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TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT HOW TO USE DYNED IN AN EFFECTIVE WAY

ABSTRACT
As in many other fields, computers have a significant role in language teaching programs and there are various software in this area. Of all these, DynEd (Dynamic Education) Interactive Language Learning Program which began to be used in state primary schools nationwide as well as some private ones in Turkey in 2006 stands out to the most commonly-used one in Turkey. The aim of the study is to guide teachers of English about how to use DynEd in an effective way. The research is a qualitative study. As a conclusion, it has been found out that DynEd is said to have positive results about students' attitude towards English. Then, blended learning, regular use of repeat, headphone and microphone buttons and regularly study of DynEd are suggested most.
    Keywords: CALL, ELT, DynEd, Blended Learning,
                 Brain-Based Learning

ÖĞRETMENLERİN DYNED'İN ETKİN KULLANIMINA İLİŞKİN DÜŞÜNCELERİ

ÖZET
Pek çok diğer alanda olduğu üzere, bilgisayarlar dil öğretiminde de önemli bir role sahiptir ve bu alanda çeşitli yazılımlar bulunmaktadır. Bunların arasında, Türkiye'de özel okulların yanı sıra 2006 yılında kullanılmaya başlanan İnteraktif Dil öğrenim programı olan DynEd (Dynamic Education), en yaygın olarak kullanılan program olarak göze çarpmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın amacı, İngilizce öğretmenlerine, DynEd'in nasıl etkin bir şekilde kullanılacağı hakkında rehberlik yapmaktır. Araştırma, nitel bir çalışmadır. Sonuç olarak, DynEd'in öğrencilerin İngilizce'ye karşı tutumu hakkında olumlu sonuçlar doğurduğu görülmüştür. Öğretmenler en çok karma kullanımı, tekrar, kulaklık, mikrofon düğmelerinin düzenli kullanımını ve DynEd'in düzenli çalışılmasını önermişlerdir.
    Anahtar Kelimeler: Bilgisayar Destekli Dil Öğrenimi,
                           İngilizce Dil Öğrenimi, DynEd, Karma Öğrenme,
                           Beyin Temelli Öğrenme

1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

Language can be described as "a means of communication" [1], "a social system enabling individuals to communicate" [2], "a set of principles setting up a relationship with the meaning and sounds" [3]. As a result of globalization, communication among nations and learning foreign languages has become inevitable. Up to now, several methods have been used to teach foreign languages, which can be classified as Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method, Cognitive-Code Approach, Natural Method, Communicative Approach and Eclectic Method. According to Demirel (2003), the other foreign language teaching methods can be listed as Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, the Silent Way and Total Physical Response. On the other hand, foreign language teaching techniques can be divided into two groups as those carried out in groups and the individual ones. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is one of the ones in the latter category [4].

The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's (NCREL) "enGauge", a Web-based framework, states functional, technological, and information literacy among the 21st Century skills [5] and the rapid growth of computers has aroused interest in the area of education [6 and 7].

Computer technology can be regarded as an educational tool supporting English Language [8] and CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) is the term most commonly used by teachers and students to describe the use of computers as a part of a language course [9]. CALL originates from CAI (Computer-Assisted Instruction), a term that was first viewed as an aid for teachers. The emergence of the concept Computer-Assisted Language Learning dates back to the 1960s and this technique started to be used in American universities in the 1970s. The philosophy of CALL puts a strong emphasis on student-centered lessons that allow learners to learn on their own using structured and/or unstructured interactive lessons. CALL can be used to reinforce what has been learned in the classrooms. It can also be used as remedial to help learners with limited language proficiency [10 and 11]. This bears significance as students have more time to study individually than the class hours.

CALL has gone through different process up to now. According to Culhane (2003), questions of whether it was possible to use computers in language learning during the 1980's became why to do so in the 1990's and how to do so at present and this study aims at finding solutions for effective use of DynEd, a means of CALL [12].

The reasons for using Computer-Assisted Language Learning include: (a) experiential learning, (b) motivation, (c) enhancement of student achievement, (d) authentic materials for study, (e) greater interaction, (f) individualization, (g) independence from a single source of information, and (h) global understanding. On the other hand, the barriers inhibiting the practice of Computer-assisted Language Learning can be classified in the following common categories: (a) financial barriers, (b) availability of computer hardware and software, (c) technical and theoretical knowledge, and (d) acceptance of the technology [10, 13, 14, 15 and 16] [Akt:17].

