

Kara, S. (2018). Blended learning: A model to enhance engagement in reading class. *Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 18 (2), 953-970.

Geliş Tarihi: 12/09/2017

Kabul Tarihi: 10/05/2018

HARMANLANMIŞ ÖĞRENME: OKUMAYA ADANMIŞLIK DÜZEYİNİ ARTIRMAK İÇİN BİR MODEL

Selma KARA*

ÖZET

İngilizce Öğretmenliği akademik okuma sınıflarında öğrencilerden alanlarıyla ilgili yapılan çalışmaları okuyup anlamaları beklenir ancak derslerde çoğu öğrencinin bu çalışmaları okumak için çok fazla çaba sarf etmediği gözlemlenir. Çoğu öğrenci, ders materyalini okumak için çok az zaman ayırır ya da ders materyalini okumadan sınıfa gelir. Bu da İngiliz Dili Eğitiminde, alanda yapılan çalışmaları okumada sınıf içi ve dışı uygulamalarını iyileştirme ve geliştirme gerekliliğini ortaya koyar. Bu çalışmada, alan çalışmalarını okuma dersinde daha etkili okuma sağlayabilmek ve adanmışlık düzeyini artırmak için Edmodo ile desteklenen harmanlanmış öğrenme modeli uygulanmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı, harmanlanmış öğrenmenin adanmışlık düzeyini artırma ve okuma ve anlamayı geliştirmede etkisi olup olmadığını incelemektir. Deney ve kontrol grupları arasında yapılan karşılaştırmalar, harmanlanmış öğrenmenin işbirlikçi bir öğrenme ortamı yarattığını göstermiştir. Sonuçlar, Edmodo ile oluşturulan harmanlanmış öğrenme modeli ile öğrencilerin okuma metinlerini daha detaylı okuduğunu, okumak ve ödevleri tamamlamak için daha fazla zaman ayırdığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, harmanlanmış öğrenme grubundaki öğrencilerin okuduklarını daha iyi anladıkları bulunmuştur. Genel olarak çalışma, harmanlanmış öğrenme ile sağlanan işbirlikçi öğrenmenin, okuma ve anlamada etkililiğini ve harmanlanmış öğrenmenin etkililiğini vurgulamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Harmanlanmış öğrenme, Edmodo, okumaya adanmışlık, anlama, akademik okuma

BLENDED LEARNING: A MODEL TO ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT IN READING CLASS

ABSTRACT

In academic reading classes in English Language Teaching Department, students are expected to read articles critically in their field; however, many students do not seem to apply much effort in reading course materials. Most of the students devote an insufficient amount of time and energy in reading and attend class without having read texts. It seems that there is a need to improve reading practices in ELT Department. In order to solve the problem, a blended learning model supported by Edmodo was incorporated. The aim of the study was to examine whether blended learning can help enhance reading engagement and comprehension. The comparisons between treatment and control groups showed that blended learning allows for a collaborative learning environment. The results indicated that students become more engaged with the text, spend more time to read and complete assignments when blended learning model supported by Edmodo is used and in a blended learning environment, students get better comprehension scores in their academic reading course. The study supported evidence for the effectiveness of blended learning in an academic reading course and concluded that collaboration provided through blended environment increases reading engagement and comprehension.

Key Words: Blended learning, Edmodo, reading engagement, comprehension, academic reading

*Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Anadolu University, Education Faculty, English Language Teaching Department, syilmaz@anadolu.edu.tr

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading ability is an important second language skill in academic settings and second language learners need to read to learn and complete tasks (Anderson, 2013; Grabe, 2009; Rosenfeld, Leung, & Oltman, 2001). According to Ku (2009) the aim in academic reading settings is the learner's potential for learning through critical reflection; therefore, students must learn to maximize their skills in analyzing information, evaluating evidence and discussing reasons. According to Paul, Elder, and Bartell (1997) critical thinking is "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information which gathered from observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as a guide to belief and action".

Without active critical thinking, it is not possible to succeed in any area (Wagner, 1997). However, students are not born with critical thinking skills. According to Fisher and Scriven (1997), we must teach critical thinking skills because students' thinking skills are not sufficient to help them overcome the problems they cope with in education. In terms of learning through critical reflection, a learner should develop in critical thinking. Therefore, it is necessary for educators to focus on teaching critical thinking instead of transmitting information in order to equip students.

In academic contexts a key issue is how second language critical reading ability can best be developed and student engagement and comprehension can be improved. In academic reading classes in English Language Teaching Department, the aim is to familiarize students with the norms of academic texts in the field of foreign language teaching and learning and to improve their critical reading; therefore, students read articles in their field and critically analyse them; however, in their first year at the Faculty of Education, many students do not seem to apply much effort in reading course materials. Most of the students devote an insufficient amount of time and energy in reading and attend class without having read their texts. It seems that there is a need to improve reading practices.

The main responsibility of instructors is to support student success through effective teaching. Blended courses may allow instructors to enhance the design of the teaching and learning environments. Blended learning is an innovative teaching method that offers students with a flexible teaching environment. Since reading is the main way to improve for ELT students, to engage students more, this study aimed to investigate the effect of blended learning on reading engagement and comprehension in critical reading classes.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Engagement and Reading Comprehension

According to Trowler (2010) engagement is the interaction between the time, effort and other relevant resources; both students and their institutions intend to maximize the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students. Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) state that student engagement has behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions: Behavioural engagement makes use of the idea of participation and includes involvement in academic, social, or extracurricular activities. Emotional engagement focuses on the extent of positive or negative reactions to teachers,

classmates, academics, and school. Cognitive engagement is defined as the student's level of investment in learning.

