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FOSTERING SELF-REGULATED LEARNING THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE LEARNING MODULE: A CASE STUDY IN TURKISH CONTEXT

A MASTER'S THESIS

BY

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THE PROGRAM OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
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To my wife, my pride and joy, *Aslıhan Tuğçe GÜLER*, for standing by me every step of the way and shining a light to my life.

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Abdulkadir Güllü

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Fostering Self-Regulated Learning through the Effective Learning Module: A Case Study in Turkish Context

Abdulkadir Güllü

October 2019

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Jennie Farber Lane (Supervisor)

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction.

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ABSTRACT

FOSTERING SELF-REGULATED LEARNING THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE LEARNING MODULE: A CASE STUDY IN TURKISH CONTEXT

Abdulkadir Güllü

M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Jennie Farber Lane

October 2019

This master's thesis investigates the perceptions of students in an English preparatory school blended program towards the effectiveness of an Effective Learning Module (ELM). This module was designed to help students create an effective learning plan to become self-regulated learners. Specifically, within the ELM the research also aims to investigate the perceived effectiveness of goal setting, learning strategies, and evaluating resources to ultimately create a learning plan and implement it. This was a case study conducted in one state university with ten participants (M_{age} = 20.8).

The results of the content analyses revealed perceived increases in the self-regulatory skills of the participants. Specifically, the participants perceived that the ELM was helpful for setting goals, and creating a learning plan. They also stated that they learned various learning strategies with the help of the ELM. Finally, the participants reported that they learned various methods to evaluate and select resources for learning. The findings, along with implications for practice and further research are discussed.

Keywords: Self-regulated learning, Effective Learning Module, advising in language learning, blended learning

ÖZET

ETKİLİ ÖĞRENME MODÜLÜ ARACILIĞIYLA ÖZ DÜZENLEMELİ ÖĞRENMENİN GELİŞİMİNİ DESTEKLEME: TÜRKİYE BAĞLAMINDA BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Abdulkadir Güllü

Yüksek Lisans, Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Jennie Farber Lane

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Bu yüksek lisans tezi, İngilizce hazırlık sınıfında harmanlanmış eğitim alan öğrencilerin bir Etkili Öğrenme Modülünün (EÖM) etkili bir öğrenme planı oluşturup öz düzenlemeli öğrenciler olabilme konusundaki yetkinliğine yönelik algılarını sorgulamaktadır. Çalışmanın bir diğer amacı ise bir öğrenme planı oluşturup uygulamaya koyarken hedef belirleme, öğrenme stratejileri kullanma ve kaynakları değerlendirme becerilerinin etkililiğini sorgulamaktır. Çalışma bir durum çalışmasıdır ve bir devlet üniversitesinde 10 katılımcı ($Ortalama_{yaş}$ = 20,8) ile gerçekleştirilmiştir.

İçerik analizlerinden elde edilen sonuçlara göre katılımcıların öz düzenleme becerilerinde algılanan artışlar görülmüştür. Özel olarak, katılımcılar EÖM'nin hedef belirleme ve öğrenme planı oluşturmada yardımcı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca, EÖM sayesinde çeşitli öğrenme stratejileri öğrendiklerini dile getirmişlerdir. Son olarak, katılımcılar öğrenme kaynaklarını değerlendirme ve seçme konularında farklı yöntemler kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bulgular, uygulama çıkarımları ve daha fazla araştırma önerileri tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öz düzenlemeli öğrenme, Etkili Öğrenme Modülü, öğrenme danışmanlığı, harmanlanmış eğitim

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Learning is a part of daily life as it is instinctive for humans to get to know about things around them to survive. It is in our nature to be curious, and this makes learning a continuous and evolving aspect of our lives. Therefore, over the years, many researchers have investigated learning; what it is, when it occurs, and how to support it. Frequently, studies related to learning are constructed around learning theories (Hilgard & Bower, 1966). One of these theories, namely self-regulated learning (SRL) theory, is the basis for the current research.

This study will try to explore the SRL strategy use of students in an English preparatory blended learning (BL) program at a state university in Turkey. In order to do so, a seven-week program called the Effective Learning Module (ELM) has been utilized as an extracurricular activity. In this chapter, some key definitions of BL and advising in language learning (ALL) are given. Additionally, the problem statement, the purpose of the research and the significance of it, and the research questions are included.

Background

In many tertiary education institutions in Turkey, it is common for students to have a preparatory English program before starting their departmental courses. Moreover, in many universities, this preparatory program is compulsory, as the medium of instruction in departmental courses is either 30% or 100% English. This is primarily because English is a requirement in most prestigious professions in Turkey, and

many companies and government institutions look for employees proficient in the language.

The state university in which the current research has been carried out is one of those universities in which most of the departmental courses are taught in English. For instance, all the courses in the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Business Administration are taught in English. In such a situation, the students are expected to do well in their preparatory school to succeed in their departmental classes. In this competitive environment, most students are able to pass the preparatory school at the end of their first academic year. Unfortunately, there are also those who, for various reasons, cannot cope with the program and fail in their first year. Such students have to repeat the preparatory school the next year and take the English proficiency exam again.

In many universities in Turkey, repeating students are required to either repeat the preparatory program with the same books and the same schedule, or use different books and a different schedule in their second year. Similarly, in some universities these students are put into separate classes as repeating students, while in others they are mixed with their first-year peers in the same classes. These students face a number of problems, including frustration, a sense of inferiority, and hopelessness.

In the state university in which the current research has been conducted, the repeating students used to be put into the same classes as their first-year counterparts. Upon observations by the teachers, it was decided that the repeating students were not doing better in class even if they were studying the same materials again and

even though they supposedly know more than their first-year peers. Furthermore, these students were also demotivating others by their constant passive behavior towards lessons and schoolwork. In light of the observations and reports by the teachers, a BL approach was proposed, and it was decided that this approach would be piloted first before being applied school-wide. The pilot study was done in the fall term of the academic year 2014-15, and all the students in their second year were offered the option to either continue with the 21-hour-a-week regular program or join the blended program in which there would only be eight hours of in-class study and twelve hours of online self-study.

Approximately half the students chose the blended program, while the others preferred to continue with the regular program. At the end of the academic term, the achievement scores of both groups were compared, and although there were no statistically significant differences between the scores, the students in the blended program reported in the interviews that they felt more independent in their studies and were more motivated to come to school and do schoolwork. In addition to this, some said that they were also able to find part-time work and earn some pocket money on the side. The approach also reduced the workload of the teachers and the resource use of the SFL. All these advantages of the BL approach led to the decision to make the blended program compulsory for all the students in their second year as part of the curriculum.

Blended learning

Blended learning was coined for the integration of face-to-face instruction with online tools to create a new environment for students. This combination includes the

benefits of traditional instruction and e-learning (Allen, Seaman, & Garrett, 2007). The term "blended learning" (BL) had its roots first in the business world, then the field of education caught up with the trend, and finally language learning and teaching followed (Bersin, 2004).

Different terms and descriptions have been used to define BL (Gruba & Hinkelman, 2012; Olapiriyakul & Scher, 2006). Dudeney and Hockly (2007, pp. 138-139) use percentages to explain BL in the EFL environment:

- A face-to-face language course with supplementary online content.
- A blended language course, with 75% online and 25% face-to-face instruction.
- A 100% online language course.

The first type in Dudeney and Hockly's definition is the most commonly used BL approach; it is used in many universities in the EFL context and is actually very similar to traditional classroom teaching. The last type is widely known as distance education. The second type is the one similar to the BL approach of the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at the state university in which the present study was conducted.

As is with the whole world, BL approaches have been gaining importance in Turkish universities, both in their departmental and in their preparatory programs. Blended learning is flexible in that it offers the learners the ability to choose a time and place for their own learning, while at the same time not hindering face-to-face instruction

(Collis & Moonen, 2002). This ability of BL makes it a worldwide trend in all parts of education and training.

With this kind of flexibility, students in a BL program may have face-to-face education on a limited number of days in a week instead of the regular five days. This leaves them with the possibility of studying anytime they would like and even if they are working while studying. Therefore, some students work part-time jobs and get work experience while they do not fall back on their studies. In this sense, BL helps students in higher education to follow their courses, and at the same time, it allows them to pursue a career without much pressure (Borstorff & Lowe, 2007).

With BL approaches on the rise, learners are no longer "the objects of their teacher's behavior [but] animators of their own effective teaching and learning processes" (Pedder, 2010, p.465). In other words, the students in BL programs are expected to monitor, regulate and attend to the quality of their own learning. The blend may include computers and classroom instruction, but it may also include self-study sessions as well. At the SFL, the students are expected to study some of the books themselves in their e-text (soft copy) forms. They have the answer keys ready at hand, so the e-texts serve as self-study material. They are also expected to do weekly online workbook assignments given by the teacher. All the assignments are graded automatically, and the students receive immediate feedback.

The BL program at the SFL also includes online performance-based tasks that consist of written portfolio and recorded speaking tasks, to be sent to the teacher for grading. There is a total of five tasks, usually two written and three spoken. Both the

written and the spoken tasks are taken from the online book the students are required to study individually. The classroom hours are usually allocated to the development of productive skills, namely speaking and writing. All these tasks, with the inclusion of quizzes and midterm examinations, make up the period average score of a student. The main teachers in the blended program are also selected from learning advisors because they are believed to help the learners better with difficulties in language learning.

Advising in language learning and fostering autonomy

Advising in language learning (ALL) is a process in which a language advisor and a learner are engaged in a reflective dialogue to determine learning issues, after which the learner comes up with a plan with the help of the advisor and implements it to reach his learning goal (Kato & Mynard, 2016). Advising sessions are usually held one-to-one, and they are similar to counseling or life coaching. However, there are other types of advising, as well, including written advising, group advising, and peer advising. The end goal of advising is for the learner to achieve true autonomy in the end.

In the case of the current study, a team of nine EFL teachers, including the researcher, went to Japan to receive advising training as part of a university-funded project. The training started in November, 2017, and included four courses. The first course took place in Japan and lasted for a week, after which the team returned to Turkey to take the remaining courses online. The team learned the basics of advising and reflective dialogue in the first module. The second course started in December and finished in January, 2018, with one lesson per week for six weeks. This course

mainly presented advising tools and research opportunities for advising. Course 3 took place between February and March, and focused on written advising and critical moments in advising sessions. The ELM was also introduced in this course. The final course took place between April and May, 2018, and the concepts of self-advising and learner transformation were discussed during the course. After the courses, the advisors at the SFL received their certificates of becoming advisor mentors, and at the beginning of the academic year 2018-19, they started training other teachers in ALL. Since 2018, the number of advisors in the team has doubled, and the team has advised more than a hundred students.

Shortcomings and goals of blended learning

Despite all the advantages, the lack of improvement in the academic success of the students in the BL program is a concern for the researcher, and he proposes that fostering the self-regulatory skills of these students may have a positive outcome for their academic success. Self-regulation can be considered as a means to foster learner autonomy as understanding the processes of self-regulation may give teachers an idea of how to help learners achieve autonomy (Nakata, 2014). One of the most valued missions of the SFL is to foster learner autonomy since its foundation, and this mission led to the emergence of the BL program.

The current study will try to shed light on how to increase the effectiveness of a BL approach at the SFL by developing some baseline strategies to help the students monitor, evaluate, and maintain their own learning. The ELM is also a type of written advising and has been used as an instrument by the researcher for this study to determine how well it helps students to develop or improve their self-regulatory

skills in language learning. To frame this intention, the theory of self-regulated learning will be discussed and reviewed in the following chapter.

Problem

The School of Foreign Languages (SFL) of a state university in Ankara, Turkey, has been applying a BL approach for their second-year preparatory school students since 2013. In this approach, the students have eight hours of in-class traditional grammar-writing-speaking lessons weekly, while they are expected to do online work for 12 hours outside of school.

Even with many resources provided for online self-study, many students in the blended program at the SFL are not performing well. This can be seen in their summative assessment scores and their portfolio work. When compared with the achievement scores of the regular groups, the scores of the students in the blended program were observed to be significantly lower in the same tests. In order to remedy this, a new program called the ELM has been proposed and implemented to help students develop and better monitor study habits. With this module, the researcher aims to gain insights into students' perceptions of whether this program is supporting the development of more autonomous learning behaviors.

Purpose

The main aim of the present study is to examine if and how students who are in an English preparatory school blended program perceive that the ELM helps them create an effective learning plan to become self-regulated learners. The research also

aims to investigate the perceived effectiveness of goal setting, learning strategies, and evaluating resources to ultimately create a learning plan and implement it.