There are several factors having great importance in foreign language learning. First, fluency, described as "speed and ease of word recognition and recall" and automaticity, defined as "the economical re-structuring of underlying processing mechanisms" are among these [18]. Then, in order to develop lexical skills, there should be close connection between new vocabulary items and prior knowledge. Finally, there should be consistent repetition to gain automaticity. The neuro-linguist Pinker (1997) says that competence

comes from practice, and automaticity comes with much practice [19]. Knowles (2004) maintains that long-term learning generally requires frequent repetition over an extended period of time [20].

Then, CALL offers some other benefits for the students and teachers. For instance, while studying on their own on computer, students do not have the anxiety to be humiliated when they make mistakes as in a classroom environment. Moreover, it can be thought that a student becomes more successful as the pace of learning is adjusted accordingly [4].

1.1. Brain-based Learning (Beyin Temelli Öğrenme)

Learning process should be arranged according to how brain works. Hebb (1949) expresses this occurs in such a way: "Neurons that fire together, wire together" [21]. As Knowles (2008) states, in the traditional way of teaching, that the teacher is in the center of teaching process, that there are course-books, that the focus is on grammar and vocabulary and it is knowledge-based. However, according to brain-based learning – recursive hierarchical learning (RHL), as mentioned above, there is a need to gain automaticity for which words should not be isolated. Then, in Recursive Hierarchical Recognition (RHR), situational inputs apart from the textual ones should be made use of for better learning. Teaching grammatical structures is not suitable. Moreover, as for speaking, the use of text in the process of learning should be avoided as it will interfere and draw the attention of the learner. Here, multimedia computers help multimodal learning by providing visual, auditory, conceptual, phonological, etc. systems. In this situation, the learner is active and switch from one program to the other without getting bored. Next, RHR makes use of icons which are visual objects. An icon can be image but not generally a text [22].

The use of texts should be avoided while improving listening because reading and listening skills use different pathways in the brain. Restack (1994) says that "Competition between sensory channels can also prove disruptive." [23]. When students are studying a lesson, they should, therefore, be guided not to rely on text until they have developed their ability to understand and repeat the key sentences.

Language models need to be at a suitable level of comprehensibility, and this is where placement and on-going testing are essential and DynEd has two different placement tests entitled 'kids' and 'general' thanks to which the students start learning English at their real level.

However, it is said that CALL has also certain drawbacks. To illustrate, pair or group work activities cannot be implemented on a computer environment. Computer scientists never think of replacing teachers with computers and have the opinion that the place of a teacher cannot be filled with a computer. It should be regarded just as a tool to promote and contribute to learning [4]. There should be a blend of individualized practice with relevant and interactive classroom activities which motivate students. CALL is now moving toward a blended model where the multimedia computer provides the necessary optimal input and practice activities, and the classroom provides the human element where the language models come to life and are extended in a social context [24]

1.2. Dynamic Education (DynEd)

DynEd, developed based on brain-based learning was developed by DynEd Co., founded in 1987 by the former director of the Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ), Lance Knowles, and a team of engineers. DynEd created the world's first interactive multimedia language

learning CD-ROM in 1988 and received a U.S. patent for this invention in 1991. Dynamic Education (DynEd) is an interactive program developed to facilitate language learning and entered Turkish schools in 2001, when Private Sanko Schools in Gaziantep started using it. Moreover, since 2006, the program has been used in all state primary schools all over the country after a protocol signed by Turkish Ministry of National Education, Sanko Holding and Future Prints in 2006 [25].

DynEd has access to and actively utilizes the real-time study records of thousands of students from around the world. It is used by individual users, private and state schools, universities, state and private institutions in over 40 countries [26].

DynEd includes a variety of programs addressing kids to adults such as A Christmas Carol, Advanced Listening, Alice in Wonderland, Clear Speech Works, Dynamic Business English, English by the Numbers, English for Success, First English, Functioning in Business, Hospitality English, Let's Go, New Dynamic English, Robin Hood, Round the World in 80 Days, Test Mountain and The Lost Secret. DynEd's most striking qualities can be listed as such: (1) Its design is in line with the human brain. (2) Studies are followed up step by step through Records Manager; Study score is determined and study reports are prepared, (3) The user takes a Placement test and starts using the most appropriate DynEd software, (4) Users' progress is measured and evaluated through Mastery tests, (5) It has been approved by various Ministries of National Education such as Turkey, France and China [26].

One of the most useful features of NDE is the Records Manager, which enables to track student progress, including time spent, percentage complete, and scores on the exercises and tests. The Records Manager is an assessment tool and a means of motivating students [27].

About using DynEd, it is suggested that students go through each lesson in those stages: "(1) Preview; (2) Comprehension, (3) Language Focus, (4) Language Practice, (6) Intermittent Review" [25].

Moreover, the producers of DynEd suggest the following about how to use DynEd: study for 20-45 minutes preferably on different days; use Records Manager to check how you study; study each lesson until your completion level reaches 2,5 or higher (Completion percentage shows how effectively the student has studied. The **Completion Percentage** sets study goals based on sentence repetitions, voice recording attempts, speech recognition activity, use of the glossary, shuffler level, and the number of questions answered correctly.); move on to the next lesson; Use the microphone, then compare what you said with that of the native speaker, compare your speed, stress and intonation, and pronunciation, which helps automaticity and long-term memory; do not use the text button; Practice; Study regularly and frequently as this will reduce total study time; the best study is a mix of activities and lessons; follow such an order: listening, speaking, extend the language by reading and writing; transfer it to your own life as classroom activities may help personalization [25].

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

The aim of this study is to guide English teachers about how to use DynEd in an effective way. DynEd has been in use in state primary schools since 2006 all over Turkey and it seems that DynEd offers good solutions for language learning and suggests several things for its best use. This study bears importance in terms of shedding light upon how to use DynEd in an effective way and checking whether theoretical suggestions comply with those suggested by the teachers using it for a couple of years, which may lead to enlightenment of the primary state

school English teachers nationwide and get better results. The responses to the following questions will be searched to achieve the goal state herein above:

- Is what the teachers who have been using DynEd for several years suggest for its effective use in compliance with what is suggested theoretically?
- What are the most important suggestions about "how to use DynEd in an effective way" put forward?

3. ANALYTICAL STUDY (ANALİTİK ÇALIŞMA)

This is a qualitative study and its working group is 17 teachers at a private school who have been using DynEd interactive language learning program for 6,5 years on average according to conditional sampling method. That is, a school where English teachers have been using DynEd for a long time was chosen as the working group. The percentage of the male teachers in the sample group is 23,53 % while that of the female teachers is 76,47 %. Then, the experience of the teachers to use DynEd is as follows: 9 years (17,65%), 8 years (29,41%), 7 years (23,53%), 6 years (5,88%), 5 years (5,88%), 2 years (11,76%) and 1 year (5,88%), which means that the teachers are very experienced in using DynEd.

The teachers have been asked an open-ended question about what they recommend to use Dynamic Education in an effective way and then the frequency of the answers has been calculated.

Next, a survey about CALL and DynEd has been made and the teachers' suggestions have been compared with the literature.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS (BULGULAR VE TARTIŞMALAR)

In order to learn the ideas of the teachers using DynEd for a period of time has been regarded significant, 17 teachers have been asked what they recommend to study English through DynEd in an effective way. The results of the responses can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1. Suggestions to use DynEd in an effective way put forward by the teachers
(Tablo 1. DynEd'in etkin kullanımı için öğretmenlerin sunduğu öneriler)

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
1. DynEd should be supported with classroom activities.	10	58,82%
2. The 'Repeat' button should be used regularly.	10	58,82%
3. The 'Microphone' button should be used regularly.	10	58,82%
4. The 'Headphone' button should be used regularly.	10	58,82%
5. One should study English on DynEd regularly. (Don't study for long hours at one time)	9	52,94%
6. Students should study English on DynEd at home, too.	8	47,06%
7. Do not use the 'Translation' button unless quite necessary.	7	41,18%
8. Do not use the 'Text' button unless quite necessary.	7	41,18%
9. Topics should be studied in the order presented.	5	29,41%
10. The function of all the buttons should be known well.	4	23,53%

Tablo 1'in devamı		
11. Do not study the same topic on the same day.	4	23,53%
12. Compare what you speak with that on DynEd	3	17,65%
13. One should correlate the new things with the previous ones.	1	5,88%
14. One should use it as suggested by user teachers and get feedback from them	1	5,88%
15. Students should be voluntary.	1	5,88%

As can be seen in Table 1, the teachers have expressed 15 different suggestions four of which have the highest percentage of frequency. Below are the detailed explanations for the recommendations of the teachers:

- "DynEd should be supported with classroom activities." (58,82%): Teacher 2 says that "after students study on DynEd, a teacher should practice it in the classroom." As suggested above, use of DynEd as any other technological tool is not sufficient for efficient learning. As Knowles (2008) suggested, a blended learning in which DynEd provides input and practice activities and the classroom activities ensure the personalization of what is learned through DynEd [22].

