

**A STUDY ON
BLENDED LEARNING MODEL
FOR TEACHING PRACTICE COURSE
IN PRE-SERVICE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER
TRAINING PROGRAM**

**Mustafa CANER
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**A study on Blended Learning Model
for Teaching Practice Course
in Pre-service English Language Teacher Training Program**

By

Mustafa CANER

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Abstract

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Mustafa CANER

English Language Teaching Department

Anadolu University Graduate School of Educational Sciences, 2009

Advisor: Prof. Dr. İlknur KEÇİK

The aim of the present study is to develop a model based on blended learning for pre-service teaching practice course in English Language Teacher Training Program at Anadolu University. It is supposed that providing a blended learning environment for teaching practice course would improve the practice and contribute to the professional growth of pre-service teachers. Since it will increase the contact hours among students and university supervisors and facilitate peer feedback among pre-service teachers, which in turn, create a productive learning environment for them.

Within the framework of ‘pedagogical action research’ design, 18 fourth year students participated in the present study. Various data gathering techniques including a survey on participants’ attitudes towards the Web (computer) based instruction and a survey on the participants’ satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course were used. Additionally, in order to perform an in-depth analysis of the findings, standardized open-ended interviews were conducted with participants.

The analysis of the data revealed that participants had positive attitudes towards the Web component of blended teaching practice course and all of the participants were satisfied with the blended teaching practice course since they reported that it met their expectations. It was also found that there was not a relationship between the participants’ participation to the asynchronous discussions and their overall satisfaction levels of blended teaching practice course. The findings indicated that the pre service teachers thought that participating in a course level blended teaching practice course increased their teaching skills, primarily their skills on preparing lesson plans and the skills on performing their teaching practices.

Although results of the present study indicated that blended learning environment was perceived positively by students, there is a need for further research to determine if the similar results could be obtained at other courses in different settings.

Key words: *Blended learning, Teaching practice, Teacher training, Pre-service teacher, ELT.*

Öz

İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı Öğretmenlik Uygulaması Dersi için Harmanlanmış Öğrenme Modeli Üzerine bir Çalışma

Mustafa CANER

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

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Danışman: Prof. Dr. İlknur KEÇİK

Bu çalışmanın amacı Anadolu Üniversitesi, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı, öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulaması dersi için harmanlanmış öğrenme modelinin uygulandığı bir ders geliştirmektir. Harmanlanmış öğrenme modeliyle hazırlanan öğretmenlik uygulaması dersinin, öğretmen adaylarının uygulamalarını geliştireceği ve onların mesleki gelişimlerine katkı sağlayacağı varsayılmaktadır. Çünkü, bu model ile hazırlanan öğretmenlik uygulaması dersinin, öğretmen adayları ile üniversitedeki danışmanları arasındaki görüşme saatlerini artıracığı ve öğretmen adaylarının birbirleri arasında paylaştıkları akran dönütünün kalitesini artırarak onlar için daha verimli bir öğrenme ortamı oluşturacağı düşünülmektedir.

Pedagojik Eylem Araştırması desenlemesiyle gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmaya 18 dördüncü sınıf öğrencisi katılmıştır. Katılımcıların dersin Web destekli öğretim boyutu ile ilgili görüşlerini ölçen bir sormaca, onların harmanlanmış öğretmenlik uygulaması dersinden memnuniyetlerini ölçen başka bir sormaca ve standartlaştırılmış açık uçlu görüşmeler, çalışma verilerinin toplanılması için kullanılmıştır.

Toplanan verilerin analizi, katılımcıların dersin Web destekli öğretim boyutu ile ilgili görüşlerinin olumlu olduğunu, dersten beklentilerini tam olarak karşıladığı için katılımcıların tümünün bu dersi almaktan memnun olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, katılımcıların çevrimiçi tartışmalara katılım oranlarıyla onların bu dersten memnuniyetleri arasında bir ilişki olmadığı da görülmüştür. Araştırmanın bulguları, katılımcıların, harmanlanmış öğretmenlik uygulaması dersinin öğretmenlik becerilerini, özellikle de ders planı hazırlama ve öğretmenlik uygulamalarına yönelik becerilerini arttırdığını düşündüklerini göstermiştir.

Her ne kadar bu çalışmanın bulguları harmanlanmış öğretmenlik uygulaması dersinin öğrenciler tarafından olumlu olarak algılandığını ortaya koysada gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalarla bu bulguların farklı ortam ve derslerde de elde edilip edilemeyeceği sınımlıdır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Harmanlanmış öğrenme, Öğretmenlik uygulaması, Öğretmen yetiştirme, Öğretmen Adayı, ELT.

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| | Adı-Soyadı | İmza |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| Üye (Tez Danışmanı) | : Prof.Dr.İlknur KEÇİK | |
| Üye | : Prof.Dr.Lütfiye OKTAR | |
| Üye | : Prof.Dr.Gül DURMUŞOĞLU KÖSE | |
| Üye | : Doç.Dr.F.Hülya ÖZCAN | |
| Üye | : Yard.Doç.Dr.Abdullah KUZU | |

Prof.Dr.Esmahan AĞAOĞLU
Anadolu Üniversitesi
Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürü

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In this chapter, the purpose and significance of the present study and the research questions that the study seeks to answer will be presented in detail.

1. 1. Background to the Study

It is obvious that the process of teaching and learning in today's education world is different from those processes that shaped higher education in the last decades of the 20th century. Along with the developing information technologies, the processes of teaching and learning are challenging the temporal and spatial boundaries. In other words, advancements in technology and developments in teaching and learning methodologies have presented new circumstances for more efficient and effective implementation of learning programs, which "make it simple for students and teachers to communicate in non-traditional methods" (Hickman, 2007, "Face-to-Screen Learning," para.2) and which "are characterized by the introduction of flexible and innovative teaching and learning technology into teaching (Vogel & Klassen, 2001, p. 105). By means of the innovations in the field of education, especially, the last two decades have witnessed the confluence of information technologies and new pedagogies such as student centered learning. The student centered approaches to teaching, which arise out of the changing understandings of the nature of learning, and especially with the impact of constructivism, turned the focus of attention from teachers to students and to learning process. In terms of incorporating the student-centered approaches into teaching, especially universities were re-inventing their purposes and thinking less about delivering instruction and more about producing learning in student-centered environments. In addition, they are moving away from a faculty-centered and lecture-based paradigm to a model where learners are in the focus, where faculty members become learning environment designers, and where students are supported to become critical thinkers (Barr & Tagg, 1995). Besides, these

influences forced scholars to introduce numerous technologies into teaching and learning environments.

Technology provides opportunities to support such environments, as Kuzu (2005, p. 13) advocated “society’s varied purposes and diversified use of information technologies and computers, which have an important place in recent technology, and the innovations they rooted, is the basis of increase in their utilization as a tool for instruction in educational circles”. Similarly, Motschnig-Pitrik & Holzinger (2002, p. 164) stated, “the Internet and information technologies are principally well suited to be used with the student-centered approach” since such instruments provide students with the capability of freely exploring material that is considered relevant for the solution of the tasks they set for themselves with the help of a facilitator. Additionally, especially the Internet in the world of education considered as “one of the most important economic and democratic mediums of learning and teaching at a distance” (Khan, 1997, p.5).

When the literature on distant and online learning environments reviewed, it is observed that the number of the students who enroll in distant courses and the number of institutions, which offer distant and online courses, are increasing day by day. This indicates that online learning environments which advocates the use of Internet and information technologies in teaching and learning environments gradually taking place in the world of education. For instance, the report of The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations, revealed that during the 1994–1995 school year, approximately 754,000 students were enrolled in college-level, credit-granting distance education courses. By 1997–1998, this number was nearly doubled to more than 1.3 million enrolments in more than 47,500 different college level courses in America (Loane, 2001, “NCES 2003-13 Report”). By the fall of 2002, more than 1.6 million students took at least one online course in the US higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2003, p.1). In terms of Turkish context, Anadolu University is an excellent example with its increasing population in distant education. The total number of recent enrolments for distant education programs is higher than one

million in Anadolu University and the number of enrolments in distant education in Turkish context increases day by day together with the distant education programs of other universities.

Recently, the learning environments which are mainly based on computer, Internet and information technologies within a distant education program has generally been labeled with an umbrella term - e-learning environments - in the field of education. This umbrella term, e-learning is also used in the same manner in the present study. The wide spread of Internet technology and advances in computer and information technologies as well as networked learning made it possible to design and utilize new generation learning environments that are realistic, authentic, and engaging. As it is stated, “the availability of computer technologies, such as the Internet, have greatly expanded the educational options available to learners and instructors alike” (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003, p.227)

At the beginning of the period when the world of education started to employ technology, the two forms of learning environments, namely, face-to-face and online learning environments remained largely separate because they used different media or method of combinations and addressed the needs of different audiences. For example, on-ground face-to-face learning typically occurred in a teacher-directed environment with person-to-person interaction in a live synchronous environment. On the other hand, distant learning systems put emphasis on self-paced learning and asynchronous interactions in text only environment. At the early stages, only asynchronous interaction was possible because the existing technology placed some limits on the instructional methods that used in each environment. Therefore, the earlier models of online learning environments put emphasis on the learner-material interactions in the text-only environments, while face to face learning environments had a tendency to give priority on the human-human interaction. Following the early stages of employing technology in the education period, the e-learning phenomenon became an alternative way of providing education for students who were unable to get into the on-ground teaching environments by offering them “the full advantage of anytime, anywhere learning” (Young, 2004, p.133).

Besides its valuable contribution to the world of education, the e-learning environments have some drawbacks in various dimensions. First of all, such learning environments ignore the motivation of students, because e-learning programs generally do not take into account the human interaction that are usually seen in a face to face learning environment. When interaction does occur, it tends to be less spontaneous than face-to-face communication. Isolation from others during the learning process such as lack of face-to-face communication with teachers in the e-learning environments can also reduce motivation in e-learning environments and grounds a lack of understanding between a student and a teacher (Molinari, 2003; Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). As Kirby (1999) argued, the lack of face-to-face physical interaction is one of the major limitations of distance or online education. Moreover, the nature of the early e-learning environments generally allowed an interaction between learners and computers (materials) and required students to go through the issues at their own pace. Although it is reasonable to expect that students should take personal responsibility for their own learning, the reality is that they often need guidance; otherwise, they will not become engaged with learning (Hajsadr, 2005). The need for a virtual classroom setting where learners could perform their in-field skills and where they could get human interaction become inevitable aspects of such technology based learning environments. As Kern and Warschauer (2000, p. 11) indicated “a shift in dynamic away from learners interacting with computers to interacting with other humans via the computers” started to be very important aspect of such educational settings recently. This shift in educational practice has occurred because of the interactive nature of some of these new technologies. Rather than simply making technology available to students, new learning and teaching is characterized by the introduction of flexible and innovative teaching/learning technology into teaching.

Thus, the incompatibility of e-learning environments in terms of providing a human to human interaction as well as diminishing the isolation from other learners forces distant learning scholars to find out a solution for the instruction delivery modalities that they offer to their students. It is clear that some practical

features of face-to-face instruction needs to be put into practice in distant learning environments as well. The need for collaboration between the face-to-face and online learning leads the educators towards a new approach to teaching and learning which is “called as hybrid or blended learning” (Rogers, 2001, p.11). This new approach provides a blend of both face-to-face and online teaching experiences. Whether the primary interest is creating more effective learning experiences or increasing access and flexibility, it is likely that the forthcoming learning systems will provide a blend of both face-to-face and online teaching experiences. Therefore, there is growing trend in academic and business circles to combine face-to-face education with Web-based education (Askun, 2007).

The wide use of technology and Internet in the education and the opportunity of blending face-to-face on-ground instruction with online teaching environments foreshadow a shift in the way of delivering instruction to the learners as well. “An important implication of this shift is the need for a recommitment to create an ideal learning environment for students and employing new pedagogies and technologies, where appropriate” (Rovai & Jordan, 2004, p.2). Those who implement blended approaches in their courses ground their pedagogy on the conjecture that there are fundamental benefits in face-to-face interaction as well as the conception that there are some ingrained conveniences of using online methods in their teaching. Thus, it can be claimed that the main goal of blending the learning environments is to find a harmonious balance between online access to knowledge and face-to-face human interaction (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003).

Although the research in the field of blended learning as an instruction model has an increasing interest, especially in the field of higher education, the concept of blended learning is still in its infancy and there are few research projects providing insights into how exactly it should be implemented into the higher education curriculum. The reviewed literature revealed that while much of the literature on online and blended learning addresses the effectiveness and mechanics of the different delivery methods, a few writers have conducted studies dealing with solely blended learning as a medium of instruction (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003; Waddoups, Hatch, & Butterworth, 2003).

With the attempt of closing the gap and contributing to the literature in the field, more studies, which deal with blended learning, should be conducted. Regarding this fact, the present study intended to provide a blended learning environment and examine its effectiveness in Turkish context. The motive and the aspiration for such an attempt will be explained in the following section.

1. 2.Statement of the Problem

Teaching Practice as a course is an important component of the Bachelor of Education Programs, which is designed to provide the critical opportunity for pre-service teachers to demonstrate their ability to write lesson plans, deliver individualized instruction, and manage the classroom in a relevant field setting. It is a triadic developmental process which includes pre-service teachers, university supervisors and cooperating teachers each of who has definite roles and responsibilities (Glickman & Bey, 1990; Casey & Howson, 1993; Bullough & Gitlin, 1995; Beck & Kosnik, 2000; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). According to the regulations of Turkish Ministry of National Education, teaching practice course is a period of guided teaching during which pre-service teachers take increasing responsibility for the instruction of a given group of learners over an extended period in the final year of their undergraduate education (Tebliğler Dergisi, 1998/2493).

When the context of this study is considered, within the framework and objectives of the teaching practice course, the pre-service teachers are usually placed in participating schools. Each pre-service teacher is monitored by supervisor from the university as well as a cooperating teacher from the participating school throughout their teaching experience process. The university supervisors give feedback for the pre-service teachers' lesson plans, observe their teaching practices and give further feedback for the teaching performances of pre-service teachers. During the actual teaching practice, in addition to university supervisors'

supervision, the cooperating teachers, who are assumed as model teachers in the participating schools, are expected to be with pre-service teachers in order to observe their teaching practice and provide feedback to them. Generally, cooperating teacher is an experienced classroom teacher in the public or private schools who have the responsibility for working with a pre-service teacher. The main duties associated with the supervisory role required cooperating teacher to provide necessary assistance in lesson preparation and lesson observation and providing feedback throughout the pre-service teachers' teaching experiences.

Within the context of the present study, when the researcher started co-supervising pre-service teachers in ELT department, it is observed and experienced by him that, pre-service teachers were encouraged to reflect on their experiences and to exchange their thoughts with their university supervisor or with their peers, yet the time allowed for this process was considered not to be sufficient. As the pre-service teachers stated, they had only two face-to-face class hours per week to discuss the preparation processes of their lesson plans as well as the issues they observed in participating schools.

As it is indicated in the literature, the observation processes of pre-service teachers in the classroom support pre-service teachers, who perform the teaching practice or the one who observe the practice, to build up their own teaching skills and activate critical reflection (Lord & Lomicka, 2007). Similarly, the observation process in teaching practice course also serves to access to the pre-service teachers' proactive thinking -acting in advance to deal with an expected difficulty- and decision-making process while preparing or performing the teaching practice in the classroom setting. This can be achieved by exchanging the ideas through making discussions between the pre-service teacher who is being observed and the other pre-service teacher who share the same teaching practice sessions. As Boz and Boz (2006, p. 365) highlighted "prospective teachers should discuss their observations with the observed teacher in order to benefit from the observations". However, it is observed by the researcher that such a thought exchange or discussion on the lesson plans and teaching practice sessions were performed in a limited time, which was not considered satisfactory by the pre-service teachers.

What's more, although it would be very favorable for the pre-service teachers to see each other's lesson plans, even the students in the same group might not have chance to see or examine his/her classmate's lesson plans, and they could not exchange their ideas either about the lesson plans or teaching practices. It is also observed that, pre-service teachers enrolled in the same class might not be able to observe carefully the teaching performances of their peers while they are awaiting for his/her turn for his/her teaching practice session. Besides, there was a lack of coordination among peers and lack of a specifically designated learning environment where the peers could exchange their opinions related to the lesson plans or teaching practice of each other. The researcher frequently witnessed that a group of six or more pre-service teachers were assigned to perform their teaching practices in a participating school, however, none of them were able to share their opinions about each other's lesson plans that they have prepared or the lessons that they have taught. That is, especially, peer reviewing of the lesson plans prepared by pre-service teachers, the peer observations of practices of all students originate a critical problem in teaching practice or teaching experience courses.

The above mentioned problems observed during the teaching practice processes as well as the observed needs of pre service teachers provided an impetus for the present study. The review of studies in the field of online learning environments inspired the researcher that through implementing a computer mediated or an online learning environment for such a course, which could also facilitate the peer feedback and observation, might be helpful for decreasing the observed problems of pre-service ELT teachers in their teaching practice courses. Facilitating peer feedback for the lesson plans, observation of the performances of the pre-service teachers by other peers and exchanging ideas through discussions might also help the growth of the teaching skills of pre-service teachers. However, due to the nature of the practice teaching course, which requires on-ground face to face meetings for all of the parties, providing a solely computer mediated or online learning environment might not serve its purpose. Therefore, it is supposed that such a learning environment can be obtained through implementing a 'blended

learning' environment where pre-service teachers are able to get feedback both from their university supervisors and their peers through both online discussion forum and face-to-face meetings.

As to provide a blended learning environment, the teaching practice course was reorganized as a blend of face-to-face and online instructional activities. Following implementation of the blended learning environment, participants' views related to blended learning and their satisfaction with blended learning environment for teaching practice course were examined. This study also intended to explore the students' satisfactions with the proposed model since "there exists a delicate balance between the needs of students for a satisfactory and effective learning experience and the needs of the institution for instructional efficiency" (Waddoups, Hatch, & Butterworth, 2003, p. 271).

1. 3. Aim of the Study and Research Questions

As it has been stated, the purpose of the present study is to take an on-ground course and move it to a largely -but not entirely- digital environment to enhance the quality of the teaching practice experiences of pre-service teachers and to evaluate the pros and cons of such an attempt through getting the students' opinions on implementation of a blended learning environment.

Regarding this aim, the study will seek the answers to the research questions below

1. a- What are the students' views related to the Web-based instruction component of blended learning environment for teaching practice course?
- b- Is there a change in the views of participants before and after the application of the blended Teaching Practice course?

2. What are the satisfaction levels of the students in a blended learning environment provided for Teaching Practice course?
3. Is there a relation between student satisfaction of blended learning environment and their participation to the discussion forum on blended learning Web site?

1. 4. Significance of the Study

Classroom-based face-to-face instruction has been the most common delivery method of instruction and it seems a routine for higher education for many years. Since the early 1990s, the existence and widespread availability of Internet has steadily increased in every aspects of human life. This widespread availability and access has brought the convenience of online-based learning to an ever-increasing number of students. As this has occurred, there has been a constant rise in the popularity and acceptance of Internet based learning environments in the field of higher education. This is also evidenced by the remarkable increase in the number of students enrolled in online courses over the past decade.

The significance of the present study is to provide a blended learning model for teaching practice course through taking an on-ground course and blend it with online learning environment to enhance the quality of the teaching experiences of pre-service ELT teachers. Through implementing such a learning environment, where many ideas related to the pre-service teachers' lesson plans and teaching practices are shared and debated both by pre-service teachers and university supervisor, a classroom community can be constructed for teaching practice courses. Establishing such a learning environment might also provide opportunities for pre-service teachers where they are able to coordinate with their peers without isolation from the learning environment. Likewise, providing a blended learning environment where both the lesson plans and videotaped teaching practice sessions of pre-service teachers are available for rest of the

students with the aim of scrutinizing and discussing them for further supervision and peer feedback could be very beneficial for pre-service teachers in a teaching practice course.

Additionally, this model might also provide virtual seminar meetings for the participants with their supervisors who support student teachers through the construction of a “mini discourse community” (Freidus, 2002, p. 75) in which members supervise one another and provide peer feedback. What is more, by means of providing a blended teaching practice course, which intends to facilitate the peer feedback and observation among the students, the pre-service teacher, who interchangeably becomes giver and receiver of feedback, will be benefitted from this model, especially, in terms of their professional development. Since it is believed that through providing feedback to each other, the pre-service teachers might be able to grow and learn from each other, and thus, to co-construct knowledge and understanding (Roehler & Cantlon, 1997).

In addition to provide an alternative dimension to the teaching practice course, the present study aims to explore the effectiveness of blended learning environment within the frame of Teaching Practice course in the ELT teacher training program at Anadolu University through the eyes of its practitioners. In view of the fact that solely providing and implementing a blended learning environment to an existing teaching practice course would not be a sufficient way for designing a course framework. In order to put a new design into practice, feedback from its practitioners is also essential. Thus, the feedback for effectiveness of this new application could be obtained through examining the opinions of its users, namely pre-service teachers, as, it is believed that “there is no better assessment metric of a teacher preparation program than the practitioner” (Schrier, 1994, “Teacher Preparation Process,” para. 4). Hence, it is also expected that through examination of participants’ feedback related to the use of blended teaching practice course, this study might assist instructors by informing them about the type of the delivery modal of the teaching practice course.

Additionally, the present study might be constructive for administrators, curriculum developers and instructors of language teacher training programs in universities who might gain new perspectives from examination of effectiveness of implementation of blended learning procedures into their teacher training programs in order to determine policy changes and changes for improvements in terms of instruction delivery methods. This additional insight and understanding may lead to changes in the way campus based instructions and in the types of programs that they offered. To that end, the institutions, which conceivably intend to make any curricular or programmatic changes that could boost the students' educational experience, would be well served through better understanding the level to which students express satisfaction with courses delivered through blended learning modality.

Although online learning is not new, blending online and on-ground face-to-face instruction is a relatively new phenomenon in the field of teacher training. Thus, the present study might also contribute expanded understanding to the way students perceive blended learning, and contribute additional understanding to the knowledge base about the implementation of blended learning for a teaching practice course. Finally, this study, hopefully will contribute to the body of knowledge of blended delivery and blended learning in higher education, and provides research and insight into student views on blended instruction.

1. 5. Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide an alternative dimension to the learning environment for teaching practice courses, and evaluate and appraise the educational effectiveness of a blended teaching practice course, with reference to the students' opinions and their satisfaction with blended practice teaching course.

The present study is idiosyncratic to foreign language teaching environment at a Turkish University and limited to the exposure of a limited number (N: 18) of pre-

service teachers' opinions about a blended learning environment for teaching practice course. The course as well as its participants is randomly selected among the other teaching practice courses in the ELT department of Anadolu University.

The institution used in the present study, offers all courses in the ELT programs in face-to-face delivery modality. Since Anadolu University has affluent resources, it provides students advanced technologies such as e-mail and Web accounts, in-campus wireless internet access, and a plenty of computer laboratories that include PC, internet access and printing options at several locations within its campus. It is believed that such opportunities that the institution provide for its students, might also ease the participants' access to the blended teaching practice setting.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2. 1. Introduction

In this chapter, through reviewing the available research on the proposed topic, the definition of the blended learning concept and the learning theory that grounds blended learning environments will be touched briefly first. Then, through critical synthesis and summary of available and related research on blended learning and teaching practice will be outlined.

2. 2. Blended Learning

When the publications on online and distant learning are reviewed, it is clearly deduced that the learners' primary reasons of selecting the online instruction depends on the issues of convenience and access, yet such instruction requires the learners to go through self paced learning approaches. It is believed that such learning environments have a limited capability to engage learners in learning events unless the learners are self-motivated and active learners (Daniels & Moore, 2000). As Collis (2003), underlined, online learning components often require a large amount of self-discipline on the part of the learners. For instance, Huang and Zhou (2003) mentioned that most of the [Chinese] students in their study faced a challenge in regulating their own learning without close guidance of their instructor. Of course, teachers should guide their students, but when a student can accomplish a task on his or her own, the student encounters a learning experience that is more meaningful. Lim, Morris and Kupritz (2006, 2007) stated that a lack of community or belonging, preventing the development of shared emotions and feelings between instructors and learners, are often reported in online learning experiences and are some of the most important factors

influencing learning satisfaction and transfer effectiveness. The recent publications on blended learning environments clearly support that most of the above-mentioned obstacles of online learning environments are vanished through blending the best sides of the learning environments.

With reference to the attempts for combining the best sides of the instructional environments, 'blended learning' has become a kind of motto in most educational settings, yet there is still a sort of ambiguity about what is meant when the term is used. For instance, in his article titled "Blended learning: driving forward without definition," Laster (2004) stated;

“[A]t one extreme; one could argue that 'blended' learning can be any kind of learning. However, in an applied view, one generally equates blended learning to a teaching and learning experience that uses technology. Within the bounds of the applied view, great variability still exists around a firmly established blended learning definition” (p.154).

Although there are a wide variety of definitions of blended learning, most of the definitions in the literature are just variations of a few common themes; Driscoll (2002) summarizes the four different concepts that blended learning was referred to in the literature as:

- To combine or mix modes of Web-based technology (e.g., live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text) to accomplish an educational goal.
- To combine various pedagogical approaches (e.g., constructivism, behaviorism, cognitivism) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology.
- To combine any form of instructional technology (e.g., videotape, CD-ROM, Web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training.
- To mix or combine instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect of learning and working. (para. 2, p.54)

The first two concepts that referred to the blended learning are the ones which also forced Laster (2004) to affirm that “blended learning can be any kind of learning” (p. 154), because they are very general descriptions that might cover almost all learning systems. For instance, if we take these two definitions into consideration, a teacher’s use of characteristics of behaviorist learning and constructivist teaching together within a lesson, or, if a teacher uses the technology while s/he is teaching any subject and asks his/her students to send their homework through e-mail, the instruction can be considered as blended learning. It is obvious that it could be very hard to find any learning system that does not involve different instructional methods, instructional technology and delivery media. Thus, defining blended learning in either of these two ways really does not get at the core of what blended learning is and why the concept of blended learning is inspiring for so many people. In another definition in the literature, blended learning defined as a blend of online and face-to-face instruction (Reay, 2001; Rothery, 2004). The last definition seems to reflect more accurately the idea that blended learning is the combination of instruction from two separate modes of teaching and learning, which are on-ground face-to-face learning systems and online distant learning systems. It also underlines the central role of Internet-based technologies in blended learning. Similarly, Osguthorpe and Graham enounced that,

"Blended learning combines face-to-face with distance delivery systems. [T]he Internet is involved, but it is more than showing a page from a Website on the classroom screen. [I]t all comes back to teaching methodologies—pedagogies that change according to the unique needs of learners. Those who use blended learning environments are trying to maximize the benefits of both face-to-face and online methods— using the Web for what it does best, and using class time for what it does best” (Osguthorpe & Graham 2003, p. 227).

The blended learning concept for the present study is based on Driscoll’s (2002) concepts referring to the blended learning, the definitions of Osguthorpe and Graham (2003), Reay (2001) and Rothery (2004). That is, the blended learning is a blend of face-to-face and distributed learning environments that highlights the

use of Internet-based technologies which is characterized by a reduction in the number of face-to-face meetings and which emphasizes the use of discussions at the course level instruction.

The following table, which is presented in Allen and Seaman (2003) and Allen, Seaman, and Garrett's (2007) studies, illustrates the prototypical course classifications and the proportions of online parts of the different learning and teaching environments. Their classification will surely contribute to the in-depth understanding of the definition of blended learning, traditional learning environments as well as the other type of instructional environments that integrates the technology into its curriculum.

Table 1. Types of courses

| Proportion of Content Delivered Online | Type of Course | Typical Description |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 0% | Traditional | Course with no online technology used —content is delivered in writing or orally. |
| 1 to 29% | Web Facilitated | Course, which uses Web-based technology to facilitate what is essentially a face-to-face course. Uses a course management system (CMS) or Web pages to post the syllabus and assignments, for example. |
| 30 to 79% | Blended | Course that blends online and face-to-face delivery. Substantial proportion of the content is delivered online, typically uses online discussions, and typically has some face-to face meetings. |
| 80+% | Online | A course where most or all of the content is delivered online. Typically have no face-to-face meetings. |

Note. This Table adapted from, Allen, Seaman, and Garrett (2007).

2. 3. Theoretical Background of Blended Learning

Over the last two decades, technology has reshaped how we live, how we communicate, and especially, how we learn. Accordingly, educational philosophies developed in response to the needs of each era and in harmony with available technology (Shneiderman, 1998). Over the years, many different educational philosophies have developed and all of those educational philosophies intended to provide students with the best education ever possible. The outstanding three of these educational philosophies, namely, behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism are predominant in the field of traditional education and used to formulate models of instruction for learning in distant and online education (Mayer, 1998).

Educational pedagogy of the fifties originally focused on individual instruction with a behaviorist stimulus-response approach, and the distance education philosophy of those periods was mainly based on behaviorist approach. As it is summarized in the words of Morphew (2000) most Web-based instruction based on behaviorism, view the learner as an empty vessel to be filled. However, by 1980s, by means of the possibility to introduce and implement philosophies of cognitive psychologies there appeared a move away from a behaviorist approach to focus on the internal mental processes and on learner centeredness. Cognitivism takes a data processing approach to learning, with the learner being seen as a computer who takes the information as input, processes it and produce it as the output. In the cognitivist model, learning takes place when the correct materials are available to the learner, and teacher directs the learning. In the 1990's with reference to the advancements of networks, namely World Wide Web, geographical distance became frivolous and the concept of distance in teaching became easier to overcome. Moreover, with changes in student demography, increasingly large classes, and a growth in part-time study, many course developers and tutors are turning to online media for teaching and learning (Rautenbach, 2007).

