

**A Clarificative Evaluation of an Internet-Based MA program in English Language  
Teaching (E-ELT) Project at Yeditepe University**

**Evrım Eveyik-Ayđın,**

Department of English Language Teaching, Yeditepe University

**Abstract**

Developments in the information and communication technologies (ICT) brought revolutionary changes in some forms of education during the last decades. In order to meet increasing education needs, web-based learning has emerged as an alternative to conventional way of education that confines teaching and learning into schools, and become a preferred model of training in many disciplines including teacher education (Miguel et al., 2006; Sakar, 2009). A web-based project that offers a distance MA program to the experienced teachers of English language was initiated by the Institute of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University. The present study explores the way this program is delivered, and aims to define its logic model in order to see the relationship between the program inputs, outputs, and the intended outcomes. Data was obtained through a needs assessment questionnaire, interviews with eight participating teachers of English, and three e-ELT staff, and the detailed analysis of written documents about the project. The findings were used to propose a program logic and to identify the elements of the program that needs to be improved to better meet the stakeholders' needs.

**Keywords** Clarificative evaluation, logic model, e-ELT, internet-based education, distance teacher education, e-learning

## **1. Concepts of e-learning and blended-learning**

The initial applications of web-based learning programs were the online versions of classroom-based courses (Singh, 2003). Although such programs provided a flexible and interactive environment for a performance oriented learning at individual pace, the learners were deprived of the benefits of in-class learning such as social contact, personal supervision for confidence and motivation (Tick, 2006), various modes of instructional delivery (Singh, 2003) and immediate feedback (Lim, 2002). Having realized that e-learning with a single delivery mode cannot provide the context for successful learning, the educators combined face-to-face instruction with distance education delivery systems trying to maximize the benefits of in-class and online methods (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Thus, using multiple training approaches and communication technologies available to learners and instructors, they created a *blended learning* context richer than either type of learning environment (Harding et al., 2005; Tick, 2006).

Although there is a general tendency to describe blended learning as educational situation in which e-learning is combined with traditional face-to-face instruction, there are a variety of views on the elements that should be included in this type of learning design. Valiathan (2002) differentiates between skill, attitude, and competency-based approaches to blended learning design. Skill-driven model combines self-paced learning with instructor support to improve specific skills while attitude-driven learning combines various events and delivery media to encourage the development of some behaviors. For attitude development, face-to-face meetings, online discussion forums, chat modules or technology-based collaborative activities are integrated in the learning process. Competency-driven model,

however, emphasizes the improvement of competencies that can be learnt through online mentoring and performance support tools with knowledge management resources.

Carmen (2002) suggests that blended-learning should integrate self-paced learning, live events, collaboration, assessment, and performance support materials; and should use technologies like synchronous communication tools, electronic and printed materials, multimedia and reusable learning materials like audio and video clips, texts, and graphics. After a detailed review of blended designs Mortera-Gutierrez (2006, p.316) lists the most used elements of blending learning as (a) traditional classroom or lab settings (face-to-face instruction), (b) reading assignments (print-based workbooks), (c) CD-ROM (self-paced content), (d) performance support tools (e.g., collaboration software, discussions, online testing, etc.), (e) teletraining (e.g., videoconferencing, audioconferencing), (f) stand-alone web-based training (virtual classroom), (g) asynchronous web-based training (e.g., through e-mail, discussion boards, etc.), and (h) synchronous web-based training (e.g. chat rooms, computer conferencing).

Having criticized the definitions which lead one to believe that any supplementary use of technology within conventional education is blending, Yoon and Lim (2007) propose a conceptual framework which offers purposeful mix of face-to-face instructions and technologies to support instructional (e.g. live class, workshop, tutoring, etc.) and noninstructional (e.g. feedback, resources, reward systems, etc.) performance solutions. In this strategic blending framework, the ingredients of the design are derived from institutional expectations and learner needs that are addressed by various delivery formats adaptable to specific situations. In that case, for instance, some blended designs may need 'web for the first

and final stages with face-to-face sessions in between' format while some others need more onsite workshops, group work activities or classroom set-ups.

In this framework, Yoon and Lim acknowledge the important role of administrative and organizational resources and constraints for the effectiveness of instructional decisions. In other words, as also suggested by Khan (cited in Singh, 2003), issues regarding the availability of needs analysis and learning objectives, pedagogic content to be delivered, technological infrastructure, qualified personnel, and appropriate management decisions need to be handled for the construction of an effective design. Besides, budget issues for producing materials, arranging equipments, and providing instructors should also be considered as e-learning requires substantial funds and sources for “purchasing, developing, implementing, maintaining and updating technologies” (Yoon & Lim, 2007, p.485).

Within the light of these accounts, web-based or distance education programs can be designed in a variety of forms; and those designed with an appropriate balance of face-to-face interactions and technology can provide a number of advantages when implemented with appropriate methods and tools. On the one hand, learners benefit from the advantages of face-to-face learning in a more interactive environment. On the other hand, they get an active control over the pace of learning, instructional flow, and selection of resources (Chung and Davis, 1995) and enjoy a sense of accomplishment from working independently in their own time frame. In the meantime, they get skilled at technology and internet resources (Altunay & Mutlu, 2008).

## **2. Distance English Language Teacher Education in Turkey**

Web-based distance education has found support in many countries in a variety of disciplines including teacher education. As reported by UNESCO (2001, 2002, cited in Altunay & Mutlu, 2008) the number of students who are out of school and who cannot receive quality education increases all over the world; and hence, demand for well-trained and qualified teachers increases as well. Not only does this situation add to the load of available teacher education programs to graduate more teachers, but also it requires in-service teachers to update their skills and knowledge with further professional development to keep up with the demands for quality education. At this point, distance education is regarded a solution to the problem of quality and quantity; and therefore, programs that offer distance teacher education and training has been encouraged. Altunay & Mutlu (2008) presents the partial list of institutions which offers such programs in the world.

