

THE EFFECTS OF TWO DIFFERENT GOAL SETTING PROCESSES
ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS WRITING AND
TOWARDS A WRITING COURSE

A Master's Thesis

By

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
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To my parents

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF TWO DIFFERENT GOAL SETTING PROCESSES ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS WRITING AND TOWARDS A WRITING COURSE

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This study was designed to investigate the effects of two different goal setting procedures on students' attitudes towards writing in general and towards the English 102 course offered at METU. Three groups of students participated in this study. One group was the control group. The other two groups were experimental groups. One of the experimental groups was assigned goals by their teacher whereas the other set their own goals.

To compare groups for the overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing and the writing course, the same survey was given as a pre- and post-treatment survey to the three groups. Six ANOVAs were used to analyze the comparisons between groups. Nine t-tests were used to investigate the attitude changes within groups.

The between groups analyses indicated that the significant difference in overall attitudes and attitudes towards the writing course that existed between the control and the self-set goal setting groups disappeared after the treatment. The

within groups analysis showed that the attitudes of the control and the assigned goal setting groups changed in a negative direction while attitudes for the self-set goal setting group moved in a positive direction. Reflections gathered from the self-set goal setting group indicated positive changes related to effort, self-study, and awareness resulting from the goal setting process.

Key Words: Goal setting theory, goals, assigned goals, self-set goals, writing

ÖZET

İKİ FARKLI HEDEF BELİRLEME YÖNTEMİNİN YAZIYA VE BİR YAZI DERSİNE KARŞI OLAN ÖĞRENCİ TUTUMLARI ÜZERİNE ETKİLERİ

Elif Topuz

Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Bölümü

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Bu çalışma, iki farklı hedef belirleme yönteminin genel olarak yazıya ve ODTÜ’de verilen İngilizce 102 yazı dersine karşı olan öğrenci tutumları üzerine etkisini incelemiştir. Çalışmaya üç grup katılmıştır. Bir grup kontrol grubu olmuştur. Diğer iki grup çalışmanın deney gruplarını oluşturmuştur. Deney gruplarından biri hedeflerin kişilere tayin edilmesi yöntemini izlerken, diğeri kendi hedeflerini belirlemişlerdir.

Grupları genel tutumları, yazıya karşı olan tutumları ve yazı dersine karşı olan tutumları açısından karşılaştırmak için, üç gruba da, uygulama öncesi anketi ve uygulama sonrası anketi olarak aynı anket verilmiştir. Gruplar arası karşılaştırmaları incelemek için, altı ANOVA testi uygulanmıştır. Grupların kendi içlerinde oluşan olası değişimini incelemek için ise dokuz tane t-testi uygulanmıştır.

Gruplar arası analizleri, kontrol grubu ile kişilerin kendi hedeflerini belirledikleri grup arasında görülmüş olan istatistiksel açıdan önemli farkın

uygulama sonrasında kaybolduđunu göstermiřtir. Grup ii analizleri, kontrol grubunun ve hedeflerin kiřilere tayin edildiđi grubun tutumlarının negatif ynde deđiřtiđini gsterirken, kiřilerin kendi hedeflerini belirledikleri grubun pozitif bir ynde ilerlemiř olduklarını gstermiřtir. Kiřilerin kendi hedeflerini belirledikleri gruptan toplanan dřünceler, kiřilerin emek, kendi kendine alıřma ve bilinliliklerinin pozitif ynde deđiřtiđini gstermiřtir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Hedef belirleme teorisi, hedefler, kiřilere tayin edilen hedefler, kiřilerin kendilerinin belirledikleri hedefler, yazı

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Goal setting is a motivational approach which investigates the drives that initiate behaviors. Goal setting was first examined in relation to work environments and has recently been extended to educational settings. In that context, goal setting has been shown to contribute to self-regulation (Dembo, 2000; Garcia & Pintrich, 1994; Zimmerman, Banner & Kovach, 2002), performance (Latham & Steele, 1983; Gaa as cited in Aldermann, 1999) and the development of positive attitudes (Bennett as cited in Demir, 2002; Demir, 2002).

The purpose of this study is to determine whether two different goal setting processes, assigned versus self-set, affect students' attitudes towards writing in general and towards English 102 writing course offered at METU, which mainly addresses the development of academic writing skills.

This study was conducted at Middle East Technical University with freshman students attending the English 102 writing course (Developing Reading and Writing Skills II). Three groups of students participated in this study. One was the control group that was not involved in any goal setting processes. The other two groups were experimental groups. One of the experimental groups was assigned goals for each writing task by their teacher while the other experimental group set their own goals.

Background of the Study

Goal setting (Erez & Kanfer, 1983; Locke & Latham as cited in Dörnyei, 2001; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Wentzel, 1999) has been used to explain behavior in work environments and business settings and has recently been emphasized in educational research. Goal setting theory attempts to explain individuals' struggle for reaching their targets (Erez & Kanfer, 1983). Specific characteristics for effective goals (Latham & Steele, 1983; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996; Smith as cited in Dembo, 2000; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995) and goal commitment (Locke, Latham & Erez, 1988) have been demonstrated as key factors leading to effective goal setting.

Goals can be classified into short-term and long-term goals (Alderman, 1999; Dembo, 2000; Schultz, 1997). Short-term goals are minor goals leading to long-term goals, which direct people towards a target. Another classification which has been explored is learners' reactions towards learning versus performance goals (Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Wentzel, 1999; Woolfolk, 1993). Students pursuing the former try to increase their knowledge and ability whereas those pursuing the latter focus on display of their level of performance. Students who adopt mastery orientations show higher levels of performance, persistence in learning and more engagement. The distinction between assigned goals and self-set goals is another classification of goals. The main distinction between these two types of goals is that assigned goals are set by external figures whereas self-set goals are personal targets that individuals set for themselves. While much research has investigated the effects of assigned versus self-set types of goal setting in relation to work environments, there are few studies on self-set versus assigned goal setting in terms of educational research.

Goal setting results in increased attention, being able to adjust the level of effort according to the difficulty of task, advancing persistence, designing effective plans and evaluation of performance and persistence in action (Alderman, 1999; Locke, 2000). Goal setting is a positive contributor to self-management and self-regulation (Dembo, 2000; Garcia & Pintrich, 1994; Zimmerman, Banner & Kovach, 2002), higher performance (Latham & Steele, 1983; Gaa as cited in Aldermann, 1999) and to the development of positive attitudes (Bennett as cited in Demir, 2002; Demir, 2002).

Motivation, which is described as “goal-directed behavior (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 173), is an inner incentive which leads to and shapes behavior (Woolfolk, 1993). As one of the sources of human action (Locke, 2000), motivation has attracted great attention in educational contexts. Dörnyei (1994a, p.273) defines learner motivation as “one of the major determinants of second/foreign language learning.” Oxford and Shearin (1994) propose that learner motivation intensifies the energy and effort spent in language learning.

Among motivational theories, self-determination theory is a widely accepted theory for analyzing motivated behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to self-determination theory, individuals need to satisfy three basic human needs to become self-motivated. The theory holds that when people feel competent, related and autonomous, they become motivated. Depending on how much these needs are catered to, the motivation levels of individuals show variation. Self-determination theory uses the terms intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to explain the different types of motivation that people may have.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have been a major focus in educational contexts as well. The former is described as the learner’s own natural and inherent

motives, whereas the latter refers to motivation which is influenced by external factors (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b; van Lier, 1996; Woolfolk, 1993).

Although children are believed to be intrinsically motivated in learning, their intrinsic motivation may be replaced by extrinsic motivation over time in educational contexts (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Dörnyei & Otto, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001; Lumsden, 1994; van Lier, 1996). Transforming extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation may be a key contributor to success in learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985; van Lier, 1996) because learners who possess intrinsic motivation prove to be more successful than those who have extrinsic motivation (Lin, McKeachie, & Kim, 2003; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

Attitudes affect “the overall pattern of the person’s responses to the target” (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998, p.44). Research shows that attitudes affect motivation. Ajzen (as cited in Tremblay & Gardner, 1995) proposes that attitudes and intentions towards a behavior are directly related. Masgoret and Gardner (2003) suggest that when individuals have positive attitudes towards learning, they become more motivated and show more effort in learning. The literature also shows the intersection of attitudes and motivation in language learning (Dörnyei, 1994a, b; Dörnyei, 2003). As a motivational theory, goal setting and goal commitment serve attitude development as well (Busch, 1998; Dembo, 2000; Demir, 2002; Bennet as cited in Demir, 2002).

Writing is one of the four skills that most schools and institutions teaching second languages aim to develop and towards which students may not be not intrinsically motivated because it involves “focused attention, serious effort, long-term commitment, and self discipline” (Zimmerman & Kitsantas as cited in Hidi,

Berndorff, & Ainley, 2002, p.431). Whereas writing was initially perceived as the transformation of predetermined ideas onto paper in accordance with the rules that different patterns of organization require, it is now considered a communicative skill which requires problem solving and the construction and evaluation of ideas (Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999). Writing is thus seen as a complex process, which requires the coordination of different strategies (Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999). Because second language processing is described as being different from native language processing, writing in a second language requires different methodological approaches in teaching (Wolff, 2000).

Looking at the difficulties that students face regarding writing, Hidi et al. (2002) designed an intervention program, which aimed at improving student writing through motivational contexts. They found that motivational factors affected students' competence and performance in writing.

As a motivational approach, goal setting may influence students' strategy use and performance in writing and attitudes towards writing. Flower et al. (as cited in Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999) reported that students' strategy use was related to the goals they pursued. In terms of performance, having goals in writing has been shown to be an effective factor in improving writing skills, and goal setting, assessing ideas and organizing thoughts in accordance with one's goals, give insight to writers. Bereiter, Scardamalia and Steinbach observed that students who were exposed to goal-directed planning were more reflective in their writing tasks (as cited in Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999). Lastly, Demir (2002) and Bennet (as cited in Demir, 2002) found that goal setting influenced student attitudes towards language skills.

Unfortunately, the literature shows that learners do not set goals (Dembo, 2000; Oxford & Shearin, 1994) and that they do not know the purpose and reasons

for the activities they are involved in at school (Thanasoulas, 2002). This suggests that teachers should pay more attention to increasing student awareness of goal setting procedures.

Statement of the Problem

Ways to measure and influence the attitudes of learners have been a commonly explored research area (Bennet as cited in Demir, 2002; Bush, 1998; Demir, 2002). A great deal of research has been conducted on the difficulty in writing (Hidi et al., 2002; Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999; Wolff, 2000), the positive contribution of motivation to learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Demir, 2002; Dörnyei, 2001; van Lier, 1996; Woolfolk, 1993), the role of goal setting in relation to performance (Alderman, 1999; Dembo, 2000; Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Pintrinch & Schunk, 1996; Wentzel, 1999) and the relationship between goal setting and attitudes (Bennett as cited in Demir, 2002; Demir, 2002). However, little research has been done to investigate the effects of two different goal setting procedures: goals set by the students themselves and goals assigned by the teacher on attitudes. The purpose of the study was to examine whether these goal setting procedures lead to any change in students' attitudes towards writing in general and towards the English 102 freshman writing course.

At Middle East Technical University, most of the teachers who teach the English 102 writing course, which emphasizes improving freshman students' academic writing skills, complain about low student motivation. This may result in part from the fact that our students may not be aware of the course goals, which in turn, may not promote motivation in writing. Setting goals may produce an increase in students' motivation level and influence students' attitudes towards the writing course in a positive manner.

Research Questions

This study will investigate the following research questions:

1. Do assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting procedures affect students' attitudes towards writing in general?
2. Do assigned goal setting and self determined goal setting procedures affect students' attitudes towards the writing course?

Significance of the Study

Because academic writing is both a very personal and a demanding process, it requires both internal and external motivation. One possible tool for influencing motivation may be goal setting. The development of more positive attitudes may be linked to increases in student motivation level. However, the literature has little research on the effects of self-set and assigned goal setting techniques on improving the attitudes of students. Thus, this study may contribute to the literature by showing any possible effects of different goal setting types on students' attitudes.

At the local level, the current curriculum renewal project, which my home institution, METU, is now undergoing, aims to find ways to increase student motivation in reading and writing courses. This study may help my colleagues, who are currently working on designing the English 102 writing course syllabus, in shaping their course guidelines. This study may also assist teachers of reading or speaking courses to increase student motivation, because the goal setting procedures that will be implemented for this study are flexible enough to be adapted to any teaching context.

Key Terminology

Goals: Future targets that individuals aim to achieve (Pöhlman, 2001).

Assigned Goals: Future targets that are externally set for individuals (Alderman, 1999).

Self-set goals: The targets that individuals set for themselves (Alderman, 1999).

Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the problem and key terminology that will frequently be used have been discussed. The next chapter is the literature review which will present the relevant literature on motivation, self-determination, goal setting and attitudes towards writing. The third chapter is the methodology chapter which explains the participants, materials, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures of the study. The fourth chapter is the data analysis chapter which demonstrates the data analysis, the tests that were run and the results of the analyses. The last chapter is the conclusions chapter in which the findings, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research are discussed.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of two different goal-setting procedures, assigned versus self-set, on students' attitudes towards writing in English in general and towards their writing course. In this chapter, the literature relevant to this study will be reviewed. First, The concept of motivation will be reviewed. Second, self-determination theory, intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation and organismic integration theory will be reviewed. This section will be followed by a discussion of goal setting theory and benefits of goal setting in educational contexts. The last section will be allocated to looking at writing and the effects of goal setting on writing.

Motivation

Motivation is described as one of the sources of human action (Locke, 2000), or as an answer of the question of “why” of an individual's behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p.3). Both of these definitions imply that motivation drives human action. Adding to this definition, Dörnyei and Otto (1998, p.64) define motivation as “the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalised and...acted out.” In other words, Dörnyei and Otto assume that motivation is more than just a source of action. Motivation is a strong force that can start a thought or an

action and once this process starts, gives this thought or action direction and shape. In this perspective, motivation embodies the processes of “decision-making, action-implementation and action-controlling” (pp. 45-46). This also assumes that the strength and duration of the thought or action are affected by motivation.

Learner motivation in learning a second language was first studied in depth by Gardner who sees motivation as “the major affective individual-difference variable contributing to achievement in learning another language” (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p.174). Similarly Dörnyei (1994a, p.273) defines learner motivation as “one of the major determinants of second/foreign language learning.” Oxford and Shearin (1994) suggest that learner motivation increases the energy and effort spent in involvement in language learning and add that unmotivated learners may not develop language skills. This implies that students with high motivation tend to be more aware of their learning and be more willing to learn.

Motivation and attitudes are related to one another. Ajzen (as cited in Tremblay & Gardner, 1995) claims that attitudes act as the direct source of intention formation, which is similar to the concept of motivation. Gardner (as cited in Dörnyei, 2001, p.49) has also suggested that attitudes have a direct influence on motivation and compared motivation to an “energy center” that includes three components: “motivational intensity”, “desire to learn the language” and “attitudes towards learning the language” (as cited in Dörnyei, 2001, p.49). Masgoret & Gardner (2003, p.172) propose that students who tend to have positive attitudes towards learning are the students who are motivated and open to learn the material. Dörnyei (1994a, b) proposes that because language learning involves both social and personal affective components, the concepts of motivation and attitude may be used

interchangeably. However, there is little research regarding the effects of student attitudes on motivation.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b; Noels, Pelletier, Clement & Vallerand, 2000) is a motivational theory which addresses the initiation and direction of human behavior. The theory examines the sources of self-motivation and the goals people are oriented towards. Deci and Ryan (1985) propose that people become self-determined if they can satisfy three basic human needs: competence, relatedness and autonomy.

Competence is the need to reach certain outcomes or success after completing a task. Competence is related to the pursuit of interesting situations and challenges which are neither too easy nor too difficult. Individuals become motivated when they face an optimal challenge as they try to solve problems they experience.

Csikszentmihalyi (1997) argues that students should be given the chance of altering the difficulty of the tasks to be able to match the task difficulty to their competence and ability. This highlights the importance of the role of the teacher. If teachers can provide students with challenging tasks or skills, students may become motivated to cope with difficulties that the educational context creates for them.

The second need, relatedness, is feeling connected to other people (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In other words, it is individuals' need to interact with their environment. Relatedness derives from the need to build strong and satisfying relationships with others in social contexts. The need for interaction is inherently rooted in individuals and the relationship between individuals' capacities and their environments may be a cause of self-determination. Attempts to interact with the environment may result in success or failure. When learners feel safe and

comfortable and when they succeed in building good relationships with their peers and teachers, they are expected to be more self-determined. Vallerand (1997), in his hierarchical model of motivation refers to this factor under contextual motivation. He suggests that besides being intrapersonal, motivation is also an interpersonal concept and is prone to social influences. Vallerand further suggests that (2000, p. 317), relatedness plays a key role for “value transmission” which refers to the internalization of certain beliefs and values which were previously accepted and imposed by others.

Deci and Ryan (1985) define autonomy as having control of one’s own behavior. Autonomy is related to the idea of being free from pressures or external forces such as rewards and punishments because autonomous individuals do not need any external factors to become motivated. Autonomous individuals are responsible people who are able to determine what is good or bad for them and who know what needs to be done to achieve their goals. Self-determination theory also holds that when people are provided with choice, they may become more autonomous because choice is a contributing factor for having control of the behavior at hand.

As one of the most important needs for self-determined behavior, autonomy has gained a great deal of attention in educational contexts as well. Promoting an autonomy supportive learning environment where learners are in charge of their own responsibilities may play a crucial role in learner motivation. When learners become autonomous, they are closer to self-motivation because, as Dörnyei and Otto suggest (1998), the sense of autonomy is inherent within the state of feeling motivated. In their study of 254 teachers teaching at different schools, Pelletier, Séguin-Lévesque and Legault (2002) examined teachers’ behavior in relation to learner autonomy. This study highlighted the role of the teachers in enhancing learner autonomy. It was

concluded that in autonomy-supportive environments, students proved to be more self-determined and more intrinsically motivated towards learning.

In educational contexts, autonomy involves taking charge of the learning process, determining the learning objectives, defining the steps to be followed in the learning process, identifying the methods, monitoring and evaluation of learning (Benson, 2001). When students take control of their own learning, they tend to adopt self-regulated learning strategies, which feed learner autonomy (Eshel and Kohavi, 2003).

Self-determination theory holds that there is no one single type of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Depending on how much these needs are catered to, the orientation and level of motivation may change. Self-determination theory focuses on two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. The theory suggests that self-determined behavior comes from within and therefore, is intrinsically motivated whereas non-self-determined behavior or controlled behavior is motivated through extrinsic stimuli (Dörnyei, 2001). In educational contexts, student behavior can be described in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is learners' natural and voluntary interest in learning. It inherently exists within the learners; intrinsically motivated learners do not need any external influences like grades to be motivated to learn (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ushioda, 1996; van Lier, 1996). Vallerand (1997) believes that intrinsically motivated students go to school because they like learning, and they focus on the process rather than on the product of learning. According to Ushioda (1996), intrinsically motivated behavior is self-generating as it is a reward itself, leads to voluntary learning, focuses on the improvement of skills and enhances learner

autonomy. Deci & Ryan (1985) argue that intrinsic motivation is of vital importance in educational contexts:

Intrinsic motivation is in evidence whenever students' natural curiosity and interest energize their learning. When the educational environment provides optimal challenges, rich sources of stimulation, and a context of autonomy, this motivational wellspring in learning is likely to flourish (p.245).

Intrinsic motivation for learners entails “interest in the subject matter, enjoyment of challenge, or a sense of making progress and increasing mastery” (Lin et al., 2003, p.252).

In a correlational study (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990) done with 173 secondary school students, the strong correlation found between intrinsic motivation and self-regulation and strategy use suggests that students who believed in the value of school work and who were motivated to learn adopted more self-regulatory skills. The use of self-regulatory strategies activated by intrinsic motivation may help learners to perform better in academic tasks. Pintrich (1989) conducted a study in which he examined the connection between student motivation and cognition and performance with the participation of 224 college students. The results showed that compared to the extrinsically motivated students, intrinsically oriented students performed better in exams and assignments.

In fact, Deci and Ryan (1985) claim that interest, curiosity and propensity towards learning and discovering new things are natural tendencies of children. Despite of this inherent motivation to learn, this type of motivation is prone to diminish (Ryan & Deci, 2000b) because people tend to believe that studying is not a naturally pleasing activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Deci and Ryan (1985) propose that when children start school, their intrinsic motivation starts to cease because school does not offer opportunities for intrinsically motivated learning. The contents

of the curriculum are not inherently interesting, and most activities, regulations, homework assignments do not activate intrinsic motivation. The lack of intrinsic motivation of learners can be linked to factors such as lack of optimal challenge, perceived competence and interpersonal contexts (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

The level of optimal challenge is very close to the need for competence that self-determination theory introduces. Optimal challenge, like competence, is dependent on the capacity or the ability of the learners. If the activity is not challenging enough, learners may give it up, moving to a more challenging one. If the challenge is too far above their level of competence, they may choose to work with an easier task. Csikszentmihalyi (1997), too, highlights the balance between challenge and skills. One of the ways to turn learning into a rewarding activity is to balance the task to be performed and the skills of the individuals. This, in return, leads to skill improvement and higher performance. The teacher is responsible to create new and manageable challenges when old ones are accomplished.

Perceived competence is the second factor affecting intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). It results from experience concerning success and positive feedback. Based on their past success or failure, students gain an impression of how successful they are and how successful they might be in the future tasks. For instance, a student who has faced failure in a particular skill or lesson may have a low level of perceived competence, which would hinder the activation of intrinsic motivation.

Interpersonal contexts, which can be linked back to the concept of relatedness, influence intrinsic motivation. Interpersonal contexts that are informational rather than being competitive may promote the intrinsic motivation of learners (Deci & Ryan, 1985). For example, in a classroom where students are

encouraged to focus on their own development rather than compare themselves with their peers' development, intrinsic motivation tends to be higher. However, when control becomes dominant with the use of rewards, punishments and deadlines, the interpersonal context weakens the intrinsic motivation of individuals because when students are motivated through external motives, learning becomes “a means to an external goal” and not “an end in itself” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p.77).

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation in educational contexts refers to the type of motivation required when an activity is not interesting or pleasant by its nature and which is aroused through external motives like passing the class or getting a good mark (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Lin et al., 2003; van Lier, 1996). Because extrinsic motivation is not self-rewarding and not voluntary, it may have some negative effects on learning. In a series of studies, McGraw observed the effects of rewards on learning by assigning participants learning tasks in which they were either rewarded or not rewarded. It was observed that external forces such as rewards might damage learning because learners tend to focus most of their attention on the reward compared to the material they are learning (as cited in Deci & Ryan, 1985). Lin et al. (2003) too, investigated the relationship between learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and student performance in psychology classes. They found that intrinsically motivated students achieved better than extrinsically motivated peers.

Despite its drawbacks, according to Deci and Ryan (1985), extrinsic motivation in educational contexts is inevitable because learners are forced to fulfill many tasks and be involved in some activities that are not inherently intrinsically motivating for them, but are demands of their environment. Because these behaviors

are not activated by internal drives, these tasks demand external factors such as grades, punishments and rewards so that learners become motivated.

Much research seems to have reached a consensus that people's natural intrinsic motivation disappears in educational contexts and their intrinsic motivation in learning is gradually replaced by extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Dörnyei & Otto, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001; Lumsden, 1994; van Lier, 1996). The reason might be that educational settings are different from the situations where individuals have their own goals that would make them feel motivated. Schools and institutions impose decisions and desired outcomes to learners, which in return, causes "variability in learner persistence in classroom contexts" (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998, p.45).

Regarding the necessity and reality of extrinsic motivation, Deci & Ryan (1985) see adapting to extrinsic motivation as a requirement of socialization and introduce the concept of internalization to explain individuals' movement from extrinsically motivated behaviors to intrinsically motivated ones. Internalization is a process through which individuals may develop positive attitudes and beliefs towards the required behavior. This process of internalization can be better examined through Organismic Integration Theory.

Organismic Integration Theory

Organismic integration theory explains the relationship between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation through gradual steps of internalization of values. It asserts that individuals' level of extrinsic motivation may vary according to how much behaviors are integrated into the self of the individuals (Deci & Ryan, 1985, Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b).

Organismic Integration Theory proposes that for an individual who experiences internalization, the internalized task or behavior becomes more valuable or meaningful. In other words, the internalization of activities that are not innately intrinsically regulated involves a gradual process of valuing the activities (Deci & Ryan, 1985, Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b).

The internalization of activities can result from different causes. Individuals may internalize activities because they may find value in doing it when they think about the outcomes of their behavior. Maturity may result in internalization of some activities as well. As children get older, they may see a meaning in the activities that they found meaningless before (Chandler & Connel as cited in Deci & Ryan, 1985). Another factor boosting internalization of external motives is the characteristic of the external stimuli. Erez and Kanfer (1983) argue that some rewards, such as praise, may increase the level of perceived competence and, thus, intrinsic motivation.

This internalization process can be explained through a continuum between two ends: amotivation and intrinsic motivation. As can be seen in Figure 1 below, the gradual stages of internalization that lie in between these two ends are four different types of extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b).