The education philosophy of online learning was mainly based on constructivism and predominantly on social constructivism, which promotes cooperation among and between students and teachers. According to Hoover (1996), constructivism has important implications for instruction regardless of its delivery methodology. For that reason, teaching cannot be viewed solely as transmission of knowledge from enlightened to unenlightened; constructivist teachers do not take the role of ‘sage on the stage’. Rather, teachers act as ‘guides on the side’ who provide students with opportunities to test the adequacy of their current understandings (Hoover, 1996).

The literature on constructivist pedagogy offers various learning environment descriptions. For instance, Savery and Duffy (1995) outlines eight instructional principles for the design of a constructive learning environment. These principles are also the key factors for online educational settings. Savery and Duffy’s (1995) eight instructional principles of a constructive learning environment are as follows:

- Anchor all learning activities to a larger task or problem.
- Support the learner in developing ownership for the overall problem or task.
- Design an authentic task.
- Design the task and the learning environments to reflect the complexity of the environment learners should be able to function in at the end of learning.
- Give the learner ownership of the process used to develop a solution.
- Design the learning environment to support and challenge the learners’ thinking.
- Encourage testing ideas against alternative views and alternative contexts.
- Provide opportunity for and support reflection

(Savery & Duffy, 1995, p. 34 - 37).

In the online learning environments, constructing new information from text is combined with information beyond the text that includes prior knowledge. This allows the learner to “form a complete and adequate representation of the text’s meaning” (Spiro et. al., 1992, p.64). The online learning environments are

principally student centered, providing multiple opportunities for the learners to synthesize, organize, and restructure information, and to create and contribute resources to the virtual space of the course (Dabbagh, 2005). In online learning environments, learners have more freedom and opportunity to direct their own learning and apply it to their needs.

From social constructivist perspectives, learning is considered to occur through process of interaction, negotiation and collaboration (Palincsar, 1998). Moreover, the social constructivist perspective in instruction gives importance to the need for collaboration among learners and with practitioners in learning environments (Lave & Wenger, 1991; McMahon, 1997). Social constructivists stress that a society's practical knowledge is situated in relations among practitioners, their practice, and the social organization. Therefore, learning should involve such knowledge and practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Gredler, 1997). What is more, social constructivist model of instruction emphasizes the importance of relationship between the student and the instructor in the learning process. For that reason, learning environments based on social constructivist approaches should include reciprocal teaching, peer collaboration, cognitive apprenticeships, problem-based instruction, Web-quests, anchored instruction and other methods that involve learning with others (Schunk, 2000).

Recent advancements in educational pedagogies have also led to a shift from teacher centeredness to learner centeredness in instruction. Concerning this shift, distance education and constructivist teaching environments have become a natural choice for education as it complies with the changing need of society to increase learner initiative, teamwork, thinking skills and diversity. Therefore, in order to support the constructivist approach, a learning community should be created, and then guided through the process of collaboration so that learning can be constructed by the group, rather than just the individual (Alonzo et. al, 2005). It is obvious that, when carefully planned, constructed, and monitored, the blended courses can effectively address many of the same learning goals of campus-based instruction, while allowing students to engage in their learning experiences

asynchronously, or according to whatever daily schedule their other personal and work obligations allow (Davey, 1999).

2. 4. Types of Blended Learning

Although there is a wide variation in the blended learning practices that are taking place, there are also some similarities among them. For instance, all the blended learning examples occur at one of the following four different levels, which are Activity level, Course level, Program level and Institutional level. In all four levels, the nature of the blends can be determined either by the learner or by the instructor. At the institutional and program levels, blending is generally left to the decision of the learner, whereas at the course and activity levels instructors are more likely to take a role in laying down the blended learning.

Blended learning at the activity level takes place when a learning activity contains both face-to-face and online or computer mediated elements. For instance, there are some military training facilities (Bonk & Wisner; 2000), such as training the air force pilots and astronauts, which incorporate both face-to-face and virtual elements. In terms of higher education, there are strategies for using technological tools to make learning activities more authentic, especially; we see how technology is used to bring experts at a distance into the classroom creating a simultaneous face-to-face and online activity.

A blended instruction at the course level engages face-to-face and online activities that are used as part of a course. Some blended learning approaches engage learners in different circumstances but supporting face-to-face and online activities that overlap in time while other approaches separate the time block so that they are chronologically put together and not overlapping.

At the program level of blended learning, there are certain face-to-face courses that are required for a program and the rest can be taken at a distance or online.

One of the significant examples of program level blended learning in the Turkish context is DELTT (Distant English Language Teacher Training). In this program, which aims to train students as English language teachers, students are offered two year face to face instruction and the first two years are followed through online supported distant education program. DELTT is the first blended program in Turkey with its face-to-face component in the first two years and the distance component in the 3rd and 4th years (Durmusoğlu-Köse, Özkul & Özyar, 2002).

In addition to some private universities, Anadolu University and Sakarya University are good examples of such institutions that provide institutional models of Blended Learning in Türkiye. Besides the Turkish context, the University of Phoenix also has an institutional model for Blended Learning where students have face-to-face classes at the beginning and at end of the courses with online activities in between. Additionally, at a university level, the University of Central Florida has created the ‘M course’ designation for blended learning courses that have some decrease in face-to-face seat-time. In the same way, at the University of Illinois, traditional on-campus economics students have been allowed to take a required course online while they were off-campus for the summer (Bonk & Graham, 2006). These are some of the institutional models of blended learning in higher education settings.

2.5. Historical Background of Blended Learning

2.5.1. Face to Face Learning Environments

The most basic definition of face-to-face learning environment is an on-ground teaching and learning session in which the learners and instructors meet together in the same place and at the same time. From historical perspective, face-to-face learning starts with the history of education. Face-to-face learning frequently takes the form of front-of-class teaching which was assumed as “an apprenticeship model of learning” (Schulz, 2005, p. 147). There is usually a teacher, as ‘sage

person', transfers core information to the students face to face and the learners actively or inactively try to grasp the information that teacher provides to them. In general, in a face-to-face learning environment, the instructor organizes everything, in other words, the lecturer controls all lessons, activities, programs, projects, and assignments. As Dabbagh and Bannan-Ritland (2005), acknowledged face-to-face learning environment is largely instructor oriented or program controlled, and generally, the learner is a passive recipient of information. The effectiveness of face-to-face learning as a platform for teaching and learning is a subject of much debate and various novel attempts have been made to incorporate different methods into the traditional teaching environment (Sayers, Nicell & Hagan, 2004). Through the development of instructional pedagogies, the atmosphere of the face-to-face learning environments has been also subjected to change. By means of educational developments, alternative face-to-face content delivery techniques or technology have been implemented into the teaching environments. Face-to-face teaching and learning environments are synchronous, while no communications technologies are required for a face-to-face session, often, other technologies, such as televisions, video players and overhead projectors, or sometimes computers are used. Verhaart and Kinshuk (2004) summarized the developmental process of the implementation of an alternative delivery techniques and technology into the face-to-face learning environments as follows:

“The continuum began with the manual methods of working with a blackboard (chalk), through early duplication, then to whiteboards and overhead transparencies. This was followed by the desktop publishing era and included photocopiers and Word Processors (WordStar, Word Perfect, Word), and finally to electronic delivery in the last 5 years. These have included PowerPoint, Windows Help Files and finally to Web based technologies, static HTML and now interactive Web pages using ASP” (Verhaart & Kinshuk 2004, p.1).

Verhaart and Kinshuk (2004) recapitulated the fundamental characteristics of face-to-face learning environments as discussions are kept in context, instructors guide the learning, discourse occurs in context and instructors can demonstrate

products. As Resta (2004) proclaimed, though the face-to-face learning environments are often complex and unpredictable, we are very familiar with them and have developed high levels of skill in working in these environments.

2.5. 2. Online Learning Environments

The rapid appearance of technological innovations in the last half century has an enormous impact on the possibilities for the learning environments, especially, for the distant learning environments. In fact, online learning environments are increasingly engaging instructional field that was once only possible in face-to-face environments. For example, communication technologies now allow us to have synchronous online interactions that occur in real-time almost the same levels of accuracy as in the face-to-face environment. The broad implementation and availability of online technologies has led to increased levels of integration of computer-mediated or online instructional elements into the on-ground face-to-face learning.

Lim, Morris and Kupritz (2006) claimed that the origin of online instruction is distance education. The advancement of online technologies has opened a new era in distance education and contributed to the expansion of the educational opportunities by reaching people in various geographical locations thereby allowing learners global access to education (Heinich, Molenda, Russell, & Smaldino, 2002).

A commonly accepted definition of distance learning is, any formal educational process that occurs with the teacher and the student separated by either time or distance. There are various definitions of distance education in the literature but their joint aspect is its flexibility in time and place. Moreover, the recent definitions of distance education significantly include technology as a means of delivery.

Historically, the distance education started with correspondence courses as early as the 1720 (Rautenbach, 2007) however, those correspondence courses were generally directed toward theological or technical skills teachings rather than general education learning goals of a four-year degree. Within the course of time, distance learning witnessed great advancements in parallel with technological developments and during the late seventies and throughout the eighties, telecourses became a common distance-learning format (Davey, 1999). By means of the arrival of Internet networks and computer-based multimedia, a new generation of distance education (Holmberg, 1995) was introduced in early 90s, and it is still in progress (Taylor, 2001), and Bersin (2004, p.2) claimed “the blended learning is the latest step in a long history of technology based training”.

2.5. 3. Advantages of Blended Learning

Although it is believed that blended learning environment is an almost new concept in the world of education, the blends of instructional methodologies have been used in this field for a long time. Therefore, as Clark (2003) claimed some skeptics see blended learning as an old idea dressed up in new clothes, something everybody has been doing all along. However, it has been driven by a series of technical innovations in learning for many centuries. Today, the academics appreciate that both face-to-face and online learning environments have a variety of pros and cons. In an effort to capitalize on the advantages of both instructional modalities and minimize the disadvantages, many institutions have begun to blend elements of these two separate learning environments. Such form of educational delivery is universally cited as ‘*Blended Learning*’ and can include many different ways of combining pedagogical approaches in order to produce optimal learning outcomes (Driscoll, 2002; Boyle, et. al. 2003; Dziuban, Hartman & Moskal, 2004).

There are countless reasons why an instructor, teacher, or learner might accept and choose blended learning over other learning options. One of them is that blended learning approach that combines classroom based education with the convenience and cost efficiency of e-learning is an alternative to isolated e-learning (Davies, 2006). Similarly, blended learning allows instructors more approaches and choices when designing instruction. Rather than limiting student teacher and student-student interactions in the face-to-face classroom, blended learning allows such interactions in an online environment at various times (Singh, 2003).

One of the most widespread reasons for blending is that it provides effective pedagogical practices. Some have seen blended learning approaches increase the level of active learning strategies, peer-to-peer learning strategies, and learner centered strategies used (Graham, Allen, & Ure, 2003). In such models, learners go through three phases; the first phase provides a self-paced learning to acquire background information; the second phase offers face to face learning focused on active learning and application experiences instead of lecture; and the final phase endows with online learning and support for transferring the learning to the workplace environment (Driscoll, 2002).

Learner flexibility and ease in accessing the learning in the blended learning environments has also increasing weight as more learners with external obligations ask for further education. Many learners prefer the usefulness offered by an online environment; nevertheless, they do not want to give up the social interaction and human contact that they are accustomed to in a face-to-face classroom (Graham, 2006; Rooney, 2003; Zenger & Uehlein, 2001).

Blended learning includes a wide variety of approaches. It may be as simple as making online resources and materials available to students outside of class, or using online technology as a forum for and means of interaction and communication outside of a face-to-face classroom experience. Likewise, blended learning may include synchronous or asynchronous online instruction and a wide variety of sophisticated technologies and rich online learning tools. In many cases,

blending of instructional modalities includes a combination of both face-to-face and online instruction within a particular course. What is more, blended learning model replaces, rather than supplements, some face-to-face classroom time with online, interactive learning activities (Twigg, 2003). In most cases, blended learning has advantages over a purely distance learning course, as it also allows face-to-face time with the instructor and/or with other students. In addition, blended learning environments provide students the option to select the type of learning environment that best meets their individual learning and scheduling needs. It is commonly believed, blended learning combines ‘the best of both worlds’. Thus, blended learning allows students to experience and take advantage of the best educational elements that both the face-to-face classroom environment and the online learning environment have to offer.

2. 6. Recent Research on Blended Learning and Teacher Training

Since blended learning and its implementation in the field of education is relatively new subject in the higher education institutions, there is limited number of studies dealing with blended learning environments in teacher education. It is also acknowledged by Young and Lewis (2008) that there is limited number of research on online and blended learning in teacher education specifically when it is compared to the research on the practice and theory of blended learning in other disciplines. However, there are plenty of studies in the literature that dealt with implementation of Web based instruction into campus based instruction and there are a growing number of faculties experimenting the innovative technology-mediated approaches to teaching, such as the use of tools for simulations, visualization, communication, and feedback that are transforming the ways that their students learn (West & Graham, 2005).

The review of the literature on the blended instruction depicted that the studies in the field of blended instruction are generally interested in inquiring the

students/participants' perspectives about implementation of such learning environments into their existing instructional systems. They used either questionnaires or participant reflections in order to appraise the implementation. Additionally, most of those studies generally followed an action research method in which the researchers made content analysis of the participants' views about the implications. Besides, several studies gathered their data through utilizing questionnaires accompanied with interviews with a focus group of participants.

The available literature on the studies dealing with blended learning and its implementation in other contexts revealed that most of them dealt with theoretical grounds of blended learning implications in corporate environments. However, there are valuable studies, which were conducted in educational settings that inspired the researcher while planning the present study. For instance, Kupetz and Ziegenmeyer's (2005) study is one of the very few descriptive studies that was conducted in EFL teacher training setting. In their study, Kupetz and Ziegenmeyer (2005) constructed a blended learning platform for Methodology course of EFL teacher training students and compared the activities working with multimedia-based case stories that centre on viewing the classroom recordings, conducting an e-interview, and developing and teaching a mini-practice with regard to their research questions. Mainly, they intended to find out how these activities help students to support their learning in general, to study TEFL topics in particular, and to broaden their perspectives on learning and teaching English. The findings of their study depicted that more than 75% of the students agreed that the multimedia-based case stories that centered on the video recordings supported their learning and nearly 60% of their participants felt similarly about the mini-practices. Moreover, Kupetz and Ziegenmeyer (2005) claimed that, students learned a lot from their peers when the student teachers reported to class when they were showed video recordings of their mini-practices. They also stated that, the design of computer-based learning module made individual variations possible because of the material's hyper-textual structure. Their concluding remark also inspired the present study that "in a teacher training course, integrated interactive

e-learning and contact learning (IIECL) are fundamental” (Kupetz & Ziegenmeyer, 2005, p.194).

Among the studies dealing with implementation of Web based instruction, Sze (2006) and Holstrom, Ruiz, and Weller’s (2007) studies also inspired the researcher a lot. In Sze’s (2006) study, the researcher attempted to describe the development of an online peer observation platform for primary ESL teachers in Hong Kong. In his study, Sze (2007) aimed at making peer observation more accessible, flexible, and user-friendly, which would not be possible in a traditional, school-based setting. In Holstrom, Ruiz, and Weller’s (2007) study, the researchers piloted a study that examined perceptions of Early Childhood Education student teachers towards e-practicum. They utilized an action research design, which requires the on-going collection of both qualitative and quantitative data in a naturalistic environment. Nevertheless, although their study has some theoretical background for blended instruction, it does not have any conclusion or present empirical findings yet, because they have just reported an ongoing study in their article.

Although studies in the field of blended learning environments are becoming common abroad, there are very limited studies in Turkish context. One of the recent empirical studies on blended learning environment in the Turkish context is Akkoyunlu and Yılmaz-Soylu’s (2006) study, which inquires students’ preferences related to blended learning environments. In Akkoyunlu and Yılmaz-Soylu’s (2006) study, the researchers intended to figure out the students’ views about blended learning environment in two courses in the fall semester of 2005-2006 in the Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technologies, Faculty of Education, Hacettepe University. The results of their study demonstrated that, the more students’ achievement level and frequency of participation to the forum raised, the more positive views they expressed about blended learning environment (Akkoyunlu & Yılmaz-Soylu, 2006). Their study highlighted that combining face-to-face teaching and the use of online instruction with forums and other available media contributed to students’ learning. In

general, participants stated their positive attitudes towards blended learning program.

Another study dealing with the blended instruction in the Turkish context is Orhan's (2008) study, which intended to discuss the process of redesigning a course for blended learning and to explore college students' perceptions of blended learning environment, revealed that university students do not want to continue their education with only traditional face to face learning environments or with a purely online learning environment. The participants of Orhan's (2008) study would like to come to campus and discuss the course content with their instructors and friends in face-to-face classes, but they also would like to use information technology as a learning tool as well.

In another study related to Web based instruction in the Turkish context, Kuzu (2005) dealt with application of constructivist approach in a Web based course. Although Kuzu's study is not directly related to blended learning, his study enriched the present study in terms of its methodology in establishing a constructivist based blended instruction model as well as its research design, which assisted the researcher a lot on the issue of action research. In Kuzu's (2005) study, the researcher focused on the problems and issues while implementing an online assisted course, and tried to expose how the problems and issues handled within the frame of the focused course. Specifically, the researcher designated a constructivist-based and online-assisted instruction and investigated the application through an action research design concerning the preparation of the course, the process and production phases of the course content and the evaluation of the course. The findings of his study pointed out somewhat similar findings with the previous studies in the field. For instance, by advocating online assisted instruction, the participants stated that they might enroll such courses again, which indicated that participants were satisfied with the proposed online assisted course. Similarly, it was found that, through following a constructivist perspective, online assisted instruction deepened the participation of the students to the course when the discussion and team works were handled in face-to-face sessions. What is more, the online assisted instruction, in his study, helped

students to feel self-confident while asking questions and maintained the interaction between peers, which in turn, promoted learning through interaction with peers.

2.6. 1. No Significant Difference Phenomenon

The studies dealing with the combination of technology and instruction revealed that implementing technology in the lessons especially computer or Internet mediated platforms enhances the quality of instructions and enriches critical thinking skills of the learners. The review of the recent literature on comparative studies which have examined the effectiveness of online and on-ground face to face teaching and learning environments have exposed that there is no significant difference between online and on-ground face to face instruction (Barry & Runyan, 1995; Schulman & Sims, 1999; Gagne & Shepherd, 2001; Hiltz, Zhang & Turoff, 2002; Russell, 1999; 2001). In his book, entitled '*The no significant difference phenomenon: A comparative research annotated bibliography on technology for distance education*' Russell (2001) summarized 355 different research studies that support the conclusion that 'no significant difference' exists between the effectiveness of face-to-face classroom instruction and online learning. Most of the studies in this work suggest that the learning outcomes of students using technology at a distance are similar to the learning outcomes of students who participate in on-ground face-to-face classroom instruction. The compiler reported in the introduction that few studies, if any, were located in which the employment of technology for purposes of providing instruction or teaching found statistically significantly superior in terms of learning to other modes of instruction. Additionally, other forms or modes of instruction were not statistically superior to the employment of technology, especially distance learning, in terms of learners' success.

Similarly, Clark (1994) claimed that the media used in instruction did not affect learning. This claim was supported by a meta-analysis performed by Sitzmann, Kraiger, Stewart and Wisner (2006). In their meta-analysis, Sitzmann et. al. (2006) found that in some cases, students in distance learning environments surpassed the achievement of students in traditional learning environments. However, when the same instructional techniques were used in both settings, there was no significant difference. Zhao, Lei, Yan, Tan and Lai (2005) also noted this finding, in a similar meta-analytic study related to the effectiveness of distance education. They noted that in military and mathematics instruction, students performed slightly better in a distance learning class, while in social science and science areas there was no significant difference.

Consequently, when similar learning theories considered as basis, face-to-face learning found to have no superiority over online or blended learning. However, the opportunities the blended instruction provided were considered to have a facilitative effect. What is more, a very recent study (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2009) which was supported by U.S. Education Department confirmed that “instruction combining online and face-to-face elements had a larger advantage relative to purely face-to-face instruction than did purely online instruction” (p. 15). Furthermore, the findings of Means et.al.’s (2009) systematic search of the research literature from 1996 through July 2008 revealed that “blended instruction has been more effective, providing a rationale for the effort required to design and implement blended approaches” (p.17).

2.6. 2. Studies on Teacher Training

Although the focus of the present study is, the blended learning environment and students’ perception related to this environment, this study could not have a wealthy literature background without reviewing the studies dealing with blended learning or Web-based instruction in line with the studies on teaching practice in

teacher training programs. The review of the literature depicted that there were plenty of studies, which examined different aspects of on ground face-to-face teaching practice in the field of teacher training. The first thing that attracted the researcher's attention in the literature review is that although studies dealt with the teaching practice in general, they have not reached a consensus on the terminology of teaching practice. Among the terms that are frequently used to identify teaching practice in teacher training are; ***Field Experience*** (Morin, 1993; Shantz & Ward, 2000; Silva & Dana, 2001; He, Means & Lin, 2006), ***Mentoring Practice*** (Brehm, 1999a; Cornu, 2005; Redmond & Mander, 2006; Grove, Strudler & Odell, 2007; Akin & Hilburn, 2007), ***Practicum*** (Strand & Johnson 1990; Akyel, 1997; Rowland et al., 2000; Blunden, 2000; Fernandez, 1998 and 2003; Moffett, 2003; Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005; Schulz, 2005; Fung, 2005; Jung, et al., 2006; Jiyoon, 2007), ***School Experience*** (Brehm, 1999b; Asan, 2003; Okan & Yıldırım, 2004), ***Teaching Experience*** or ***Student-teaching experience*** (Wittenburg & McBride, 1998; Knudson, 1998; Golland, 1998; Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, 2001; Romeo, 2001), ***Service Learning*** (Bennett & Green, 2001) ***Micro/Macro Teaching***, (Benton-Kupper, 2001; Amobi, 2005; Bell, 2007) and ***Teaching Practice*** (Paker, 2000; Salleh, 2002; Bani-Abdelrahman, 2003; Sharpe et al., 2003; Harris, Pinnegar, & Teemant, 2005, Keçik, 2007).

Although studies dealing with teaching practice do not have a consensus in the terminology they use to identify the process, in fact the pre-service students practice their teaching throughout this process; therefore, the term '***Teaching Practice***' is preferred to identify the process in this study.

The review of literature on pre-service teachers' teaching practices revealed that most of those studies dealt with the problems that pre-service teachers encountered during their micro or macro teaching experiences in on-ground face-to-face teaching environments. The studies related to teaching practice, which attempted to provide an alternative dimension to on-ground face-to-face teaching practice procedures in the literature, can be classified into two groups as empirical and descriptive studies.

The descriptive studies generally focused on describing the teaching practice procedures and the means that are utilized to support pre-service teachers during their teaching practices in schools. Chepyator-Thomson and Liu's (2003) study below is an example of such studies. On the other hand, empirical studies generally investigated the student perspectives related to new implications in the teaching practice process either through interviews or by means of questionnaires. Since there are plenty of studies dealing with teaching practices, the ones that provide alternative dimension to the process are included in the reviewed literature in the present study.

Chepyator-Thomson and Liu (2003) conducted a study in order to investigate pre-service teachers' reflections on their '*student teaching experiences*'. The focus of their study were (a) to document what student teachers learned from their '*student teaching experiences*' and (b) to elicit suggestions for reforming Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programs of similar background. They used a questionnaire to elicit responses from the participants regarding what they learned from their student teaching experiences and to solicit suggestions to improve their undergraduate program. Examination of responses from the pre-service teachers' reflections on student teaching experiences indicated that they mostly learned skills of class management and techniques of discipline. These results were consistent with the literature regarding physical education student teacher's priority in management and class control. In reference to this study, class management and control appears at the top of the concerns raised by the pre-service teachers. This study also confirmed that during '*student teaching*', pre-service teachers have opportunities to develop class management and control skills, but have fewer chances to enhance technical skills and strategies of teaching, and show less concern on student learning during the initial period of '*student teaching*'. The second purpose of the Chepyator-Thomson and Liu (2003) study was to gather suggestions regarding improvement of undergraduate teacher preparation program and future student teachers based on the participants' student teaching experiences. The pre-service teachers considered field experience as lacking in their undergraduate teacher education program. The pre-service

teachers suggested that, instead of the program focusing on the performance, the activity classes should focus on how to teach various specific skills. A concluding remark was that a well-supervised and teaching-centered early '*field experience*' could provide pre-service teachers with an environment in which they could concentrate on developing actual skills of teaching and other aspects of teaching in public school physical education.

In one of the descriptive studies related to the alternative forms of teaching practice process, Jung, et. al., (2006) described three different blended models for offering '*clinical experiences*' to students in special education distance programs. These programs reported attempts at or plans to incorporate desktop videoconferencing to facilitate some face-to-face interactions (online) to enable campus-based supervisors to observe practice at local placement sites without devoting time to travel and to allow conferences for more personalized feedback to '*practicum*' students. After describing the models, the authors suggested that the use of technology could be beneficial in connecting students and facilitating supervision in special education. They suggested that with the popularity of Web-based instruction, it is inevitable that many programs will offer '*clinical experiences*' as well as course work online and can benefit from the experiences of these and similar programs.

There are also some other descriptive studies which dealt with teaching practice and distant education as well as '*practicum*' and '*mentoring*' issues. For instance, Wittenburg and McBride's (1998) study dealt with '*student-teaching experience*' that utilized Internet in the supervision of student teachers in Texas A&M University. In this study, researchers intended to (a) explain the construction of a basic interactive Web site, (b) take the concept of communicating through e-mail a step further to include the use of the Internet as an instrument to enhance student-teaching supervision and, (c) examine ways of troubleshooting common problems that may arise when using Internet. The researchers utilized an e-mail based supervision system to provide feedback to the student teachers. Regarding the findings of their study, they claimed that use of e-mail, however, is just one aspect of the Internet that could be utilized in the supervision of student teachers.

Moreover, they suggested that Internet could be invaluable tool in initiating frequent communication between the university and student-teaching sites, particularly when separated by distance. Additionally, they believed that development of an interactive Web site has the potential to be a dynamic and multidimensional tool in the formative supervision of student teachers. According to Wittenburg and McBride (1998), the use of Internet (e-mail) for the supervision of student teachers holds many fascinating and exciting possibilities. The actual observation and assessment of the student teacher's performance by the university supervisor is still preferred. Nevertheless, Internet use can enhance the student-teaching experience.

Similarly, in a study Whipp (2003), attempted to compare patterns and levels of reflection in students' e-mail discussions about '*field experiences*' of teacher education students in urban schools. Primary data sources of her study included transcripts of all student e-mail postings to the electronic discussions, written student surveys, and a reflective portfolio assignment completed by students at the end of each semester. Analysis of discussion transcripts during the earlier semester revealed that higher levels of reflection were rare. With a number of changes in both the design and level of support for the discussions, students during the second semester were more inclined to write at higher levels of reflection. This study confirmed previous studies of online communities in K-12 education and in teacher education, which maintained that online discussions should be structured carefully to support high levels of reflection. This study also suggested that particularly helpful scaffolds in online discussions about '*field experiences*' are tailored and general questions from teacher educator and peers about sociopolitical and moral issues raised by '*field experiences*'. She concluded that such supports could encourage a higher level of discussion that in turn, could act as an additional and important scaffold for higher levels of reflection in *field experiences*.

Another descriptive study which explored the teaching practices of pre-service teachers is Simpson's (2006) study. In her article, Simpson (2006) discussed the provision of '*field experience*' for teacher candidates who were in distance

delivered teacher education programs where the students work towards a first level teacher education qualification. Her article examined the literature on 'field experience' and explored some of the ways '*field experience*' can be implemented in distance delivered teacher education programs. After examining studies in the field of teaching experience of distant education teacher candidates, Simpson claimed that the use of new technologies could be of value to all (on-campus and distance) teacher education students during their *field experience*. According to Simpson (2006), computer-mediated communication is useful in providing student support and communication for the parties in *field experience*.

In Bangel, Enersen, Capobianco and Moon's (2006) study the researchers tried to determine the effectiveness of a specific '*practicum*' and online course for the education of gifted learners through providing a knowledge base to undergraduate pre-service teachers. In this study, researchers examined two training strategies to increase pre-service teachers' understanding of gifted students. Within the framework of this study, participants were provided with the information concerning the characteristics and needs of gifted students through online course and they were expected to reflect this knowledge during their '*practicum*' experiences. The perceptions of the participants interpreted from data gathered through semi-structured interviews, their lesson plans, their performance in the classroom as assessed by specialists in the field of gifted education, as well as self-evaluation of their teaching with videotapes. The analysis of the data revealed that participants benefited from the online instruction and self-evaluation of their teaching through use of videotapes that provided the scaffolding necessary for them to prepare, in the short term, for their *practicum* experience, and, in the long term, for their future classrooms. Their findings indicated that this experience, which was more than most standard *field experiences*, provided the opportunity to utilize more fully the skills the participants trained to use in their teacher education program.