- "The 'Repeat', 'Microphone' and 'Headphone' buttons should be used regularly" (58,82%), "The function of all the buttons should be known well." (23,53%) and "Compare what you speak with that on DynEd" (17,65%) : "Teacher 15 mentions that "if students use the buttons enough, their pronunciation gets better". This suggestion is parallel to what the literature says. To clarify better, DynEd Co. informs, in order to gain automaticity, one should repeat what is uttered on DynEd as many as the user needs, then record it and finally compare it with the original statement on DynEd. If that is now similar enough, the procedure should be repeated again.

- "One should study English on DynEd regularly. (Don't study for long hours at one time)" (52,94%) "Students should study English on DynEd at home, too." (47,06%), "Do not study the same topic on the same day." (23,53%): Teacher 2 states "one should study regularly, not for long hours once a week" and Teacher 6 says "students should study DynEd at home". Here again, there is compliance with what is suggested theoretically. Learners usually try to finish the lessons on DynEd quickly, which is a mistake. If this happens, the learner is unlikely to gain confidence to improve listening and speaking skills. If DynEd is studied on different days and review it often, the progress will be far faster. Otherwise, it is quite possible to forget what is studied quickly in a short time. One should practice hard to become perfect [25]. The more one practices, the less time it will take to learn English. To illustrate, studying for 45 minutes three times a week is more effective than studying for three hours once a week. For that reason, studying regularly is required if one wants to reduce the study time to learn English. Then, studying the same unit several times a day does not ensure its learning but may lead to memorization and then to forget what is studied.

- "Do not use the 'Translation' and 'Text' buttons unless quite necessary." 41,18%: Teacher 5 states that "students should use text and translation buttons as little as possible". The simple and clear iconic presentations on DynEd help users estimate the

meaning of the words s/he encounters while studying. The use of the text buttons intervenes in the learning process and draws the attention of the learner and may block learning. The text and translation supports are provided in case one doesn't learn the topic or the sentence at all and they should be used sparingly [25].

- "One should correlate the new things with the previous ones." (5,88%), "One should use it as suggested by user teachers and get feedback from them" (5,88%) and "Students should be voluntary." (5,88%): Teacher 14 says that "the suggestions of the teachers using DynEd should be taken into consideration" and Teacher 1 says that "if students are not voluntary, it serves little as any other materials." According to the constructivist approach, the student can re-organize his/her cognitive structure by correlating the new information and experiences with the previous ones The students should make a relationship between the new ideas and the old understandings. Or else, knowledge not correlated with the previous experiences will be memorized and soon forgotten. Briefly, the student should place new things on the present mental structure in an active way for meaningful learning [28].

Then, the ideas and the experiences of the teachers who have been using DynEd are crucial for better results. If one does not get help and feedback from those teachers, they will have try and make errors till learning the best way of studying and this is one of the targets of the present study to guide users within the light of what literature says and the teachers suggest.

Finally, if students are self motivated and voluntary to study, this will facilitate learning. However, it is not only the responsibility of the students but also the teachers to ensure that the students feel motivated. If a teacher helps his/her students that they can learn by guiding them about how to study efficiently, they are more likely to have desire to learn, that is success will make them more motivated and vice versa.

It is clearly seen that the teachers using DynEd in the sample group of teachers have given similar suggestions to those by the producer company. It shows that the teachers have quite familiarized with the program and internalized how to study English through DynEd.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS (SONUÇ VE ÖNERİLER)

As a conclusion, it is understood that CALL can help teachers enrich their way of teaching English. DynEd, an interactive language learning program and a program developed as brain-based learning approach is taken into consideration, provides good contexts for learning a language. However, one should take care of several issues while studying it. For example, the classroom activities should support DynEd for personalization of the knowledge, the functions of the buttons should be well known and the repeat, microphone and headphone buttons should be used regularly while one should avoid using text and translation buttons. Then, it is needed to study DynEd steadily and the old and new knowledge should be correlated. As a result, it is recommended that:

- DynEd should be used as suggested by the user teachers and the producers as explained briefly herein above,
- All English teachers using DynEd be informed about how to use DynEd in an effective way,

- More experimental researches be carried out pertaining to how effective DynEd is in language learning both in private and state schools.

NOTICE (NOT)

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