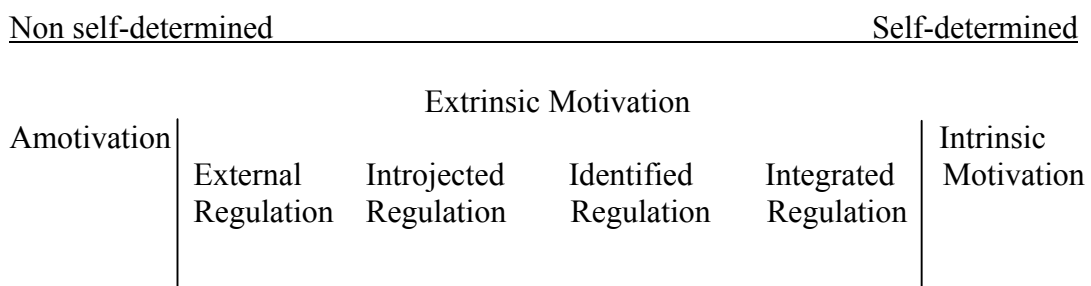


Figure 1 – The continuum of self-determination. (Adapted from: Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.72)

The stage “lacking an intention to act” is the stage of amotivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p.61). Amotivation is referred to as “the least autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation” (p.61). At the other end of the continuum is intrinsic motivation

which involves internal enjoyment, satisfaction and interest. Between these two extremes lie external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation and integrated regulation. Internalization increases gradually across these types of extrinsic motivation as one moves towards intrinsic motivation.

External regulation is the least internalized extrinsic motivation type, in which individuals are motivated by rewards or threats. At this stage, individuals experience the existence of external control over their actions. A student whose only concern is to get a better job while studying is externally regulated because the job, which is an external factor, is the source of the action.

The next stage is introjected regulation, the stage at which some rules or norms are internalized but are still controlling. Avoidance of anxiety or guilt or establishing pride can be reasons for this type of internalization. At this stage, the individuals still do not value what they are doing but because of feelings like pride or to avoid guilt, they are motivated for the action. For example, a student who completes an assignment in order not to feel embarrassed is experiencing introjection.

The third stage is identified regulation, which involves more autonomy. It occurs when individuals engage in an activity because they consider it important. At this stage, individuals see the rationale behind doing that activity. For example, a learner memorizing spelling lists because he believes in its contribution to performance is activated by this stage.

The final stage in which extrinsic motivation reaches its highest degree of internalization is the stage of integrated regulation. Regulation at this stage is at its most autonomous degree where individuals identify the activity with their own values and beliefs. At this final stage individuals integrate the activity with their

personal values. Valuing the activities that were initially imposed by external forces, an individual can be considered to be 'identified' with the values of the activity. Thus, it is the closest stage to intrinsic motivation.

It would be unfair to expect learners to feel natural intrinsic motivation towards activities and practices at school where external control is a dominating factor and learners are not given the chance to make choices. However, it may be possible to help learners internalize their requirements, such as listening to the teacher or doing an assignment. One of the ways to help learners internalize school practices can be goal setting.

Goal-Setting Theory

Goal-setting theory, introduced by Locke and Latham, highlights the fact that individuals need to set goals to have a purpose that activates behavior (Dörnyei, 2001). Wentzel (1999, p.77) defines the theory as "a basic decision-making process concerning what to do." Erez and Kanfer (1983) bases the theory on the assumption that individuals struggle to achieve goals, which are the end points of goal setting. This theory was first used to motivate workers in business settings. The application of the theory was then expanded to motivate learners in educational settings. Oxford and Shearin (1994, p.19) stress the importance of this theory as they claim that goal setting may have "exceptional importance in stimulating L2 [target language] learning motivation."

There has been much research to determine the factors that contribute to successful goal setting. Successful goal setting is dependent on goals, commitment to goals and motivational influences (Dembo, 2000; Locke et al., 1988; Dörnyei & Otto, 1998).

Goals

Goals are defined as “future states or outcomes that one strives to achieve or avoid” (Pöhlmann, 2001, p.69) and as a key factor affecting “motivation to choose, act or persevere in an activity” (McClelland & Atkinson, as cited in Lin et al., 2003, p.252). Goals are “cognitive representations of future events” and “powerful motivators of behavior” (Wentzel, 1999). Dörnyei and Otto (1998) propose that early step towards motivation is taken when individuals transform their wishes and desires into goals. A motivated individual, according to Masgoret & Gardner (2003, p.173) “expends effort, is persistent and attentive to the task at hand, has goals... and makes use of strategies to aid in achieving goals.”

Locke (2000) defines goals as activators of both conscious and unconscious knowledge and as energizers to discover unknown knowledge. He claims that goals can have influence on actions in three ways. First, they direct individuals’ attention to goal-directed behavior and lead them to ignore other behavior. Second, the intensity or the degree of energy spent increases when action is goal-directed. Third, goals affect the duration of the action, or in other words, the persistence of the action.

Goals regulate action by placing emphasis on goal-relevant behavior. In other words, individuals put more effort into behaviors determined by goals. For example, for learners whose goal is to build grammatically correct sentences in an essay, this may lead them to work intensely on the sentence structures they produce but to ignore using a variety of vocabulary.

The degree of the intensity of an action may vary depending on whether the action is goal directed or not. Individuals tend to intensify their level of energy when an activity is goal directed. This idea suggests that when learners have goals for specific tasks and activities, they may spend more energy on them.

The persistence of actions is related to goals and the value individuals place on them, as well. People persist more if the goal is important and valuable for them. This suggests that the importance of the goal is also a factor influencing action. Learners, for example, persist in educational study to be able to enter a good university although they may not like studying.

Gillette (1990) proposes that students vary in their academic performance and strategy use depending on the goals they are attached to. Her study highlights that the types of goals that learners have determine their behavioral patterns. The types of goals are better predictors of effectiveness in goal setting rather than the strategies used to achieve goals.

Given the variety in results of goal directed behavior, such as differences in performance levels or the duration of the behavior, researchers have used different classifications of goals in educational contexts to explain these differences (Alderman, 1999; Dembo, 2000; Dörnyei, 1994a; Dörnyei & Otto, 1988; Dweck, 2000; Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Erez & Kanfer, 1983; Locke et al., 1988; Meece, Blumfeld & Hoyle, 1988; Middleton & Midgley, 1997; Miller, Bahrens, Greene & Newman, 1993; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Schutz, 1997; Spinath & Stienmeier-Pelster, 2003; Wentzel, 1999; Wolters, Yu & Pintrich, 1996; Woolfolk, 1993). In accordance with the focus of this study, only the literature on short-term versus long-term goals, mastery versus performance goals and assigned versus self-set goals will be reviewed in detail below.

Short-Term and Long-Term Goals

Long-term goals direct people towards a final target, so they are distant goals. People set long-term goals through transforming their beliefs and values into targets. Long-term goals are attained through a set of short-term goals. Short-term

goals can be considered as steps serving the accomplishment of long-term goals (Alderman, 1999; Dembo, 2000).

Both types of goals may contribute to motivating individuals. Long-term goals call people's attention to the ultimate target and thus may lead them to take action. However, if long-term goals are not sustained through short-term goals, also referred to as proximal goals or sub-goals, individuals may not know how to reach them. For example, as Dörnyei and Otto (1988) suggest, language learning is an unending process, which becomes a distal goal; therefore, setting proximal goals like studying for the exams may act as a better motivator for students.

Looking at this from a different point of view, Schutz (1997) suggests, for example, that finishing an assignment within set time limit gains additional meaning if this sub-goal is linked to a long-term goal of finishing high school. Schultz (1997) investigated the relationship between long-term educational goals and sub-goals with 480 high school students. The results of the study were two fold. It was concluded that when students valued long-term educational goals like getting a college diploma, they tended to set sub-goals for themselves. The other finding was that when students set sub-goals and used effective learning strategies, they proved to be academically more successful.

Bandura and Schunk (as cited in Alderman, 1999) examined the effects of these two goal types on students' intrinsic motivation and mathematics performance. In addition to a control group, there were two experimental groups: a short-term goal group in which students were given specific assignments each session and a long-term (distal) goal group in which students were given a bigger section to be completed by the end of the seventh session. The students in the short-term goal group performed better in math and were more intrinsically motivated for learning

than long-term goal group because the specific tasks assigned to them seemed more doable for the students and completion of these specific assignments acted as immediate motivators for the students for the next assignment.

Achievement Goals (Mastery and Performance Goals)

Considerable research has been done to define and categorize achievement goals which have been used to explain how learners shape their own learning. Researchers refer to achievement goals to explain the inconsistency in behaviors or responses of learners that are equal in ability. Achievement goals have been categorized into two main types: mastery goals, also referred to as learning goals, that emphasize learning, and performance goals that emphasize evaluation of performance (Dweck, 2000; Elliot & Dweck, 1988).

Students who possess mastery goals seek the ultimate goal of learning because for these students the actual process of learning is an end in itself. These students' focus is directed towards learning, mastery of new skills and improvement. Setting mastery goals is a way to seek challenges, so learners who set mastery goals do not get easily frustrated with difficulties they face when dealing with the task (Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Wentzel, 1999; Woolfolk, 1993). Students following this pattern want to improve their learning, so they monitor their own performance and look for useful strategies to achieve this (Dweck, 2000). Mastery orientation also encourages "risk-taking, participation and involvement" that results in success in learning (Oxford & Shearin, 1994, p. 22).

Students who set performance goals, on the other hand, focus their attention on the evaluation of their performance. These students are not concerned with improvement of learning but the image they create in other people's minds (Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Wentzel, 1999; Woolfolk, 1993). These students may develop a

helplessness pattern if they judge themselves as poor students. Learned helplessness is defined as a pessimistic, helpless state in which students may feel that they are not capable of accomplishing tasks or mastering new knowledge (Dweck, 2000).

Students who feel helplessness assume success is beyond their ability and capacity (Dörnyei, 1994a).

Mastery goals are superior to performance goals in regards to promoting learning. The differences concerning the meaning of success, focus of effort and attention, reasons for satisfaction, view of errors and evaluation criteria demonstrate how different these two goal patterns are. Whereas mastery goals are progress-oriented, performance goals are product-oriented.

Students with mastery orientations prove to be more motivated to learn (Middleton & Midgley, 1997), overcome failure more easily (Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Spinath & Stienmeier-Pelster, 2003), adopt self-regulatory strategies more often (Middleton & Midgley, 1997; Miller et al., 1993; Wolters et al., 1996) and entail active engagement in learning (Meece, et al., 1988).

It is clear that learners benefit from mastery-oriented goal-setting procedures. Ames (1992) suggests that motivation is far more related to students' perceptions about themselves rather than to the actual performance. She adds that the enhancement of motivation is directly linked to the increase in the value students attach to effort, which can best be fostered by the teacher.

If the teacher can move students towards mastery orientation, learning becomes more meaningful. Seifert's study (1997) conducted with 559 tenth grade students, primarily focused on the effects of the affective domain on the formation of mastery and performance goal orientations. He concluded that the teacher was the most influential figure on student goal orientation. When the teacher was effective in

making students feel competent and autonomous by treating students with respect and helping them with their comprehension of the materials, the students moved towards mastery orientation. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) also sees teaching as formulating students' goal structures.

Ames (1992) points out that in classrooms in which mastery goal orientation is promoted, the design of the tasks, the role of the teacher and the evaluation of the learning process aim to promote motivation. Regarding tasks, attracting learners' attention to the reasons for doing the task and letting them to explore the meaning of the material to be learned rather than focusing solely on content, providing students with challenges that are manageable at their level and meaningful activities that students would value and be interested in, may contribute to mastery orientation. As for the role of authority, teachers who promote autonomy and self-regulatory learning skills and strategies along with providing continuous support are more likely to increase the mastery orientation of their students. And finally, evaluation that stresses progress rather than performance is also very important to create mastery orientation in classrooms. Tolerating mistakes and accepting them as a sign of learning also help learners set mastery goals. Ames specifies that new assessment techniques, such as portfolios, which value progress, clear feedback, explanation and class discussions for clarification or justification of the teaching points, can be useful strategies to promote mastery orientation.

Assigned and Self-Set Goals

There is little research about the distinction between assigned and self-set goals in educational contexts. However, these two types of goals have been commonly used in management and business settings.

Assigned goals are future targets that are externally set for individuals. For example, goals set by the employers for employees or by the teachers for students are of this type. When individuals have assigned goals, they tend to pursue them because assigned goals imply that individuals for whom the goals are set are able to reach those goals (Alderman, 1999; Salancik as cited in Locke et al., 1988). This leads to increase in perceived competence of individuals (Alderman, 1999).

When assigned goals are legitimate and moderate in difficulty, they may be adopted as personal goals. Locke et al. (1988) summarizes a number of studies which showed internalization of assigned goals. When individuals were given the chance to set their personal goals after trying for assigned goals, they tended to set similar goals to previously assigned goals.

Self-set goals (also referred to as personal goals or self-determined goals) are the targets that individuals set for themselves. However, there is little research on self-set goals in the literature. Schunk (as cited in Alderman, 1999) investigated the effects of self-set and assigned goals. The study involved three groups of sixth-grade slow learners who were learning subtraction. While one experimental group was assigned goals, the other group set their own goals. For example, the students in the assigned goal group were told how many pages of exercises they were supposed to do but the self-set goal group was asked to determine the amount of exercises themselves. The third group was the control group. The result was that self-set goal group performed better in math.

