

T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES



**IMPLEMENTING CLASS BLOG AS A LEARNING TOOL IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHING**

THESIS

Nurgül KAYIŞOĞLU

Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Programme

August, 2020

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(Y1712.020047)

**Department of English Language and Literature
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Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

August, 2020

DECLARATION

I hereby declare with respect that the study “Implementing Class Blog As A Learning Tool In English Language Teaching ”, which I submitted as a Master thesis, is written without any assistance in violation of scientific ethics and traditions in all the processes from the Project phase to the conclusion of the thesis and that the works I have benefited are from those shown in the Bibliography. (.../.../20...)

Nurgül KAYIŞOĞLU

FOREWORD

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU for her valuable guidance during this process. I also would like to thank the eleventh-grade students of Fatsa Anatolian High School, the precious participants of this study, who enthusiastically collaborated with me and expressed to me several times their interest and their confidence in this Project.

August, 2020

Nurgül KAYIŞOĞLU

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IMPLEMENTING CLASS BLOG AS A LEARNING TOOL IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

ABSTRACT

In recent years we have been witnessing the benefits of the use of technological developments in educational contexts. These developments have caused undeniable changes in our attitudes, understandings, actions and ways of teaching and learning. Here, the main resource to gain favor from these improvements is the internet, because there are numerous amounts of materials available for language teaching and learning on the net. Foreign language teaching and learning seem to have a considerable place in web technology since it provides authentic materials and situations for students to practice the language and gain language awareness. Considering this fact, the potential of blogs draws the attention. In the light of these facts, the study examines the procedures involved in implementing the class blog as a teaching and learning tool in an EFL class by trying to find out the attitudes of students, towards using the class blog. The study was conducted at Fatsa Anatolian High School over an 8-week period in the second semester of the educational year of 2019. Fifteen eleventh- grade students participated in this study. The students followed the weekly programs of the Turkish National Education curriculum for the eleventh-class students studying at Anatolian High Schools by doing the activities in the book of the Turkish National Education Ministry within their class blog. After the treatment, the performances were analyzed based on pre-study interviews and semi-structured interviews, the researcher's field notes and a writing pre-test. The analyses of the data showed that classroom blogs may have positive effects on learning English and can be supportive in foreign language learning as the process motivates students to take responsibility for their own learning process. We also observed that the blogging activities help to enhance the students' language and communication skills. Therefore, the study suggests that the practice of blogging can be an effective learning and teaching tool.

Keywords: *Learning English, class blog in learning English, learning tool*

BİR SINIF BLOĞUNUN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİMİNDE ÖĞRENME ARACI OLARAK KULLANILMASI

ÖZET

Son yıllarda, eğitim alanında teknolojik gelişmelerin getirdiği faydalara şahit olmaktayız. Söz konusu gelişmeler tutumlarımızda, anlayışımızda, davranışlarımızda ve öğrenme- öğretme yöntemlerimizde de inkar edilemez değişimlere sebep olmuştur. Bu gelişmelerden fayda sağlayabileceğimiz ana kaynak internettir. Çünkü internet ortamında dil öğrenme ve öğretme adına sayısız materyal bulunmaktadır. Öğrencilerin dil çalışmaları yapması ve dil farkındalığı kazanması için özgün materyaller ve durumlar sunduğundan web teknolojileri yabancı dil öğrenme ve öğretiminde, önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bu faktör göz önünde bulundurulduğunda blog uygulamalarının sahip olduğu potansiyel dikkati çekmektedir. Söz konusu durumların ışığında, bu çalışma, uygulama esnasındaki süreçleri inceleyerek bir sınıf bloğunun yabancı dil öğretim aracı olarak nasıl kullanılabilirliğini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma 2019 Eğitim- Öğretim yılının ikinci döneminde sekiz haftalık bir süreyi kapsayacak şekilde Fatsa Anadolu lisesinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmaya onbirinci sınıfta okuyan onbeş adet öğrenci katılmıştır. Öğrenciler sınıf bloğu uygulamalarında, milli eğitim bakanlığı Anadolu liseleri müfredatını takip ederek, bakanlık tarafından temin edilen ders kitaplarındaki konu ve uygulamaları takip etmişlerdir. Uygulamalardan sonra değerlendirmeler, ön çalışma ve yarı yapılandırılmış açık uçlu cevap gerektiren görüşme formları kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Görüşme formlarına ek olarak, öğrencilerin bir dil öğrenme aracı olarak blog kullanılması konusunda tutumlarını ölçmek amaçlı anketler de uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen bilgilerin analizine göre, blog uygulamalarının İngilizce öğretimi bakımından olumlu etkileri olduğu ve öğrencilerin kendi öğrenme sorumluluklarını üstlenmesi bakımından katkı sağlayarak yabancı dil öğrenme ve öğretme konusunda destek sağlayan bir unsur olduğu görülmüştür. Bir başka deyişle, öğrencilerin İngilizce öğrenmeye karşı motivasyonlarının artmasıyla sınıf bloğu uygulamaları arasında olumlu bir ilişki olduğu görülmüştür. Aynı zamanda öğrenciler de blok uygulamalarının dil ve iletişim becerilerine katkı sağladığını belirtmişlerdir. Buna bağlı olarak çalışma, blok uygulamalarının etkili bir öğrenme ve öğretme aracı olduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İngilizce öğrenme, ingilizce öğrenmede sınıf bloğu, öğrenme aracı*

1. INTRODUCTION

Many researchers who concentrate on the field of education have started to lay emphasis on preparing students for the future ahead, which is rapidly changing. In today's world, language educators frequently hear the terms of student-centeredness, language awareness, self-reflection, self-evaluation, autonomous learning, collaborative studies, communicative approaches, active participation of students, and interactive and authentic environments. So, they feel the need of finding new methods or tools to help both their students and themselves gain the new understandings of the new era. And here, technology comes to our rescue. Some previous studies show that technology-enhanced teaching has positive effects on learning. It can be said that the technological devices we have can be the most important tools we may make use of while we are teaching and learning a foreign language, since they offer us much more than books or audio recordings can. Students not only have the opportunity to learn anywhere and anytime but also, they have access to an endless ocean of knowledge by themselves which supports their critical thinking and taking control of their own learning (Noytim, 2010; Wang & Woo, 2009)

Students should be exposed to the language as much as possible to learn it. The exposure issue becomes much more important when you try to teach a foreign language in a country where there is very limited chance to practically use the language out of classroom in daily life. Taking this fact into consideration, technology will move one step forward. There is a mind-blowing speed in technological developments in every field of life and education is no exception. From this perspective, no one can deny that there is growing interest in the internet for teaching and learning. This new tendency causes the activities of teaching and learning happen not just inside the classroom. So, teachers start to think of trying to find new teaching and learning tools, especially in language teaching, since it will not be wise to ignore the propensity of students for these technological developments through widespread use of the internet in the new era, and the new interaction, communication, learning and social life of students

have been set up around the internet and the new technological tools such as smart phones, PCs and tablets. That is why language teachers are now considering the ways of implementing technology as a learning and teaching tool.

1.1 Background of the Study

Today, we have the “millennial generation” as our students. However, we are not millennials as their teachers. So, we may not have the same familiarity or comfort level with the new technologies or tools as compared to our students. Moreover, we are likely to see these technological activities that our students are engaged in as a waste of time, with the belief that the use of those devices will cause them to avoid the real-world responsibilities which will lead them to a successful future life. However, we have to keep in mind the fact that the only thing which will not change is the change itself. We must also admit that things have also changed with regard to education. Therefore, those new activities of this new generation may not be as futile as we think. There, they live in a whole new world which may have its own benefits. Researchers in the field point out that in this new digital world, young generations may learn collaboratively or teach each other and learn from one another while creating their identities (Yang & Chen, 2006; Zawilinski, 2009; Sun, 2009; Hsu & Wang, 2010; Sidek & Yunus, 2011). For example, when they play computer games or have a chat with their friends, in this way they learn to look for new information by themselves through which they become familiar with autonomous learning, which is one of the key terms of the contemporary educational areas. This new world of the net generation is central in many parts of their lives. As teachers we cannot stay out of it anymore. It is obvious that educators should be able to find ways to establish a connection with their students by manipulating the educational advantages in this digital world. We may use those technologies to support language learning and help them become more independent in their learning, which is one of the most important issues of contemporary learning and teaching environments. Here, we may refer to the concept of instructional technology, which means integrating technology into education (Belderrain, 2006). Korkmazgil (2009) stated that the act of making technological

applications a part of the curriculum is to find better ways in the processes of teaching and learning. We use technological tools in every part of our lives to make things better and easier. Those tools will certainly be helpful for both teachers while doing their job and students in their learning process, because we all know that technological tools, instruments and applications have changed all of us from the moment they came into our lives. When we want to look from the students' perspectives, they are no longer passive recipients of knowledge, and the educators feel this fact deeply, and for this reason teachers are trying to find new approaches or tools to make a connection with their students' new learning tendencies (Kazancı, 2012).

There are some other researchers who studied the effects of technology on teaching and learning, such as Blasszauer, 2001; Salaberry, 2001; Jarwish, 2005; Dudeney & Hockly, 2007; Zengin, 2007; Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 2008; Baron, 2008; Godwin & Jones, 2008; Erban, Ban & Castaneda, 2009; Wiebe & Kabata, 2010; Baytak, Tarman & Ayas, 2011; Tabatabaei & Gui, 2011; İşman, 2012; Zhao, 2013; Arifah, 2014; and Jacqui, 2015. These studies mainly pointed out that the technological improvements, the intelligent devices, computers, and of course the ever-growing access to the internet and its minute-by-minute uploaded new applications, certainly have positive effects on teaching and learning a foreign language.

For nearly four decades we have been witnessing considerable changes in teaching foreign languages. Teachers feel responsible to learn how to make benefits from the opportunities presented by the technological tools in order to accommodate themselves with the demands of their new age students. They try to find the answer to the inevitable question in their minds, that is, "How can I harness the power of the new technologies, mobiles, and ICT tools with which my students are becoming more and more familiar, and these technological environments which are entering every aspect of their lives?" These new age students want to be more active and they feel like being a part of their learning process, because they are active in their social-technological daily lives. They obtain the information, shape it, contribute to it and produce new information. Some of the most famous terms which have been used since we have technologically thinking students, are communicative language teaching, taking

learning responsibilities, autonomy and critical thinking. It can be said that all of these new understandings in teaching a foreign language are supported by the developments in technology. Akyol (2010) stated that contemporary students find using technological tools in education more interesting than traditional ways because they have grown up with these technologies.

As a result of natural changes in the perceptions of education as the time goes by, we have started to hear the term student-centeredness. This means that teachers do not dominate the classroom procedures but the students are encouraged to be active learners by reflecting on the learning procedures and becoming more independent. In addition to this, with these new perceptions, constructivist theories have gained importance. When we review the literature, two very influential names come to the fore. Those names are Piaget and Vygotsky. They both talk about constructivist theories but from different perspectives. Piaget calls his theory Cognitive Theory, which focuses on individual learning. Vygotsky calls his theory Social Constructivism, which focuses on social interaction learning. As we examine his theory, we can understand that learning can take place in social settings, which means people learn by interacting with each other. From this point of view, this is a learner-centered approach because learners access the new information by relating the previous ones in authentic contexts. At this exact point we can talk about the new technologies, namely the internet, because it is the new place for social interaction. In this platform we can talk about student or learner-centered approaches as it is a perfect place for everybody to explore what they need to learn. There, the learners seek the information and this act helps the learners understand how to deal with a problem by improving themselves.

Therefore, language teachers feel an urge to make use of such a tool to teach, because it is not possible not to see that the internet and the new kind of social interaction and learning settings are in every aspect of our lives. Motschnig-Pitrik and Holzinger (2002) pointed out that “the internet and information technologies are principally well-suited to be used with the student-centered approach” (p.164).

We can already witness quite a lot of teachers in the world of social networking trying to teach something through videos, weblogs or other instruments. There

are also some researchers who worked on the use of internet-based technologies to teach and learn a language. Boas (2011) states that if students use the internet while they are trying to learn English, they will be encouraged to use the language by fulfilling online tasks.

The internet is not just an entertainment instrument anymore. It is a communication, information, authentic resource of gaining knowledge, learning and teaching tool. If we put more emphasis on the education part, the weblogs provide certain advantages such as interacting with peers, exchanging thoughts, receiving feedback, keeping portfolios and accessing authentic resources.

Thanks to the internet, there is an enormous flow of information. So, in the classrooms where English is taught as a second or foreign language, internet usage is welcomed by instructors. When we consider blogs in this respect by reviewing the literature in general, it can be said that blogs are widely used in language teaching.

It can be said that using blogs in education has some positive effects on students. When they are active users of blogs, they have control over their learning. When using blogs, they read and write, and communicate among peers through the posts they share. This provides them with more freedom when we compare it to the classical classroom environments in which there are limited interactive and communicative tools and the opportunity of obtaining feedback from others.

Here we may also mention autonomy. Learner autonomy has gained importance in language learning and teaching for some decades. Holec, (1981) defines learner autonomy as taking charge of one's own learning. Learner autonomy was identified as one of the key competences for lifelong learning at the European Commission in 2006. Harwood (2010) and Illes (2012) stated that blogs may be helpful to enhance learner autonomy and grammatical awareness. In consideration of the previous research, we can see in what points technology would help our students see the value of knowing how to use it to achieve their societal, personal, institutional and instructional goals autonomously. Recently, a great many foreign and second language teachers have put emphasis on preparing their students to take responsibility for their own learning outside the classroom. The learning environment which will be created by the help of the

class blog will provide students with the opportunity of learning, practicing and communicating outside the classroom, which may foster learner autonomy more. Harwood (2010), by putting emphasis on learner autonomy, states that blogging activities are ways of moving students towards independent learning if used appropriately, and they can also enable students to benefit each other by taking charge of their own learning.

Dieu (2004) and Trajemberg & Yiakoumetti (2011) also emphasized in their studies that blogs provide opportunities for peer learning and collaboration. As it is often stated in recent research, while learning a foreign or second language, one of the advantages of using mobile devices is the learners' having a chance to access information coming from their teachers and peers and a chance to respond to them.

Thanks to the help of mobile devices in recent years, it has been accepted that weblogs or blogs are beneficial tools in educational contexts. From this aspect, creating and making use of a foreign language learning class blog with the help of a mobile device enables students to carry out tasks by accessing online learning resources of any kind. In this way, learners may send information texts, videos, sound files or visuals which they may find enjoyable while learning a foreign language at the same time. By carrying out certain tasks using the class blog, learners are expected to be autonomous but not to be passive listeners who just receive information only from their teachers. Trajemberg & Yiakoumetti (2011) claimed that blogs can provide language learners with a unique opportunity to promote social interaction and collaborative learning, self-expression, and self-evaluation, and they also gain language awareness, all of which could certainly be important steps in the process of being autonomous learners.

We have been living in a rapidly changing world and apparently this new world has its own demands. When we look at the field of education, there we can see concepts such as critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. This means that teachers cannot teach by just transmitting information anymore. There is a need to find new ways to be in harmony with the new era of teaching and learning foreign languages. Educators have started to see clearly that some other tools need to be implemented to meet the needs of the new era, in which

students and teachers are both in favor of more interactive ways of teaching and learning that will enable collaboration and being more autonomous. Özkan & Bada (2012) stated that thanks to blogs, classes have become more interesting for students in the technology age.

Students are more open to adapt themselves to the demands of the new world. In today's world, children and later our students are born in a digital, technological world. They can guide themselves through their interests and needs. From this perspective, they have a kind of self-directed learning understanding. Most of them have their own mobile phones and PCs through which they have access to the internet. The recent findings have revealed that if learners use technology when they want to learn something, this may have a positive effect. In fact, they learn by searching for a specific subject, and by sending and receiving texts, photos and sound. They are not passive agents who just listen to their teachers anymore. They certainly do not want to be in a position in which they only consume what they are given, but they tend to contribute to the information which could be seen as one of the philosophies of the new world of education.

In many respects we, as language teachers have started to realize that we should be involved in our students' digital, technological world to help them learn effectively. We can clearly see that our students and their world have changed. Accordingly, their perceptions toward learning have also changed. In some studies, it has been put forward that using technological instruments such as blogs as teaching and learning tools may be beneficial (Illes, 2012; Harwood, 2010). We can also witness some other researchers who have studied the use of blogs in EFL learning and teaching (Ward, 2004; Pinkman, 2005; Zhang, 2009; Harwood, 2010). It has also been reported that blogs can be useful to promote student-centered learning, which has been favored by the experts of education for the last decades (Harwood, 2010). In the light of the studies done in this field, we can assume that blogs may serve as an effective learning and teaching environment where students are able to feel as if they are important parts of that community in which they all have the opportunity to express themselves due to the suitable features of using them. This peculiarity of belonging to a community may also have an important effect on power structures of traditional

classes, and this will eventually lead to student-centeredness by empowering students.

Another term that language teachers have encountered very often recently is authenticity. If a language teacher is in need of providing his/her students with life-like situations involving authentic texts, and visual or listening materials to help them improve, there is nothing better than the internet. Most of the language teachers are aware of the advantages of using the internet-based technologies in education and they try to find ways to integrate these technologies into their teaching environments. One of the most commonly used ways of these integration acts is creating educational blogs. The blogs in this respect may act like as an authentic source because there is a live interaction among the peers, sharing ideas and information and obtaining feedback from each other. In addition to this, students are surrounded with authentic communicative tasks which are available in the visual, audio and written forms in blog applications.

If teachers and learners are aware of the benefits and the ways of using it effectively, as Myers, Hudson & Pausch, (2000) stated, this educational tool will have a low threshold and a high ceiling. The term threshold means the difficulty level of using a system and the term ceiling means the level of benefits of using a system. If we think about this threshold and ceiling together with the educational tools of technology, we come to an understanding that those tools should be easy to use and should provide some opportunities to the applicators. Contemporary teachers, who are searching for new ways to meet their students' needs, tendencies and demands in the new era, may find class blogs useful, because they are easy to use and manage and may address technologically thinking students. Researchers point out that blogs make it possible for the students to engage in real world tasks and the learner-centered environment in which they can learn autonomously, reflecting on how to construct new understandings. Regarding all these facts, this study has been conducted to highlight how a class blog can be used as a learning tool in English language teaching.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

We can say that technological developments have affected almost all areas of teaching and learning including language education. The classroom dynamics have also changed in a considerable way in recent years. Technological developments play a significant role in these dynamics. Another changing dynamic is the students themselves. Köksal and Demirel (2008) stated that students have also evolved into different personalities that are more likely to question, criticize, do brainstorming and use ICT to find the answers by using multiple resources. Thus, teachers have been talking about a shift from old school practices to learning practices in which students are much more in control of their own learning. When the situation is viewed from this aspect, blogging activities seem to have potential to be a kind of transformational link between those new approaches and the old ones and these kinds of applications are becoming more and more popular as a language learning and teaching tool. Teachers also have been trying to find ways to integrate new tools into education environments to support their students' learning processes. Nowadays, they feel that the way they try to teach should certainly be changed due to the advances in the digital world of the new technologies. For this reason, today educators strongly feel the need to use the media to teach a foreign language in an engaging and effective way, since it can easily be seen that students are born in an environment surrounded by technological tools and that they live almost their entire life in those new era contexts.

The new generation interact, communicate, manage their daily activities and learn in a rapid and interactive way in the new technological environments. It can be assumed that if teachers stay out of it, they cannot impress them to teach anything. One way not to stay out of the new tendencies is to become accustomed to information and communication technologies (ICT), which have been widely used to provide learners and teachers with a wide range of opportunities in educational tasks both inside and outside the classroom. So, educators are trying to understand the potential of ICT and new technological applications because they can clearly see that formal, traditional education contexts are not the only places in second language teaching. When considered from this point of view, educational blogs seem to be a proper platform in

foreign language teaching and learning. So, implementing educational blogs as classroom extensions may help both teachers and students keep pace with new teaching and learning dynamics, such as the need to create critical thinking and self-expression opportunities, interaction and authentic communication, various resources, real life tasks that will lead to skill developments, motivation to learn, learner autonomy, a context to obtain immediate feedback, peer learning, learning strategies, active use of language, and cooperative studies, all of which would sometimes be hard to achieve in traditional “sit-and- listen-to-the-teacher” classroom environments. Many studies in the field show us various beneficial ways of using blogs. Richardson (2006) said that students find blogging much closer to themselves than a traditional classroom context because in this way they learn by discovering and improving their language skills. Sun (2009) stated that students can develop their own language learning strategies by using blogs. Zhang (2009) pointed out that by looking at different posts shared by their peers in the blog they have the chance to see different points of view, share their ideas and foster their thinking skills. Williams & Jacobs (2004) stated that blogging activities help students improve learner autonomy and create greater interactions with peers.

1.2.1 What is a blog?

A blog, with its most basic explanation, is a kind of webpage created by its author or multiple authors in any kind of ways they wish. The authors publish anything in any forms and they receive or make comments for these posts, which is a highly interactive environment. These activities are quite common for our new age students actually. A definition of a blog is: “A blog is a text-based online environment which allows for embedding links to other online resources, and in which the author’s posts appear in reverse chronological order” (Halic, Lee, Paulus, and Spence, 2010, p.206).

A blog is an informational website created to share information of any kind: written, visual or audio-visual. Blogs seem to offer many advantages for practicing language by developing skills at all levels when we consider them from the viewpoint of education. Thanks to blogs, users of this technology have become contributors of information rather than just consumers of it. Thus, educational blogs have been accepted as beneficial tools from the viewpoints of

student communication, motivation, creative language usage, active involvement, cooperative studies, authentic context and learner autonomy, which are all essential factors of contemporary educational fields. By the help of blog implementations in language education, students have the chance of working all together toward a joint outcome in a faster and easier way without any limitations of time and place, accessing different types of authentic materials, experiencing new language forms that maximize their lexical competence by exposing them to different types of information shared by others, learning in a social environment, and also taking control of their own learning by being self-directive. They live a majority part of their daily lives searching for any kind of information using social media applications. Sidek & Yunus (2011) pointed out that blogs can be used in teaching and learning languages as they are similar to other social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter with which the students are certainly familiar enough. Today, students are active in these social media applications even for learning a foreign language. So, it will be wise to implement a similar application to capture their interest and to make them motivated to learn. Motivation is commitment to learn something and only in this way does true learning take place.

Modern students also like to have opportunities for self-expression, and blogs make a perfect place for this tendency. Thus, language teachers nowadays need to find new ways to teach according to the necessities of the 21st century learning and teaching environments. Functions of blogs in the process of foreign language learning make researchers carry out studies on their benefits. Because blogs are easy to access, they provide sources in different forms; each student can be the author of the blog which they contribute to in whatever ways they want: visual, written or audio-visual, and they are also safe to use because the lecturer can restrict access to the blog, so that is, it can be used privately within a group.

There are different classifications of blogs made by different scholars, but they are not all related to education, so it will be better to mention the categorization made by Campbell (2003). He categorized blogs into three types, which are tutor blogs, learner blogs and class blogs.