Research questions

The research questions are related to the perceptions of English preparatory students within a BL program about ELM and its contribution to their self-regulation. The researcher will address the following questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of the ELM in terms of its effect on helping them set goals to study English?
2. What learning strategies do students prefer within the ELM?
3. What are the students' perceptions on the ELM in terms of its help with resource preference and evaluation?
4. What are the students' perceptions of the ELM in terms of its effect on their English skills?
5. What are students' perceptions of the ELM in terms of creating a learning plan to become more self-regulated learners?

Significance

In many tertiary education institutions in Turkey, one of the main aims of an English preparatory program is to help students achieve autonomy and master their own learning skills before they start their departmental education. After a review of a number of the websites of their preparatory programs in Turkey, it has become clear that no or very few other state universities incorporate such a BL approach in their foreign language education programs. If proven effective, the findings in the current research may provide some insights into facilitating learners of English in

preparatory schools to become more autonomous and regulate their learning behavior. Furthermore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the ELM as a program to foster the self-regulatory skills of students has been used for the first time in a Turkish state university. Therefore, the findings of this study could support the state university in question becoming a model for other universities.

Definition of key terms

Blended Learning (BL) Program: a blended language course, with 12 hours online self-study and 8 hours face-to-face instruction, applied at the School of Foreign Languages at the state university, in which this research was conducted, for repeating students in their second year of English preparatory program.

Effective Learning Module (ELM): a seven-week extracurricular course module which is designed to help learners make an effective learning plan and utilize it (see Appendix C for a sample).

Learning Advisory Program (LAP): "the process and practice of helping students to direct their own paths to become more effective and autonomous language learners" (Mynard & Carson, 2012, p. 4).

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL): the act of learning in which students activate and maintain motivation, cognition and behaviors to reach their goals (Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will first focus on reasons why a blended learning (BL) approach has been chosen by other institutions in the world, and whether such an approach has proven effective for them. The chapter also provides a short review of theory related to self-regulated learning (SRL) and will also include any insights of whether a BL approach has helped improve the self-regulatory skills of the students and, subsequently, their academic success. Finally, the initiative advising in language learning (ALL) and its relationship with learner autonomy and self-regulation will be examined in detail.

Blended learning around the world

BL approaches have been gaining importance in higher education institutions around the world in recent years (Borstorff & Lowe, 2007; Collis & Moonen, 2002; Pedder, 2010). Before exploring selected studies that have researched this approach, there is a need to define different terms related to technology use in teaching and other novel ideas relating to it. Therefore, terms like distance education, online learning (e-learning) and BL will be compared.

Distance education

Distance education generally refers to the educational model that usually caters for an older, more financially-independent population that pursue an academic degree without the confines and time limitations of traditional classroom environment (Milman, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). In this sense, distance

education differs from campus-based college education in that it gives the students the ability to pursue an academic degree by studying part-time while working full-time and taking care of their families.

In campus-based college education, students are expected to attend classes regularly, and perform well in their tasks and exams to be able to pass their classes. In distance education, however, attendance could only be measured by how much of the content provided has been viewed or read by the students. Therefore, learning strategies of the students in distance education programs might differ widely from those of campus-based students (Milman, 2015).

In a study carried out in the Netherlands on 758 participants of distance education programs, Neroni, Meijs, Gijselaers, Kirschner, and de Groot (2019) used a mixed-methods analysis to determine whether time management skills and strategy use were predictors of academic achievement. They used the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1993) to determine the time and effort management skills and strategy use of the participants, as well as their exam scores for academic achievement. The analyses showed that time and effort management and complex cognitive strategy use of the students were strong predictors of academic achievement. Therefore, it can be concluded that students in distance education programs with better regulatory skills performed better academically, as well.

Online learning (e-learning)

Online learning, or e-learning, has almost become synonymous with distance education today because of wide availability of technology and online content. Upon review of the works by Anderson (2008), Berberoglu (2015), and Moore, Dickson-Deane, and Galyen (2011), it was found that they identify some key differences between online and distance learning:

- Unlike distance education, online learning does not have to be for academic purposes; i.e., it may not provide an academic degree at the end.
- Online learning tools can be part of a curriculum both in distance education programs and blended programs.
- Distance education generally does not include any synchronous interaction between the instructor and the students, but it usually involves pre-recorded lessons, emails, and the like.
- Online learning can be synchronous through an online conferencing application, in which online classrooms can be created and lessons can be performed with the instructor and the students present at the same time.
- In distance education, the instructor and the students are separated from each other geographically, but online learning can take place inside the traditional classroom environment.

Blended learning

BL was coined for the integration of face-to-face instruction with online tools to create a new environment for students. This combination includes the benefits of both traditional classroom instruction and e-learning (Allen et al., 2007). One of the very first attempts at BL was the integration of e-learning into an instructor-led

leadership development training program. Voci and Young (2001) investigated the effectiveness of this implementation through a case study. The results of the case study revealed that BL not only takes into account learning differences, but it also provides a way of –and a reason for– social interaction.

The quality of BL is connected to the perceived ease of use and student satisfaction with the online platform used (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). Bitlis (2011) confirms that students enjoy the freedom provided by the flexibility of BL environment, which also increases learner autonomy. After review of related literature by Chen and Jones (2007), and Lopez-Perez, Perez-Lopez, and Rodriguez-Ariza (2011) the benefits of BL can be summarized as follows:

1. Students can learn in a synchronous or asynchronous way.
2. BL is suitable for different learning styles.
3. BL can satisfy individualized interests of learners.
4. BL helps students develop autonomy.
5. BL provides a positive learning environment.
6. Students can have opportunities to apply the acquired knowledge.
7. Students have more input and output opportunities with BL.

As with all other technologies, however, BL applications require some kind of a skill-set both for the teacher and the students. If the students cannot adjust to the platform being used, or the platform is too outdated, then the BL approach may fail. Slow internet connectivity or a poor technical infrastructure of the platform may also cause issues during the process.

The perceived drawbacks of BL can be summarized as follows (Stracke, 2007):

1. Lack of adequate internet connectivity
2. Lack of technical support
3. Non-occurrence of updates and/or enhancements to the platform
4. Inefficiency of the teacher
5. Lack of orientation for the students

Even with its setbacks, BL is still regarded as an effective way of learning a foreign language. In their study with 43 volunteer students, Harker and Koutsantoni (2005) compared the effectiveness of distance learning and BL. They investigated which mode of content delivery was more effective in terms of student retention and achievement levels. While the achievement levels were similar in both groups, the student retention levels were much higher for students in the blended program.

In another study, Sagarra and Zapata (2008) investigated the perceptions of 245 second language Spanish learners on an online homework platform. They used the platform to assign online workbook activities and compared the results of a survey and two language assessment tests. The results of the tests indicated a significant increase in grammar scores. The students also reported that the platform was useful specifically in the areas of grammar and vocabulary learning.

In a comprehensive meta-analysis, Bernard, Borokhovski, Schmid, Tamim, and Abrami (2014) reported that technology use generally has a positive effect on education, and when compared to distance education, online learning and classroom

instruction, BL approaches were “effective to a modest but significant degree” (p. 116).

Similarly, in another study done in Saudi Arabia on 148 participants, an experimental research design was used. The control group consisted of 50 students in the traditional education environment. There were two experimental groups: a group of 55 were BL students, and 43 were students using an e-learning platform. Pre- and post-tests were done to determine the differences in academic achievement. The results revealed statistically significant differences favoring BL. While e-learning and traditional classroom practices produced significant differences between the pre- and post-tests, the differences were close to each other and were outweighed by the BL approach (Al-Qahtani & Higgins, 2012).

In conclusion, the body of research in literature on BL approaches leads us to an assumption that BL methods generally foster academic achievement of the students and seem to yield better achievement scores than distance learning, online learning and regular classroom instruction. The studies examined in this section provide us with some insight into whether BL fosters academic achievement, but there is a lack in the findings about how the learners succeeded, what strategies (if any) they used, and whether they were able to regulate their learning. The current study has been carried out mainly because even though BL approaches seem to yield better achievement scores around the world, this is not the case in the BL program in the state university in which the researcher is currently working. Therefore, the researcher is trying to find out the root of the problem and see if fostering self-regulation of the students in the BL program might help alleviate the problem. In the

next section, SRL theory and its relationship with academic success and learner autonomy will be examined.

Self-regulated learning theory

In order to find ways to foster autonomy, a number of theories and methods have been proposed (Cotterall, 2000; Hafner & Miller, 2011; Luke, 2008). Self-regulated learning (SRL) is one of these theories that focus on the learners and the learning process itself to help learners achieve success in the academic environment by taking responsibility for their own learning practices. SRL is the act of learning in which students activate and maintain motivation, cognition and behaviors to reach their goals (Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Successful learners in the blended program are often described as self-regulated learners (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).

Self-regulation is not a skill by itself, but rather a process of transforming cognitive abilities into academic skills (Zimmerman, 2002). SRL does not necessarily mean "successful learning" but it paves the way for describing the various components that lead to successful learning (Boekaerts, 1999). The development of students' proficiency as lifelong, self-regulating learners is recognized as a "fundamental goal of education" (Bandura, 1997, p.174). In order to improve and regulate their learning, the learners are expected to meet three conditions. First, they need to understand the concept of quality (what is expected) in relation to a piece of work. Second, they need to possess sufficient evaluative expertise to be able to compare the current work with what is expected. Finally, they are required to have certain strategies to improve and further their learning (Sadler, 2009).

The theory proposes that when learners take the initiative to regulate their own learning, they start to gain insight into how they learn better. Forethought, performance and self-reflection are the main phases in the SRL process (Zimmerman, 2002). In the forethought phase, the learners set goals and strategies for their learning, as well as identify their self-motivation beliefs. In the performance phase, the learner puts his plan into action and closely monitors his learning, making real-time changes if necessary. In the final stage, the learner reflects on the learning process as a whole and evaluates his learning.

In addition, Pintrich (2004), and Duncan and McKeachie (2005) propose a social cognitive view of assessing motivation and self-regulation in college students. They propose that the motivational beliefs, which include value, expectancy, and affective components, along with learning strategies, which include cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and resource management skills, result in the culmination of a construct to assess motivation and self-regulation. This construct also led to the creation of their MLSQ (Pintrich et al., 1993).

The following review of literature examines the results of several studies conducted in international and Turkish contexts, and discusses the similarities and discrepancies in the results. The quantitative research on self-regulation generally focuses on the relationships between self-regulation and metacognition, autonomy, and academic achievement. This review also examines different types of research, mainly correlational research and case studies based on the relationship between self-regulation, academic achievement, and metacognition. It is also important to note

that not all the studies reviewed involve BL, but they serve to highlight key research methods and findings relevant to the current study.

Successful self-regulated learners generally demonstrate higher performance, higher course satisfaction and higher perceived learning than low-achieving self-regulated learners in online learning environments (Cho & Shen, 2013). In their research, Cho and Yoo (2017) applied data mining techniques to predict students' achievements and demonstrate successful students' learning patterns in an online course using log files saved on a course management system (CMS). The study was conducted on 60 participants studying in a distance education setting, and the results showed that even though the self-reported SRL strategy use did not seem to be a significant predictor of achievement, the log files obtained from the online platform indicated that high-achievers were more self-regulated than their low-achieving peers.

In a correlational study on the relationship between academic achievement and SRL on 151 undergraduate students from various ethnic backgrounds in flipped mathematics classes in a Midwestern university, Sun, Xie, and Anderman (2018) applied motivation and learning strategies scales adapted from the MSLQ. They found that self-regulation of the students was significantly and positively related to their academic achievement in both pre-class online activities and in-class learning environment.

A meta-analysis reviewing 21 empirical and correlational articles on the effects of and the relationship between self-regulation and academic achievement found similar results. The analysis included studies conducted in Turkey between 2005 and 2014.

The results revealed a large effect of self-regulation on academic achievement. Furthermore, the results also showed no significant differences between SRL strategies and school level, course type and study design (Ergen & Kanadli, 2017).

The results of the above studies indicate a positive relationship between self-regulation and achievement. However, there is also one study conducted in a Turkish context that shows a negative relationship between the two variables. In the study carried out in a Turkish university on 276 participants, Çetin (2017) tested whether metacognition and self-regulation were predictors of academic achievement. The metacognition and SRL scores of the participants positively correlated with each other, but neither score was a predictor of academic achievement. Surprisingly, self-regulation seemed to be significantly and negatively correlated with academic achievement. The reason for this might be that in this study, all the participants were from teacher education programs, and a high grade point average is not necessary to become a teacher candidate in Turkey. Rather, the scores from national exams are considered. Therefore, even though they were highly-self-regulated, the students may not have had an inclination to achieve better in their undergraduate studies.