However, in contexts such as work environments or schools where goals are mostly determined by external factors, assigned goals may also prove to be useful. When students find the goals relevant, they may accept the goals and pursue them even though the goals have been assigned (Assor, Kaplan & Roth, 2002; Erez &

Kanfer, 1983). This is where internalization and self-determination come into play again. Presenting the relevance of goals may help students find value in pursuing the goals and internalize the goals.

Characteristics of Effective Goals

No matter what the classification is, there are certain characteristics of goals that make goal setting more effective. Smith (as cited in Dembo, 2000, p.73) introduces a set of characteristics for effective goals. He calls them “SMART goals: specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and timely.”

Specific goals clearly describe what individuals want to achieve. When goals are vague and not clear, they may not be very motivating. Pintrich & Schunk (1996), too, propose that specific goals increase learners’ motivation and achievement. When the goal is too general, individuals may not know how to attain the goal. For example, wishing for a specific grade rather than to wish for success is more motivating. Or, a goal of using a variety of transitional devices is more motivating when compared to the goal of being good at coherence.

Specific goals may result in an increase in individuals’ motivation levels and better task performance. Tremblay and Gardner (1995) investigated the relationship between goal specificity and motivation. The results showed that goal specificity lead to increase in motivation. Similarly, Alderman, Klein, Seeley & Sanders (as cited in Alderman, 1999) also examined the effect of goal specificity. They looked for a correlation between student performance and goal specificity. Looking at students’ goals in learning logs and their grades, they concluded that specific goals lead to higher motivation and better task performance. Another study was done by Latham & Steele (1983) in which they compared students’ performance level in goal setting and “do best” conditions. The goal setting group’s task, which was to put

together four pieces of construction paper to create a toy, was highly specific when compared to the Do Best conditions. It was observed that the group who set goals was significantly more successful than the other group whose task was far more general.

Measurable goals are the ones that can be clearly evaluated and assessed. If individuals do not know how to measure their goals, they may not also know how to reach them. This characteristic is in close relation with specificity because specific goals are easier to measure. For example, naming the science chapter to be read is easier to measure than the goal to study science.

Action-oriented goals emphasize the action to be performed. Goals that are dependent on individuals' characteristics may fail to succeed. For example, wishing to develop a positive attitude towards a course may not be as effective as setting a clearer target such as finishing comprehension questions, because it is not action-oriented.

Whether a goal is realistic or not is also an important criterion for effective goal setting. Realistic goals are ones which individuals are able to accomplish. Challenging goals are effective but when they are unrealistic, they may not motivate individuals. For instance, deciding on reading a whole book in one night would be unrealistic, and thus is a poor goal choice. Pintrich and Schunk (1996), however, put more emphasis on the importance of challenge and moderate difficulty. They are for the idea that moderate challenge is a necessary component for an effective goal. Schunk (as cited in Alderman, 1999) investigated learners' motivation towards arithmetic division exercises considering goal difficulty. The result was that learners having more difficult goals performed better and showed greater motivation.

Timely goals are shorter-term goals that serve long-term targets. This would make the overall goal easier to realize. For example, setting a goal such as graduating from the university is a relatively poor goal when compared to a goal like passing the courses of a semester. Pintrich and Shunk (1996) refer to the same characteristic when they propose that an effective goal should be proximal. Proximal goals are the ones that can be achieved in a reasonable time limit. Distant goals may make learners feel less confident; and individuals may not see their progress easily when they set distant goals. Because proximal goals are easier to achieve, they give motivation and confidence to individuals.

Commitment

Goal commitment is the second factor affecting attainability of goals (Locke et al., 1988). Goal commitment is individuals' attachment to pursuing a goal once it is set. There is a strong relationship between goal commitment and goal attainment. When commitment to a goal decreases, the performance in attaining the goal decreases as well. Brunstein (2000) highlights the importance of goal commitment in relation to failure when pursuing a goal. He claims that goal commitment enables individuals to have clear ideas about their ambitions. When committed to a self-defined goal which stands for a continuing struggle to obtain a desired identity, the divergence stemming from failure and the desired future may lead individuals to be better committed to their goals, which in return, eases attainability. Brunstein further claims that committed individuals turn failure into a motivating force. In contrast, individuals who are not committed to their goals may tend to escape from any upcoming goal-oriented activities when they expect failure. To increase goal commitment, Locke et al. (1988) suggest that external, interactive and internal factors are important.

External factors relate to the idea that when goals are set by a legitimate authority, people tend to pursue them. Supportive authority figures who establish trust or peer pressure result in high goal commitment. In educational contexts, therefore, if teachers set reasonable goals along with applying moderate control, students may try to attain the goals. A supportive authority figure and legitimate goals may also help learners to internalize goals which would lead to higher self-determination. This implies that assigned goals can be accepted and internalized if external factors are accepted by individuals.

Interactive factors, which directly relate to the need for relatedness that self-determination theory proposes, involve being participative in goal-setting. Locke et al. (1988) claim that when goals are set participatively, individuals may become committed to goals. Also, an interactive environment, where learners compete to attain challenging goals, may lead to higher commitment. Mueller (as cited in Locke et al., 1988) found that subjects in the competitive condition set more difficult goals and were more successful in attaining those goals than subjects in a non-competitive condition. In educational settings, when students try to attain their goals in a setting where they share and interact with one another, goal commitment tends to increase.

Lastly, internal factors, such as individuals' self-confidence, tend to affect goal commitment. Locke et al. (1988) summarize a number of studies about the relationship between goal commitment and individuals' perceived chances of attaining the goal. This is similar to what Deci and Ryan (1985) mention as perceived competence. Learners' own beliefs about their prospective success level may have an effect on their ability to attain goals. When students are forced to set very difficult goals, their faith in attaining the goal may decrease. This also suggests that when

self-confidence is higher, the possibility of setting and attaining harder goals increases.

Motivational Influences

Dörnyei and Otto (1998) mention motivational influences on goal setting especially regarding second language learning. They propose that subjective values like individuals' beliefs and feelings developed through past experiences, may affect their goal setting procedures. They also claim that perceived value of the outcome of the action affects goal setting. They believe that learners of a second language focus on the consequences of goal setting and that language learning is commonly perceived as an instrumental goal. The probability of attaining the goal is the third motivational influence. When learners feel that it is probable for them to achieve the goal, goal setting becomes more effective. Environmental factors such as the influences of family and socio-cultural norms affect goal setting processes as well. Future targets that are approved by the environment are easier to set and pursue. And lastly, attitudes towards learning a second language affect individuals. When students develop positive attitudes, setting educational goals becomes easier and goal setting becomes more effective.

Benefits of Goal Setting in Educational Contexts

Goal setting may have benefits for motivation in educational contexts as the process of goal setting promotes self-regulated learning, higher performance and development of positive attitudes.

Zimmerman, Banner and Kovach (2002, p.2) define academic self-regulation as "self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions intended to attain specific educational goals." They claim that poor academic performance, attendance problems and poor development of academic skills can be overcome by promoting

self-regulated learning. When students are involved in self-regulatory processes, they become more aware of their own performance and they become controllers of their learning. They suggest a cyclic model of self-regulated learning that involves the process of goal setting as can be seen in the figure below:

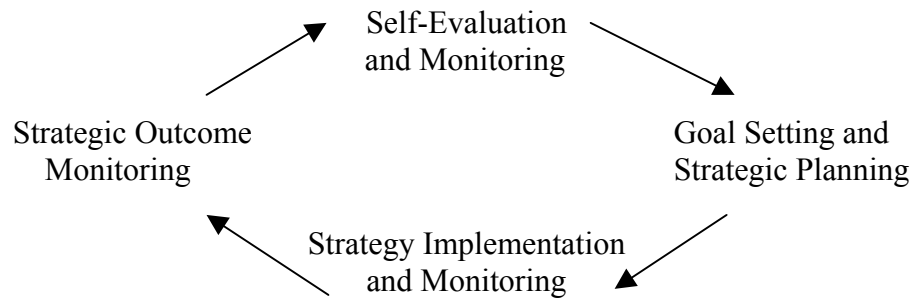


Figure 2 – The cycle of self-regulation. (Adapted from: Zimmerman, Banner & Kovach, 2002, p.11)

Figure 2 shows goal setting as a component of self-regulated learning. Having evaluated and monitored their learning, students need to set goals to plan the strategies they will use. Only after planning strategies through goal setting, can students apply these strategies and see the changes in their learning. This implies that students who set learning goals are more capable of improving their academic achievements by regulating their own learning.

Garcia and Pintrich (1994), too, mention the importance of goal setting for self-regulation. They see self-regulation as a process having three stages, which are related to one another. They assume that self-regulation includes the stages of planning, monitoring and regulation. And goal setting is a part of the planning process which is succeeded by the stages of monitoring of the academic performance and regulation, which encourages revising and strategy use. Dörnyei and Otto (1998, p.60) add that the process of goal setting can be seen as a part of the evaluation of the self-regulatory strategies as well. Goals can be considered as “standards of

performance” for evaluation and can indicate how to regulate performance. Dembo (2000), too, highlights the outcomes of goal-setting on self-regulation:

Goal setting is a planning process and is an important aspect of self-management. This process puts meaning in people’s lives, helps them achieve their dreams and ambitions, and sets up positive expectations for achievements. Students who set goals and develop plans to achieve them take responsibility for their own lives. They do not wait for parents or teachers to instruct them as to what they should be doing with their lives (p.70).

Goal-setting, when carefully designed, may also produce higher performance.

Latham and Steele (1983) observed the performance of college students who were assigned to a toy assembly project. The experiment compared students’ performance level in goal setting and Do Best conditions. It was observed that the group who set goals was significantly more successful than the other group.

Gaa (as cited in Alderman, 1999) investigated the elementary and secondary school students’ achievement on reading skill. Students were assigned to three groups: conferences with goal-setting, conferences without goal-setting, and a control group with no conferences. Although all the students were given the same reading instruction, it was observed in the post test that goal-setting group scored higher on reading achievement and achieved more goals.

Development of positive attitudes is another outcome of goal setting procedures (Dembo, 2000). Busch (1998) discussed the relationship between attitudes towards a management program and goal commitment. The program aimed to introduce management by objectives and performance evaluation to employees in order to increase productivity. Instruments were distributed to 119 employees to determine the level of goal commitment. Results revealed that employees who had higher goal commitment possessed more positive attitudes.

Demir (2002) investigated the effects of goal setting on students' attitudes towards their university reading course. One of the groups was the control group whereas the other group was the experimental one. The participants of the experimental group set goals on their goal cards each week throughout the procedure. The researcher found that goal setting had slight contributions towards attitude development.

Writing and the Effects of Goal Setting on Writing

Writing is a demanding skill that has many requirements such as appropriate use of vocabulary, accuracy in grammar and spelling and successful planing of text organization (Hyland, 2003; Hidi et al., 2002). It is also a process of construction and evaluation of ideas (Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999). Writing in a second language is a more difficult process than writing in one's native language because some sub-skills necessary for writing may not have developed adequately (Schoonen et al., 2003; Wolf, 2000).

Because of these difficulties, students may not be motivated towards writing. Larson (1988) report that students often encounter anxiety and boredom when they do not feel engaged in writing. A similar observation was made by Holmes & Moulton (2003) who conducted a study with three composition classes. They asked students to draw cartoons of the steps they take while creating a written assignment. The results showed that most students experienced anxiety while writing. Awareness of goals and goal setting which contribute to motivation (Dörnyei, 2001; Oxford & Shearin, 1994) can help students to overcome these difficulties and to become motivated. Goals are suggested to contribute to strategy use, better performance and student attitudes towards writing.

Flower et al. (as cited in Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999) highlighted the importance of goals in fostering strategy use. The researchers collected data on students' strategy use through think-alouds, interviews and their grades. They found that the effective strategy use lay in the goals that students set for themselves.

Bereiter et al. (as cited in Galbraith & Rijlaarsdam, 1999) examined the role of goals on writing performance. They compared two groups of children, one control group and one experimental group, in their writing performance. The students in the experimental group were involved in goal-directed planning which was first modeled by the teacher. The results revealed that the students experiencing goal directed planning wrote essays that displayed more reflective thought.

Goals also affect attitudes which have “a directive influence on people’s behavior” because “one’s attitude towards a target influences the overall pattern of the person’s responses to the target” (Dörnyei and Otto, 1998, p.44). Williams (1998) links negative attitudes towards writing to the fact that students perceive themselves as students, not as communicators or writers. Students’ lack of insight and purpose for writing can be overcome by the help of goals. Galbraith and Rijlaarsdam (1999) propose that a sense of purpose is the key determiner of effective writing. Setting goals can help learners to acquire an insight into the writing process because goal setting may help them see a purpose in writing.