Similarly, a global increase in the need for learning English has resulted in the need for English language teachers. In Turkey, the Higher Education Act of 1981 authorized Anadolu University to establish Open Education System to be the national distance education provider. With the introduction of eight-year compulsory education in 1998, foreign language courses became part of curriculum for the 4th and 5th graders in elementary school. This change caused a serious deficit in the number of English language teachers, and encouraged Anadolu University to offer a four-year bachelor degree (BA) blended learning ELT programme in 2000 (Latchem, 2006). In the programme, the enrolled students received 10 hours a week on-campus language teaching and e-learning in education during the first two years. In year 3 and 4, however, almost all courses were delivered online. Today, the Open Education Faculty ELT BA is the only programme providing distance education in ELT in Turkey (Sakar, 2009).

The first attempt to initiate an MA program in internet-based English Language Teaching (e-ELT) in Turkey, on the other hand, was made by the Institute of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University.

### **3. Construction of a program logic for the e-ELT project**

Within the framework of e-ELT program that was initiated as a pilot project at Yeditepe University during the academic year of 2007-2008, web-based courses were offered to experienced English language teachers who wanted to hold an MA degree. Before describing the project, it is of great importance to make an explicit description of its underlying rationale and logic model.

According to Owen (2007), the construction of a program logic is one of the approaches in clarificative evaluation that describes the program by showing the links between its assumptions, objectives and activities. In other words, a logic model is a simplified picture of a program that displays the logical relations among the resources invested in the program, the activities undertaken, services provided to program participants, and the changes or benefits that result. As such, it establishes a framework for understanding the elements of the program and the causal relations between them. Besides, logic model also identifies the realistic goals of a program that are attainable as well as those that are unattainable, and thus forms the basis for the program development by building the shared understanding and expectations within the stakeholders of the program (Wholey et al. 2004).

In an attempt to understand the way this pilot e-ELT program is designed in order to achieve its objectives, the present study aims to 1) define its logic or underlying rationale by

displaying the relationship between the program input, output, and the intended outcomes, 2) identify the needs of the program stakeholders, i.e, students enrolled in the program, e-ELT instructors and the institution, and 3) identify the elements or the components of the program that needs to be modified to better meet the program needs. Finally, the study makes suggestions regarding the ideal way the program needs to be implemented based on their perceptions of the program.

## **II. Method**

### **2.1. Internet-Based English Language Education Project at Yeditepe University**

Internet-Based English Language Education program that has been evaluated in this paper is a project implemented by the English Language Teaching Department of the Institute of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University. This internet-based projet aimed to develop an interactive and student-centered distance education program in order to support the professional development of English language teachers with at least 2 years of teaching experience in Turkey. The project also aimed to offer distance education service to teachers from the schools that are connected to American and Canadian Universities which Yeditepe University has exchange protocols with; and teachers who are enrolled in an MA program at these universities.

The piloting of this project was initiated during the academic year of 2007-2008, and was terminated in 2008-2009. During that period the e-ELT program had been offered for three semestres. At the very beginning of the project, the principals of the Anatolian High Schools the graduates of which have a high rate of application to and acceptance by the ELT

department at Yeditepe University were contacted to be informed about the pilot program. Thus, 13 teachers from Ankara Atatürk Anadolu Lisesi, Bornova Anadolu Lisesi, and Bursa Anadolu Lisesi volunteered to participate in the program. The project was first introduced to these teachers in June 2007 at Doga Club of Yeditepe University.

The project team included four full-time professors one of whom is the head of department and of the project, and the rest are ELT staff who are the instructors of the internet-based ELT courses offered. The Institution of Educational Sciences also hired a graduate assistant to work on this project throughout her doctoral studies. Besides, the University Rectory assured the project team of any technical support to be provided by the teaching staff of the department of Computer Engineering.

## **2.2. The Medium of Content Delivery: Moodle**

As emphasized by Tick (2006), the key issue in the implementation of e-learning is the management and delivery of the learning content by an appropriate learner or course management system (LMS/CMS). These systems are web applications with a variety of tools that allow educators to create web sites for internet-based courses, and give them access control so the course can be viewed only by the enrolled students. In order to select the most appropriate management system, it is important to consider the delivery format of e-learning (i.e whether it will be blended or completely online with no face-to-face interactions).

For the current e-ELT project, the team decided to use *Moodle* which is a commonly used, open source software package built on a sound educational philosophy. Based on the principles of social constructionist pedagogy suggesting that people learn best when they are



engaged in a social process of constructing knowledge, Moodle provides the users with many tools for discussion and sharing ideas to construct knowledge (Cole & Foster, 2005). It allows student registration, uploading and sharing materials, forums and chats, reviewing assignments and posts, tracking student activity reports, assessment, and recording grades. Besides, it is available cost-free on its website (<http://www.moodle.org>), and accessed easily through a web-browser and installed by any educator who is willing to create online learning communities.

The e-ELT staff who were in charge of the development and implementation of the internet-based program adapted four class-based courses that are already offered in the preparatory phase of face-to-face MA program to Moodle environment. These were the core courses on second language acquisition, language teaching methods, the use of technology, and testing in ELT. After the program web site was created, e-ELT staff was given a training on how Moodle works by an instructor who has previous experience in the use of Moodle to teach foreign languages. Later, the e-ELT staff visited participating schools to introduce Moodle to the volunteer participants of the program. In these visits, they were provided with a visual demonstration on Moodle, and shown how to register in the program through their moodle accounts.

### **2.3. Participants**

Although there had been 12 volunteer participants of the e-ELT project, data used in the identification of student needs came from the eight of them in the summer of 2009. Due to the timing of data collection, four of them could not be reached throughout the summer despite their initial consent to participate in the study. All of the eight participants, 6 females and 2

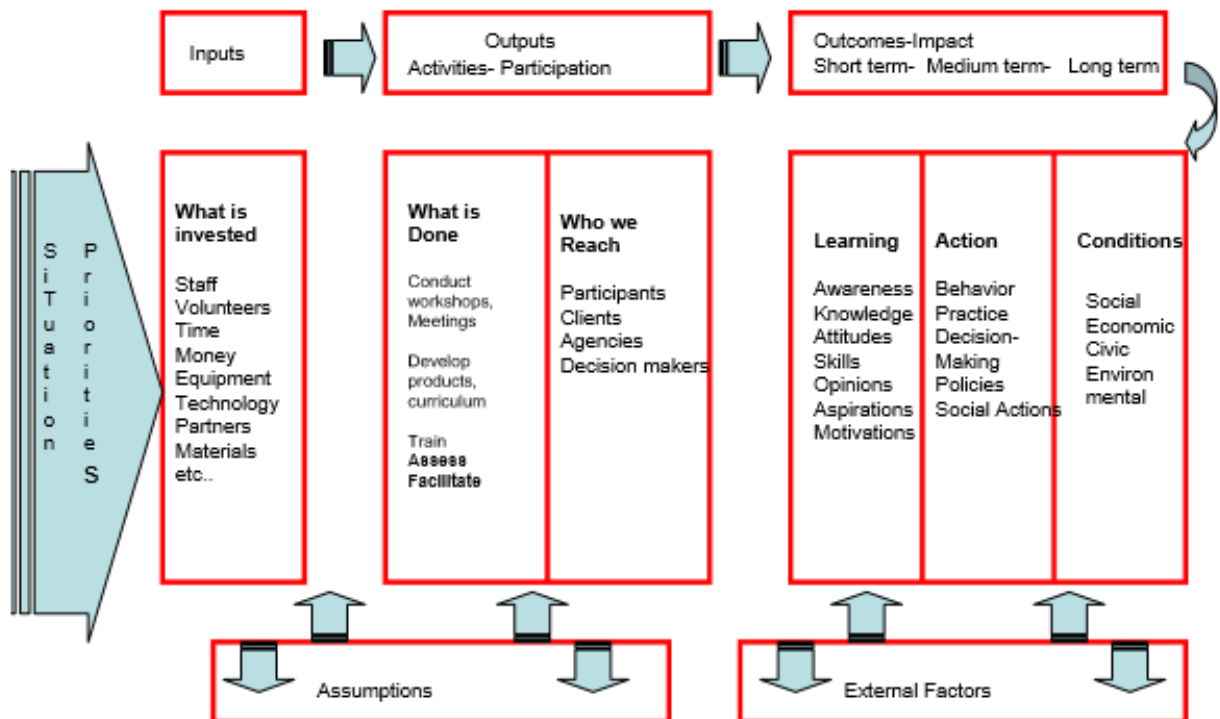
males, were graduates of a four-year language teaching program, and working at the capacity of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in three Anatolian High schools with a teaching load of 20-25 hours a week. These teachers with an age range of 34-to-49 had 11-to-28 years of teaching experience in EFL. The background questionnaire given to them has revealed that all of the participants had prior experience in using computers, especially Microsoft word and internet to prepare course materials and to check e-mails; however, they had no previous experience in web-based distance learning. Besides, they all had access to internet at their home and schools.

In order to clarify the program theory, three members of the project team who were the teaching staff of the department of English Language Teaching were interviewed. As their views reflected their perceptions of the program logic, it was vitally important to take their perspective to understand the perceived needs and objectives of the pilot e-ELT project. Except for one of these professors who had taken online courses during her graduate studies, the rest had no previous experience in web based education and the use of Moodle.

#### **2.4. Data Collection and Analysis**

In the identification of program logic, any written document about the program and the perceptions of those involved in the program form the most significant sources of information (Owen, 2007). Therefore, any e-ELT documents including program proposals presented to Yeditepe University Rectory and the Higher Education Council were investigated with a normative approach to be able to clarify the relation between the program input, output and impact. Besides, Moodle print outs of the student activity reports in the web-based courses

were studied with the course instructors in order to understand how internet-based courses were implemented. These documents were analyzed in consideration with a logic model proposed in UW-Extension web-site (<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/Imcourse/#>) with the following elements:



To be able to identify learners' views on and expectations from the pilot distance MA program, a questionnaire was developed based on participating EFL teachers' e-mail responses to five preliminary questions on their perceived needs (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was also inspired by the guide provided by Marsh (2001) in order to determine the most effective blended learning program. Hence, the instrument had four brief sections to collect data on personal background, technical background and available resources, learners'

expectations, and concerns with the program including their suggestions. The questionnaire included 5-point likert type, yes/no, multiple-choice, and open ended type of questions, and was pilot tested for the verbalization of its items before the actual data collection (see Appendix B).

Data were also collected through semi-structured interviews conducted on the phone with these participants. As the subjects were residing in different cities, face-to-face or focus group interviews were not feasible to make in this study. Therefore, each participant was contacted to set an appropriate date for a telephone interview that lasted about 30-40 minutes. During the interviews, notes were taken for the content analysis.

In order to take all stakeholders' point of view in the development of program theory, the e-ELT staff was also interviewed and made part of the process of developing logic model. The interviews that were all conducted in Turkish were audio-recorded to be transcribed later.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1. The results of the needs assessment questionnaire and the interviews with participants**

Some of the data obtained through the questionnaire (Part C, Q14, 15 & 16) were analyzed by SPSS 15.0 to see the frequency of answers and the mean values of these items. Although the sample size of this evaluation study is too small to make any assumptions, some descriptive statistics may be used to have a rough idea about the expectations of participating teachers from the distance education program. The results obtained on this section of the

questionnaire revealed that all of the participating teachers (100%) joined the program in order to keep up with the recent developments in the field of ELT as they also verbalized during the interviews. They explained that as it has been at least 10 years since they graduated from college, and they have a strong need to update their knowledge to be able to better respond to their students' needs. This reason was followed by a need to get a master's degree for career advancement, for professional development, collaboration with colleagues, and the convenience of the program in terms of time and place with a response frequency of 87.5 % (see Appendix C). Only one of the teachers stated that he joined the program, because he had an intention of pursuing his doctoral studies in the future. As they have a quite a load of teaching at their schools, distance education is his only choice to achieve his future goals. Considering their needs, teachers expect the program to offer courses on language testing and materials development & adaptation (100%), teaching methods, research methods, teaching skills and use of technology (87.5 %). 75 % of the teachers, on the other hand, preferred courses on classroom and ELT management, second language learning, sociolinguistics, and cross-cultural communication. According to the 87.5 % (7) of teachers, distance MA program should be conducted with a balance of 75 % online and 25 % on-campus activities. Only one of the participants (12.5%) prefers the program to be 100% online. Similarly, 87.5 % of them want the integration of on campus activities once a semester while only one participant wants on-campus meetings twice a semester. As for the activities, the following table shows the type of activities they prefer to get involved in the internet-based

MA program. According to the answers obtained through the questionnaire, team projects and communication through e-mails are the most preferred activities by the participants. They are followed by face-to-face feedback sessions, on-campus seminars and course reviews.