Among the few studies that focused on exploring the benefits of applying blended learning in teacher education, King's (2002) case study explored the dynamics and experiences of the instructor and students participating in a hybrid-modeled

teacher education program. Having an ample background on online instruction, King, proposed a hybrid course, which blends online and face to face instruction in one of the courses in post secondary teacher development program in an American University, and examined whether essential elements of a quality teacher education classes might be found or cultivated in this blended learning environment. Six sessions of this class held face to face at the university and eight of them conducted asynchronously online in a 5-week period. The hybrid course was primarily a Web-based, interactive, instructor-guided course in conjunction with interactive campus-based class sessions. The course enriched by utilizing Web-based course technologies including threaded discussions, Websites, file sharing and personal and distribution list e-mail. The participants of her study were 15 students who were educators and educators-in-training ranging in teaching experience from zero to 34 years. The findings of King's (2002) study which initially intended to simply explore the viability and dimensions of the hybrid [blended learning] format revealed that hybrid classes pose an opportunity to develop interactive, collaborative learning communities and these hybrid online classroom discussions had the potential of prompting critical thinking, dynamic interactive dialogue, and substantial peer-to-peer interaction. Concerning the findings the study, King reached a conclusion that blended learning might present an opportunity to develop interactive and collaborative learning communities for pre-service teachers through overcoming the drawbacks of online instruction and minimizing the inconvenience of face-to-face instruction.

In another study conducted by Khine and Lourdusamy (2003) in one and only teacher training institute in Singapore, the researchers examined blended approach of online tutorials, content delivered on multimedia CD-ROMs, and online discussion in their 'Teaching and Classroom Management' course. The specifically designed CD-ROM consisted of relevant classroom episodes, interviews with teachers, reports and newspaper clippings on disciplinary problems in Singapore schools, which provided information on authentic classroom situations to help trainee teachers effectively apply the theories and principles of classroom management and understand the philosophies governing

good classroom management as well as to prepare them to face real-life situations. After attending to six weeks of face-to-face tutorials on campus, trainee teachers sent out to schools for practice teaching and they were asked to share their experiences and observations of classroom management and discipline issues and other significant events that happened during their school placement through a group online discussion forum. Throughout this practice session, researchers collected trainee teachers' feedback on various dimensions in order to evaluate a module in the teacher education program. Their findings revealed that the trainee teachers felt that online discussion during *practicum* provided them with an avenue to discuss their problems and ideas and that responses from peers helped them clear their problems. As a conclusion Khine and Lourdasamy (2003) believed that the trainee teachers' learning was enhanced by such a blended approach, for example, the multimedia CD provided them with examples that were well integrated with online tutorials and online discussion allowed them to learn from peers.

In order to examine different aspects of blended learning in teacher education, Ausburn (2004) utilized a questionnaire to compare the participants' preference and performance in distant learning and ATLAS (Assessing the Learning Strategies of Adults) to identify the instructional goals and course design features of blended learning valued by adult learners in teacher education. The findings, which in turns, might help the faculty developing courses with an online at-distance component, indicated that participants in her study value learner options, variety of choices, and self-directedness in their learning opportunities. What is more, the adult learners in teacher education benefited from frequent announcements and reminders from the instructor and from effective two-way communication with their classmates and instructor to establish a learning community.

Motteram's (2006) case study examined the perception of graduate students in teacher education on a Master's program at Manchester University towards blended learning. The author developed a blended module, which makes use of two key ICTs in its delivery, namely, the Web, which presents information about

the topic of CMC via specially written texts with links to a number of Web sites and an asynchronous communication via forum. Additionally, he provided guidelines for utilizing online discussion forums in conjunction with face-to-face classes. In addition to reviewing the development of the module over time, in his case study, the researcher collected various data with reference to his research questions. His findings advocated that if the tasks in a blended learning environment are relevant to learners and set up well, then they could help learners to develop their knowledge and skills. Findings of the study also suggested that blended learning could play a role in helping the process of transforming teachers, by providing them with the relevant and useful deep learning experience.

Delfino and Persico (2007) conducted a five-year case study (2001 - 2005) of an education technology course in secondary teacher education in Italy. The purpose of their study was to improve *practice teaching* in pre-service teacher training in educational technology, by identifying the problems connected to the introduction of online collaborative techniques, investigating the pros and cons of possible solutions with the aim of reaching an optimal blend between online and face to face for the given context. During the period of the study, authors experienced various versions of the course and its different combinations, including traditional, pure online and blended approaches. Consequently, the course in question transformed from entirely online to a blended approach of online and face-to-face learning as a result of the experiments and adopted solutions. Delfino and Persico (2007) concluded that the blended learning environments could be used in pre-service teacher training since the blended course brought designers and tutors to reflect on the best way to merge and integrate face to face and online techniques, by choosing the best approach for the various phases and activities of the course.

In another recent study, Young and Lewis (2008) examined the perception of teacher candidates in terms of the effectiveness of courses and programs delivered at a distance at seven universities in the United States. They collected participant's responses to a survey containing questions in four categories, including the effectiveness of course structure, overall enjoyment and satisfaction, adequacy of student-teacher interaction, and adequacy of peer-to-peer interaction. Their

findings provided the basis for their conclusion that pre-service teachers in distance programs had more or less positive attitudes to distance education in terms of overall satisfaction and enjoyment.

Besides the studies dealing with online or blended instruction in teacher training, there are also various studies related to blended instruction and teaching practice courses. For instance, in a qualitative study, Czop-Assaf, (2005) examined the perspectives and experiences of four student teachers from a reading specialization program who used an asynchronous online discussion board during their '*school-based field practicum*'. This study took place after the participants graduated from the reading specialization program and began their 1st year as elementary teachers. They were asked to reflect on their experiences using an online discussion forum during their '*school-based field practicum*' and explain how online communication influenced their teaching experiences. The researcher specifically attempted to find an answer to the question how student teachers in a reading specialization program perceived their participation on an online discussion board during their field placement? The analysis of the data revealed that online discussion used by these elementary teachers helped to remove the feelings of isolation, assisted in building personal and professional relationships, and extended practical teaching experiences. Participants felt connected with their classmates and believed that online communication provided a lifeline that helped them survive the struggles of practice teaching. Sharing ideas online gave participants an additional opportunity to reflect on their teaching practices with others, thus making elementary teaching a more collaborative and reflective learning experience.

In a study conducted by DeWert, Babinski and Jones (2003), the researchers intended to investigate use of an online support community in providing social, emotional, practical, and professional support to beginning teachers. The authors investigated the types of issues new teachers discussed in an online community and the impact it had on the lives of these beginning teachers. The authors used action research method, which is the upward-spiraling cycles of problem presentation, analysis, knowledge construction, and action. Qualitative and

quantitative results of this study indicated that online discussions gave teachers with the opportunity to clarify their thinking about complex educational issues and helped them to make informed decisions related to their professional practice. In addition, analysis of the data confirmed that the project provided for the beginning teachers increased an emotional support, decreased feelings of isolation, increased confidence, more enthusiasm for work, increased reflection, ability to adopt a more critical perspective, and improved problem-solving skills.

Similarly, exploring the potential of a Web-supported professional development system, which integrated videotaped classrooms and discussion forums for use in pre-service science methods classrooms, Barnett's (2006) study examined pre- and in-service teachers' perceptions related using the ILF (Inquiry Learning Forum) and how their participation in the ILF helped to enhance their teaching. Researcher collected data from multiple sources; including, pre-post semi-structured interviews, student journals, student course evaluations, online discussion forums, and e-mail exchanges between the pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and the course instructor. The efforts described in their study was, to implement a Web-based professional development system, contribute to the ongoing effort within the teacher education community to better understand how emerging media and tools like the ILF can be used to bridge the assumed theory-practice gap in teacher education programs and provide pre-service teachers access to reform-oriented classrooms. Through combining online classroom videos with asynchronous discussion and other teaching instruments, the pre-service teachers were able to view actual teaching practice and engage in extended conversation with peers, who brought with them a variety of perspectives and interpretations of the teacher's classroom teaching contexts. The analysis of the data revealed that the use of video vignettes and asynchronous discussion forums in the ILF support the discussion of teachers' beliefs regarding inquiry-based instruction. In general, the findings of Barnett's (2006) study suggested that such Web-based professional development systems have great potential to renew and reform teacher education courses and to support both pre- and in-service teachers to critically thinking about their own beliefs and practice.

Hewitt, Pedretti, Bencze, Vaillancourt and Yoon (2003) described an innovative study in which teacher candidates' immediate reactions to videotaped teaching scenarios recorded and the subject of those recordings analyzed through personal and group analyses. Although their study was not directly related to online or blended instruction in teaching practice, the innovation they provided in their study is worth mentioning. The intent of their study was to help teacher candidates develop a deeper awareness of their own reactions to real-life instructional scenarios and to encourage them to consider alternative instructional strategies. In general, the goal was to elicit candidate reactions to common, everyday teaching situations and then to explore how those responses might be improved through discussion and reflection. The multimedia presentation contained a series of video vignettes that collectively depicted an innovative third grade science lesson on the topic of photosynthesis. The presentation also included a copy of the teacher's lesson plan, a copy of the activity sheets, a textual description of the context and rationale for the lesson, and a number of still photos and videos depicting the classroom environment and student work. The pre-service teachers were asked to describe, as quickly as possible, how they would respond to the situation that the onscreen teacher was currently facing. In each case, the teacher candidates recorded their immediate reactions on a reflection sheet. The reflection sheets from the 40 teacher candidates served as one data source. Analysis of the data yielded that for over 70% of the cases; pre-service teachers either modified or reinvented their immediate personal responses after conversing with their peers. Group discussion brought new considerations to the attention of many pre-service teachers, including timing issues, classroom management concerns, and the possibility of turning problems back to students. The results of the analysis suggested that this instructional approach was beneficial in several respects. For instance, it encouraged pre-service teachers to talk about teaching in terms of the moment-by-moment decisions that practitioners made in classrooms. By projecting their immediate responses onto those of the situation, and making those responses a subject of analysis, teacher candidates could potentially develop deeper insights into their own practice and the complex nature of teaching. Almost all of the pre-service teachers felt that the activity was professionally valuable and

most of the participants confirmed that such a study increased their awareness of their own reactions to teaching situations.

In Bennett and Green's (2001) study, the authors discussed the efficacy and benefits of '*service learning*' and online instruction, and suggested ways to incorporate these techniques into the classroom. The authors of this paper suggested that online instruction and '*service learning*' could not only co-exist as teaching methods, but may actually combine to form a resembling relationship that strengthens a course to an exponential degree. '*Service learning*' provided students the opportunity to practice newly learned skills in a functional environment. Online instruction offered opportunities for immediate feedback that allows for effective processing of the experience.

Killian and Willhite's (2003) study, which investigated the use of electronic discussion forum of pre-service teachers in language arts methods class, is not directly related to the teaching practice process. However, it is worth including such a study in the literature review for understanding the perceptions of the pre-service teacher related to the use of electronic discussion forum as part of their courses. Moreover, their concluding remark was also valuable for further studies, which may include electronic discussion forum in *field experiences*. Killian and Willhite (2003) explored pre-service students' prior experience, perceptions and expectations for participation in an electronic discussion forum and then, at the end of the participation, to learn to what extent these perceptions had changed. The evaluation of use of electronic discussion forum experience of students suggested that many of the benefits identified in the literature were also evident for this study. They found out that, while students were participating in electronic discussion, the level of student involvement increased, both for the class as a whole and for the individuals who were not regular participants during in-class discussion. The findings of this descriptive study about the efficacy of electronic discussion in language arts methods class confirmed the benefits of use of electronic discussion to supplement traditional classroom discussion. They concluded their article stating that further research in other pre-service contexts is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of electronic discussion to extend the

dialogue of methods classes and to promote shared reflection during '*field experiences*'.

The literature related to learning environments, practice teaching, use of Internet, particularly, the use of discussion boards, and the use of videotaped classroom teachings placed on the Web page for feedback in teaching practice, or ELT methodology courses have been discussed above in order to provide the necessary background and justification for the current study which explored the impact of a *blended teaching practice course* on pre-service teachers enrolled in a English language teacher preparation program.

The brief review of available literature examined in this chapter has presented valuable and necessary background and justification for the current research. For instance, Kuzu's (2005) study based the design of the Web portion of the blended learning environment of the present study, which will be explicated in detail in the methodology chapter. Similarly, Kurubacak's (2000); Chejlyk's (2006); Akkoyunlu and Yilmaz-Soylu's (2006, 2008a, 2008b) and Orhan's (2008) studies helped to form the data gathering instruments of this study. Other studies, which implement feedback sessions through videotaped classroom practices (Hewitt et. al., 2003; Sze, 2006; Barnett, 2006; Bangel, Enersen, Capobianco & Moon, 2006), also inspired the researcher to employ discussion forum based feedback sessions through videotaped teaching practices of pre-service teachers.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3. 1. Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology of the study will be explained. Regarding the overall purpose of the present study, the research design, the participants, the researcher, the medium and design of the course, the instruments that were used to gather qualitative data including Web based instruction attitude survey and standardized open-ended interviews will be presented in detail.

3. 2. Research Design

The aim of the present study was to find effective solutions to the problems that pre-service teachers confront in their teaching practice courses as well as to propose and implement change, and improve practice and performance of the learners. Concerning the aim of the present study, the review of literature on the research methodologies have revealed that action research is a proper research design when the intent of the study is to improve the quality and performance of the community or an identified area of concern (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Dick, 2002; McNiff, 2002).

As in the words of Kuzu (2005), “the most outstanding purpose of the action research in the field of education is to understand the emerging issues in the world of education systematically and attempt to change and develop those issues” (p.32). Thus, aiming towards the improvement is an essential element in action research and is, basically, what distinguishes it from other research approaches (Norton, 2009).

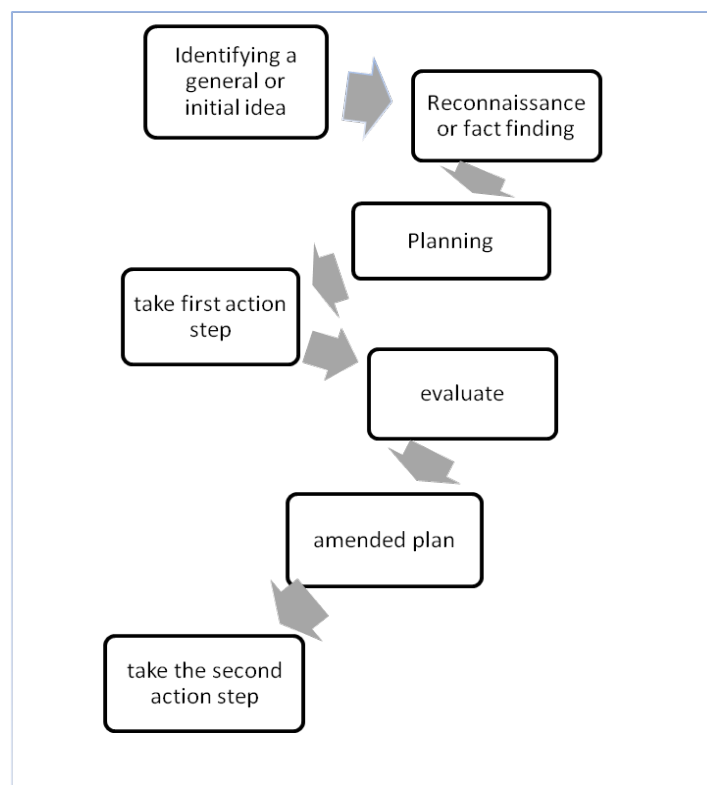
When the literature on action research is reviewed, it is observed that there are different views of action research abound within the literature, (Cassell & Johnson, 2006) such as some influential commentators have emphasized that action research is a systematic self-reflective scientific inquiry implemented by practitioners to improve practice, whereas others framed the action research as appreciative inquiry that builds upon organizational successes rather than straightening problems. With the same concerns, some see that the theoretical imperative of the action research is “interpretive understanding” and some considered it as “casual explanation” (Cassell & Johnson, 2006, p. 783).

Broadly speaking there have been two distinct traditions in action research; the first one is the British tradition that links research to improvement of practice and is education orientated, that has fostered curricular reform and increased professionalism in teaching. The second tradition is the American tradition that links research to bringing about social change, which has its roots in the progressive education movement and the work of John Dewey. Additionally one more tradition is seen in Australia, which has brought about collaborative curriculum planning (Mills, 2007; Norton, 2009).

Depending on the view that action research is a systematic self-reflective scientific inquiry conducted by practitioners to improve practice, in line with the British tradition, and referring the pedagogical action research Norton (2009) claimed “*the fundamental purpose of pedagogical action research is to systematically investigate one’s own teaching/learning facilitation practice, with the dual aim of improving that practice and contributing to theoretical knowledge in order to benefit student learning*” (p.59). Pedagogical action research is usually conducted at an educational setting that is a university environment, by an instructor or a researcher who recognizes a problem or limitation in his/her workplace situation and, devises a plan to counteract the problem, implements the plan, observes what happens, reflects on these outcomes (Norton, 2009, pp. 51-60).

Although there are various concepts of action research, which are labeled differently due to the purposes of the research, the research methods used to collect and analyze data do not differ. Likewise, action research specifically refers to a disciplined inquiry done by a researcher with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future.

Action research in general has seven major characteristics, which are; being a social practice, aiming towards improvement, being cyclical, having systematic enquiry, being reflective, being participative, and determined by the practitioners. It is believed that reflecting on practice, as part of an action research cycle is essential if any enduring change is to be effected, because it involves some transformation from previously held assumptions to adopting a new framework (Norton, 2009). The action research's characteristics of being cyclical is described as carrying out simple cycle of actions and reflection which is broken into phases of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting in line with the action research theory of Kurt Lewin. Smith (2007) figures the action research with reference to Lewin's concept of being spiral and cyclical as in the following diagram.



In a similar vein, Norton (2009) described the action research as having four-cycle steps; which are *observe, plan, act and reflect*. According to Norton (2009) the first step in an action research is to observe or notice that something is not as it should be and/or could be improved (observe). The second step is to plan a course of action that involves changing something in the practice (plan). The third step is to carry out the change (act). The fourth step is to see what effect the change has made (reflect). He also offered a five-step process in the pedagogical action research that is symbolized with the acronym ITDEM. ITDEM stands for; Identifying the issue, Thinking of ways to tackle it, Doing it, Evaluating the effects, and Modifying practice.

Within the general framework of pedagogical action research, the present study primarily focused on improving an alternative model for the teaching practice course for the pre-service teachers through designing and developing a blended learning environment, and validation and evaluation of a specific course, namely, blended teaching practice course.

Since the study is conducted at an educational setting that is a university environment, by an instructor or a researcher who recognizes a problem or limitation in his/her workplace situation and, devise a plan to counteract the problem, implement the plan, observe what happens, reflect on these outcomes 'pedagogical action research' was considered to be the appropriate method.

As it is stated the goal of the present study is mainly to develop, evaluate and improve the practice teaching courses of pre-service teachers through offering an alternative model for the current teaching practice course in teacher training program at a University, so the ITDEM model suggested by Norton (2009) within the pedagogical action research methodology is applied for the present study.

As in the ITDEM model, the present study is conducted in a five-step process within the frame of pedagogical action research methodology. The first step is the identification of the problem that the researcher faced during his co-supervisors in teaching practice and school experience courses. The second

step of the present pedagogical action research is thinking ways to tackle the identified problem, in which the researcher sought to find an alternative way through reviewing the related literature. The second step also includes designing and implementation phase of the blended learning environment for the teaching practice course. The third step is the “doing it” phase and covers application and practicing of a blended learning environment in the regular teaching practice course and its evaluation from the students’ perspectives will be held in the fourth step. The modification practice is the final step of the study, therefore, the modification of the blended learning teaching practice course will be held with reference to its evaluations from students’ perspectives. However, concerning the nature of the action research, minor modification of the course will also be held within each action step.

Baker and O’Neil (2006, p.6) described evaluations as being “used to describe judgments of status about programs, institutions, and individuals for the purpose of improvement which is a kind of formative evaluation, or decisions that can be considered as summative evaluation”. Summative evaluations generally serve for a decision-making process when a person or group is trying to decide if a program is to be adopted or not (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006), and they are usually obtained through comparing one program with another one, such as comparison of face to face and online instructions.

On the other hand, *formative evaluation*, which goes under other names such as ‘*developmental evaluation*’ and ‘*implementation evaluation*’, is a type of evaluation that has the purpose of improving programs. It describes the evaluation of course materials or learning environments with the objective of providing information for improvement during the design and implementation phases (Schifter & Monolescu, 2004). In a very broad description, formative evaluation of a program focuses on customer satisfaction. For instance, a satisfaction survey that asks whether the customers (e.g., students or faculty) enjoy the format of the course, whether the format impedes or promotes the learning/teaching process in any way (Schifter & Monolescu, 2004) can be regarded as formative evaluation of a new learning environment or program.

When the literature on the evaluation of the learning environments has been reviewed, it is found that several attempts have been made to develop evaluation frameworks for Web-based learning environments and Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (1996, 2006) model outstands in the literature as a course evaluation model (Belanger & Jordan, 2000; Kruse, 2004; Britain & Liber, 2004).

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2006) evaluation model has four levels: 1- Reaction, 2- Learning, 3- Behavior, and 4- Results. The first (reaction) level of their model is used to explore how participants of a program or course react to it. They labeled this level as "customer satisfaction" level (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006, p. 21), in which instructors can determine what their students like and dislike about the program or course. The second level of the model is used to determine how much participants in the program have learned. These two levels of the model are generally used for the formative evaluation purposes in the literature since they serve for the purpose of improving programs. The third and fourth levels of the model are typically used to evaluate a program for summative purposes since they evaluate the end product of the course or the program. The present study will consider Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2006) formative evaluation levels since the present study intends to evaluate the effectiveness of Web-based instruction component of blended teaching practice course with the objective of providing information for improvement during the design and implementation phases.

3.2. 1. Participants of the Study

The participants of the present study were 18 undergraduate ELT students who enrolled in two sections of the Teaching Practice course (OMB 406 Teaching Practice G/H) in English Language Teacher Training Program at Education Faculty of Anadolu University. All of the participants declared that they have an adequate amount of background on the information technologies and have ample

computer skills such as using word processor or surfing on the Internet. Their background was also strengthened through two compulsory courses in the program, which are BIL125 Computer, and OMB 212 Teaching Technologies and Material Design. All of the participants were in the 4th grade spring term of 2007-2008 academic year and they had already taken a pre-requisite course -School Experience - in the fall term of the same academic year in which they performed shorter tasks in real classroom environments in participating schools.

3.2. 2. The Researcher

The researcher of the study is a PhD candidate and full-time research assistant in English Language Teacher Training (ELT) Program at Anadolu University.

Prior to start his PhD dissertation, he enrolled in several PhD courses in his major as well as other major oriented courses including “*Web Applications in Education*”, “*Statistics in Social Sciences and Research Methodology*”. Beginning in 2002-2003 fall term, he took the role of co-supervisor in “*School Experience II*” and “*Teaching Practice*” courses and still co-supervising the students face to face in those courses. He has worked with several experienced university supervisors and gained expertise in the field of lesson planning, observation, giving feedback and performance evaluation.

In 2004, he worked with an educational technology development group who prepare lesson contents for the online courses of DELTT program at Anadolu University. He was one of the educational technology designers of distant delivered “*ELT Methodology Course*” in this program and designed the contents, tasks and quizzes of several units for the internet based ELT Methodology course. He is also working as one of the academic advisors of this course whose duties are providing feedback and answer students’ course related questions through asynchronous discussion forum since the fall term of 2004-2005 academic year. Beside academic advisorship of ELT Methodology course, the researcher has also

been carrying out almost the same job in another course, which is “*School Experience II and Teaching Practice*” in the same program since the fall term of 2006-2007 academic year. The researcher’s duty in this course is to guide the students on the procedural and academic aspects of their micro and macro teaching practices through an asynchronous discussion forum provided for the Distant English Language Teacher Training Program students.

In order to strengthen his background on the ELT methodological issues, he also participated to the undergraduate ELT Methodology course in the fall and spring terms of 2006 – 2007 academic year as a teaching assistant.

The researcher’s experience in co-supervising the on-ground teaching practice students in ELT department and academic advisorship of the DELTT students in the distant delivered courses strengthen his background on both supervising the teaching practice students and using the asynchronous discussion forum for this purpose.

3. 3. Data Gathering Instruments

The study relied on various techniques to gather its data including a survey on participants’ attitudes related to the Web (computer) based instruction, a survey on the satisfaction of the participants with the blended teaching practice course, and standardized open-ended interviews with participants.

3.3. 1. The Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey

The Web based instruction attitude survey (Appendix 1) is adapted with slight changes from Kurubacak (2000) and used in the present study. After getting permission from the author, the researcher made slight changes such as changing

the name of the institution and the name of the course and used this survey with the intention of examining participants' opinions related to the Web based instruction component of the blended teaching practice course. Kurubacak (2000) used the Web based instruction attitude survey once at the very beginning of the application of the Web based instruction in order to gather background data of participants and information about their familiarity and expectations related to the online learning environments and once after the application of the Web based instruction in order to examine the changes in the participants' expectations and attitudes. The terminology used in the items of this survey seems that they are related to the computer attitude, however, as Kurubacak (2000, p.145) stated, descriptions of students' computer experiences and computing skills will reflect their attitudes towards Web-based instruction. Similarly, other researchers such as Mitra and Hullett (1997), Litchfield, Oakland and Anderson (2002), Mitra, et. al., (2006), and Lin (2008) also acknowledged that considering attitudes towards computer use of the learners is an important indicator when assessing student attitudes toward online or Web based instruction. Likewise, the participants' attitudes towards the Web based component of the learning environment could also be figured out through examining students' attitudes towards Web/computer use in the present study.

The Web based instruction attitude survey consisted of three demographic questions and 20 six-point Likert type questions ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree. In general, the survey inquires participants' opinions related to Web/computer based instruction. The instrument was used at pre-application and post-application period in the current study as to find out if there is a change in the participants' opinions related to instruction before and after taking the *blended teaching practice course*. The aim of administrating the survey on two separate occasions is two folded; first, it will provide background data of the participants as well as information about the participants' previous experience and expectations related to online learning prior to the study. Secondly, it will provide data that are related to the participants' opinions on

blended instruction to find out whether blended instruction would display an alteration or not after taking the blended Teaching Practice course.

Since, it is essential to know whether the same set of items would elicit the same responses if the same questions are recast and re-administered to the respondents, the reliability of the survey was calculated through using the Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 and 1. However, there is actually no lower limit to the coefficient. The closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). A commonly agreed cut-off for satisfactory Cronbach's alpha value is 0.7, although a value of 0.6 can be accepted during exploratory research (Hair et. al., 1995; Kent, 2001; Garson, 2008). The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability value for the original survey was determined as; .787, while alpha reliability for the adapted version of the survey was determined as; .619, both of which were considered acceptable and reliable.

3.3. 2. Blended Learning Satisfaction Survey

In order to examine the participants' satisfaction levels related to the blended learning environment, a satisfaction survey (Appendix 2) is used at the end of the term. This questionnaire, which was adapted from Chejlyk (2006), was originally designed to measure the participants' perceptions related to their satisfaction in an online learning environment. It is slightly modified so as to cover the participants' perceptions related to their satisfaction in blended instruction. The original Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey consists of 3 sections and total 33 questions. 30 of the questions in the instrument were four-point Likert type questions ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree; 2 of them were open ended questions and one of them was asking students to rank the order of importance of interaction in blended learning environment from most important to least important. The four-point Likert type questions in the first part of the

instrument are associated with the participants' perceptions related to online course access and design, the second part inquires the participants' perceptions related to the discussion function of the learning environment by means of four-point Likert type questions and the third part focuses on the perceptions related to the participants' satisfaction with the blended learning environment. For the purpose of the present study slight changes were made in the original instrument and only 21 four-point Likert type questions that focused on the perceptions related to the participants' satisfaction with the blended learning environment were used in the present study. Accordingly, since the focus of the present study was the participants' satisfaction with the blended learning environment, the questions in the first and second parts, and two open ended questions that inquires the participants to range the importance of the interaction in the blended learning environment were excluded from the final form of the survey. Consequently, the final form of the survey consisted of 21 four-point Likert type questions ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In order to establish its content validity, the final form of the survey was examined by an expert in the field and the instrument was renewed through considering the expert's view. The reliability of the final form of the survey was calculated through using Cronbach alpha and was found as .796 which is satisfactory reliability level.

3.3.3. Interviews

To triangulate the findings of surveys and for further investigation of the participants' views, "standardized open-ended interviews" (Patton, 2002) with participants were conducted. The researcher wrote a pool of interview questions based on the related literature, observations throughout the course of the research process and experts consultations. In this pool, there were roughly 40 questions in the mother tongue (Turkish) of the participants. Then, the researcher classified, modified and reviewed each interview question. Finally, the researcher consulted with his dissertation advisor on these questions in order to give a final shape to

them. The 13 questions were chosen as final interview questions to investigate students' opinions related to the blended teaching practice course (Appendix 3). These 13 interview questions were grouped in 5 main topics, which were general opinions related to the blended teaching practice course (1), process-oriented questions (2), questions inquiring the contribution of the course to the participants' teaching professions (3, 4 and 5), questions focused on the formative evaluation of the course (6, 7, 8 and 9) and satisfaction-oriented questions (10, 11 and 12). Additionally, in order to confirm the content validity of the interview questions, an expert in the field was asked to assess the clarity of the questions. Consequently, 13 interview questions got their final forms after getting the experts' recommendations and views on the questions.

The format of the interview was Patton's (2002) "standardized open-ended interview" which "is the most structured and efficient of the qualitative interviewing techniques and is useful for reducing bias when several interviewers are involved, when interviewers are less experienced or knowledgeable, or when it is important to be able to compare the responses of different respondents" (Sewell, 2001, "Types of Qualitative Interviews," para. 3). In this format, the interviewer tracks a strict script, and there is no flexibility in the wording or order of questions. That is, the exact wording and sequence of questions are determined in advance and all interviewees are asked the same open-ended questions in the same order.