1.2.2 Tutor blogs

Campbell (2003) stated that these blogs are created by the teacher to provide the students with daily reading practice, class or syllabus information, or a resource of links for self- study. It can be said that tutor blogs act as personal libraries, the focus of which is mainly on self- reading activities that are actually helpful for the students to become more autonomous in their learning. But this type lacks interaction because students cannot send comments for their teacher's posts.

1.2.3 Learner blogs

Learner blogs are created by students. They are totally under the control of the learners without any restrictions. They are good because the learners can interact with each other and obtain feedback from one another, which enables peer learning. Learner blogs may also act as personal portfolios, which is beneficial for both the teacher and the students to see their strengths and weaknesses. They are obviously good for the development of language skills due to their multifunctionality such as writing, reading and having a real audience. However, as Özkan (2011) said, they are difficult to arrange and follow since the students are in charge of everything in their blogs.

1.2.4 Class blogs

These types of blogs can be created by both the teachers and the students. Class blogs may function as a joint notebook or portfolio of the students who make contributions on certain subjects on a regular basis. Everybody, both students and teachers, is engaged in the process. These kinds of blogs extend the class time. Students have the chance to contribute to their joint class project at any time and anywhere, as long as they have an internet connection. Students and the tutor all together post comments and upload materials. Zhang and Olfman (2010) pointed out that class blogs both provide the learners with a chance of documenting and sharing related materials, and with feedback and peer assessment. A class blog may serve as a joint notebook which all of the students can write in and send various types of posts which they all can see and share comments about. In this way, it contributes to students' critical thinking and showing respect for different ideas in an interactive and communicative

atmosphere. Campbell (2003) reports that class blogs are more fun and that they increase the feeling of unity in which students interact with each other in the target language, and adds that class blogs are also useful to implement project-based language learning. Stanley (2005) stated that class blogs are good for collaborative discussion and encouraging students to reflect on their studies.

Classical notebooks are for one student only. This means that nobody can make a contribution to or assess the contents of it to give feedback other than the teacher. And even the teacher can only do it in a limited manner. However, a class blog is an ever-growing joint notebook in which all of the students can make varied types of technological contributions and benefit from those contributions thanks to its multimodality and feature of open access to everyone at any time and anywhere, which gives students freedom to make decisions about their own learning strategies. Georgescu (2010, p.186) expressed that “a class blog is the result of the collaborative work of the students in a class”. Therefore, among these three types of blogs which can be used for educational purposes, class blogs seem more favorable to use as a language learning and teaching tool, because a class blog has more functions and advantages than the other two types.

In today’s world, students want to be more active and freer, and they have a strong need to express themselves. They are not satisfied only by reading books or listening to the teacher to learn, because they know that the whole world of information is within their hands and they want to make use of it. They are interactive students in this communication age. They continue their interactivity about any subject all day long. If language learning cannot be integrated into this act, the teaching method will turn into something too traditional, towards which students nowadays may lose motivation and from which they cannot benefit so much anymore. So, a great responsibility here lies with teachers, who should direct the new needs and desires of the-new era students to obtain the best benefits and prevent them from deviating from the right paths. The reason behind this research is to investigate the benefits and challenges of using a class blog in English classes. Blogs seem to fit in with the new educational needs in that:

- They can provide interaction and support communication among students.
- They may offer learning opportunities in an integrated way for the basic skills of learning a language, which are speaking, listening, reading and writing, and also the sub-skills.
- When we consider learner autonomy, which is a popular term in recent teaching-learning environments, preparing a blog task may be helpful for the students to take responsibility for their own learning.
- They may provide authentic materials and enable students to gain language awareness.
- Students can be more active and engaged in the process of learning than in traditional classes.
- They may be good for critical thinking, feedback, peer learning, reflection and motivation.
- They can be a classroom extension which provides more practice and exposure to the target language.
- They may be helpful for both students and teachers to keep up with technological implications in education.
- Learning and teaching can take place at any time and anywhere, which is in line with the needs of the new generation.

In the literature we can find great numbers of studies showing the educational benefits of using blogs. The researchers (Bartlett-Bragg, 2003; Brescia & Miller, 2006; Kajder & Bull, 2003; Martindale & Wiley, 2005) pointed out in their studies that using blogs has a positive effect on critical thinking and knowledge construction. Christensen, (2002), Step-Greany (2002), and Conole, De Laat, Dillon and Darby (2008) all carried out research to find out the benefits of technology-enhanced instruction. Farmer, Yue, and Brooks (2008), and Pinkman (2005) refer to blogs as communicative resources which can provide students with life-like and catchy materials. Cashion and Palmieri (2002) state that blogs are used to contribute to classroom environments promoting interactive acts of students, thinking in a reflective way, and

interpreting and applying their knowledge. In addition, Benson (2013) points out the importance of self-directed life-long learning in the world of business and social tenets, stating that autonomy has an outstanding position in the world with respect to policies of education.

When we scan the literature in Turkey, we cannot find enough studies from which we can obtain necessary data and results showing the pros or cons of implementing a class blog as a language teaching and learning tool. There are not so many blog implementations in schools in Turkey, as this is a rather new concept for us. For this reason, a study on the use of a class blog as a language teaching and learning tool will be beneficial for language teachers and language teaching program developers. The study presents and analyses the results of a case study conducted to examine the effects of a class blog incorporated in to the regular curriculum of the eleventh class at an Anatolian High School in Turkey.

1.3 Purpose of the study and the research questions

Nowadays, we have started to hear the terms such as student-centeredness, critical thinking, enhancing learner autonomy, active learners, emphasizing language awareness, developing communicative and intercultural competence, the teacher as a facilitator, authentic resources and environments, and engaging in the teaching-learning processes. These terms came into our lives as a result of the changing world around us. Neither students nor teachers are the same as the ones in the traditional world before the technological improvements. It is not easy to fulfill the requirements of such terms in traditional classroom teaching and learning environments. Almost everything has changed in life. From the educational perspective, we do not learn in the same way as our ancestors did. We are not satisfied with books and classical environments. Learners are not passive and they do not want to wait to receive information. They tend to participate in their learning process actively by shaping and adding value to information in a rather communicative manner compared to the learners in the past. Today, students have unlimited resources for all kinds of subjects thanks to the information and communication technologies. They do not rely on books and teachers only. They are connected to their peers, other teachers and even the

whole world. So, they also learn from each other and from others. Moreover, they do this in an incredibly fast way. It can be said that they have more freedom to take control of their own learning. The changing attitudes of students nowadays show us that they tend to be more independent learners and that they like the freedom of social media platforms. This tendency towards their own freedom recalls the term autonomy, which is one of the most popular words in teaching and learning practices recently and which is also hard to achieve easily. When we think about blogging activities and learning processes simultaneously, it would also be wise to try to see the contribution of blogging to creating autonomy, critical thinking, communication and active participation, which are the ways of learning of the new era, among students while trying to understand the benefits of it as a teaching tool.

The empirical studies done in the field of foreign or second language education show us that there is a role shift from teacher authority to learner-centeredness, which leads to learner autonomy. For this reason, educators try to implement new tools to enhance their students' learning in a contemporary and effective way. "Blogs have been well received in education owing to their multimedia feature, interactivity and ability to support cooperative and autonomous learning." (Sun, 2009). Reinders & White (2016) pointed out that with the integration of technology into education in the mid-1990s, new practices and possibilities started to influence the state of being an autonomous learner. "Blogs give students a chance to participate actively in their own learning, determine their learning goals and share their knowledge in order to develop their own understanding of the target activities" (Bakar, Latif & Ja'acob, 2010). It can be assumed that while students are preparing their blog post they interact with each other and have control over the process.

Perhaps language instructors and researchers have been influenced most by the advances in information and communication technologies (ICT), because they now know that it is impossible to go on teaching and learning languages with the old school practices and that they need to implement different teaching and learning contexts to fit the needs of the new era for both students and instructors to obtain the utmost benefits from the viewpoint of improving language learning

and teaching skills. Öz (2014) stated that ICT tools are great motivation factors for students to learn a language.

However, there is not much advice on the paths to follow in order to reach that level of learning. Considering this issue, it seems that involvement of technology in education makes it easier and that blogs can be thought of as potential educational tools. However, in educational systems like the ones in Turkey, teachers' roles may have been maximized, which means that independence or taking the responsibility for one's learning is not favoured. Çakıcı (2015) stated that the reason why autonomization cannot find a desirable place in our system is that it is assumed as a threat for the power structures in the cultural understandings of educational environments in Turkey. Considering this as a gap between contemporary educational understandings of the world in general and in our country, the researcher tried to close the gap by examining one of the promising ways of supporting autonomous and active processes by creating a class blog as a learning tool to teach English, hoping to provide an insight into the benefits and the challenges of using such a tool.

Taking a class blog into consideration as a useful tool to learn and teach language, educators may try to figure out ways to integrate it into their lessons by combining it with the curriculum which they have to follow. However, a certain amount of research should be done to understand its benefits and challenges, prior to its implementation in language classrooms. Herewith, this study is inspired by the potential benefits of using class blogs as a teaching tool, and it aims to present the pros and cons of implementing a class blog as a language learning tool in order to provide a useful reference for those who will implement and integrate blogging activities as a tool to teach English.

The current literature makes us understand that using blogs is an effective technique which can be used in an EFL context. When we have a general look at the previous studies on using blogs as a language learning tool, we see that most of them concentrate on using other blogs or creating students' personal blogs. However, this is handled differently in this study, which deals with constructing a class blog on which all the students share their posts as co-bloggers and following the curriculum by transferring the activities of their English textbooks provided by the National Education Ministry. Thus, the first

purpose of this study is to establish for resesarchers an understanding of how teachers can integrate the procedures of using a class blog in English language teaching. Secondly, it aims to identify the benefits and the challenges of using class blogs as a learning tool in English language teaching. In line with the above-mentioned purposes, the following research questions guide the study:

- Are there any benefits in implementing a class blog in English language teaching? If so, what are those benefits?
- Are there any challenges in implementing a class blog in English language teaching? If so, what are those challenges?

The research approach to answer these research questions can be said to be both inductive and deductive, which enables the researcher to make inferences combining the theories put forward in previous studies done on the similar subjects.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature related to implementing blogs, and specifically class blogs, as a language learning and teaching tool. When we look at the studies made on using blogs as an educational tool, we can see that they can be useful in some of the most important issues, such as engaging student discussion among themselves, promoting peer learning, providing feedback, developing learning skills, learner autonomy, motivation, and exposure to the target language through authentic resources and meaningful contexts. It is also said that blogs are helpful to create learner-centered contexts which enable students to perform communication tasks and which are also good for learning vocabulary. There are several studies made on blogs several years ago (Dieu, 2004; Downs, 2004; Campbell, 2003; Churchill, 2009; Glogoff, 2005; Johnson, 2004; Lamshed, Berry & Armstrong, 2002; McIntosh, 2005; Noytim, 2010; Pinkman, 2005; Thorne & Payne, 2005; Wang & Hsu, 2008; Warschauer & whittaker, 2002; Williams & Jacobs, 2004; Wu, 2011; Zawilinski, 2009) showing that blogs were becoming popular in the field of language teaching and learning. This fact has not changed recently. Now we have seen some contemporary studies proving that implementing blogging activities enhances language learning due to the multi-functionality of the blogs as a learning and teaching tool.

Pinkman (2005) made a study on the effects of blogs from the viewpoint of learner independence and interest in learning out of classroom. The study was conducted with fifteen pre-advanced students at a university in Japan. Results of the research suggested that students benefited from the feedback they obtained from their peers and their teachers and that the interaction among themselves enhanced their interest and their reading, writing and communication skills.

Another study was conducted by Iyer (2013) to explore the effects of collaborative blogging on communicative skills in writing with twelve fourth-year university students in Taiwan. The results revealed that thanks to the collaborative blogging activities, the students' communicative skills in writing, and their creativity and critical thinking levels increased.

One of the other studies was carried out by Kitchakarn (2012) to examine the effects of peer feedback that students obtain from class blogs and their attitudes towards peer feedback with thirty-four second-year students at a university in Bangkok. According to the results, students showed positive attitudes towards blogging and it was observed that peer feedback through blogs enhanced the students' writing skills.

Another study was conducted by Soares (2008) to find out whether students would use the class blog as a language learning tool. The researcher set up a class blog with nine pre-intermediate EFL students in a language school in Brazil and it was observed that the students used the class blog as a learning tool, which helped the students learn the language in a fun way by motivating them to learn.

Bakar, Ya'acop and Latif (2010) did a research study on the effectiveness of using blogs as a second language learning tool and they found out that more than ninety percent of the participants accepted using blogs as a useful learning tool. One important aspect of this study is to concentrate on class blogs as a language learning and teaching tool to provide both students and teachers with a kind of refreshment in their learning and teaching process, which would probably become more and more tedious if traditional classroom contexts continued to be implemented, ignoring the inevitable changes happening about everything in life. However, very few studies have been made related to class blogs and their effects on learning a second language when used as a learning and teaching tool integrated into the regular curriculum. This research examined several angles of using a class blog as an English language learning tool and tried to find out in what ways implementing a class blog would be useful.

2.2 Motivation

Web applications such as blogs have communicative environments in which the participants interact with each other at different levels. It is impossible for language teachers to ignore the core position of communication in teaching a language and this communicative atmosphere creates one of the most important factors for acquiring true learning, that is motivation. Digital tools create perfect opportunities for language learning. Gorder (2008) pointed out that when classrooms are integrated with technology, students become more active and responsible. Dornyei (2003) said that motivation is vital for learning. It can be said that using internet-based tools as language learning and teaching platforms is a source of motivation both for teachers and students, since those platforms provide them with endless authentic materials and resources. Perhaps the most motivating factor for using social media platforms as learning tools is that students have the chance to have the freedom of learning in their own space and time which is also a great motivational factor.

In today's world, children are born in the world of technology, but because of the rapid developments, the majority of instructors are still struggling to get used to implementing those technologies. It can be said that most instructors are still in a transformational process between the new technologies and the old practices. However, they urgently need to embrace the new world of educational practices to make their students feel related to almost the only world they were born in, that is the digital and the technological one. In this way, students will be more motivated to learn in a context in which they feel more comfortable. Godwin & Jones (2003) stated that because learners are able to express themselves to a real audience, they become motivated, involved and interested in the topics discussed in the blogs.

Blogs are multi-media and simple web publishing platforms. People spend most of their time on a daily basis using these kinds of platforms and applications and publishing all kinds of information. It can be said that the publishing act seems to be one of the most important needs of the new era. When we consider this fact in terms of education, students also like to publish their pieces of work. So, sharing their blog posts is a great motivation for students. Sun (2009) mentions the development of learning strategies and motivation as outputs of

implementing blogs, which form lively settings enabling extensive language practice.

There are two types of motivation having a considerable influence on how a student approaches his/her learning: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. However, those motivational factors mentioned above are mostly related to the latter. Extrinsically motivated students perform a learning activity to have a grade while intrinsically motivated students perform because they have an interest for that activity (Green & Sulbaran, 2006). Ramsden (2003) pointed out that the first principle of affective teaching is capturing students' interests. Huffaker (2004) reports that blogs give students a chance of self-expression and creativity. That is why we can say that when students are performing blogging activities, they are intrinsically motivated, which is the holly degree that teachers want their students to achieve.

2.3 Feedback

Feedback is thought to be one of the most important aspects of student learning. It would be hard to achieve good performances and improvement if we did not obtain the necessary feedback showing us our weaknesses in order to overcome them or supporting our strengths to give us motivation.

Feedback has a close relationship with assessment. A study is assessed to see if the performer has been following the right path to achieve the desired outcomes. The information gained after the assessment process is then used to give feedback to the performer with the intent of providing improvement. Here we have to mention two types of assessment: one is formative, the other is summative assessment. Summative assessment represents the end product and it is said to be the "assessment of learning", which is mostly about giving grades for the levels reached by the performers after the learning process. This type of assessment has a very slight link to feedback. What is taken into consideration here is formative assessment, which is said to be "assessment for learning". This type has a close link to feedback because it consists of providing suggestions for improvement by giving positive reinforcement. It allows for sharing of information between peers and teachers, which is what they do when they are performing blogging activities.

It is claimed by almost all of the educators that creating a feedback culture in educational programs is very important. London & Smither (2002) stated that there is a close relationship between providing supportive feedback and improved outcomes. One of the outstanding features of blogging, that is “one to one and many to one”, enables students to obtain feedback from different levels. When students try to post something on the blog, this means that they have been writing for the audience, which requires giving and receiving feedback. Sharing their ideas also contributes to metalinguistic awareness, which is one of the sub-benefits of feedback.

When students accept giving feedback as their task to their peers, it can be said that they might find it fun to read their classmates’ comments, which also supports interaction with each other. This means that since there has been a shift between teachers’ and students’ role in recent years as one of the necessities of contemporary learning and teaching attitudes, teachers are not the only agents to give feedback anymore, which is also related to 21st century learning environments. Gedera (2011) stated that the feedback given as a blog comment is less threatening than that given in the margins of papers written in red ink. Williams and Jacobs (2004) reported that blogging activities when used as a language learning tool are beneficial from the viewpoint of providing feedback among peers, in the sense that they become interactive students by reflecting on their studies.

2.4 Communication

It can sometimes be difficult to encourage or motivate, or to give every student the chance to communicate throughout the lesson. However, languages are for communication and if communication occurs, the language occurs.

Nowadays young people are spending more and more time interacting and communicating in social media applications. Blogs form a suitable place for active, interactive and collaborative communication (Sun, 2012). It is obvious that blogs have several advantages in language learning from the aspect of providing students with communication opportunities because they require an intense student involvement in interaction with peers and the teacher. Churchill

(2009) said that students actively use language in blogging activities. Atay and Kurt (2006) reported that students' communicating with each other may have a positive effect on their anxiety, because they are used to this kind of environment called as social media, in which they are constantly involved in a communication activity. Therefore, when they are engaged in similar communication activities to those that they have been performing on a daily basis on social media in their class blog, such as reading and commenting on each other's posts in a communicational manner, this helps them learn effectively.

2.5 Exposure

Krashen, (1985) stated that exposure to a language constitutes the main part of the acquisition process. Thanks to web technologies, we are exposed to numerous opportunities for authentic learning materials of all kinds such as written ones, visuals, and audio-visuals which can easily be integrated into class blogs. Dieu (2004) reported that when students are engaged in blogging activities, they benefit from several very useful language learning opportunities such as maximized exposure to language in new situations, collaboration with peers and contact with experts. Stanley (2004) points out the similarity of blogs to a kind of small language community and he adds that students will have the opportunity to learn everything happening in this community. That is actually like being exposed to a language in the way we are exposed to our mother tongue in the community we were born in.

Blogs combine all kinds of resources which can contribute to the exposure to authentic language learning materials such as texts, videos, audios and links to other blogs or web pages related to language learning and teaching or to the topic. Sharing ideas, and taking different points of view and learning from each other into consideration also creates convenient atmospheres to be exposed to the target language.

2.6 Authenticity-Meaningful Context

From the language learning and teaching point of view, authenticity is anything which was not intentionally produced.

Pinkman (2005) pointed out that students can communicate outside their classroom in an authentic environment thanks to the blog implementations in their foreign language learning classes. Barrett & Garrett (2009), and Hill, Song & West (2009) define blogs as a 21st century personal environment in which learners can control their learning in an authentic and social and respectively meaningful context. Sharples (2009) emphasizes the benefits of learning out of class and situated and flexible learning opportunities enhanced by technological applications in education. The flexible context of blog implementations provides students with a freedom of determining their own learning space and time in which they are more likely to be involved in more meaningful and authentic learning environments.

Authentic materials can lead to meaningful communication opportunities in meaningful contexts. Nunan (2004) pointed out the importance of authenticity in language learning. Classical classroom contexts and textbooks are designed for a certain level that does not provide flexibility and has a limited decontextualized feature which does not fit in to the 21st century learning environments and is almost useless, whereas using authentic materials is proven to have positive effects on language learning

2.7 Being Autonomous

Autonomy is one of the most desired characteristics that learners should have nowadays. Educators are in agreement that students should be encouraged to be autonomous learners since a lot of researches done in the educational field has revealed that it is the best way of learning something. A teacher may find blogging activities useful for his/her students because preparing blog posts includes organizing and planning the information they would like to share and these are the main steps towards taking responsibility for the learning processes. In this way, students have the chance of being autonomous by doing online exchanges.

Seitzinger (2006) pointed out that blogs have positive effects on students' metacognitive skills by giving them opportunities to reflect on their learning process. Reflection requires being an autonomous learner at a certain level. Richardson (2006) mentioned the advantageous part of blogs, that is enabling learners to keep records of their work which will contribute to their metacognitive skills by making it possible for them to monitor their progress.

A wider access to authentic resources is possible with the mobile devices which are in every part of our lives. Thanks to these devices, learners search for the resources they need. This contemporary activity of searching for the information needed by the learners themselves is seen as a core feature of being autonomous, which is taking control of one's own learning (Benson,2001). Being autonomous does not happen by itself; rather, it should be worked on. Blogs are said to be one of the most advantageous places to develop learner autonomy. Benson (2011) said that students who are not yet capable of being autonomous can develop it, and he added that if a learner learns a language autonomously the results will be better.

Being an autonomous learner for a student means he/she is capable of directing his/her learning. Brookfield (2009) defined self-directed students as not being dependent on others for learning, which means taking responsibility for their own learning, that is defined as learner autonomy. Wang (2005) pointed out that with the help of technological developments, learners have more chance to do things such as realizing their mistakes and correct them, which are the responsibilities of the teacher in dependent learning, and he added that technology helps language learners in skills development, communicating and publishing their work, which the new age learners would probably be more satisfied with.

2.8 Tasks

From a language learning point of view, tasks cover an essential place in learning environments. Language teachers use tasks to make the students use the language. Thus, the internet enables learners to have access to all kinds of materials and experiment with new language forms while preparing their class blog tasks. It is also important to prepare appropriate tasks to enable student

interaction and active involvement in the learning process. The common European framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) implies that real life tasks chosen according to students' needs outside the classroom are fruitful (Council of Europe, 2001). Thus, blogs enable students to continue language learning activities outside the physical walls of the classroom. Dudeney & Hockly (2007) noted that when students do research to complete their online tasks, they access more information in an authentic way, which will be helpful for their problem-solving skills in real-life situations. Thanks to technology, in this case the blogging activities, students can perform their tasks given by their teacher in several forms such as audio and video recordings, writing texts or visual displays. This kind of flexibility of the choices that students can benefit from when they are performing their tasks will certainly give the students a kind of freedom which will have positive effects on their self-awareness, self-determination and self-esteem. Class blog environments form suitable places to work collaboratively when students are performing their tasks. As pointed out by Zhang (2009), students have the opportunity to interact with each other and see their class-mates' posts, in which they can experience different points of view and also make assumptions.

2.9 Learner-Centeredness

In teacher-centered methods, students passively receive information whereas in student-centered approaches, learners are actively involved in the process by making contributions to the knowledge construction. This is related to constructivism, which is called the philosophy of education, the origin of which is linked to Jean Piaget, and the educational part of the theory, which is called the constructivist theory of education, was developed by Lev Vygotsky, who improved his theory around social constructivism. These two theorists' approaches were later combined with that of another theorist, Bruner, and what they contributed to the education world is very influential in contemporary classroom practices. The theory acknowledges active participation of students in the learning process, whereas teachers are seen as just facilitators of their students' processes, and in learning through peer and group work, that is, interacting and learning from each other. In this respect, the term learner-

centeredness has been defined, which finally suits the class blog applications as a language learning tool. Blackmore and Squires (2010) pointed out that “Blogs offer students self-awareness and self-determination with an environment where they can have a chance to learn from each other and this kind of information sharing is actually the basis of a constructivist approach for language learning.”