Bennet (as cited in Demir, 2002) examined the effects of goal setting and motivational tools on students’ attitudes towards writing. Both questionnaires and interviews were used to identify any changes in attitudes toward writing. It was concluded that students who created academic goals to advance their writing skills developed positive attitudes towards writing.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the literature on motivation, self-determination theory, goal setting theory and the benefits of goal setting theory were discussed. Lastly, the benefits of goal setting on writing were examined. The next chapter is the methodology chapter, which gives information about the participants of the study, materials used, data collection procedures and data analysis.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Goal setting has been suggested to have an influence on attitudes. The purpose of this study was to determine whether two different goal setting procedures, assigned versus self-set, would help the development of positive attitudes towards writing in general and towards English 102 writing course offered at Middle East Technical University.

The study investigated the answers of the following research questions:

3. Do assigned goal setting and self set goal setting procedures affect students' attitude towards writing in general?
4. Do assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting procedures affect students' attitude towards the writing course?

This methodology chapter is composed of four sections. In the first section, the participants in the study and their characteristics are described. In the second section, the materials and instrument used will be explained. In the third section, there will be detailed information about how the data was collected. The final section gives information about how the data was analyzed.

Participants

The study was conducted at Middle East Technical University with a total of 63 freshman students and one teacher from the Modern Languages Department. This study was conducted to investigate the potential change in the attitudes of students

towards writing in general and towards the compulsory English 102 course, which emphasizes developing writing skills.

For this study students from three different sections of English 102 writing course were chosen. There were one control group and two experimental groups in the study. These three groups were chosen among the six groups who were given the pre-treatment questionnaire. Although one of these three groups had significantly more positive attitude levels when compared to the other two, these three groups were chosen because they belonged to the same teacher. The group showing significantly more positive mean values was chosen as the control group. The other two groups were randomly chosen for one of the goal setting processes. Participants from the selected three groups of the pre-treatment questionnaire included 23 students in the control group, 18 students in the assigned goal setting group and 22 students in the self-set goal setting group. Because there were absent students when the post-treatment questionnaire was administered, only 22 students from the control group, 14 students from the assigned goal setting group and 18 students from the self-set goal setting group participated in the post-treatment questionnaire. The data collected about participants included information about their gender and whether they have taken English 102 before, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of Participants by Group

Group	Group Size	Male	Female	Number of students taking the English 102 course for the first time
Control	23	14	9	20
Assigned	18	15	3	18
Self-set	22	18	4	11

The teacher was an instructor at the Department of Modern Languages. She was an experienced teacher who has taught English 102 course before. She willingly agreed to participate in the study.

Materials

Materials used in this study included a goal list, a goal checklist, individual student goal cards, and an attitude questionnaire used as a pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaire.

Goal List and Goal Checklist

The goal list, which was composed of forty-two items including goals about writing, reading and research (see Appendix A), was designed for the students in the self-set goal setting group. Copies of the goal list were distributed to students prior to treatment. The main reason for designing a goal list for the self-set goal setting group was to give students a variety of goals from which they could choose and set their own goals. In order to maintain the relevance of the goal list to the goals of the English 102 course taught at METU, the goals in the curriculum set for the English 102 writing course at METU were used. Some of the course goals, which would not be taught during the period of the study, were eliminated through negotiation with the teacher.

The goal checklist, which included the same goals that were listed in the students' goal list, was designed for the teacher to keep account of the goals she set for the assigned goal setting group and the goals practiced in the self-set goal setting group (see Appendix B). For the assigned goal setting group, the teacher ticked the goals that she assigned to the students for each writing assignment. For the self-set goal setting group, the teacher used this checklist to tick the goals that were practiced

in class each week and this checklist functioned as a guide to direct the teacher in teaching upcoming goals.

Goal Cards

The self-set goal setting group was provided with individual goal cards (see Appendix C). Each student in the self-set goal setting group was given six goal cards, which were designed by the researcher. The goal cards had two sections. In the first section, the students listed their goals that they set for each week. In the second section, the students were asked to reflect on what they had done in the previous week to help them achieve those goals. This reflection section was added in response to the feedback from the teacher.

Attitude Questionnaire

The attitude questionnaire, (see Appendix D) which was mainly adapted from Demir's (2002) study, was given as a pre- and a post-treatment questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of forty-four questions. The questionnaire also included an informed consent form which informed students about the questionnaire's being voluntary and their responses being confidential (see Appendix E).

Considering the fact that the students were upper intermediate level learners of English, the questionnaire was designed in English. The questionnaire had two sections. In the first part, there were questions about the students' background. These questions asked about students' departments, their sex and whether they had taken the English 102 writing course before. The second section included forty-four statements which investigated students' attitudes and motivation towards writing in general and towards the 102 writing course offered at METU. Items 2, 8, 10, 16, 19, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 36, 39, 40 and 42 were about writing in general. The remaining 30 items addressed attitudes towards the English 102 writing course. These items were

designed in a five-point Likert scale, with ‘strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘undecided’, ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ options.

Data Collection Procedures

On February 19, 2004, I received permission from Middle East Technical University, Department of Modern Languages to conduct the study. On February 26, 2004, when the teachers in the Modern Languages Department got their programs and schedules, a list of 102 teachers and their sections was taken in order to determine the sections and the teacher for the pilot study and the experiments. On March 5, 2004, the first draft of the questionnaire was piloted at Middle East Technical University, with one class. The class selected for the pilot study was composed of students mainly from the Electric and Electronics Department, who are similar to the sample of the study. After the data of the piloting of the questionnaire was collected, reliability tests were used to analyze the clarity and reliability of the questionnaire items. The questionnaire proved to be reliable, the only adjustment made in the questionnaire before administering it to other classes was to exclude one question which proved to be double-barreled.

Considering the possibility that departments which are not parallel in their content and student profiles would differ in their attitudes towards the writing course, only departments which had curricula largely based on quantitative studies were selected for the participation in the pre-treatment questionnaire. On March 16-17 and March 22-23, 2004, the attitude questionnaire was given as a pre-treatment questionnaire to six sections of the English 102 writing course.

Before running statistical tests and choosing three groups among the six, the researcher consulted a mathematics professor on March 29, 2004 to assure the appropriateness of the data analysis process. Individual student mean scores were

calculated and the data was analyzed using six ANOVA tests. Among the six groups, three groups were selected for the study, although one of the groups displayed significantly higher mean values when compared to the other two groups. The reason for choosing these three groups was that they had the same teacher, which would eliminate the teacher variable that might have had an important impact on student attitudes. The group which was significantly different in attitude levels was selected as the control group. The other two groups were assigned to one of the goal setting processes randomly.

After the groups were selected, the researcher organized a meeting with the teacher on March 30, 2004. The goals and objectives to be covered during the study were negotiated with the teacher. At the same time, an orientation about the treatments in both experimental groups was given to the teacher. In this orientation, the procedures to be applied in the experimental groups were explained to the teacher in detail. It was emphasized that the same goal list would be used in all sections.

On April 2, 2004, an orientation was given to the students in the self-set goal setting group. The orientation took about forty-five minutes and information about goals, goal setting theory and how to set goals were explained to the students. Also, how students would be using their goal cards was demonstrated by the researcher. On the same day, the treatment period, which lasted for six weeks, started for both experimental groups.

In the assigned goal setting study, the teacher assigned goals for each writing task. The students were assigned a writing goal each time and were assigned to work on attaining the goal. For the weeks during which there was not any writing task in the course syllabus, the teacher assigned short writing tasks to assign goals for each week. The teacher put a tick near the goals she assigned on her goal checklist to keep

a record of the goals she assigned. Also, the teacher gave feedback on each writing assignment about the performance of the students in achieving the goals she set for them.

In the self-set goal setting group, the participants were provided with the goal list every week. Each week, on the last day of their 102 writing course, in the last ten minutes, students were provided with their goals cards by the teacher. Students, looking at their goal list selected and set goals for the following week. And each week, they looked at their preset goals and evaluated themselves regarding which goals they had achieved. The teacher also, put ticks next to the goals she taught that week on her own goal checklist.

The control group was not involved in any goal setting process and followed their regular syllabus.

After the treatment period, the same questionnaire was given to all three groups as a post-treatment questionnaire. The post-treatment questionnaire was given to the assigned goal setting group on May 18, 2004, to the self-set goal setting group on 25 May, 2004 and to the control group on May 26, 2004. Because classes were cancelled, the post-treatment questionnaire could not be given in the same week. However, the duration of the treatments was six weeks for both experimental groups.

Data Analysis

The data for this study was composed of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was gathered from the pre- and post-treatment questionnaires. Qualitative data, which is of less emphasis, was gathered through the reflections of the self-set goal setting group on their goal cards.

In order to analyze the quantitative data, student responses on the pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaires were analyzed. For both the pre- and

post-treatment questionnaires, items in the five-point Likert scale were assessed values ranging from 1 to 5. The scoring for the positive statements were as follows: Strongly agree = 5, Agree = 4, undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree = 1. Negative items (1, 5, 6, 8, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 28, 32, 33, 37 and 44) were reverse scored. Before running tests for comparisons, the researcher consulted the mathematics professor again on June 2, 2004 to confirm the procedure to be followed. Upon the suggestions of the professor, individual student means were calculated to run the tests for comparisons within groups and comparisons between groups.

To investigate the effects of goal setting on overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing and attitudes towards the writing course, six ANOVA tests and nine *t*-tests were run. ANOVAs were used to analyze the comparisons between groups in the overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course before and after the treatments. Tukey's HSD was used for post hoc analysis in order to determine the exact location of differences when significant results were indicated in the ANOVA tests. To see the attitude change within groups in terms of their overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general, and attitudes towards the writing course, *t*-tests were used.

For qualitative data analyses, the reflections on the student goal cards that were distributed to the self-set goal setting group were analyzed. After the themes gathered from each goal card were listed, the goal cards were grouped according to the themes. The themes which were common on the goal cards were chosen, which resulted in the qualitative data for this study.

Conclusion

In this section, information about the participants, the materials and instrument used, data collection procedures and data analysis were given. The next chapter explains the data analysis procedures and presents the results of the data analysis.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study was designed to investigate the effects of two different goal setting procedures, assigned versus self-set, on students' attitudes towards writing in general and towards the English 102 course which mainly addresses the improvement of academic writing skills.

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Do assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting procedures affect students' attitudes towards the writing course?
2. Do assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting procedures affect students' attitudes towards writing in general?

This study was conducted with the participation of three groups of freshman students who were taking the English 102 course. The first group was the control group and the other two groups were experimental groups. One experimental group followed an assigned goal setting procedure while the other experimental group set their own goals.

This chapter presents the findings about the effects of the two different goal setting procedures, assigned versus self-set, on students' overall attitudes, students' attitudes towards writing in general and students' attitudes towards English 102 writing course. The data analysis will be presented in terms of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Quantitative Data

The data for this study was primarily composed of quantitative data which was gathered through pre- and post-treatment questionnaires. Items in the questionnaire were designed on a five point Likert scale and were assessed values ranging from 1 to 5. The scoring for the positive statements was as follows: Strongly agree = 5, Agree = 4, undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree = 1. The negative items were reverse scored. Items in the overall pre- and overall post-treatment questionnaires were examined for consistency and the Cronbach's alpha of reliability was .93 for the pre-treatment questionnaire and .95 for the post-treatment questionnaire. To test the reliability of the items which address the attitudes towards writing and the writing course, Cronbach's reliability test were run both for the pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaires. For the items about writing, Cronbach's alpha was .79 for the pre-treatment questionnaire and .85 for the post-treatment questionnaire. For the items about the writing course, Cronbach's alpha was .90 for the pre-treatment questionnaire and .92 for the post-treatment questionnaire. Item scores were averaged for each participant to calculate mean values for overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course.

To analyze the data, six ANOVA tests and nine *t*-tests were run to investigate the effects of goal setting between and within groups. ANOVAs were used to analyze the comparisons between groups in the overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course before and after the treatments. When significant results were indicated in the ANOVA tests, Tukey's HSD was used for post hoc analysis in order to determine the exact location of differences. *T*-tests were used to explore attitude change within groups in terms of students' overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general, and attitudes towards the writing

course. Mean values from 1.00 to 3.00 were considered negative and values from 3.01 to 5.00 were considered positive for the purpose of this analysis. The between groups analyses of the data for both the pre- and post-treatment questionnaires will be presented first below, before the relevant within groups analyses.

Between Groups Analyses

In order to compare the possible differences in attitudes among the three groups, the responses to the pre- and post-treatment questionnaires were compared by running ANOVA tests between groups. Tukey's HSD was used where significant ANOVA results occurred to determine where the difference in the results lay. The results of the pre-treatment questionnaire will be presented before the results of the post-treatment questionnaire.

The Results of the Pre-Treatment Questionnaire

Before the treatments started, a pre-treatment questionnaire was given to all three groups. The responses were obtained from 23 students from the control group, 18 students from the assigned goal setting group and 22 students from the self-set goal setting group. The researcher ran ANOVA tests to compare the groups with one another for the students' overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and attitudes towards English 102 course.