Each interview lasted about 25 minutes in length and all interviews were video recorded. The researcher and the interviewees were alone during interviews. The researcher asked some entree questions to make the participants comfortable at the beginning of each interview session and then he moved the focus of interview to the participants' opinions related to the Blended Teaching Practice course. No significant interruption was experienced in each interview.

3.3. 4. Field Notes and Observations

One of the sine qua non of any research, principally the qualitative research, is taking and keeping notes about the research process. There are various attempts and ways of keeping notes in a research process with reference to its methodology and design such as, keeping research diaries, research logs, journals or taking field notes. Generally, these qualitative research instruments are created by the researcher to remember and record the behaviors, activities, events and other features of the setting or phenomenon being studied. Although in many cases, the primary focus of such instruments is the development of one's own skills and knowledge as a practitioner, this approach can often be understood as a form of action research, and they serve as a thorough record for the researcher, with sufficient information to replicate the study and verify that the results are valid (Newbury, 2001).

With the aim of keeping a systematic record of events in the research process, the researcher kept paper and pencil notes as well as a virtual research log throughout the study. The researcher's paper and pencil notes and virtual research log were used as a supplementary material while discussing and interpreting the findings of the study.

Another data-providing context in the present study was the field notes based on field observations. Throughout the semester, the researcher visited the participating schools and observed pre-service teachers' teaching performances in the classroom setting regularly. During the field observations researcher regularly took notes, supervised and gave feedback to the pre-service teachers in face-to-face sessions at the campus. After each field observation, the hand written notes were reviewed and transcribed by the researcher. In addition to the field observation notes, the participants were also video-recorded during the field visits that also served as additional research log for the present study.

3. 4. The Medium of Instruction (The Context)

The blended learning is applied within a single course – OMB 406 Teaching Practice G/H – in order to explore its planning, implementation, and cyclic development from the student perspective through administration of surveys and interviews.

Within the framework of the present study, the pre-service teachers enrolled in a 14 week blended teaching practice course. Every week, each participant is asked to prepare a lesson plan in Word format and mail them to the researcher 2 days prior to their actual teaching practices in the participating schools. As soon as the researcher received the lesson plans, transferred them into Flash and PDF format and uploaded them onto the Web page.

When the pre-service teachers logged on to the WebCT, their first task was to examine their friends lesson plans in the ‘lesson plans module’ of the Web page and provide feedback for the lesson plans through an asynchronous computer-mediated discussion forum where the other pre-service teachers have also examined the same lesson plans and gave their feedback. Another weekly task for each participant was observing the videotaped teaching practices and providing feedback to the pre-service teacher through the discussion forum.

Once students log on to the ‘Teaching Practices Module’, they see an introductory screen that shows a list of recorded videos that capture each pre-service teacher’s classroom practices. When the students click on the related course’s video link, they immediately log on to the incorporating page where they will watch the videotaped classroom practice accompanied with the lesson observation criteria (Appendix 4) that was developed by the researcher and his dissertation advisor. As Sze (2006) asserted, when lesson segments or whole lessons are digitized and placed on the Web, the students might make very convenient viewing and it can be followed by computer-mediated discussion, thus developing critical reflection. Similarly, Hajsadr (2005) affirmed the efficiency of classroom teaching is further

improved by making the same teaching objects available after class via the Internet.

The purpose of placing observation evaluation criteria on the same page is to enable the students to scrutinize the videotaped lesson through a holistic criterion and provide their feedback regarding these criteria. The lesson plans of the videotaped practice sessions, which are placed in the '*Lesson Plans Module*' beforehand, are also linked next to the video clips in order to enable the viewer more easily to work out what is taking place in the videotaped lesson if necessary. Additionally, in order to ease the feedback providing process, a link to the '*Discussion*' button on the same page is placed. If the students click on the discussion button, they are directly taken to an online forum page (WebCT) where, after logging in, s/he is able to take part in an asynchronous discussion with other pre-service teachers who have watched the same video-recorded classroom practice.

Discussion boards, which were referred as computer conferencing tools, are the frequently used communication tools in online learning environments. Like asynchronous tools, they provide spatial and temporal flexibility to the participants and allow participants to interact with one another at any place and time convenient for them. By means of the discussion board, participants are able to reflect, edit, and revise their messages before sending them. Likewise, on the contrary to the face-to-face settings and diverse synchronous tools, the communication process in discussion boards is recorded. That is, the posted messages are permanent and can be reprocessed that can foster follow-up discussions. The permanent characteristics of the messages in the discussion board is that they are stored in a secure and stable space which also allowed the researcher to consider them as an additional research log for the present study.

Concerning the characteristics and significance of the discussion boards in online learning environments, the discussion board formed one of the functional elements of the proposed blended teaching practice course. This tool provides a time of convenience and place of convenience opportunity for student-student

contact and student-instructor contact. It also provides a shared space and meeting place for the participants of the blended teaching practice course. The asynchronous discussions related to the participants' lesson plans and teaching practice served as virtual peer feedback or peer supervision seminars where the instructor to student and student-to-student feedback exchange occurred in the blended teaching practice course. The exchange of feedback has been described as personal sharing of reactions and perceptions about other group member's behaviors (Morran, Stocton, Cline & Teed, 1998). The general literature on feedback reveals that qualified feedback "*helps learners confirm the intended outcome of the learning/situation, motivates them to continue and move on, enables them to assess their own learning/performance, and lets them identify their next step*" (White, 2007, p.301). Therefore, the peer feedback sessions in the asynchronous discussions can be considered as part of the participants' professional development.

In the asynchronous discussions within the blended teaching practice course, participants were directly involved in each other's learning by being supervisors for each other. It is not to imply that peer feedback can occur only in a pair, however, each pre-service teacher acts as a peer supervisor for at least one other. What is more, the feedback sessions through the asynchronous discussion board can be regarded as a part of social constructivist learning, as the social constructivist view of learning suggests that learning should be "*participatory, proactive, communal, collaborative and given over to the construction of meanings rather than receiving them*" (Bruner, 1996, p. 84).

All of the participants were encouraged to participate in the discussions. They were also informed that it is not compulsory but a volunteer action to participate in the discussions, and their grades will not be affected negatively because of not participating to the discussions, however, their participation to the discussions will contribute positively to their developments, specifically, to their lesson plan preparation and teaching practice processes. The aim of volunteer participation to the peer feedback sessions through asynchronous discussion is to provide an effective and natural atmosphere, since, as Alfonso (1977) suggested "*only when*

teachers interact in a natural way, when their professional work is shared by others, and when it can be observed as part of an ongoing process of collaborative teaching can peer supervision be effective” (p. 597).

As to provide a blended learning environment, the course, which is subject to the present study, is organized as a combination of both face-to-face and online instructional activities. The class meets face to face once a week for 2 hours in the campus and the rest of the activity is carried out online. The participants are also required to perform their teaching in participating schools for 6 hours per week. The on-ground face-to-face portion includes discussion of the lesson plans, and other aspects of teaching practice that either provided on the course Web page as PowerPoint presentations or in-class discussions related to their teaching practice.

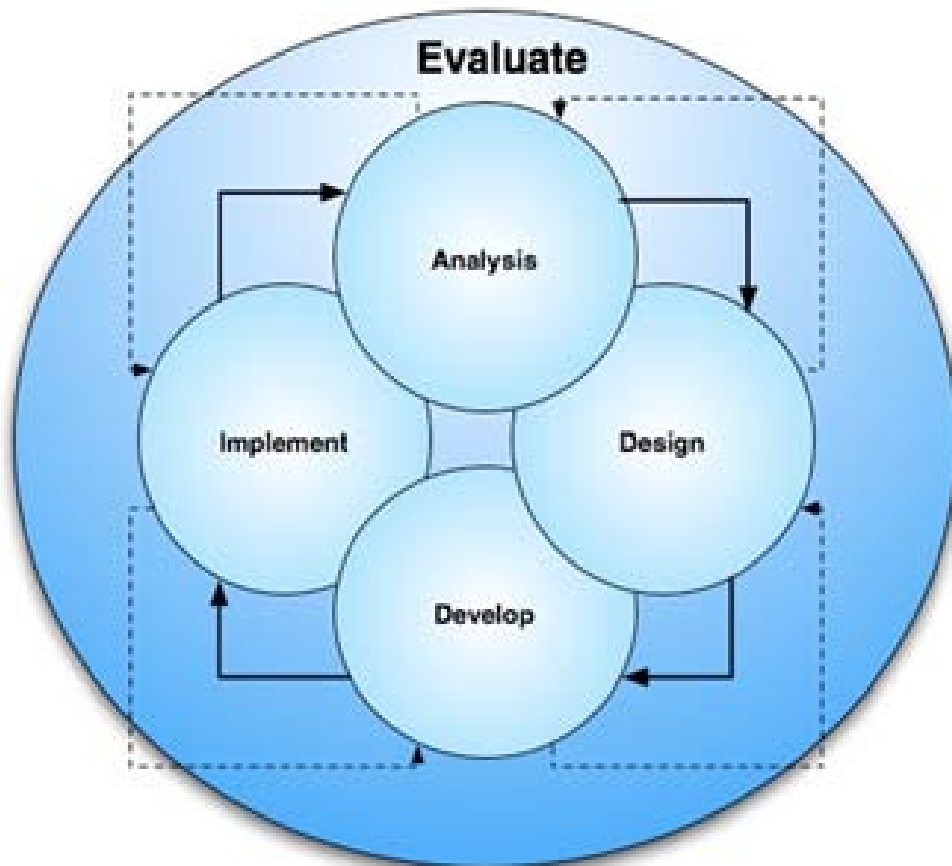
The exams and grading (a mid-term and a final exam) of the students were held concerning the evaluation of their lesson plans and university supervisors’ field notes that are gathered through observations of their class practices. Additionally, participation to the discussion board and providing feedback for their friends’ lesson plans and classroom practices were considered as bonus and added to their final grades.

3. 5. The Procedure

3.5. 1. Phase One: The Planning and Designing of the Online Component of the Blended Learning Environment for the Teaching Practice Course

This phase is the second cycle of the study. Subsequent to the review of literature in the field, an online program template, namely blended teaching practice course template, was planned and designed in order to provide an alternative instructional environment for the teaching practice course.

According to the definition given on the Web page of The Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence (2006), “*the instructional design is the practice of maximizing the effectiveness, efficiency and appeal of instruction and other learning experiences. The process consists broadly of determining the current state and needs of the learner, defining the end goal of instruction, and creating some "intervention" to assist in the transition*”. There are many instructional design models in the literature however; it is observed that most of the current instructional design models are variations of the ADDIE model, which stands for Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate. Clark (1994, “Why Instructional System Design”) figurized the ADDIE model as follows;



The principles of blended learning environments are similar to other forms of learning environments. Therefore all of the phases of the ADDIE model which are analyze, design, develop and implement were also regarded as a base in the

instructional design of the blended learning environment for the teaching practice course.

The program template that is developed for the purpose of the present study consisted of a series of hyperlinked HTML pages. The online component of the course is accompanied with WebCT software program that consisted of a series of hyperlinked HTML pages. The WebCT software program, which is used in the present study, is campus licensed by Anadolu University and provided for its entire instructors who wish to implement it as an online component for their courses. WebCT (Web Course Tools) is a class management package developed at the University of British Columbia that facilitates the creation of sophisticated World Wide Web-based educational environments by non-technical users. It can be used to create entire on-line courses, or simply to publish materials that supplement existing courses. It provides tools to enhance interaction between students and faculty, and includes security, administration, facilities for backing up, etc. (Fuller, Awyzio & McFarlane, 2001). In other words, WebCT is a Web-based course management system and an interface, which has an integrated set of tools or modules used for developing and delivering entire courses or components of courses over the Internet.

As mentioned above, the program interface (WebCT) which is used in the present study consisted of a series of hyperlinked HTML pages with the aim of increasing the collaboration among the participants. When the students log on to the WebCT, they come across with an introductory screen where they are asked for user name and password. After they fill in their user names and passwords, which is provided for the participants in advance, the home page of the Blended Teaching Practice course (Figure 1) become visible.

The screenshot shows the WebCT interface for a course titled "2007-2008 BAHAR: Öğretmenlik Uygulaması (Practice Teaching)". The page is viewed in "Designer Options" mode. A "Control Panel" is visible at the top left. The main content area is titled "Homepage" and includes a welcome message: "Welcome to your Blended OMB 406 Teaching Practice Course". Below the message, a grid of icons provides access to various course components: Course Info (person icon), Lesson Plans (folder icon), Discussions (yin-yang icon), Methodology_Notes (exercise icon), Teaching_Practices (video camera icon), Mail (envelope icon), Extra_materials (reference icon), Chat (speech bubbles icon), e-Schoolexperience (Hidden) (globe icon), Tips of the day (lightbulb icon), and Good_Moments (camera icon).

Figure 1. Homepage of Blended Teaching Practice Course (WebCT)

The home page of the Blended Teaching Practice course consist of some extra content modules including Course info, Lesson plans, Discussion, Methodology Notes, Teaching Practices (videos), Mail, Extra Materials, Chat, Tips of the day and a link to accompanying page.

The 'Course Info Module' is used to inform students about the objectives and the course outline of OMB 406 Teaching Practice course in detail. The '*Lesson Plans Module*' (Figure 2) is divided into sections as each covering a week's lesson plans of the pre-service teachers. In this module, students are able to view the weekly lesson plans of their classmates, examine them and provide feedback for those lesson plans through the discussion (forum) page of the WebCT platform.

The screenshot shows the WebCT interface for the course "2007-2008 BAHAR: Öğretmenlik Uygulaması (Practice Teaching)". The top navigation bar includes "myWebCT", "Resume Course", "Course Map", "Check Browser", "Log Out", and "Help". Below this is a "Control Panel" with "View" and "Designer Options" tabs. The "Course Menu" on the left lists: Homepage, Course Info, Lesson Plans (highlighted), Discussions, Methodology_Notes, Teaching_Practices, Mail, Chat, and Extra_materials. The main content area is titled "Homepage > Lesson Plans" and contains the following text: "Here you will find your and your friend's lesson plans, which are grouped weekly. Please give your peer feedback and comment on your friends' lesson plans through discussion link on the left hand column of this Web page." Below the text is a grid of 12 icons, each representing a week's lesson plans. The icons are labeled: I.Week, II.Week, III. Week, IV.Week, V.Week, VI.Week, VII. Week, VIII.Week, IX.Week, IX Week (Cont.), X.Week, and Make-up Plans.

Figure 2. Lesson Plan Page

The asynchronous computer-mediated 'Discussion' forum of WebCT provides an additional learning opportunity as an adjunct to other activities that are held within the framework of this course. Through using discussion board students can interpret and analyze others' feedback related to their lesson plans and practice teachings, present their points of view, and provide further information that support their rationale of preparing the lesson plan. What is more, the feedback on the discussion board makes visible the other participants' feedback for the lesson plans and practice teachings for longer terms. The 'Discussion Board' (Figure 3) of the course is divided into sections to cover each week's lesson plans and classroom practices. Each section on the discussion board is activated in the beginning of the related week and left accessible in the following weeks. The researcher regularly checked the students peer feedback and other postings in the discussion board and acted as moderator of the discussion platform. Sometimes he asked questions to foster participation and provided feedback about the students' lesson plans and their videotaped classroom practices every week. The track of student participation to the discussion board was encouraged and their visiting the course content pages was monitored through WebCT's control panel.

The screenshot displays the WebCT interface for a discussion forum. The top navigation bar includes 'myWebCT', 'Resume Course', 'Course Map', 'Check Browser', 'Log Out', and 'Help'. The course title is '2007-2008 BAHAR: Öğretmenlik Uygulaması (Practice Teaching)'. The 'Control Panel' shows 'View' and 'Designer Options'. The 'Course Menu' on the left lists: Homepage, Course Info, Lesson Plans, Discussions, Methodology_Notes, Teaching_Practices, Mail, Chat, and Extra_materials. The main content area is titled 'Discussions' and includes a 'Compose message' button, a search box, and 'Topic settings'. Below this is a table of discussion topics.

| Topic | Unread | Total | Status |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| Main | 0 | 1 | public, locked |
| I. Week | 2 | 50 | public, unlocked |
| II. Week | 1 | 96 | public, unlocked |
| III. Week | 0 | 123 | public, unlocked |
| IV. Week | 72 | 103 | public, unlocked |
| V. Week | 3 | 163 | public, unlocked |
| VI. Week | 64 | 139 | public, unlocked |
| Teaching_Practices | 16 | 29 | public, unlocked |
| make-up plans | 0 | 2 | public, unlocked |
| VII. Week | 104 | 139 | public, unlocked |
| VIII. Week | 45 | 124 | public, unlocked |
| TeachingPracticesII | 8 | 26 | public, unlocked |
| Telafi Planları II | 0 | 12 | public, unlocked |
| IX. Hafta | 29 | 58 | public, unlocked |
| TeachingPracticesIII | 10 | 14 | public, unlocked |
| 9.Hafta_II | 33 | 64 | public, unlocked |
| X. Week | 30 | 35 | public, unlocked |
| TeachingPractices_IV | 0 | 10 | public, unlocked |
| Genel Yorumlarınız | 0 | 8 | public, unlocked |
| All | 417 | 1196 | --- |

Figure 3. Discussion Forum Page

In the '*Methodology Notes Module*' (Appendix 5), students find some additional materials such as lecture notes in PDF and PowerPoint presentations (Appendix 6) which intend refreshing students' methodological knowledge. The additional materials in this module include the lecture notes related to the features of classroom practice such as lesson planning, writing objectives in lesson plans, giving instruction properly, etc. They are not used to teach new subjects but to activate and refresh the students' background knowledge that they gained during their previous methodology courses.

The video-recorded classroom teaching practices of each participant is placed on a separate Web page but linked with their names through the '*Teaching Practices Module*' on the WebCT. The entrance page of Teaching Practices provides brief information about how to access the videotaped classroom practices of the students. When students log onto the '*Teaching Practices Module*' (Figure 4) they see the focus points of the week that was assigned for each of them and links for the video clips of the recorded teaching practices. Each video clip is also accompanied with a classroom observation criterion and both of them are published on the same Web page (Figure 5). Additionally, the lesson plan of the same lesson is placed on the page via a link.

myWebCT Resume Course Course Map Check Browser Log Out Help

2007-2008 BAHAR: Öğretmenlik Uygulaması (Practice Teaching)

Control Panel View Designer Options

Course Menu Homepage > Teaching_Practices > Teaching_Practices

Homepage
Course Info
Lesson Plans
Discussions
Methodology_Notes
Teaching_Practices
Mail
Chat
Extra_materials

macromedia FLASHPAPER

Sevgili Öğretmen Adayları, izleyeceğiniz kaydedilmiş ders anlatımlarına dönütleriniz için odaklanacağınız konular gruplarınıza göre aşağıda ayrı ayrı verilmiştir. Dönütlerinizi verirken kayıtlı ders videolarının yanındaki "Ders Gözlem Kriterlerini" dikkate alınız.
Derslerin kaydedilen videolarına isimlerinizin yazılı olduğu linkleri tıklayarak ulaşabilirsiniz

I. Grup;

Dersin Giriş Bölümü: Student 1, Student 2, Student 3
Öğretim Yöntemi: Student 4, Student 5, Student 6
Hata Düzeltme ve Değerlendirme: Student 7, Student 8, Student 9
Materyal Kullanımı: Student 10, Student 11, Student 12
Dersin Sonuç Bölümü: Student 13, Student 14, Student 15
Sınıf Yönetimi: Student 16, Student 17, Student 18

[D](#) [S](#) [H](#) [M](#)

.....

2. Grup;

Dersin Giriş Bölümü: Student 16, Student 17, Student 18
Öğretim Yöntemi: Student 1, Student 2, Student 3
Hata Düzeltme ve Değerlendirme: Student 4, Student 5, Student 6
Materyal Kullanımı: Student 7, Student 8, Student 9
Dersin Sonuç Bölümü: Student 10, Student 11, Student 12
Sınıf Yönetimi: Student 13, Student 14, Student 15

[E](#) [Es](#) [B](#) [T](#)

Figure 4. Teaching Practice Entrance Page

The screenshot displays the WebCT interface for the course '2007-2008 BAHAR: Öğretmenlik Uygulaması (Practice Teaching)'. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Control Panel:** Shows 'View' and 'Designer Options' tabs.
- Course Menu:** Lists navigation options: Homepage, Course Info, Lesson Plans, Discussions, Methodology_Notes, Teaching_Practices, Mail, Chat, and Extra_materials.
- Video Player:** A central window showing a videotaped teaching practice in a classroom setting.
- Gözlem Dönüt Kriterleri (Observation Feedback Criteria):** A right-hand panel containing two sections:
 - Dersin Giriş Bölümü (Course Introduction Section):**
 1. Dersin hedef-davranışlarını öğrencilere bildirebilme
 2. Derse uygun bir giriş yapabileme
 3. Konuyu önceki derslerle ilişkilendirebilme
 4. Öğrencilerin derse ilgi ve hazırbulunuşluk düzeylerini artırabilme
 - Öğretim Yöntemi (Teaching Method):**
 1. Konuyu pratik ve anlaşılabilir örneklerle açıklayabilme
 2. Konuyu yaşamla ilişkilendirebilme
 3. Konuya uygun düşündürücü sorular sorabilme
 4. Katılanları, konu ile ilgili düşüncelerini açıklamaya ve soru sormaya özendirilebilme
 5. Anlaşılır açıklamalar ve yönergeler verebilme
 6. Verilen yönerge ve açıklamaların anlaşılabilirliğini kontrol edebilme
 7. Öğrencilerin yapılan etkinliklere etkin katılımını sağlayabilme

Figure 5. Videotaped Teaching Practice in Teaching Practice Page

The 'Mail' function of the WebCT is mainly used for communication among the participants. Through registering the WebCT each student obtained a mail account automatically which can be traced within the program template. Participants used it for two main purposes, which were sending their weekly lesson plans to the instructor in order to be uploaded on the Web page and communicating with each other, including the instructor, on the basis of the course subjects.

There is also an 'Extra Material Module' in the home page of the *blended teaching practice* course which is used to share extra materials that can be used in

the teaching practice course such as a sample yearly practice program for pre-service teachers and feedback and evaluation criteria.

A *chat session* function was also added in the home page in order to facilitate out-of-class refreshment for students. This module allows instructor and the students to communicate in real time in any one of five different rooms. It is observed that, from time to time, participants use this module for out of class subjects.

'*Tips of the day tool*' originally allow the instructor to write tips for students on topics such as using WebCT, however, in this course this tool is used for the purpose of warning the students on the specific issues such as reminding them to send their lesson plans, or to provide feedback for their friends' lesson plans. These tips are displayed randomly each time a student logs onto the home page of the course.

In addition to the above outlined online platform, students were also enrolled in a two-hour face-to-face session every week. The aim of this face-to-face session was for the orientation purposes at the beginning of the term, however, throughout the course of the time, these face-to-face sessions are held regularly in order to facilitate on-ground part of the course. Every week on Mondays, students and the instructor came together in a classroom and discussed the course related subjects including problems the pre-service teachers faced in the practice schools or planning proper activities for their practice teachings.

3.5. 2. Proposed Action Plan (Audit Trail of the study)

In this part of the study, the proposed actions, which serve as the audit trail of the research, that were followed through practicing the blended teaching environment are outlined in weekly basis for the dates between 18 February 2008 and 30 May 2008 (see, Table 2).

Table 2. *Audit Trail of the study*

| The Weeks (Date) | Proposed Actions (Activities) |
|---|--|
| 1 st Week (18 – 22 February 2008) | <p>Students will be introduced to the project and their tasks within the Teaching Practice course that they should follow throughout the spring semester. Additionally, students will be given a Web based instruction attitude survey, which also gathers the participants' demographic backgrounds and computer skills. They will be asked to sign a contract that depict their being volunteer to participate to the study.</p> |
| 2 nd Week (25- 29 February 2008) | <p>The students will submit their first lesson plans and after uploading them on to the Web page, a demo peer feedback session will be organized. The researcher will also give feedback for the students' lesson plans in order to make them familiarize what subjects are taken into consideration while analyzing the lesson plans and giving feedback to them. This week will also function as an orientation to the blended learning environment for the teaching practice course.</p> |
| 3. 4. 5. Weeks (3-7 March 2008), (10-14 March 2008), (17-21 March 2008) | <p>Concerning the dates of the pre-service teachers' teaching practices, they will submit their lesson plans in Word format to the researcher and researcher will upload them on the Web page. Then students will discuss about them and give (peer) feedback for their classmates' related lesson plans.</p> |
| 6. Week (31 March 2008- 4 April 2008) | <p>The classroom practice of pre-service teachers will be videotaped and it will be uploaded on the Web page. The video clips will also accompany their lesson plans, which are already submitted and discussed before the presentation. The first pre-service teachers' teaching practice will be discussed and other students as well as the researcher will give feedback for the videotaped practice.</p> |
| 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. Weeks (7-11 April 2008), (14-18 April 2008), (21-25 April 2008), (28 April -2 May 2008). | <p>The classroom practice of pre-service teachers will be videotaped regularly and it will be uploaded on the Web page. The video clips will also accompany their lesson plans, which are already submitted and discussed before the presentation. The pre-service teachers' teaching practice will be discussed among students and they will give peer feedback for the videotaped practice.</p> |
| 12. Week (19-23 May 2008) | <p>Students will be asked to rate their satisfactions with the Blended Teaching Practice course environment through Blended learning satisfaction survey.</p> <p>During the midterm weeks (24-28 March 2008), (5-9 May 2008) and final exam weeks (2-6 June 2008), the pre-service teachers will not be responsible for performing teaching practice at participating schools.</p> <p>Additionally, throughout the course of the research, the researcher and pre-service teachers will meet for two hours face to face sessions in a classroom and they exchange their ideas about that week's events, their obstacles that (if) they faced on the Web.</p> |

3.5. 3. Phase Two. Implementation of Blended Learning Environment

In the following part of the study, the actions followed throughout the implementation and practicing the blended teaching practice course are outlined with reference to the audit trail and proposed action plan of the present study.

Regarding the nature of the methodology of the current study, actions followed throughout practicing Blended Teaching Practice Course differentiated from the early action plan. Since each week of the research process is regarded as the cycles of the action research, some changes in the process of the actions were inevitable. Therefore, the procedures and changes in the original action plan will be outlined below in detail.

The very first action of this study was to inform the dissertation committee about the processes and proposed actions of the research. Upon obtaining their approval on the main objectives of the research and proposed actions, the researcher started to follow the proposed actions and document the process in a systematic way.

First Week (18 – 22 February 2008)

As the first step of the regular teaching practice course, the selection of the schools where pre-service teachers would perform practice teachings were made. Depending on the cooperating teachers' weekly lesson plans, pre-service teachers were distributed to the selected cooperating teachers in the selected participating schools. Administrators and the cooperating teachers in the participating schools were also informed about the research process.

Second Week (25- 29 February 2008)

In the second week of the research, completing the selection of schools and assigning the pre-service teachers to these schools, pre-service teachers started the participating schools in order to establish their first contact with the environment and their cooperating teachers. The purpose of this first contact meeting was that the pre-service teachers would get familiar with their cooperating teachers, their students, the teaching materials and books used in the class, and the teaching environment where they would perform their practice teaching in general.

Each pre-service teacher were asked to prepare his or her teaching practice schedules which illustrated when and what each pre-service teacher would teach in their practice teaching sessions.

Within the same week, the researcher completed design of the additional Web page where the videotaped teaching practices of the pre-service teachers will be uploaded. Meanwhile, the organizational and official procedures of the WebCT, which was used to accompany the teaching practice course, were set.

Third Week (3-7 March 2008)

In the third week, pre-service teachers were assigned to observe the teaching of cooperating teachers at the participating schools for a few class hours. During this observation and adaptation sessions, the pre-service teachers observed the cooperating teachers with the aim of gaining more responsibility in teaching the class and familiarity with both students and classes where they would perform their practice teachings.

During this week, ahead of the beginning of the actual study, the pre-service teachers were asked to attend a two-hour face-to-face meeting session in a classroom on campus. During this meeting, pre-service teachers' responsibilities

as well as their assignments for each week within the framework of the practice teaching course were explained. In this face-to-face meeting, the pre-service teachers were also informed about the study that would take place over the span of the course. The nature of the study and the nature of the participant involvement were explained in detail. In compliance with a proper research design requirements, a consent form (Appendix 7) was given to the participants in the face-to-face meeting at the beginning of the session. 17 Students then signed the consent forms on a voluntary basis. One of the students enrolled in the class after the face-to-face session but when she was informed of the research, she also signed a consent form prior to the-research.

The meeting also provided a time for participants to complete the Web/computer based instruction attitude survey. With the help of the survey the variables such as previous experience in computer use, experience with related course content and their attitudes towards online learning were examined by researcher to determine the attitudes and perceived abilities of the students coming into the course. Participation in surveys throughout this study was deemed voluntary and anonymous to everyone other than the researcher. After the data were collected, student names were removed and identification codes were used throughout the study. After completing the Web/computer based instruction attitude survey, students were then given a brief overview of the blended learning tools to be used in the course by the researcher. They were supplied with user names and passwords and given a chance to practice using the system in a technology-supported classroom. The researcher helped students learn how to use the WebCT software and showed them how they would log in to the Web page using different WebCT addresses. The researcher then discussed the course layout, objectives, and policies as written in the course syllabus.

During the face-to-face meeting, all of the participants analyzed a sample lesson plan and the researcher gave feedback for the sample lesson plan in order to guide the participants on the subjects that they should focus on while writing their own feedback for their peers' lesson plans.