Students upload their blog posts by doing their own research and working on it by themselves or together with their friends, and in the class blog and afterwards they comment on each other’s posts and in this way an educational conversation occurs in which they give feedback to one another. All these activities refer to student-centeredness, because students take responsibility for their own learning and they are actively engaged in the process (Darabi, 2006).

In blogging activities, students are given the opportunities to use the language by making use of the internet to prepare their posts and comment on each other’s posts as a communicative activity, and in this way, they will have more freedom to learn from their peers and by themselves. Thus, the teacher adopts a role of facilitator, which leads to learner-centeredness. In learner-centered environments, some of the key factors are students’ reflecting on both their learning materials and learning processes, and personalizing their own learning.

2.10 Interaction

Today, what we call social interaction is mainly through our PCs and smart phones. It is better to call this as virtual interaction. When it comes to education, interactivity is right in the middle of core points to make the process of learning engaging. So, blogs can be said to be very practical. When students are engaged in blogging activities as their learning tasks, they answer their peers’ questions, comment on each other’s posts and share their ideas, and they are co-authors of their blog, which keeps them in a continuous interaction. Lohnes (2006) gave a definition of blogging as a type of interaction which is a dynamic process enhancing communication among students. In this interactional environment provided by the class blog, students form a learning community. Darabi (2006) pointed out that the major features of these learning communities consist of engagement of students, awareness of their shared responsibilities, active learning and integration of the curriculum. It is obvious that

implementing class blogs makes all these important factors easier and more practical from the viewpoint of language learning. Considering them as one of the social networking applications, blogs are certainly an effective tool when implemented in the educational field, from the viewpoint of interaction among students or between students and the teacher, because they can study in their blogs in collaboration, and they can give responses to their peers' posts in the forms of texts, images, videos or audios, all of which are for interactional purposes.

Putting emphasis on interaction, Zawilinski (2009) suggested blogs as beneficial tools for students to improve their communication skills and work in collaboration. Hsu and Wang (2010) reported that when using blogs, students may develop a sense of community in which they develop social interaction and their communication skills by getting in touch with a real audience.

2.11 Peer Learning

Blogs provide students with the opportunity of interacting with their peers and learning from each other. Peer learning is also favoured by the constructivist approach which also emphasizes the importance of student-centeredness, and educators today accept that it is the right way to follow in learning and teaching processes. In conventional classes, students also interact with each other but in a very limited manner. A student has a chance to communicate only with their desk mates or the ones sitting near to them, or only the ones who are their close friends. The assignments are done only for one eye; that is, the teacher's eye. He/she is the only agent who gives the feedback. This is a heavy load though, both for the teacher and the students. As we examine the research done on this subject, we can see that obtaining feedback from peers is highly motivating and has a positive effect on learning. Most of the research results show us that students benefit a lot by looking at other students' posts and obtaining feedback from them. Yang & Chang (2012) reported that students' academic success improved following the activities in which they commented on each other's posts by being in an interactive environment in which they learned from one another.

2.12 No Limitations of Place-Time-Resources

The classroom environment is a limited one from the aspects of place, time, resources and several learning opportunities compared to the environment of a blog, which is a platform where the students can do a lot of activities at any time and anywhere as long as there is an internet connection. Students have the chance of experiencing communicative exchanges both inside and outside the classroom. This also makes a contribution to creating a sense of community in which they feel more comfortable when learning something. Blogging activities provide maximum versatility and a broad scope for interactivity (Williams & Jacobs, 2004). In a sense, students are not just within the borders of the classroom when they are learning with the help of blogging activities, because they enter their blog posts or comment on their peers' posts whenever or wherever they want. Sidek and Yunus (2011) noted that students also feel freer to send their posts, when they are not face to face with their friends or teachers which gives them a sense of being in their comfort zone. Blogs and internet technologies enable students to access almost endless resources of information in their hands, at home, at school, literally any time and anywhere. Tekinarslan (2008) said that students are affected positively when they search for information for their blogging tasks.

2.13 Active Learners

Tapscott & Williams (2007) stated that the new generation learners are not satisfied with being passive consumers, but that they want to be controllers, decision makers and designers of their learning process. We can assume that today learners would like to be active learners in their education life since they are active in their daily life by the help of the technological devices they use. They have the internet and they have power. Thanks to the internet and its applications such as blogs, they look at what they want and they learn what they want, and so they have the active control of their own life.

Sharing blog posts as a language learning activity makes the process more informal and students become more active since they can all together see each other's posts and make comments and obtain immediate feedback from one

another in a communicational atmosphere in which they are more active than they are in the classical sit-and-listen atmosphere. In this way, they are engaged in a process which is favored by the majority of educators nowadays. Hsu and Wang (2010) pointed out that if blogs are used as tools to teach language, students have the chance of publishing their studies by the help of which they easily search for the information, and reflect on and create a communicative atmosphere among themselves, which are all achieved by the active participation of students into their learning process when they are involved in blogging activities.

2.14 Vocabulary Learning

Language is communication, and rich vocabulary knowledge is crucial for a successful communication. Learner blogs create extra reading opportunities and extend lexical competence. Hulstijn, (2001), Laufer, (2003) and Nation (2001) stated that if learners do have a limited chance of exposure to L2, vocabulary learning activities should be contextualized. It can be said that a class blog can make a suitable context for students to engage in vocabulary learning activities. Using mobile devices to learn L2 vocabulary is beneficial (Sato, Matsunuma & Suzuki, 2013). Noytim (2010) suggested that blog implementations may positively contribute to improving reading and writing, and accordingly, vocabulary skills, since blogs enable students to access a lot of reading materials related to their topics, posted by the other students, which will also contribute to improving their contextual vocabulary. Rahmany, Sadeghi and Faramarzi (2013) reported blogs to be effective tools for vocabulary knowledge development, and they added that blogs may also be useful for students to construct grammatically correct sentences by the help of the feedback they obtain from their peers.

2.15 Multiple Skill Development Simultaneously

Armstrong & Retterer (2008), stated that using blogs in English lessons can help students in developing their writing skills. Students communicate with their friends through posting their texts. Since blogging activities enable them to reach an authentic audience, and since they write for this certain audience, they

become more motivated to improve their writing skills. Hyland & Hyland (2006), stated that writing is a social and cultural activity when considering writing for the audience. Smith (2009) constructed a research study on using blogs as a learning tool and one of the highlighted issues stated in the study was that the students' skills have improved from the viewpoint of language construction by receiving and processing information.

Blogging activities enable students to improve their four basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening thanks to their multi-media features, and also their communicative, interactive, critical thinking and socio-cultural skills. Ward (2004) says that "While students are writing something, they should read it as well or they should read their friends' comments or reflections so that they can improve reading and writing skills in this real life like platform." Oravec (2002) reported that implementing blogging activities in classrooms may enhance students' critical and analytical thinking skills.

Multiple skill development may be achieved by the help of blogging activities implemented for the purpose of learning a language and here, class blog implementations may be especially beneficial, since while students are performing their blogging tasks, they search for information to shape their blog posts and they ask for their peers' opinions before they publish their work, and they are in a communication throughout the whole process because the platform on which they are to publish their individual works is a joint one. They do a lot of reading, writing, listening and speaking activities, because their blog posts may be in any form and they may perform them in any way: individually, as peer work, group work or in collaboration as a whole class.

2.16 ICT Technologies

Ulbrich, Jahnke & Maternsson (2011) described our modern age students as "members of the net generation" and stated that they learn differently, so that the values of the traditional methods to access information do not address their understanding, because they use a network in which they work in collaboration, managing several tasks at the same time to access information. They are engaged in information and communication technologies (ICT) in every aspect of their lives.

Students of the 21st century know that language learning is more than filling-the-blanks exercises or passive watching. Language teaching and learning environments have started to be shaped by the development of ICT and the widespread use of the internet recently. Teachers should integrate information and ICT into their lessons, because the century we have been living in is characterized by this term. Everything we do in our daily lives is related to those technologies, and education is no exception. One of the best ways of integrating ICT into our lessons could be implementing a class blog as a learning tool. Öz (2014) says “ICT tools motivate students to learn a language,” because they are connected to the whole world and they are exposed to foreign languages constantly. So, the more they are exposed to foreign languages, the more they learn and the more they want to learn.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research is designed as an action research study. The term “action research” was put forward in the 1940s by Kurt Lewin who is accepted as the founder of social psychology, and we still use his basic principles of action research today. Ferrance (2000) stated that action research is a reflective, collaborative process undertaken in school settings to search for solutions to everyday, real problems or ways to improve instruction and increase a student’s success in making a change. In other words, it is a case study, which has a similar explanation to that given above. A case study is a research method in which a researcher performs a detailed study on a particular subject in its natural context to obtain a better understanding of it. The researcher observes what happens by using several methods, such as observations, surveys, interviews and questionnaires. Willis (2008) pointed out that a case study provides researchers with a chance of having a holistic approach when investigating a particular situation by having another chance of observing it in its natural settings.

In an action research and a case study, you can see some research methods focusing on investigative and analytical studies with the intention of both finding solutions to certain problems and learning more about the educational issues to bring about improvement. The reason why you conduct an action research or a case study is that you simply hope to obtain better results for schools, teachers, or programs. One of the distinguishing features of the action research or case study in an education context is that it is typically conducted by the educators working in the field.

Educators generally follow a certain plan when conducting an action research. First, they identify the problem and try to collect the data. In the second phase,

they work out a plan and start to implement it. In the third phase, they evaluate the results, trying to find the best path to follow.

In this research, qualitative data collection instruments and descriptive analysis were used in order to find the answers to the research questions.

3.2 Participants

This study was conducted over an eight-week period of the second semester of the education year 2018-2019. The participants consisted of fifteen male and female non-native English language students. The students were eleventh-grade high school students within the age range of 15-17. Their proficiency levels were intermediate. The students had 4-hours of English lessons per week. The course book the students had was Silver Lining 11 for secondary education. This coursebook was supplied by the Turkish National Ministry of Education. The study was conducted totally in line with the course book. The themes, the language structures and the vocabulary items were adapted to the tasks which the students themselves prepared for their blog posts. In this way, the students did not experience any kind of negative effects while they were continuing their regular curriculum. All the students were informed in detail about the study they were engaged in.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

3.3.1 Writing pre-test

Before starting the study, it was important for the researcher to have an idea of the students' understandings about using social media in order to make better implementations, because the study itself is about implementing one of the social media implementations, that is the class blog. Thus, at the very beginning, just before starting the class implementation activities, the researcher held a quiz in which there was a question about using social media. The quiz question was:

“Write a paragraph about the advantages and disadvantages of social media”.

3.3.2 Pre-study interview

The aim of the pre-study interview was to gather information about the participants in relation to their familiarity with technology and their computer skills. The questions were:

1. Do you use technology? How often?
2. Do you use computers?
3. How good are your computer skills?
4. What is a blog?
5. Have you ever used a blog?

3.3.3 Researcher's field notes

The researcher kept field notes to record her observations and reflections regarding the implementation of class blogs in English language teaching. The aim of keeping the field notes was to find the answers to the following questions:

- -How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?
- -What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for her students' language learning?
- -What worked well? Why?
- -What did not work? Why?
- -What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that she/her students experienced?

3.3.4 Semi-structured interviews

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students on a weekly basis to elicit the students' reflections on the benefits and challenges of using class blogs as a language learning tool. The questions were:

- -Which activity was your favorite? Explain why.
- -What did you find difficult this week?
- -Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

- -Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?
- -Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

3.4 Procedure

Having received a letter of permission from Istanbul Aydın University, the researcher obtained confirmation from the high school administration and from the National Education Ministry Provincial Management of Fatsa, Ordu, where the study was conducted. Before starting the research study, the students were informed that anything done within the timeline of the study would have no effect on their grades.

The study lasted eight weeks. The initial classes of the first week were mostly teacher-led, as the blogging project was introduced and the procedures were explained. Everything about blogs and their functions was explained in detail. Following the technical explanations about blogs, web applications and their impacts on learning and teaching, detailed information about the class blog project was also given to the students. These initial lessons also provided the teacher-researcher with the opportunity to assess the students' individual differences. This was helpful to decide the best implementation policies for the study.

The class blog was set up on a free blogging platform. The students were shown a sample blog using the smart board and they were instructed on how to design their own class blog. The students then learned how to access the class blog and how to add blog posts and comments. They were asked to write their first blog entry. All students wrote their blog posts and commented on their peers' posts on a regular basis. The students were instructed to read at least two or three of their classmates' blog entries and comment on them. They were able to use any kind of format as a blog post. It could be a video they had recorded related to the subject, a picture which they gave a description of, or a written text. The contents of their entries were those of the classroom context. The students were formatively assessed at the end of each week in accordance with the content of their blog entries.

The data of the study were subjected to descriptive analysis. Loeb, Dynarski, McFarland, Morris, Reardon & Reber (2017) define descriptive analysis as a phenomenon answering questions about who, what, where, when, and to what extent. Zikmund (2003) states that when you want to perform a descriptive analysis, you transform raw data into a more understandable form and by interpreting, rearranging, ordering and manipulating it. When a researcher conducts a descriptive analysis, this means that he/she is in the need of summarizing the data collected. Thus, the researcher collected the data on a regular basis gathered from the writing pre-tests, pre-study interviews, researcher field notes and semi-structured interviews, and by interpreting the results, created a comprehensive summary out of them.

3.4.1 The weekly procedure

Data collection procedures lasted for 8 weeks. The pre-study interview was conducted to determine the readiness of the students who were going to take part in the study. This pre-study interview also played an important role as a warm-up session for the study. The questions were: Do you use technology? How often? Do you use computers? How good are your computer skills? What is a blog? Have you ever used a blog?

Each student was given a paper on which these pre-study interview questions were written. They answered the questions. After the interview, a short conversation was held about the questions and how they were feeling about the study which they were about to participate in. This short conversation was important from the respect that it would give the researcher an opinion about the before and after phase of the study. It was a new activity for them in which they would get used to some new processes such as uploading posts, leaving their comments on each other's posts and in a way being autonomous learners in a language class. The questions in the pre-study interview were short and clear so that the students could answer easily.

Before starting an activity, it is important to feel ready for it and every person should feel relaxed and comfortable to express their true feelings and thoughts. It is also important for the researcher to obtain credible feedback. Hence, the

students were allowed to write their answers either in their native language or in English.

Following the evaluation of the pre-study interview, the semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of each week's implementation to have an overall idea of the thoughts of the students about blog usage procedures and to be able to observe the effects of using the class blog as a language teaching tool. The semi-structured interviews were done at the end of each week and this helped the researcher to observe the changes of attitudes, feelings, thoughts and behaviours of the students from their point of view gradually.

3.4.2 Writing pre-test

A considerable number of educators point out that using technology has become an integral part of language education. From this respect, social media applications constitute an important part of the lives of young people. Knowing this fact, the researcher asked a question to reveal what the participant students thought about social media applications by requesting them to write a paragraph about the advantages and disadvantages of social media.

After assessing the students' paragraphs, it could clearly be seen that they were quite aware of the advantages and disadvantages of social media. The fact that they were conscious enough about what would be harmful or what would be beneficial for them was related to their ages. They were eleventh-grade students who were between the ages of 15 to 17.

Most of the students reported that using social media provided them with many advantages, such as accessing information quickly, being able to look for a lot of subjects at the same time, communicating, making friends, learning about different cultures and new places, and having fun. They pointed out that it is also beneficial to use social media from the viewpoint of acquiring information about the economy, health, everyday issues and even finding new jobs. Some students reported that social media can be used for educational purposes and that taking learning English into consideration, it is also beneficial for learning new vocabulary. As a conclusion of the students' positive attitudes towards using social media, they admitted that when appropriately using social media, it

will make our lives easier by helping us to find whatever we want and to get to know about what is going on in the whole world.

The paragraphs the students wrote about using social media revealed that they are also aware of the negative aspects of social media. Nearly all of the students said that if used unconsciously, social media would be harmful in many aspects, such as that continuous use of social media by looking at digital screens would harm both our mental and physical health. Our eyes could be damaged and it could be bad for physical posture by sitting in front of the screen all day long. They reported that it could harm our mental health since it could cause addiction due to living in that fictional world only. Moreover, in this way, those unconscious users would spend so much time on social media that they would even forget their daily responsibilities to continue their lives. The majority of the students said social media is not good for making real friends or continuing face-to-face healthy relationships with the family members. Some students said that especially younger users must be very careful since they could encounter cyber-bullying and ill-intentioned people which would cause a lot of problems. Most of them also admitted that it caused them to lose so much time, preventing them from doing their homework or studying for their lessons. One student said that we must say “stop”, implying we have to have a self control for using the social media in a beneficial way.

3.4.3 Pre- study interview

This interview was done with the fifteen students who took part in the study. Some of the students preferred to answer the questions in Turkish. The researcher translated the Turkish written interview papers into English. The questions were examined by making categorizations to provide a coherent narrative in order to have an overall understanding for each of the answers given to the questions.

Question 1: Do you use technology? How often?

All of the students answered the first part of the question with a “yes” and they all said they were using technology every day. It could be seen clearly that the term technology meant using their mobile phones and the internet for the students. They all had smart phones. Some had the latest versions and some had

the older versions. Each of them had internet access via their telephone operators and wi-fi connection at their homes or the facilities they had been to during the day. After evaluating the fifteen answers to the second part of the question, it could be understood that they were using technology (the internet) for 1 to 5 hours a day. One of the students said: "I cannot use the internet much because I stay in a dormitory."

Although the question asked was about technology usage in general, the students considered it as using mobile phones and the internet. Clearly, they all, more or less had access to the internet every day and they were acquainted with using the internet for their personal needs.

Question 2: Do you use computers?

Twelve of the students said that they used computers. Two students out of twelve said they used computers not very often but just a little. One of them said: "only at school." Three of them said that they used their smart phones as their PCs.

It is understood that all of the students were able to use computers. Since our mobile phones now have most of the functions of computers, students did not need to use PCs, but used their phones, because smartphones have almost the same capabilities as computers have. Even if they mostly used their smartphones as their PCs, they were familiar with the traditional desktop models since they had computers and smartboards as computer screens in their schools and classrooms.

Question 3: How good are your computer skills?

Ten students reported that they had an intermediate level of computer skills. Three of them said they had quite good computer skills with which they could design web pages or graphics. One said, "I am not very good at it. I can only use the internet." Another one said, "I have no skills."

Although a few students thought that they did not have reasonable computer skills, it is obvious that most students thought they were good at using computer programs. While some of them were not sure of their computer skills because they were only using their smart phones as PCs, it was obvious that all of them could manage tasks which they were to do on a daily basis.

Question 4: What is a blog?

Six of the students reported that a blog was an internet blog, web page or something like famous social media applications. It could be understood from their answers that they had information about what a blog was. It was also a positive thing to see four students' answers saying that it was a place where you can have fun and learn at the same time when we consider the meaning of this project, which can be seen clearly in the heading that is "Implementing the class blog as a learning tool in English language teaching." Three students' answers pointing out that a blog enables us to have fun and share something was also in line with the research topic of this study. Only two students reported that they had not heard about blogs before, but it could be said that even if it was slightly, they had a kind of knowledge about blogs.

Question 5: Have you ever used a blog?

Ten students out of fifteen reported that they had never used blogs before. Three students said that they had just looked at some blog pages, and two students said that this was going to be the first time for them to use a blog.

In conclusion, we can infer from the students' remarks that they used technology very often, namely the internet. They all had access to the internet. The hours they spent surfing the net may vary from student to student but each of them spent at least one hour searching the net on a daily basis. When it comes to using computers and being familiar with computer programs or applications, most of them were good at it, because all of them had smart phones and those smart phones have the majority of the features of PCs. All of the students had an idea about what a blog is even though some said they had not heard of it before. Most of the students reported that they had not used a blog before. They meant they had not been a blog writer before. However, some were following some certain blogs.

In the light of such information obtained from the pre-study interviews, no obstacles were seen to implementing the project, since it was understood that the students were capable enough to open a class blog and carry out the necessary tasks to complete the study.

At the end of the pre-study interviews, the researcher requested the students to ask their peers those questions and share their ideas among themselves. In this way, the students had a warming session before starting the blog studies. They started to think about writing on a blog and that sharing something for both themselves and for their classmates would make the English lessons more enjoyable. Moreover, the students had the joint understanding that by sharing posts and reading or watching and commenting on their friends' posts would help them learn English easily.

Each week's task was in line with the topics, vocabulary and language structures of the units in the course book which was designed according to the curriculum of the high schools in Turkey. While preparing their tasks, the students were encouraged to use the structures they had been learning in that specific week of the study. The steps to be taken in the study were followed in accordance with the syllabus.

It took eight weeks to collect the data. At the end of each week, five of the students were chosen randomly to answer the semi-structured interviews. Five different groups of students answered five semi-structured interview questions at the end of each week. The questions were designed for them to reflect on the studies that they did throughout the week. In this way, they were able to see their own weaknesses and the strengths while performing the tasks of the week and the weak and strong points of implementing a class blog as a language teaching and learning tool. The semi-structured interview is instrumental in providing valuable information for those who want to use technology, the internet and the blogs to teach English by showing them the possible ways to make things better. The questions of the semi-structured interview were as follows:

- 1) Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.
- 2) What did you find difficult this week?
- 3) Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?
- 4) Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?
- 5) Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

3.4.4 Procedure: Week 1

The main aim of the first week was to familiarize the students with the concept of the study, which is implementing the class blog as a learning tool in English language teaching. The first week was a kind of warm-up process. To ensure the warming-up, the researcher generated discussions on technology in general, using technological tools, the internet, using social media and blogs. These discussions were held by the researcher to feel certain that the students were ready to be involved in the study, to detect their strengths and weaknesses before the implementation, and to familiarize them with the class blog.

The first week was spent on the introduction to the study. This week was the most teacher-led part of the study in order for the students to understand the main goals. In the first week of the study, the uploading processes were governed in the classroom by using the smart board. The researcher (the class teacher) signed in the class blog and uploaded the first entry of the study.

The instructor gave a guidance lesson to show how to use the blog and made the students comment on the first entry of the class blog. In order to progress harmoniously with the curriculum and the course book, the students first studied the theme “Haiku”, the subject which was covered in the first week of the study in their course books.

For the task of the first week, the students uploaded their own Haiku poems, the traditional Japanese poems which can be written on many themes and which do not need to rhyme. Each week, a certain time was spent on reading students’ blog posts on the smart board of the classroom and on having conversations about them. After sending their entries, students were free to comment on each other’s posts at any time and anywhere.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with 5 of the students to elicit the students’ reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

The semi-structured interview was given to five different students each week and at the end of each week a class discussion on using blogs was held with the fifteen students who were the participants of the study. This end of the week

verbal debates was really fruitful for the researcher, who had to keep field notes after each week's performances. The researcher's field notes questions were:

- 1) How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?
- 2) What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for her students' language learning?
- 3) What worked well? Why?
- 4) What did not work? Why?
- 5) What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that she/her students experienced?