Comparison of overall student attitudes. To compare the students' overall attitudes before the treatment, the responses of the students who took the pre-treatment questionnaire were analyzed by calculating individual student means and by running an ANOVA test. Table 2 shows mean values of overall attitudes of the groups before the treatments.

Table 2

Mean Values for Overall Attitudes (Pre-Treatment)

Groups	N	M	sd	F
Control	23	3.45	0.36	5.88*
Assigned	18	3.02	0.56	
Self-set	22	3.09	0.38	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation; F = variance

* $p < .05$

The results in Table 2 show that all means are positive but a significant difference exists between the groups. In order to determine the exact location of this difference, Tukey's HSD was applied as a post hoc test. The results from the Tukey's test are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Tukey's HSD Results for Overall Attitudes (Pre-Treatment)

Groups	MD	SE
Control & Assigned	0.42*	0.14
Control & Self-set	0.35*	0.13
Assigned & Self-set	0.07	0.14

Note. MD = mean difference; SE = standard error

* $p < .05$

Table 3 demonstrates that the assigned goal setting group and the self-set goal setting group did not differ from one another significantly. The control group, however, showed a significant difference from the two experimental groups. Despite this difference, these three groups were chosen for this study to maintain a single teacher among all groups, thus eliminating the teacher variable, which might have had an influence on student attitudes. Because the overall mean of the first group was higher, this group was chosen as the control group.

Comparison of student attitudes towards writing in general. The attitude questionnaire designed for this study included statements that aimed to explore the students' attitudes towards writing in general. The items, which were not directly

related to the English 102 writing course were considered as items that related to writing and to components of academic writing processes. After individual student means for items 2, 8, 10, 16, 19, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 36, 39, 40 and 42 were calculated, an ANOVA test was run to compare groups for their attitudes towards writing. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Mean Values for Attitudes Towards Writing (Pre-Treatment)

Groups	N	M	sd	F
Control	23	3.55	0.37	2.98
Assigned	18	3.23	0.52	
Self-set	22	3.30	0.46	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation; F = variance

The table shows that all the mean scores are positive and there are not any significant differences among the groups regarding attitudes towards writing in general. Similar to the results of the overall attitude questionnaire, the control group had the highest mean when compared to the experimental groups.

Comparison of student attitudes towards the writing course. This study investigated student attitudes in the context of the English 102 writing course. Therefore, the questionnaire included items that were directly related to student attitudes towards the writing course. Items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35, 37, 38, 41, 43 and 44, which asked about students' attitudes towards the writing course, were analyzed. Individual student means were calculated to run an ANOVA test. The results of the ANOVA test showing the mean values of the groups can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5

Mean Values for Attitudes Towards the Writing Course (Pre-Treatment)

Groups	N	M	sd	F
Control	23	3.40	0.39	6.55*
Assigned	18	2.92	0.62	
Self-set	22	3.00	0.38	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation; F = variance

*p < .05

The results in Table 5 show that the mean values of the assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting group for English 102 writing course are slightly negative while that of the control group is positive. Also, a significant difference exists between the groups. In order to determine the exact location of this difference, Tukey's HSD was applied as a post hoc test. The results from the Tukey's test are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Tukey's HSD Results for Attitudes Towards the Writing Course (Pre-Treatment)

Groups	MD	SE
Control & Assigned	0.47*	0.15
Control & Self-set	0.40*	0.14
Assigned & Self-set	0.08	0.15

Note. MD = mean difference; SE = standard error

*p < .05

As can be seen in Table 6, there is not a significant difference between the attitude levels of the students in the assigned goal setting group and the self-set goal setting group. However, the control group had significantly more positive attitudes towards the writing course when compared to those of the assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting groups.

The Results of the Post-Treatment Questionnaire

The same version of the attitude questionnaire was given after the treatments were conducted in the two experimental groups. The participants included 22

students from the control group, 14 students from the assigned goal setting group and 18 students from self-set goal setting group. Again, student means were calculated to run ANOVA tests, which were used to make comparisons between groups' overall attitudes, their attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course. When significant results occurred in ANOVA tests, Tukey's HSD was used as a post hoc test to locate the significant differences.

Comparison of overall student attitudes. After six weeks, during which two experimental groups were involved in goal setting processes, the same questionnaire was administered to all three groups. To determine whether there occurred any changes in the overall attitudes among the three groups, an ANOVA test was used. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Mean Values for Overall Attitudes (Post-Treatment)

Groups	N	M	sd	F
Control	22	3.31	0.51	4.29*
Assigned	14	2.83	0.63	
Self-set	18	3.25	0.36	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation; F = variance

* $p < .05$

When compared to the overall means gathered from the pre-treatment questionnaire results, the mean values of the control group (3.45 to 3.31) and the assigned goal setting group (3.02 to 2.83) show a decline in mean values. The assigned goal setting group which had a positive mean value (3.02) in the overall questionnaire conducted before the treatment shows a negative mean value in the post questionnaire results. However, the mean values for the self-set goal setting group (3.09 to 3.25) show a rise in the results of the post-treatment questionnaire. The results in Table 7 also show that a significant difference exists between the groups. In order to determine the exact location of this difference, Tukey's HSD was

applied as a post hoc test. The results from the Tukey's test are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Tukey's HSD Results for Overall Attitudes (Post-Treatment)

Groups	MD	SE
Control & Assigned	0.48*	0.17
Control & Self-set	0.06	0.16
Assigned & Self-set	0.42	0.18

Note. MD = mean difference; SE = standard error

* $p < .05$

As Table 8 shows, there is significant difference between the attitude levels of students from the control group and the assigned goal setting group, which existed in the results of the pre-treatment questionnaire as well. There occurred a change, however, in the relationship of the attitude levels of the control group and students who set their own goals. The mean values for the two groups moved closer. The significant difference between the control group and the self-set goal setting group in the pre-treatment questionnaire results does not exist in the results of the post-treatment questionnaire.

Comparison of student attitudes towards writing in general. The responses to the 14 statements which addressed student attitudes towards writing in general are evaluated separately to determine students' attitudes towards writing in general. As Table 9 below demonstrates, ANOVA results show that there is not any significant difference among groups after the treatments.

Table 9

Mean Values for Attitudes Towards Writing (Post-Treatment)

Groups	N	M	sd	F
Control	22	3.50	0.61	2.45
Assigned	14	3.08	0.62	
Self-set	18	3.42	0.50	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation; F = variance

These results are consistent with the results of the pre-treatment questionnaire in that the attitude levels of all groups are still positive. However, there is a decline in attitude levels of the control group (3.55 to 3.50) and the assigned goal setting group (3.23 to 3.08) while there is a rise in the attitude levels of the self-set goal setting group (3.30 to 3.42) towards writing.

Comparison of student attitudes towards the writing course. The post-treatment questionnaire responses to the items that specifically aimed to evaluate students' attitudes towards the writing course were calculated to find individual student means and an ANOVA test was run to compare attitude levels towards the course. Table 10 displays the results of the ANOVA test.

Table 10

Mean Values for Attitudes Towards the Writing Course (Post-Treatment)

Groups	N	M	sd	F
Control	22	3.23	0.53	3.33*
Assigned	14	2.79	0.66	
Self-set	18	3.18	0.37	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation; F = variance

*p < .05

When compared to the results of the pre-treatment questionnaire, there is a decline in attitude levels of the control group (3.40 to 3.23) and the assigned goal setting group (2.92 to 2.79). However, the post-treatment questionnaire results show more positive mean values for the self-set goal setting group (3.00 to 3.18). The results also show that a significant difference exists between the groups. In order to determine the exact location of this difference, Tukey's HSD was applied as a post hoc test. The results from the Tukey's test are presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11

Tukey's HSD Results for Attitudes Towards the Writing Course (Post-Treatment)

Groups	MD	SE
Control & Assigned	0.44*	0.18
Control & Self-set	0.05	0.17
Assigned & Self-set	0.39	0.19

Note. MD = mean difference; SE = standard error

* $p < .05$

The results in Table 11 in terms of attitude levels towards the writing course show that the significant difference between the assigned goal setting group and the control group seen in the pre-treatment questionnaire results still exists in the post-treatment questionnaire as well. However, because of the decline in the mean values of the control group and the rise in the mean values of the self-set goal setting group, there is not any significant difference between the self-set goal group and control group, unlike what occurred in the pre-treatment questionnaire results.

Within Groups Analyses

Because the aim of the study was to see the effects of goal setting procedures, the same version of the attitude questionnaire was given to all three groups as a pre- and post-treatment questionnaire. *T*-tests were used to analyze each group's responses to the pre- and post-treatment questionnaires for changes in overall attitudes, in the attitudes towards writing in general and attitudes towards the English 102 writing course. None of the groups displayed a significant difference in their attitudes after six weeks of treatments. The analyses for the control group, the assigned goal setting group and the self-set goal setting group are presented below.

Control Group

Although the control group did not receive any implementation of goal setting procedures, *t*-tests were run to determine whether there was a change in student

attitudes. Table 12 shows means and t-values of the control group in terms of their overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course.

Table 12

Mean Values for Responses Given by the Control Group on the Pre- and Post-Treatment Questionnaires

Questionnaire	Timing	N	M	sd	t
Overall	Pre	22	3.47	0.34	1.83
	Post	22	3.31	0.11	
Writing	Pre	22	3.58	0.35	0.84
	Post	22	3.50	0.61	
Course	Pre	22	3.43	0.37	2.03
	Post	22	3.23	0.53	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation

When compared to the pre-treatment questionnaire means of attitudes of the control group, control group shows a non-significant tendency towards more negative attitudes in the post-treatment questionnaire for the overall attitudes as well as for the attitudes towards writing in general and attitudes towards the writing course.

Assigned Goal Setting Group

The assigned goal setting group were assigned writing goals by the teacher for each writing assignment for six weeks. The students were asked to pay special attention to the goals set by the teacher. The teacher reported that she gave feedback about the goals she assigned for each writing assignment. According to the goal checklist kept by the teacher, the teacher set more than one goal for each week. The responses of the assigned goal setting group on the pre- and post-treatment questionnaires were analyzed through *t*-tests. The results are shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13

Mean Values for Responses Given by the Assigned Goal Setting Group on the Pre- and Post-Treatment Questionnaires

Questionnaire	Timing	N	M	sd	t
Overall	Pre	14	2.99	0.66	1.12
	Post	14	2.83	0.63	
Writing	Pre	14	3.15	0.53	0.58
	Post	14	3.08	0.62	
Course	Pre	14	2.91	0.66	0.98
	Post	14	2.79	0.66	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation

The assigned goal setting group, also showed a non-significant decrease in their attitude levels. Mean values of the assigned goal group's responses on the post-treatment questionnaire in terms of their overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course are lower than their mean values obtained from the pre-treatment questionnaire results.

Self-Set Goal Setting Group

The self-set goal setting group was the other experimental group of this study. For six weeks, the students were asked to set their own goals from the list of course goals each week. The students were also asked to reflect on their goal setting experience over the six weeks. The results of the *t*-tests reveal that there is a non-significant trend towards more positive attitudes, as shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Mean Values for Responses Given by the Self-Set Goal Setting Group on the Pre- and Post-Treatment Questionnaires

Questionnaire	Timing	N	M	sd	t
Overall	Pre	18	3.12	0.37	-1.36
	Post	18	3.25	0.36	
Writing	Pre	18	3.33	0.43	-0.61
	Post	18	3.42	0.50	
Course	Pre	18	3.02	0.38	-1.59
	Post	18	3.18	0.37	

Note. N = number; M = mean; sd = standard deviation

Table 14 shows that the mean values of overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course of the post-treatment questionnaire for all variables are higher than the mean values of the pre-treatment questionnaire. The self-set goal setting group is the only group showing such an increase in mean values.

Qualitative Data

As a part of the treatment, the self-set goal setting group set goals for themselves at the end of the last lesson hour each week. The students chose their goals from the goal list given to them in the orientation prior to the treatment. The students were also asked to write reflections about what they did to achieve their goals on the goal cards. These reflections were intended to give students an awareness of their responsibility to pursue their goals. These reflections also helped the researcher gain insight into the effects of the treatment on the self-set goal setting group. The data gathered from these reflections provides some evidence of why attitudes towards writing in general and English 102 writing course may have become more positive.

Although there are student reflections that complain about limited time and the heavy workload, there are also signs of positive reflections. These reflections of students from the self-set goal setting group constitute the only qualitative data. This data was analyzed in terms of the common points raised in student reflections.