Interestingly, half of the teachers went against the idea of integrating video conferencing into the courses. During the interviews, the reason for that was revealed to be their concerns with the use of technology required for videoconferencing. Although they were excited about the program and had positive attitudes in general, some of the teachers still felt uncomfortable as they saw themselves as the incompetent users of technology.

Table1: Activities the learners want to get involved in the e-ELT.

	<b>Always % (N)</b>	<b>Often % (N)</b>	<b>Sometimes % (N)</b>	<b>Rarely % (N)</b>	<b>Never % (N)</b>
Team projects	50 (4)	37.5 (3)	12.5 (1)	-	-
Individual projects	25 (2)	25 (2)	25 (2)	-	25 (2)
Face-to-face feedback sessions	37.5 (3)	25 (2)	25 (2)	-	12.5 (1)
e-mail	50 (4)	37.5 (3)	-	-	12.5 (1)
Videoconferencing	12.5 (1)	12.5 (1)	25 (2)	-	50 (4)
Discussions	25 (2)	25(2)	37.5 (3)	-	12.5 (1)
On-campus seminars	50 (4)	12.5 (1)	25(2)	12.5 (1)	-
On-campus workshops	25 (2)	12.5 (1)	25(2)	12.5 (1)	25 (2)
On-campus exams	37.5 (3)	12.5 (1)	25(2)	-	25 (2)
On-campus reviews	50 (4)	12.5 (1)	25 (2)	-	12.5 (1)

According to the participants, in the online phase of the program instructors should

have activities that encourage more collaboration, exchange of information and experiences, as well as of lesson plans and practical tips that they can use in their daily teachings.

Assignments, reading materials, synchronous question-answer sessions, discussions and forums should also be part of online teaching. During the interviews, only one of the teachers insisted that videoconferencing should be an indispensable part of online meetings. He said:

Now that Moodle allows videoconferencing, it is a great opportunity for us to learn it now, so we can use it with our students as well. The school I work in has great facilities, so I can easily apply what I have been learning in this program.

The rest of the teachers, however, remained reluctant to the idea of video conferencing as they believe that it is too difficult to schedule a certain time appropriate for everyone. As for the face-to-face phase of the program, they believe that on-campus meetings should not be loaded with activities, but involve course reviews, and seminars on the issues that need to be clarified.

Both the questionnaire and the interviews with participants also revealed that the biggest difficulty they had during the piloting of the project was meeting the assignment datelines due to their teaching loads, busy exam weeks, and unavailable Moodle sites, and reaching the library sources due to the limited off-campus access to the subscribed databases. Although they feel under pressure when they face such difficulties, they seemed to be content with their instructors' flexibility especially in delays caused by technical problems and their busy schedule.

### **3.2. The results of the interview with the e-ELT instructors**

The instructors of the program point to the necessity of including more skills and task

based activities in the program to promote a better interactive and collaborative e-learning environment. Having reached a consensus on the suitability of the delivery format of e-ELT to the objectives of the program, they emphasized the importance of having face-to-face interactions both using more of Moodle modules in online sessions, and including more student presentations to on-campus meetings. Therefore, they believe, they need to gain more experience in the use of Moodle, and do more thinking in the adaptation of their curriculum to the internet environment.

The e-ELT staff also indicated that they needed to observe the teaching practices of participating teachers at their schools as part of their evaluation of the project. During these visits, they observed that teachers especially benefited from what they learned at the internet based skills course. They aim to keep observing them in the following semesters as well to see if the program makes any difference in their practices.

### **3.3. The Logic Model of the e-ELT Project**

Based on the information obtained through the content analysis of any written documents, the interviews with the ELT staff, and the needs of program stakeholders, the following logic model is proposed for the e-ELT project:

**Situation:** In parallel with an increasing global deficit in the number of well-trained teachers of English, Turkey is in need of qualified English teachers who can keep up with the



demands of rapid changes in the field of education. The internet-based e-ELT project aims to meet this need by supporting the professional development of experienced English language teachers with an interactive distance education program based on internet technologies so they can raise competent speakers of that language.

In Turkey, the fact that students in Anatolian High schools are no longer required to attend one-year preparatory schools affects the improvement of students' language skills. The graduates of these schools who cannot achieve high levels of proficiency in English tend to spend years in the prep schools of universities to improve their basic communicative skills in English. One way to overcome this problem is to train the teachers of these students and update their knowledge of teaching methodologies and skills through the MA programs. The face-to-face pilot MA program offered by the Institution of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University has been offering this sort of education to any English language teacher who wants to have an MA degree. However, as regular attendance is required, only the teachers who live in Istanbul and its vicinity can benefit from the program. Therefore, the same quality of education is intended to be offered to the teachers of Anatolian high schools in long distances with a blended web-based MA program. Thus, the professional development of those who otherwise do not have the opportunity to attend on-campus programs due to a variety of reasons is supported to a great extent.

**Priorities:** As mentioned earlier, teachers of the Anatolian High schools that applied to the university with a demand for in-service training before was given the priority in this pilot

project due to the reasons stated above. The program aims to provide these teachers with an MA certificate in the first place. In the upcoming years, however, the program will be extended to provide more teachers with quality education.

**Inputs:**

*Staff:* The project team includes four full-time ELT staff, one of whom is a professor of ELT who is also the head of department and of the project, and the rest are assistant professors of ELT at Yeditepe University. There is also a graduate assistant hired by the Institution of Educational Sciences to work as the webmaster of the project website throughout her doctoral studies. During the implementation of online courses, six more teaching staff from Marmara University and Boğaziçi University will join the program as part-time lecturers when needed. Besides, the University Rectory assures the project team of any technical support to be provided by the teaching staff of the department of Computer Engineering.

The responsibilities and the workload percentages of the teaching staff who are in charge of this project are specified as follows:

The head of project is responsible for:

- drawing the institutional frames of the e-ELT program
- redesigning the courses to be offered online,
- designing the related internet-based research projects,
- assigning project-related responsibilities to the members of project team,

- providing institutional support
- evaluating the project-related reports
- coordinating the process of composing the final report (40 %).

Project team member 1 is responsible for:

- coordinating technological issues,
- preparing group reports,
- supporting the head of project in administrative and technical issues,
- adapting the Applied Linguistics course to Moodle environment. (15 %)

Project team member 2 is responsible for:

- coordinating the instructors who are working on the adaptation of courses to

Moodle environment

- writing up group reports,
- adapting the Testing and Teaching Methods course to Moodle environment. (20 %)

Project team member 3 is responsible for:

- coordinating the pedagogical content knowledge

- adapting the Skills course to Moodle environment. (15 %)

Graduate Assistant hired for the project is responsible for:

- creating, maintaining and updating the program webpage
- opening the student accounts
- dealing with students' technical problems (10%)

**Time:** The e-ELT MA program will be offered during the fall and spring semesters of the academic year. As the program is designed in a blended format, the participating teachers will be invited to the campus once in each semestre at the end of the school year for face-to-face interactions. Asynchronous online activites that do not require participants and instructors to be in front of the computer at the same time can be carried out independently by each participant, while timing of synchronous activities that require the presence of all at the same time will be scheduled consensually during the semester.

The preparation for and the implementation of the web-based courses takes instructors 5 to-8 hours a week. The development and conduct of the pilot project, however, took almost two years (from June 2007 to April 2009). The program has a detailed timetable that describes its monthly schedule.

**Budget/Equipment:** For the implementation of the project, the following equipments were needed to be purchased:

1. Two HP Compaq laptops (1000 \$ each) and color printers (150 \$ each), 2 webcams with

microphones (20 \$ each), 10 headphones with microphones (10 \$ each), LCD projector (1500 YTL), and white screen to be used by the project team during their project-related visits to the participating high schools.

2. One digital sound recording machine (200 YTL) to be used in face-to-face interviews in project related researches.

3. Digital video cameras (520 YTL) for observing the participating teachers in their classroom environment, and one DVD player (130 YTL).

4. Stationary Materials: A4 size papers to be used in the project for the writing of reports; discs and toner.

5. A certain amount of budget to cover the travel

***Technology and Materials:*** For the management and delivery of the learning content, the project team decided to use Moodle for the reasons provided elsewhere in this report (see 2.2). The courses that are already offered in the face-to-face MA program will be redesigned for Moodle.

The main books that will be used in each course will be sent to teachers enrolled in the program. Handouts and other supplementary materials will be scanned and posted electronically in Moodle environment so the participants can download or print them out. For the production of the course materials, and the face-to-face activities of the program, a multimedia lab with a capacity of 30 computers that is arranged for this project by the Institute of Educational Sciences will be used.

**Resources:** The enrolled participants of the program will be able to benefit from the university library and its electronic facilities. Currently, Yeditepe University library has the subscription to many periodicals including Language and Communication, Learning and Instruction, Learning and Motivation, Linguistics and Education, Studies in Educational Evaluation, The Journal of Higher Education, T.H.E Journal and System; and Electronic Databases including Web of Science, EbscoHost, Taylor and Francis Online. The participants of the e-ELT will have access to these resources through their student ID numbers.

**Outputs:**

**Activities:** The e-ELT program is composed of internet-based activities and face-to-face interactions. Internet-based activities involve the use of Moodle modules that allow discussions, forums, peer reviews and feedback, online quizzes, and uploading of assignments. Any one of these activities is integrated into the weekly schedule of the program. Videoconferencing that could not be achieved during the piloting of the program will be integrated into the program in the next semesters. The face-to-face interactions, on the other hand, are carried out once a semester and generally during the last week of the program. The participating teachers who are invited into the campus for such interactions are provided with accommodation in the guesthouse of the university. During that week, seminars, workshops, course reviews, student presentations, and in-class examinations are implemented from 9 am to 5 pm.

***Training:*** At the very beginning of the project, students were trained on the use of Moodle. The participants can also reach the instructors and the webmaster whenever they need technical help.

***Assessment:*** Students are assessed through the scores they obtained on online and on campus quizzes and exams. Besides, they need to post assignments on Moodle and participate in forums and discussions. The frequency and the quality of responses and feedback each student gives to their peers will also be used for assessing student participation. Besides, the participants will be asked to do a couple of micro teachings throughout the semester and observed by their course instructors.

***Participation:*** The participants of the program are experienced English language teachers working in Anatolian High schools in three different cities in Turkey. The program is developed and implemented by the ELT staff at Yeditepe University. The decisions about the program are made by the Institution of Educational Sciences with the consent of university rectory based on the needs of participating teachers, and the objectives of the program.

***External Factors:*** Any decision taken by the University Rectory and the Higher Education Council might affect the implementation and the future of the program. Changes in the attitudes of high school principals towards the program may also affect their support to their participating teachers. Similarly, changes in the stakeholders' needs might require some modifications in the program. These are some of the external factors that need to be considered in this program.

**Outcomes:**

Having considered the input and the output of the program outlined above, in the short run e-ELT project will have:

- provided the experienced teachers of English working in three Anatolian High schools with an opportunity to earn a Master's degree in the field of ELT.
- provided these teachers with a flexible, interactive, and student-centered program that encourages self-paced learning.
- provided these teachers with a sense of accomplishment from working independently.
- increased their awareness of the recent developments in the field of ELT.
- improved their teaching skills by updating their knowledge in second language learning and teaching.
- provided these teachers with a platform to share their teaching experiences with their colleagues in a collaborative environment.
- increased their familiarity with internet technologies.
- increased their awareness of the internet sources (e.g. electronic journals, databases, etc.) that they can refer to for their professional development.
- improved their attitude towards distance education.

The medium term goals of the program include the following:

- teachers' ability to integrate internet technologies into their curriculum will have been improved.



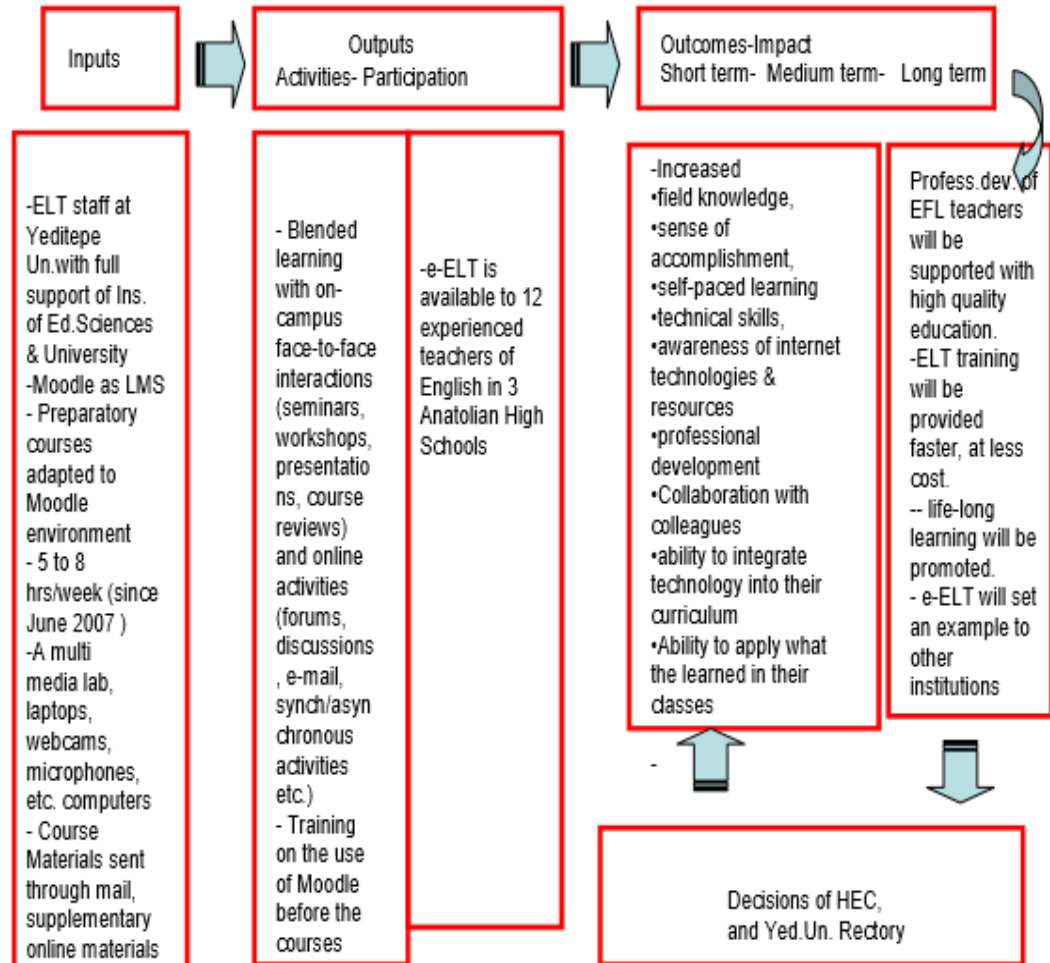
- teachers will be able to apply what they learned in the program to their daily teaching.

The long term goals and the contributions of this project to national education and economy, on the other hand, are expected to be as follows:

- Internet-based MA program offered within this project will support the professional development of EFL teachers with a high-quality education.
- Education will be provided faster in a more interactive way, at less cost; and the continuity of the EFL education will be ensured regardless of time and place.
- Within the framework of “life-long learning” concept that is encouraged by the distance MA program, teachers will be motivated more to go on with their graduate studies.
- In case e-ELT program gets an approval from the National Committee of Higher Education Council, distance education in EFL will be offered to more teachers all over the country, and Yeditepe University will set an example to other institutions with its contributions to our education.

In the long run, the project also aims to offer distance education service to teachers from the schools that are connected to American and Canadian Universities which Yeditepe University has exchange protocols with; and teachers who are enrolled in an MA program at these universities. Besides, the program has some contacts with some outstanding professors of ELT from these universities who accepted to contribute to the program in the future.

The program logic identified in this paper is summarized briefly in the following table:



### Discussion and Conclusion:

The e-ELT project implemented by the Institution of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University is the first attempt to initiate an internet-based distance MA program that offers blended education to the teachers of English. With this pilot project, the program makes an

alternative to conventional education for experienced ELT teachers who seek support for their professional development. The project aims to achieve the same quality of education in distance MA as in the conventional face-to-face MA program for these teachers. Therefore, it was of great importance to establish a common understanding of the program logic by clarifying its objectives based on the needs of its stakeholders.

The results of the needs analysis, interviews and a thorough examination of the project documents contributed to the efforts of showing the relation between program inputs, outputs and outcomes in this paper. The logic model identified above clearly showed that the project included the elements suggested in the literature of blended learning. It acknowledged the importance of self-paced learning, collaboration, and synchronous communication as suggested by Carmen (2002), and included many of the elements listed by Mortera-Gutierrez (2006) and Yoon and Lim (2007). In addition, the program was conducted by a well-qualified teaching staff who deployed quite an effort to prepare the pedagogic content to be delivered, build the technological infrastructure, and take the appropriate management decisions for the construction of an effective design.

Considering the findings of this clarificative evaluation, however, the e-ELT program

can be improved in future by having more activities that promote social contact, immediate feedback and peer interaction. Since the participants do not find it feasible to increase the number of on-campus meetings because of their teaching schedule and other responsibilities, the instructors are suggested to use the limited time for face-to-face teaching more effectively, and add more synchronous activities that also involve the use of videoconferencing to the online phase of the project. Although both participating teachers and the e-ELT staff are generally pleased with the way the courses are implemented, instructors can be trained more on the different modules of Moodle so they can benefit from its assets in a full extent. Besides, in order to minimize the technical problems encountered during the course of the program, more technical support should be provided to the participating teachers so they can have access to the program website without any problem.

Although this study achieves to offer a logic model for the pilot e-ELT project, the limitations of the study should also be mentioned. First of all, data could not be gathered from the population, but a sample of 8 participants due to the time of data collection. Besides, the study lacked the views of decision makers like the rector or the head of the Institution. Having their views, however, could have added a significant perspective to the study. Secondly, the

results regarding the way the courses are implemented are mainly based on the perceptions of the participants and the instructors, and therefore, it is not possible to make strong claims about whether or not the courses really achieved its objectives. Hence, this is suggested to be the aim of a larger scale evaluation study in the future.

### **References:**

Altunay, D. & Mutlu, M.E. (2008). Distance English language teacher training program in Turkey: e-learning opportunities for the right to education. *Distances et savoir. Hors series.*

Carmen, J. M. (2002). Blended learning design: Five key ingredients. Retrieved June 14, 2009 from [http://www.knoeldgenet.com/pdf/Blended%20Learning%20Design\\_1028.PDF](http://www.knoeldgenet.com/pdf/Blended%20Learning%20Design_1028.PDF)

Chung, J. & Davis, I.K. (1995). An instructional theory for learner control: Revisited.

*Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology*, pp. 72-86. Anaheim, CA: AECT

Cole, J. & Foster, H. (2007). *Using Moodle (2nd Edition)*. O'Reilly Community Press.

Harding, A., Kaczynski, D., & Wood, L. (2005). Evaluation of blended learning: Analysis of qualitative data. *UniServe Science Blended Learning Symposium Proceedings*, pp. 56-62.

Latchem, C., Ozkul, A.E., Aydin, C.H., & Mutlu, M.E. (2006). The Open Education System, Anadolu University, Turkey: e-transformation in a mega-university. *Open Learning*, 21 (3), 221-235.

Lim, D. H. (2002). Perceived differences between classroom and distance education: Seeking instructional strategies for learning application. *International Journal of Educational Technology*, 3 (1).

Marsh, J. (2001). How to design effective blended learning. Retrieved on June 15, 2009 from <http://www.brandon-hall.com>

Miguel, V.J.E., Guerreiro, S.M.M., & Nascimento, do R.P. C. (2006). Web tool to support online inquires: Adapting Moodle to meet some of tutors' and teachers' needs. *Current Developments in Technology-Assisted Education*, pp. 715-719.

Mortera-Gutierrez, F. (2006). Faculty best practices using blended learning in e-learning and face to-face instruction. *International Journal on Elearning*, 5(3), 313-337.

Osguthorpe, R.T. & Graham, C.R. (2003). Blended learning environments: Definitions and directions. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 4(3), 227-233.

Owen, J. M. (2007). *Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches*. New York: The Guilford

Press.

Sakar, N. (2009) Online course support in distance learning: Student evaluation of English Language teaching Bachelor of Arts Program. Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, Vol. 10 (2).

Singh, H. (2003). Building effective blended learning programs. Educational Technology 43 (6), 51-54.

Tick, A. (2006). The choice of eLearning or blended learning in higher education. Paper presented in 4th Serbian-Hungarian Joint Symposium on Intelligent Systems.

Valiathan, P. (2002). Blended learning models. Retrieved June 24, 2009, from <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2002/aug2002/valiathan>

Wholey, J. S., Hatry, H. P., & Newcomer, K. E. (2004). Handbook of practical program evaluation. Retrieved August 15, 2009 from <http://www.google.com/books>

Yoon, S.W. & Lim, D.H. (2007). Strategic blending: A conceptual framework to improve learning and performance. International Journal on Elearning, 6(3), 475-489.

## **Appendix A**

Sevgili Öğretmen Arkadaşlar,

İnternet destekli Master programımızın sizlerin ihtiyaç ve beklentilerinize daha iyi yanıt verebilmesi için aşağıdaki 5 soruyu cevaplamanızı rica ediyorum. Sizlerden gelen yanıtlarla ihtiyaç analizi anketi oluşturulacak ve tekrar görüşleriniz alındıktan sonra program ve içeriği değerlendirilecek ve yeniden düzenlenecektir. Katkılarınız için çok teşekkürler.

1. İnternet destekli MA programımızdan beklentileriniz nelerdir?

---

---

---

2. Programa katılırken alanınızla ilgili geliştirmeyi düşündüğünüz eksikleriniz/yönleriniz nelerdi?

---

---

---

3. Program ihtiyaçlarınıza cevap verebiliyor mu?



---

---

---

4. Programda karşılaştığınız zorluklar nelerdir?

---

---

---

5. İhtiyaçlarınızı daha iyi karşılayabilmek için programda yapılmasını istediğiniz değişiklikler, veya önerileriniz var mı?

---

---

---

**Appendix B:**

**A Needs Analysis Questionnaire Developed for English Language Teachers who  
are enrolled in Internet-based MA program at Yeditepe University**

**by Evrim Eveyik-Aydin**

This questionnaire is designed to identify the needs of English Language Teachers who participated in the Internet-based MA program initiated as a pilot project by the Institute of Educational Sciences, the program in English Language Education at Yeditepe University. Your responses will be used in the determination of the program content and its structure in order to respond to your learning needs better. We also assure you that your responses will be used only for the stated purpose and will remain confidential. If you have any questions, please contact me at the following mail address: [evrimaydin@yeditepe.edu.tr](mailto:evrimaydin@yeditepe.edu.tr)

Thank you for your contribution.

Evrin Eveyik-Aydin

**Part A: Personal Background Information**

1. Gender: Female ----- / Male-----
2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Location: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Years of experience in EFL teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

5. How many hours a week do you teach? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Level(s)/ grade(s) you taught:      Preschool \_\_\_\_\_

Primary \_\_\_\_\_

High School \_\_\_\_\_

University Prep \_\_\_\_\_

7. Levels you are planning to teach upon the completion of this program?

Preschool \_\_\_\_\_

Primary \_\_\_\_\_

High School \_\_\_\_\_

University Prep \_\_\_\_\_

8. Degrees previously earned?

BA \_\_\_\_\_

MA \_\_\_\_\_

PhD \_\_\_\_\_

Field? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you available to travel for on-campus meetings and project presentations?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

What time of the semester/ year? \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B. Technical Resources and Background**

10. Do you have any previous experience in using computers?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ For what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you have any previous experience in learning via computers?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ On what occasion? \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you have access to the following?

a. Computers Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (home \_\_\_\_/ office\_\_\_\_/ other \_\_\_\_ ) No \_\_\_\_\_

with full media

b. Internet Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (home \_\_\_\_/ office\_\_\_\_/ other \_\_\_\_ ) No \_\_\_\_\_

c. labs Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (home \_\_\_\_/ office\_\_\_\_/ other \_\_\_\_ ) No \_\_\_\_\_

e. Headsets Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (home \_\_\_\_/ office\_\_\_\_/ other \_\_\_\_ ) No \_\_\_\_\_

f. Microphones/ Speakers Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (home \_\_\_\_/ office\_\_\_\_/ other \_\_\_\_ )

No \_\_\_\_\_

13. How often do you use the following?

	Always (5)	Often (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)
Microsoft Word					
Power point					
Acrobat Reader					
E-mail					
Chat/ Instant Messaging					
Videoconferencing					
Newsgroups					
Forums					
Skype/ Netmeeting					
Internet Journals					
Electronic databases					
Moodle					
Blackboard					
WebCT					

Other:

---



---



---

**Part C. Expectations about the program**

14. What are your reasons to join the EELT program? Please mark the ones that apply.

- a. To get a master's degree for career advancement \_\_\_\_\_
- b. To keep up with the recent developments in the field \_\_\_\_\_
- c. For professional development \_\_\_\_\_
- d. The convenience of the program in terms of time and place \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Access to resources \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Collaboration with colleagues \_\_\_\_\_
- g. More hands-on opportunities with technology \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Financial reasons \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Preferred learning styles \_\_\_\_\_

Other:

---

---

---

15. Which of the following courses do you need to be included in the program?

- a. Foreign Language Teaching Methods \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Second Language Learning \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Second Language Acquisition \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Foreign Language Testing \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Research Methods \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Language Teaching Skills \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. Issues in INSET (In-service Training) & Professional Development \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. Sociolinguistics \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. Cross Cultural Communication \_\_\_\_\_
  - j. Psycholinguistics \_\_\_\_\_
  - k. Bilingualism \_\_\_\_\_
  - l. Use of Technology in Foreign Language Teaching \_\_\_\_\_
  - m. Syllabus Design \_\_\_\_\_
  - n. Materials Development & Adaptation \_\_\_\_\_
  - o. Teaching Young Learners \_\_\_\_\_
  - p. Mentoring \_\_\_\_\_
  - r. Program Development and Evaluation \_\_\_\_\_
  - s. ELT Management \_\_\_\_\_
  - t. Classroom Management \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
-

16. Which of the following instructional activities would you like to participate in the EELT program?

	Always (5)	Often (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)
a. Team projects					
c. Individual projects					
d. face-to-face feedback sessions					
e. E-mailing					
f. Video conferencing					
d. Discussion forums					
e. On-campus seminars					
f. On-campus workshops					
g. On-campus exams					
i. On-campus course review sessions					

Other:

---



---

---

17. How should the EELT program be conducted?

- a) 100% online
- b) 75% online, 25 % on-campus
- c) 50% online, 50 % on-campus
- d) 75% on-campus, 25% online
- e) 100% on-campus courses supported by technology
- f) Other

---

---

18. How often should on-campus activities be integrated into the program?

- a) once a month
- b) once a semester
- c) twice a semester

Your suggestion \_\_\_\_\_.

19. What activities should be included in the online component of the program?

---

---

20. What activities should be included in the on-campus component of the program?

---

---

21. Which type of program (completely online vs. blended) would suit your needs better in terms of:

a) improving pedagogical skills                      online \_\_\_\_    blended\* \_\_\_\_

either \_\_\_\_

b) accessing resources (library, teaching materials, etc.)

online \_\_\_\_    blended \_\_\_\_

either \_\_\_\_

c) having more collaboration with peers & teachers

online \_\_\_\_    blended \_\_\_\_

either \_\_\_\_

d) cost of attending the program

online \_\_\_\_    blended \_\_\_\_

either \_\_\_\_

e) encouraging self-paced learning

online \_\_\_\_    blended \_\_\_\_

either \_\_\_\_

---

\* Blended learning refers to a mix of on-campus/face-to-face interactions and online learning.

f) increasing your motivation to complete the program

online \_\_      blended \_\_

either \_\_\_\_\_

g) other

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

#### **D. Concerns with the program**

21. What kind of difficulties did you have while participating in the pilot program in terms of:

a. Using moodle in the program

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

b. Learning through technology in general

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

c. Meeting the datelines and other course requirements

Please explain:

---

---

d. Carrying out the instructional activities

Please explain:

---

---

e. Accessing resources

Please explain:

---

---

f. Reaching the teaching staff

Please explain:

---

---

g. Duration of the program

Please explain:

---

---

h. Getting technical support

Please explain:

---

---

i. Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

22. If on-campus activities were integrated into the program, what suggestions would you have in terms of

a. Type of instructional activities  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Implementation of the course content  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Timing/schedule of the activities  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Any other suggestions:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

Descriptive Statistics of learners' expectations from the e-ELT:

Items on the Needs Analysis Questionnaire	Frequency % (N)	Mean	Standard Dev.
Q 14. Reasons to join the e-ELT?			
a. to get an MA degree for career advancement	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
b. to keep up with recent developments	100 (8)	1.000	.0000
c. for professional development	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
d. convenience of program in terms of time/place	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
e. access to resources	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
f. collaboration with colleagues	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
g. hands-on opportunities with technology	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
h. financial reasons	12.5 (1)	1.8750	.3536
i. preferred learning styles	50 (4)	1.5000	.5345
Q 15. Which courses should be included in the e-ELT?			
a. Foreign Language Teaching Methods	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
b. Second Language Learning	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
c. Second Language Acquisition	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
d. Foreign Language Testing	100 (8)	1.0000	.00000
e. Research Methods	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
f. Language Teaching Skills	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536

g. Issues in INSET (In-service Training) & Professional Development	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
h. Sociolinguistics	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
i. Cross Cultural Communication	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
j. Psycholinguistics	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
k. Bilingualism	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
l. Use of Technology in Foreign Language Teaching	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
m. Syllabus Design	50 (4)	1.5000	.53452
n. Materials Development & Adaptation	100 (8)	1.0000	.00000
o. Teaching Young Learners	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
p. Mentoring	50 (4)	1.5000	.53452
r. Program Development and Evaluation	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
s. ELT Management	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
t. Classroom Management	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291