At the end of this face-to-face meeting, pre-service teachers were informed about the schedule of the following face-to-face meetings, and the deadlines to submit their weekly lesson plans. With reference to the pre-service teachers' weekly programs at the participating schools, participants were divided into two groups as to cover two days in a week, which are Wednesday group and Friday Groups. The deadline for submitting the lesson plans for the Wednesday group was determined as Monday midday and Wednesday midday for the Friday group. Both groups were also assigned to provide their feedback through asynchronous discussion forum prior to the actual teaching practices.

In the proposed action plan, all of these actions handled in three weeks were supposed to be the actions of the first week, however, due to official and organizational procedures of teaching practice course these actions lasted three weeks in the academic term. The actions of the first three weeks were documented systematically by the researcher and reported to the dissertation supervisor.

Fourth Week (10-14 March 2008) Orientation Week

The fourth week was organized as an orientation week in which participants tried to get familiar with the blended teaching practice course in general. Particularly, during this week, participants started to use the WebCT software, and they started to practice how to use the discussion board effectively for giving and receiving feedback.

In this week, pre-service teachers prepared their lesson plans and submitted them to the researcher on the appointed day and time. The researcher converted the MS Word formatted lesson plans into the Flash and PDF using campus licensed Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 software program and published them on the "*Lesson Plans Module*" of the WebCT as the 'orientation week's lesson plans' and participants gave feedback for their friend's plan.

During this time, the researcher warned the participants who did not give any feedback by sending messages through the discussion board and assisted the participants who had problems or difficulties in using the discussion forum properly. After providing plenty of time for peer feedback and reading the students' messages in the discussion forum the researcher also analyzed all of the lesson plans and gave feedback for the participants' lesson plans individually. The researcher's feedback messages were also assumed as model feedback for the lesson plans through which participants were guided in the proper way of giving feedback.

The participants were also asked to rewrite their lesson plans considering the feedback that they received both from their peers and from instructors and resended them to the researcher in order to publish them on the Web page as final drafts of their lesson plans.

Fifth Week (17-21 March 2008)

As it was confirmed in the fourth week and practiced in the orientation week, participants prepared their lesson plans in MS Word format and submitted them to the researcher on the scheduled times. After receiving the first draft lesson plans researcher converted them into the Flash and PDF formats and uploaded them on the 'Lesson Plans module' of the WebCT as the 'first week's lesson plans'.

All of the participants wrote their critics and give peer feedback to their friends through discussion board on scheduled times (see, Appendix 8). Prior to writing his feedback for the lesson plans, researcher read the participants' messages, noted the problems in messages and wrote his feedback for the lesson plans, through chain messages in forum.

One of the problems observed in the discussion messages was, some of the participants did not write their messages in chain format but they wrote them as

separate topics. The participants who wrote their feedback on separate topics were warned for the sake of integrity. Another problem was observed in submitting the lesson plans during the face-to-face sessions. In order to ease the process and provide some more time for the face-to-face sessions, participants were also allowed to submit their lesson plans through using the 'mail function' of the WebCT.

Sixth Week (24-28 March 2008) 1st Midterm Week

Although the evaluation of the lesson plans was not the direct concern of the present study, students' works should be evaluated within the framework of the regular Teaching Practice course. Therefore, participants' lesson plans that they prepared until the midterm week were evaluated through using the lesson plan evaluation criteria of the ELT department by both the researcher and another expert in the ELT department. The mean scores of the assessors' evaluations were calculated and the results were given as the notes of the participants' first midterm grades.

Seventh Week (31 March - 4 April 2008)

In the seventh week, pre-service teachers prepared and submitted their lesson plans through using e-mail function of the WebCT. The researcher converted and uploaded them on the lesson plans module of the WebCT under the title of "*II. Week's Lesson Plans*". The pre-service teachers wrote their feedback for their peers' lesson plans through the discussion board and following a plenty of time for each group the researcher wrote his critics and feedback for the lesson plans.

In this week, randomly selected 4 pre-service teachers' teaching practice in participating schools were video-recorded upon obtaining permissions of

cooperating teachers and school administrators. The video recording of the teaching practices were handled by the researcher himself during his visits of the participating schools. The video-recorded lessons of the pre-service teachers were edited by using Windows moviemaker software and transferred into FLV format by using campus licensed Macromedia Dreamweaver 8. The FLV versions of the video-recorded lessons of the pre-service teachers, which were roughly 40 minutes in length, were uploaded to the accompanying Web page. Then the video-recorded lessons of the pre-service teachers were released and participants, who had user ID and password, were able to watch them. Participants were also notified through discussion forum to write their feedback and critics for the recorded lessons of their friends on the discussion board under the title of “*Teaching Practices*”.

In the discussion of the recorded teaching practices, the precedence was given to the pre-service teacher who has been recorded. Since, all of the participants were informed previously to write their own reflections, that is self-reflection first and then peers write their critics and feedback for the recorded teaching practice (see, appendix 9).

In the 7th week, participants were assigned to give feedback for both lesson plans and video-recorded lessons of their friends under two separate topics in the discussion forum.

At the end of the 7th week, the researcher reported the path of the actions and the problems that were observed in the actual practices of blended learning teaching practice course to the dissertation review committee. The meeting with the dissertation review committee resulted with some essential changes in the route of the forthcoming actions. One of the observed problems in the process was that giving feedback for the lesson plans as a whole hindered some important aspects of lesson planning. Concerning the reason behind giving the improper feedback, such as, lack of knowledge in giving feedback or difficulty in focusing on all aspects of the proper lesson plan at the same time, the researcher and the dissertation committee decided to use a set of criteria that will be used in both

feedback sessions for the lesson plans and teaching practice. It was supposed that the probes or focus points provided through dividing the analysis process of lesson plans or practice teaching into the segments might enable the pre-service teachers to construct and deconstruct interpretations of the gist of the lesson planning and teaching action.

Including the 7th week, pre-service teachers were assigned to analyze the lesson plans and video-recorded lessons as a whole, however, after this week they were asked to write their feedback on the discussion board considering the evaluation criteria, which consisted different focus points. Considering the teaching practice evaluation criteria in the literature and current evaluation criteria, a set of criteria (Appendix 10) was developed under six topics by the researcher and his dissertation supervisor, which are; *Objectives of the lesson, Lead in to the lesson, Context of the lesson, Instructions and Flow of the lesson, Materials, Error correction and evaluation*. Additionally, with reference to the focus points above, 18 pre-service teachers were also clustered as three pre-service teachers in each of six groups, and each group, which consisted of three pre-service teachers, were assigned to focus on different topic in the evaluation criteria (focus points) of lesson plans or practice teaching of each week on a rotation basis.

Eighth Week (7-11 April 2008)

As in the previous weeks, in the 8th week pre-service teachers prepared and submitted their lesson plans through using e-mail function of the WebCT. The researcher converted and uploaded them on the lesson plans module of the WebCT under the title of III. Week Lesson Plans. The pre-service teachers wrote their feedback for their peers' lesson plans through the discussion board and following this, the researcher wrote his critics and feedback for the lesson plans.

Beginning by the 8th week participants started to give feedback for his/her friends' lesson plan and videotaped practice teaching, along with the predetermined focus

points. The focus points for each pre-service teacher's feedback were ordered in a recurrent sequence for each week. That is, for the rest of the blended teaching practice process each group was able to analyze and give feedback for the different probes of lesson plans and videotaped practice teaching for each week, accordingly, at the end of the process they would be able to see the big picture through scrutinizing the parts of it.

Concerning the determined focus points for each group, the participants were primarily assigned to give feedback for the focused probes first and then they were allowed to give feedback for the lesson plans and videotaped practice teaching, if they wanted to highlight or criticize other points apart from the focus points. The lists of the groups and their focus points were announced in the face-to-face session and they were informed through mail function of the WebCT. In addition to the lesson plans, the lists of the groups and their focus points were also announced in the lesson plans module of each week. Similarly, in addition to the video-recorded practice teaching, the lists of the groups and their focus points were announced in the teaching practices module of each week. Additionally, the criteria suggested to use in the analysis of the video-recorded practice teaching was published in the accompanying Web page next to the each video-recorded practice teaching.

In the 8th week, researcher visited the pre-service teachers at their participating schools and video-recorded their teaching practices. As in the previous weeks, video-recorded teaching practices of pre-service teachers were edited to provide a smooth streaming on the Web and published them on the accompanying Web page for further analysis and feedback of other pre-service teachers.

Ninth Week (14-18 April 2008)

In the 9th week, every phase of procedures followed as in the previous week. That is, participants submitted their lesson plans; they were transformed in to the

proper formats and published on the related module of WebCT; researcher continued to visit pre-service teachers at the participating schools and video-recorded their practice teachings; uploaded the recorded practice teaching of the participants on the accompanying Web page after editing and transforming them into proper formats; and participants wrote their critics and provided feedback for the lesson plans and practice teachings through using discussion board of WebCT.

In the 9th week, some of the participants reported that they had difficulties in streaming the video-recorded practice teaching on the Internet and therefore they could not provide their feedback for the practice teaching of the 9th week teaching practices. In order to overcome the surfacing problem, the researcher copied the video-recorded practice teaching of 9th week into VCDs and distributed them to the participants who had difficulty in watching them. Those participants who could not watch the video-recorded practice teaching on the internet were able to watch them through VCDs and wrote their critics and feedback after watching them on VCDs.

Tenth Week (21- 25 April 2008)

Prior to the 10th week, some problems had occurred in the teaching practice process. Accordingly, some pre-service teachers could not perform their practice teaching on the scheduled timetable due to the unscheduled exams at school or due to the shifts in cooperating teachers' weekly schedules. Therefore, the 10th week was reorganized as make up week for the participants who had not performed their practice teaching on the scheduled timetable.

In the 10th week, only those participants who had problems in performing their practice teaching had submitted their lesson plans and the rest of the participants provided their feedback for those lesson plans. Their lesson plans were grouped as make up plans on the lesson plans module. The normal procedures were followed

in the 10th week and the participants who had to compensate for the practice teaching had accomplished their assigned tasks.

Eleventh Week (28 April - 2 May 2008)

Throughout the course of the blended teaching practice course, the participants almost gained satisfactory experience in preparing and submitting lesson plans, analyzing them and providing feedback both for the lesson plans and for video-recorded practice teaching of the pre-service teachers. Therefore, in the 11th week, every step in the procedures of the blended practice teaching course such as preparing and submitting lesson plans, analyzing them and providing feedback both for the lesson plans and for video-recorded practice teaching of the pre-service teachers were handled intact.

Twelfth Week (5 - 9 May 2008) 2nd Midterm Week

The dates between 5 and 9 May 2008 were announced as the second midterm week in the academic schedule of Anadolu University. Therefore, participants were not assigned to go to the participating schools. Since the nature of each course required the instructors to evaluate and give marks for the second midterms, the participants in this study were also evaluated. The researcher and another instructor in the department evaluated final drafts of lesson plans that were prepared by the participants until the second midterm week and their evaluation's mean scores were given as their second midterm marks for the teaching practice course. As in the evaluation of the first midterm, participation to the discussions in the WebCT were also concerned as a bonus of total grading while calculating their second midterm marks.

Thirteenth Week (12-16 May 2008) Spring Fest Holiday

The dates between 12 and 16 May 2008 were announced as the Spring Fest week in the academic schedule of Anadolu University and all of the courses were intermitted. Regarding this occasion, all of the participants were allowed not to submit their lesson plans and not to perform their practice teaching in the participating schools although normal teaching processes were held in the secondary schools. However, they were asked to carry out and complete the previously assigned tasks such as giving feedback for their friends' videotaped lessons, lesson plans, or writing the self-reflection reports if they had not accomplished them on time.

Although all of the courses were intermitted in the university, two of the participants asked to carry on their previously scheduled practice teaching at the participating schools. They prepared their lesson plans, submitted them to the researcher as usual and went to the participating schools to perform their practice teaching. The researcher uploaded and released those lesson plans as the 12th weeks' lesson plans and the rest of the participants provided their feedback in the relevant topic of discussion board.

In addition to the regular procedures of the blended teaching practice course, in the 12th week the researcher reported the course of actions and latest advances in the processes of blended teaching practice course to the dissertation supervisory committee.

Fourteenth Week (19-23 May 2008)

The procedures of preparing and submitting lesson plans, analyzing them and providing feedback both for the lesson plans and for video-recorded practice teaching of the pre-service teachers as well as other procedures of the blended practice teaching course were handled intact in the 12th week. Participants

provided their feedback for their friends' lesson plans and practice teaching through the discussion board concerning the focus points.

As similar in the previous weeks, researcher continued to visit the pre-service teachers at the participating schools and video-recorded their practice teaching and provided them feedback both through face to face sessions and through analyzing their video-recorded practice teaching on the accompanying Web page.

Fifteenth Week (26- 30 May 2008)

The procedures of preparing and submitting lesson plans, analyzing them and providing feedback both for the lesson plans and for video-recorded practice teaching of the pre-service teachers were handled intact in the 13th week as well.

The fifteenth week in regular academic schedule was the last week of the blended teaching practice course. Therefore, the researcher completed his visits to schools and recording of the pre-service teachers' practice teaching. Similarly, pre-service teachers completed their assigned tasks that were scheduled at the beginning of the project.

Sixteenth Week (2- 6 June 2008) Final Exams Week

The sixteenth week was scheduled as the final exam week in the regular academic schedule, and the end of this week was the end of the academic term as well. As in the first and second mid-terms, students should be evaluated and their final grades should be given for the academic procedures of the teaching practice course. Based on the in-field observations and participation to the discussions in the WebCT, participants' performances were evaluated and their final exam grades were given. In order to provide intact grades, in addition to the researcher's in-

field observations and notes, another expert in the ELT department watched and analyzed pre-service teachers' video-recorded practice teachings and their final grades were calculated through the evaluations of two different graders.

The 16th week was also the last week of the project. The Web based instruction attitude survey, applied at the beginning of the study, was given to the participants as post-application in order to see if there are any significant changes in their attitudes as a result of implementing blended teaching practice course. In addition to this survey, an adapted version of Chejlyk's (2006) Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Questionnaire was given to the participants in order to estimate the participants' satisfactions with the blended teaching practice course.

During this week, participants were asked to write their reflections, opinions and self evaluations of the whole process related to the implementation of the blended teaching practice course and send them privately through using the mail function of the WebCT.

In the 16th week, as a final step in data gathering process, all of the participants were interviewed with the purpose of gathering their views related to the blended teaching practice course. All of the interviews were hold at the researcher's office privately and each interview was video-recorded.

In the last day of the 16th week, all of the participants were invited to a complimentary dinner hosted by the researcher. This complimentary dinner was organized as an end of the project event in which the researcher was able to tender his thanks to the participants.

After finalizing the data gathering process, in the final week of the present study, the researcher reported the course of whole actions and advances throughout the processes of blended teaching practice course to the dissertation supervisory committee.

3. 6. Data Analysis

The data analysis part presents the analysis methodology of the collected data. The selection of the proper statistical processes and proper statistical test types for the present study are also presented in this section

Prior to the analysis, the raw data, which was gathered through a series of survey instruments, was first converted to an exportable format using Microsoft Excel, and then was imported to the statistical analysis software. The software used to perform both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 17.0 for PC. The software was run on an IBM Think Centre using the Windows Vista Business operating system. The interviews with the participants were also transcribed first and they were analyzed after coding the interview data with reference to each question.

Regarding the nature of the variables, the distribution of the data, its being categorical or continuous, the scale of measurement of the variables and the number of the subjects, the proper statistical tests that could be performed while attempting to answer the research questions of the present study can be found both in parametric and nonparametric tests. The proper statistical test for one of the data gathering instruments of the present study, which is Web based instruction attitude survey is “The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test” which is the non-parametric version of the paired samples t-test and the one that should be used if the distribution of differences between pairs are non-normally distributed. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test is appropriate when there are two nominal variables and one measurement variable especially when one of the nominal variables has only two values, such as "before" and "after," and the other nominal variable often represents individuals. Additionally, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test is an appropriate statistic procedure when the N of subjects is below 30. Therefore, the analysis of the students’ attitudes towards Web based instruction is held by means of The Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

Another statistical test used in the present study is the frequency distribution of the items in the survey related to the participants' satisfaction on blended learning. In order to depict the participants' satisfaction level on the blended learning environment, participants' opinions ranked in a four-point Likert-type survey were computed and their frequencies and percentages were used while interpreting the results.

The interview data served as a triangulating source in this study to examine participants' opinions related to blended learning environment. To analyze the data from the interviews, the researcher watched and listened to each of 18 video-recorded interviews for four times. The first two times, he just listened to each interview without transcribing. This provided the researcher a clear understanding on each recorded interview. Then, he started to transcribe them one by one. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, following a standardized set of typing procedures. It took almost three to four hours to transcribe each interview. Throughout the transcription process, there were two levels of reviewing and editing. First, the researcher transcribed the video-recorded interviews and a colleague of the researcher did a thorough review of each transcript, matching it against the recorded videos. The truth of the transcriptions was estimated through establishing the extent of consensus on the truth of the transcriptions between the researcher and his colleague. Secondly, the researcher performed a final review, edited each transcript by listening to the video-recorded interviews for the last time, and gave the final shape to them.

As a final step in the analysis of interviews, the researcher made an in-depth analysis of the interview data with reference to the five main topics that were determined in interview question formation process, which were; (1) the participants' general opinions in relation to the blended teaching practice course, (2) the process (use) of the blended teaching practice course, (3) the contribution of the blended teaching practice course to the participants' teaching professions, (4) the formative evaluation of the blended teaching practice course and (5) the satisfaction of the participants with the blended teaching practice course.

On the subject of the reliability of the in-depth analysis, the data obtained from the transcriptions of the interviews were assessed by another expert in an attempt to establish a reliable and valid analysis. To test the understanding of each group of the topics, the researcher and another expert read randomly selected five interviews and grouped them for all five topics independently. In order to examine the consistency between the coders, a matrix including the checklist of interview topics was prepared and the matrix was filled in for each participant after the grouping procedure. The consistency of the grouping was examined through ratio of agreements to disagreements by using the formula (reliability = number of agreements / total number of agreements + disagreements) suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994, p.64). A score of 0.90 percent of agreement was achieved, suggesting that grouping procedure was reliable. When differences occurred, the researcher and the other expert discussed the discrepancies in the grouping results until a consensus was reached through mutual conversation. Finally, once the researcher and the other expert were confident that they established acceptable levels of coder reliability, the researcher proceeded to the final stage and systematically applied the grouping to the entire corpus of text. The related parts of the interviews were used as direct quotations to support the participants' opinions that emerged while interpreting the rest of the data.

In addition to analysis of the data gathered from surveys and interviews, the ratio of participants' participation to the asynchronous discussions were also examined in order to find a genuine answer to the 3rd research question. The participants' participations in the asynchronous discussions on the WebCT discussion board were logged through the related function of the WebCT. The aim of keeping the logs of participation in the discussions is two folded. First, the researcher intended to track the participation of the students to peer feedback sessions. Although it was not an intended aim, the logs served as an activator tool for the participants who did not actively participate to the discussions. During the weekly face-to-face sessions, the researcher shared the weekly postings of the participants and students who sent more messages were encouraged by the other participants. The second aim of logging the participation in the discussion is genuinely answer the

third research question, which inquires the relation between participants' level of satisfaction of blended teaching practice course and their participation to discussion forum on blended learning Web site.

3. 7. The Validity and Reliability of the Action Research

In a very general sense, reliability and validity focus on the issues about the quality of data and appropriateness of methods were used in a study. In other words, reliability of a study indicates the degree of comparability between outcomes when an event is repeated under similar conditions; whereas, validity of a study means whether research explains or measures what it would suppose to measure or explain.

Reliability and validity of a study is the concern of both qualitative and quantitative studies, however, "there are strong voices suggesting that these criteria are neither directly applicable nor congruent to qualitative research" (Newman, 1999, "Reliability and Validity," para. 1). The reliability and validity concepts are completely different concepts in qualitative studies. For instance, internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity concepts of quantitative studies could not be applicable to the action research, which is contextual and local with its idiosyncratic data (Kuzu, 2005; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005).

While reliability and validity terms are considered as separate issues in quantitative studies, they are not taken into account separately in qualitative research. What is more, instead of using these two terms, the qualitative studies either use trustworthiness as an umbrella term or use other terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, which cover reliability and validity concepts of quantitative studies. According to Lincoln and Guba (1988), these terms are the naturalistic correspondents of the conventional criteria such as internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity.

Within the tradition of qualitative research, credibility has been used to describe the focus of the research and refers to confidence in how well data and processes of analysis address the intended focus. Therefore, the selection of context, participants and approach to gathering data plays important role in arising the credibility of a qualitative research.

The transferability of a qualitative research is another aspect of the rigor of a research and it refers to the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. In order to facilitate transferability of a qualitative research, it is essential to give a clear and distinct description of context, selection and characteristics of participants as well as the researcher, data collection and process of analysis. Likewise, a rich and persuasive presentation of the findings together with proper quotations will also enrich the transferability.

Another commonly used term in enhancing the rigor of a qualitative research is trustworthiness, which generally used interchangeably with the reliability and validity concepts of the quantitative research perspective. Some techniques for enhancing the trustworthiness of data, such as memoing and keeping field notes, the triangulation of data, and the use of multiple coders, are referred in the literature frequently. Anastas (2004) suggested that it is not necessary to use all of these techniques in any one study, because qualitative studies do not lend themselves a checklist approach to quality assurance inherently. However, Anastas (2004) and Yıldırım and Şimşek (2005) suggested that utilizing following techniques in qualitative inquiry such as prolonged engagement with participants and in the study setting, having an audit trail, peer debriefing or peer consultation, and addressing the implications of the findings for practice when qualitative research is used for program or practice evaluation purposes, might contribute to illuminate the relevant phenomena in question.

Concerning the concepts of rigor in qualitative studies in the literature that is summarized above, following criteria and precautions were taken into consideration throughout the present study;

- A longitudinal approach is followed, hence, a prolonged engagement with participants and with the study setting is established,
- The context, participants and researcher of the study are described in detail,
- An audit trail (proposed actions and action cycles) is established beforehand,
- Data collection and analysis are detailed thoroughly for all the steps,
- Peer debriefing or peer consultation is conducted, hence, the subjectivity of the process and the continuous need for methodological decision making is diminished,
- Observations and interviews are recorded accurately through video recorder,
- The transcriptions of the video recordings are reviewed by another expert,
- The researcher kept a systematic record of the events in the research process,
- A dissertation review committee monitored the phases of the research,
- A research audit committee, which includes the dissertation advisor and another expert in the field, monitored the phases of the audit trail of the actions,
- In order to provide data triangulation, the data were gathered in naturalistic settings using multiple data sources at different times. For instance an extensive collection of all the relevant electronic messages and replies over the research period have been retained and collectively provide an extensive action research log of how the implementation of the blended learning

environment and the operations of the blended teaching practice course were managed,

- An objective approach was adopted in interpreting and describing the data,
- Direct quotations were used in the interpretation and discussion of data,
- A Consent Form was gathered from all of the participants
- A plenty of reference were provided through reviewing the relevant literature.

Chapter 4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

The present study attempted to explore the potential difficulties and ongoing actions in implementing a relatively new learning environment to the teaching practice course. Therefore, all of the phases of the research, the implementation of the learning environment, and cyclic phases of the proposed actions were also noted down as a part of its research design. Additionally, the present study sought the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards computer use in the teaching and learning environments since their attitudes towards computer use in the educational environment might reflect their attitudes towards Web based component of the blended teaching practice course. Moreover, the present study intended to examine the pre-service ELT teachers' satisfaction levels with the course level blended learning program from different aspects. Hence, it might give a broad picture of their educational attainment from implementation of blended learning model in their teaching practice course. With reference to the aim of the study, a general evaluation of the study and the blended teaching practice course will be presented in the following section.

The cyclic phases of planning, designing and implementation of blended learning environment for teaching practice course were explained in detail in the methodology chapter. In order to explore potential difficulties and ongoing actions in those phases, participants' opinions related to the process were gathered through surveys, interviews and observations by the researcher. The analysis of the interviews provide the additional data for the present study, since, they served as the fundamental instruments to find answers to the research questions of the present study.

In the following section of this chapter, the results will be discussed with reference to the following research questions of the study:

1. a- What are the students' views related to the Web-based instruction component of blended learning environment for teaching practice course?
b- Is there a change in the views of participants related to Web-based instruction component of the blended teaching practice course before and after its application?
2. What are the satisfaction levels of the students in a blended learning environment provided for Teaching Practice course?
3. Is there a relation between student satisfaction of blended learning environment and their participation to the discussion forum on blended learning Web site?

4.2. Participants Attitudes Related to Web Component of Blended Teaching Practice Course

The first research question of the study was inquiring the students' attitudes related to the computer use in Web component of blended teaching practice course and the change that might occur during the application. For this purpose the participants attitudes were gathered through Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey and its results were analyzed under three headings;

- Participants' general attitudes related to the Web component of Blended Teaching Practice course,
- Participants' attitudes related to the contribution of Web component of Blended Teaching Practice course to their professional growth, and
- Participants' attitudes related to the communication and interaction aspect of Web component of Blended Teaching Practice course

As it is explained in chapter 3, though the questions in the survey used the term computer, it has been considered by many researchers that considering attitudes towards computer use of the learners is an important indicator when assessing student attitudes toward online or Web based instruction (Mitra & Hullett, 1997; Kurubacak, 2000; Litchfield, Oakland & Anderson, 2002; Mitra, et. al., 2006; and Lin, 2008).

The Web-based instruction attitude survey included 5-point Likert type questions ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree. Therefore, when analyzing the results, to see the positive and negative tendencies of the subjects, the end-points were merged for the interpretation. Accordingly, the analysis is interpreted using ‘strongly disagree’ (SD) and ‘disagree’ (D) together as “disagree” and ‘agree’ (A) and ‘strongly agree’ (SA) together as “agree”.

4.2.1. Participants’ General Attitudes Related to Web Component of Blended Teaching Practice Course

The analysis of the gathered data through the pre and post application of the survey revealed that the participants’ attitudes towards Web based instruction were almost positive prior to taking part in this study, though; their attitudes became slightly more positive after taking part in the present study. The percentages and frequencies of items related to general attitudes of the participants towards Web component of the blended teaching practice course that were obtained through the pre and the post applications of the survey are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Participants' general attitudes in pre and post applications

| Statements | Pre-Application | | | | | | Post-Application | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | SD | D | BD | BA | A | SA | *SD | D | BD | BA | A | SA |
| 1. Increased use of technology in teaching makes learning easier | - | - | - | 16.7 (n 3) | 38.9 (n 7) | 44.4 (n 8) | - | - | - | - | 27.8 (n 5) | 72.2 (n13) |
| 3. I prefer classes in which I use computers | - | - | - | 27.8 (n 5) | 38.9 (n 7) | 33.3 (n 6) | - | - | 5.6 (n1) | 16.7 (n3) | 33.3 (n6) | 44.4 (n 8) |
| 4. I feel comfortable using computers | - | - | 5.6 (n1) | 27.8 (n 5) | 27.8 (n 5) | 38.9 (n 7) | - | - | 5.6 (n1) | 16.7 (n 3) | 33.3 (n 6) | 44.4 (n 8) |
| 15. The use of computers makes the academic climate of the University intellectually exiting. | - | - | - | 38.9 (n 7) | 38.9 (n 7) | 22.2 (n 4) | - | 5.6 (n1) | 5.6 (n1) | 16.7 (n 3) | 27.8 (n 5) | 44.4 (n 8) |

* **SD:** Strongly Disagree, **D:** Disagree, **BD:** Barely Disagree, **BA:** Barely Agree, **A:** Agree, **SA:** Strongly Agree

As it is seen in Table 3, the participants' general attitudes towards using computers ranked between 'barely agree' to 'strongly agree' options when the survey was given prior to the study. For instance while 83.3 % (38.9 + 44.4) of the participants believed that increased use of technology in teaching made learning easier at first, the percentage increased to 100 % (27.8 + 72.2) when the participants were asked to rate the same statement at the end of the study. Similarly, while 66.7 % (38.9 + 27.8) of the participants felt comfortable using computers at first, it has risen to 77.7 % (44.4 + 33.3) after they took the blended teaching practice course. Likewise, prior to taking the blended teaching practice course 61.1 % (38.9 + 22.2) of the participants believed that using computers in courses made the academic climate of the University intellectually exciting, however, the percentage increased to 72,2 % (27.8 + 44.4) after they experienced with the teaching practice course.

As it is seen in Table 3, the findings of the Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey revealed that almost all of the participants felt comfortable using computers in their courses in a general sense, yet, the analysis of the interviews revealed that some of them lacked some computer skills and Internet access which distressed some of the participants (S-4, S-12, S-14, S-17). Although these participants did not state any negative feelings towards blended teaching practice course at the beginning, they were worried about the potential problems that they might encounter in a Web based environment due to their lack of computer skills and lack of Internet access. Some of the participants' thoughts on this issue were as follows: "At the beginning it was fearsome for me, because I was not good at computer and Internet; however, the idea was fascinating" (S-4). Similarly, when it was first introduced, Student 12 thought that it would be boring and hard class since he did not have a personal computer.

As a conclusion, the analysis of the items in the survey related to the participants' general attitudes towards Web component of the blended teaching practice course revealed that participants had more or less positive attitudes at first however; their attitudes have become more positive after they have participated to the study. The analysis of the related questions in the interviews, on the other hand, revealed that participants have rather pessimistic feelings towards the blended teaching practice course at first; however, as they stated in the interviews, almost all of the participants' general attitudes towards blended instruction switched over into completely positive attitudes after they have gained experience in the blended teaching practice course.

4.2.2. Participants' Attitudes Related to the Contribution of Web Component of Blended Teaching Practice Course to their Professional Growth

The analysis of the data, which was obtained through *Web-based instruction attitude survey*, was also helpful to examine the participants' attitudes towards the contribution of computers in their learning process (see Table 4).