Effort

Although the students were told that whether they committed themselves to their goals or not would not be taken into consideration by their teacher, the reflections on the goal cards reveal that students put effort in achieving their goals. Students mostly listed the activities or specific tasks they worked on to pursue their goals. For example, a student's list reported that he worked on the goals of "narrowing down a given topic" and "writing a thesis statement" while writing a sample outline. Another student who set the goal of avoiding logical fallacies tried to achieve this goal while relating each paragraph to the thesis statement. As the following excerpts from the student goal cards reveal, students reported that they focused their attention on their goals, felt the responsibility of the goals, persisted in achieving the goals and did their best to achieve their goals through working on some exercises.

While I was preparing for my essay, I try to pay attention to [my] goals.

I achieved nearly all of them [my goals]. It was very hard [for] me but now I am very relaxed.

I was able to do some of them. But, I will finish all of them.

I have tried to do some exercises

I have tried to do my best by doing some exercises

When I prepared documents for our essay homework, I gave attention to [my] goals.

Self-study

Goal setting may contribute to self-regulation and give individuals the responsibility of pursuing their goals (Dembo, 2000). In student reflections, there is evidence of extensive self-study. Some students reported that they did extra exercises, consulted course books and booklets to learn more about a topic they had chosen to study.

I read how to write a conclusion paragraph from 102 booklet...[I] specified a goal and worked on it.

In order to achieve my goals for this week, I take some extra study for all of them but only just first and second [were] totally achieved.

I looked at book and booklet so I learned the in-text references. Furthermore, I search and get some books.

I read how to write an expository essay conclusion from the textbook.

Awareness

Although the reflection section on the goal cards was intended to include lists of activities done to achieve the goals, there was evidence that students thought about what they could do to achieve their goals, as can be seen in the student reflections below:

I have thought... what kind of practices can be done and which one can be the most useful.

Brainstorming ideas, narrowing down [a] topic, thesis statement, developing one main idea in each body paragraph [gave] me the ideas of how can I achieve these goals.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of two different goal setting procedures on students' overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards English 102 course. In order to investigate possible changes in student

attitudes, an attitude questionnaire was given as a pre- and a post-treatment questionnaire. None of the results showed significant changes. However, data indicate that the mean values of the control group and the assigned goal setting group changed in a more negative direction while the mean values for the self-set goal setting group moved in a more positive direction. Tukey's post hoc tests revealed that the significant difference in overall attitudes and attitudes towards the writing course that existed between the control group and the self-set goal setting group disappeared after the treatment. Although the very limited available qualitative data is insufficient to draw strong conclusions, there is evidence in the reflections of the self-set goal setting group of increased effort, tendency towards self-study and raised awareness after the treatments.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This study investigated the effects of two different goal setting processes on student attitudes towards writing in general and towards the English 102 writing course. This study was conducted with three groups of METU freshman students who were taking the English 102 course, which mainly focuses on developing academic writing skills. One of the groups was the control group and the other two groups were selected as the experimental groups. One of the experimental groups followed an assigned goal setting procedure whereas the other experimental group set their own goals.

This chapter includes the findings and discussion, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

Findings and Discussion

The results of ANOVA tests and *t*-tests showed non-significant changes in attitude levels. The data analyses indicated two main findings of the study. First, self-set goal setting was more effective than assigned goal setting in positively influencing student attitudes. Second, attitudes towards the English 102 course were seen to change more easily when compared to attitudes towards writing in general.

Although the changes in overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing and attitudes towards the English 102 writing course of the assigned goal setting group and the self-set goal setting group are in opposite directions, none of the changes

proved to be significant. The reasons for the non-significance of the changes can be that the treatment period was short, commitment to goals was not assessed, optimal challenge was not established and student goal orientations were unknown.

The main reason for the non-significant changes can be that the duration of the study was short. Considering that it is difficult to change attitudes and because certain trends can be noted in the data, it is arguable that, a six-week treatment time was simply not long enough to influence attitudes. Related to the limitation of the short treatment period, setting many goals for a week could have been a hindrance for students. As Smith (as cited in Dembo, 2000) proposes, manageable and realistic goals are more effective goals. However, as confirmed by student reflections on the goal cards, students set more goals than they could manage. This might have caused students to feel incompetent and unsuccessful, which are obstacles for positive attitude development.

Secondly, commitment, which has been noted as one of the most important factors affecting goal attainability (Brunstein, 2000; Locke et al., 1988) was not a focus of the study and was not assessed. Because most goals are externally imposed in educational settings, students may not feel attached to educational goals. In such a context where rules and regulations are highly extrinsic, whether students find the goals relevant to their own goals becomes important (Assor et al., 2002). This study has not investigated students' commitment to their goals. This might have led students to infer that this is not a meaningful nor a complete process.

Also, the students' level of optimal challenge was an unexploited factor, which might have had an effect on the results of the post-treatment questionnaire. When behaviors are optimally challenging, that is, challenging but manageable,

individuals become more willing to cope with the difficulties (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Whether the students set goals that were optimally challenging for them is unknown.

Students' goal orientations, too, were an uncontrollable variable in relation to students' attitudes. The literature is rich in research that has proven the benefits of adopting a mastery orientation which focuses on learning rather than on the evaluation of the performance (Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Wentzel, 1999; Woolfolk, 1993). Unfortunately students have a tendency to place strong emphasis on the perceived value of outcome (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998), which is closer to the idea of performance orientation. Students might have been performance oriented, which might have caused them to miss the value of setting goals for themselves. Because the attainment of the goals was not evaluated by the teacher, the performance oriented students might have found setting goals meaningless. These factors combined with the limited time for this study could have led to non-significant results.

In spite of the non-significant differences in attitudes before and after the treatments, self-set goal setting was more effective in changing attitudes in a positive direction. The study showed that the control group which did not follow any goal setting procedure and the assigned goal setting group showed a negative trend in attitude levels while the self-set goal setting group displayed more positive levels of overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the writing course after treatment.

The data analysis shows that the assigned goal setting group displayed negative trends for overall attitudes, attitudes towards writing in general and towards the English 102 writing course. The reasons for the movement of the assigned goal

setting group towards negative attitudes can be linked to the external forces, lack of internalization and lack of choices.

The main reason for the negative trend seen in the mean values of assigned goal setting group might be that the goals were assigned by the teacher, which make them external by their nature. Because the goals were generated by an external figure, they were extrinsically imposed on the students (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Lin et al., 2003; van Lier, 1996). This extrinsic motive was not voluntary, which in return, may not have promoted interest and commitment.

The goals, being extrinsic, may not have been internalized by the students as well. Internalization (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b), which means the integration of the actions to the self, is the determiner of how close individuals are to the intrinsically motivated behavior. Because the goals were purely set by the teacher, the students may not have found personal value in attaining the goals. The limited time for the study could also have been a hindrance for internalization of the goals. It is possible that some students may not have achieved identified regulation or integrated regulation on the continuum of internalization (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, b).

Another reason for the negative direction of the attitudes of the assigned goal setting group might be that the students in the assigned goal setting group were not provided with choices, which are important for intrinsically motivated learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). The teacher determined one or more than one goal for the students and the students did not have any say in which goals to pursue. The students were not involved in any decision-making processes. This might have resulted in dissatisfaction and might have prevented the development of more positive attitudes.

The change in attitude of the self-set goal setting group was not significant but it was the only positive change in attitude in the three groups. The reasons for the positive trend in attitudes of the self-set goal setting group can be related to the choices provided and focused attention.

The goals were not purely self-set by the students, so the process of self-set goal setting was not totally intrinsic. However, the students were given choices, which are an important determiner of intrinsically motivated behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). The students were given a list of writing goals that were compiled by the researcher. The students were free to choose whichever goals they wanted to set for themselves. The number of the goals to be set was also left to the students. Therefore, the students were not limited in their choices. This provided the students with the sense of responsibility and control which are inherent concepts in autonomy (Benson, 2001).

Setting personal goals might have increased the possibility of placing more emphasis on the goal directed behavior (Locke, 2000). The qualitative data from student reflections supported this argument because students reported that they put effort on the tasks or exercises that would serve the attainment of their goals. Some students showed evidence of increased awareness as well. The reflections show that students in the self-set goal setting group thought about what they could do to achieve their goals. There is even evidence of self-regulation. The reflections of these students, which are the only qualitative data gathered for this study, suggest that goal setting can be a starting point for developing self-regulation (Dembo, 2000; Garcia and Pintrich, 1994). Student reflections showed that some students tried to attain the goals by doing extensive writing or reading outside the classroom. This supports the importance of goal setting in the development of self-regulation and

autonomy, in a broader sense. Therefore, it is more probable for the self-set goal setting group to have internalized the goals because they were personally determined. And this internalization may have led to more positive attitudes.

Overall, the study also showed that attitudes towards writing in general are more difficult to change than attitudes towards the writing course. The significant difference which existed between the control group and the self-set goal setting group in the pre-treatment writing course questionnaire disappeared after the treatments. When the pre- and post-treatment results of the writing questionnaire are compared to the pre- and post-treatment results of the writing course questionnaire, students' attitude towards the writing course seems to be more amenable to change than students' attitude towards writing. This may imply that students' negative attitudes towards the writing skill are more deeply rooted. This may result from the difficulty involved in writing, especially in second language (Hidi et al., 2002; Schoonen et al., 2003; Wolf, 2000).

Pedagogical Implications

Although the results of the study did not show any statistically different changes in the attitudes, they indicate that self-set goals, which are more personal than assigned goals, appear to be more effective in positively influencing attitudes. This study shows that it is worth implementing goal setting in classrooms and exploiting goal setting theory in educational contexts because being aware of the goals may help in the development of the positive attitudes in educational settings (Bennett as cited in Demir, 2002; Demir, 2002).

This study is consistent with self-determination theory as well, because the results show the importance of providing students with choice. When people are provided with choice, they become more motivated (Benson, 2001, Deci & Ryan,

1985). Although this study did not investigate motivational drives in particular, the choices provided in the self-set goal setting group can be argued to be the main determiner of the opposite direction of the means for the assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting groups. Therefore, teachers should provide students with choices and allow them to make their own decisions about which goal to work on while practicing goal setting. Self-set goals may be more personal and so, more easily internalized. This, in turn, may help students move towards more intrinsically motivated learning.

Setting goals may not always guarantee commitment. Because goal setting is a process involving decision-making, strategy use and evaluation, students should be provided with training in goal setting. Therefore, teachers have an important role in students' experience with goal setting processes. If teachers provide explicit training in goal setting, including modeling of the process and if they monitor the succeeding stages of goal setting, students can benefit more from goal setting and thus, may display more positive attitudes.

This study was able to show that assigning students goals that they do not find value in may not be an effective technique in addressing their attitudes. Relevance of the goals to student needs is an important point to consider when assigning goals to students (Assor et al., 2002). Erez and Kanfer (1983) stress that if individuals can find meaning in assigned goals, these goals can have positive influences on individuals. Therefore, if the decision is made to assign goals, it would be beneficial if teachers talk about the importance of pursuing the goals they set for their students and to relate the goals to student goals and interests. Here, the relationship of long term and short term goals comes into play. The link between the short term goals and the distal goals may contribute to the attachment to the goal

(Alderman, 1999; Dembo, 2000) which can also serve the internalization of the goals by the students.

Also, assigning goals should not be the only responsibility of teachers in terms of goal setting. If teachers will set goals for their students, they should apply moderate control and support for the students as well (Ames, 1992; Locke et al., 1988). Therefore, providing constructive feedback for the goals, which was a part of the implementation of this study, may be helpful with goals that are meaningful for the students.

This study may also contribute to course design in schools and institutions. The curriculum and syllabus committees may make use of the findings of the study when designing educational programs. Goal setting can be included into the curricula as a contributor to the development of an autonomy supportive learning environment. Self-regulation, including goal setting, can be accepted as an educational policy which students would benefit from in their educational lives. Because the processes which were implemented in the study are not limited to any skill or proficiency level, it is possible to adapt goal setting to any course design. Related to program design, goal setting can be a part of the teacher training program as well. Teachers, especially novice teachers, may not be familiar with goal setting, self-regulation and autonomy. Therefore, teachers should to be trained about procedures of goal setting and ways to enhance self-regulation.

Limitations of the Study

This study had certain limitations in examining the effects of different goal setting procedures on student attitudes. The limitations of this study resulted from the duration of the study, the selection of the groups, the inadequacy of the writing tasks, the design of the goal list distributed to self-set goal setting group, the inability of the

researcher to observe the implementation of the treatments, and the limited amount of qualitative data.

The length of the treatment was short, which is an important limitation of the study. Excluding the week of orientation given to only self-set goal setting group, the experiment lasted for six weeks, which is a short time for this kind of experimental study. The long add-drop period determined in the academic calendar of the university is the first reason for not having been able to start the experiments earlier. During the add-drop period, students are allowed to change classes and to change their lesson hours. This results in the changes in the student list for each section. Because these changes in the student lists, the study could not have been started before the add-drop period was over. The other reason for the limited time was that the researcher spent two weeks to select the three groups for the study. In order to eliminate the effects of different variables such as the teacher variable or the important differences between the majors of the groups or between students' attitudes, the pre-treatment questionnaire was distributed to six different sections. The collection and analysis of the pre-treatment questionnaire required two weeks, which postponed the start of the treatments.