Reading engagement, on the other hand, is defined as interacting with text (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Engaged readers are able to select the texts that they will read; as they read, they engage in higher-order thinking and they move from stage of retelling of the text or summarizing the text to the stage of critical reflection on the text (Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, Perencevich, Taboada, Davis, Scafiddi & Tonks, 2004). Reading engagement has three different dimensions: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. Behavioral reading engagement refers to observable behaviors that indicate students' involvement in reading (Guthrie, Wigfield & You, 2012). Emotional reading engagement is concerned with students' affective reactions toward reading materials (Finn and Zimmer 2012). Cognitive reading engagement deals with reading psychologically and mentally and it is related to the meaningful processing of a text (Guthrie et al. 2004). Research on reading and motivation has stated that there is a strong and positive correlation between reading engagement, student involvement for extended periods of time, and higher levels of achievement in reading comprehension (Connor, Jakobsons, Crowe, & Meadows, 2009; Klauda & Guthrie, 2015). Since there is a strong and positive correlation between reading engagement, keeping students involved for extended periods, and higher student achievement in reading comprehension, for reading instructors a concern in reading classes is how to help students for their reading engagement. The main purpose of a reading class is to achieve high levels of comprehension; then an important concern for the reading instructor is how to achieve high levels of comprehension.

In the present study, behavioral and emotional dimensions of reading engagement will be used which includes aspects of reading such as motivation and a balance of interests, attitudes, self-regulation. Central to the rationale for this investigation is the finding that motivation and engagement contribute to reading comprehension.

Teachers devote considerable amount of time and energy in order to support their students' motivation and engagement while reading (Dolezal, Welsh, Pressley, & Vincent, 2003). Motivation and engagement may influence the development of reading comprehension because motivated students usually want to understand text content fully and, therefore, they process information deeply. Motivated students gain in reading comprehension proficiency since they read frequently with these cognitive purposes (Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 1999). Carini, Kuh & Klein, (2006) concluded that there are links between student engagement and specific academic skills such as critical thinking and problem solving.

2.2. Blended Learning and Reading Engagement and Comprehension

Blended learning has become a key concept in language learning for some time. It is a combination of face-to-face learning and teaching mediated by technology (Chew, Turner & Jones, 2010). In a blended course, traditional in-class learning is supplemented with the use of appropriate learning technologies. The use of technologies with new teaching methodologies creates innovative learning environments and thus instructors are able to organize their teaching in a more efficient way. For example, classroom time can be spent to teach the content suitable for face-to-face meetings. Technological tools selected to suit the course content help for the practices and supplementary resources.

Blended learning can overcome problems found in the learning process such as time limit of conventional classes.

Dziuban, Hartman, and Moskal (2004) state that blended learning is a pedagogical approach that combines the effectiveness of socialization processes of the classroom with the active learning possibilities of the online environment which is enhanced technologically. Besides, Jou, Lin & Wu (2016) and Motteram (2006) found positive results of blended learning on learners' performance.

Educators used blended learning to maximize the advantages of traditional face-to-face learning and online learning (Wang, Yang & Wen, 2009). To create the best learning model for their students and to create the most efficient learning environment different educators blend their lessons (Wang et al., 2009). Literature has reported why people used blended learning. The reasons given were: to create interest in study (Adas & Bakır, 2013) to have interesting lesson (Percy, 2009), to increase communication (Palak & Walls, 2009), for social networking (Melor and Rashidah, 2011), to support collaboration (Anderson, 2007), to motivate students (Eydelman, 2013), and to create a student-centred learning environment (Vernadakis, Giannousi, Derri, Michalopoulos, Kioumourtzoglou, 2011).

2.3. Edmodo

Instructors often find it difficult to 'blend' online and face-to-face components (Ma'arop & Embi, 2016). As a way to blend, Edmodo is a platform similar to popular Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in which educators can safely share information, create surveys, follow up tasks and give notes. Edmodo, which is available at www.edmodo.com, has been designed and developed by Jeff O'Hara and Nick Borg (2008). This website is a free and private learning network and it looks similar to Facebook. Only teachers can create and manage accounts. The teacher gives a group code to the students and they register in the group and get access to join the group. Teachers can send text (SMS) alerts, messages attached with a file or a link, reply students' messages, send out quizzes and assignments, receive completed assignments, give feedback, assign grades for 'assignments', store and share content in the form of both files and links, conduct polls, maintain a class calendar, and contact with the whole class, small groups, or even individual students via Edmodo. Since it is similar to a popular SNSs, it may not cause students to face any difficulties. Moreover, teachers may like Edmodo because it provides simple functions for teachers to create and manage their online classroom community. In addition, Edmodo offers privacy to both teachers and their students. These features make Edmodo a possible tool to blend classes.

On the student perceptions of use of Edmodo previous research concluded that students like to use Edmodo because they like to get quizzes and give homework online, get feedback from teachers and class and they like it because they are able to send notes to their favourite friends and they think Edmodo is useful and easy to use (Kongchan 2013, Thongmak, 2013).

Based on the literature review, this study focused on the use of Edmodo in critical reading classes. The blended learning model supported by Edmodo was developed in response to the requirements of critical reading course which mainly aimed to improve students' academic reading skills. The model was also used to increase students' reading

engagement and promote positive attitude toward reading. Specifically, the aim of the study was to examine whether blended learning can help enhance reading engagement and comprehension. The study was designed to answer the following research questions.