Qualitative research in general tends to be more exploratory; therefore, a deeper analysis of two studies in particular on SRL strategy use and its impact on achievement is done. The summaries are given below.

In a case study in China on four participants, two of whom were categorized high-achievers (HAs) and the other two low-achievers (LAs), Zeng and Goh (2018) utilized an SRL approach to determine whether the listening achievement in English

and metacognitive awareness of the participants were affected positively. The study took six months and data were gathered through different forms of instrumentation, including a metacognitive awareness questionnaire, learning portfolio, reflection form, interviews, and test scores. Comparing the pre- and post-test scores, high-achieving participants improved their listening scores by almost 20 points on a 100-point test, while the low-achieving ones improved by approximately 9 points. Student reflections and interviews also showed that HAs were more engaged in the practice and development of their listening skills, but the LAs reported that their main aim was to score better in their exams. Overall, HAs spent almost four times as much time on activities as LAs did, and similarly, HAs repeated more challenging tasks much more than LAs did. Additionally, strategy use by the HAs was oriented towards listening comprehension and development in skills, whereas LAs did not provide meaningful input regarding metacognitive awareness. To conclude, high-achieving students in the study were able to develop their listening skills better, regulate their learning better, and be more aware of their self-improvement than the low-achieving students.

It is interesting to note that the behavior of the low-achieving students in the case study of Zeng and Goh (2018) are similar to students in the current case study: Those who are enrolled in the BL program within the state university. The students in the BL program seem reluctant to regulate their learning; instead of improving and monitoring their learning processes, their attention is focused on getting better test scores.

In another study, Phillips (2016) tried to find out whether students used SRL strategies to enrich their learning experiences. In an introductory physics course with 24 participants, students were asked to attend three lectures and a two-hour lab work weekly, along with flexible homework assignments, in which they were given between 50 and 75 suggested problems. The participants were free to choose the assignments they wanted to do, but they were encouraged to pick the ones related to the learning outcomes specifically given during each lecture. The end goal was not to submit the solutions, but rather to provide written and spoken accounts of their own planning, monitoring and reflection stages of solving the problems. Many of the homework reports stated that the plan of the participants was to do more practice, and again many wrote in their reflection that the next step was again to do more practice. Additionally, most students found creating a homework report to be tedious and mundane although they reported that being able to choose the assignments more suitable to their needs at the time was one of the highlights of the course. One student, Isaac, was found by the researcher to be of particular interest because of his successful application of SRL strategies. He successfully linked his future goal setting with his past performance in the course and was able to monitor his learning by asking himself reflective questions, such as whether he understood the concepts in the lectures well or not. Although he would be considered a low-achiever at first (i.e., his first three test scores were approximately 22% lower than the class average), he was able to achieve much better in the final test.

The above study was not carried out in a foreign language learning or a BL setting, but it bears similarities that are important to mention. First, flexibility to study what is needed is also reported to be one of the most important features of a BL

environment. Secondly, even though the study setting was an introductory physics class, learners in a foreign language learning setting, specifically the ones with lower self-regulation, seem to lack the skills needed to plan, monitor and adjust their learning, as well. Finally, the importance of reflecting upon what has been learned and what is missing is a key component in SRL and also in ALL, which will be discussed in the following section.

Advising in language learning

Advising in language learning (ALL) is when a mentor or guide uses a reflective process to help learners become more "effective [and] aware" of their learning process (Kato & Mynard, 2016, p. 27). Reflective dialogue, whether it be face-to-face or written, is the main component of ALL, in which a learner reflects on their language learning and problems they face during the learning process, and comes up with possible solutions to those problems with the help of a language advisor.

The research on ALL generally comprises qualitative data gathered from transcriptions of advising sessions, learning journals, and written reflections. In this section, analyses of qualitative research on ALL are reported, and even though the studies are not primarily concerned with BL environments, some studies involve self-access learning centers (SALCs), where learners are free to regulate their own learning behavior. As research in ALL is limited in terms of the scope of the current study, and majority of the research is focused on developing advising strategies and techniques for prospective advisors, only one study focusing on a participant in a self-access learning environment has been included in the review.

In a longitudinal case study with a Brazilian student of English, called in the study as Lucas, the researcher sought to answer the question of what the effects of ALL on a student's motivation to learn are. The data collection process took two and a half years, and in the first 16 months Lucas attended a total of 32 face-to-face advising sessions, after which he started to take charge of his own learning, benefiting from the self-access center at his university. He reported in the interviews that when he started his tertiary education, his motivation for learning English was high, but over time it gradually declined because of negative learning experiences. After starting his advising sessions, however, his motivation gradually increased over time, reaching its peak toward the end of advising sessions, after which his motivation started to decline again by a small margin. By the end of the advising support, Lucas said his ability to regulate his learning had increased significantly and that he was able to control his learning. Although reluctant at first, Lucas decided to pursue a career of teaching both English and Portuguese as a foreign language (Castro, 2018).

The main aim of the previous study was to determine the effects of advising on a learner's motivation, but the findings also revealed patterns of self-regulatory behavior, as the participant stopped having advising sessions after a period of time. This is the expected behavior of an advisee in his or her learning trajectory, and also the final step in the advising process, called "transformation," in which the learner is completely independent and learns to "self-advise" (Kato & Mynard, 2016, pp. 213-236).

The Effective Learning Module (ELM) was created as part of the curriculum of the self-access learning center in a university in Japan (Lammons, 2014; Mynard &

Stevenson, 2017). The main aim of the module is to foster learner autonomy through various SRL strategies including planning, monitoring, and reflection, to create a learning plan in the end. The module can be regarded as a type of written advising, and that is why it links advising with self-regulation. Other researchers have yet to investigate the effectiveness of the ELM over self-regulation and achievement; therefore, this study aims to investigate this issue.

Concluding statement

In this literature review, evidence shows that BL seems to be a way of fostering self-regulation and academic achievement for students. Additionally, self-regulation has a positive effect on academic achievement. Finally, ALL is a way to guide the learners to become more autonomous in their studies, and the ELM was created as a tool for written advising. The current study combines all these concepts and tries to foster the self-regulation of the learners in a BL environment via the ELM. The study also aims to find out whether using the ELM will help learners achieve better academically.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Introduction

The main aim of the present study is to examine if and how students who are in an English preparatory school perceive that the Effective Learning Module (ELM) helps them create an effective learning plan to become self-regulated learners. Also, the study tries to answer other questions related to becoming accomplished language learners by (a) setting goals for their English learning, (b) applying different learning strategies, (c) evaluating the resources they choose to use, and (d) making use of a learning plan they have created. In order to address these questions, a case study research design was implemented. The current chapter describes the research design applied to answer the research questions, as well as the context of the study, the participants, instrumentation and the method of data collection and analysis.

Research design

In this study, the researcher seeks to foster the self-regulatory skills of students enrolled in a blended learning (BL) program by implementing the ELM. To investigate the perceived efficacy of this module, a case study, specifically, a collective case study design (Stake, 1995), in which several cases are adopted, was used as there were ten different cases (students) in the current study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a case study is an investigation of a phenomenon that occurs within a specific context. The specific context in this research is the BL program and the phenomenon is the perceived effects of the ELM on students in the BL program. Although qualitative in nature, a case study can allow the use of quantitative data to support the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 40-48).

Most of the data used in the study will be qualitative, consisting of elements such as student journals and written reflections (ELMs), examples from transcriptions of interviews and transcriptions of post-interviews. The quantitative data gathered from the Assessment of General English (AGE) proficiency test scores in September and in January will act as a support to determine the effectiveness of the aforementioned ELM in terms of academic success.

Context

The study took place at the School of Foreign Languages at a state university in Ankara, Turkey. This state university is the only one in Turkey that implements a BL approach in its English Preparatory Program for second-year repeating students. Since its establishment in 2011, the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at the state university has been using a form of BL method. All courses offered in the preparatory program has a form of a blended approach embedded. To illustrate, the regular preparatory program has 8% online homework for all levels. For the second-year repeat students, online study comprises 25% of the period total grade, therefore, leading us to the conclusion that BL is not a new approach for the SFL. Thus, it has been a unique opportunity for the researcher to investigate the effectiveness of the ELM to increase self-regulatory skills of students, as well as their achievement. All the necessary permissions to carry out the study have been granted by the Ethics Committee of the state university at which the researcher is working and the data were gathered accordingly (see Appendix D).

Participants

For the qualitative portion of the study, a sample of 10 students (n=10) was selected by the researcher from his own BL class through a convenience sampling method to participate in the current study. All the participants were in the BL program, and nine of them were female students. The students were from the same age group (M_{age} = 20.8), and the English proficiency levels were also similar: between A2 and B1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR; Little, 2006), determined by the scores of the September AGE proficiency exam. All the students in the sample signed forms of consent to participate in the study, and took part in interviews and produced written reflections and journals (ELMs).

A population of 195 students within the blended program participated in the AGE examinations in the academic year 2018-19, but only the scores of the 10 students in this study are reported to help answer the last research question. Written permissions to use the scores of the students was obtained from the management of the SFL.

Instrumentation

Pre- and post-interviews

The pre-interview sessions were actually one-to-one advising sessions done by the researcher, and they were based on the researcher's training in ALL (Mynard & Carson, 2012). These advising sessions were not structured, as the direction of the sessions is usually determined by the student; nonetheless, the sessions had intentions to assess student goals, learning plans, and preparation. Each session took about an hour with each student. The data gathered provide some information to be used in the creation of student profiles. Additionally, the participants also talked

about their learning plans and the specific language skill(s) they wanted to improve. The sessions were carried out after the ELM was administered and before the AGE examination in January.

Post-interview questions (see Appendix A) were created by the researcher, and included reflective questions to ask the effectiveness of the ELM to the participants. The first question in the interview tries to answer the first research question, and the second tries to answer the second research question. The third and fourth questions in the interview will answer the third research question, and the last two in the interview are for the last research question. The interviews were done after the January AGE examination, and each lasted about 15 minutes.

The questions in the post-interview were translated by the researcher into Turkish (see Appendix B) and checked by two independent assessors for comprehension and relevance and to ensure the validity of the translations. The Turkish version was used to avoid possible misinterpretation by the participants.

Effective learning module (ELM)

The main instrument in the study was the ELM (see Appendix C), developed by the advisors in the Japanese university in which the researcher received his advisor training. These modules have been considered as an instrument because they collect the data that will be used to give insights into student learning and self-regulation. The modules act as a reflective journal for the students to set big and small goals, and then make a learning plan and implement it.

The ELM has four main units with an auxiliary unit (named Unit 0), in which the students write a profile of themselves and learn how to write reflections. This unit acts as an introduction to the ELM.

Unit 1, named Goal Setting, focuses on setting big and small goals for language learning. The big goal is a language skill (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and the small goal is a system of language (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) that students choose to improve in a target situation.

In Unit 2, the students choose strategies from a list to achieve their small and big goals. There is a total of 5 strategies for the small goal, and 6 for the big goal. After picking their strategies, the students are asked to try them out.

Unit 3 is about choosing and evaluating resources. Six criteria are given to help the students choose the right resource for themselves by using a "PICK+" method: (a) Purpose: how it will help them to achieve their big or small goals, (b) Interest: how interesting it is, (c) Comprehend: whether it is understandable at their level, (d) Know: what strategies they can use with the resource, (e) place: where they can use the resource, and (f) time: how much time it will take to use it. The students first evaluate a resource they already use, then they pick a new resource using the same method.

Unit 4 constitutes the final steps needed in the learning plan. After deciding what to do in each unit, the students take accountability by making a SURE (study, use, review, evaluate) plan, in which they begin to study by themselves using the plan

they have created after the units. This unit primarily focuses on students deciding how and when to revise and evaluate their learning.

After each unit, the students are expected to write a reflection based on what they have done in the unit. These reflections, along with the other data in the ELMs are the basis for the primary qualitative data that have been analyzed to determine how self-regulated the learners have become.

Achievement scores

The Assessment of General English (AGE) proficiency exams are prepared by the Testing Unit of the School of Foreign Languages of the state university. The AGE is prepared in accordance with the regulations imposed by the Higher Education Council (YOK) and accredited by Pearson Assured independent accreditation company to ensure validity. It is administered four times in an academic year; one at the beginning of the academic year (usually in September), one in between the fall and spring semesters (usually in January), one at the end of the academic year (usually in June), and one after the summer course (usually in July).