Table 4. Contribution of blended instruction to students' professional developments

| Statements | Pre-Application | | | | | | Post-Application | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|----|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| | *SD | D | BD | BA | A | SA | *SD | D | BD | BA | A | SA |
| 2. The use of computers helps me to learn more | - | - | - | 11.1 (n 2) | 55.6 (n 10) | 33.3 (n 6) | - | - | - | - | 22.2 (n 4) | 77.8 (n 14) |
| 6. Computers are <u>NOT</u> good substitutes for lectures and class discussion | 22.2 (n 4) | 33.3 (n 6) | 11.1 (n 2) | 22.2 (n 4) | 5.6 (n 1) | 5.6 (n 1) | 27.8 (n 5) | 38.9 (n 7) | - | 22.2 (n 4) | 5.6 (n 1) | 5.6 (n 1) |
| 9. Computer use helps me better understand course material. | - | - | - | 16.7 (n 3) | 55.6 (n10) | 27.8 (n 5) | - | - | - | 5.6 (n 1) | 55.6 (n10) | 38.9 (n 7) |
| 10. Using computers will help instructors. | - | - | - | 22.2 (n 4) | 50.0 (n 9) | 27.8 (n 5) | - | - | - | - | 66.7 (n 12) | 33.3 (n 6) |
| 16. The use of computers is increasing collaborative learning in the courses | - | 5.6 (n 1) | 16.7 (n 3) | 16.7 (n 3) | 44.4 (n 8) | 16.7 (n 3) | - | - | - | - | 38.9 (n 7) | 61.1 (n 11) |

* **SD**: Strongly Disagree, **D**: Disagree, **BD**: Barely Disagree, **BA**: Barely Agree, **A**: Agree, **SA**: Strongly Agree

As it is seen in Table 4, participants believed that Web-based component of courses would contribute to their learning. For instance, prior to taking blended teaching practice course 88.9 % (55.6 + 33.3) of the participants believed that the use of computers, which in turn Web-based component of the blended teaching practice course would help them to learn more. Once they experienced the blended instruction, all of them (22.2 + 77.8 %) have started to think that blended instruction helped them to learn more in terms of teaching profession. Similarly, while 83.4 % (55.6 + 27.8) of the participants believed that the use of computers in the class might enrich their understanding of the course materials at the beginning, the ratio of the participants who believed that Web component of the course enriched their understanding of the course materials increased to 94.5 % (55.6 + 38.9), soon after they took the blended teaching practice course. With

reference to the role of the class discussions, while 27.8 % (22.2 + 5.6) of the participants believed that in-class discussions might not function well in blended teaching practice course at first, the percentage of these students has decreased to 11.2 % (5.6 + 5.6) after they practiced asynchronous discussions in the blended teaching practice course. The analysis of the post application of the survey showed that, most of the participants believed that Web component of the blended teaching practice course contributed to their developments as teachers.

Besides the survey findings, the analysis of the interview results depicted that participants believed that the teaching practice course contributed to the pre-service teachers' teaching professions a lot after they experienced the course, however, nearly 17 percent of the participants thought such a course might not contribute to their development at first. For instance, over half of the students (77.8 %) highlighted the importance and the amount and variety of the feedback that they received from their peers and from their instructor as the contribution of this course to their professional development. This is indicated in the following extracts from the interviews with the students.

“This course contributed very much to our teacher-ship, I was able to see and analyze a lot of lesson plans and videotaped lessons which in turn gave me a critical perspective to my own lesson plans and lessons” (S-3).

“Theoretically we knew how to prepare a lesson plan but we had problems in practice. In this course, we had chance to see and analyze many lesson plans. We got feedback about our weak points in our lesson plans and rearranged them; also, we were able to see week points in our friends' lesson plans and gave feedback for their lesson plans. This was a great practice process for what we had learnt in our methodology courses and a great progress in our teaching” (S-9).

“The major contribution of this course to my professional development is that I was able to see myself while I was teaching, because I have watched my videotaped teaching performance through online Web page when I was at home and able to make a meaningful self reflection about my teaching” (S-8).

“You have got a lot of input through feedback. The feedback did not come from one person, but 5 to 10 friends and a teacher provide feedback for your lesson plans, accordingly your behaviors are subjected to change. I think it is the professional development that this course provides to me” (S-10).

Similarly, comparing the first term face-to-face only course to this one, Student 12 and 13 stated as follows:

“In the first term we only got our supervisor’s feedback for our lesson plans if we could arrange a meeting with him/her. However, in this course we got feedback both from our supervisor and from our friends continually. I think this aspect contributed to our development” (S-12).

“Throughout last semester, I was able to get feedback only three times from my supervisor, however, this term I was able to get at least three times more feedback per week. This continual feedback process changed my awareness on various aspects of lesson planning” (S-13).

Similarly, Student 15 stated:

“I couldn’t get my friends opinions about my lesson plans at the first term, but this course enabled us to exchange our thoughts. My classmates have commented on my lesson plans or my videotaped teaching performance and I have commented on my friends’ lesson plans. By means of this course, especially through the discussions, I have started to think twice for every phase of my lesson plans. Therefore I believe that this course was beneficial for my development as a teacher”.

The students’ answers to the related questions both in the survey and in the interview revealed that Web component and the course itself contributed to their development as a teacher. This finding of the present study showed similarities with the findings of the Akkoyunlu and Yılmaz-Soylu’s (2006) study that highlighted that combining face-to-face teaching and the use of online instruction with forums and other available media contributed to students’ learning. Likewise, this finding of the present study showed similarities with the findings of Orhan’s (2008) study, which revealed that university students did not want to continue

their education with only traditional face-to-face learning environments or with a purely online learning environment.

4.2.3. Participants Attitudes Related to Communication and Interaction Aspects of Web Component of Blended Teaching Practice Course

Web-based instruction attitude survey was also helpful to examine the participants' attitudes towards online communication and interaction aspect of Web-based component of blended teaching practice course. It was observed that participants considered computers and the communication channels that Web-based instruction of the blended teaching practice course provided for the pre-service teachers were helpful in communicating with their instructor and with their peers. As it is seen in Table 5, the participants' attitudes towards contribution of the Web component of blended instruction to the interaction among the peers increased between the period of pre application of the survey and the post application of it. For instance, while 61.1 % (38.9 + 22.2) of the participants believed that they could easily access to their instructors through using e-mails at first, it became 100 % (55.6 + 44.4) after they experienced blended teaching practice course. Similarly, while 50 % (22.2 + 27.8) of the participants believed that computers could enable an effective communication between their classmates before the application of blended instruction, it turned into 100 % (33.3 + 66.7) after they practiced to use such communication channels in the blended teaching practice course.

Table 5. Attitudes towards communication aspect of blended learning

| Statements | Pre-Application | | | | | | Post-Application | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|---|----|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | *SD | D | BD | BA | A | SA | *SD | D | BD | BA | A | SA |
| 11. Computers are effective for communicating with other students about non-course related subjects. | - | 16.7 (n3) | 11.1 (n2) | 16.7 (n3) | 27.8 (n5) | 27.8 (n5) | - | - | - | 22.2 (n4) | 50.0 (n9) | 27.8 (n5) |
| 12. The use of e-mail gives me easier access to instructors. | - | 11.1 (n2) | 11.1 (n2) | 16.7 (n3) | 22.2 (n4) | 38.9 (n7) | - | - | - | - | 55.6 (n10) | 44.4 (n8) |
| 19. Computers are effective for communicating with faculty about course related work. | 5.6 (n1) | 38.9 (n7) | 5.6 (n1) | 11.1 (n2) | 16.7 (n3) | 22.2 (n4) | - | - | - | - | 38.9 (n7) | 61.1 (n11) |
| 20. Computers are effective for communicating with other students about course related subjects. | 5.6 (n1) | 27.8 (n5) | 11.1 (n2) | 5.6 (n1) | 22.2 (n4) | 27.8 (n5) | - | - | - | - | 33.3 (n6) | 66.7 (n12) |

* **SD**: Strongly Disagree, **D**: Disagree, **BD**: Barely Disagree, **BA**: Barely Agree, **A**: Agree, **SA**: Strongly Agree

These findings of the survey revealed that most of the participants were aware of the benefits of the communication channels of the computers in general at the beginning of the study and at the end of the study all of them agreed on this function of Web-based instruction, since they already experienced such communication in the blended teaching practice course. Similarly, the students indicated during the interviews that the interaction and sharing among the students during this course was one of the most important benefits of the blended teaching practice course. The following extracts from the interviews with the students reflect their ideas related to the interaction and sharing function of the blended teaching practice course.

“We were in an interactive relation with our peers and supervisor. We write our comments, or we write our opinions when one of our friends writes a comment to our lesson plans. Therefore, there was always an interaction while reading the feedback for the lesson plans or for the videos, this interaction helps us to learn a lot” (S-13)

To me, the most favorable side of this course was getting continual feedback and sharing our thoughts with our friends. This process, I mean, exchanging our ideas established an

interaction with my friends, therefore I can say that sharing and continual interaction was the most favor of this course (S-2).

In the first term, we did not discuss anything about our works with our friends. However, in this course, we discussed them through the discussion board. In addition, we set a network with our friends since I always felt that I have to write and collaborate with my friends if I want to make a good lesson plan (S-6).

We had a similar course in the first term; we usually gave our lesson plans to our instructor and got it back with red lines on it. There was not any interaction between us; it was just exchanging the papers. Nevertheless, in this course we exchanged our thoughts both with you and with our friends on our works (S-5).

We write our thoughts about our friends' work on the discussion board, but the discussing on our works was not limited to the discussions on the Web. We continue to discuss and exchange our thoughts when we met in the canteen or outside the school. Therefore, this course was very beneficial for me (S-7).

The analysis of the related survey items and related interview questions concerning the participants' attitudes towards the communication and interaction aspect of the blended teaching practice course revealed that the participants' positive attitudes increased within the course of time that they spent in the blended learning environment.

As conclusion, the findings of the present study revealed that blended teaching practice course improved interactivity, fostered peer collaboration and established a sense of community, since students could interact with their instructors or their peers through both face-to-face and online communication and information channels. This finding is a further support for the contribution of Web based instruction as in the previous studies on the effectiveness of blended courses that found blended courses improving interactivity, fostering peer collaboration and establishing a sense of community (Moore & Anderson, 2003; Benbunan-Fich &

Hiltz, 2003; Story & DiElsi, 2003; Twigg, 2003; Stein, 2004; Picciano and Dziuban, 2007; and Vaughan, 2007).

4.2.4. The Change in the Participants' Attitudes between Pre and Post Applications of the Survey

Although a rough comparison of the findings which were obtained through pre and post applications of the Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey revealed that the participants' positive attitudes towards Web based instruction gradually turned into more positive attitudes after taking part in this study, it is also important to analyze the findings of the two applications of the survey through statistical procedures.

The descriptive statistics for the pre and post applications of the survey related to the participants' opinions on the Web based instruction component of blended learning environment are given in Table 6.

Table 6. The means of participants' opinions related to Web-based instruction

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------------|----|--------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Pre Application | 18 | 4,2194 | ,53279 | 3,25 | 5,00 |
| Post Application | 18 | 4,6694 | ,25618 | 4,25 | 5,10 |

The mean score for the participants' levels of agreement with the statements in the survey, which was applied prior to the application of the blended teaching practice course, was calculated as 4.21 with a standard deviation of .53. Further analysis of this finding related to the participants' ratings on their level of agreements with the statements in the survey showed that the participants "barely agree" with all of the statements in the survey.

The same instrument was administered to the participants at the end of the study in order to examine the change in participants' level of agreement with the same statements. The analysis of the second application of the survey revealed that participants had slightly higher positive attitudes towards Web based instruction than their attitudes at the beginning of the study. The mean score of the participants' levels of agreement with the statements in the final survey was calculated as 4.66 with a standard deviation of .25. This result depicted that the participants' levels of agreement with the statements moved from "barely agree" to "agree" level, which in turn, indicated that participants' attitudes towards blended learning environment had progressed to a more positive manner in the course of the study.

In order to test the significance level of the difference, the nonparametric version of t-test, namely Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, was used in the data analysis procedure. Table 7 illustrates the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test results and its statistics for the pre and post applications of Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey.

Table 7. Wilcoxon signed ranks test results for pre and post Web-based instruction attitude surveys

| Post- Application – Pre- Application | n | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks | z | p |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|------|
| Negative Ranks | 3 ^a | 7,83 | 23,50 | -2,702 ^d | ,007 |
| Positive Ranks | 15 ^b | 9,83 | 147,50 | | |
| Ties | 0 ^c | - | - | | |
| Total | 18 | | | | |

a. Second Application < First Application

b. Second Application > First Application

c. Second Application = First Application

d. Based on negative ranks.

The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test statistics for pre and post applications of the *Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey* revealed that there was a significant

difference between the pre and post applications of the survey ($z = -2,702$, $p < ,007$). That is to say, concerning the distribution of negative ranks in the second application of the survey, it can be claimed that participants' opinions related to the blended instruction have changed positively after they experienced blended teaching practice course.

4.3. Participants' Satisfaction with Blended Teaching Practice Course

In the following part the results related to the satisfaction levels of the pre-service ELT teachers in a blended learning environment provided for teaching practice course is presented in relation to the second research question, which is "What are the satisfaction levels of the students in a blended learning environment provided for teaching practice course?"

With intention of finding meaningful answers to the second research question of the present study, one of the formative instruction evaluation levels which was characterized as the "customer satisfaction" level by Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006; p.21) was operated in investigating how the participants would react to the implementation of the blended learning into the teaching practice course. The use of "reaction level" evaluation of the blended teaching practice course served to depict the levels of participants' satisfaction as well as to answer the second research question of the present study which inquires the satisfaction levels of the students in a blended learning environment provided for their teaching practice course.

For this purpose the results of Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey were analyzed under four headings;

- Participants' overall satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course (Items 9, 19, and 21),

- Participants' satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course in terms of its contribution to their professional development (Items 1, 3, 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18 and 20)
- Participants' satisfaction with the feedback function of the blended teaching practice course (Items 2, 4, 6, and 14), and
- Participants' satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course in terms of online communication and interaction aspects (Items 7, 8, 11, 12 and 17).

In order to examine the participants' satisfaction levels related to the blended teaching practice course, a satisfaction survey was administered to the participants at the end of the term. As it is explained in chapter 3, the adapted version of "*Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey*" totally consisted of 21 items with 4-point Likert-type questions, ranging from (1) strongly agree to (4) strongly disagree. Therefore, when analyzing the results, to see the general tendencies of the subjects, the end-points were merged for interpretation.

4.3.1. Participants' Overall Satisfaction with Blended Teaching Practice Course

The analysis of the survey revealed that all of the participants were satisfied with the blended teaching practice course in general. Their general satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course was shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Participants' satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course

| Statements | Percentages (%) and Frequencies | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------|---|------|
| | S.A. | A | D | S.D. |
| 9. I am very satisfied with this blended course. | 94.6 (n 17) | 5.6 (n 1) | - | - |
| 19. I would recommend this course to others. | 88.9 (n 16) | 11.1 (n 2) | - | - |
| 21. I feel blended teaching practice course is as effective as face-to-face courses. | 88.9 (n 16) | 11.1 (n 2) | - | - |

* **SA:** Strongly Agree, **A:** Agree, **D:** Disagree, **SD:** Strongly Disagree

As it is seen in Table 8, the pre-service teachers' response to item 9 in the survey depicted that 94.6 % of the participants were strongly satisfied with the blended teaching practice course, and 88.9 % of the participants strongly agree that they would recommend this course to others. The analysis of the survey also revealed that 88.9 % of the participants considered this course as affective as face-to-face courses, which in turn reflected that they satisfied with the blended teaching practice course as much as they were satisfied with their face-to-face courses.

The participants' overall satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course was also scrutinized through standardized open-ended interviews. For instance, the first question in the interview was inquiring the participants' views related to the blended teaching practice course at the beginning and at the end of the study. The analysis of the first interview question revealed that participants' first impressions related to blended teaching practice course were rather pessimistic. Only one of the 18 participants (S-13) was very enthusiastic to take this course at the beginning of the term, since she believed in the importance of integration of the technology and Internet into the courses. She was real supporter of the course who tried to encourage her classmates to take part in this study when the first meeting was held.

Student 15, who stated her negative attitudes towards this course at the beginning, was living in a dormitory and she did not have Internet access at her dormitory, likewise, she had limited computer skills when the study started. She was absent in the first meeting when the outline of the blended teaching practice course was introduced to the participants. The researcher informed her about the outline of the course later and asked whether or not she would like to take part in the study, she agreed to participate in the study since she did not want to be standing apart from her classmates. As she stated in the interview,

“... Everyone in the group said that it seems a different course, why don't we take part in such a teaching practice; therefore, I had decided to participate. Otherwise I would not participate, because it might be difficult task for me to go the Internet cafes at nights”.

Likewise, the analyses of the interviews with participants showed that, although they accepted to participate in the present study, three of the participants (S-1, S-8 and S-11) had some concerns in their minds when they were first introduced to blended teaching practice course. As they declared, they did not believe in the possible contribution of blended teaching practice course at the beginning. For instance, Student 11 stated:

“I didn’t believe that this type of a teaching practice might contribute to our teaching. It seems like attending an online course where I could not get satisfactory feedback for my works”.

Similarly, Student 8 stated:

“I was frustrated at first because it was the first time that I was attending such a course and it seems very difficult to achieve all of the goals that you have explained to us as blended teaching practice course”.

In the same way, Student 1 stated

“I had never imagined this course as a beneficial course at first, because it seems it will trigger some burdensome duties for me”.

When those participants were asked about their most recent opinions related to the blended teaching practice course after they experienced it throughout the fall term, all of them stated that their first concerns, especially their negative attitudes towards the course completely changed. Interestingly, the attitudes of Student 15, who was the only participant who stated her negative feelings about this course even after experiencing it, have also changed to a more positive attitude. She stated;

“At first I avoided participating to this course and wanted to be opted out. On the other hand, I did not want to be standing apart from my classmates; hence, I participated to it half-heartedly. Now, I am not opposing it as much as I was at the beginning. Because, you can see and analyze a lot of lesson plans and

materials, which you cannot do in a completely face to face course, but going out for Internet cafe's at nights still detains my goodwill and support for this course".

With the exception of Student 15, all of the participants stated positive changes in their preliminary concerns. For instance, S-1 stated

"When I look back, I said to myself that, fortunately I took part in this course, it was a very influential course that I took recently".

Similarly, student 14 also stated;

"I was suspicious at first but now I believe that it was a good opportunity for me to take this course".

Only one of the participants (S-13) stated that none of her expectations changed after taking this course, since she believed that this course would be very beneficial for their development in teaching profession. She stated;

"Nothing has changed in my attitudes because I still believe in the efficiency of such courses which integrates the technology and Internet into a unique learning environment".

With the aim of further examination of the participants' views related to their overall satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course, they were asked in the interviews, whether or not they would suggest such a teaching practice course to their juniors in the ELT department. Without exception, all of the participants said that they would suggest blended teaching practice course to others. A follow-up question inquired the reasons behind their preference in suggesting the course to others. They stated various reasons for suggesting blended teaching course to others. For instance, 50 percent of the participants (S-1, S-2, S-4, S-5, S-8, S-9, S-10, S-12 and S-14) believed that blended teaching practice course was very helpful in terms of professional development. As Student 2 stated;

"I am always telling the benefits of this course to my friends. I would suggest it to all of the students including the newcomers

and recent students. Because, I really believe that it was very beneficial for me. I mean, I have gained professionalism by means of this course, therefore, I suggest it to all of my friends”.

In the same way, Student 8 stated;

“We were able to improve ourselves as a teacher through analyzing others’ lesson plans, videotaped lessons, and discussing on these subjects. Furthermore, we get a lot of feedback from our friends and we were able to comment on others lesson plans that improved our vision on preparing lesson plans. Therefore I certainly suggest this course everyone in the 4th grade”.

Likewise, two of the participants’ (S-16 and S-3) reasons of suggesting this course to others were the benefit of getting and giving feedback. Student 16 said

“After getting your friends’ feedback, you try to do your best because you know that your friend tried a lot to assist you. This function of the blended teaching practice course made me to suggest it to my friends”.

Three of the participants (S-6, S-11 and S-17) suggested it to others because of the ease this course provided to them. Although Student 17 believed that this new course might give rise to some extra responsibilities for them at first, her reason to suggest it to others was the easiness of this course. She stated;

“This course gives us flexibility; you don’t have to be at the instructor’s office at a fixed time for getting feedback. You can send your lesson plans to your instructor through the Web page and get a lot of feedback from your friends while you are at home. Then you can rearrange your plan regarding your friends’ critics and comments. This is the ease we witnessed in our blended teaching practice course, therefore I would suggest it all of my friends”.

Other participants also stated various reasons for suggesting this course to others, including seeing and analyzing their peer’s lesson plans and videotaped lessons (S-15 and S-18), its role in strengthening the communication ties and interaction

among the students (S-11 and S-13), and its role in facilitating group work activities (S-7).

The last question of the interview was inquiring the participants' satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course. Although their satisfaction levels were examined through Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey, it is believed that participants' responses to this question made a major contribution in finding a meaningful answer to the second research question of the study. The analysis of their responses to the last question revealed that without exception, all of the participants declared that this course absolutely satisfied them and they believed that this course extremely met their expectations.

The participants in the present study declared that they would like to enroll such blended courses and to suggest this kind of courses to other students since the blended environment in the present study provided them an online community where they interacted with their peers and got continual feedback both from their instructor and their peers that increased their satisfaction with the blended instruction. This finding shared similarity with findings of Kuzu's (2005) study in which participants stated that they might enroll such courses again since they believed that online assisted instruction would help them to maintain interaction between their peers.

In terms of general satisfaction of the participants with the learning environment, the findings of the present study was also consistent with the views of some theorists in the literature such as Young (2002), Bunderson (2003), Waddoups, Hatch and Butterworth (2003), Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) and Twigg (2003), who suggested that the blended format might result in greater student satisfaction.

4.3.2. Participants' Satisfaction with Blended Teaching Practice Course in terms of their Professional Growth

The participants' satisfaction with the contribution of the blended teaching practice course to their professional development was computed and their frequency distributions and percentages of the items which shows their satisfaction levels are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Satisfaction with the contribution of the blended teaching practice course

| Statements | Percentages (%) and Frequencies *N:18 | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| | S.A. | A | D | S.D. |
| 1. The course documents, lesson plans, and videotaped lesson practices used in this class facilitated my learning | 94.4 (n17) | 5.6 (n 1) | - | - |
| 5. Analyzing the lesson plans and videotaped lessons in this course facilitated my learning | 88.9 (n 16) | 11.1 (n 2) | - | - |
| 10. Preparation for Lessons and lesson plans in this course facilitated my learning. | 88.9 (n 16) | 11.1 (n 2) | - | - |
| 15. I feel this blended class experience has improved my teaching skills. | 88.9 (n 16) | 11.1 (n 2) | - | - |
| 18. This blended course did not meet my learning needs. | - | - | 5.6 (n 1) | 94.4 (n 17) |

* SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

As it is seen in Table 9, all of the participants were satisfied with the contribution of the blended teaching practice course to their professional developments as teachers. For instance, item 15 revealed that all of the participants (88.9 % + 11.1%) believed that their experience with this blended course improved their teaching skills. Similarly, as item 18 revealed all of the participants (5.6% + 94.4%) believed that this course met their learning needs.

The participants' satisfactions with the contribution of blended teaching practice course to their professional growth were also scrutinized through interviews. For instance, in the fifth question of the interview, participants were particularly asked the contribution of the blended teaching practice to their *objective writing in lesson plans; planning effective activities for lead in; organizing the content of the*

course effectively; giving clear instructions; selecting proper materials, and error correction and giving feedback in the lessons. When their replies to the fifth question were analyzed in detail, it was found out that all of the participants gained great insight in all of the aspects mentioned above. For instance, referring to objective writing Student 11 stated;

“In the first term, I had no idea about what to do when my instructor underlined the objectives in my lesson plans, I knew something wrong but I didn’t know how to do it correctly. On the other hand, when I saw the examples and read various feedback in this blended teaching practice course I learnt how to write proper objectives for my lesson plans”.

Referring to planning effective activities for lead in Student 2 stated;

“Prior to this course I didn’t concern about the lead in a lesson, but now I have learnt that it is a vital part of the lesson planning. I have realized that it is a natural part of a lesson”.

Similarly, student 11 stated;

“I didn’t know that the lead in is a must of a good start of a lesson, I am sure I will practice this when I become a teacher as well”.

With reference to organizing the content of the course effectively, Student 2 stated;

“I have learnt how to sequence the activities in a lesson plan. I have learnt not use every activity just for its own sake. Now, I have learned how to sequence them concerning their difficulty for example”.

Related to giving clear instructions in the lesson plans and in the teaching performances, Student 11 stated;

“I had problems in giving clear instructions, especially; I didn’t know how to check the understanding of my instructions. I got

lots of feedback on this issue and I think this course helps me improve my way of giving instructions”.

Most of the participants believed that this course contributed to their decision making in the selection of proper materials for the lessons they taught. Especially through seeing a plenty of lesson plans they expanded their repertoire on the materials that they could use on various topics. For instance, Student 1 stated;

“Using materials in the lessons was not so important for me, I mean, I didn’t know its importance in lesson preparation process. But now, I realized that the more colorful material use in the lessons makes your lessons more meaningful”.

Both the analysis of the related items in the survey and analysis of the interviews revealed that the participants of the present study were satisfied with the contribution of the blended teaching practice course to their professional development. Further analysis of interviews in the present study revealed that almost all of the participants found the evaluation of video-recorded teaching practice as one of the favorable aspect of the blended teaching practice course and they declared that analysis of other friend’s videotaped lessons, and peer feedback for those lessons contributed to their professional growth a lot. With reference to this finding, it could be suggested that pre-service teachers can enhance their teaching profession through analyzing and watching the recordings of their own or their peer’s teaching practices throughout the teaching practice process. This finding is a further support for the contribution of using recordings of the teaching performances in the previous studies such as Kupetz and Ziegenmeyer’s (2005) study, which revealed using classroom recordings in EFL methodology courses can help the pre-service teachers to expand their perspectives in teaching and they enable them to see the lessons from a teacher’s perspective.

4.3.3. Participants' Satisfaction with the Feedback Function of the Blended Teaching Practice Course

The participants' responses to the Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey were also useful to see their satisfaction with the feedback function of the blended teaching practice course. The results of the analysis of the related items of the survey were illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10. Participants' satisfaction with the feedback in the discussion board

| Statements | Percentages (%) and Frequencies | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | S.A. | A | D | S.D. |
| 2. I received timely feedback from my teacher | 50 (n 9) | 50 (n 9) | - | - |
| 4. I felt frustrated by the lack of feedback from my teacher. | 11.1 (n 2) | 22.2 (n 4) | 38.9 (n 7) | 27.8 (n 5) |
| 6. I was able to get individualized attention from my teacher when I needed | 77.8 (n 14) | 22.2 (n 4) | - | - |
| 14. I received timely feedback from other friends in the class. | 44.4 (n 8) | 38.9 (n 7) | 16.7 (n 3) | - |

* **SA:** Strongly Agree, **A:** Agree, **D:** Disagree, **SD:** Strongly Disagree

The results depicted that they were satisfied with the individualized attention from their instructors (50%), as it is seen in Table 10, 33.3 % (11.1 + 22.2) of them felt frustrated when there was lack of feedback from their instructor. The survey also depicted that, 3 of the participants (16.7 %) were slightly dissatisfied with the feedback that they got from their peers. This finding was also evidenced in the analysis of the interviews. For instance, while expressing their opinions about the drawbacks of the blended teaching practice course two of the participants (S-7 and S-8) complained about the quality of the peer feedback, hence, they stated that unqualified contents of some messages and feedback in the discussions were the drawbacks of this course. They expressed their ideas as follows;

“Sometimes our friends gave weak feedback for the lesson plans; I mean they wrote just for the sake of giving feedback or writing something as feedback”(S-7).

“The unfavorable aspect of this course was some of my friends did not pay enough attention to the quality of their feedback. It was the only drawback of this system” (S-8).

The analysis of the interviews also revealed that 50 percent of the participants (S-4, S-8, S-9, S-10, S-11, S-12, S-13, S-17, and S-18) were satisfied with the asynchronous feedback function of the blended learning environment, which provided them with an intimate environment. They affirmed that face to face feedback sessions might be face threatening, whereas, asynchronous feedback on the discussion board of the blended teaching practice course did not have such restrictions. In giving feedback through asynchronous discussion board, participants felt more comfortable, especially, while they were criticizing their friends’ lesson plans or while they were reading their friends’ comments on their own lesson plans. For instance, Student 4 stated;

“Now, I don’t prefer getting feedback face to face; most probably I would be ashamed when I was criticized among other friends”.

Similarly, Student 10 found face-to-face feedback more demotivating therefore; she stated that she did not prefer it. Another student (S-13) opined that the given feedback in face-to-face sessions, especially peer feedback could not be as objective as desired. She declared;

“Sometimes you see some immature aspects in a lesson plan, and you are sure that those aspects should be corrected, but at the same time you hesitate to tell it among others. Because you think that your friend might not consider your feedback as a constructive contribution, or s/he might be blushed when you said the truth. Therefore, those comments declared in face-to-face sessions seem frivolous or futile feedback. However, when you give your feedback through online discussion board you feel yourself a bit more secure in this aspect. Although my feedback for my friends was almost constructive critics, I could not say any of them in face to face to any of my friends”.