Research Questions:

- 1- Does blended learning have an effect on reading engagement when compared to face to face learning at the university level?
- 2- Does blended learning have an effect on academic reading comprehension when compared to face-to-face learning at the university level?

Academic reading is important in ELT department because teacher candidates will read, evaluate and learn from texts written in their field. By using Edmodo as the technological tool, the blended learning model was incorporated into the academic reading course to increase students' reading engagement and promote a positive attitude toward reading. Specifically, the study examined whether blended learning can help enhance reading engagement and comprehension. The findings will explain the ways to make reading more effective in academic reading classes, give insight into how to engage students more in reading and how to improve reading practices in reading classes. Moreover, it will provide additional support for cooperative reading and blended learning.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

62 first-year students studying at a Turkish University English Language Teaching department participated in this study. They were enrolled in the critical reading class as part of the curriculum. All of the first year students were grouped by the department randomly at the beginning of the fall semester and the researcher was teaching two groups, so the researcher chose one of the groups as the control group and the other one as the experimental group randomly. Each group had taken a reading class in the first semester and reading classes in the first semester focused on critical reading too, but the topics were varied. The course required students to meet in class once a week for 3 hours. There were 14 weeks in a term.

3.2. Treatment and Procedures

There were two groups in the study; a treatment group and a control group but both treatment and control groups had a pedagogical intervention because the purpose of the reading class was to familiarize students with the norms of academic texts in the field of foreign language teaching and learning and to improve their critical reading. In reading class, students read academic texts and they find out the purpose, determine the research question(s), examine citations and their relevance, identify the instruments used to gather information, read and understand information presented in visuals like charts, graphics, tables etc., consider the conclusion drawn and implications for practice, assess the report on the basis of its conformity to the norms and question its generalizability to other situations. Different from the control group, the treatment group had blended learning via Edmodo.

At the beginning of the term, as a pre-test, all students read an academic article and answered questions on the organization and specific information. In the first two weeks of the term, both the treatment group and the control group were introduced the text type and they analyzed it. With an example text, they were familiarized with how information in an academic article is organized and how they can use this knowledge to find specific information. In the third week, the researcher introduced Edmodo to the treatment group, they got their Edmodo accounts and started to use it. The following weeks, the treatment group, read the text before coming to class, made an outline and uploaded this outline to Edmodo. The class gave feedback to each outline online through Edmodo, the feedback sessions were organized in a way that each outline would get at least five feedbacks from the classmates. When there is a point not clear, students discussed it online. Each week, they answered about 10 questions online before coming to class. These questions focused on the purpose and significance of the study, research questions, instruments used in the study, tables and charts and conclusion of the study. The answers to these detailed questions about the text were uploaded as an assignment to Edmodo. The researcher, checked whether the answers are correct or not and gave feedback to the answers online. The instructor also labeled tags like hardworking, good attendance, good participant, and student of the week to different students. The class met in the computer laboratory in the face-to-face session of the class, they checked their Edmodo page again if there was a new post or announcement. After that, as teacher-fronted discussion, the class focused on questions and answers and students justified their answers, the students defined the concepts and terms accurately and lastly, they focused on the implications of the study and they discussed how this study could be used in their situation. At the end of the class, the instructor assigned the new text and uploaded the assignment and questions to Edmodo for the next class.

The control group read the same texts and answered the same questions as the treatment group. However, they did not use Edmodo. The instructor assigned the text and asked students to read the text, make an outline and answer the questions and asked them to give their assignment to the instructor at the beginning of the class. The instructor collected their outline and answers and graded their assignment after the class. In the class, the control group worked in groups of five and gave feedback to the outlines and clarified points. After that, as teacher-fronted discussion, they answered the questions and defined the concepts and terms accurately, and focused on the implications of the study and they discussed how this study could be used in their situation. At the end of the class, the instructor assigned the new text and the questions.

Both the treatment and control groups read a text each week and completed related assignments during the term, totally 10 texts were analyzed by each group at the end of the term.

3.3. Instruments

Behavioral reading engagement refers to observable behaviors that indicate students' involvement in reading (Guthrie, Wigfield and You, 2012). Several indicators of behavioral reading engagement were analyzed in the present study; first, the percentage of assignments completed by each student in each group was calculated. Next, a three-item survey was used to assess reading behaviors and time spent on reading. The first question asked students to choose the statement that best described their reading behavior

among four options ranging from 1 (I mostly skimmed the text in order to get just the main ideas) to 4 (I read the entire text very thoroughly). The second item asked about the average time students spent reading, and the third item asked them to report the average time they spent completing each of the reading assignments.

According to Finn and Zimmer (2012), emotional reading engagement is concerned with students' affective reactions toward reading materials, The Achievement Emotions Questionnaire-Mathematics (AEQ-M) developed by Pekrun, Goetz, & Perry, (2005) was adapted to measure students' emotional engagement in the study. The AEQ-M assesses students' achievement emotions experienced with mathematics in three different situations: attending class (class-related), studying and doing homework (learning-related), and taking tests and exams (test-related). In the present study, the learning-related part of the AEQ-M was modified to assess students' emotional experiences with reading assignments. In the present study, totally nine items asked students to range their boredom, enjoyment and anger as they do their reading assignments on a five-point Likert scale. Students responded to each item ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Likert scale items were evaluated for the content validity by means of index of item-objective congruence by three instructors who work for the same institution with the researcher. The results showed that all items could be reserved as they possessed proper index (0.66-1.00). In order to determine internal consistency reliability, the researcher piloted the scale with 30 second year students and calculated to find out Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. The alpha coefficient value of 0.907 indicated that the reliability of the scale was high.

In addition, at the end of the term, the students were asked to write three or more paragraphs to provide a detailed description of the behaviors, emotions, and thinking processes that they experienced during reading course throughout the term.

For reading comprehension, the student answers in the assignments were analyzed and graded throughout the term by the researcher and an instructor who teaches critical reading for interrater reliability. When there is a mismatch, the researcher and the instructor discussed the answer and got an agreement on the student answer. All students were given an article and they had to answer questions on specific information and organization in the final exam and the results of this exam were evaluated by two instructors as the post-test.

4. RESULTS

For comprehension, pre-test post-test control group design was used. The pre-test was given before the classes begin to see whether the treatment and control groups were at the same level of familiarity with ELT articles. The students were given a text and asked to answer 10 questions on the organization, specific information and concepts in ELT. Table 1 shows the results of the pre-test.

Table 1.
Mean Scores for Pre-Test Comprehension

	Groups	N	Mean	Std .Deviation	Std. Error mean
Pretest	Control	31	3.75	1.83	.213
Comprehension Score	Treatment	31	3.29	1.68	.207

According to Table 1, there was a small numerical difference in the mean scores of Treatment group (TG) and Control group (CG). Independent samples t-test was run to see whether the difference was statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.
T-Test for Pre-Test Comprehension

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test Test for Equality of Mean			
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean di StErD
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.061	.71	-1.618	130	.080	-530 .305
Comprehension Score	Equal variances not assumed			-1.618	118	.080	-530 .305

The results of Independent samples t-test with ($\alpha = 0.05$) show that $p = 0.80$ and this value indicates that difference between the mean scores of TG and CG was not statistically significant. This result was important for the study because it revealed that both TG and CG were unfamiliar with reading articles in ELT.

For behavioral engagement, reading assignment completion rates for each student in both TG and CG were calculated. Students totally had 10 assignments to complete. In TG, six students (20 %) did not complete at least one reading assignment out of ten as compared to nine in the CG group (30 %). The number of students who missed half of the assignments (five or more) was four in the CG and none of the students missed more than three assignments in the TG. For reading assignment completion, the results revealed that more students in the TG completed all assignment and overall the rate of assignment completion is higher in the TG.

The descriptive statistics for the engagement variables are given in Table 3.

Table 3.
Mean Scores for Dependent Variables

Dependent variables	Group	n	M	SD
Reading behavior	CG	31	2.61	1.49
	TG	31	3.78	1.26
Reading time	CG	31	1.08	0.27
	TG	31	1.05	0.43
Assignment time	CG	31	0.88	1.18
	TG	31	1.34	1.32
Enjoyment	CG	31	2.15	1.48
	TG	31	3.92	1.56
Anger	CG	31	1.72	0.89
	TG	31	1.31	1.11
Boredom	CG	31	4.32	1.86
	TG	31	2.27	1.21

To examine whether the differences between the TG and CG regarding each reading engagement dimension are significant, t-tests for independent samples were conducted. The results of behavioral engagement independent samples t-tests show that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the TG and CG in reading behavior and assignment doing time. In t-test the value of p was 0.002 ($p = 0.002$, $\alpha = 0.05$) for reading behavior and p was 0.001 ($p = 0.001$, $\alpha = 0.05$) for assignment doing time. These results show that students read the text more carefully and thoroughly when the course is blended. Moreover, the results show that students spend more time to do the assignments when they use Edmodo.

The results of emotional reading engagement independent samples t-tests show that there is a statistically significant difference between TG and CG in enjoyment ($p = 0.003$, $\alpha = 0.05$) and boredom ($p = 0.001$, $\alpha = 0.05$). Anger is similar in two groups. These results reveal that blended learning is more enjoyable for the students, they are less bored when doing their assignments.

To compare pre- and post-performance of the TG and CG on the reading comprehension, paired sample t-tests were used. The results show that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level in the mean scores of the TG on the pre and post-tests. The results of the paired sample t-test show that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level in the mean scores of the CG as well. This result shows that both TG and CG improved in terms of comprehension.

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of blended learning in reading classes and to compare the comprehension of the students in the blended learning and face-to-face learning. Since there was a numerical difference in the comprehension scores that students had while doing the assignments throughout the term, first mean scores for each student were calculated to decide average comprehension score of each student. After that, independent sample t-test was run to see if the mean difference between the groups was significant. According to the results of independent samples t-test, there is a statistically significant difference between TG and CG in comprehension scores they had throughout the term. In t-test the value of p was 0.005 ($p = 0.005$, $\alpha = 0.05$). This result shows that comprehension is better when their reading course is blended. For the final post-test comprehension, the results are given in Table 4.

Table 4.
Mean Scores for Post-Test Comprehension

Group Statistics					
	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean
Post-test Comprehension Score	Control G	31	6.54	2.71	.311
	Treatment G	31	8.75	1.97	.231

According to Table 4, there was a numerical difference in the mean scores of TG and CG in the posttest. Independent samples t-test was run to see whether the difference was statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.
T-test for Post-Test Comprehension

Independent Samples Test								
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances								
			t-test Test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean	St ErD
Posttest Comprehension Score	Equal variances assumed	2.04	.148	-3.326	120	.003	-.730	.236
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.618	118	.003	-.730	.236

The results of Independent samples t-test with ($\alpha = 0.05$) show that $p = 0.003$ and this value indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the TG and CG in the post comprehension scores. The final post-test results indicate that students got better comprehension results in the blended learning situation.

The paragraphs students wrote at the end of the term provided qualitative analysis for the study. The information students provided were itemized by the researcher and they were checked by an instructor working at the same department with the researcher. Mostly stated items in the student paragraphs in the TG were: 'I liked using Edmodo', 'the use of Edmodo made me want to read the text', 'When I discussed with my friends, I learned better', 'I felt that I had to answer questions and write an outline because both my friends and the teacher would read what I wrote', 'Reading the text was more enjoyable when I discussed it with my friends while reading', 'I had the opportunity to ask my friend when I did not understand any part of the text'. Overall, the result of qualitative analysis support that the use of blended learning has a positive effect on student engagement and motivation to read.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to examine whether blended learning has an effect on student reading engagement and comprehension in academic reading classes. Specifically, it set out to answer whether blended learning has an effect on reading engagement when compared to face-to-face learning and whether blended learning has an effect on reading comprehension when compared to face to face learning at university level. The blended learning tool was Edmodo.

The results for reading assignment completion showed that Edmodo use increased the number of assignment doing. This result indicates that students are more motivated to do assignments when the reading class is blended and more students complete assignments when teachers blend their reading courses.

According to the results, students read the text more carefully and thoroughly when the course is blended and they spend more time to do the assignments when they use Edmodo. These results indicate that blending the reading course has a positive effect on reading engagement. When the students use Edmodo to discuss, they have to read what other students write and they have to write answers and opinions. When they use Edmodo their posting will be visible to all class. This may make them read more carefully because when they discuss in the face to face classroom some students may be unwilling to participate and they may leave the responsibility to other group members.

The results of emotional reading engagement results indicate that when doing their assignments if the students communicate with each other online, they enjoy doing the assignment, and the use of Edmodo makes them less bored. This result indicates that the feeling of boredom may be avoided through the implementation of blended learning.

Overall, the results regarding reading engagement reveal a positive attitude towards blended learning by Edmodo. This is probably because students collaborate more effectively when they use Edmodo and blended learning environment helps them to interact with each other and collaboration motivates them to read and do assignments. Several previous studies also concluded that both instructors and students think that Edmodo is a great way to get students engaged and organized in learning and it provides benefits to educational settings. (Kandappan, Jaykumar & Fukey, 2014; Thongmak, 2013). Thus, the blended reading environment is a contributing factor to active and engaged reading; it promotes the development of group cohesiveness, creates a group of students who support each other with the reading task and makes students active participants so reading becomes more enjoyable.

The results regarding comprehension show that comprehension improved both in the treatment group and in the control group. This is clear because both groups got pedagogical intervention; however, the comparisons between comprehension scores of students reveal that students showed better comprehension in the blended learning situation. Similarly, Taj, Ali, Sipra & Ahmad (2017) investigated the effect of technological tools on EFL reading comprehension and vocabulary learning of tertiary level students. They concluded that their findings are in line with a growing body of evidence that technological support has potential to promote learners' EFL reading comprehension. The result of the present study indicated that students become more engaged with the text, spend more time to read and complete assignments and they collaborate with each other to clarify points when the course is blended via Edmodo. The study reveals that when students are more engaged in the reading class, they get better comprehension scores. The study showed that Edmodo is a simple tool for blended learning in reading classes and it suits educational process in improving reading engagement and comprehension allowing for more time for reading, more time for assignment doing, more participation and discussion and better comprehension in academic reading classes.

The study, inevitably, has a number of limitations. First of all, the study is conducted in an academic reading class, the purpose of the class is to make students familiar with the norms of academic reading. In a lower level class where the purpose is strategy training in reading, a different tool or a different design of the blended class may be necessary. Future research may focus on the effect of blended learning on reading engagement and comprehension in different level classes. Second, for the blended learning situation, it should be made certain that each student in the class has access to the internet and is able to follow all postings and assignments, participate in discussions and upload assignments.

Overall, this study provides support for blended learning that allows students to actively engage in and better comprehend reading. In fact, reading comprehension is a complex skill to acquire. We cannot be sure how exactly a reader interacts with a text. However, the present study implies that blended learning environment creates better interaction with the text and better comprehension when compared to the only face-to-face classroom environment. Blended learning allows for a collaborative learning environment where students are encouraged to communicate with each other as they read. With an online classroom community, students are more motivated to read and are able to overcome difficulties they encounter as they read their academic texts. The blended learning model in this study is, therefore, useful for students since it can promote interaction among the students. Overall, technological support is beneficial for student engagement. Edmodo appears to be a useful tool for a reading class that allows for interaction with the class members and the instructor. Collaborative work allows for student motivation and the result is better comprehension. Moreover, from the instructor's point of view, it is easier to follow student assignments and grade them, and follow, if students read or not.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, N. J. (2013). *Active skills for reading*. Toronto: Heinle&Heinle Publishers.
- Adas, D., & Bakir, A. (2013). Writing difficulties and new solutions: Blended Learning as an approach to improve writing abilities. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(9), 254-266.
- Carini, R., Kuh, G., & Klein, S. (2006). Student engagement and student learning: Testing the linkages. *Research in Higher Education*, 47(1), 1–32. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-005-8150-9>.
- Chew, E., Turner, D., and Jones, N. (2010). In love and war: blended learning theories for computer scientist and educationalists. In F.L. Wang, J. Fong and R. Kwan, (eds.), *Handbook of research on hybrid learning models: advanced tools, technologies, and applications*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.
- Connor, C. M., Jakobsons, L. J., Crowe, E. C., & Meadows, J. G. (2009). Instruction, student engagement, and reading skill growth in Reading First classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal*, 109(3), 221. Retrieved December 12, 2016, from <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/592305>
- Dolezal, S. E., Welsh, L. M., Pressley, M., & Vincent, M. M. (2003). How nine third-grade teachers motivate student academic engagement? *Elementary School Journal*, 103, 239–267.
- Dziuban, C. D., Hartman, J. L., and Moskal, P. D. (2004). Blended learning. *Educause Center for Applied Research*, 7, 1-12. Retrieved August 10, 2016 from <https://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ERB0407.pdf>
- Eydelman, N. (2013). A blended English as a Foreign Language academic writing course. In B. Tomlinson & C. Whittaker (Eds.), *Blended Learning in English Language Teaching: Course Design and Implementation* (pp. 43-50). UK: London British Council.
- Finn, J. D., and Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter? In S. L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp.97–131). Boston, MA: Springer.
- Fisher, A. and Scriven, M. (1997). *Critical thinking: Its Definition and Assessment*. UK: Center for research in critical thinking. Edge press.
- Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109.
- Grabe, W. (2009). Teaching and testing reading. In M.H. Long C.J. Doughty (eds.), *The handbook of language teaching* (pp. 441-462). MA: Blackwell Publishing LTD.
- Guthrie, J. T. and Wigfield, A. (2000). Engagement and motivation in reading. In M. Kamil & P. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 3, pp. 403–422). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., Barbosa, P., Perencevich, K. C., Taboada, A., Davis, M. H., Scaffidi, N. and Tonks, S. (2004). Increasing reading comprehension and engagement through concept-oriented reading instruction. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96(3), 403–423. Retrieved March 21, 2015 from <http://www.cori.umd.edu/research-publications/2004-guthrie-wigfield-et al.pdf>
- Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., Metsala, J. L., & Cox, K. E. (1999). Motivational and cognitive predictors of text comprehension and reading amount. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 3, 231–256.
- Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A. and You, W. (2012). Instructional contexts for engagement and achievement in reading. In S. L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 601–634). New York, NY: Springer.
- Jou, M., Lin Y., & Wu, D. (2016). Effect of a Blended Learning Environment on Student Critical Thinking and Knowledge Transformation. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 24(6), 1131-1147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2014.961485>
- Kandappan, B. V., Jaykumar, L. and Fukey, N. (2014). A study on student preference towards the use of edmodo as a learning platform to create responsible learning environment. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 144, 416-422. Retrieved March 20, 2016 from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.311>.
- Klauda, S. and Guthrie, J. (2015). Comparing relations of motivation, engagement, and achievement among struggling and advanced adolescent readers. *Read Write*, 28, 239–269. Retrieved April 18, 2016 from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4314949/pdf/nihms616858.pdf>.
- Kongchan, C. (2013). How Edmodo and Google Docs Can Change Traditional Classrooms? *Proceedings of the European Conference on Language Learning*, Brighton, United Kingdom, paper no.0442, 2013.
- Ku, Y. L. K. (2009). Assessing students' critical thinking performance: Urging for measurements using multi-response format. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 4, 70-76.
- Ma'arop, A. H., & Embi, M. A. (2016). Implementation of blended learning in higher learning institutions: A review of literature. *International Education Studies*, 9(3), 41-52.
- Motteram, G. (2006). Blended Education and the Transformation of Teachers: A Long-term Case Study in Postgraduate UK Higher Education. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 37(1), 17-30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2005.00511.x>
- Melor M.Y; Nur Rashidah K.R. (2011) Motivation and Attitude for Learning English among Year Six Students in Primary rural school. *Procedia Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 2631-2636.

- Palak, D. & Walls, T., R. (2009). Teachers's Belief and Technology Practices: A Mixed methods Approach. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 41(4), 417-441.
- Paul, R., Elder, L. and Bartell, T. (1997). Study of 38 public universities and 28 private universities to determine faculty emphasis on critical thinking in instruction. Retrieved February 3, 2015 from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/research/Abstract-RPAUL-38public.cfm>
- Pearcy, A.G. (2009). *Finding the perfect blend: A comparative study of online, face-to-face, and blended instruction*. University of North Texas. *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*, Retrieved from [http://search.proquest.com/docview/304963133?accountid%20=4488%20\(304963133\)](http://search.proquest.com/docview/304963133?accountid%20=4488%20(304963133))
- Pekrun, R., Goetz, T. and Perry, R. P. (2005). Academic emotions questionnaire-mathematics (AEQ-M): User's manual. Germany: University of Munich.
- Rosenfeld, M., Leung, S. and Oltman, P. (2001). The reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks important for academic success at the undergraduate and graduate levels. TOEFL Monograph 21. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Taj, I. H., Ali, F., Sipra, M. and Ahmad, W. (2017). Effect of technology enhanced language learning on efl reading comprehension at tertiary level. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, 8(1), 108-129. Retrieved June 16, 2017 from <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol8no1.9>
- Thongmak, M. (2013). Social network system in classroom: antecedents of Edmodo adoption. *Journal of e-Learning and Higher Education*, 2013 (2013), 1-15. Retrieved February 3, 2016 from <https://doi.org/10.5171/2013.657749>.
- Trowler, V. (2010). Student engagement literature review. The Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/studentengagementliteraturereview_1.pdf
- Vernadakis, N., Giannousi, M., Derri, V., Michalopoulos, M & Kioumourtzoglou. (2011). The impact of blended and traditional instruction in students' performance. *Procedia Technology*. 1, 439-443.
- Wagner, R. K. (1997). Intelligence, training, and employment. *American Psychologist*, 52 (10), 1059–1069.
- Wang, X., Yang, Y. and Wen, X. (11-14 October 2009). *Study on blended learning approach for English teaching*. Paper presented at the Systems, Man and Cybernetics (SMC), 2009. IEEE International Conference on System, Man and Cybernetics.

GENİŞ ÖZET

1. Giriş

Akademik ortamlarda, okuma becerisi önemli bir yabancı dil becerisidir ve akademik okumada öğrenci bilgiyi analiz edebilmeli, bulguları değerlendirebilmeli ve nedenleri tartışabilmelidir. Bunları yapabilmesi içinde eleştirel düşünmeyi bilmelidir. Hayatın her alanında gerekli olan eleştirel düşünme, doğuştan gelen bir yetenek değildir, geliştirilebilir. Akademik okuma derslerinde önemli bir konu eleştirel düşünmenin nasıl geliştirilebileceği ve öğrencinin nasıl daha etkili okumasının ve anlamasının sağlanacağıdır.

Okumaya adanmışlık okunacak metinle etkileşime girmek olarak tanımlanabilir (Guthrie ve Wigfield, 2000). Adanmış öğrenci, kendi okuyacağı metni seçebilir, okurken üst düzey düşünebilir ve bir metni özetlemenin ötesinde metni eleştirel olarak değerlendirebilir (Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, Perencevich, Taboada, Davis, Scaffiddi & Tonks, 2004). Okumaya adanmışlığın davranışsal, bilişsel ve duyuşsal olmak üzere üç farklı boyutu vardır. Davranışsal boyut, öğrencinin okumayla ne kadar ilgilendiğini gösteren gözlemlenebilir davranışlardır. Duyuşsal okumaya adanmışlık, öğrencinin okunacak metne gösterdiği duyuşsal tepkilerdir. Bilişsel okumaya adanmışlık ise okumayla psikolojik ve zihinsel olarak ilgilenmek ve okunan metnin anlamlı olarak işlenmesi sürecidir. Yapılan çalışmalar okumaya adanmışlık ve başarı arasında doğru orantı olduğunu ortaya koyduğundan, okuma becerisi öğretmenleri için bir sorun öğrencilere okumaya adanmış öğrenci olabilmeleri için nasıl yardım edeceğidir. Bir okuma dersinin amacı yüksek ölçüde anlama sağlamak olduğundan okuma öğretmenleri için nasıl yüksek oranda anlama sağlanacağı da bir sorudur. Bu çalışmada, okumaya adanmışlığın davranışsal ve duyuşsal boyutları kullanılacaktır.

Diğer taraftan, harmanlanmış öğrenme dil öğrenmede önemli bir kavram haline gelmiştir. Harmanlanmış öğrenme uygulanan bir derste, geleneksel sınıf-içi öğrenme uygun teknolojik araçların kullanımı ile desteklenir ve bu da yenilikçi öğrenme ortamları yaratır ve daha etkili bir öğretim sağlar.

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalında akademik okuma derslerinde öğrencilerden İngiliz Dili Eğitimi alanında yazılmış metinleri okuyup anlamaları ve eleştirel olarak değerlendirmeleri beklenir. Fakat çoğu öğrencinin derslere ya metinleri hiç okumadan ya da az zaman harcayarak sadece gözden geçirip geldiği gözlemlenir. Bu durumda akademik okuma dersi öğrencilerinin okuma adanmışlığı ve anlama düzeylerinin artırılması için Edmodo ile desteklenen bir harmanlanmış öğrenme modeli oluşturulmuştur. Çalışmanın amacı, harmanlanmış öğrenmenin okuma adanmışlığı ve anlama düzeylerinin artırılmasında etkili olup olmadığını araştırmaktır.

Araştırma soruları:

- 1- Harmanlanmış öğrenmenin, yüz yüze öğrenme ile karşılaştırıldığında üniversite düzeyinde okuma adanmışlığında bir etkisi var mıdır?
- 2- Harmanlanmış öğrenmenin, yüz yüze öğrenme ile karşılaştırıldığında, akademik okuma-anlama üzerinde bir etkisi var mıdır?

2. Yöntem

Çalışma akademik okuma dersinde toplam 62 öğrencinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirildi. Öğrenciler bölüm tarafından rastgele sınıflara ayrılmış olduğundan, araştırmacı tarafından sınıflardan biri rastgele deney grubu ve diğeri kontrol grubu olarak belirlendi. İlk haftalarda akademik okuma ile ilgili genel bilgiler verildikten sonra dersin üçüncü haftasında, deney grubuna Edmodo tanıtıldı, öğrenciler Edmodo hesaplarını aldılar ve kullanmaya başladılar. Takip eden haftalarda, deney grubu, sınıfa gelmeden önce metni okudu, bir özet hazırladı ve bu özeti Edmodo'ya yükledi. Dönüt oturumları Edmodo kullanarak gönderilen özetlerin her birine en az beş dönüt gelecek şekilde planlandı. Özeti yazan ve dönüt veren öğrenci, çevrimiçi olarak metin ve özet konusunda gerektiğinde nedenlerini gerekçelendirdi. Ayrıca, araştırmacı tarafından her metinle ilgili yaklaşık on soru Edmodo ya yüklenerek öğrencilerin derse gelmeden önce bu soruları cevaplamaları istendi. Araştırmacı, cevapların doğru olup olmadığını çevrimiçi kontrol etti ve dönüt verdi. Edmodo'nun özellikleri kullanılarak öğrencilere çalışkan, derse iyi devam eden, derse iyi katılan, haftanın öğrencisi, metni en iyi anlayan gibi ödül etiketleri verildi. Sınıf yüz yüze dersler için de bilgisayar laboratuvarında buluştu. Önce özet ve sorulara verilen cevaplarla ilgili gerekçelerini sözlü olarak açıkladılar, sonra kavram ve terimler açıklandı ve son olarak metinde okudukları konunun pratikte nasıl etkili olabileceğiyle ilgili tartıştılar. Dersin sonunda, araştırmacı bir sonraki hafta okuyup tartışacakları metni ve soruları Edmodo'ya yükledi.

Kontrol grubu deney grubu ile aynı metinleri okudu ve aynı soruları yanıtladı. Ancak, Edmodo'yu kullanmadılar. Araştırmacı, öğrencilerden derse gelmeden önce özet hazırlamalarını istedi ve özetleri dersten sonra değerlendirdi. Sınıfta, kontrol grubu beş kişilik gruplar halinde çalıştı ve gruptaki özetlerden her birine dönüt verdi. Bundan sonra, araştırmacının verdiği on soruyu yanıtladılar ve kavramlar ve terimler üzerinde tartıştılar. Son olarak metinde okudukları konunun pratikte nasıl etkili olabileceğiyle ilgili tartıştılar.

Dönem sonuna kadar her iki grupta da toplam on metin okunup incelendi.

Her iki grupta, öğrencilerin okumaya adanmışlık düzeylerini bulmak için her bir öğrencinin kaç metin okuduğu incelendi. Her öğrenciye ders sonunda üç maddeden oluşan Likert tipi bir anket verilerek okuma davranışları incelendi. Duyusal okuma adanmışlığını belirlemek için Pekrun, Goetz ve Perry (2005) tarafından geliştirilen anket düzenlenerek dokuz maddelik Likert tipi ölçek oluşturuldu. Öğrenciler dokuz maddenin her biri için metni okurken duygusal olarak hissettiklerini 1 ve 5 arasında derecelendirdiler. Ayrıca, dönem sonunda öğrencilerden dönem boyunca okuma dersinde ki davranış, duygu ve öğrenmelerini ve dersle ilgili düşüncelerini açıklayan en az iki veya üç paragraf yazmaları istendi.

Ayrıca anlama düzeylerini belirlemek için her öğrencinin metinlerle ilgili on soruya verdiği doğru yanıtlar hesaplandı.

3. Bulgular, Tartışma ve Sonuçlar

Sonuçların değerlendirilmesinde, anlama düzeyleri için ön-test, son-test grup düzenlemesi kullanıldı. Ortalama analizlerinde ve bağımlı örneklem t- testlerde harmanlanmış öğrenme yapılan gruptaki öğrencilerin diğeri gruba göre daha fazla anlama düzeyine sahip olduğu bulundu.

Her bir okuma adanmışlığı boyutu için deney ve kontrol grupları arasındaki farkı bulmak için bağımsız değişken t-testleri hesaplandı. Sonuçlar, deney ve kontrol grupları arasında okumadan zevk duyma ve sıkıcılık maddeleri için önemli değişiklik olduğunu fakat kızgınlık için fark olmadığını gösterdi. Harmanlanmış öğrenme grubundaki öğrencilerin ödevlerini yaparken daha az sıkıldıklarını ve metin okuyup ödev yapmayı zevkli bulduklarını gösterdi.

Sonuçlar, Edmodo kullanarak harmanlanmış öğrenme modeli uygulanan grupta, öğrencilerin daha fazla sayıda ödev tamamladığını, metinleri daha dikkatli ve daha çok zaman harcayarak okuduğunu ve okuma ve ödev yapmayı daha zevkli bulduğunu gösterdi. Bu sonuçlar genel olarak harmanlanmış öğrenmenin akademik okuma dersinde olumlu etkileri olduğunu göstermektedir. Edmodo kullanarak harmanlanmış öğrenme modeli kullanılan grupta, öğrenciler özet ve soru yanıtlarını Edmodo'ya yükledikleri, gönderileri ve katılımları bütün sınıf tarafından görüldüğü için öğrenciler ödevlerini daha dikkatli yapmış ve daha fazla katılmış olabilir.

Sonuçların gösterdiğine göre okuma ve analizlerini Edmodo kullanarak tartışma ortamında yapan öğrenciler çevrimiçi birbirleri ile iletişim halinde olduklarından okumak onlara daha zevkli hale gelmektedir.

Sonuç olarak, harmanlanmış öğrenmenin okuma adanmışlığı üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğu, öğrencilerin metinleri daha fazla zaman harcayarak daha dikkatli okuduğu ve okuduğunu daha iyi anladığı bulunmuştur. Bunun nedeni, harmanlanmış öğrenmede öğrencilerin işbirlikçi öğrenme ortamında olduğu ve işbirlikçi öğrenmenin onları motive ettiği olabilir. Böylece, daha aktif ve okuduğundan anlayan okurken birbirini destekleyip birbirinden öğrenen ve ders materyalini isteyerek okuyan bir okuma grubu için harmanlanmış öğrenme modeli olumlu sonuçlar vermiştir. Çalışma işbirlikçi öğrenme ve harmanlanmış öğrenmeyi destekleyen bir bulgudur.