The AGE is composed of four skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking, all equal in weight (25 points each). In the listening section, there are 3 parts, all including 5 multiple-choice items each. In the reading test, there are 3 parts, with question types including multiple-choice, sentence insertion and summary completion. The writing test includes two parts; the first is a response task in which the students read a text and write a response to it including their opinion about the author's views. The second task is an extended-response essay question in which

three statements are given, and the students write their opinions by choosing one. The speaking test has two parts; in the first one the students are asked three questions on a set topic and are expected to provide short answers, and in the second one, one statement on the same topic is given, in which the students are given one minute to think and take notes, and two minutes to talk about it.

Methods of data collection

The primary data collection method was semi-structured and informal personal interviews, and content analysis of students' use of and review of the ELM. As stated above, the pre-interview sessions were actually advising sessions, and each took about an hour. The times and dates of the sessions were determined by the participants, and the sessions took place at the SFL in the participants' spare time. The sessions were scattered through the last two weeks in November, 2018, with one participant being interviewed a day. Each session was audio-recorded with a mobile phone to be transcribed later.

Post-interviews were conducted after the January AGE examination to ascertain perceptions of the students after applying their learning plan. The time and place of the interviews were determined by the participants, and each interview took about 15 minutes. All the interviews took place at the SFL in the participants' spare time in March, 2019, and audio-recorded with a mobile phone to be transcribed later.

The ELM was administered through a seven-week period in the first half of the fall term of 2018-19 academic year, between September and November, 2018. Each week in the first four weeks, the participants and the researcher came together to

finish one of the units in the ELM. The remaining three weeks were for incorporating the learning plan created at the end of the fourth week into self-study.

The AGE examination is an English proficiency exam prepared by the Testing Unit of the School of Foreign Languages of the state university. The secondary data consist of the AGE proficiency exam scores of the participants in this study in 2018-19 academic year.

Methods of data analysis

The content of the qualitative data gathered from the transcriptions of advising sessions and interviews was analyzed via content analysis. Specifically, a conceptual content analysis, in which the existence and frequency of the concepts in the data are analyzed, has been performed (Creswell, 2012). Furthermore, the approach used in the categorization of the data was the directed approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), or deductive approach (Mayring, 2014), which means the categories were derived from previous research.

The content analysis of the interviews has been carried out as follows: (1) organize data, (2) explore and code data, (3) construct descriptions, (4) identify the qualitative findings, (5) interpret the findings, and (6) validate the accuracy of the findings. Each interview has been recorded and the spoken data have been transcribed by the researcher. Throughout the data analysis procedure, the transcribed spoken data have been read individually and categorized according to the shared points. At the same time, the researcher analyzed the transcribed spoken data to generate further common themes or patterns. While analyzing the data, a colleague was asked to review and

analyze the transcriptions and identify codes. When there were differences in code identification and content the researcher and the colleague discussed the analysis until there was consensus. This process helped ensure the reliability of the analysis and helped to address possible bias.

The data from the ELMs were analyzed through content analysis, and ten profiles have been created with those data and the data from pre-interview sessions. The data in the ELMs were analyzed in the same manner as the pre- and post-interviews. Primarily, the written reports in the units, and the reflections of the participants in the final pages of each unit in the ELM were put through data analysis procedures.

While analyzing the data, items and sub-scales related to affect, cognitive and metacognitive strategy use, and resource management in the MSLQ (Pintrich et al., 1993) were used as a basis for creating a rubric, and the rationale for this was to apply a systemic approach grounded in the literature in order to ensure that the categorization of the data is not subject to possible misinterpretation. The MSLQ is divided into two broad scales (viz., motivation and learning strategies), and many of the subscales and components were taken into account during the coding process of the data. The MSLQ itself was not used as an instrumentation during the data collection phase, instead its content helped guide the analysis and coding of the data. Two subscales and their components under motivation (viz., value and expectancy) have been omitted from the rubric because they were not related to the purpose of the current study; therefore, no data were gathered in relation with those subscales. The included subscales are given in Table 1.

Table 1
Subscales of the MSLQ included in the current study (Adapted from Garcia-Duncan, Pintrich, Smith, & McKeachie, 2015)

Scale	Subscale	Component
Motivation	Affect	Test anxiety
Learning Strategies	Cognitive	Rehearsal
		Elaboration
		Organization
		Critical Thinking
	Metacognitive	Planning
		Monitoring
		Regulating
	Resource Management	Time and study environment
		Effort management
		Peer learning
		Help-seeking

The quantitative data taken from the AGE scores were only used to help answer the fourth research question. The numerical data of the exam scores were provided in a table for visual comparison, and no statistical analysis was conducted.

The distribution of data according to each research question

In this section, an overview of how the data from the content analyses have been distributed is presented to provide an organizational preview of the analysis. The overview is divided according to each research question.

Research question 1: The results reported in Chapter 4 for this question are under Goal Setting in the Main Analysis, and they were drawn from the content analysis of the first question in the post-interviews, and the first unit of the ELM.

Research question 2: The results related to this research question are under the main analysis of cognitive and metacognitive strategy use in Chapter 4. The data were drawn from the content analyses of the second question in the post-interviews and the second unit in the ELM.

Research question 3: The results regarding this research question are presented under resource management in the main analysis in Chapter 4. The related data were drawn from the content analyses of Unit 3 in the ELM, and the third and fourth questions in the post-interviews for selecting and evaluating resources. Furthermore, the data related to help seeking and peer learning were also gathered from the third and fourth questions in the post-interviews.

Research question 4: The results under achievement in the main analysis in Chapter 4 are presented to answer this research question. The AGE scores of the participants were obtained from the administration of the SFL with permission, and the data from the content analysis of the fifth question in the post-interviews were also included.

Research question 5: The results given in Chapter 4 for this research question are under creating a learning plan in the main analysis. The data were taken from the content analyses of the sixth question in the post interview, and the fourth unit in the ELM.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

The main aim of the present study was to examine if and how students in a blended learning (BL) program within English preparatory school perceive an Effective Learning Module (ELM) helps them create an effective learning plan to become self-regulated learners. Also, the study sought to answer other questions related to student self-reports of becoming accomplished language learners by (a) setting goals for their English learning, (b) applying different learning strategies, (c) evaluating the resources they choose to use, and (d) making use of a learning plan they have created. In order to address these questions, a case study research design was implemented. This chapter provides information about the analysis and the results of the study. The analysis of the data is presented in two sections. The first section presents a *preliminary analysis* comprised of profiles of the ten participants. The second section features the *main analysis* where further examination and content analyses of the post-interviews and of students' ELMs are reported.

Preliminary analysis

In this section, the profiles of the ten participants are given. Pseudonyms have been used to protect their identities; any personal information in the data, which is not related to learning English, has been omitted for the same reason. While creating the profiles, the recordings of pre-interview advising sessions were transcribed and used for analysis. The pre-interviews that took place before the ELMs were mostly about students' intentions for setting goals (language skills to improve) and for creating a

learning plan (cognitive and metacognitive strategies and resource management). The interviews also gained insights into their general anxiety levels and motivation for study. Although the participants were not asked about anxiety and motivation specifically, these topics repeatedly came up in the advising sessions. Therefore, the related data have been included in the preliminary analysis, *post hoc*. The profiles are listed alphabetically.

Student #1: Annie

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: History

Language skill(s) to improve: writing, speaking, and grammar

Learning plan: As part of her learning plan, she wished to continue going to the self-access center at the school to improve her speaking skill with the help of foreign teachers. To improve her reading skill, she studied textbooks and also read novels in Turkish for general comprehension. She believed that books and movies helped her improve her vocabulary. However, she stated that no one had guided her to do anything regarding her studies in English, so she would apply the same strategies that she had used while learning Arabic to learning English.

Cognitive strategy use: As she is a student in the department of history, she said she could memorize whole pages in a short time. She also said that she used a reading strategy (viz., skimming), which she learned at school while studying English, not just for English texts, but also for anything she read.

Metacognitive strategy use: She stated that she transferred all the skills she used while reading in Turkish to reading in English. Additionally, she believed that

English should be learned just like Turkish, by hearing simple words over and over first, and then building on the existing knowledge. In order to get higher marks, she focused on what she had to improve. She said she enjoyed speaking with foreigners, but felt inferior while speaking. Also, she did not know why she could not learn English easily. She wanted to improve her vocabulary and grammar; however, she did not know how.

Resource management: She used TV as a resource to improve her English as she always liked watching TV. She also said she liked studying with her peers, specifically Kate because they are friends. She felt happy and confident while helping her little cousin with her homework in English because she also learned something new each time.

Anxiety: high level of anxiety and belief of failure because of the past failures in her exams.

Motivation for study: She said she did not know where and when she would need English in her life. Translating something made her happy because it helped her remember words and grammar structures better. She said she would feel more confident after creating a learning plan for herself.

Student #2: Daniella

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: Banking and finance

Language skill(s) to improve: speaking (fluency) and writing

Learning plan: She did not wish to create a learning plan for herself because she believed that a plan would not work anyway. However, she stated that she wrote two

essays a day and practiced speaking about twenty different topics, but she thought doing practice did not really help her improve the skills.

Cognitive strategy use: She believed repetition is key to learning a language. She used to memorize words and phrases, but stopped doing so because it did not help her in the exam.

Metacognitive strategy use: She stated that she knew what to do while studying writing. She was aware that writing and speaking skills were similar to each other, and tried to improve her speaking just like her writing, by making short notes to talk about. She said doing practice was helpful but not enough.

Resource management: She was aware that she was not making enough effort for learning English. She sought help from her teacher at school, and started studying upon his advice. With the help of her older sister, she was able to get a high mark in speaking in the exam. She said her friends could also help her.

Anxiety: high level of test anxiety, fear of failure, and blaming others. She said she felt pressurized by her older sister and her current teacher at school.

Motivation for study: She said she really needed to take a break from studying, but did not know what to do either.

Student #3: Diana

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: History

Language skill(s) to improve: reading, speaking, and grammar

Learning plan: She had many plans in mind, but said that she had difficulty applying them all. She made a plan with her teacher to improve her vocabulary, and felt it was very helpful. She also read five texts a day to improve her reading skill.

Cognitive strategy use: She stated that writing essays helped with her reading skill, as well. Watching videos both for recreation and study also helped with her listening skill. However, she said she was having a hard time matching her goals with learning strategies.

Metacognitive strategy use: She was aware that learning English and studying for English exams were not different from each other, but prefers ready-made learning plans instead of creating ones for herself. She believed that she would not understand what she was reading in English, and could not produce intelligible sentences while speaking.

Resource management: She stated that the learning strategies she learned from her teacher helped her a lot in her studies. Furthermore, she enjoyed watching TED videos in her spare time, but had difficulty evaluating the effectiveness of the resources she used.

Anxiety: low level of anxiety towards exams. She believed that as long as she did her portfolio work and studied enough, she would succeed eventually.

Motivation for study: She had advising sessions with other advisors before, and said that she did not have a negative attitude towards learning English. She also said that she values learning in general and enjoys learning English. Her goal was not only to pass the preparatory school, but to learn English better.

Student #4: Emily

Gender: female

Age: 27

Department: Energy systems engineering

Language skill(s) to improve: writing and speaking

Learning plan: She did not believe creating a learning plan would help her even though she felt that she had a solid plan for her studies.

Cognitive strategy use: She said she used a translation app for speaking and writing skills. She then memorized what she had translated to use in the exam. She believed that memorizing was the way to pass the exam. Additionally, she analyzed different essays to find useful language to model. As she was actively writing scholarly articles, she felt confident in transferring complex thoughts into her writing. She also realized that her listening skill would improve if she continued to make use of the self-access learning center.

Metacognitive strategy use: She said she tried to warm up to learning English by listening to songs in English. Her second language is Kurdish, but she rarely uses it. Furthermore, she believed that when a topic familiar to her was in an exam, she performed much better. She was also aware that speaking and writing skills had common characteristics.

Resource management: She sought help and feedback from her teacher about her writing. Additionally, she got help from her boyfriend. She stated that she spoke with her classmates from Syria or Somalia in English, but she avoided speaking as much as she could.

Anxiety: She felt her age was a restrictive factor for learning a language. As a PhD student, she wrote twelve articles, but had stress during exams. She stated that she resorted to memorization when her anxiety level was high.

Motivation for study: She did not believe that she would pass the exam because English had no place in her life. She saw English as another job, so she did not enjoy learning it. She found Physics classes to be easier.

Student #5: Emma

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: Banking and finance

Language skill(s) to improve: speaking, grammar, and vocabulary

Learning plan: She said she already had a solid learning plan for her studies.

Cognitive strategy use: She stated that her vocabulary was good, but she did not know how to accurately select what words to use.

Metacognitive strategy use: She felt that even though listening was the skill that she studied the most, her proficiency was diminishing. She also said she felt that her speaking skill would never improve.

Resource management: She practiced with her Ukrainian roommate, but this was only on rare occasions. She also sought help from her teacher regarding her studies.

Anxiety: She said that she was under a lot of stress; however, this was unrelated to her studies, but rather familial health issues.

Motivation for study: She said that she admitted defeat regarding speaking and listening, and gave up studying those skills.

Student #6: Gabriella

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: Banking and finance

Language skill(s) to improve: speaking

Learning plan: She stated that she was planning to make use of the self-access center.

Cognitive strategy use: She did not report anything related to cognitive strategy use.

Metacognitive strategy use: She did not report anything related to metacognitive strategy use.

Resource management: She said that she did not trust her friends, so asking for help from other seemed to her like an impossible task.

Anxiety: Because of her speech impairment, she said that she would have difficulty finding a job when she graduated.

Motivation for study: She said she felt like English was a barrier for her and she needed to pass it, but she was not demotivated to study more.

Student #7: Grace

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: Banking and finance

Language skill(s) to improve: speaking (pronunciation), listening, grammar, and vocabulary

Learning plan: She stated that she was studying regularly, and that she had a different plan for each of the skills she wanted to improve.

Cognitive strategy use: She said that she did not like memorizing, and studied for improvement in language skills. Additionally, she used similar strategies to the ones she used while learning mathematics. She also said she was able to gauge her speaking skill by the reactions of her listeners. She was aware that regular and systematic study would bring success.

Metacognitive strategy use: She would compare herself with other English-speaking Turks that she thought were better, to determine how much more she needed to improve.

Resource management: She said she was mixing physical and online resources for variety. She used apps suggested by her teachers, and she practiced speaking with her friends regularly.

Anxiety: She thought English was "a hypocrite." Even though she studied regularly and continued improving herself, sometimes her exam results would be very low. She felt responsible to her family, and this put more pressure on her. She stated that her anxiety levels were much higher in speaking exams.

Motivation for study: She said regular study increased her motivation to go on. She had a plan to go abroad for language courses, and her plans for English were not limited to her exams. She enjoyed learning English for the sake of the language itself, not for the exams.

Student #8: Kate

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: History

Language skill(s) to improve: reading

Learning plan: She said she did not really have a learning plan because she was still using the plan she had created before failing the exam.

Cognitive strategy use: She was not aware that she could not transfer her existing knowledge to a new strategy. She thought all skills and strategies were unrelated.

Metacognitive strategy use: She was aware of the fact that when she read something, her only goal was to get better exam scores, not learn English.

Resource management: She found keeping a vocabulary notebook to be a waste of time because the words she had studied rarely appeared in the exams.

Anxiety: high exam anxiety. She would even forget the meanings of simple words in a reading passage.

Motivation for study: Her only motivation to study was to pass the exam. She stated that she had further academic plans, but she would plan her English studies for each occasion individually.

Student #9: Sarah

Gender: female

Age: 20

Department: History

Language skill(s) to improve: writing, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary

Learning plan: She did not have a concrete plan, but had many tentative ones.

Cognitive strategy use: She said she was watching animation films and mimicking what was being said.

Metacognitive strategy use: She was aware that English was much more than she had anticipated. She realized she was able to perform better when she mixed English with the activities she liked.

Resource management: She had many apps and coursebooks for each skill in mind. She also sought help from her older brother regularly.

Anxiety: She felt left behind because all of her friends had passed the exam the previous year. She also felt pressurized by all the schoolwork she had to do.

Motivation for study: English had become an obligation for her, so she did not enjoy it as much as she did before. She said that if she saw that she could do well in her exams, her motivation to study harder would be higher.

Student #10: Sebastian

Gender: male

Age: 21

Department: Banking and finance

Language skill(s) to improve: reading and writing

Learning plan: He did not have a plan, but said that he tried to study regularly.

Cognitive strategy use: He said that he watched TV shows with subtitles to improve his pronunciation and fluency, and he also spoke with his foreign friends as much as he could. He stated he would combine English with his hobbies.

Metacognitive strategy use: He was aware that all the skills in English are interconnected. He said that his past failures taught him the importance of lifelong learning, and with English he was able to learn about other cultures.

Resource management: His older brother helped him with his writing. He also said that the best way to learn English was by travelling, so he went to Europe in the summer break and made a lot of friends there.

Anxiety: low test anxiety. He said he failed because of fights with his girlfriend and familial health issues.

Motivation for study: He said he wanted to become a world citizen, and English is a universal language. He wanted to master English in order to survive in his travels.

Summary statement

The data from the pre-interview sessions revealed some similarities and differences among the participants regarding goal setting, cognitive and metacognitive strategy use, and resource management. Table 2 includes a summary of the data gathered in the pre-interview advising sessions. The categories of cognitive and metacognitive strategy use, and resource management were adapted from the categorizations in the MSLQ (Pintrich et al., 1993). As none of the participants reported managing their time and study environment under the category of resource management, it was omitted from the table, and the skill of selecting and evaluating resources was added. The category of goal setting was added by the researcher to include the common statements of the participants. All the categories were organized to be in line with the research questions.

Table 2
Summary of the data from the pre-interview advising sessions

Common statement/skill	f
Goal setting	
My main goal is to pass the exam.	7
I don't know where to start.	4
I already have short- and long-term goals for myself.	3
Cognitive strategy use	
Elaboration/linking	5
Rehearsal/memorization	3
Organization/outlining/note-taking	3
Critical thinking	1
Metacognitive strategy use	
Planning/task analysis/awareness	5
Monitoring/self-testing	5
Regulating/adjusting	4
Resource management	
Help seeking	8
Selecting and evaluating resources	5
Peer learning	5
Effort regulation	2

The pre-interview data showed that the majority of the participants set goals to achieve better in their examinations, and almost half of them reported that they had difficulty setting goals for their learning. Only three participants seemed confident in the variety and complexity of their current learning goals.

In terms of cognitive strategy use, half of the participants reported linking their current knowledge to a new task or learning situation. Three participants said that they rehearsed by memorizing and organized their learning by taking notes. However, only one participant (Grace) reported indications of thinking critically in the sessions.

For metacognitive strategy use, half of the participants reported that they were aware of their strengths and weaknesses in English, also they reported that they were monitoring their learning. Furthermore, four participants stated that they adjusted their learning according to their needs and strengths.

In terms of resource management, the majority of the participants stated that they sought help from an authority (teacher, older sibling), while half of them said they were confident in their ability to select and evaluate new and existing resources. Likewise, half of them reported that they preferred learning from their peers. Nonetheless, only two participants (Grace and Sebastian) said that they were able to gauge how much and how intensely they needed to study.

Main analysis

In this section, the reports of the participants on their self-regulatory skills and their achievement scores are given to answer the research questions. The data were gathered through content analysis of post-interview transcriptions and participants' use and review of the ELM files. Moreover, the subscales in the MSLQ (Pintrich et al., 1993) were also considered while reporting the results. Further explanation can be found under each section. First, results related to goal setting, strategy use, and resource management are reported. Additionally, achievement scores of the students in four AGE examinations are given. In line with the preliminary analysis, comparisons are made where necessary.

Goal setting

Unit 1 in the ELM focused primarily on setting goals. In the unit, the participants were asked to fill in what they did to learn English at that time, and then asked to write what they wanted to be able to do, in which they decided on their goals (language skills they wanted to improve). In the MSLQ, this stage is under the sub-scale metacognitive self-regulation, called planning, and it is related to the awareness of a student about what he needs to improve.

The frequencies of the common statements of the participants related to goal setting are given in Table 3. The statements in the table are a combination of the content analyses of post-interview data and the reports of the participants in the first unit of the ELM.

Table 3
Common statements of the participants related to goal setting with the help of ELM

Statement	f
It was helpful for setting goals.	10
It helped me realize what I was good at and what I needed to improve.	6
It made me realize I was not studying enough.	4
It helped me organize my learning.	4
It helped me find out my real goal.	3
It helped me concentrate on my studies and lessons.	2

Analyzing the post-interview data, it can be seen that all the participants found ELM to be useful for setting goals. Furthermore, a majority of the participants (n=6) reported that the ELM made them realize what their strengths and weaknesses were.

Four participants stated that the ELM helped them realize that their study habits were not adequate. Likewise, four participants said the ELM helped them organize their learning behavior. Three of the participants reported that they were able to figure out their learning goals with the help of the ELM, and two of them said they were able to focus on their lessons more after the ELM.

Cognitive and metacognitive strategy use

The second unit in the ELM gives some sample activities (learning strategies) to the students to try out. It then asks them to state whether they have used the activity before. The main purpose of the unit is to get the learners to think in depth about their current learning strategies, while providing some new activities that they may consider trying in order to achieve the learning goals they set in Unit 1.

In the MSLQ, cognitive and metacognitive sub-scales are different from each other, but they are reported here together because a seemingly cognitive activity may turn into a metacognitive one if one asks for the reason for doing the activity. For example, if a student reports that he is keeping a vocabulary notebook, this is usually seen as a cognitive strategy (organizing) because the end goal is learning new words. However, if the student also reports that the reason for keeping a notebook is to adjust his vocabulary learning behavior because a previous method did not prove to be useful, then the metacognitive process of monitoring and regulating learning behavior should also be considered. Therefore, the findings under cognitive and metacognitive strategy use are reported here without distinct categorization. The common learning activities and techniques regarding the use of learning strategies by the participants can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4
Common learning activities used by the participants

Strategies/activities	f_{after}	f_{before}
Watching videos with the script	5	5
Taking notes/revising	5	3
Free writing/speaking on a topic	5	1
Having conversations with friends	4	5
Recording speech to check for mistakes	3	2
Singing along to English songs	3	1
Writing a diary	3	0

f_{after} = frequency of participants that tried the activity for the first time after the ELM
f_{before} = frequency of participants that were already using the activity before the ELM

The data in Table 4 display comparisons between strategy use before and after the ELM. Overall, according to the content analysis of post-interview data, seven participants found the ELM to be useful for providing them with new activities to try out to be able to reach their learning goals. The participants also stated that the activities to improve their small goals (pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary) were more beneficial. Specifically, half of the participants tried taking notes, watching videos with the script to revise grammar and vocabulary, and free writing/speaking activities for the first time after the ELM. Additionally, four participants reported that they tried having conversations with their friends after the ELM. Finally, three participants stated that they would try singing along to English songs to improve their pronunciation, recording their speech to check for errors later, and keeping a diary of their learning behavior.

Resource management

Resource management included four main components: (a) evaluating the existing resources to make changes if necessary, (b) selecting new resources based on certain criteria, (c) seeking help from an authority (teacher/advisor), and (d) peer learning. In

the ELM, the resources are limited to study materials (textbooks, worksheets, audio, video, apps, etc.). The MSLQ presents a wider view of resources, also taking into account the effort put forth by the students, seeking help from teachers, and learning from peers. Both approaches were considered during the data analysis.

In Unit 3 of the ELM, the participants learned about a method called PICK+ to evaluate existing resources and select new ones for their learning goals. According to the method, there are six criteria for evaluating resources: (a) purpose, (b) interest, (c) comprehend (level), (d) know (knowing what strategies to use with it), (e) place (where to use it), and (f) time (when to use it). In the unit, the participants were first asked to answer yes/no questions about their existing resources, and then asked to pick certain criteria that they would use when selecting new resources. The content analysis of the data gathered in the end is reported in Table 5.

Table 5
Evaluation results for existing resources and selection criteria for new resources

Criterion/Evaluative question	f_{eval}	f_{pick}
Purpose (is it helpful for the skill I want to improve)	6	10
Interest (is it fun)	5	8
Strategy (do I know what learning activity is suitable for this resource)	5	7
Level (is it the right level)	4	6
Time (do I need a lot of time for this resource)	4	2
Place (do I need a specific place for this resource)	2	3

f_{eval} = frequency of participants that answered "yes" to the questions in parentheses for evaluation
f_{pick} = frequency of participants that have chosen to use the criterion for selecting new resources

Not surprisingly, all the participants thought that the purpose of the resource is a crucial factor to select it, and four participants decided to discontinue using their existing resources because they thought the resource was not helpful for the skill(s)

they wanted to improve. Furthermore, fun factor and strategy use seemed important (n=8 and n=7, respectively) while selecting new resources, while half of the participants reported that their existing resources were fun, and that they were aware of what learning strategies to use with their resources. Additionally, four participants thought that the level of their resources was not suitable for their own level, and six of them said that level is another important criterion for selecting new resources. Consequently, the place and time for using the resources seemed unimportant for most of the participants.

The MSLQ divides resource management into four categories: (a) time and study environment, (b) effort regulation, (c) help seeking, and (d) peer learning. In the post-interviews, the participants also provided information about their help seeking and peer learning habits. Before the ELM, eight participants had stated that they sought help from their teacher, and five of them mentioned studying with and learning from their peers. These numbers also increased after the ELM, with all the participants saying they started seeking help from their teachers/advisors, and seven of them stating they were studying with their peers.

Achievement

Achievement is the desired outcome of successful self-regulation. In this section, achievement is measured by whether the participants were able to get a set score or above in the AGE examination, and the minimum score is 69.5 to be able to pass the preparatory school at the SFL. In Table 6, all the AGE exam scores of the participants between September 2018 and July 2019 are given for comparison. It is

also important to note that the data in Table 6 do not indicate that the ELM contributed to the participants' AGE outcomes, but rather it is more informatory.

The September examination took place before the academic year and the ELM, and the scores of the participants are reported here for reference. The AGE examination in January was seven weeks after the ELM, and it was the first high-stakes examination after the ELM. It is surprising that the achievement scores of most of the participants dropped in that exam, even though the scores started to increase in the following exams.

Table 6
The AGE scores of the participants

Name	Sept. 2018	Sept.-Nov. 2018	Jan. 2019	June 2019	July 2019
Sebastian	62.5		55.5	70.0*	-
Sarah	62.0		49.0	64.0	69.5*
Grace	59.5		73.0*	-	-
Emily	58.5		56.0	57.5	-**
Daniella	57.0	*Application of the ELM*	48.0	69.5*	-
Kate	56.5		60.0	63.5	72.5*
Diana	56.0		45.0	61.0	58.0
Gabriella	54.5		47.5	48.0	35.5
Emma	54.0		56.5	54.5	63.5
Annie	53.5		40.5	48.5	71.5*

*passed the preparatory school
**dropped out of school

Grace was the only student to be able to pass the preparatory school right after the ELM. Daniella and Sebastian were able to pass the AGE in their second try, and Annie, Kate, and Sarah passed the exam in their third try. Emily dropped out to

pursue her academic career as a PhD student in another university, in which the medium of instruction is Turkish.

Additionally, according to the content analysis of the post-interviews, it was found that seven participants reported seeing improvements in different language skills after creating their learning plan with the help of the ELM. Specifically, Daniella, Diana, Emily, Gabriella, Grace, and Sarah reported seeing improvements in their speaking scores in midterms and online portfolio tasks. Likewise, Daniella and Emily reported improvements in their writing scores in midterms and written portfolio work. Moreover, Diana and Kate stated that their reading skill improved, evident in their scores in quizzes and midterm exams, and their self-study of reading textbooks. Finally, Grace reported improvement in her listening scores in quizzes and midterms after her shadowing (i.e., reading a book and listening to its audiobook at the same time) activities.

Creating a learning plan

The last unit in the ELM was about finishing the module by creating a learning plan and implementing it based on what has been covered in the previous units. In this section, the data obtained from the content analyses of student reports in the ELM, and the transcriptions of post-interviews are presented. In the final unit of the ELM, the participants learned about making a SURE (viz., study, use, review, and evaluate) learning plan, in which they would (a) study to learn something new, (b) use what they studied in a target situation, (c) review what they had studied before regularly to internalize, and (d) evaluate their language gain. An example of a completed learning plan by a participant is presented in Figure 1.

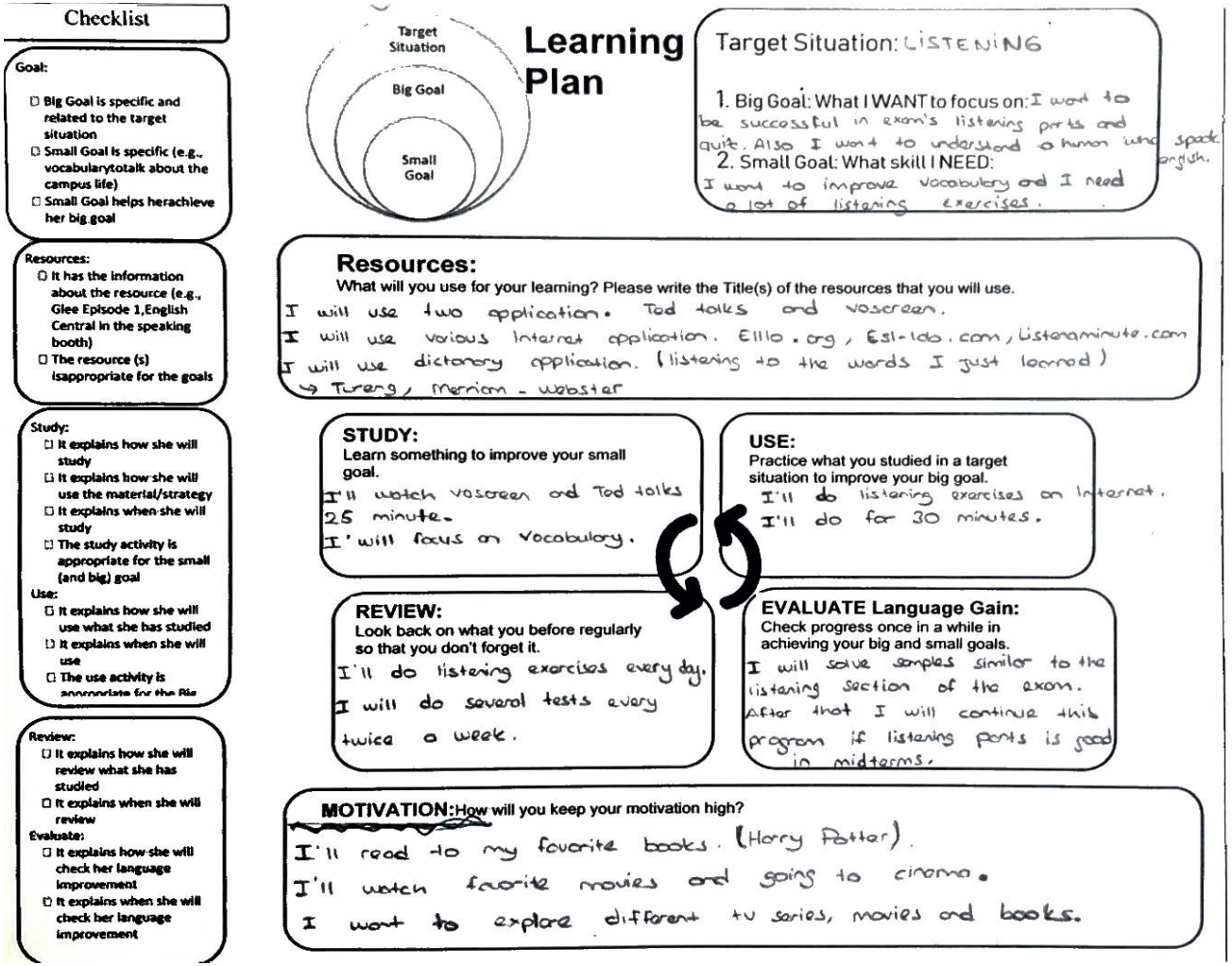

Figure 1. The learning plan of one of the participants

Creating an applicable and practical learning plan is the end goal of the ELM. Therefore, student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the ELM for creating such a learning plan were obtained. Common statements are given in Table 7.

Table 7
Common statements related to the SURE learning plan

Statement	f
The ELM was helpful for creating a learning plan.	7
I feel confident in creating new learning plans for myself in the future.	7
The SURE learning plan made my learning more organized.	3
I did not apply the SURE learning plan.	2

The majority of the participants (n=7) found the ELM to be useful for creating their learning plan, and stated that they felt confident about developing new plans for their future learning. In addition, three participants said that their learning plan made their learning habits more organized. Finally, two of the participants reported that they did not make use of their learning plans.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The aim of the present study was to examine the perceptions of students in an English preparatory school blended program toward creating an effective learning plan to become self-regulated learners with the help of the ELM. Additionally, the study aimed to investigate the perceived effectiveness of goal setting, using cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and evaluating and selecting resources to create a learning plan and implement it. In order to analyze the written and spoken data, content analyses of the transcriptions of pre-interview advising sessions and post-interviews, and student reports in the ELMs have been carried out. The overview of the study, as well as a discussion of the major findings, and implications for practice and further research are presented in this chapter. Additionally, the limitations of the current study are presented at the end.

Overview of the study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of students in an English preparatory school blended learning (BL) program toward becoming self-regulated learners by creating a learning plan with the help of a module called the ELM, and by setting goals, using cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and evaluating and selecting resources in line with the units in the ELM. All the participants in the study completed the ELM, and produced written reports in each of the four units. Furthermore, pre-interview advising sessions and post-interviews have been carried out with all the participants to get their perceptions toward self-regulation before and after the application of the ELM. The collected data were

analyzed through content analysis in line with the MSLQ (Pintrich et al., 1993), and the ELM.

The current study was a case study with ten participants, all within the BL program at the SFL, and with similar English levels, evident in their September AGE scores in Table 6. All the participants consented to take part in the study and all its aspects. In addition, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the state university in which the study was carried out.

In order to achieve the specific goals of the study, the research questions below were addressed:

1. What are students' perceptions of the ELM in terms of its effect on helping them set goals to study English?
2. What learning strategies do students prefer within the ELM?
3. What are the students' perceptions on the ELM in terms of its help with resource preference and evaluation?
4. What are the students' perceptions of the ELM in terms of its effect on their English skills?
5. What are students' perceptions of the ELM in terms of creating a learning plan to become more self-regulated learners?

During the procedure of data analysis, preliminary and main analyses were conducted respectively. In the preliminary analysis, the content analyses of the transcriptions of pre-interview advising sessions were done, and the data were categorized according to sub-scales in the MSLQ, and common themes and

statements given by the participants. In the main analysis, the data from the ELMs and the transcriptions of post-interviews were presented in four categories in line with the research questions: (a) goal setting, (b) strategy use, (c) evaluating and selecting resources, and (d) achievement.

Major findings and conclusions

The main aim of the present study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the ELM for students of English in a BL program in terms of the theoretical background of SRL. Before going deeper into answering each research question below, it is important to note some highlights and overarching findings of the current study first. This research is a case study because the demographics of the participants are unique. The participants were: (a) in an English preparatory program at a university, (b) students who failed their first year of preparatory education, and (c) educated in a BL program. Even though it is a case study, it bears a resemblance to action research, as well, because the researcher was an active participant in the application of the ELM, as well as being the classroom teacher and advisor of the participants. Therefore, he was able to gain some other insights into the ELM and the learners, and his practice as an advisor.

First, it is necessary to include some insights about the "wow effect" of advising, which was also present when the participants of this study first heard about the ELM, and they were eager to be a part of this research. This effect refers to the initial surprise of the students when they see a teacher sitting across them, actively listening to their learning issues, and reflecting back what they think or feel. In many of the advising sessions with different students, they stated that it was the first time in a

long time that an adult was actually listening to their learning problems, about which they could not talk to their parents or friends with the fear of being judged or scolded. Thus, the advising program at the SFL has become very popular among learners of various backgrounds in a short time. Normally, universities have counseling services, but factors like social pressure and cultural repression play a huge role in deterring people from seeking professional help. ALL, however, has a more specific goal: helping learners with their learning issues. Therefore, students do not feel like they are going to a psychologist, but rather a specialist in learning issues, although sometimes they also open up about their psychological problems in the sessions.

One of the challenges for the researcher in this study was about making the distinction between being a teacher and an advisor. During the application of the ELM units, the researcher had to suppress his reactions as a teacher, an authority figure, and be a guide to the participants as their equal. This equality is important in building rapport and trust with the learners in advising sessions.

While doing the units in the ELM, the participants were made aware that they would not be judged, and that they should keep an open mind about other participants' thoughts about learning. This led to an open conversation among the participants and the researcher during the ELM, and thanks to these conversations, the participants stated that they learned some strategies and tips from each other. Even after the ELM, when they were asked to come together to talk about their learning progress, they were eager to do it and reflect on their learning. Consequently, from the perspective of the researcher, the ELM acted like a glue that put together the learners

and their learning processes. Building upon the results of the analyses presented in Chapter 4, major findings related to each research question are discussed below. The sub-sections are reported in the order of research questions.

Students perceive that the ELM helps them to set goals

The responses of the students confirmed that the ELM was a helpful tool to set language goals, and that setting goals encouraged them to study English as they realized what they needed to do specifically regarding their language learning goals. One can also assume that it helped with their self-regulation because it was the first time the participants were asked to adjust their learning goals according to their needs and wishes by thinking deeply about what they were actually doing and what they needed to be doing to achieve their goals. This assumption can be further supported by the actual sentences of the participants during the post-interviews. Some examples are given below:

> Daniella: It helped me to organize and plan my learning.
>
> Emily: It helped me realize my weak points.
>
> Gabriella: It helped me realize what I did well and what I needed to improve.
>
> Grace: Seeing what we are currently doing to study English made me realize I was not doing much to learn English. I realized I had to create a more effective learning plan.

As can be seen from the quotations, some of the students showed signs of metacognitive awareness towards their strengths and weaknesses in the learning process. The ELM seemingly helped them evaluate their current

learning behavior and adjust it according to the goals they set, which is another indication of SRL strategy use because monitoring and adjusting learning are also phases in the theory of SRL. This result is also supported by the literature, as Phillips (2006) found in his case study that the participant in the study showed signs of self-regulation by linking his language learning goals with his past experiences. Also, Zimmerman (2002) states that in the first phase of SRL process, called the forethought phase, the learners set language goals for themselves.

Students mainly prefer engaging activities and strategies that improve productive skills in English

The participants considered trying some of the activities presented in the ELM for the first time; therefore, they found the ELM to be useful for providing them with alternative strategies. This can be seen as a type of dependency on the ELM, but during the application of the unit, students also suggested other learning strategies they used as alternatives for their peers to try, as well, such as shadowing or writing based on a model text, both of which show a high level of strategy use.

Most of the students preferred activities where they were taking notes, having conversations with friends, watching English videos with the script, and free writing and speaking on a topic. It can be assumed that the participants tended to select strategies that require active engagement of the students. The reason for this might be that learners actively engaged in the learning process tend to get more satisfaction from their learning and perceive that their learning of the language improves, which is also another indication of successful self-regulation (Cho & Shen, 2013).

In addition, they mostly preferred activities that might improve their productive skills in English, namely speaking and writing. This might be because of the fact that the students might perceive that they do not normally have enough chances to get feedback on their written work or to have speaking practice in English. Therefore, they might feel that they are not improving the productive skills well enough.

Students pick and evaluate resources based on various criteria

The purpose of a resource was deemed the most important criterion by the participants while selecting new resources. This is not surprising, considering the first unit was about setting goals, and the second was about learning strategies. As the participants were aware of what language skill they wanted to improve and what learning strategies they could apply to improve it, the only thing left for them to do was to pick the most appropriate resources accordingly.

The second favored criterion was the fun factor of a resource. This result may be considered in line with the previous findings, as the participants seemed to prefer more engaging strategies to use. As human beings, we tend to engage ourselves more in activities that seem more fun, so this might be the case for that criterion, as well. Likewise, the criterion of strategy use is also directly linked with the findings in the previous research question. Therefore, confident in their learning strategy use, the participants might have reported it as an important factor while selecting new resources.

The level of a resource was also considered important for the participants. Looking at the evaluation results, it seems that six participants thought that their existing resources were not suitable for their level (i.e., they were perceived to be either too difficult or too easy by the participants), so it is not surprising those participants to think that level should be considered an important criterion, as well.

The criteria of place and time did not seem to be important for most of the participants, which was actually similar to the results in the preliminary analysis. This can be attributed to the nature of the BL program as most of the classwork of the students is in the form of self-study. Also, previous learning habits of the participants may have played a role because they may have transferred their past habits of managing their time and study environment.

Seeking help from the teachers/advisors was favored by all the participants after the ELM. With the ELM, the participants were presented with a written form of advising for the first time, and many participants also had their first advising sessions in the pre-interviews. Upon experiencing advising, they stated that they started to seek help from their teachers and other advisors more. This can be assumed as advising having a positive effect on students' help seeking habits. Furthermore, during the application of the ELM, the participants sometimes worked together and discussed the elements in the units, which may have encouraged them to study with their peers more often.

Resource management is particularly important in a BL environment, as well as SRL theory (Garcia-Duncan & McKeachie, 2005; Pintrich, 2004; Zimmerman, 2002; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011), because the learners are provided with a large number

of resources to select from, according to the personal experience of the researcher as a teacher in the BL program at the SFL for more than three years. Therefore, selecting appropriate resources from the pool is an important and sometimes difficult task for the learners. The findings related to resource management seemed to have eased the procedure of selecting suitable resources for the participants.

Students perceive that the ELM helps them improve their learning

According to the AGE scores, six participants were able to pass the preparatory English program by the end of the academic year 2018-19. Nonetheless, the academic achievement of the participants cannot be attributed to the ELM, as there might be many other external variables affecting their exam outcomes, such as changes in study habits, their motivation to study, and their anxiety levels in the exams. Related to this, Güler (2018), found a positive correlation between year of studying English and extrinsic motivation, and a negative correlation between year of study and achievement. This means students in their second year of preparatory program were not internally motivated to study, and also achieved lower than students in their first year of preparatory education. Therefore, these factors also need to be addressed before reaching a conclusion.

The perceived success of the participants, however, was reported in post-interviews. The reports of the participants indicated positive outcomes related to their portfolio work, midterms, and self-study. Comparing this with the reviewed literature, a fair number of examples can be given with regard to the relationship between self-regulation and academic achievement. Cho and Shen (2013) reported that successful self-regulated learners performed better. In addition, Sun et al. (2018) found a

positive relationship between self-regulation and achievement. Moreover, the results of the meta-analytical review of 21 studies by Ergen and Kanadli (2017) revealed a large effect of self-regulation in academic achievement. Finally, a case study conducted by Zeng and Goh (2018) produces similar results, with self-regulated learners achieving better in their listening tests.

Therefore, even though the ELM may not be a direct indicator of academic achievement, in line with the literature, self-regulation can be linked with achievement. Building upon this, the application of the ELM might have fostered the self-regulatory skills of the participants, indirectly contributing to their academic achievement in the end.

Students perceive that they have become more self-regulated after the ELM and their learning plan

The MSLQ (Pintrich et al., 1993) divides metacognitive self-regulation into three components: planning, monitoring, and regulating learning. Also, Zimmerman (2002) proposed three main phases of SRL as forethought, performance, and self-reflection. The components and the phases are in line with one another in that each respective pair refers to similar processes of self-regulation.

In order to determine the perceived self-regulation of the participants, a deeper look into specific statements from their post-interviews is needed. The stage of planning/forethought (setting goals) has already been discussed in the first finding; therefore, the stages of monitoring/performance and regulating/self-reflection will be discussed in this section, with specific statements from the participants.

Daniella: I feel pretty confident because I started to study in a more organized and disciplined way. I can see my weaknesses now.

Emily: As I now know what I need to improve myself in, I feel confident about planning, as well.

Gabriella: It was very helpful because I was able to achieve my goals by monitoring my studies according to my learning plan.

Grace: I realized what I can do regularly or not and what bores me. Therefore, I feel that I will be able to create a better and more beneficial learning plan in the future because I now feel more experienced.

Kate: I think it was helpful because the learning plan made me realize how much I improved my skills, and this motivated me.

Sarah: It helped me organize myself and study regularly the topic that I thought I needed to improve.

Sebastian: I can now create a plan for whatever skills I need to improve.

In their post-interviews, many of the participants gave statements that might be perceived as they were monitoring and adjusting their learning behavior according to their goals and needs. Signs of organizing and monitoring learning, and knowing what to study can be attributed to monitoring/performance stages. Moreover, realizing what has been learned and knowing what to do next might been seen as signs for regulating/self-reflection stages. Having confidence in their skill to create a learning plan for future learning may also be counted as metacognitive awareness, and thus monitoring and adjusting the learning behavior. The stages mentioned here are also phases in the SRL theory, and these phases are also needed in BL environments because most of the schoolwork includes self-study. Nevertheless,

some participants also produced statements that might be conceived as the learning plan and/or the ELM did not help them enough. Some examples are given below:

> Annie: Finding good learning strategies to put into my plan was difficult for me. I also don't know how to evaluate the effectiveness of the resources I put into the plan.
>
> Diana: I can actually create very good learning plans for myself, but I have difficulty applying them. I even sought help about this, but perhaps random study brings success for some people, instead of having a rock-solid plan.
>
> Emma: Actually, it helped me, but it also didn't because after some time I chose different methods of study. I used my learning plan and also tried different things, but in the end, I was unsuccessful. I guess I should have found different and more effective methods.

These statements of the participants here can also be considered as constructive criticism for further development of the ELM. It seems that one participant did not find the units in the ELM informative enough. Even if unit 3 in the ELM provides extensive guidelines to effectively evaluate resources, these guidelines may need more clarity or explanations during the application of the unit. Another stated that she lost faith in organizing her language learning. This is actually one of the common issues brought up in advising sessions; the student feels burnt out and loses the motivation to study. Face-to-face advising works better with such students; therefore, Diana could have benefitted from verbal advising better. The last student, Emma, seems to have had trust issues with the program, so she resorted to another plan. The fact that she felt remorseful in the end shows her frustration towards being unable to

use effective methods of study. This kind of indecision can also be remedied by one-to-one advising sessions.

In conclusion, considering all the findings and perceptions of the students, the ELM seems to have been perceived as a helpful module for fostering SRL strategy use of students in a blended learning program. Also, from an indirect perspective, the module is perceived to increase academic achievement of the students.

Implications for practice

The ELM can be seen as a wholesome module, and it is applicable in and out of the classroom. The module can be revised according to the objectives and goals of a particular institution and used as part of the curriculum, or can act as an extracurricular module to help learners deal with learning issues. There is a body of research in favor of extracurricular activities for student development in Turkish (Civitci, 2015) and international contexts (Astin, 1999; Marsh, 1992; Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002). Based on the experience of the researcher, however, it is advisable to embed such a module into the curriculum because self-regulation is a life skill, and the ELM seems to foster it. Therefore, making it a curricular module will ensure that more students will be able to benefit from it. However, it is also important to note that the application of the ELM takes a noticeable amount of time, and the workload of the advisors/teachers also increases as a result.

Furthermore, educational institutions may provide their staff with learning advisory training to help them enrich their interactions with the students and to improve their understanding of the learning processes. Also, the ELM can be combined with other

advising types to provide better support for learners having difficulty in their learning process.

Finally, SRL and learner autonomy should be emphasized in tertiary education. Students normally learn to set goals, and monitor and regulate their learning in their departmental courses, but the preparatory schools are usually seen as a barrier to be passed, and many students seem to have the misconception that a language can be learned just like any other academic subject, by studying or memorizing textbooks. Therefore, institutions may provide orientations for their new students, in which the students get familiarized with language learning process, and the importance of setting goals and monitoring learning activity, along with gauging the learning process according to needs are explained to them.

Implications for further research

The current study was carried out in one state university in Turkey; therefore, the findings were limited to the university in question. However, to the researcher's knowledge, there is at least one other university in Turkey which will implement ALL into their curriculum. Similar studies can be conducted in Turkey or other countries to better generalize the findings of this study.

In addition, the participants in this case study had a unique demographic. This study may also be replicated with various demographics to investigate the effectiveness of the ELM on each demographic. Also, ALL is a long and continuous process, which means it may take a long time (e.g., a year or more) to see positive results in

learning. Therefore, related longitudinal studies may provide further insights into the practice.

Furthermore, the current study was a case study with a small number of participants. Related studies with a larger sample and more robust research methods may be carried out to provide better understanding of student perceptions of their self-regulation in similar contexts. Moreover, ALL is a fairly new phenomenon, and written advising is only one aspect of it. Therefore, more research into ALL and other types of advising is needed in order to evaluate or examine the effectiveness of the practice on learning issues.

Another implication could be for BL approaches. If such blended programs as the one in the state university in which this study was conducted are implemented in other institutions, more research opportunities into the effectiveness of these programs may arise. Finally, motivational factors and anxiety of the students were not taken into account in this study. The findings of the current research can be extended by considering these factors in further related studies.