Similarly, Student 18 stated;

“I believe that online feedback were more objective because, in face to face feedback sessions I could not utter my critics even to my closest friend, likewise, I would not prefer to hear any other’s critics about my plans among others”.

The analysis of the related items in the Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey as well as the analysis of the related questions in the interviews revealed that participants were satisfied with the feedback function of the blended teaching practice course. In terms of the feedback support from the peers, the findings of the present study supported the findings of Ziegenmeyer’s (2005) study which depicted that pre-service teachers learned a lot from their peers when they reported back to their peers what they did while performing their practices. That is, the feedback function of the blended teaching practice course contributed to the pre-service teachers’ teaching practice performances and receiving asynchronous feedback satisfied them to a great extend.

4.3.4. Participants’ Satisfaction with Blended Teaching Practice Course in terms of Online Communication and Interaction

In terms of participants’ satisfaction with online communication and interaction aspect of Web based component of the blended teaching practice course, all of the participants believed that this course has created a sense of community among the participants. As item 17 in Table 11 depicted, 88.9 % of the participants strongly believe that this course encouraged them to discuss course related subjects with other students in the class. Most of the participants (77.8 %) were also satisfied with the sense of community that was established among the students. Similarly, most of the participants (77.8 %) were satisfied with the interaction among the students that occurred for clarification purposes.

Table 11. Participants' satisfaction with communication and interaction

| Statements | Percentages (%) and Frequencies (N:18) | | | |
|--|--|------------|---|------|
| | S.A. | A | D | S.D. |
| 7. This course created a sense of community among students | 77.8 (n 14) | 22.2 (n 4) | - | - |
| 8. In this class, I was able to share my viewpoint with other students. | 77.8 (n 14) | 22.2 (n 4) | - | - |
| 11. In this class, the teacher functioned as the facilitator of the course by continuously encouraging communication | 77.8 (n 14) | 22.2 (n 4) | - | - |
| 12. In this class, I was able to ask for clarification from other student when needed | 72.2 (n 13) | 27.8 (n 5) | - | - |
| 17. This blended course encouraged students to discuss ideas and concepts with other students. | 88.9 (n 16) | 11.1 (n 2) | - | - |

* **SA:** Strongly Agree, **A:** Agree, **D:** Disagree, **SD:** Strongly Disagree

With the intention of further examination of the participants' opinions related to the communication and interaction aspect of the blended teaching practice course, participants were asked about their feedback preference in the interviews. The sixth question was inquiring whether the participants would prefer to get all of the feedback that they got through online discussions in face to face sessions or not, and why. The analysis of interviews revealed that only one of the participants (S-15) did not prefer to get online feedback. She stated, "*I prefer face to face feedback sessions because if all of the feedback sessions were held face to face I don't have to go out to the Internet cafes to read feedback*". Likewise, two of the participants (S-3 and S-14) stated that it made no difference for them; however, they had some doubts about both the quality and the amount of the feedback they received as well as the manner and knowledge of the feedback providers if it were given face to face. For instance, they stated their opinions as follows;

"I would prefer both kinds of feedback but I am doubtful about quality of the face to face feedback, because I am sure that I cannot get such productive and plenty feedback in face to face sessions"(S-3).

“If you were the instructor who gives the feedback, I would prefer your face to face feedback, but I am not sure that whether other instructors may give satisfactory feedback as much as you give to our plans and lessons” (S-14).

On the other hand, 15 of the participants (83, 3 %) stated that they preferred to get the feedback through asynchronous discussion forum. The participants who preferred getting feedback through asynchronous discussion board had various reasons to support their preference. For instance, four participants (S-1, S-2, S-7 and S-8) stated that getting feedback face to face might be very time consuming both for students and for instructors; four participants (S-3, S-7, S-14 and S-18) believed that they could not get satisfying and fulfilling feedback when feedback sessions were held face to face; four participants (S-5, S-7, S-9 and S-11) declared that getting feedback face to face would not be effective and productive as getting it through online discussions. One of the participants (S-16) highlighted the permanency of the online feedback and stated;

“When the instructor and other friends wrote their feedback for our lesson plans and our videotaped lessons, you know that they are always there. If someone gives feedback for our works orally in the face-to-face sessions, I might forget some of them; however, I am able to read them whenever and wherever I want. This made me feel very relaxed”.

The analysis of the Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey and analysis of the related questions in the interviews revealed that the blended teaching practice course satisfied the participants in terms of its communication and interaction aspects.

4.4. The Participants Opinions Related to Pros and Cons of Blended Teaching Practice Course

With the aim of additional and overall evaluation of the course, the participants' opinions on the favorable and unfavorable aspects of blended teaching practice

course were gathered in the interviews. In terms of its benefits and favorable aspects, various opinions were stated, however, there was a consensus that the blended teaching practice course gave them a great chance in seeing other's lesson plans, materials and videotaped lessons. All of the participants believed that the most favorable aspect of this course was the opportunity that it provided for the participants to see and analyze other classmates' lesson plans and materials in advance. Because they believed that seeing and analyzing their friends' lesson plans and teaching practices gave a privilege to their own development in preparing lesson plans as well as teaching practices. For instance, Student 7 acknowledged that in addition to other benefits, seeing others lesson plans and videotaped lessons helped him to improve his own language use. Another participant (S-17) accredited that seeing others lesson plans and videotaped lessons in this course increased her creativity in preparing her own lesson plans.

The second major favor of this course that was assured by 50 percent of the participants (S-2, S-4, S-5, S-6, S-7, S-8, S-12, and S-16) was the use of discussion board for the purpose of giving and receiving feedback. For example, Student 4 declared;

“Getting peer feedback was very excellent, because when you read your friends' critics about your lesson plan you can rearrange it, and therefore, I always thought that I have a good lesson plan”.

Similarly, Student 6 said;

“I think the most favorable aspect of this course was the discussions about the lesson plans. We discuss our lesson plans with our friends; this was very beneficial for me”.

In addition to the benefits of discussions and feedback, three (16.7 %) of the participants (S-1, S-11 and S-18) found that this course created the sense of self-confidence which they stated as one of the favorable aspects of blended teaching practice course. For example, Student 1 stated;

“Before entering the class, I had chance to read my friends’ and your feedback for my lesson plan, and I was able to think twice on my activities. You know that you did not decide it alone but with your friends and with your instructor. Then I feel confident and less stressful in the lessons”.

Similarly, Student 18 stated, “thanks to my friends’ and your feedback and interventions, my stress was weakened and I felt confident in my lessons”.

Regarding the favorable aspects of the blended teaching practice course, three (16.7 %) of the participants (S-3, S-10 and S-15) believed that being videotaped and being able to watch others’ practice teaching videos without any limitation on time and place was another favorable characteristic of this course. As Student 3 said;

“To me the most favorable aspect of this course was videotaping our lessons and watching it on the Internet. This is the first time that I could see myself while teaching. By means of watching the videotaped lessons I could see my own faults in teaching”.

Interestingly, Student 15, who had negative feelings about this course at the beginning stated that she liked being video-recorded in this course. As she said,

“After a while you can watch your lesson and then you said to yourself that I wish I didn’t do it in that way. Likewise, when I watched my friends’ lessons, I could see what they did in their class and decided to do it in the same way in my classes”.

Through the interviews, the participants were also asked about the drawbacks of the blended teaching practice course. When the participants’ answers to the interview questions and their reflection reports were examined, the results revealed that eight (44.4 %) participants (S-1, S-5, S-9, S-11, S-13, S-16, S-17, and S-18) believed that this course did not have any drawbacks or unfavorable aspects. On the other hand, some of the participants underlined some drawbacks to some extent. For instance, two of the participants (S-7 and S-8) complained about the quality of peer feedback, hence, they stated that unqualified contents of

some messages and feedback in the discussions that were given in the first few weeks were the drawbacks of this course. As Student 7 stated “*sometimes our friends wrote weak feedback, I mean they wrote just for the sake of giving feedback or writing something as feedback*”. Similarly, Student 8 stated;

“The unfavorable aspect of this course was some of my friends did not pay enough attention to the quality of their feedback. It was the only drawback of this system”.

Although they stated lack of quality in feedback as the drawback of this course, they also affirmed in the interviews that such unqualified feedback decreased towards the end of the first half of the semester, especially, when the evaluation criteria for the lesson plans and course observation were prepared and assigned to the students in parts. Hence, each week different groups of students focused on different parts. As the majority of the participants stated focusing solely on specific aspects of lesson plans and videotaped courses increased the quality of the feedback and minimized the workload of the course.

In terms of drawbacks of the blended teaching practice course, three of the participants (S-2, S-10 and S-14) found this course as tiring and time consuming. For instance, Student 10 stated;

“Every week you have to prepare your own lesson plan and its materials, however, your weekly tasks could not be fulfilled through preparing your own lesson plan, you have to analyze others’ lesson plans and give meaningful feedback for your friends’ lesson plans and videotaped courses. It was very time consuming and I think it is the biggest drawback of this course”.

Student 2 complained about the oversized workload of this course, however, she stated;

“I think, there must be some extra tasks for this course otherwise it wouldn’t differ from other teaching practice courses and we wouldn’t be as qualified teachers as we accomplished in this course”.

Although it was actually related to the technological aspects of the course, five (27.8 %) of the participants (S-3, S-4, S-6, S-12 and S-15) found the network connection and technology as the significant drawbacks of this course. When the reason behind their beliefs was examined further, it was found that S-4, S-12 and S-15 did not have personal computers and Internet connections at the place where they live. Therefore, they found the use of Internet as the drawback of this course. Student 3 and Student 6, on the other hand, considered lack of quality in the Internet connection and its consequences in general; therefore, they stated the use of technology as the drawback of this course.

In terms of the burden that the course might cause as a drawback, there was a common consensus among the participants, that is, the blended teaching practice course might demand more class works than other face-to-face teaching practice courses. In the same way, some of the participants (S-5, S-9, S-12, S-16, S-17 and S-18) were also worried that this new course might give rise to some extra responsibilities for them. Therefore, Student 16 stated;

“It seemed practicable therefore I accepted to take part in this study, however, I was worried that I got into hot water”.

Similarly, Student 5 stated;

“I had neither negative nor a positive feeling towards this course at first, but frankly, what I thought was this course will be a very burdensome in general”.

In order to examine participants' views related to drawbacks of the blended teaching practice course, in the third question of the interviews, participants were asked if they faced any problems through experiencing this course. Almost all of the participants declared that they did not face any problems during their blended teaching practice course. However, some (33.3 %) of the participants (S-1, S-4, S-7, S-8, S-10, and S-12) had minor problems related with the Internet connection and software related problems. In order to scrutinize those problems participants were also asked specific questions such as “Did you have any problems in

participating to the discussions?, Did you have any problems in giving and receiving feedback?, Did you have any problems in sending your lesson plans to your instructor? and Did you have any problems in watching the videotaped lessons via Internet?”. The analysis of the interviews revealed that, except watching the videotaped lessons via Internet, none of the participants had any problem during the blended teaching practice course. Almost 40 percent of the participants had problems in watching the videos during the first two weeks and the problem was handled through providing them with the VCDs of each lesson.

The findings of the present study revealed that most of the participants reported blended teaching practice course as requiring more course work than their other face-to-face courses. This finding showed similarities with the findings of several research which confirmed that online course work for students require more effort than face to face courses (Navarro and Shoemaker, 2000; Redding and Rotzler, 2001; Wyatt, 2005).

4.5. The Discussion Board Participation Rates of the Participants

The participants’ participations to the asynchronous discussions on the WebCT discussion board were logged through the related function of the WebCT. Total 1227 intact messages were shared among the participants and the researcher throughout the blended teaching practice course and there was neither irrelevant nor empty message on the discussion board. Since the researcher read and replied all of the messages during the discussion process in order to provide feedback to the students, the researcher deleted the irrelevant or empty messages on the discussion board immediately and they were not included in the total number of messages on the discussion board. 120 of the messages were sent by the researcher whereas the rest of the messages were shared among all of the participants. The participants’ participations to the asynchronous discussions were summarized in Table 12. The “Hits” column in the following table illustrates the ratio of each participant’s visits to the asynchronous discussions page of the

course, the “Read” column illustrates the ratio of the read messages by the participants, and “Posted” column, illustrates the number of messages written by the participants. Since the “Hits” ratios in the discussions might mislead the interpretation of the data, they were not included in the data analysis; however, they were presented in the following table with the intention of illustrating the complete picture of the scene.

Table 12 illustrates the ratio of the messages written by the participants ranking from the participant who sent the highest number of messages to the discussion board to the participant who sent the fewest messages to the discussion board. For instance, Student 9 is the one who sent 10, 3 % of the total messages (114 of 1107); whereas, student 3 is the one who sent only 1 % of the total messages (9 of 1107) in the discussion board.

Table 12. Distributions of participants’ participation to the discussions

| Participants | Discussion Participation | | | Percentages of posted messages |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| | Hits | Read | Posted | % |
| S - 9 | 1264 | 466 | 114 | 10.3 |
| S -13 | 1063 | 545 | 104 | 9.4 |
| S - 1 | 942 | 240 | 95 | 8.6 |
| S -14 | 1560 | 458 | 93 | 8.4 |
| S -16 | 2610 | 874 | 82 | 7.4 |
| S - 8 | 5636 | 1179 | 73 | 6.6 |
| S - 2 | 1127 | 482 | 67 | 6.0 |
| S -12 | 1572 | 592 | 60 | 5.4 |
| S - 7 | 924 | 403 | 58 | 5.2 |
| S -11 | 941 | 363 | 58 | 5.2 |
| S - 5 | 2576 | 786 | 53 | 4.8 |
| S - 6 | 873 | 256 | 51 | 4.6 |
| S -18 | 959 | 372 | 51 | 4.6 |
| S -10 | 759 | 207 | 46 | 4.2 |
| S - 4 | 773 | 259 | 41 | 3.7 |
| S -17 | 920 | 247 | 35 | 3.2 |
| S -15 | 463 | 123 | 17 | 1.5 |
| S - 3 | 698 | 147 | 9 | 1.0 |
| Total | | | 1107 | 100 |

In order to analyze the relationship between participation in the discussions and the satisfaction levels of the participants, the number of posted messages was compared with the satisfaction levels of each participant. The analysis of the significance of the correlation between the participants' posted messages on the discussion board and their satisfaction level of the blended teaching practice course which obtained through blended learning environment satisfaction questionnaire were compared with non parametric Spearman rank correlation test. The statistical analysis of the Spearman' rho is illustrated in Table 13.

Table 13. Correlations for satisfaction and participation to the discussions

| | | Satisfaction | Posted messages |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Spearman's rho | Satisfaction | Correlation Coefficient | 1,000 |
| | | | -,268 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . |
| | | | ,282 |
| | N | 18 | 18 |

As it is seen in Table 13, the correlation between the number of the participants' postings on the discussion board and their satisfaction level of the blended teaching practice course is not significant ($r_s = -.268$, $p > .05$). In other words, there is not any relationship between the participants' number of the postings in the discussion board and their overall satisfaction levels of blended teaching practice course.

The analysis of the significance of the correlation between the participants' 'read' messages on the discussion board and their satisfaction level of the blended teaching practice course was also compared through non parametric Spearman rank correlation test and the findings are illustrated in Table 14.

Table 14. Correlations for satisfaction and message read in the discussions

| | | Satisfaction | Read |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Spearman's rho | Satisfaction | Correlation Coefficient | 1,000 |
| | | | -,263 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . |
| | | | ,291 |
| | N | 18 | 18 |

As it is seen in Table 14, the correlation between the number of the participants' read messages on the discussion board and their satisfaction level of the blended teaching practice course is not significant ($r_s = -.263$, $p > .05$). In other words, there is not any relationship between the number of the participants' read of the messages on the discussion board and their overall satisfaction levels of blended teaching practice course.

The present study revealed that there is not any significant relation between the participants' ratio of participation in the discussion forum, the ratio of reading messages in the discussion board and their attitudes towards blended learning environment. That is, the participants' ratio of participation in the discussions or the ratio of read messages by the participants did not influence their attitudes towards blended instruction. In the literature related to the blended learning and participants' satisfaction with the participation to the asynchronous discussions, Akkoyunlu and Yılmaz-Soylu's (2006) study revealed that the more frequency of participation to the forum raises the more positive views they expressed about blended learning environment. The reason of the dissimilarity between the findings of the present study and their study might be related to the majors of the participants as well as the function of the discussion forum. In Akkoyunlu and Yılmaz-Soylu's (2006) study the participants were students of computer education and instructional technologies program and used the discussion forum relatively for answering the discussion questions or exercises related to the course content. Therefore the more participation to the discussion resulted the more positive opinions related to the blended learning environment. However, in the present study, the participants were pre-service ELT teachers and they have used the discussion forum to discuss the issues related to their practice teaching course process. Even if they did not directly participate to the discussions by giving peer feedback or posting messages, they all read their friends messages and gained insights about their further teaching performance or lesson plans through the peer feedback provided by their classmates. The peer feedback to lesson plans or video-recorded teaching practices on the discussion forum aided them to make better performances in their forthcoming teaching performances. Moreover, since

the participants of the present study were satisfied with the blended course in general, the amount of the messages sent to the discussion forum or the number of the read messages on the discussion forum did not play a significant role in their perceptions related to the satisfaction with the blended teaching practice course.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary

In this part of the study, the problem, the design and findings of the present study are summarized first, and concerning the findings, the conclusion of the study will be outlined.

It was observed that pre-service English language teachers encountered some problems during their practice teaching, such as lack of getting satisfactory feedback for their works, approachability of the university supervisors, and lack of coordination between peers in the practice teaching groups. The review of studies in the field inspired the researcher that an alternative way of teaching practice course might be obtained through implementing a blended model. Hence, the goal of the present study was to take an on-ground teaching practice course and move it to a face to face and online blended learning environment to enhance the effectiveness of the course and evaluate the effects of the implementation through examining the participants' beliefs related to blended learning environment and the participants' satisfaction levels with the blended course.

Regarding its focus, to accomplish its purpose and find genuine answers to the research questions, a pedagogical action research was utilized as the research methodology in the present study. Within the general frame of pedagogical action research design, the present study primarily focused on the design, development, validation and formative evaluation of a course level blended learning model in a teaching practice course.

The blended teaching practice course was organized as a combination of face-to-face and online instructional activities that lasted 12 weeks. Every week students were responsible to prepare their lesson plan, send it to the Web page of the course and participate in the asynchronous discussions about the lesson plans and

videotaped teaching practices. Additionally, besides their weekly teaching practices at the participating schools, they were asked to meet for two class hours on campus to discuss the matters that they encountered during their teaching experiences in schools. The participants of the present study were 18 undergraduate ELT students who enrolled in two of the teaching practice courses in the department of Language Teacher Training program at Education Faculty of Anadolu University.

One of the focuses of this study was formative evaluation of a course level blended learning program with reference to the participants' views, which was gathered through various data gathering instruments in a pedagogical action research design. The study mainly focused on "to improve the practice rather than produce knowledge" (Elliott, 1991, p. 49) which was also one of the fundamental purposes of action research. Regarding this basic notion of action research, the blended teaching practice course was evaluated for possible wider implementation of it within the same or similar contexts in language teacher training programs in addition to improve its practice in such settings. The theoretical framework for the formative evaluation of the Blended Teaching Practice course was based on the Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (1996, 2006) model of program evaluation.

The study utilized various data gathering techniques including a survey on attitudes towards the Web based instruction, a survey on the participants' satisfaction with the blended instruction, field observations, participants' postings on the discussion forum, informal reflection reports of the participants, and standardized open-ended interviews with participants. The gathered data were examined and interpreted through descriptive analysis. The followings are the findings of the present study:

- The participants' responses to the Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey and the results of its descriptive analysis revealed that participants' opinions related to the Web based instruction have changed positively after they experienced blended teaching practice course.

- The analysis of interviews revealed that none of the participants had any problems in using the Web page of the blended teaching practice course.
- The analysis of interviews revealed that blended teaching practice course contributed to various aspects of professional development of the pre-service English language teachers.
- All of the participants believe that blended teaching practice course made a great contribution to their teaching professions as teachers.
- All of the participants believe that seeing and analyzing others' lesson plans and videotaped lessons as well as giving feedback to them improved their own abilities in preparing lesson plans and practicing the teaching.
- As identified by the participants, the key success of the blended teaching practice course was providing continual feedback for the lesson plans and video-recorded lessons through asynchronous discussions.
- Descriptive statistics for the Blended Learning Satisfaction Survey and the analysis of the related questions in the interviews revealed that all (100 %) of the participants of the present study were satisfied with the blended teaching practice course and its implementation in their teaching practice procedures.
- The analysis of the significance of correlation between the ratio of the participants' postings on the discussion board, the ratio of the read messages by the participants and their satisfaction level of blended teaching practice course which was obtained through blended learning environment satisfaction survey revealed that there was not a correlation between participants' participation to discussions, the ratio of the read messages by the participants and the overall satisfaction level of the participants with the blended teaching practice course.

5.2. Conclusion

This section will outline the conclusion and implications of the present study regarding Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (1996, 2006) formative evaluation of the effectiveness of blended teaching practice course in terms of the participants' satisfaction with this instructional environments.

We can conclude that blended teaching practice course improved interactivity, fostered peer collaboration and established a sense of community, since students could interact with their instructors or with their peers through both face-to-face and online communication and information channels of WebCT such as discussion forum, mail and chat.

The opportunities for students to take peer feedback and supervisor feedback for their works related to the teaching practice course through asynchronous discussions increase the convenience and satisfaction in blended teaching practice course.

This study revealed that pre-service teachers did not have realistic expectations of the workload in blended teaching practice course. They assumed that fewer face-to-face interactions with the instructor and reduced classroom time means less workload so it was quite a surprise to many of them that the online component of the course entailed a higher level of engagement with the course material and an increased interaction with both their instructor and peers. That is, the blended teaching practice course demanded more course work than their other face-to-face courses.

With reference to Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (1996, 2006) formative evaluation of the course level blended instruction model, it can be claimed that blended learning environment for teaching practice course is a satisfactory course and implementing such a course model in current teaching practice courses might contribute to the pre-service ELT teachers' professional growth as well.

The present study supported the argument in the literature that blended learning environments could combine and blend the strengths of face-to-face and online learning environments and might provide effective instructional environments for teaching practice courses in teacher training programs.

The pre-service teachers' perceptions of blended learning are generally positive, and they hold positive attitudes towards the future of blended learning in teacher education and believe blended learning might contribute to the professional growth of the pre-service teachers in future.

In conclusion, this formative course evaluation indicated that participating in a course level blended teaching practice course increased the participants' teaching skills, primarily their skills on preparing lesson plans and the skills on performing their teaching practices.

The results of this study indicated that pre-service teachers favor blended teaching practice course and it is perceived as an effective way of learning and professional development in teaching practice courses. Hence, it could be claimed that through applying blended learning in teaching practice course, teacher education programs may maintain and improve the quality of teaching practice courses in pre-service teacher education.

Regarding the findings of the present study, it could be claimed that a well-organized blended teaching practice course can encourage students to be active participants in the class discussions and may help to create a collaborative learning environment through providing asynchronous interaction among students and between instructors and students that is a key factor in student learning.

In addition to improving practice in the teaching practice course, the present study also served to the purpose of determining if blended instruction could be implemented within a teaching practice course in teacher training program at a university. That is to say, the study seeks to answer, whether or not blended instruction can be implemented within teaching practice course, which is one of

the major courses in a language teacher-training program. The findings of the present action research confirmed that blended instruction model could be implemented to the teaching practice course in a language teacher-training program.

5.3. Implications

The results of this study will be of practical interest primarily to the teaching practice course supervisors in teacher training programs. For supervisors, understanding the current state of blended teaching practice course could be useful in forming their opinions and guiding their future behavior, such as whether or not to begin or continue teaching such courses. Similarly, educational administrators such as program and department chairs, or teaching practice course coordinators could also benefit from the results of this study, because, the findings of this study could be used by administrators to identify obstacles to the successful integration of blended courses in the curriculum.

With reference to the findings of this study, it could be suggested that teaching practice courses should provide more opportunities for the pre-service teachers to see and analyze a plenty of lesson plans and practice teaching performances throughout their teaching practice courses. Students in teaching practice courses need to get plenty of feedback both for their lesson plans and for their practice teachings. This could be achieved through providing a platform where their instructor and their peers provide them with plenty of feedback through online or asynchronous discussion forum and where they can see and analyze a great amount of lesson plans as well as recorded teaching practices. Likewise, analyzing videotaped teaching practices of pre-service teachers could contribute to their professional development especially to their skills on preparing the lesson plans. Therefore, it could be suggested that pre-service teachers in teaching practice course should be accommodating with blended learning environments in their teaching practice courses.

The findings revealed that blended environment provided for teaching practice courses of pre-service teachers can satisfy participants and this type of instruction in the teaching practice courses or micro teaching practice courses could be implemented in teacher training programs. Therefore, it is believed that providing a blended learning model for the teaching practice course of pre-service teachers where they are able to get continual guidance of their university supervisor, besides the constant peer support and continuous peer feedback for their lesson plans and teaching practices will contribute to their training process and professional growth as a teacher.

5.4. Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, several suggestions for future research in this area are offered. The first recommendation for future research is that this study should be replicated at other learning and teaching settings to determine if similar results are obtained. Although the results of the present study indicated students on several important factors perceived that blended learning environment positively, this perception could be different in another study that involved courses with a different blend. Therefore, future research should determine if the results can be replicated in other courses in different settings and in other majors especially those that might have different methods of developing or delivering blended courses. Additionally, future studies in other geographic locations could determine if the results can be generalized throughout the country.

Although the numbers and majors of participants in this study were narrowly defined as two teaching practice course and their students in a teacher training program in Turkish context, this study might form a good base for future research. Future research could test this blended teaching practice model on more diverse populations including distant language teacher training program students.

Another recommendation for future research is that other stakeholders such as university supervisors and cooperating teachers might be included in the future research. By assessing the opinions of multiple groups of stakeholders, future research studies could paint a more comprehensive picture of the current state of blended learning opportunities for teaching practice courses at teacher training programs.

The last but not least recommendation for future studies is that student reactions to the course could be measured through using different instruments where participants are able to share their likes, dislikes, suggestions, and comments.

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Appendices

Appendix. 1. Web Based Instruction Attitude Survey

Name and Surname:

Student ID:

Date:

How many other courses have you taken that required the use of the Web:

| <p style="text-align: center;">Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the appropriate number</p> <p>* The term “Computers” indicates the Web-Based component of Blended Learning</p> | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Barely Disagree | Barely Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------------|--------------|-------|----------------|
| 1. Increased use of technology in teaching makes learning easier | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. The use of computers helps me to learn more | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. I prefer classes in which I use computers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. I feel comfortable using computers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. The use of computers in teaching makes the learning process too impersonal | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Computers are <u>NOT</u> good substitutes for lectures and class discussion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Computers should only be used to supplement traditional teaching tools. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. I would stay away from classes that <u>DO NOT</u> use the computer for instructional purposes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Computer use helps me better understand course material. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Using computers will help instructors. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Computers are effective for communicating with other students about non-course related subjects. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. The use of e-mail gives me easier access to instructors. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. Communicating with professors by e-mail is generally satisfying | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. Computers enable me to interact more with professors. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. The use of computers makes the academic climate of the University intellectually exiting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16. The use of computers is increasing collaborative learning in the courses | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17. Computers allow me to communicate with people I would not normally be able to communicate with. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18. Computers have negatively affected the way I interact with people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 19. Computers are effective for communicating with faculty about course related work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20. Computers are effective for communicating with other students about course related subjects. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

*Adapted from Kurubacak (2000).

Appendix. 2. Blended Learning Environment Satisfaction Survey*

Name and Surname:

Date:

This survey is designed to measure some of your perceptions related to your satisfaction in Teaching Practice course, which was implemented in a Blended-learning environment.