3.4.4.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the first week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.

Student 1: Writing a poem together.

Student 2: The poems.

Student 3: We wrote enjoyable poems as far as we could.

Student 4: Writing poems.

Student 5: Writing poems by having fun.

This question was asked to determine the attitudes of the students towards doing the curriculum exercises by posting on the blog page.

It can be understood from the students' remarks that trying to write enjoyable poems to post on the blog drew their attention. They all said that it was fun. It could be said that they had fun working on a text they were about to post on their class blog. When they were exchanging their ideas in the weekly speaking session which was held at end of each week, they all said it was better to write something on social media and post it rather than just writing in their notebooks. They added that they felt motivated to perform the task, because they knew everybody would see it.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: It was difficult to log in because of internet connection problems.

Student 2: There was nothing that I found difficult.

Student 3: There was nothing difficult.

Student 4: There was nothing difficult.

Student:5 Nothing was difficult.

This was the first week of the study, yet the students had no difficulty in following the process. Only one student said it was difficult because of the internet connection problems, but this was a temporary issue. Because it was an introduction week the teacher introduced the steps of the study by displaying presentation slides which explained what a blog is and how to open a blog account. From this perspective, the classes were more teacher-led as compared to the following weeks. They sat at their desks and tried to understand the aim of the study and the tasks they were supposed to do.

The first blogging activity they did was performed in a classical lesson format. They first wrote their poems in their notebooks and then they uploaded them on the class blog. After they had put their Haiku poem on the blog, they had to read each other's posts and make a comment. Therefore, they said there was nothing difficult that week.

Question 3: Did you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: I tried again. I asked for help from my friends.

Student 2: I understood that I must improve my English.

Student 3: I had no difficulty so I have no idea.

Student 4: I understood that I have a limited imaginative power.

Student 5: I would ask my teacher and my friends for help.

The students reported that there was nothing that they could address as a difficulty. They agreed that there could always be some internet connection problems but these would not restrain them from blogging activities. Some students thought that they were incapable of expressing themselves when they tried to create an authentic piece of work using their English. They addressed this as a difficulty. What they suggested as an idea was to improve their English.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: No. I worked with my friend.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No.

As can easily be understood from the answers of the students, there was no problem in the process of blogging. They were involved in similar social media processes every day in their after-school life so they had a great success in the blogging process.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as a part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: We had fun. But we did not learn anything, because I did not want to learn anything. If I wanted to learn, I would do it. But I don't want to learn.

Student 2: Yes, I had fun, because I communicated with my friends and I both had fun and improved my English at the same time.

Student 3: Yes, we had fun because there were enjoyable activities and subjects.

Student 4: Yes. We had enjoyable and amusing tasks.

Student 5: Yes. We had the chance of practising English continuously and improving ourselves.

All of the students said blogging activities were fun. They reported that they learned English by doing enjoyable tasks. Nearly all of them admitted that they had the chance to improve their English.

3.4.4.2 The researcher's field notes for week 1:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

The researcher observed that all of the participant students were quite enthusiastic to start the class blog activities. All tried to express their thoughts about the class blog after the researcher gave the necessary explanations. It can certainly be said that fifteen students out of fifteen had positive feelings about sharing their posts on the blog. This broadcasting idea made them excited

because they live their life in this publishing world. They spend a lot of time in the social media world and they share all kinds of posts. The researcher could feel the connection between the study and the students' daily life activities by taking their remarks and attitudes into consideration. This connection created a positive attitude towards learning English via blogging. They admitted that they needed to do more research on the topic because they knew their study was not just in their notebooks, hidden between the front and the back covers.

- What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for the students' language learning?

They were more active when doing the tasks. When they were doing the same activity using their textbooks and writing in their notebooks, they used to become bored and were not active students, whereas doing the same curriculum tasks by posting them on the class blog made them more active students. They asked more questions and did more researches. They were more motivated to communicate in English when they worked together.

-What worked well? Why?

It was observed by the researcher that the students' motivation levels towards learning English increased. This was because they found themselves in the world of their new era. At the end of the lesson, some of the students said they felt happy to use social media in the classroom and this implementation made them feel more interested in learning English.

-What didn't work well? Why?

Some shy students did not want to be active immediately. They needed some encouragement. Even supported by the researcher and by their peers, they still acted without self-esteem.

- What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher / the students experienced?

The researcher thought that more encouragement could be given to the students who felt shy. The researcher also had the idea that the examples of the activities could be presented prior to the students' presentations. A conversation session could be held about the task and the topic of the week before they started to

prepare their blogging activities in order to give them some ideas about the different alternatives for presenting their work. In this way, they could be shown possible paths to follow and they could create their own path by taking advantage of the presented examples. Having examples in front of them would motivate shy students more to take their first steps.

3.4.5 Procedure: Week 2

The main aim of the second week was to see if the students were likely to improve their self- awareness for language learning by trying to create their own works to post on the class blog.

The topic of the posts for two weeks was “facts about Turkey”, which is in line with the curriculum. This theme, the seventh unit in their course book, was studied in the class hours of weeks 2 and 3. The students were free to share any kind of posts which could be on the landmarks, the monuments, the popular tourist destinations, describing cities and historic sites, and asking for or giving more detailed information.

The students were recommended to use the passive voice and the comparative or superlative structures which were covered in the seventh unit in the second and third week of the study.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students’ reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.5.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the second week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favorite? Explain why.

Student 1: My favourite activity was to search for interesting information about famous places to post on the blog, because I like learning about different places by surfing on the net.

Student 2: To see new visuals about the topic.

Student 3: I liked to see the historical places and my favourite places while searching on the net.

Student 4: It was fun to prepare blog posts about touristic places. We felt as if we were there.

Student 5: I liked to study on the favourite places in Turkey, because our country is really nice.

The topic of the second week was suitable for preparing visuals to introduce the unit. So, the students liked to study on this topic while searching for information on the net. They all felt comfortable while preparing their posts using the internet, because what they did was quite similar to their daily activities on the net.

What they most liked was doing research on the topic and not just dependent on the passages given in their textbooks.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: Nothing.

Student 2: I had some difficulties in writing English sentences.

Student 3: I had difficulties when writing about the topic.

Student 4: I had difficulties when I was writing sentences for the visual.

Student 5: I had difficulties while translating Turkish sentences into English.

One student out of five said he/she had no difficulty while studying the topic. The other four students said they had difficulties with writing sentences in English. They felt that their English level was insufficient for writing correct sentences to post on the blog. The students added that they had to be much more careful about the grammatical correctness of their sentences because they were to be published on the net.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: No.

Student 2: I must memorize more vocabulary and try to construct more sentences as far as I can.

Student 3: I must improve my English to write correct English sentences.

Student 4: I must do more exercises to learn English.

Student 5: Yes, I have: To practice more to improve my English.

The students realized some deficiencies when they were to construct their own sentences. This made them think about ways to improve their English and they wanted to practice more to improve their English. Trying to be much more careful about their sentences might have been hard for some students but they were observed to be motivated to improve as well.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: No.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: No, I didn't.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No.

They became more familiar with the process of the class blog in the second week of the study, so they did not have any problems.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: Yes, it is instructive. It enables young people to learn by being social.

Student 2: Yes, I did. We learn new fresh things.

Student 3: Yes, I did. I learn English in an enjoyable way.

Student 4: It is enjoyable and instructive. I learn English in an enjoyable manner.

Student 5: Yes, it is enjoyable and instructive. Writing a poem or writing an English paragraph helps us learn and use English.

All of the students agreed that blogging activities were both enjoyable and instructive. They reported that they learned and had fun because they encountered new information while they were active in searching for something to post on the blog, which they found fresh and exciting.

3.4.5.2 The researcher's field notes for week 2:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

The students were eager to study the subject “facts about Turkey”. After the students had read the instructions about the unit in their course book, they put forward a lot of ideas about how to convert the course book activities into blog posts. They all wanted to make contributions to their joint class blog.

- What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for the students' language learning?

The students searched the net to find information, and read texts and web pages that they could use when creating their posts. They were able to focus on searching for the necessary information. The researcher observed that the students detected new structures and tried to figure out the meanings and usages of them. Meanwhile, they were actively working on several skill levels at the same time. They did activities of reading, writing, listening and speaking while working for their class blog. While doing their preparations, some preferred to work in groups and some preferred pair work which enabled them to have authentic conversations.

-What worked well? Why?

None of the students were disinterested. They were automatically engaged in pair and group work to exchange ideas. They all took their tasks seriously and tried to learn correct structures to create a good post. In a way, they acted freely when completing their tasks and this meant that they had started to take responsibility for their own learning.

-What did not work well? Why?

Some students reported that when they did the activities which they would post on the internet, they wanted to use more sophisticated sentences because those posts would be within the reach of others. Thus, they felt that their vocabulary knowledge was insufficient. So, some students felt a bit discouraged.

- What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher / the students experienced?

The blogging procedures went well. There were no problems searching for the information and downloading it to the blog, and all of the students were eagerly involved in the activities. They reported that they learned English by considering blogging as a learning tool. The only problem the students put forward was their vocabulary knowledge. They said that if they had known more English vocabulary, they would have created better texts and communicated better. The researcher felt the need to put more effort into teaching vocabulary. However, the students would already have put more effort into learning vocabulary when engaging in blogging activities. They had the chance of reading several different authentic reading materials and thanks to this act, they encountered a lot of vocabulary and started to learn it. They were not limited to seeing only their studies, but rather, they could see all of their peers' studies on the blog, which also contributed to their vocabulary knowledge.

3.4.6 Procedure: Week 3

The main aim of the third week was to determine developments in the students' English learning motivations and their early impressions of class blogs.

This was a continuation of the seventh unit in the course book. The topic of this week was "proverbs" such as: Don't count your chickens before they hatch; If you can't beat them, join them; You can't teach an old dog new tricks; The early bird catches the worm, The grass is always greener on the other side of the hill.

The task of the week was to discuss proverbs in Turkish, with the same meanings as the ones above or to find some different proverbs in English and match them with the ones in the Turkish language. The students were free to choose the style of their posts and comments.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students' reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.6.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the third week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favorite? Explain why?

Student 1: It was not difficult to find the meanings of the proverbs.

Student 2: I liked the activity. Everybody tried to find a proverb.

Student 3: I had fun trying to translate the English proverbs into Turkish because there were ridiculous meanings.

Student 4: I liked the activity in which I had the opportunity to compare the two languages and their different points of view.

Student 5: I learned new proverbs and we discussed them in the classroom, which was nice.

All of the students liked the activity. Each of them found two proverbs and asked their classmates to guess the Turkish equivalents of the English ones. They communicated with each other and discussed the meanings of the proverbs all together. They also had interesting conversations about cultural differences by making comparisons of some English and Turkish traditions.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: The proverbs in the two languages did not use the same items to give the same meaning, so I found it hard to compare them.

Student 2: I had some difficulty in finding proverbs.

Student 3: I found it hard to find the Turkish meanings of English proverbs, because you cannot translate them as they are.

Student 4: Since there were different meanings, I sometimes did not understand the meanings of the proverbs.

Student 5: It was difficult to translate the words.

The students reported that it was difficult to find the Turkish and English proverbs to match with each other. By the help of the activity the students were able to see the cultural differences between the two nations. They also discussed cultural differences between the two languages. This activity was mainly about comparing the two languages of Turkish and English. Translations were needed to make suitable comparisons. The students conducted beneficial conversations among themselves about the translations, which helped them understand the different points of views between the two languages.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: I should search for more proverbs in English and try to understand them.

Student 2: We should have found the proverbs all together.

Student 3: I dont think the proverbs can be translated into other languages because I understood that proverbs reflect their own unique traditions.

Student 4: I will look for more proverbs more often and try to understand them.

Student 5: I should carry a dictionary with me.

While preparing their proverb posts, the students realized certain cultural differences between the two languages, they discussed this subject among themselves, and they all looked at each other's posts and asked their peers who posted them, for their meanings. By studying in collaboration, they figured out most of their problems but sometimes they needed advanced support to find the right meaning. So, they asked their teacher for help.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: No. It was easy and practical.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No. Our teacher helped us a lot.

The students found the processes of blogging easy in the third week of the study. The process became easier and more enjoyable for the students that week.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: Yes. Translations and comparisons between the two languages were very useful. I learned new vocabulary.

Student 2: Yes. I have learned a lot of things such as English proverbs.

Student 3: Yes. I have learned new vocabulary and studied pronunciation.

Student 4: Yes. I have learned new meanings of new proverbs.

Student 5: I have learned new proverbs.

The students worked on finding new proverbs in English and they compared the ones they found with their Turkish equivalents. They did translation studies and had discussions with their peers, which truly helped them enhance their vocabulary knowledge. They also figured out new structures by examining the sentences that they translated.

3.4.6.2 The researcher's field notes for the week 3:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

They found it very enjoyable to find English proverbs and ask their friends to guess their meanings through their class blog. Thanks to this activity, they tried to compare the two cultures. All of the students were actively working on their tasks. One of the most important facts of taking their studies seriously was the awareness of posting them on the blog. The idea of publishing their work made them engaged in the process without losing their motivation.

- What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for the students' language learning?

The students were all interested in the activity of finding proverbs and afterwards discussing them via blog posts. They benefited from this activity to a considerable extent, because they did their research about the proverbs via the internet and chose a few of them from among a long list of others. In this way, the students learned a lot of vocabulary without putting in extra effort. Moreover, they had useful conversations about their posts. The comments they made for their peers' posts were actually feedback that they produced for each other. The atmosphere of this weeks' procedure was highly student-centered, which occurred naturally by the help of the class blog implementation.

-What worked well? Why?

In the third week of the study, the students became more comfortable about posting their studies on the class blog. They were allowed to use their mobile phones to search for their topic on the net. Thus, they felt free and concentrated on their own tasks and organized their findings by using their personal PCs in

the class. It could be seen that integrating technological devices into teaching-learning accelerates the processes. Acceleration is now one of the key words in teaching and learning environments due to the continuously increasing speed of nearly everything in every field of life.

This week, it became more visible that they had started to act more autonomously and did not wait to be spoon fed by the teacher. It could be observed that the more they were motivated, the more wanted to search for information and learn more.

-What did not work well? Why?

This activity progressed well in all aspects, because they did not create original materials by themselves but they examined the written sentences and compared them with their mother tongue and discussed their meanings via blog posts and classroom conversations. So, it was rather easy to complete the process this week. However, again one or two students who lacked self-esteem reported that it was hard for them to search for something in English because they did not understand most of the words.

- What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher / the students experienced?

There were no considerable problems to solve in this week's activities. The students benefited from the activities by using all the skills together. The problem with the students who had low self-esteem could be handled by helping them with ways to improve and by showing them ways of learning how to learn before deciding that they were not good at something. The researcher tried to remain more by those students' sides until they reached the necessary understanding level.

3.4.7 Procedure: Week 4

The main aim of the fourth week was to see if the students learned the theme, related vocabulary and structures better when using the class blog by being autonomous at a certain level.

From this week on, for two weeks, the topic was "sports". This week, the students began to study unit 8, which focuses on the reported speech structures.

The students were informed by the teacher that these two weeks' posts might be about reporting news, doing interviews or talking about sports. In this way, the students would be able to identify the lexis and jargon about extreme sports, exchange opinions about outdoor/extreme sports, and ask some questions to do an interview with a sportsperson.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students' reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.7.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the fourth week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.

Student 1: Learning about dangerous sports and studying different branches of sports was exciting.

Student 2: It was enjoyable to read and talk about the posts of my friends.

Student 3: I learned different things, because everybody posted different things.

Student 4: The topic was interesting. We shared our ideas.

Student 5: I learned different things about sports thanks to the activities.

The students did their researches individually and then they shared their ideas among themselves before and after they put their posts on the blog. They also had the chance to be active in the four skill areas in the sense that they searched for the topic by reading a lot of alternatives, wrote their posts, spoke with their peers to decide who was going to do what, and listened to their classmates' ideas.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: Nothing.

Student 2: I had no difficulties.

Student 3: I did not find anything difficult.

Student 4: No difficulty.

Student 5: I did not find anything difficult.

As can be understood from the students' remarks, they easily did the activities of the fourth week. They got used to the idea of searching for information, reading and writing about it, and having conversations among themselves by looking at each other's posts.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: No.

Student 2: I had no difficulties.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No.

The students reported that they had no difficulties at all. They all worked harmoniously and benefited from the activity at all levels. The sense of belonging to a learning community could clearly be seen in this week's activities.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: I only had a minor problem when I was trying to upload a photo, because you cannot connect every kind of sites due to the school web connection restrictions.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: Yes, some connection errors but those were not so important.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No.

Most of the students tried to upload their posts using the class smart boards. Since the internet connection is restricted at schools, they had some connection problems and that caused some loss of time. However, they helped each other and put forward other options to solve the problems. Peer learning and group work understanding was getting stronger this week.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: Yes, I certainly did. It is more enjoyable writing a blog rather than writing in my notebook.

Student 2: Yes. I learned how to write a blog.

Student 3: Yes, I did. I plan to create an English blog for myself.

Student 4: Yes, I did. I learned new information, new vocabulary and new structures when I looked at the blog posts.

Student 5: Yes. I learned a lot of things from the blog posts.

They all agreed that they enjoyed blogging activities and that these helped them learn English. Each week, a certain time was spent on reading the students' blog posts one by one on the smart board of the classroom and on having conversations about them, which was an activity they really liked.

3.4.7.2 The researcher's field notes for week 4:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

The students reported that they liked to study English by doing blogging activities because it was much more fun comparing to just using the text book in the lessons. Some students were neutral about the topic of the week because they were not keen on sports, yet they were active enough when sharing their ideas and communicating. They pointed out that they really liked it when all the blog posts were read one by one in front of the classroom using the smart board and looking at the visuals, and at the same time listening to the audio posts uploaded by their friends and then having a conversation about each of them. In this way, they all had the chance to express themselves, which was a rather more limited chance for each of them in traditional classes. Moreover, they had the opportunity to see more authentic resources prepared by their peers and in this way, they could see different points of view.

-What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for her students' language learning?

They were more autonomous this week. They gained the understanding of searching for information themselves. They did successful group and pair work, communicating in English about the task of the week. Talking about every students' posts created a new and different classroom dynamic, because it was

not practical to share everybody's work by looking at each other's notebooks or letting each student present their personal studies about which others had no idea, one by one using the smartboard. In this system, however, the class blog functions as a joint class notebook, and everybody sees everything simultaneously and everybody has an idea about what is written and then shares those ideas with each other to achieve better results. All these factors contributed to peer learning and feedback they obtained from each other.

-What worked well? Why?

Having the idea of putting something they are responsible for on the internet made them interested in the activities throughout the class hours. Before starting their personal tasks, they all asked one another about what they were going to do and they decided on theirs accordingly. The students embraced the blog as their joint responsibility and tried to put in their joint efforts. It was observed clearly that class blog activities have a positive effect on enhancing language skills. The students also pointed out that obtaining feedback both from their peers and the teacher was beneficial to improve their English knowledge levels. Having continuous conversations on their blog posts helped them develop their critical thinking skills.

-What did not work? Why?

Some students said that they felt insecure, since they were worried about making mistakes due to their lack of suitable English vocabulary and structure knowledge. They remarked that posting something for the access of everybody is a serious act, and that was the reason why they wanted to be perfect. They thought that their English level was not good enough to share something in English on the blog and they felt discouraged. However, from this week on those students who were feeling insecure started to take some steps towards improvement, as they felt they were in a cooperation with their classmates and that they would benefit from this context where everybody was together.

-What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher/the students experienced?

The researcher could encourage the students who felt discouraged more and help them prepare their tasks at the starting levels. Those students could be

involved in group and pair work studies so that they could learn from their peers at the same time. These options were made use of and some level of improvement became visible.

3.4.8 Procedure: Week 5

The main aim of the fifth week was to determine if the students learned the theme, related vocabulary and structures better when using the class blog by being autonomous in learning English at a certain level and to observe the benefits gained with regard to the skills.

This week, the students continued to work on the topic of “sports”. While giving the regular lesson in class hours, the teacher encouraged the students to talk about the sports both in the classroom and in the class-blog sharing videos, pictures and texts which they found interesting. While carrying out their activities they tried to use the words, phrases or idioms that they had been studying in the week.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students’ reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.8.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the fifth week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.

Student 1: Recording a video was really fun. We studied and learned a lot of things to say in the video. It was a great chance to speak English.

Student 2: I can say that my English has improved thanks to the blogging activities

Student 3: I had fun while we were recording a video for our blog.

Student 4: Recording the video was really fun.

Student 5: We both have fun and learn when we record a video.

For this weeks’ activity, they recorded a video collaboratively on sports to post on the class blog. The students worked in coordination for their video. They shared their texts and practiced pronunciation of the words before recording the video. They all benefited a lot from this activity.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: Nothing.

Student 2: I had some pronunciation issues.

Student 3: Nothing.

Student 4: I had difficulty when I tried to say correct sentences.

Student 5: No difficulties.

Generally speaking, the students did not have any difficulties performing a video recording task. Some students reported that they found it hard to pronounce words perfectly. They studied hard to sound phonetically correct.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: No.

Student 2: We could have recorded a better video.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: I should study pronunciation. We could have recorded a sports branch shown as practical examples.

Student 5: We might have recorded a video in which we practice a branch of sports.

As they generally remarked that there were no particular difficulties, they did not write about eliminating difficulties. Some students thought that they could have recorded a better video. However, their collaborative work to create the video taught them a lot, and they learned from each other a lot.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: The internet was slow.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: There was a problem with the internet. It was not easy to put the video on the blog.

Student 4: The internet connection.

Student 5: Yes, sometimes I could not connect to the internet.

The general problem was internet connection problems. Students did not have any difficulty about the blogging process.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: Yes, I learned new things. We have become more socialized among our peers.

Student 2: It gives me a chance to improve my English and learn new things.

Student 3: Yes, I learned new information.

Student 4: Yes, I did.

Student 5: Yes, I certainly did, because we did a lot of things to share.

The students agreed that the blogging helped them learn in an enjoyable way. This is why the class blog has created a different learning environment which has a positive effect on the students from many aspects.

3.4.8.2 The researcher's field notes for week 5:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

This was the second week for the same topic. They were in a mood in which they were used to studying English through the class blog. They felt comfortable about it. All of them were interested in doing something for the blog. For the activity task, they got together and prepared the video as a group work. They noted that if they were required to shoot a video as a part of their assignment before the blogging activities, it would not be the same. It was probably like a duty, but now they did it because they wanted everybody to see it. It can be concluded that the publishing idea made the biggest difference.

-What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for her students' language learning?

Before they recorded their video, the students performed good group work all together. They studied carefully to say grammatically correct sentences and they put extra effort into pronouncing words correctly. They were quite successful in peer learning. It was observed that they gave feedback to each other throughout their group work. Moreover, the most striking scene was that it seemed like

their own world in which they were happy to learn something, because in their life after school, they shoot videos and share them for everybody to see. That is one of their most motivating points. When they started to do the activities which they do in their social life, this attracted them most, so in this way, they felt they were completely engaged in the process because they wanted to.

-What worked well? Why?

The students worked together for this week's activity and they had a nice communication atmosphere. They had fun creating a video to talk about the sport of archery. They did beneficial research and learned about the topic, new vocabulary and related structures by themselves, because it could be seen that they were familiar with the digital world and they liked learning and sharing in this world. Since they were motivated by those factors, it could be said that a permanent and true learning started to occur. It could clearly be observed that when given the opportunity, students were willing to take the responsibility for their own learning.

-What did not work? Why?

When they wanted to create a video, some students were not sure about the pronunciation of some words and needed the researcher's help and encouragement to do it. Some did not want to be visible on a blog. However, this situation did not create a big problem because in the end, thanks to the practices they did, those students successfully performed their tasks. Regarding those previously shy students, it was observed that they could handle their problems in a much better way in this week.

-What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher/the students experienced?

More pronunciation exercises could be done especially with the students who lacked self-confidence about this. They could be encouraged to listen and try to sing English songs more in order to practice pronunciation. Those students could also be guided to perform speaking tasks more often.

3.4.9 Procedure: Week 6

The main aim of the sixth week was to determine if the students learned the theme, related vocabulary and structures better when using the class blog by being autonomous at a certain level and to observe the benefits gained with regard to the skills.

The theme of the following two weeks was “my friends” which was covered in unit 9 in the course book. Within this topic, students were to describe events, places and people using the related vocabulary which they had been studying throughout the unit. Students might write a text about their friends, share pictures showing nice moments with their friends, or record a video with their friends emphasizing friendship etc. This topic was enjoyable for them to share creative posts.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students’ reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.9.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the sixth week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.

Student 1: This activity was a social one and I liked it.

Student 2: It made me happy to talk about friendship. Speaking English and communication was good.

Student 3: We had a nice class hour looking at our posts.

Student 4: It was nice to learn the thoughts of others.

Student 5: To talk about friendship was nice.

The students wrote their thoughts on the blog and then they discussed each post in the classroom. There was a fruitful interaction among the students when doing their tasks. The blog posts which they created substituted for authentic materials.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: Everything was easy.

Student 2: It was easy and enjoyable.

Student 3: Nothing.

Student 4: I did not have any difficulty.

Student 5: I found nothing hard and everything enjoyable, easy and instructive.

The students all remarked that they found the activities enjoyable and they added that they had been learning English doing the blogging activities.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: No ideas.

Student 2: We did this activity in the school garden. This was nice. Why do we have to sit in the classroom? This is a difficulty so let's eliminate it.

Student 3: Sitting in the class. Listening all the time is a problem. The blogging activities gave us some freedom.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: Nothing.

Some students said that blogging is a kind of freedom. They accepted it as a problem to be stuck in the classroom with the books. It can be said that they felt a kind of freedom implementing the class blog and that they wanted this type of learning to continue after finishing the implementation of this project.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: No.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No problems at all.

Student 5: No, I did not.

In the sixth week of the study, as it can be seen from their answers above, the students became more familiar with the blogging activities, and it can be said that they totally understood the logic behind it. The benefit they obtained was at the highest level in this week.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: I learned new vocabulary and got better at making correct English sentences.

Student 2: It was certainly instructive. I felt that I learned. New words, new concepts, conversation.

Student 3: Yes, I learned so many things.

Student 4: Yes. It enables us to learn in a sociable way.

Student 5: Yes, definitely, because we learned together and from one another, which was fun.

In this week we started to see more positive attitudes towards learning English through blogging. They started to see the positive aspects of having a class blog which are communication, having fun and learning at the same time and peer learning.

3.4.9.2 The researcher's field notes for week 6:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

All of them enjoyed the activities. They liked the talking part more. They all shared their ideas by looking at each other's posts. They prepared their posts to share but this did not end the activity. It was observed that they liked to continue talking about their posts afterwards, which was a great contribution to their conversational skills and which would certainly help to improve their English in a communicational, practical way, not just in a theoretical manner. This week they were much more in charge of their own learning. As soon as they had learned the topic of the week they got together and started to discuss what could they do to prepare a worthy task to publish on their class blog. As it can be noticed when reviewing the literature about using blogs for educational purposes, it can be said that blogs are good for creating a learning community, and this week the students were in a mood in which they were in such a community, where they shared ideas and learned from each other thanks to their class blog.

-What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for her students' language learning?

The students remarked that it was better to write something on the blog, because everybody could see it and share their ideas and help each other if they saw something wrong. They had the opportunity to teach one another and learn from each other. They said that they were not able to look at everybody's notebooks and compare their homework to learn more or to improve their studies, but that it was possible with the blogging activities. Moreover, they started to use the class blog as their portfolios, which they needed to refer to in order to reflect on their studies and the feedback they got from their peers. It was observed that their sentences became more sophisticated, which means that their vocabulary knowledge improved by the help of the tasks for which they had done several studies beforehand.

-What worked well? Why?

In the sixth week of the study, the students started to benefit from the blogging at the utmost level, especially from the viewpoint of learning from each other by giving and receiving feedback, communication in the target language, group and peer work, and also searching for information on their own, which means they had started to be more autonomous. When the classical classroom practices were applied, the students were waiting for the teacher to give directions and they were only doing the exercises in their textbooks and did not want to do anything else to contribute to the topic. However, a short time after the blogging activities began, they wanted to do original things to post. They were quite inexperienced and actually, some were shy to use the target language at the beginning, but they started to take small steps of their own like sharing a different reading passages related to that week's topic and then discussing it with their peers, which they were hardly eager to do. It can definitely be said that the class blog activities helped the students cross the line towards learning the target language efficiently.

-What did not work? Why?

Literally nothing went wrong. However, since the sixth and seventh weeks were the exam weeks, they were not eager to share long posts. Yet even when they

shared a single word on the blog, this led them to talk about it in the classroom. There were still some shy students who were hesitant to make mistakes while they were speaking or preparing their tasks. But it was obvious that they were getting better.

-What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher/the students experienced?

The students could have been led to share more sophisticated and longer posts. They should have been encouraged to comment on each other's posts more. Instead, they preferred to talk about the activities in the class, which is not a negative attitude concerning language learning strategies.

3.4.10 Procedure: Week 7

The main aim of the seventh week was to determine if the students learned the theme, related vocabulary and structures better when using the class blog by being autonomous at a certain level and to observe the benefits gained with regard to the skills.

In the seventh week, the students shared posts about our "other" friends: animals. This was again a wide-ranging area in which students were able to feel free to share any kind of posts and comments including photos, internet observations, videos and so on.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students' reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.10.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the seventh week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favourite? Explain why?

Student 1: I like animals. I like talking about animals. I read and watch videos about animals on the internet.

Student 2: We laughed a lot by looking at our posts.

Student 3: The topic was enjoyable.

Student 4: It is really enjoyable to study on something and share it with everybody.

Student 5: Looking at our posts.

Generally speaking, the students enjoyed the topic and they felt comfortable to post about and comment on a subject they liked. By the end of the class blog implementation the activities they performed became more enjoyable, since they were more confident about what they were going to do.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: I wanted to post a lot of things but had no time.

Student 2: Because it was the exam week, we had no time to do something else.

Student 3: Nothing.

Student 4: Sometimes I think too much because I don't want to make mistakes

Student 5: I could not post a lot of things because of exams.

The students complained about the shortage of time because it was the exam week. They needed to spend more time on preparing their class blog tasks, but due to the exams they could not do it and their motivation levels went down a little bit.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: English lessons should be more frequent. Two lessons are not enough.

Student 2: No exams. No memorizing. Blogging is good.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: I feel that I must study English more.

Student 5: I must study more.

They said they should have studied English more. They started to feel that they should improve their English to create sophisticated posts. They were motivated to search for the target language more and learn more. They started to realize that they had to do more self-studies to improve their foreign language knowledge.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: No

Student 2: I am a professional now.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No.

Nobody in the class encountered any problems, because they had got used to the process of blogging. All of the students had the idea of running a class blog all together.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

Student 1: Yes. I always look for something to share something.

Student 2: Yes, of course.

Student 3: Yes. This is fun.

Student 4: Yes. I learn. Before blogging I wasn't studying in this way.

Student 5: Yes, I learned words and I speak.

All of the students remarked that it was an enjoyable part of their learning processes. They were all motivated to study and learn more. They now accepted the class blog as a beneficial language learning tool which they admitted that they would like to continue implementing even after the project was over.

3.4.10.2 The researcher's field notes for week 7:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

In this week, all of the students agreed that it was a nice method to share their assignments, read each other's posts and have the chance to compare their thoughts via blogging activities. The students admitted that having a class blog encouraged them to learn more. It was observed that they were much more engaged in their learning process than they had been in their previous lesson before the study. Again, this week's attraction was the fact that they were going to publish their work which was definitely one of the leading factors that drove the students to be more active, more motivated and more eager to learn to minimize their mistakes.

-What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for the students' language learning?

When we reached the seventh week, it could be observed that the students all became researchers. They put more effort into completing their tasks because they knew they were going to be on the net forever. So, they tried to learn more and be more fluent in English. They made use of their personal efforts to support each other. Since they had one joint target that was their class blog, which they should make a contribution to, they were in positive relationships, which was good for effective learning.

-What worked well? Why?

Doing research and then posting worked really well, because after they posted their findings, the students looked at each other's assignments and had conversations about each of them. In this way, they not only worked on their own tasks but also on the other students' work one by one. The context created by the help of the class blog was highly interactive and promoted the sense of belonging to a community for the students. These factors created the desired outcomes, such as motivation to learn, learning both by themselves and from each other, and being autonomous learners.

-What did not work? Why?

Some students felt that their English level was not adequate to prepare tasks to post on the blog. However, they tried hard to improve their levels, and it could be seen that they improved their English. The self-esteem problems began to decrease this week.

-What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher/the students experienced?

The researcher could spend more time with the students who had self-esteem problems about expressing themselves in English. It was observed that those students were more willing to express themselves without the fear of making mistakes. This relief was mainly because of the class blog community atmosphere in which they understood that they could learn from each other in an enjoyable and safe way without being criticized by others.

3.4.11 Procedure: Week 8

The main aim of the eighth week was to determine if the students learned the theme, related vocabulary and structures better when using the class blog by being autonomous at a certain level and to observe the benefits gained with regard to the skills. Considering this was the last week of the study, the researcher conducted an interview to determine their final ideas about implementing a class blog as a language learning tool.

This was the final week of the study. In this week, the students started to study the last unit of the course book which covers the theme “values and norms”. Students were able to make comments about moral values and norms in different cultures. They studied the grammar structures of either...or/ neither...nor, both...and/ not only...but also. The students were reminded to use these structures they had been studying in the classroom as much as possible in their posts. Unit 10 was about expressing opinions, exchanging ideas and making comments, which was also very beneficial for the last week of the study. In this last week of the performances the students were encouraged to comment on the pros and cons of the study with each other in their blog posts.

At the end of the week, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the students to elicit the students’ reflections on the benefits and challenges of using the class blog as a language learning tool.

3.4.11.1 The evaluation of the semi-structured interview for the eighth week:

Question 1: Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.

Student 1: The best part was to comment on the blog posts by both writing on the blog and speaking about them with my friends in the classroom.

Student 2: What I liked most was commenting on each other’s posts. It was to communicate.

Student 3: I loved searching for different cultures.

Student 4: Learning about cultures was nice. I learned many new things.

Student 5: Learning about new things about the Turkish culture.

Students learned and made comments about moral values and norms by doing researches on different cultures. They also learned the related vocabulary by making inquiries about the topic and asking for their parents' and grand parents' opinions in order to discuss them on the class blog.

Question 2: What did you find difficult this week?

Student 1: It was difficult to write grammatically correct sentences.

Student 2: I cannot write correct sentences.

Student 3: Nothing.

Student 4: Nothing.

Student 5: There were not many things.

Some students were hesitant about the correctness of their sentences when writing and speaking, because as they performed their tasks week by week and did their research to create their blog posts, they felt the need to know more English vocabulary and structures. Most of them did not find any difficulties. It was certain that they improved their English.

Question 3: Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

Student 1: I need to improve my English.

Student 2: I need to practice and revise more.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No.

The students who had some difficulties about their English levels admitted that they should have studied more and improved their levels. In fact, they improved their English by performing blogging tasks to a considerable degree even in this short period of time, but they felt it was not enough. Others reported that they had no difficulties.

Question 4: Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

Student 1: No, I did not.

Student 2: No.

Student 3: No.

Student 4: No, I did not.

Student 5: No, I did not.

The students had no problems while they were dealing with the blogging activities, because they had been studying for creating blog posts for eight weeks and they had all become accustomed to the processes.

Question 5: Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so why? If not, why not?

Student 1: Yes, the blogging activities were beneficial. It was a nice thing to improve our English levels.

Student 2: Absolutely, yes, because we made a lot of sentences and learned new vocabulary.

Student 3: I really love blogging. It works.

Student 4: Yes, I did, because I learned the things I did not know.

Student 5: It was beneficial, because I learned new information and I learned English.

At the end of the study, in the last week of the activities, it could be clearly seen from the remarks of the students that they were all satisfied with implementing the class blog as a learning tool in English language learning. Without exception, the fifteen students indicated that they learned better when they used class blogs to perform their tasks. They were in a rather different atmosphere than in their traditional classes and they encountered new concepts such as; peer learning, feedback and taking responsibility for their learning, and they all benefited positively from all these naturally by learning new things along with the class blog activities.

3.4.11.2 The researcher's field notes for the week 8:

-How have the students reacted to the activities? Why?

All of the students were happy to have a class blog. They said they wanted to go on with those kinds of implementations for the following years because they thought that they learned better in this way. They took pride in the work they

completed as a part of their class blog tasks and they said that they liked the idea of sharing what they did with others and having the advantage of seeing what their peers did.

-What did the researcher like about each activity regarding its benefits for the students' language learning?

It was certain that the students benefited from the class blog implementation. They were active researchers to gather information in order to create authentic posts. All of them took it seriously, so they encountered and tried to learn new vocabulary and structures by themselves and from each other. These observations revealed that after eight weeks of implementation, the students had started to use the class blog as a learning tool, which created better results from the viewpoint of enhancing students' language learning skills compared to the outcomes before the class blog implementation.

-What worked well? Why?

Pair work and group work activities were good enough. It was observed that the students became autonomous learners while trying to prepare their posts. They obtained feedback from each other and they reflected on their own work. They also improved their communications skills to a considerable extent. Before implementing the class blog, some students were just sitting and listening, and they had the chance to say something perhaps three or five times in a semester. But when they were preparing their posts, they were all active and felt the need to say or ask each other something. They talked in their groups, shared ideas with their partners or peers, and made comments on others posts or ideas. It was observed that their motivation levels did not decrease, because the tasks they tried to complete were never monotonous, arising out of the special feature of multiple choices in the technological world, from which students benefited whenever, wherever and however they wished.

-What did not work? Why?

A couple of students who thought that they are not good at English might not have benefited to the same extent as the others. However, they claimed that they realized they did not study enough and would certainly concentrate on studying English much more often. It was clearly observed that those students were not at

the same point where they started to do blogging activities. Previously, they did not want a solution but were content to just sit and wait. However, after the eight-week of period they started to reflect on their studies and tried hard to engage in the process, and they definitely managed a lot.

-What could the researcher do to eliminate the problems that the researcher/the students experienced?

The blogging activities helped all of the students who were involved in the study. However, those students whose levels of English were lower, should have been taught some structures prior to their tasks which they were supposed to prepare for the class blog. At this point, the feedback they obtained from their class mates helped them a lot, because they were in a constant interaction with their peers and with the teacher, which did not allow the shy students to be excluded from the process.

3.5 Conclusion

It was interesting to see that the students simultaneously made use of the four basic skills of teaching and learning a foreign language while they are doing the class blog activities, and at a better level than they did in conventional classroom activities. They read texts, wrote their own texts about that week's topic, and spoke to and asked their peers for advice, and then they listened to their friends' ideas and had conversations about one another's posts and comments. Overall, it can be said that the students benefited from the blogging activities as an English learning tool in multiple ways, and that their progress could clearly be seen when they started to use more complicated sentences in their conversations towards the end of the study. The students stated that they felt a sense of freedom to express themselves when doing their class blog tasks. This was because they were born in a digital world and the idea of transforming some of the activities into a digital platform captured their interest immediately, and their enthusiasm level towards the study did not gradually lessen.

Weblogs are tools to share all types of resources such as videos, texts, photos or images. The freedom of choices which was provided by the blogging activities led the students to make their own choice in favor of class blog activities rather

than reading a given text in their books and writing in their notebooks just to keep the records of their studies for themselves. In conclusion, after the analysis of the semi- structured interviews and the observations done in the classroom by the researcher, it could certainly be said that implementing class blog processes made the students active learners who willingly participated in all parts of their learning process by interacting, communicating, exchanging ideas, accomplishing individual, pair and group work, trying to benefit from several authentic resources, and giving feedback to each other.

Even though the blogging activities seemed to contribute to the writing skills most, it did not actually work in that way. The students made use of the four basic language skills simultaneously. As Hyland & Hyland (2006) stated, writing is a socially and culturally situated activity; people write for social reasons and they feel the need to give and receive feedback, which also leads them to make use of other skills along with writing. This phenomenon is described as the “21st century personal learning environment”, which was pointed out by Barrett & Garrett (2009), Hill, Song & West (2009). Being one of the sub- points of these new environments, blogs can be said to serve as a language learning tool, since they certainly enable students to take control of their learning process in a more social and authentic contexts, engaging in a much wider environment than they have in classical classroom settings. This is because blogging activities give more opportunities for interrelating, interaction with their classmates and teachers, giving and receiving feedback and eventually learning in a more enjoyable and easier way.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overall Evaluation of the Interviews

The students were interviewed throughout the eight weeks by asking five questions as semi-structured interviews to elicit their reflections on the benefits and challenges of using class blog as a language learning tool. The first question was “Which activity was your favourite? Explain why.”

The answers of the students to the first question revealed that they enjoyed the activities they did to post on the class blog. When we look at the answers of the students, we can see that most of the students reported that they had both fun and learned something while searching the net for their topic, because they acknowledged that they felt relaxed while studying the weeks’ topics by using the internet and sharing their findings using a social media application. One of the students answered the question in the third week by saying “I learned new things and we discussed them in the classroom, which was nice”. The idea of sharing and seeing each other’s works and being able to comment on the posts made them excited, as they could see the connection between their daily activities and the class activities. In the sixth week another student said, “It was nice to learn the thoughts of others.” This is because they all have smart phones and they literally live their lives in that virtual world by sharing their ideas, looking at and commenting on others’ ideas. So, when the classes were integrated into this virtuality in some way, they feel more comfortable and admit that they learn easier. In the fifth week, one of the students reported that “I can say that my English has improved thanks to the blogging activities.” In this way, the students had the chance to look at each other’s tasks, comment on them, and see different points of view and more vocabulary, and they admitted that they benefited a lot from these activities, since it enabled them to learn from each other. They also reported that the blogging activities gave them an extra chance to communicate in English, since they were able to see everybody’s sharings and needed to talk about each other’s posts. One student

answered the first question as “The best part was to comment on the blog posts, and both writing on the blog and speaking about them with my friends in the classroom were good.” It could be understood from their answers that the students benefited from the blogging activities by making use of the four language learning skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The second question asked throughout the eight weeks was “What did you find difficult this week?”

The majority of the students answered this question by reporting that nothing was difficult. As it could be understood from the answers to the first question, the blogging processes seemed familiar to the students, and they enjoyed them since they were engaged in similar activities in their daily lives. Yet, some students reported a couple of difficulties. Two students said there were internet connection problems and that they could hardly upload their posts. One student reported that the English class hours were not enough to prepare nice posts and study them in the class. A few students admitted that they had difficulties when they tried to express themselves in English. In the second week, one student stated, “I had difficulties in writing an English sentence.” Another student said in the eighth week, “It was difficult to write grammatically correct sentences.” This kind of remarks revealed that a couple of students had some worries about their English levels. The fact is that they had not been in this type of class before, and English learning and teaching processes, had an effect on their being worried about their English knowledge levels. However, towards the end of the study, fifteen students out of fifteen reported that their knowledge of vocabulary and English sentence structures had grown and they had started to find it easier and easier.

The third question asked throughout the eight weeks was “Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?”

Some of the students answered this question by saying “no” because they had reported in the second question that nothing was difficult. However, some put forward some ideas even if they had said there were not any difficulties at all. A few students said they should improve their English and study vocabulary more. Some students said they should study pronunciation of English words, because the more they had to speak the more they realized that they had difficulties in

pronouncing the words correctly. One student criticized the classical teaching methods by saying “We have to sit in the classroom. This is a difficulty, so let’s eliminate it.” Blogging activities provided them with a degree of freedom to act in their comfort zone in which they posted something, read others, made comments, and became socialized and spent most of their time on a daily basis. In the last weeks of the study, students felt that English class hours should be extended in the curriculum, because they wanted to study more and learn more by implementing the class blog. Thanks to the answers given to the third question, we can understand that the students started to detect their weaknesses and strengths as the study went on. This was because they started to become more autonomous and tried to take responsibility for their own learning. Prior to the implementation studies, the students were more passive information receivers no matter how hard they tried to prepare their own assignments. For them, the teaching and learning method seemed classical, which involved a teacher explaining the topic, the same book to follow every day, and sitting, watching and listening most of the time. It can be said that contemporary students do not like the classical methods anymore. Hence with the blog implementation, they felt personal responsibilities to study more and prepare tasks which should be at least close to being perfect, because they knew everybody would see them and they would be there all the time on the net. Moreover, the blogging was very similar to their daily activities, and so they had ideas about what they could do, and integrating the internet into the lessons both to do research about their tasks all together and to post their tasks captured their interests immediately.

The fourth question asked throughout the eight weeks was “Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?”

The majority of the students remarked that they did not encounter any problems. When we look at the answers given over the weeks it can be seen that some students complained about the speed or connection problems of the internet. From the very beginning of the blogging processes to the end of the study, the students did all the activities easily. The students seemed to develop a sense of group working and helped each other. One student answered, “No, I worked with my friends.” Another one answered, “Our teacher helped us a lot.”

Interpreting these answers, it could be considered as a progress from the perspectives of group work or pair work, peer assessment, obtaining immediate feedback and learning from each other.

The fifth question asked throughout the eight weeks was “Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?”

Nobody gave a negative answer to this question. There were totally forty answers given to this question in the eight weeks, and each answer showed a satisfaction towards the blogging activities as a language learning tool. In the first week of the study one student said, “I had fun, because I communicated with my friends, and both had fun and improved my English.” In the second week another student remarked that “Yes, it is instructive. It enables young people to learn by being social.” Another one said, “I did learn fresh things.” Similarly, positive remarks by the students continued throughout the weeks, such as, “Yes, I certainly did. It is more enjoyable writing a blog than writing in our notebooks.” “Yes, I did. I learned new information, new vocabulary and new structures when I looked at the blog posts.” In the last three weeks, their answers became more specific about their learning process. In the sixth week, one student said, “Yes definitely, because we learned together from one another, which was fun.” Another answer was “I learned new vocabulary and got better at making correct English sentences.” In the last two weeks, some of the answers were “Yes, I learned. Before the blogging I was not studying in this way.” “I really love blogging. It works.” As can be seen from the students’ answers, all of them found the blogging activities beneficial from the viewpoint of learning English. All of them agreed that they learned English better and in an enjoyable manner, and they felt the relaxing freedom to do their own researches about each week’s topic. This could indicate that they started to become autonomous learners while preparing their posts for the class blog. They reported that they enjoyed the study, as they had the chance to learn something from their classmates, which enabled them to obtain immediate feedbacks. In this way, they all became involved in group or pair work, which had importance for their having conversations among themselves.