Limitations

The first limitation of the study was that it is a case study; therefore, the sample and its population are very limited in scope. Moreover, the study was carried out in one state university in Turkey. Thus, the results were limited to that university. To remedy these drawbacks, studies with a wider sample from a wider range of universities can be conducted, and the number of raters could be increased for increased validity. In addition, data analysis procedure was content analysis, and the

data from the analysis are subject to possible misinterpretation of the researcher because he was also an active participant in the research and might have had bias or conflict of interest. Although efforts had been taken to avoid bias by consulting a second rater, in further studies, the researcher could get another advisor to lead the sessions and participate as an observer only.

Another limitation could be the method of the study. This study is a qualitative study lacking quantitative methods to better validate and generalize the results. In related mixed-method or multi-method studies, triangulation of the results could prove more valid outcomes of the research. Additionally, the MSLQ can be used as an instrument to provide pre- and post- quantitative data to perform paired-samples *t* tests with a larger sample.

Finally, this study did not investigate the participants' motivation to study and their anxiety levels. In addition, gender ratio of the participants was not controlled, as the participants volunteered for the study. These factors and other variables could have influenced the results of this study. While conducting further studies, it may prove to be more effective to investigate other variables as much as possible to better control the research environment.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Post-Interview Questions (English)

Participants' Interview Protocol

You are kindly requested to participate in this interview and express your opinions and feelings considering the questions in this protocol. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and you will be under no obligation whatsoever to answer any questions that you are not inclined to answer. Your responses will be used for research purposes only and will be strictly confidential.

1. In what ways do you feel the ELM helped you to set learning goals as defined in Unit 1?
2. In what ways do you feel the ELM helped you to use the learning strategies given in Unit 2?
3. In what ways do you feel the ELM helped you to evaluate the existing resources you use as defined in Unit 3?
4. In what ways do you feel the ELM helped you to select new resources according to your needs as defined in Unit 3?
5. Do you feel that the learning plan you created at the end has helped you to achieve your learning goals in English? If yes, how? If no, why?
6. How confident do you feel about making your own learning plans in the future? Why?

Procedure:

The discussion on each item is estimated to last 5 minutes and there are 6 items to consider. The total interview duration is about 30 minutes. It will be audio-recorded using a cell phone to be transcribed and used for the purposes of this study.

Appendix B: Post-Interview Questions (Turkish)

Katılımcılar İçin Mülakat Protokolü

Bu protokole katılıp sorulan sorular hakkında fikir ve duygularınızı ifade etmeniz rica olunur. Çalışmaya katılımınız tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalıdır ve cevaplamak istemediğiniz herhangi bir soruyu cevaplamama hakkınız saklıdır. Cevaplarınız tamamen gizli tutulacak ve sadece bu çalışma amacıyla kullanılacaktır.

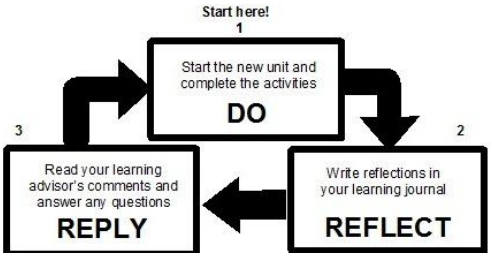
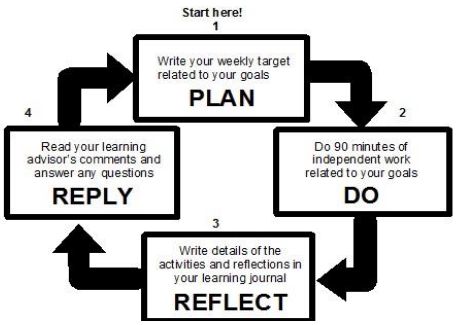
1. Ünite 1'de ele alındığı üzere, ELM öğrenme hedefleri belirleme konusunda size ne şekilde yardımcı oldu?
2. Ünite 2'de belirtilen stratejiler ışığında, ELM bu stratejileri kullanabilme konusunda size ne şekilde yardımcı oldu?
3. Ünite 3'te belirtilenler ışığında, ELM kullandığınız mevcut kaynakları değerlendirebilme konusunda size ne şekilde yardımcı oldu?
4. Ünite 3'te belirtilenler ışığında, ELM ihtiyaçlarınıza yönelik yeni kaynaklar seçebilme konusunda size ne şekilde yardımcı oldu?
5. Üniteler sonrasında oluşturduğunuz öğrenme planı sizce belirlediğiniz hedeflere ulaşma konusunda size yardımcı oldu mu? Olduysa nasıl? Olmadıysa neden?
6. Gelecekte kendi öğrenme planlarınızı yapma konusunda kendinizi ne kadar yetkin buluyorsunuz? Neden?

Uygulama:

Her soru için görüşme süresi yaklaşık 5 dakikadır ve toplamda 6 soru bulunmaktadır. Toplam mülakat süresi yaklaşık 30 dakikadır. Mülakat bir cep telefonu yardımıyla kayıt altına alınacak ve bu çalışma amacıyla yazıya dökülecektir.

Appendix C: Effective Learning Module (Sample Pages)

Overview of Effective Learning Module

<table>
<tr><td>Week</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td rowspan="4">Learn about how
to be a good
language learner</td><td>UNIT 1: GOAL SETTING</td><td rowspan="4"> 
</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>UNIT 2: STRATEGIES</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>UNIT 3: RESOURCES</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>UNIT 4: SURE PLAN (Attend a workshop)</td></tr>
<tr><td>5
6
7</td><td>Try out your
learning plan</td><td>Self-study</td><td> 
</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td colspan="3">Get feedback and grade from your learning advisor</td></tr>
</table>

Name: _____

Unit 1:

GOAL SETTING

This unit will help you decide your language goals.

In this unit you will:

- ❑ Think about what you already do in English
- ❑ Choose an appropriate, specific and realistic goal
- ❑ Connect your Wants, Interests and Needs to your goal

1. What do you do <u>Now</u> in English?

Let's start by thinking about what you already do and how it helps you. Look at the examples below 1. Write "YES" if you do it. Write "NO" if you do not. 2. Write how often you do it.

Example:

Read	Books	Magazines	Newspapers	Comics	Something else
YES					Facebook Everyday
Write	Homework	Emails	Letters	Diary	Something else
YES	Everyday				

Your turn:

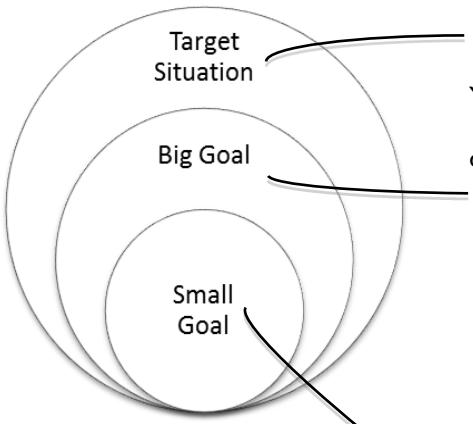
Read	Books	Magazines	Newspapers	Comics	Something else
Write	Homework	Emails	Letters	Diary	Something else
Listen	Songs	TV Programs	Internet Videos	DVDs	Something else
Speak	Karaoke / Singing	Chat with friends	Classroom Activities	Presentations	Something else

Look at the chart on page 1 again. What do you notice?

2. What do you <u>Want</u> to be able to do in English?

In Activity 1, you made a chart of what you already do in English. Now, think about what you want to improve this semester.

When deciding a language goal, it is important to think about a target situation. More importantly, you need to connect your **WIN** - **W**ants, **I**nterests and **N**eeds to your language goal.



1. Think of a situation where you want to use English. You might use an idea from Activity 1. Examples: class discussions/listening to music, etc.
2. Choose a language skill you **want** to focus on improving this semester. This is your Big Goal. Choose ONE big goal: speaking, listening, reading or writing.
3. Then, explain what topics you are **interested** in speaking, reading or writing about or listening to.
4. Write what skill you **need** to work on for 1 and 2 – this is your Small Goal (see examples on the next page). Choose ONE small goal: fluency, grammar,

Your Small Goal should help you to achieve your Big Goal ☺

Reflection

1. Which part of this unit was easy and which was difficult? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Comments from your Learning Advisor

Your questions

Name: _____

Unit 3:

RESOURCES

This unit will help you discover what you can use to study successfully.

In this unit you will:

- ❑ Learn how to choose & evaluate resources
- ❑ Choose a good learning resource for your own goal
- ❑ Attend a workshop

Please write your big and small goals:

Big goal:

Small goal:

1. Review

Before you start this unit….

❑ Did you read and reply to your learning advisor's

Comments at the end of the last unit?

❑ Did you write some strategies for your Big and Small

Goals on your Learning Plan?

❑ What are your goals?

2. Thinking about Resources you use

There are many resources we can use to study language, for example books, websites, music, movies and even people.
But how should we choose a resource? We need to think about these six points:

1. **Goals**: How does it help to learn English (what skill does it help)?
2. **Interest**: How interesting is it?
3. **Level**: Is it too easy? Too difficult?
4. **Time:** How much time does it take?
5. **Place:** Where can it be used?
6. **Strategy:** What activity can be done with the resource to improve English?

Example:

Hi! I'm Mert.

Target situation: Improving listening comprehension

Big Goal: Earning a high listening grade at IELTS

Small Goal: Understand what the speakers are talking about easily and learn new words

1. Purpose: How does it help you to learn English (what skill does it help)?
The worksheets help me to improve my listening skills. They are also useful in improving my pronunciation and learning new words.

2. Interest: How interesting do you think it is?
I enjoy listening to recordings from different speakers. It's interesting to hear various speakers and try to understand what they say.

3. Level: How do you feel about the level?
I feel good because I can understand what the speaker is talking about. This makes me more confident!

4. Strategy: What activity will you do with the resource to achieve your big goal?
I'll listen to each recording twice and check my answers in the end. In order to learn new words, I'll write them down in a notebook and group them by theme.

5. Place: Where do you use the resource?
At the ILC.

6. Time: How much time does it take?
Each worksheet takes 5-10 minutes to complete. I think I can do at least 5 every day.

1. Think about a resource you use

Think about a resource you use now or have used before. Can you use it for your Big and Small Goals?

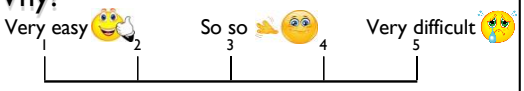
Title of Resource: _____

What kind of resource is it? (e.g. book, DVD etc.) _____

1. **Goal**: How does it help you to achieve your big or small goals?

2. **Interest**: How interesting is it? Why?

3. **Level**: How do you feel about the level? Why?



4. **Strategy:** What activity will you do with the resource to achieve your big goal?

5. **Place:** Where do you use it?

6. **Time**: How much time does it take? (e.g. 30 minutes, 1 hour)

Could you use this resource for your big or small goal?: Yes / No

Appendix D: Ethics Committee Approval

ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT ÜNİVERSİTESİ (AYBÜ)
ETİK KURULU
PROJE ONAY BELGESİ

Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu akademisyenlerinden Abdulkadir GÜLLÜ'nün, "Fostering Self-Regulated Learning Through A Learning Advisory Program: A Case Study In Turkish Context And Its Implications" adlı araştırması değerlendirilmiştir. *(Bu kısım başvuru sahibi tarafından doldurulmalıdır)*

Proje etik açısından uygun bulunmuştur.	☑
Proje etik açısından geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir.	☐
Proje etik açısından uygun bulunmamıştır.	☐

AYBÜ ETİK KURULU KARARI (Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır)	
Araştırma kodu (Yıl – Araştırma sıra no)	2019 – 255
Başvuru formunun Etik Kurula ulaştığı tarih	17.05.2019
Etik Kurul Karar toplantı tarihi ve karar no	29.05.2019 – 44
Yer	Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Esenboğa Külliyesi
Katılımcılar	Formda imzası bulunan üyelerimiz toplantıya katılmıştır.

KURUL BAŞKANI, BAŞKAN YARDIMCISI VE ÜYELER:

		İMZA
Prof. Dr. Cem Şafak ÇUKUR	**Başkan**	
Prof. Dr. Tekin AKDEMİR	**Bşk. Yrd.**	
Prof. Dr. Muharrem KILIÇ	**Üye**	
Doç. Dr. Özge GÖKBULUT ÖZDEMİR	**Üye**	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ertuğrul DEMİRDEL	**Üye**	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Behlül TOKUR	**Üye**	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şule KAYA	**Üye**	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Birgül ÖZKAN	**Üye**	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Nimet YILDIRIM TİRGİL	**Üye**	