There is no right or wrong answers, but it is important that you respond as accurately as possible to each question by marking the most appropriate response.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated!

| Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. The course documents, lesson plans, and videotaped lesson practices used in this class facilitated my learning | | | | |
| 2. I received timely feedback from my teacher | | | | |
| 3. The materials that were linked to this course facilitated my learning | | | | |
| 4. I felt frustrated by the lack of feedback from my teacher | | | | |
| 5. Analyzing the lesson plans and videotaped lessons in this course facilitated my learning | | | | |
| 6. I was able to get individualized attention from my teacher when I needed | | | | |
| 7. This course created a sense of community among students | | | | |
| 8. In this class I was able to share my viewpoint with other students | | | | |
| 9. I am very satisfied with this blended course | | | | |
| 10. Preparation for Lessons and lesson plans in this course facilitated my learning | | | | |
| 11. This class, the teacher functioned as the facilitator of the course by continuously encouraging communication | | | | |
| 12. In this class, I was able to ask for clarification from other student when needed. | | | | |
| 13. The learning activities in this course required application of problem solving skills which facilitated my learning | | | | |
| 14. I received timely feedback from other friends in the class | | | | |
| 15. I feel this blended class experience has improved my teaching skills | | | | |
| 16. The learning activities in this course required critical thinking which facilitated my learning | | | | |
| 17. This blended course encouraged students to discuss ideas and concepts with other students | | | | |
| 18. This blended course did not meet my learning needs | | | | |
| 19. I would recommend this course to others | | | | |
| 20. I learned at least as much in this course as compared to a face to face course | | | | |
| 21. I feel Blended Teaching Practice course is as effective as face to face courses | | | | |

*Adapted from Chejlyk (2006)

Appendix. 3. The Interview Questions

1. Dönem başında Harmanlanmış Öğretmenlik Uygulaması ile ilgili ne düşünüyordunuz?
Şu anda bu uygulama hakkında fikirleriniz değişti mi?
2. Bu ders sırasında her hangi bir sorunla karsılaştınız mı? Açıklayınız.
 - a. Cevrim içi tartışmalara katılmada sorun yaşadınız mı?
 - b. Planlarınıza dönüt alma ve verme sürecinde sorun yaşadınız mı?
 - c. Ders planlarınızı danışmanınıza online olarak göndermede sorun yaşadınız mı?
 - d. Arkadaşlarınızın videoya kaydedilen ders anlatımlarını internet üzerinden izlemede sorun yaşadınız mı?
3. Öğretmenlik Uygulaması dersinde Harmanlanmış öğrenme modelinin uygulanması sizin öğretmenlik ile ilgili bilgi ve becerilerinizin gelişimine katkı sağladı mı? Hangi yönde? Açıklayınız.
4. Özellikle biraz sonra sayacağım noktalarda bir katkı sağladı mı?
 - a. Hedef yazımına yönelik
 - b. Derse etkili bir giriş yapabilme
 - c. Ders içeriğini etkili bir şekilde düzenleyebilme
 - d. Doğru ve açık yönergeler verebilme
 - e. Derse uygun materyal seçiminde
 - f. Hata düzeltme ve dönüt verme konularında
5. Harmanlanmış Öğretmenlik Uygulaması kapsamında kullanılan biraz sonra sayacağım işlemler yararlı oldu mu? Nasıl?
 - a. Online tartışmalara katılmak
 - b. Ders planlarınıza arkadaşlarınızdan internet üzerinden dönüt almak
 - c. Arkadaşlarınızın ders planlarına internet üzerinden dönüt vermek
 - d. Videoya kaydedilmiş ders anlatımınız üzerinden dönüt almak
 - e. Videoya kaydedilmiş ders anlatımlarınızı kendiniz izlemesi
6. Gerek ders planı hazırlama gerekse ders anlatımlarıyla online olarak aldığınız dönütleri yüz yüze almak istermiydiniz? Neden?
7. Sizce Harmanlanmış Öğretmenlik Uygulamasının en faydalı yanı neydi?
8. Harmanlanmış Öğretmenlik Uygulamasının en olumsuz yanı neydi?
9. Harmanlanmış öğretmenlik uygulaması sırasında aldığınız online dönütlerden hangilerinden daha çok yararlandınız?
 - a. Akran dönütü?
 - b. Öğretmen dönütü?
10. Bir kelime ile bu tür bir uygulamaya ne ad verirdiniz?
11. Bu tür bir öğretmenlik uygulamasını sizden sonraki arkadaşlarınıza tavsiye edermisiniz? Neden?
12. Genel olarak harmanlanmış öğretmenlik uygulaması dersini değerlendirdiğinizde bu dersten memnun oldunuz mu? Bu ders beklentilerinizi karşıladı mı?
13. Eklemek istediğiniz başka görüşleriniz var mı?

Appendix. 4. Criteria for Lesson Observation

Dersin Giriş Bölümü:

1. Dersin hedef-davranışlarını öğrencilere bildirebilme
2. Derse uygun bir giriş yapabilme
3. Konuyu önceki derslerle ilişkilendirebilme
4. Öğrencilerin derse ilgi ve hazırbulunuşluk düzeylerini artırabilme

Öğretim Yöntemi:

1. Konuyu pratik ve anlaşılabilir örneklerle açıklayabilme
2. Konuyu yaşamla ilişkilendirebilme
3. Konuya uygun düşündürücü sorular sorabilme
4. Katılanları, konu ile ilgili düşüncelerini açıklamaya ve soru sormaya özendirebilme
5. Anlaşılır açıklamalar ve yönergeler verebilme
6. Verilen yönerge ve açıklamaların anlaşılabilirliğini kontrol edebilme
7. Öğrencilerin yapılan etkinliklere etkin katılımını sağlayabilme
8. Öğretimi bireysel farklılıklara göre sürdürebilme
9. Ders sırasında özetleme ve uygun dönütler verebilme
10. Derse ilgi ve güdünün sürekliliğini sağlayabilme
11. Demokratik bir öğrenme ortamı sağlayabilme
12. Yapıyorsa grup çalışması ve bireysel çalışmalar sırasında öğrencilerle ilgilenebilme
13. Özel öğretim yaklaşım, yöntem ve tekniklerini bilme ve uygun biçimde kullanabilme

Hata Düzeltme ve Değerlendirme

1. Hatalı yanıtları zamanında ve gereği gibi düzeltebilme
2. Doğru cevabı buldurmak için yerinde ve düzenli ipucu verebilme
3. Övgü ve yaptırımlardan yararlanabilme

Materyal Kullanımı

1. Etkinliklerde öğretim teknolojilerinden (tepegöz, projeksiyon vb.) yararlanabilme
2. Etkinliklerde görsel-işitsel araçları (yazı tahtası, tepegöz, projeksiyon vb.) düzenli kullanabilme
3. Öğretim araç gereç ve materyalini sınıf düzeyine uygun biçimde kullanabilme


Dersin Sonuç Bölümü:

1. Dersi sonuca bağlama ve özetleme yapabilme
2. Gelecek dersle ilgili bilgiler ve ödevler verebilme
3. Öğrencileri bir sonraki derse hazırlayabilme

Sınıf Yönetimi

1. Zamanı verimli kullanabilme
2. Öğrencilerle etkili iletişim kurabilme
3. Öğrencilerle göz teması kurabilme
4. Ses tonunu etkili biçimde kullanabilme
5. Sözel dili ve beden dilini etkili biçimde kullanabilme
6. İngilizce'yi düzgün akıcı ve kuralına uygun şekilde kullanabilme
7. Etkinliklerin niteliğine göre sınıf içindeki fiziki pozisyonunu ayarlayabilme
8. Kesinti ve engellemeler karşısında derse devamlılığı sağlayabilme

Appendix. 5. Methodology Notes Module


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2007-2008 BAHAR: Öğretmenlik Uygulaması (Practice Teaching)

View

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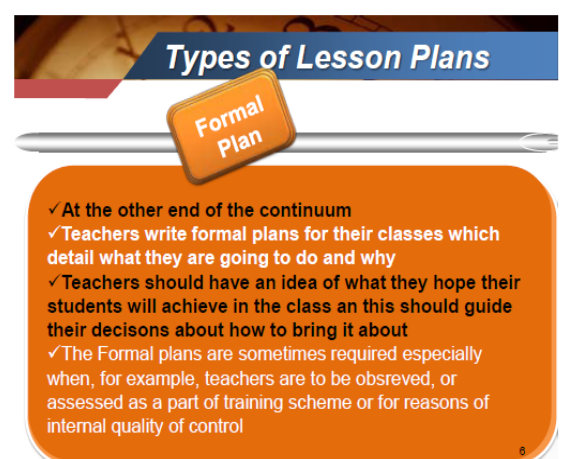
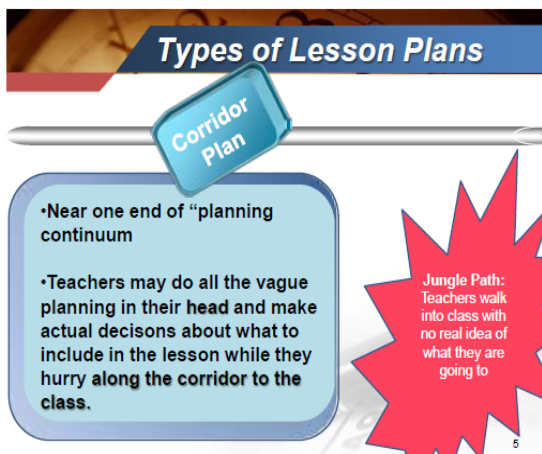
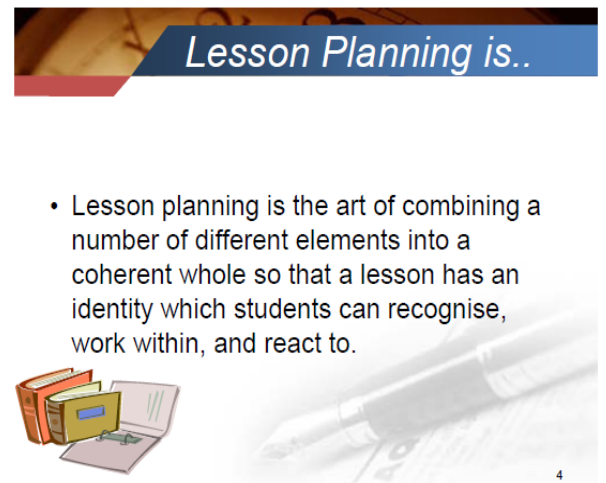
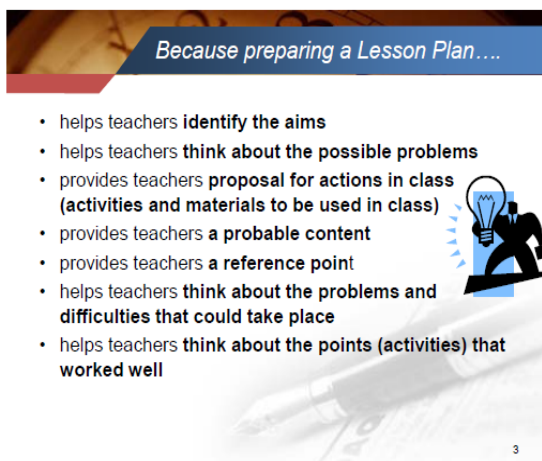
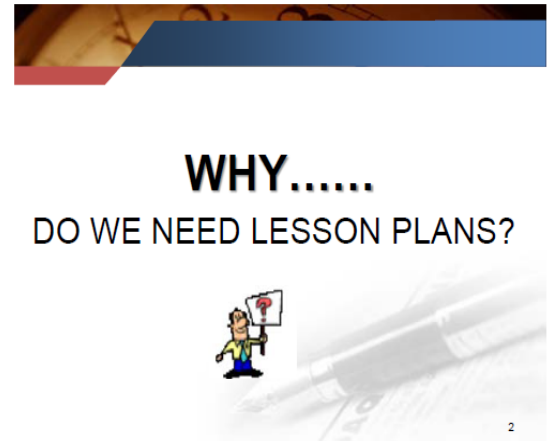
Note that, there are two forms -PDF and FLASH- for each file. They are same files but both of them are presented here in case you might have problems in reaching those files.

(The PowerPoint presentations below are the course materials of OMB 301 & 302 Methodology Course at ELT Department of Anadolu University)

M. CANER

1. PlanningLesson.pdf
2. PlanningLesson.flash
3. Steps_of_a_Lesson.pdf
4. Steps_Of_Lesson.flash
5. Transitions.pdf
6. Transitions.flash
7. Processing.pdf
8. Processing.flash
9. Drills.pdf
10. Drills.flash
11. L1_use.pdf
12. L1_use.flash
13. GroupActivities.pdf

Appendix. 6. Sample pages of PPs in Methodology Notes Module



Appendix. 7. Consent Form

Section A. Research overview

Dear student,

As you know, we have started to deliver OMB 406-G/H Teaching Practice courses in a blended learning mode since the beginning of 2007- 2008 Spring term as part of a research.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the application of blended learning within the context of teaching practice course.

Therefore, within the framework of this course, you will be asked to send your lesson plans regularly through e-mail, to participate Web based discussions on time, to fill in questionnaires, to make interviews with the researcher as well as other requirements of the teaching practice course throughout the term.

Please feel secure that:

- Your participation is voluntary – you don't have to participate
- Participation or refusal to co-operate will have no bearing on your course assessment
- You can always contact the researcher if you have any queries regarding this research
- Any information provided will remain confidential
- You will not be identified, unless otherwise agreed.
- Data held on computers and "hard" copy files will be held securely
- Data collected will be fed back to you so that you can make corrections
- Data analysis will be available on request
- Your name and signature are used only as proof of reading the consent statement below – these will not be used in any other way
- You can withdraw your consent at any time

Please complete Section B or C –

*Thank you.
Mustafa CANER*

Section B. Consent Form:

I have read and understood Section A above. By signing below I agree that the information that I am going to provide will be used for the above research purpose.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

Section C. Consent Withdrawal:

I withdraw my consent to participate in research outlined above in Section A. By signing below I agree that any information given by me will not be used for the above research purpose. I also understand that this action **will not** influence my relationship with the researcher, his supervisor or Anadolu University.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix. 8. Sample peer feedback for lesson plans

Subject: F.İ.'s 5.week daily lesson plan

Message no. 377

Posted by **A.F.A**

Hi, my best friend! transitionların iyi bence resim göstericem diyip resmi gösterip Angelayı describe ediyolar bakalım tutmus mu diye check ediyolar.sonra şunu bitirdik şimdi buna geçiriyoruz die de belirtiyosun aktiviteler arası

Message no. 378[Branch from no. 377]

Posted by **H. Y.**

Merhaba f... bu hafta senin için **materials** değerlendirmesi yapıyorum. Ders kitabından bir bölüm seçmişsin normalde çok verimli bir kitap olmamasına rağmen bu hafta kullandığın bölüm iyi sayılır.

Message no. 387[Branch from no. 378]

Posted by **B. Y.**

F...cim **objectivelerinden** ben sorumluyum :) ilk olarak overall objectivinde by describing a photo demene gerek yok gibi geldi ama yanlış oluyormu benimde tam bilgim yok hocamız bizi aydınalatacaktır sanırım.

Message no. 435[Branch from no. 387]

Posted by **B.T.**

F...cim... cok guzel bi plan olmus guzel gider umarim... Overall **objective**'in gayet guzel! Behaviourallarda ufak bi puruz var o da

Message no. 399[Branch from no. 378]

Posted by **S.S.**

Slm canım bu hafta **hata ve düzeltmelere** yoğunlaşıcım, öğrencilere yes, good, ok! gibi farklı dönütler vermişsin doğru cevabı sen de tekrarlamışsın çok güzel olmuş her şey clear görünüyor

Message no. 403[Branch from no. 399]

Posted by **E.K.**

Merhaba canım... Bu hafta ben **opening ve warm up** partlarına odaklanıcım canım...sana bu yönde birkaç önerim olacak.....

Message no. 424[Branch from no. 399]

Posted by **Z.Y.**

Selam F... ... benim yogunlasacagım konu **hata duzeltme ve degerlendirme** bazı soru sorma tekniklerinde sıkıntı var gibi... ..

Message no. 411[Branch from no. 377]

Posted by **K. K.**

Selam F... güzel bir plan olmuş.tebrikler.ama farklı resimler kullanabilirsin. Sadece kitaba bağlı kalma derim.....

Message no. 446[Branch from no. 427]

Posted by **E. G.**

Canımcım **laed in** de resim gösterip onu yorumlatman gayet güzel olmuş yalnız bunu bu kadar hızlı yaptırmanın sebebini merak ettim biraz daha soru sorarak genişletebilirsin sanırım

Message no. 457[Branch from no. 377]

Posted by **M.D.**

Merhaba canım. Ben de bu hafta **materyalleri** degerlendiriyorum.. Öncelikle sunu söylemem gerekiyor kitabı tarattırıp buraya koyman ve plan hakkında daha çok fikir sahibi olmamızı saglaman gercekten çok iyiydi tebrikler.

Message no. 414[Branch from no. 387]

Posted by **F.İ.**

Dear my best friends :) yorumlarınız için çok teşekkür ederim planımı yazarken pek yaratıcı fikirler gelmedi aklıma. Açıkçası sizden gelecek yorumlara güvendiğimden böyle oldu sanırım. Yorumlarınız doğrultusunda bazı değişikliklerde bulunacağım umarım güzel bir ders olur :))

Message no. 427[Branch from no. 377]

Posted by **Researcher (INO406)**

Sevgili F,

Genel hedefte describing paragraf okuyarak okuma becerilerini geliştirmeyi amaçladığını yazman güzel olmuş böylece daha specific bir genel hedef belirlemişsin. Ama writing ile ilgili olan dışında davranışsal hedefler pek olmamış. (Burada belginin yazdığı hedef de çok güzel olabilir).

Giriş için arkadaşlarının da belirttiği gibi biraz da social chat ekleyebilirdin ama Resim kullanman da öğrencilerin merakını artırıcı ve ilgilerini çekici olmuş.

Öğrencilerin tahminlerini tahtaya yazman da bunu okuma için purpose olarak kullanmanda güzel ama okumaya geçişte transition daha güzel olabilirdi.

Etkinliklerden (spidergraph ve true/false) sonra paragrafı özetlemen de hoş olmuş, böylece kısa bir tekrar yapmışsın. ...

Post readinn için Writing e geçişte "best friends" fikrini kullanman da çok üretken bir geçiş sağlamış ve hoş olmuş.

Materyallerini planına eklemen çok güzel ama onları gördükten sonra acaba sen "describing people" mı yapıyorsun diye düşünmeden yapamadım. Cunku tüm etkinlikler ve örnekler aslında describing people ile ilgili.

Dolayısıyla Sen en başta (sanırım daha önce describing person ile ilgili bir seyler öğrenmişler o nedenle let's remember etkinliği var) kişileri tarif ederken kullanılan sıfatlarla bir giriş yapsaydın, bir kaç kişi tarifini yapsaydın daha güzel bir pre reading olabilirdi.

Yarın sana başarılar diliyorum.

M.C.

:)

Appendix. 9. Sample self-reflection and peer feedback for video recorded lesson

Message no. 981Posted by **E.D.****Subject: Re: E.D.**

Merhaba arkadaşlar;

9/C ile yaptığım **dersim ve kendim hakkındaki görüşlerimi** sizlerle paylaşmak istiyorum. Önce dersimin içeriği hakkında kısa bir şeyler söyleyeyim. Dersim sabah 2. saatteydi ve bir listening dersiydi. Konusu da bir İngiliz öğrencinin çocukların aşırı televizyon izlemelerini önlemek için icat ettiği "television shoes" adlı bir buluştu. ...

Derse güzel bir giriş yaptığımı düşünüyorum. Konuyu önceki dersle ilişkilendirmedim fakat öğrencilerin derse ilgi ve hazırbulunuşluk düzeylerini arttırabildiğimi düşünüyorum. Gayet güzel bir akış oldu fakat belki daha da kısa yoldan bir girişle inventiona da getirebilirdim diye düşündüm elbette. Belki inventionlar hakkında daha çok konuşturabilirdim.

Dersin bütününde anlaşılır yönergeler ve açıklamalar yapabildim. Fakat first listening için verdiğim yönergeyi daha güzel verebilirdim. Orada tahtaya yazdığım 2 cümlenin British studentla ilgili haberi dinlemeden önce doğru ya da yanlış olduğunu guess etmelerini ve guesslerini de kağıda yazmalarını istedim ve daha sonra dinleyeceğimizi söyledim ama sanırım orada instructionımı pek kavrayamamışlar ki biraz bakındılar etraflarına.

Elimden geldiğince öğrencilerin etkin katılımını sağlamaya çalıştım. Öğretimi bireysel farklılıklara göre özellikle hazırladığım görsel-işitsel materyallerle sürdürebildim.

Elimden geldiğince dönüt vermeye çalıştım fakat tabi bunlar bilinen ve standart sözlerin dışına çıkamadı... ...

Hatalı yanıtları zamanında ve gereği gibi düzeltebildim. Soruyu yanlış cevaplayan ya da hiç cevaplayamayan öğrenciler için arkadaşlarından onlara yardım etmelerini istedim.

Materyal açısından zengin bir dersti bence. ... Görsel materyal olarak renkli resimler kullandım

Dersi bir ödev vererek sonlandırmaya çalıştım. İnterneti araştırıp birkaç invention ve inventors bulmalarını istedim. Belki bir de derse özetleyebilirdik ama sürem zaten çok kısıtlı olduğundan açıkcası aklıma da gelmedi hiç . Bir de see you bile diyemeden zil çaldı :)

....

Görüşlerinizi merakla bekliyorum arkadaşlar... :) **E.D.**

Message no. 1026[Branch from no. 981]Posted by **E. G.**

E., dersin gayet başarılı geçmiş tebrik ederim. Ben **senin videonda materyal kısmını** inceleyeceğim. Dersin başında görsel renkli materyallerden yararlanmışsın. Bu tip materyaller öğrencilerin dikkatini çok çekiyor ancak kullanışlılık açısından bir kaç önerim olacak.

Message no. 1032[Branch from no. 1026]

Posted by **M.D.**

Mrb E.cım... videonu izledim ve **sınıf yönetimi** hakkında kousucam ... Zaman kullanımıyla baslamak istiyorum.. Derse girişte biraz fazla zaman kullanmışsın gibi gelmişti fakat dersin tamamını izleyince ayırdığın zamanın uygun olduğunu fark ettim.. Bu pek çoğumuzun ayarlayamadığı bi konu bence. Tebrikler. ... Öğrencilerle iletişim konusuna gelince onları dinlemeye ve cevaplama özen göstermişsin... Fakat küçük bi noktaya dikkat çekmek istiyorum nitekim sen de söylemişsin sınıfın oturma düzeninden dolayı dersi daha çok tahta önünde işlemişsin ve arkadaki çocuklarla beden dili anlamında çok fazla ilişki kuramamışsın.

Message no. 1089[Branch from no. 1032]

Posted by **B.T.**

Merhaba canım... ancak videonu izleyebildim ve dönüt yazabiliyorum, Malum sınav haftası staj vs.. Ben **ders yönetimin üzerine konuşacağım**. E...cığım videonun genelinde o kadar çok uğultu hakim ki sınıfa sen de çok zorlanmışsın izlerken ben de çok zorlandım. Ama burdan söylemek istiyorum ki tüm diğer arkadaşlar da bunu göz önünde bulundurarak yazsınlar dönütlerini bizim 9.sınıflarımız çenelerini kapatmaktan aciz insanlar :) asla susmuyorlar, asla! ... Bu noktada senin yapabileceğin bir şey yoktu, bunu biliyorum.. Görsel materyallerin, kullandığın listening parçası ve production kısmındaki görsellerin de derse olan katılım, ilgi ve güdüyü sürekli hale getiriyor, dersin anlaşılabilirlik düzeyini yükseltiyor. ... Yönergelerin genelde açık ve anlaşılırdı yalnızca 1st listenin için verdiğin yönerge muğlak olmuş. Çocuklar neyi guess edeceklerini anlayamamışlar ... Öğretmenlik meslek bilginden yararlandığın açıkça gözlemlenebiliyor. Her aşamada ne yaptığını niye yaptığını biliyorsun. ...

Message no. 1110[Branch from no. 981]

Posted by **D.K.**

Sevgili E...

Kusura bakma ancak izleyebildim videonu...e...cım ben **hata düzeltme ve değerlendirme** kısmıyla ilgileniyorum ama sanırım bunun dışına biraz çıkıcam.. Çünkü anladığım bişi var; demekki teoride mükemmel planlar yazılsada uygulamada o kadar ii olunamayabilio..Nasıl ki ders planlarına övgüler yağdırdıysam şimdi de birazcık eleştiricem ders anlatımını... kırılmazsın umarım....

-ilk izlenimim sınıf sessizliğini sağlama konusunda...malesef ders boyunca bunu başaramadığımı gördüm...

-warm up tan sonraki visuallar sınıfı kısa bi süreliğine topladı diyebiliriz işte burda senin materyal bolluğunu takdir ettim...

-first listening purpose arkadaşlarımda değindiği gibi biraz havada kaldı..yani tahtadaki 2 cümle true mu false mu?? peki neye göre karar vercekler? ve amaç ne?? ve sonra diyorsunki just tell me "yes or no" eğer sadece yes or no diceseklerse neden kağıda bişiler yazdılar???

-yine during listening de instruction vermeden worksheet leri dağıtmışsın dolayısıyla sen instruction verirken dinleyen birkaç kişiyle sınırlı kaldı.

-post aktiviteye gelince inan amacı ve süreci hiç anlamadım..gidip planını okumak zorunda kaldım..grup çalışması ama kim kimle grup belli değil..yine worksheetler dağıtıldı ve look at the chart denildi... Çocuklarda anlamadı ne yapacaklarını....

- ve tüm bu etmenler sende etkiledi..sen de artık bi an önce bitsin bu ders olayına girmişsin.. yani videodan anladığım bu...

Canım benim..her ayrıntısı bu kadar güzel hazırlanmış bu planı yetiştiricem diye uğraşmışsın sürekli...
sevgili e... son olarak şunları söylemek istiyorum...zaman ilerledikçe en az planların kadar harika bi öğretmen olacağına eminim.....

Message no. 1138[Branch from no. 1110]

Posted by **E.K.**

Merhaba e...cım..

Zaten dersinde vardım ancak dönütümü geciktirdiğim için, hatırlamak amaçlı tekrar izledim...uğultu ve gürültü nedeniyle videonu anlamak biraz zor; bu noktada ben avantajlı oluyorum...ilk olarak diğer arkadaşların dikkatine sunma ihtiyacı duyduğum bir nokta var...senin bu dersin, öğrencilerin bu güne kadarki en iyi dersleriydi diyebilirim...yani bu gürültü düzeyinde kalırlarsa biz kendimizi şanslı sanıyoruz...activitelerin iyiydi, ilgilerini çekti de bu seviyede kalabildiler...

Canım ben **dersin sonuç kısmına** odaklanıyorum... bu kısım genel olarak hepimizde problemlili...dersi yetiştirelim diye koşa koşa yapsak bir anlamı kalmıyor activitelerin ve dersin pace i bozuluyor...sindirerek yapsak bu sefer de yetişmiyor..senin zamanlamayla ilgili çok büyük sıkıntın olmadı, vaktin farkındaydın ve ucu ucuna yetiştirdin...

Dersini bir şekilde sonuca bağlamışsın ancak özetleme yapma fırsatın olmamış...ödev vermişsin öğrencilere; ki ödevin gayet güzel en azından internetten araştırmalarını istemen yapmalarına az da olsa katkı sağlamıştır belki..

Gelecek dersle ilgili bilgi vermek kriterler arasında ancak her zaman öyle bir fırsatımız olmuyor...bir sonraki ders ne olacağından biz de haberdar olmuyoruz yani.....

Öğrenciyi bir sonraki derse hazırlama da pek mümkün olmamış, zaten mümkün olmuyor....

Ya E...cım işte böyle...

Genel hatlarıyla iyiydi dersin canım, tebrikler...

Appendix. 10. Criteria for lesson plan evaluation

1. Hedefler

- Dersin Genel Hedeflerini açık bir biçimde ve uygun bir dil ile ifade edebilme
- Dersin Davranışsal Hedeflerini açık bir biçimde ve uygun bir dil ile ifade edebilme
- Davranışsal Amaçları Genel hedeflere uygun biçimde ifade edebilme
- Genel ve Davranışsal Amaçları ifade ederken uygun dil kullanabilme
- Planda yer alan Etkinliklerin Genel ve Davranışsal Amaçlara uygunluğu (Dönütleriniz olumlu yada olumsuz olsa da mutlaka açıklama getiriniz, nasıl düzeltilebilir konusunda tavsiyelerinizi ekleyiniz)

2. Derse Giriş

- Derse girişte öğrencilerin ilgisini çekebilme
- Gerekliyse konuyu ve/veya yapılacak etkinlikleri dersle ilişkilendirebilme
- Derse uygun bir giriş yapabilme
- Konuya uygun bir bağlam (Context) oluşturabilme

3. İçerik

- Aktiviteleri tüm öğrencilerin dil seviyelerine uygun olarak sunabilme
- Uygulanan etkinliklerle öğrencilerin etkin katılımının sağlayabilme
- Gerekliğinde pair work/ group work etkinliklerinin kullanılabilmesi
- Bireysel farklılıkları dikkate alabilme
- İçerik Gramer anlatımı ise:**
Bağlam (Context) oluşturmada öğrenci katılımı sağlayabilme
Anlamın netleştirilmesi sağlayabilme
Yeterli sayıda örnek verebilme
Yeterli açıklıkta örnek verebilme
Tahtaya yazılacak bilginin düzeninin sağlayabilme
Tahtaya yazılacak bilginin açıklığını sağlayabilme
Öğrencilerin anlayıp anlamadığının kontrolü
Öğrencilerin farkındalığını artırıcı (processing activity) etkinlikler uygulanması
Uygulama aşamasında anlamlı, bağlam içinde yer alan etkinlik çeşitlerine yer verme
- İçerik Okuma/Dinleme/Yazma/Konuşma ise;**
Konuya ön hazırlık (Pre-reading; pre-writing etc) yapabilme
Sürece yönelik çalışmalar (örn. okuma için sorular) yapabilme
Sorulan soru ve yapılan etkinliklerin niteliği ve yararı
Strateji öğretimi amaçlanıyorsa nasıl uygulandığı

4. Yönerge ve Ders Akışı

- Anlaşılır yönergeler yazabilme
- Yönergelerin anlaşılabilirliğin kontrolünü yapma
- Yönergeler ile etkinliklere geçişin uygunluğu
- Planın tümünün bağdaşık (coherent) olması
- Ders planının tümünde anlaşılır bir dil kullanımı
- Derse uygun bir bitiş yapabilme

5. Materyal

- Öğretim teknolojilerinden yararlanabilme
- Uygun araç gereç ve materyal hazırlayabilme ve kullanma
- Görsel materyallerden (Overhead, handouts, pictures etc) yararlanabilme
- Materyalleri hedeflere uygun seçebilme
- Kullanılan materyaller eklenmiş mi?

6. Hata düzeltme ve Değerlendirme

- Uygun soru sorma teknikleri kullanabilme
- Hata düzeltme ve dönüt vermeyi çeşitlendirebilme
- Öğrencilere uygun dönüt verebilme
- Övgü sözlerini kullanabilme
- Ödev verilmiş mi? Verilmişse planın tümüne uygunluğu
- Dersin tümünün (anlaşılabilirliğinin) değerlendirilmesi