4.2 Findings

After evaluating the students' answers to the interviews and the researcher's field notes taken during the whole process of implementing the study, the list of benefits which it is possible to gain from using a class blog as a language learning tool can be summarized as follows:

- Implementing class blogs as language learning tools may provide active student involvement in to the process.
- Class blogs written jointly by the students can support group/ peer learning.
- Students can see the comments and opinions of others, from which they will benefit as feedback.
- Students can express themselves freely in their posts.
- Students may find using blogs entertaining, which enables them to keep their motivation levels high.
- Students can communicate and discuss the relevant topics in their blog which can be assumed as an authentic context.
- Students make use of all kinds of resources- texts, audio-recordings, videos, pictures e.t.c.- when performing the blog tasks.
- Class blog implementations may enrich the curriculum by providing extra resources and class activities which will be performed by the students.
- Students can reach a larger audience, not just the teacher.
- Students can develop a sense of community in which they help each other and learn from one another.
- While students are preparing their blog-posts they take control of their own learning, which enables them to be autonomous learners.
- Class blogs may contribute to students' being better readers and writers.
- Implementation of class blogs can be one of the best means of student interaction, which may lead to many beneficial points in language

education, such as peer learning and feedback, group work, communication, and critical thinking.

- A class blog implementation may be one of the best student-centered applications, since it enables students to decide about most of the educational acts by themselves by being active participants throughout the whole process.
- Class blogs may serve as a portfolio keeping tool, because what students do will always be there in a reverse chronological order. In this way, they may see their progress, weaknesses and strengths.
- Thanks to blogging activities of all kinds, it can be possible to improve all basic and sub- language skills.
- Participating in a class blog activity by being able to see everybody's work and commenting on each other's posts may be motivating for students.
- Being exposed to several authentic materials can be beneficial from the viewpoint of lexical competence.
- Knowing that their studies will be published can make students more motivated and serious towards their assignments, which will lead to language awareness in the end.
- A class blog is a social environment and learning in this context has some certain benefits of being exposed to the target language.
- Thanks to the multifunctional feature of a class blog, students can experience new language forms incidentally.
- Students will have the chance to continue class discussions about the topics they are responsible for, outside the classroom, whenever they wish and wherever they are.
- A class blog can create opportunities to produce the target language forms in authentic and meaningful contexts, which is a great motivation for the students.

- A class blog may help the instructor to be able to monitor the students' progress and make effective assessments.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

We are surrounded by a web-based environment in which we are living our lives through technological devices and software. Everything about life is there: people, businesses, social relationships, shopping and also education. Research done in the foreign language teaching field has presented us with a lot of examples showing that using technology in teaching languages has a positive effect on students' learning. It is impossible not to see the advantages of using technology in foreign language education. We have been witnessing innovations in the world of education where teachers encounter new tools of teaching practices nowadays. One of those new tools which can be implemented for educational purposes is weblogs or blogs. Blogs are welcomed warmly in education because they are user-friendly and they address the learning needs of contemporary students, such as active, autonomous and cooperative learning, critical thinking, improving problem solving-skills, multi-media support, interaction and communication, and expressing themselves. In the light of the latest developments, language teachers attempt to investigate new technologies to integrate them into their lessons in order to achieve better results to suit the needs of the new generation of technologically-raised students. Considering the data gathered from several kinds of blog implementations as language learning and teaching tools, we can definitely witness that considerable positive attitudes occurred towards blog use in language classes.

Among many different types of blogs, class blog implementations seem more suitable to provide benefits both as an in-class and out-of-class application. Class blogs also appear to be more convenient for integration into the curriculum, because this kind of blogs may serve as a joint digital notebook to which both the teacher and all the participants contribute simultaneously and in which they give immediate feedback to one another, and are in integration and communication using written, spoken, audio and visual methods. Students keep

the records of their studies in their class blogs and everybody has access to them, which serve as portfolios, thanks to which the students may have the chance of reflecting on their studies.

5.2 Overview of the Study

The literature review revealed several studies carried out on the use of blogs as a language learning and teaching tool. However, unlike the research previously done on using blogs as an educational tool, the present study tries to shed light on another aspect of using blogs. This study examines the implementation of a class blog as a language learning tool, by carrying out the activities, which are in students' text books prepared according to the curriculum, into the class blog as a blog task. The students followed the topics and language activities through their class blog by publishing their written, spoken and visual posts. Their tasks were concerned not just with reading the textbook and performing activities which are mostly done by writing in their notebooks and keeping those just for themselves afterwards. Since the class blog enabled them to vary the tasks they were going to prepare, they performed the activities in many forms by writing essays, sending visuals or sharing videos they recorded about the week's topic. It can be said that the class blog had the function of a joint notebook of which everybody had one exact copy, by the help of which all of the students had an access to every record in it and obtained the necessary feedback by showing their progresses, weaknesses and strengths, providing an atmosphere of sharing ideas and enabling peer learning. Moreover, it can be assumed that the class blog may create an alternative authentic atmosphere for learners to improve their main and sub-language learning skills.

The participants were fifteen eleventh-grade students studying at Fatsa Anatolian High School, Ordu, Turkey. Data gathering instruments were a writing pre-test, pre-study interviews, semi-structured interviews and the researcher's field notes. The researcher implemented content analysis to investigate the effects of using blogs as a language learning tool.

5.3 Conclusions

In regard to the results obtained from the recent studies, using internet-based applications such as blogs can contribute to creating discussions among students, peer learning, autonomy, critical thinking, interacting and communicating, and taking advantage of authentic context and materials. It is obvious that blogging activities had positive effects on enhancing students' English learning skills. Class blog implementations may serve as better tools for language learning classes, because they offer most of the learning strategies to students. The findings of this study revealed that the class blog implementation as a language learning tool provided many positive means to the students from the viewpoint of improving language learning skills and strategies. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the literature by presenting an alternative angle on the use of a class blog as a language learning and teaching tool.

5.3.1 Interaction / communication

Young people nowadays are active users of social media. They also interact and communicate in English while they are performing on social media, because it is now the lingua franca. Since the students were already used to learning English when using social media, they felt comfortable to share something in English while carrying out their tasks in their class blog. Most of the students reported that it was beneficial to follow the curriculum through their class blog, because they had the opportunity to interact with their friends continuously, and in this way, they learned a lot from each other. The students recorded that before implementing the class blog they just wrote their assignments in their notebooks and did not have a chance to see the others' notebooks to obtain and provide feedback and also learn from their peers. However, after implementing the class blog, everything was open to everyone, which enabled them to be in interaction with all of their classmates and help each other see different points of view or their mistakes while communicating at the same time. All of the students reported that blog activities created extra settings for them to communicate more. They often asked each other for their thoughts about their posts before and after publishing them, in and out of the classroom. Although some students were hesitant to share posts and comment on their friends' posts

in the first weeks, in the following weeks they all got used to the idea of the class blog and they reported that they enjoyed doing the English activities through the class blog. As the time progressed thanks to the interactional context of the class blog, the students seemed to build up a community in which they could communicate in English and contribute to each other's language improvement. As could be seen from the data obtained from the interviews, what the students saw as an advantage of the class blog was that it enabled them to express themselves and interact with others. One of the other advantages of the class blog was for the students who felt embarrassed while they were trying to communicate in English. Thus, those students who had self-esteem problems seemed to act in a more relaxed way to communicate using English as the time went by throughout the class blog implementation process.

From the teacher's (the researcher's) point of view, it was observed that the students should be given appropriate tasks and that they should be led to access necessary materials by the teacher to enable student interaction and maximize learning opportunities.

5.3.2 Autonomy / Responsibility

The literature review revealed that class blog activities have a positive effect on helping students become autonomous and independent learners. Lee (2011) stated that blogging enhances autonomous learning by providing self-regulation and control.

As the study progressed, it could be said that the students achieved high levels of active participation and autonomy. The students carried out their own research about the week's topic while preparing their blog posts and they reported that searching the net for their topics helped them learn new expressions and vocabulary, which can be assumed as autonomous learning activity. So, this could indicate that implementing a class blog might help to enhance learner autonomy. Given certain tasks to be completed in a certain time period, the students were able to decide their own learning needs and they successfully chose the ways to follow to achieve better outcomes by assessing their own learning processes. Some students reported that trying to prepare blog posts gave them more freedom to do what they liked while preparing their blog

posts. Since the students knew that they were publishing their written, visual or audio-visual posts for the real audience, they were more careful about their posts and this caused them to take more responsibility for their own learning.

The teacher acted as a facilitator during the implementation of the class blog to give the students more opportunities to take control of their own learning. Little (2000) stated that teachers should be given the opportunity to have their own independence, that is, they should be autonomous in the first place in order to teach their students how to be autonomous.

5.3.3 Motivation

All of the students stated that their motivation levels never decreased throughout the study because they found the blogging activities more enjoyable than conventional class activities. They felt motivated in terms of sharing their ideas and having the chance of expressing themselves through publishing their posts, which, they admitted, kept them alert. The students became bored easily when they had to follow only the text book itself in English lessons. However, following the curriculum through blogging activities provided them with several different opportunities such as preparing their own posts by taking control of their learning, interacting with all of their class mates continuously, and learning from each other, which contributed to their motivation towards learning by also creating a safe place for them to learn. The preparation of their blog posts enabled them to have the right to choose their own investigating strategies to access the information, a process which supported being self-determined, and in this way, all of them became motivated and interested in the activities, because the situations were under their own control. They were not forced to act in controlled situations which might lead to memorizing but not internalizing the knowledge. It is obvious that internalization of knowledge affects learning in a much more positive manner. This is also another factor of motivation in learning.

Using authentic resources to prepare their blog posts motivated the students too. In their traditional classroom process, they had limited resources to follow the topic, which was generally given in a ready-made format, that is, the texts in their books. However, each student prepared their own posts in the format they

liked for their class blog. Thus, they had more than one resource for each topic prepared in several forms by the performing of different activities by the students, and all these resources were open for them to learn each other's opinions, which also provided them with many opportunities such as communication, peer learning, feed back, taking their own responsibilities for their learning, critical thinking and learning how to learn, all of which were great contributions to their being motivated to learn.

5.3.4 Collaborative / Peer learning / Feedback

Dillenbourg (1999) defined collaborative learning as a situation in which more than two people try to learn new things together. Collaboration among students is beneficial in several ways, such as: helping each other improve by obtaining and providing feedback, recognizing their needs, social interaction, respecting each other's ideas and thoughts, and keeping the attention directed towards the activities. Nearly all of the students said that they certainly learned new things from their friends' posts. It was observed that they were constantly involved in a certain collaborative work while searching the net for their weekly tasks. It could be said that the students also were able to develop "a sense of community" which most educators find beneficial for students to learn better, and in which they are eager to support each other. All in all, the class blog activities allowed the students to interact more due to their collaborative atmosphere. Before the class blog implementation, the students seemed to sit at their separate desks, seeing each other's backs and sitting behind one another. However, with the introduction of the class blog there appeared a big communal desk on which each one of the students could see each other's face and study, and thus, they had an urge to communicate, interact, share and learn, because it was just like one single desk on which everything is placed for the access of everybody. So, everyone sits on one part of it and does one part of the work jointly by communicating, providing feedback and teaching each other together with their teacher, who is always ready for them to facilitate the learning process for them.

Therefore, in this kind of collaborative study carried out by the students, it is certain that the workload of the teacher will decrease considerably and he/she will have more time to do researches to contribute to the educational processes.

The students automatically went into collaborative studies. Sometimes they performed in pairs, sometimes in groups, which was always in a collaboration. Perhaps the collaborative atmosphere was created by the idea of having one joint class blog. This idea also led them to another idea of having a sense of community, which is one of the most important factors in language development.

5.3.5 Improvement of multiple skills

Speaking, that is knowing a language, requires mastery of the four basic language skills. The students actively used those four skills before, after and during the time they were preparing their blog posts. As they developed a kind of community in which they studied for their tasks collaboratively, they had the chance to make use of all four basic language skills simultaneously. They searched for the topics, asked questions to each other, and considered each other's ideas in their work, which enabled them to enhance speaking and listening skills. They searched the net and read a lot of documents on their topic and afterwards, they wrote their first drafts, which caused them to make use of reading and writing skills. It could be clearly seen that the students' language skills were enhanced by the help of the integration of the class blog into the regular curriculum. Thanks to their class blog they had extended classroom activities, which they could hardly perform in the classical class hours that were mostly limited to a teacher, a text book, students' personal notebooks and a smart board on which they mostly had access only to ready-made resources. However, together with the class blog implementations, the students had to contribute to the blog by publishing their studies, about which they had to do research by using authentic resources for a real audience.

5.4 Implications of the Study

This study, by taking the results of the writing pre-test, pre-study interviews, semi-structured interviews and the researcher's field notes into consideration, has tried to shed light on the effect of implementing a class blog as an English learning tool. The researcher sought to find out the pros and cons of implementing a class blog from the viewpoint of both teachers and students by

assessing the student interviews and the teacher's (the researcher's) field notes together with the literature reviews.

The results obtained from this study and the literature review suggest that quite a lot of researchers in the field of education support the idea that blogs have great potentials as instructional tools in language teaching and learning. The findings of this study reveal that the students both enjoy the class blog activities and improve their language learning skills better than classes in which they do not use the class blog. It is understood from the results of the data that the class blog motivated the students to learn the target language, and made them eager to read and write more. What is more, the results showed us that the students found the class blog activities both entertaining and educational, and they reported that they were in a more conversational process while preparing their blog tasks. Since students of the new era are "digital natives", as Prensky (2001) named them, using a class blog to follow the curriculum may seem motivating for them in many aspects. Since they know how to use hundreds of digital applications and carry out most of their daily activities by making use of them, transferring language learning activities to a class blog can make students feel familiar with the learning context and eventually, this will help them learn in an easier, quicker and probably in a more efficient way.

The results of the study demonstrated that the students have positive attitudes when using the class blog, as they like expressing themselves freely and in this way, they find the opportunity to communicate and practice in English by interacting with all of their classmates together. If we consider that obtaining feedback enhances the language learning process, the class blog may be beneficial in that students obtain feedback not only from the teacher but also from their classmates. If the class blog can be implemented to follow the curriculum, obtaining feedback from peers thanks to the class blog activities may also contribute to having authentic communications and collaborative learning.

The authentic atmosphere created by the class blog means students encounter real audiences who read and comment on their posts. Knowing this fact, students act more carefully when preparing their posts. This context caused them to write for the audience by taking every step carefully, which led them to

take their learning into consideration and learn in the end both by their own effort and from their peers. At the end of the implementation, the students reported that they understood what was meant by learning to learn with limited help from the class teacher.

Peer learning is considered as an important factor which has a positive effect on the language learning process. Thus, class blogs may enhance peer learning as they provide students with the chance of reading and commenting on each other's posts, which provides them with valuable feedback.

Taking the results into consideration, the class blog implementation can make the lessons fun, since it offers more interaction among students. If a class blog is to be implemented, the interactive and collaborative atmosphere of the lesson may enable students to experience their classmates' points of view and different ideas, which will enrich their language knowledge by obtaining a constant feedback at the same time.

Another implication that may be significant is that the class blog may be beneficial for learners to take responsibility for their own learning, because they are autonomous when preparing their blog posts and publishing them. If students are to use a class blog as a joint platform where they should be active to post their tasks, they should plan, research, develop and publish them by themselves. These kinds of acts are rather different from the ones in which they just keep notebooks to write down their task, only for the teacher to assess it and then forget about it somewhere under their desk. Hence it was impossible to forget anything on the class blog, because everything was there all the time and provided an open access to anybody who wished at any time and anywhere, which was a precious feature to revise, reflect on, remember and see the learning progress. This is like keeping portfolios. So, the class blog could be served as a joint class portfolio from which all of the students benefited.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the benefits of implementing a class blog as a language learning tool. It examined the students' attitudes toward

integrating the class blog a social media application to follow the regular curriculum activities in English lessons.

One limitation was the limited number of the students who participated in the study. A larger number of students may exhibit better results.

Another limitation was that there was only one group of students with whom the implementation of the class blog project was carried out. There would have been comparative results if there had been one extra group of students with whom classical lesson environment activities were carried out just to be observed as a control group.

One more limitation was the limited class hours and the limited time period decided for the process of implementing the case study. The eleventh-grade students had only four hours of English lessons per week, which allowed students a very limited time to prepare and post their blog posts and even to work collaboratively in a conversational atmosphere to discuss their tasks and share their ideas. The study lasted for eight weeks, but carrying it out for a longer period time would give a chance to the students to benefit more and to the researcher to obtain more and consistent data.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

This study aimed to determine the benefits of implementing a class blog as a language learning tool. The total number of the participants was fifteen, which was a rather small sample size. If the number of the participants was higher, it would be possible to make broader generalizations.

Another suggestion is about the duration of the study. A longer period of time for such a research study will be better for stronger claims about the benefits of implementing a class blog. More longitudinal research will be helpful to further investigate how much blogging stimulates students' self-motivation for learning English.

One more suggestion for further research is that the class blog implementations can be applied to several levels of students to decide about the best outcomes by comparing each level. So, in further studies, other levels of students may be included to observe the effects of implementing a class blog as a language

learning tool on them, because lower-or higher-level students other than eleventh graders might react differently to class blog implementations as a language learning tool.

One last suggestion could be about the audience factor. In this study, the students only had their classmates and their teacher as their audience, because the class blog was not opened up to global access. This was a deliberate choice of the researcher so that the control of the process would be easier and would not be outside the curriculum. However, having a chance of interacting with others out of the classroom and with native speakers would motivate students more, and they would be engaged in more authentic interaction, which would possibly lead them to be more independent learners. More research could be done to understand the benefits and challenges of using class blogs as an inter-class and open to a global process.

This was a small-scale action research. So, more teacher collaboration and different class blog implementations simultaneously could give more reliable results about the pros and cons of class blog activities. It would also be advisable to conduct a research study on the features of blogging activities as a language teaching and learning tool, showing how they support the class processes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Writing pre-test – Students’ paragraphs about advantages and disadvantages of social media:

APPENDIX B. Samples of the class blog implementation:

APPENDIX C. Pre-Study Interview:

APPENDIX D. Pre-study interview (answers)

APPENDIX E. Ethics Committee Approval

APPENDIX A Writing pre-test – Students' paragraphs about advantages and disadvantages of social media:

Student 1:

Technology has profits but it has a lot of harms too. These are technology's profits: We have a lot of new information. We look for about so much subject. We talk with our friends. We have information fast. We hide our memory. These are technology's harms. It's harmful for our eyes. It's too much boring time. It makes our ill. It makes dependent.

Student 2:

Social media and internet become important part of our lives. It's different advantages and disadvantages. First, I want to say useful. It provides to receive information quickly. It provides us to get information about the places we can't see and it helps us contact other people how new friendships.

Student 3:

Social media become important take part of our lives. Social media has advantages and disadvantages. First, I want to say useful. It provides to receive information quickly. It provides contact other people and make new friends. There is disadvantages too. Harmful. It's time loss. We lot of use social media, harmful mental health.

Student 4:

Social media's a lot of advantages. For example we can have information fast, we can communicate easily with our family and friends, we have fun and we share photos. This's advantages were that. It's a lot of disadvantages. Like it makes me dependence, it takes our a lot of time, for children. It makes mental skills and physical skills problems. And also it's harmful for our health. Finally we shouldn't use so much times it.

Student 5:

Advantages: People can find information very fast, can make new friends, hide memory, they can meet old friends, for someone social media is a job, they can talk with other people they can learn news with social media they can learn new information.

Disadvantages: Because of social media a lot kid's future and life overtake people could parents make people social make people angry or fear because of social media people be a thief because of looking screen their eyes are hurt and they start wear glasses.

Student 6:

Social media is a lot of advantages for students. In the advantages, They can search a lot things. And they can make a lot of friends. They can talking with friends. Also social media is a lot of disadvantages for student. In the disadvantages, They don't study for lessons and they waste a time. They can be an asocial. We must say "stop".

Student 7:

Chief of all social media is good thing when people use correctly. We can learn malpractice, news and what happening in the world. But social media can be problem when kids use it without parents permissions. When parents tired they give their phone to their kids and they say "My child doesn't live without internet". Actually, social media has many advantages and disadvantages but everything has pros and cons. Just we must be careful.

Student 8:

The advantages of social media we can find someone or something easily. We can have fun by music and videos. It helps us to communicate with our friends away from us. Shortly we can find whatever we want. But the disadvantages of social media it is a time loss. It steals our time. People who we don't know can disgust us. It causes lack of self-confidence in our social life. We spend less time with our family. Shortly these are advantage and disadvantages of social media.

Student 9:

It provides get information / It provides get information faster. It provides faster stop / It provides do homework / It provides learn new vocabulary. It provides foster communication, it provides fun. It provides see different culture. after that it provides watching films. It provides see different country. It provides learn news. It causes waste time. It causes eye problem. It causes don't study lesson. It causes skater. It causes heart problem. It causes headache.

Student 10:

Technology has a lots of advantages and disadvantages. For example we can make researches from Internet. We can reach everyone every time. Also we can find important information. But I think disadvantages of technology is more than advantages. For example technology can destroy friendships. People don't communicate themselves as in old days. People don't use technology trustly.

Student 11:

Technology is good and comfortable. Technology advantages; we can search information on google, we can make new friends in social media. We can watch film, documentaries, and other videos. we can make homework, we can play games or listen to music. But Technology has disadvantages: for example we can spend free time on computer, smart phone, television, tablet, laptop, playstation, smart board and other technology devices. So we can't study lesson. Technology has very bad habits. For example there Friendship is fake and bad. usually Peoples know there Friendship is safety. But it's not safety.

Student 12:

The technology / social media is very advantages and disadvantages.
First of all i writing advantages: Every house is in the modern internet and we are very quick
If you are really important searching is on the net very quickly but we used to books get so much time our lifes. And social media / technology so easier than letter because very quick answers for asks. But sometimes social media is very dangerous for childs. Because, social media: bullys can be very bad things. We have a lot of time social media in a day. And we forget responsabilitys for ex: we hadit time with family, not doing homeworks ...
Maybe one day we can not important for the social media
G We will be an addict
And it was so bad for the future ...

Student 13:

Technology is really important. It has big part of our lifes. It can be good and also bad. We can use technology for health, education, economy and other daily stuffs. We're all spending a lot of time on Social Med. We're following, commenting and more. But in long term it takes our mental and physical health. "Cyber Bully" thing is serious problem for young age people. We should use ore technology in right way.

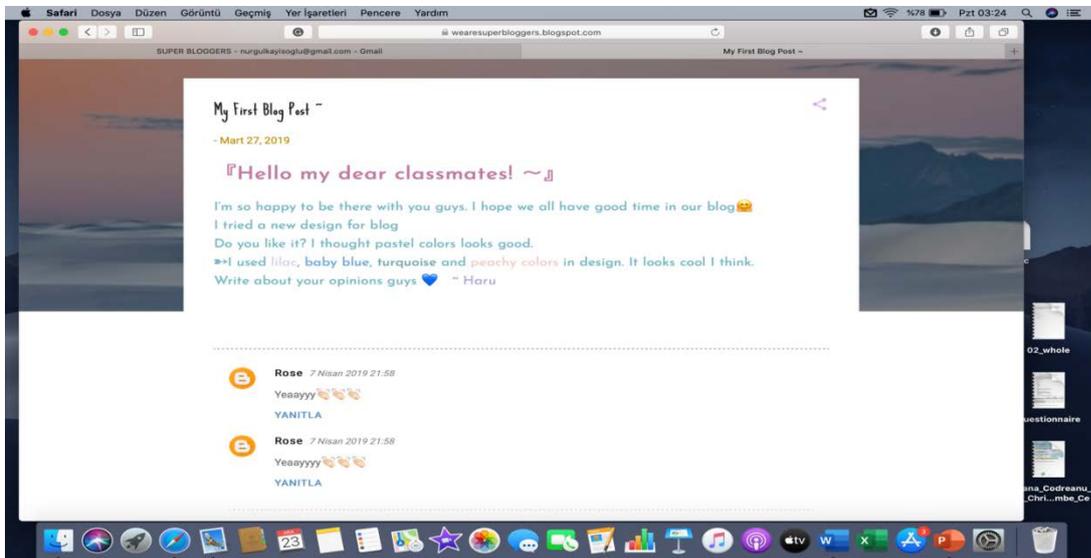
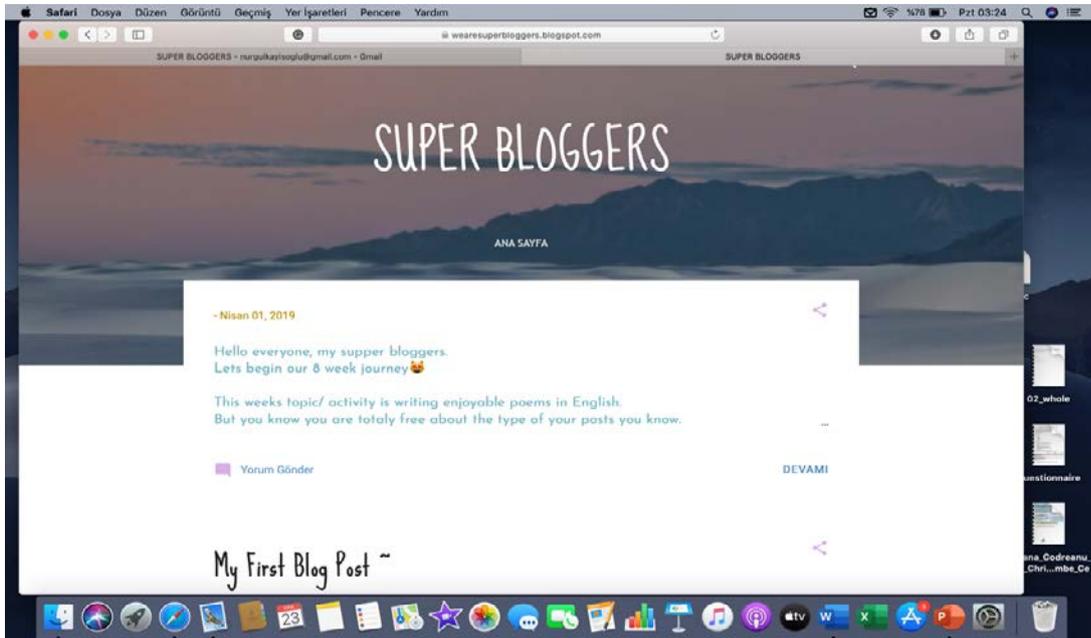
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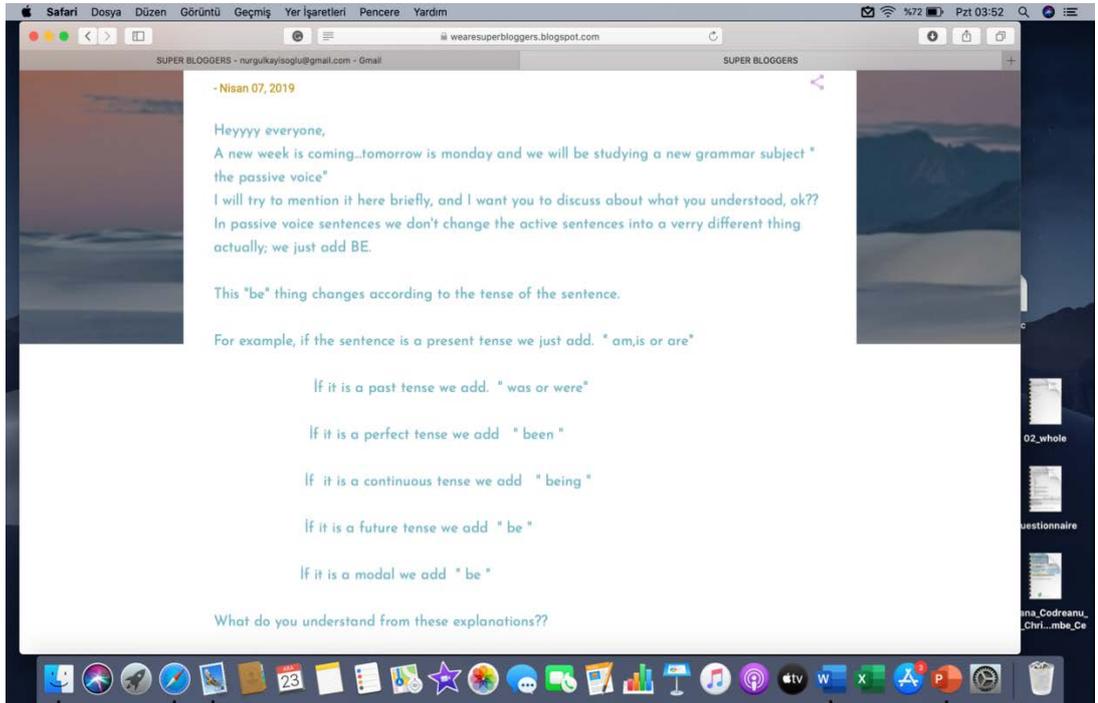
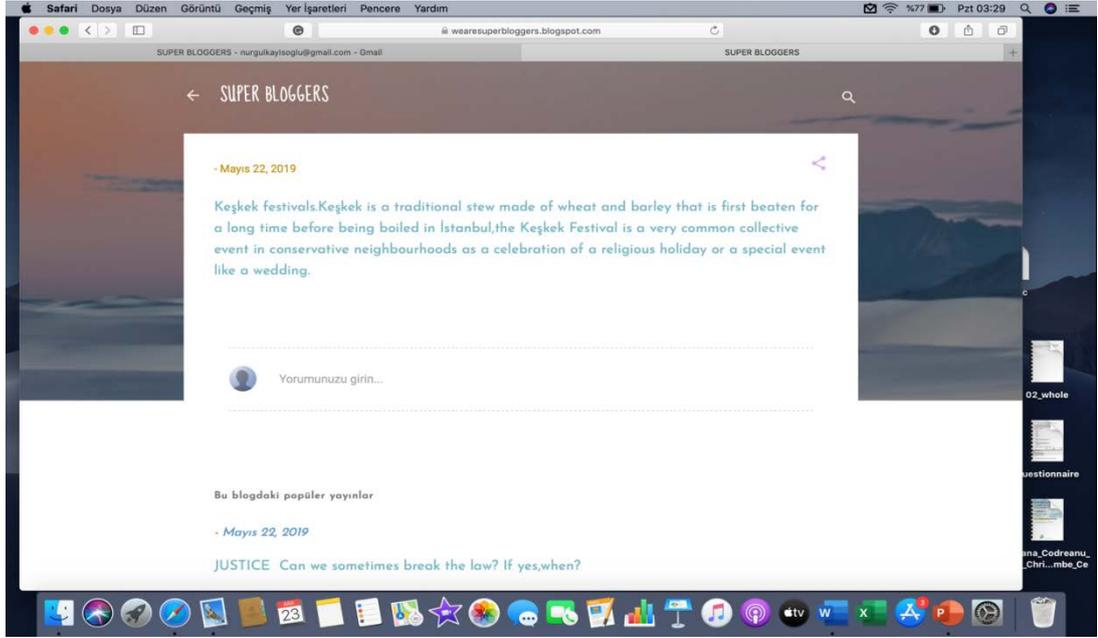
My favorite social media is Twitter. Because it is fun. And I like read. Make our lives easier. It allow us to reach technology easily. Technology facilitates communication. The technology has healty hazards.

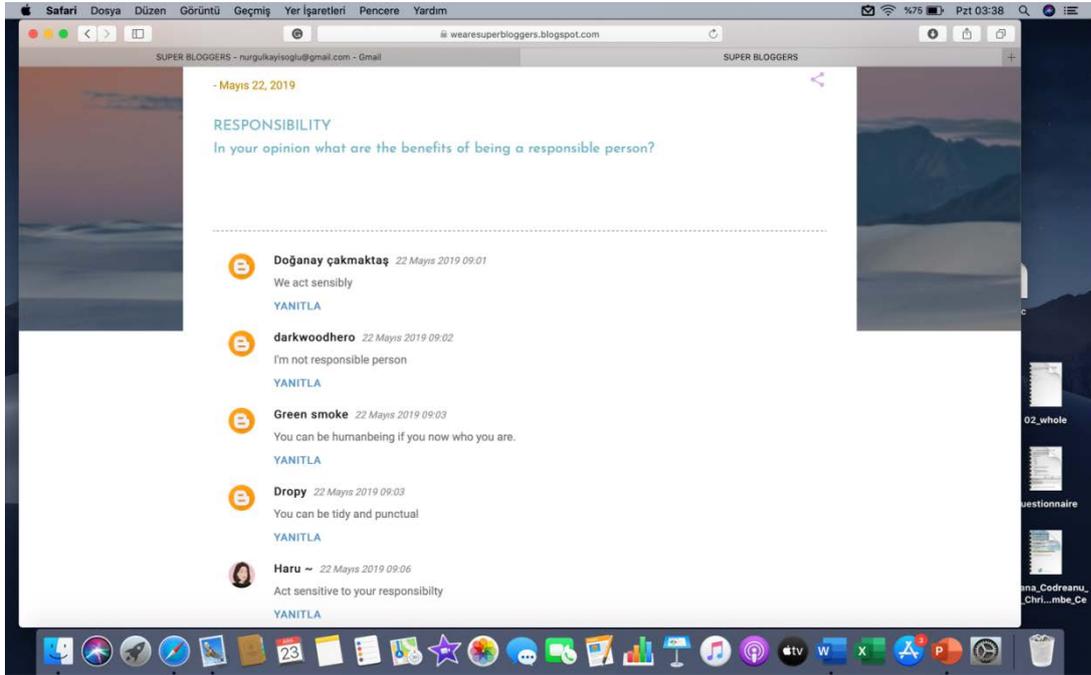
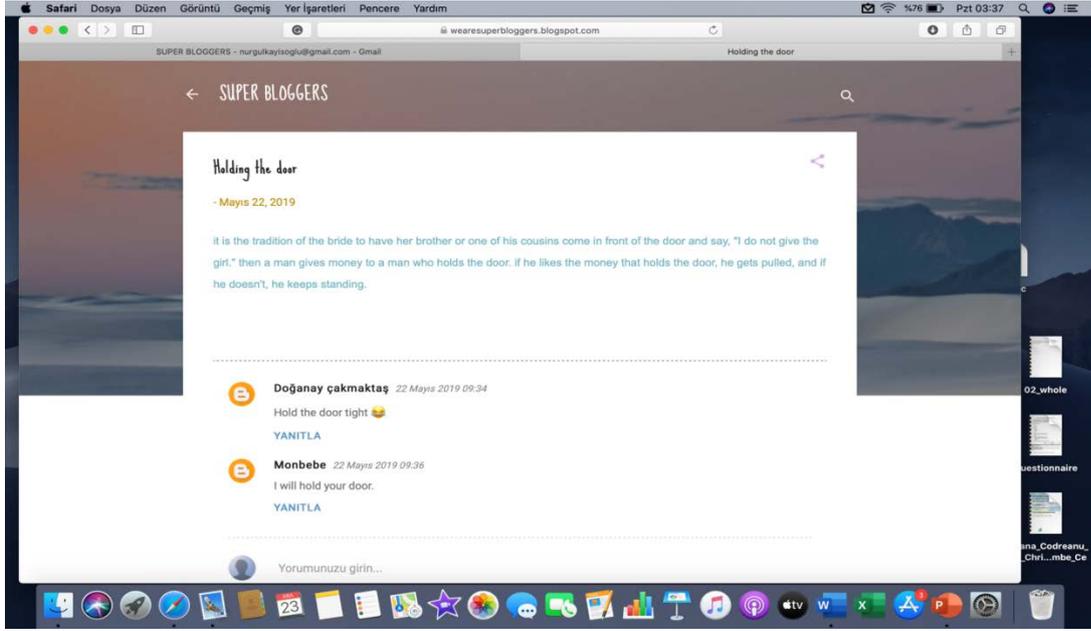
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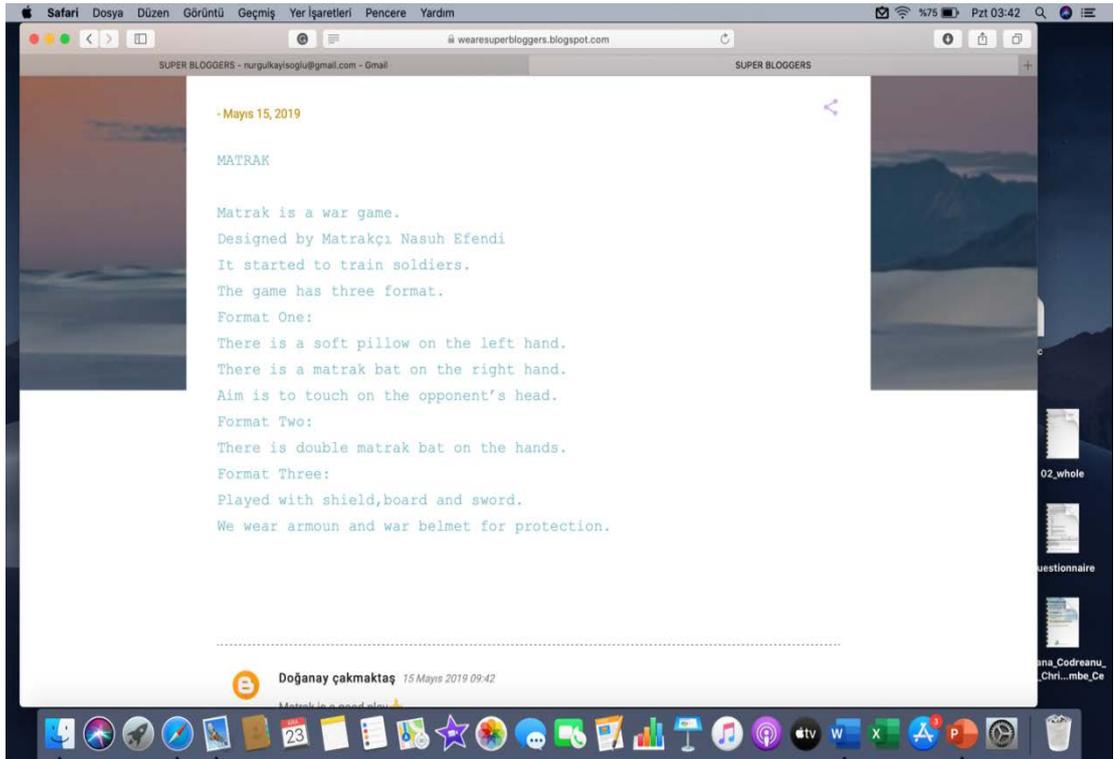
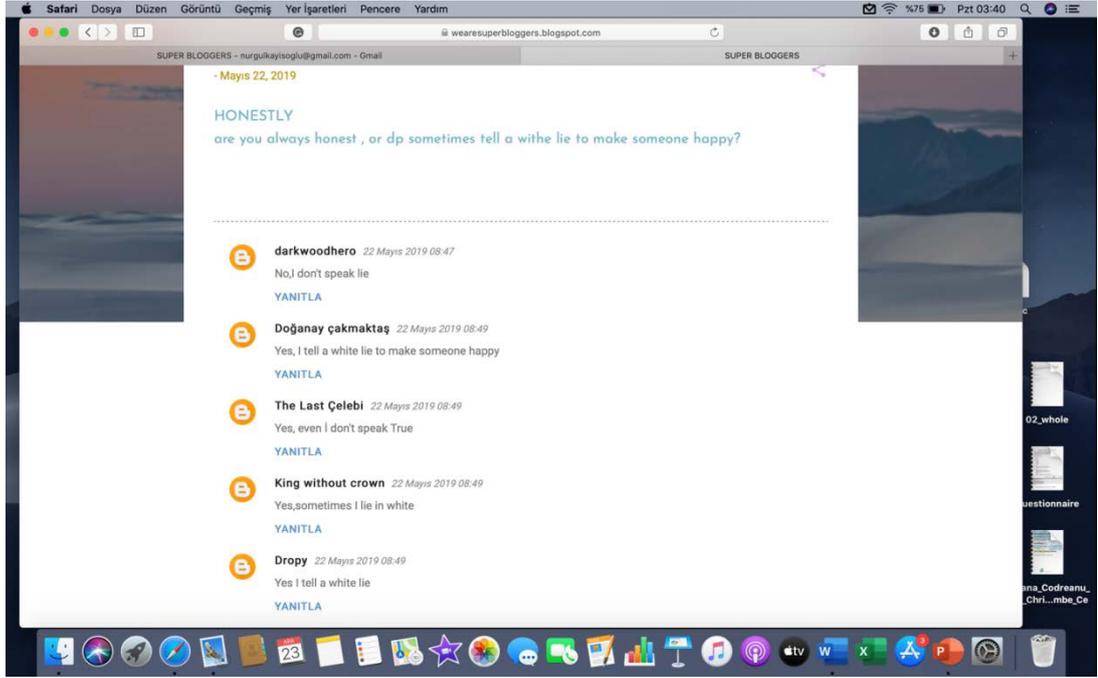
Technology made our life better and quicker. Technology fascilitates our life. Technology fascilitates communication. People can calling our friends and family. People can findg information very fast. Makes lives our life easier. The technology has healty hazards. People can't spend to much time with people's family and friends. Technology also entalier people. Technology very advantages but it is very dangerous. You can playg computer game. You can searching new information. You can taking foto with social media. You can chatting your friends. You must carry bad people.

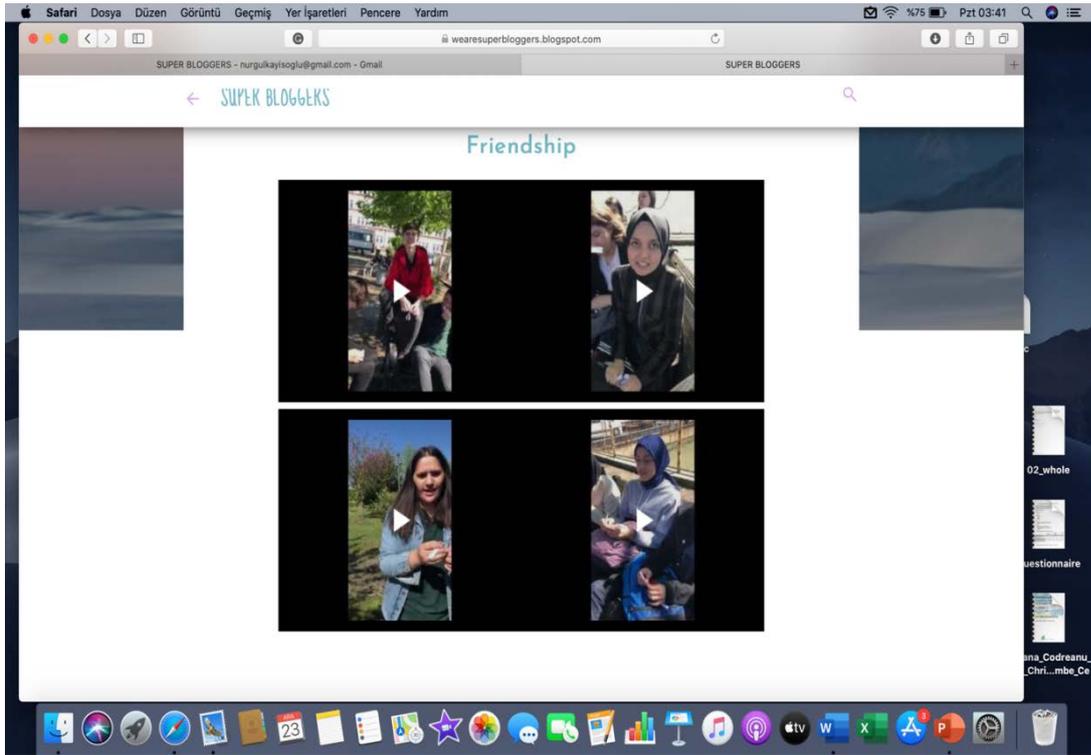
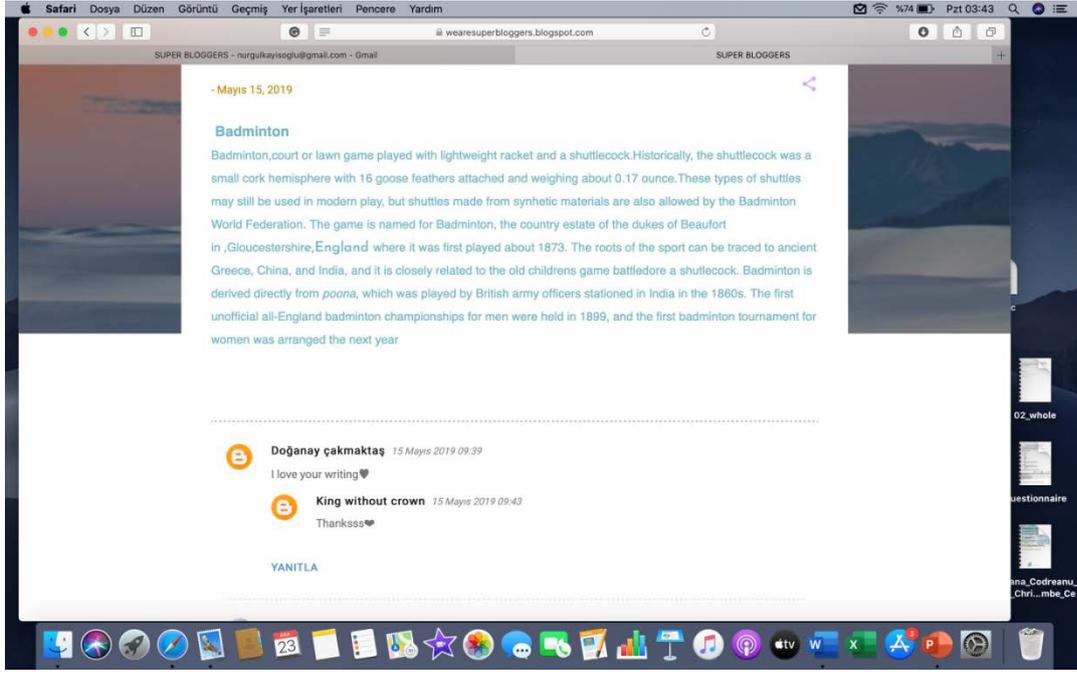
APPENDIX B Samples of the class blog implementation:

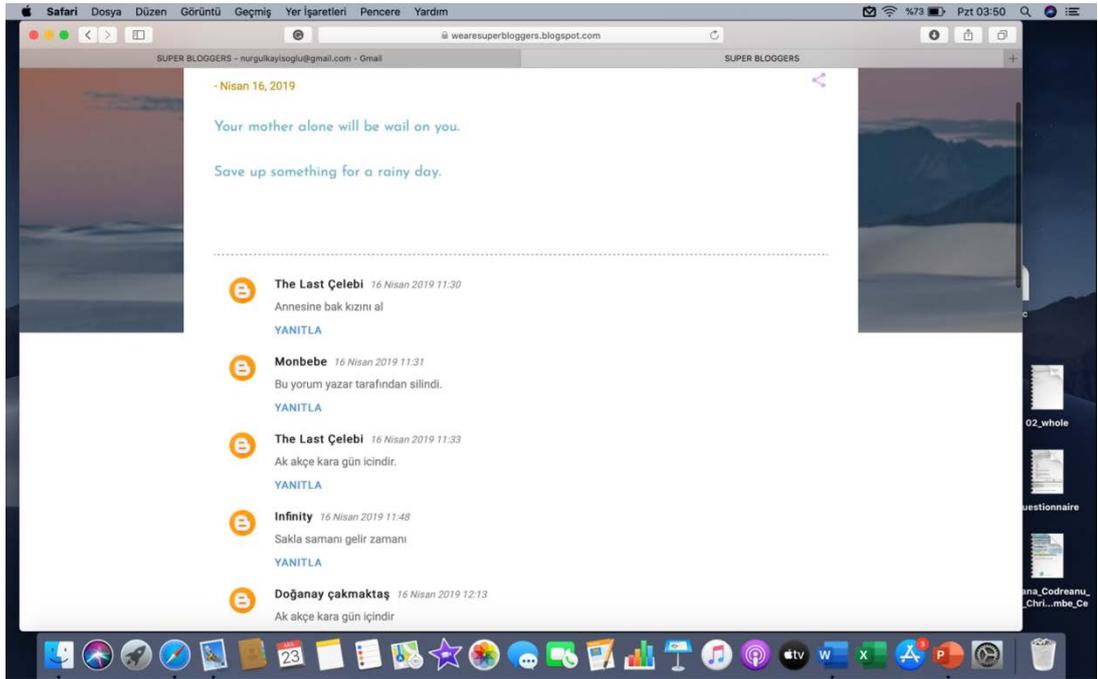
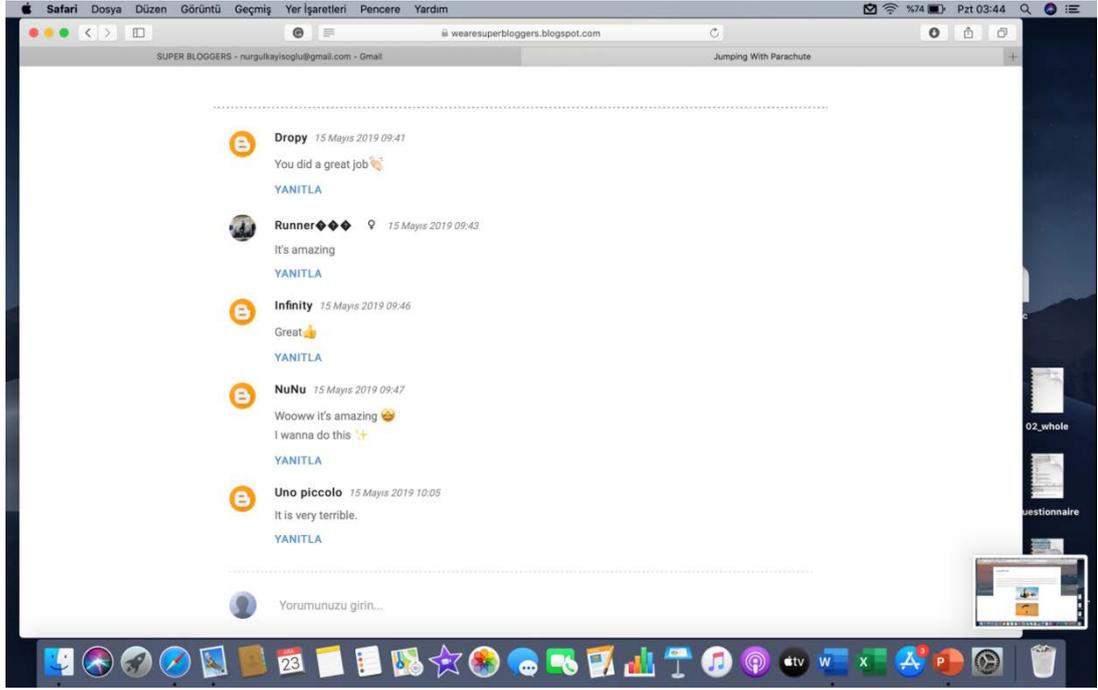


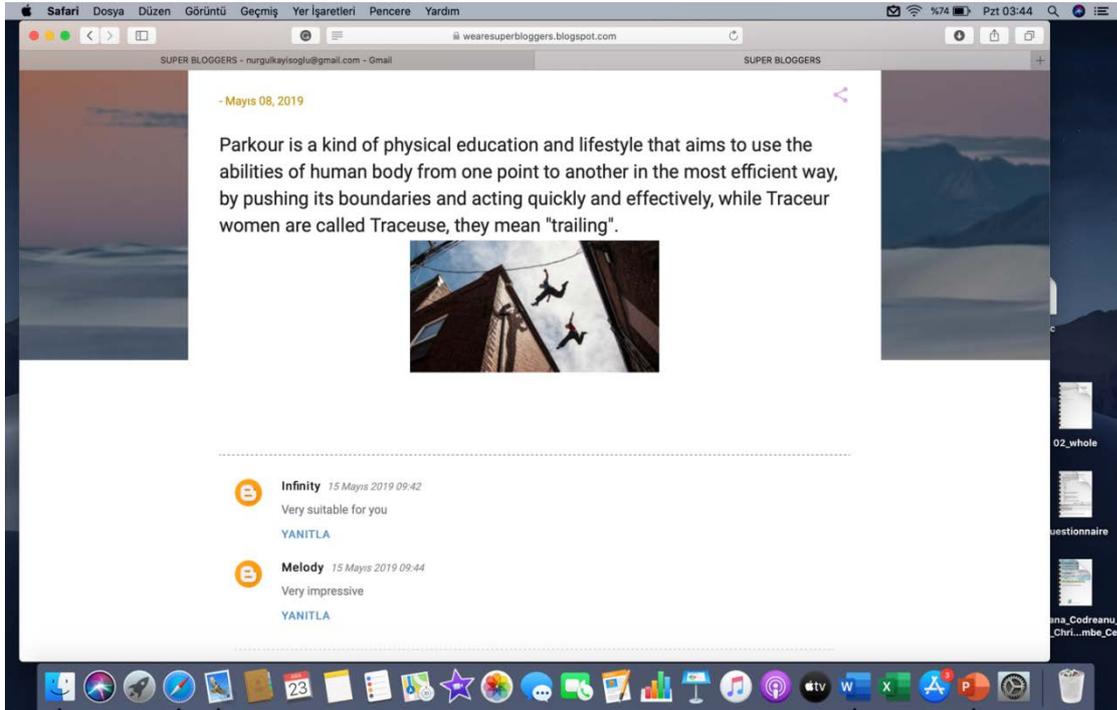
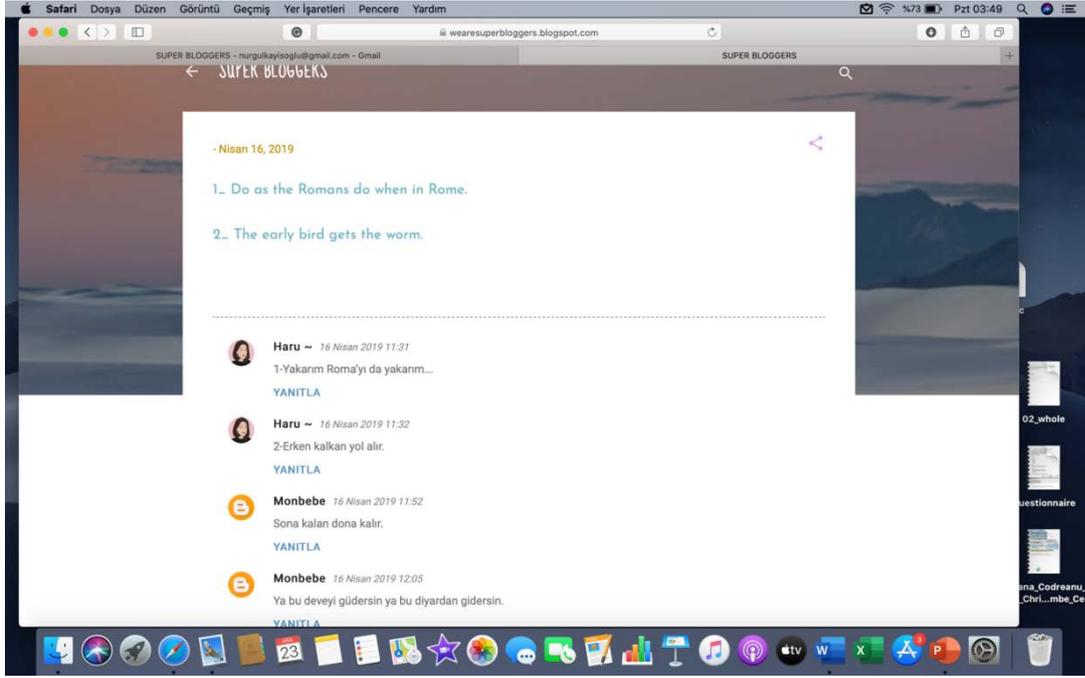


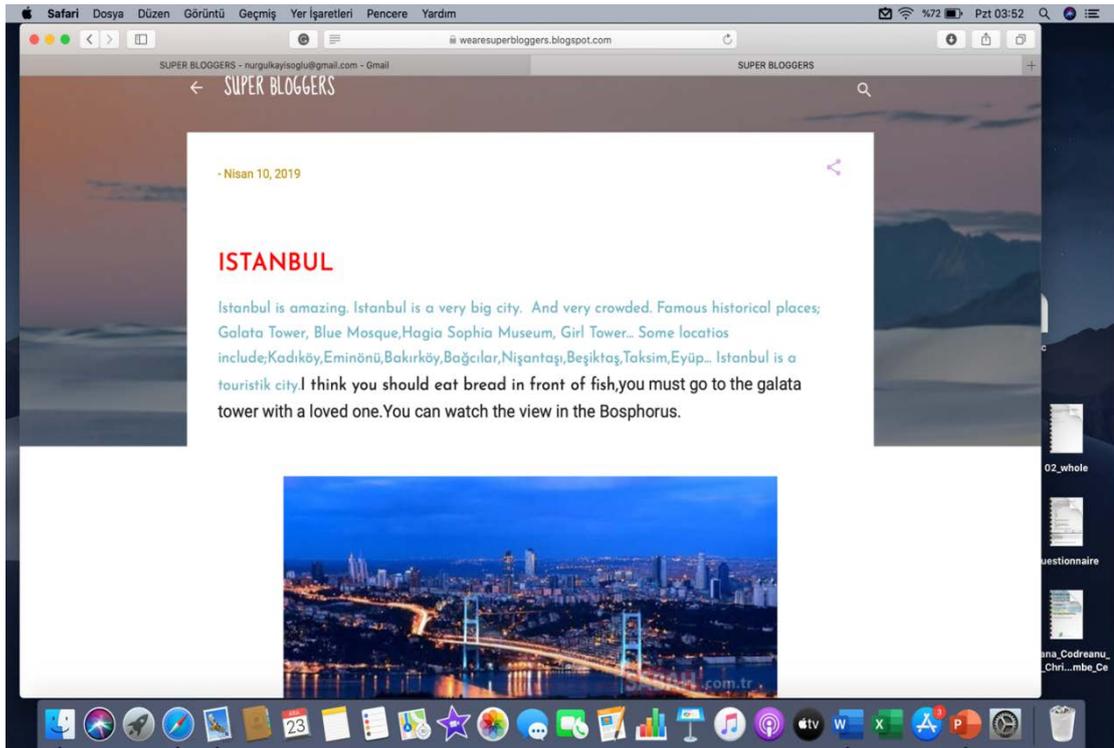
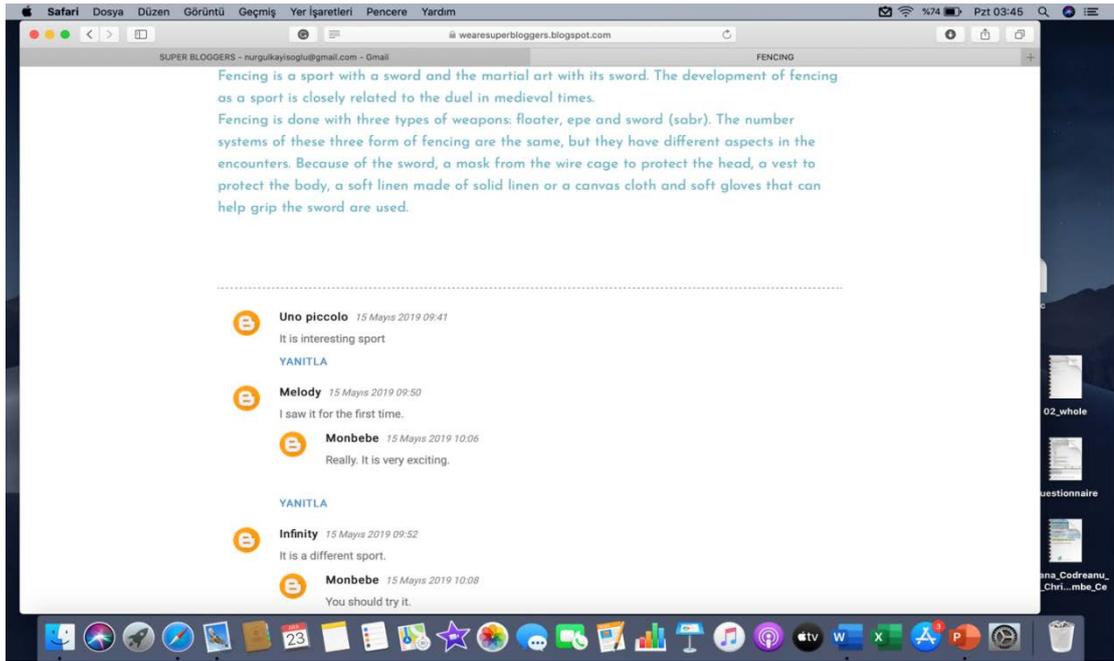












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SUPER BLOGGERS - nurgulkayisoglu@gmail.com - Gmail

Come to Samsun...

- Nisan 10, 2019



- Samsun has got çivisiz mosque wich the architech didn't use nothing but wood to build.It is 800 years old and open to pray.
- Pazar Mosque, Samsun's oldest surviving building, a mosque built by the Ilkhanate Mongols in the 13th century.
- Batı Park (West Park) is a large park on land reclaimed from the sea
- The big ist city of the Blacksea regi.on is Samsun.

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Safari Dosya Düzen Görüntü Geçmiş Yer İşaretleri Pencere Yardım %74 Pzt 03:44

wearesuperbloggers.blogspot.com

SUPER BLOGGERS - nurgulkayisoglu@gmail.com - Gmail

Kick box

- Mayıs 08, 2019

Kickboxing is a defense sport where different techniques are involved. Karete and Muay Thai, which are two different sports, is a martial art based on power and technical knowledge. The most important thing is that it is an extremely harsh sport. This sport, which requires high power to beat your opponent, allows you to spend more energy and power than many other sports.Kick box is not just attack sports.



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APPENDIX C Pre-Study Interview:

Pre-Study Interview:

1. Do you use technology? How often?
2. Do you use computers?
3. How good are your computer skills?
4. What is a blog?
5. Have you ever used a blog?

Semi-structured interviews:

-Which activity was your favorite? Explain why.

-What did you find difficult this week?

-Do you have any ideas to eliminate those difficulties?

-Did you encounter any problems in the process of blogging?

-Did you enjoy blogging as part of your learning process? If so, why? If not, why not?

APPENDIX D Pre-study interview (answers)

Pre-study interview (answers)

Question 1: Do you use technology? How often?

Student1: Yes, everyday.

Student 2: I am staying in the dormitory. I sometimes use the computers in the school.

Student 3: I think so. I use my phone for 1-2 hours a day.

Student 4: Yes, every day. 2-3 hours.

Student 5: I use technology almost every day but I do not spend long hours surfing the net.

Student 6: I use it everyday for 3-4 hours.

Student: 7: Yes, I use it for one hour everyday.

Student 8: I use it for 2 hours a day.

Student 9: Yes, every day.

Student 10: I use it continuously.

Student 11: Yes, I use it every day.

Student 12: Yes, I use it every day if I have access to the internet.

Student 13: Yes, I use technology. I use the internet for 4 to 5 hours a day.

Student 14: Yes, almost everyday if I have internet access.

Student 15: Yes, I use technology everyday. I surf the net for 3-5 hours a day.

Question 2: Do you use computers?

Student1: Yes, I do.

Student 2: Only at school.

Student 3: Only my smartphone.

Student 4: Of course.

Student 5: Yes, I use it but not very often.

Student 6: Yes, I do.

Student: 7: No, I use my smartphone.

Student 8: Yes, I do.

Student 9: Yes, but very little.

Student 10: Yes, I do.

Student 11: Yes, I use it.

Student 12: Yes.

Student 13: Yes, I do.

Student 14: Yes.

Student 15: No, I use my smartphone.

Question 3: How good are your computer skills?

Student1: Enough.

Student 2: I know Word and Exel a little.

Student 3: I use Word on my smart phone.

Student 4: Not very good. Only internet.

Student 5: A bit better than average I may say.

Student 6: I have intermediate skills.

Student: 7: I have computer skills above the intermediate level.

Student 8: I am better than intermediate level. I can do graphics and web page designs.

Student 9: Reasonable level.

Student 10: I think I am good enough.

Student 11: I am at intermediate level.

Student 12: I have no skills.

Student 13: I use it at intermediate level.

Student 14: Enough to go on with.

Student 15: I have an intermediate level of skills. I do not know many programs.

Question 4: What is a blog?

Student 1: It is a group to have fun and a place to share.

Student 2: It is an internet blog.

Student 3: It is a web page.

Student 4: It is like Facebook.

Student 5: A blog is a virtual world place where you can learn something, share your

experiences, and advices, and where you can have fun and even earn money.

Student 6: It is a social place to have fun.

Student: 7: For me, it is a tool to have fun and share something.

Student 8: We have just started. We will see in the coming days.

Student 9: I think a blog is a place where people can have fun and learn at the same time.

Student 10: It is a place to give information about a subject, a product or a field of interest and share comments.

Student 11: It is a social media application for having fun, expressing yourself and letting yourself go.

Student 12: I have just heard about it. It is something like a group, like Instagram.

Student 13: It is a website aiming to have fun and learn in a group.

Student 14: It is a place where we share our ideas freely and have chit-chats by learning

something.

Student 15: When you explained it, I was taken by the idea. We meet new people here.

Question 5: Have you ever used a blog?

Student 1: No.

Student 2: I have looked at some of them.

Student 3: I have just looked at some blogs.

Student 4: No.

Student 5: No, I haven't.

Student 6: No, this is going to be the first time.

Student: 7: No, I haven't.

Student 8: I am not a blog writer but a blog reader.

Student 9: No, I haven't. But I have looked through some.

Student 10: Yes, I have.

Student 11: No, I am using it for the first time.

Student 12: No, I haven't. I have heard about it for the first time with this project.

Student 13: No, I haven't.

Student 14: No.

Student 15: No.

APPENDIX E. Ethics Committee Approval

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 14/05/2019-2704



T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 88083623-044
Konu : Nurgül KAYIŞOĞLU Etik Onay Hk.

Sayın Nurgül KAYIŞOĞLU

Tez çalışmanızda kullanmak üzere yapmayı talep ettiğiniz anketiniz İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Etik Komisyonu'nun 07.05.2019 tarihli ve 2019/07 sayılı kararıyla uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinize rica ederim.

e-İmzalıdır
Prof. Dr. Ragıp Kutay KARACA
Müdür

Evrakı Doğrulamak İçin : <https://evrakdogrula.aydin.edu.tr/en/Vision.Dogrula/BelgeDogrulama.aspx?V=BEKV33ETA>

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Elektronik Ağ:<http://www.aydin.edu.tr/>

Bilgi için: Bülke KENDER
Unvanı: Enstitü Sekreteri



RESUME

- **Personal Information**

Name & Surname: Nurgül KAYIŞOĞLU

E-mail: nurgulkayisoglu@gmail.com

- **Education**

2018: Istanbul Aydın University, Social Sciences Inst., MA Degree in English Language & Literature

1997: Bursa Uludağ University Education Faculty, Dept. of Foreign Languages, English Language Education.

• Work experience

Date	place	Institution	Duty	Explanation
20.06.2019-	Bursa	Bursa Sadettin Türkün Secondary School	English Teacher	
01.09.2010-01.02.2011	Ordu	Governorship of Ordu	Görevlendirme	
09.03-22.06.2010	Ordu	Governorship of Ordu	Project Expert	European Union Grant Projects
2008-2010	Ordu-Fatsa	District Governorship of Fatsa	Project Expert	General European Union Projects
2008	Ordu Fatsa	Ordu University Faculty of Marine Sciences	Lecturer	English Language Lecturer
2005-2007	Belarus	Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Foreign Affairs	a) Lecturer b)Expert of Turcology chairmanship of BELARUS State Economics University c)Assistant of training services of Turkish Embassy in BELARUS	Lecturer of Turkish and English languages sent abroad (Belarus)
2002-2019	Fatsa-Ordu	1st and 2nd Notary Public of Fatsa	Translator and Interpreter	Translator and Interpreter of the Turkish, English and German languages
1999-2019	Fatsa-Ordu	Fatsa Anatolian High school	English Teacher	
1997-1999	Fatsa-Ordu	Fatsa Anadolu Denizcilik Meslek Lisesi	English Teacher	