The selection of the groups is another important limitation for this study. The groups chosen for the study were not identical in their attitudes before the treatments started. The students in the control group had significantly higher mean values of overall attitudes and attitudes towards the writing course. The analysis of the pre-treatment questionnaire responses of the six groups showed that the three groups which were not used for this study, had closer mean values to the mean values of the two experimental groups used in this study. However, each of these three groups belonged to different teachers. Assuming that the teacher variable could be a more

influential factor, three groups having the same teacher were selected as the participants of this study.

The inadequacy of the writing tasks was a limitation, as well. In the course schedule, there was not a writing task for each lesson and for each week. This could be a hindrance for the students who set their own goals because the students might not have found a relevant task in which to work on their goals. In order to minimize this limitation, the teacher was asked to do more writing tasks for the six-week treatment period. These extra writing activities that were not determined by the course schedule were also implemented in the assigned goal setting group and the control group in order not to create a difference except for the difference in goal setting processes.

The goal list distributed to the students who set their own goals might have caused confusion as well. Because the list was a long list, covering most of the objectives of the writing course, there could have been a mismatch between the goals that the students set and the schedule of the program. In other words, the students might have faced the problem of not being able to pursue their goals if those goals had not been covered yet. Therefore, grouping the goals per week and providing choice among the goals that were covered in class could have been a better alternative. In addition, the long list of goals, which gave the students freedom to choose more than one goal, might have led some students to lose their focus.

Because of the time constraints, the researcher could not observe the implementations of the experimental groups. How the teacher carried out the treatments was unknown so it is not possible to determine the focus placed on assigned goals or the goal setting activity in self-set goal setting group.

Lastly, collecting more qualitative data could have given the researcher the chance to analyze the goal setting procedures with more insight. The qualitative data which was gathered from the self-set goal setting group was not enough to make strong evaluations of the whole process. Collecting reflections from all three groups would be useful for more reliable evaluation of the goal setting processes. Also, conducting interviews with both the teacher and the students, which could not be done due to time constraints, would have provided valuable data.

Further Research

Based on the findings and limitations of the study, suggestions for future research can be made. Studying both the self-set goal setting and assigned goal setting processes again with a larger number of participants in different levels of proficiency over a longer period of time, emphasizing qualitative research, investigating commitment to goals and examining goal setting in relation to different goal orientations could be interesting areas of research.

First of all, because the results of the study show patterns of changes in student attitudes, goal setting is worth exploiting in educational contexts. Self-set goal setting contributed to the development of the positive student attitudes. It is also important to note that, the limitations of this study might be a reason of the negative mean values in the responses of the assigned goal setting group in the post-treatment questionnaire. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to make the claim that assigned goal setting procedure is ineffective for developing positive attitudes. If the implementation of the procedure was carefully planned over a longer period of time, the results might prove to be more positive. Therefore, in future research, a similar study can be replicated with a larger number of participants. Also, the future research can examine the effects of goal setting in different proficiency levels. This study

included students who were all at upper intermediate level. Future research with students of different levels is necessary to be able to generalize the findings of the study.

Future research is necessary to investigate the effects of goal setting on student attitudes from a qualitative point of view. The experiences of the students who are involved in goal setting processes can provide valuable information about the implications of the processes. Reflective sessions or one-to-one conferences with the participants would provide insight concerning the effects of goal setting. This process of gathering student reflection can even be integrated into the implementation process. Rather than treating goal setting as a separate activity, self-regulation, which includes self-monitoring and evaluation, can be a part of the treatment. The effect of goal setting and self-regulation on student attitudes would provide important contributions to the literature. Another point that the qualitative research may focus on can be the relationship between the students' backgrounds and goal setting. Whether students have taken the course before, whether they like writing in their native language, the syllabi they follow in their departments and other possible background characteristics may have important influences on students' goal setting processes.

The effect of goal setting and commitment to goals on attitudes is an area for possible future research. This study did not take attachment and commitment to goals into consideration. Whether the students felt attached to their goals and pursued them is unknown and something which further research could place emphasis on.

Another interesting research area would be to link the effects of goal setting on attitudes to the goal orientations of the students. This study did not investigate the goal orientations of the students. In fact, mastery orientation and performance

orientation can have different effects on attitudes. Future research can analyze the attitude levels of students and comment on the findings in relation to the goal orientations of the students.

Conclusion

This study investigated the effects of two different goal setting processes on students' attitudes towards writing and towards a writing course. The goal setting processes studied in this study were assigned goal setting and self-set goal setting. Neither group showed significant changes in the course of the study. Mean scores for the control group and the assigned goal setting group moved in a negative direction whereas the mean scores for the self-set goal setting group showed a more positive trend in attitudes. The significant difference which was prevalent between the control group and the self-set goal setting group in the pre-treatment questionnaire results for the overall attitudes and attitudes towards the writing course, disappeared in the post-treatment questionnaire. These results imply that self-set goal setting procedure is more effective than assigned goal setting procedure in changing student attitudes. The study also showed that the attitudes towards the writing course are more open to change than attitudes towards writing.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Goal List

Below is a list of goals that you will be using when selecting your personal goals.	
1	Writing simple, compound and complex sentences
2	Using correct and appropriate punctuation symbols
3	Using the tenses correctly and appropriately
4	Using correct subject-verb agreement
5	Choosing words appropriate to the topic and task at hand and using them correctly with their collocations
6	Using appropriate signal words and transitions
7	Brainstorming ideas about a given topic
8	Narrowing down a given topic
9	Clustering related ideas and eliminating irrelevant ideas and making an outline
10	Revising the first draft in accordance with the feedback
11	Writing a topic sentence with a topic and a controlling idea
12	Writing major supporting sentences
13	Writing minor supporting sentences
14	Distinguishing between major and minor supports
15	Maintaining smooth transition between and within paragraphs
16	Giving background information about the topic when writing an introductory paragraph
17	Narrowing down the thesis statement
18	Awakening the reader's interest through techniques such as questioning, quoting, etc. when writing an introductory paragraph
19	Writing a thesis statement

20	Developing one main idea in each body paragraph
21	Relating each paragraph to the thesis statement
22	Supporting the main idea in each body paragraph
23	Summarizing main points and relating them to the thesis statement when writing a conclusion paragraph
24	Using an appropriate closure technique in the conclusion paragraph
25	Using a monolingual dictionary and thesaurus
26	Developing focus and clarity within the writing assignments
27	Synthesizing information from multiple sources
28	Avoiding sexist language when writing essays
29	Avoiding logical fallacies when writing essays
30	Quoting
31	Paraphrasing
32	Summarizing
33	Showing in-text references in APA format
34	Showing end-text references in APA format
35	Distinguishing between formal and informal register and using them appropriately (contractions; general discourse markers such as “kind of”, “sort of”; general words such as “thing”, “,issue”)
36	Using patterns of discourse (e.g. description, cause effect, for and against) in appropriate combinations when necessary
37	Avoiding plagiarism
38	Searching and reading extensively to get background information about a topic
39	Distinguishing between more important and less important sources
40	Locating and inferring the main ideas of a text
41	Recognizing the voice of the writer (writer’s point of view, tone, attitude)
42	Recognizing worthwhile references in a text for further reading

Appendix B
Goal Checklist

	The following goals have been practiced by the students this week	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 5	W 6
1	Writing simple, compound and complex sentences						
2	Using correct and appropriate punctuation symbols						
3	Using the tenses correctly and appropriately						
4	Using correct subject-verb agreement						
5	Choosing words appropriate to the topic and task at hand and using them correctly with their collocations						
6	Using appropriate signal words and transitions						
7	Brainstorming ideas about a given topic						
8	Narrowing down a given topic						
9	Clustering related ideas and eliminating irrelevant ideas and making an outline						
10	Revising the first draft in accordance with the feedback						
11	Writing a topic sentence with a topic and a controlling idea						
12	Writing major supporting sentences						
13	Writing minor supporting sentences						
14	Distinguishing between major and minor supports						
15	Maintaining smooth transition between and within paragraphs						
16	Giving background information about the topic when writing an introductory paragraph						
17	Narrowing down the thesis statement						
18	Awakening the reader's interest through techniques such as questioning , quoting, etc. when writing an introductory paragraph						
19	Writing a thesis statement						
20	Developing one main idea in each body paragraph						

21	Relating each paragraph to the thesis statement						
22	Supporting the main idea in each body paragraph						
23	Summarizing main points and relating them to the thesis statement when writing a conclusion paragraph						
24	Using an appropriate closure technique in the conclusion paragraph						
25	Using a monolingual dictionary and thesaurus						
26	Developing focus and clarity within the writing assignments						
27	Synthesizing information from multiple sources						
28	Avoiding sexist language when writing essays						
29	Avoiding logical fallacies when writing essays						
30	Quoting						
31	Paraphrasing						
32	Summarizing						
33	Showing in-text references in APA format						
34	Showing end-text references in APA format						
35	Distinguishing between formal and informal register and using them appropriately (contractions; general discourse markers such as “kind of”, “sort of”; general words such as “thing”, “,issue”)						
36	Using patterns of discourse (e.g. description, cause effect, for and against) in appropriate combinations when necessary						
37	Avoiding plagiarism						
38	Searching and reading extensively to get background information about a topic						
39	Distinguishing between more important and less important sources						
40	Locating and inferring the main ideas of a text						
41	Recognizing the voice of the writer (writer’s point of view, tone, attitude)						
42	Recognizing worthwhile references in a text for further reading						

Appendix C

Goal Card



My Goal Card

Name & Surname:

First Week



I want to practice the following goals for the next week:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Reflection: How has what I have done this week helped me to achieve these goals?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Appendix D
Attitude Questionnaire

Section I

Please fill in the following information

Class :

Department :

Sex : Male Female

Have you taken the 102 writing course before? Yes: No:

If yes, how many times?

Section II

Please put a tick in the most appropriate box for you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I only study for English 102 course when I have to.					
2. I enjoy doing research.					
3. I know which objectives I will achieve with the help of English 102 course.					
4. I like to study for English 102 course instead of watching TV.					
5. Studying for English 102 course is a waste of time.					
6. The reason why I write essays is because I need to get a good mark.					
7. When I am given an assignment, I look forward to putting my ideas on paper.					
8. For me, brainstorming ideas before writing an essay is a waste of time.					
9. I take the English 102 course to learn useful skills.					
10. I am glad we have a writing course.					
11. I believe I will be a successful student in English 102 course.					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
12. Writing skills that are taught in English 102 course can be helpful to me in my everyday life.					
13. English 102 course improves my vocabulary.					
14. I learn the things I want to learn about writing in English 102 writing course.					
15. The number of English 102 course hours per week is more than needed					
16. Being able to write in English is important to be a successful METU student.					
17. English 102 course is difficult for me.					
18. There is too much homework for English 102 course.					
19. Writing in English is an enjoyable activity.					
20. To me, writing in English 102 is only a way for teachers to grade us.					
21. If I had a choice, I would never take English 102.					
22. I think it is useful for me to edit my paper before submitting it to the teacher.					
23. I like studying for English 102 even if I don't have homework to do.					
24. I like coming to English 102 writing class.					
25. English 102 writing course is useful for me.					
26. Learning to write in English requires serious effort.					
27. I think I am good at writing in English.					
28. For me, revising the paper is useless.					
29. English 102 writing course is enjoyable.					
30. Writing skills that are taught in English 102 course can be helpful to me in my future job.					
31. I believe that students who are successful in English 102 will be more successful in their departments.					
32. English 102 course doesn't really improve my writing.					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
33. Making an outline is a waste of time.					
34. To me, writing in English is a skill that I can improve.					
35. I wish I were more successful in English 102 course.					
36. I like to learn new vocabulary.					
37. Doing research before the assignments is a waste of time.					
38. I would take English 102 course even if it were an elective course.					
39. I like learning writing skills.					
40. I enjoy writing essays.					
41. In order to learn English well it is necessary to take English 102 course.					
42. Learning to do research is useful to me.					
43. I believe that students who are successful in English 102 course, will have more chance to get better jobs.					
44. I postpone doing the writing homework as long as I can.					

Appendix E
Informed Consent Form

Dear students,

My name is Elif Topuz and I am a student of MA TEFL Program at Bilkent University. I am conducting a study about student views of writing and writing courses. The following questionnaire is designed for this study. I would appreciate it if you can answer the questions in the following questionnaire. Another version of the same questionnaire will be distributed later this term.

All data collected through your responses will remain anonymous. Your identity will not be revealed in any report derived from these data. Your signature on the consent form below will be held separately from the completed questionnaires in order to ensure your anonymity.

Please read the questions carefully and answer all of them. Your answers will contribute to my study. Thank you for your participation.

Elif Topuz
MA TEFL Program
Bilkent University
Ankara

I have read and understood the above and agree to participate in this study.

Name:

Signature: