

The situational analysis of the physical state of an ELT department

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Abstract

While there are just a limited number of situation analysis studies, there is almost no situation analysis study referring to the physical conditions of an ELT Department. With this in mind, in this paper, the physical state of an ELT department in one of the oldest and rooted universities of Turkey was tried to be analyzed. The picture drawn by an interview with 15 faculty members including professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers and research assistants has illustrated that if basic physical needs in education are not met; language learning quality decreases as a result. The state, institutional administrations and policy makers should firstly supply the education field with the most required physical settings in order for an effective education atmosphere. The results obtained from this descriptive study may prove to be of some help for educational institutions, administrators and policy makers as well as the researchers studying in the related field.

Keywords: ESP, EAP, Situational Analysis

1. Introduction

EAP is considered to be one of the two sides of English for Specific Purposes while the other one is English for Occupational Purposes. These two dimensions are categorized into subjects or occupations with which it is connected. Hence, EAP might be divided into English for Chemistry, English for Science, English for Finance, etc. and EOP is based on such occupations as English for Police officers, English for Nurses, English for Engineers, English for Soldiers etc. (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001). In these mentioned branches and sub branches, to increase the learner motivation and success, the physical state of the setting that best increase the students' achievement would contribute to facilitate the learning process. Thus, this paper focuses on describing the situational analysis of an ELT department, which is the analysis of the extensive context or external setting. That's to say, the aim of this study is to have a broad view on the sufficiency of the physical conditions of Çukurova University, English Language Teaching Department to see whether it has the required conditions for an adequate teacher education program. In order to find out the academic staff's perceptions on the physical state of the ELT department, the answer was sought to the following research question:

How do ELT academicians perceive the sufficiency of the physical condition of their department for a featured teacher education?

More specifically,

a) What are the ELT academicians' perspectives on the minimal physical requirements of an ELT department for a teacher education program of high quality?

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b) Do the ELT academicians think that their department has the minimal physical requirements for a teacher education program of high quality?

c) Do the ELT academicians think that their institution may respond to the physical requirements for a teacher education program of high quality?

2. Program specifics

The following section describes the full time ELT program of Çukurova University.

2.1. About the programme

The English Language Teaching (ELT) Department provides both undergraduate (BA) and graduate (MA and PhD) programs. The main elements of this program cover ELT methodology, linguistics and literature and elective courses like German and French. By means of these elective courses, students are supplied with chances to continue their personal interests in diverse cultural and occupational subjects. Therefore, the aim of the program is to aid students to reach competency of the English Language and as a result supply them with the knowledge and practical skills for teaching English as a foreign language. The department also arranges apprenticeship in specific schools of the Turkish Ministry of Education.

2.2. Qualification awarded

The students who have brilliantly finished this program get the bachelor's degree of English Language Teaching.

2.3. Level of qualification

First Step (Bachelor's Degree).

2.4. Specific admission requirements

Students are placed in the program after taking a centralized national university placement test (ÖSYS) conducted by the government. That's to say, Student Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM) is the responsible institution to place students according to their ÖSYS scores.

2.5. Qualification requirements and regulations

In order to be successful in this program, students need to finish all the courses successfully by acquiring a minimum of 240 ECTS credit and owning a minimum of GPA of 2.00/4.00.

2.6. Profile of the programme

The English Language Teaching Department educates candidate EFL teachers for institutions of elementary, secondary, and higher education. High school graduates are accepted to the program. Students who select this program after taking the university placement exam take a mastery exam in the department and those who are excellent in the exam start the program in freshman year. Starting from the first year they take language, methodology, literature, and pedagogy courses. They are educated both theoretically and practically in the courses. When they are in the senior year, they also start apprenticeship where they teach sample lessons. The graduates of the program may be recruited by the Ministry of Education.

2.7. Key learning outcomes

2.7.1. Theoretical

- Figures out basic concepts and principles in language teaching.
- Figures out characteristics of different age groups.
- They list testing and assessment methods.
- Evaluates text books according to the students' needs.
- Acquires theoretical knowledge of teaching language skills.
- Gains literary terms.
- Acquires theoretical knowledge of translation.
- Defines subfields of linguistics, figures out main terms and theories.

2.7.2. Applied

- Acquires basic terms and principles while practising.
- Evaluates and selects course books from diverse aspects.
- Translates from Turkish to English and from English to Turkish.
- Displays theoretical knowledge of language teaching skills in practice.
- Clarifies how linguistic theories function in different languages.

2.7.3. Skills

Conceptual/cognitive

Selects among methods and materials by looking at the needs (age, environment and physical state) of learners.

Applied

Figures out methods of material development, adaptation and use.

2.7.4. Personal and professional qualifications

- Ability to work independently and take responsibility
 - Learning mastery
 - Communication and Social Competence
 - Competence in field and occupation
- Applies proper testing and assessment methods within setting.
- Conveys knowledge according to the characteristics of age groups.
- Adapts and develops materials according to needs of the learners.
- Analyzes and defines literary writings.

2.8. Occupational profile of graduates

Each graduate of the program are acceptable for a teaching position in schools of primary, secondary and high education in Turkish education system. The university has graduates already working as lecturers at different universities throughout Turkey. Some graduates may also be seen in banking positions or other private institutions.

2.9. Course structure diagram

For the diagram, see Appendix 1 at the end of the paper.

2.10. Assessment and grading

Evaluation of the students in this program is achieved according to Çukurova University Education and Assessment regulations for Associate and Undergraduate degrees. In assessing and evaluating the students' success, final exams and mid-term exams function effectively as well as assignments, projects, seminars field work, and laboratory etc. Lecturers introduce the assessment criteria and their ratio to students at the beginning of each semester. Assessments of grades are as following;

- Through a combination of mid-term exams and assignments like a research, field work, and projects etc., mid-term grade is assessed.
- Raw achievement scores correspond to sum of 40% of mid-term grade and 60% of final exam grade. These scores are counted out of 100 points.
- Overall achievement score of a student is counted according to Çukurova University Relative Evaluation System. At the end of this evaluation, students get a letter grade as a total achievement score.

2.11. Graduation requirements

In order to finish undergraduate degree, students must finish all courses, applications and workshops contained in the program, attain two hundred and forty (240) ECTS credit in total in undergraduate level and gain a minimum GPA of 2.00/4.00.

3. Methodology

In this paper, views of teaching staff were measured by means of an interview. Based upon a qualitative research design, this study was conducted having resource to descriptive research design with a view to identify the perspectives of faculty members. In the study, most of the staff members were reached to be interviewed and the interview was directly administered to the target group by the researcher.

3.1. Instruments

In this situation analysis study, semi-structured interview questions were administered to gather the necessary data. The semi-structured interview questions maintain a number of instructions for interviewers and supplies reliable, comparable qualitative data. A semi-structured interview, as Bernard (1988) mentions, is best employed when there is only one opportunity to interview someone, just like in our case in which we had only one chance to make an interview with the respondents as a result of their busy work schedule.

3.2. Setting

This study took place at the English Language Teaching Department of Çukurova University, Adana Turkey. The university selected for this study is known to be one of the oldest and rooted universities in Turkey, dating back to 1969. Besides, the education faculty of the university in which this study was conducted was founded in 1982. According to what the official website of the university states, the university has modern classrooms as well as lecture halls to supply students with comfortable and proper conditions. One of the lecture halls is named after Prof. Dr. Mithat Özsan containing two halls – one with 450 and the other with 150 chairs as well as both being equipped with all needed technical equipment for scientific and cultural meetings. The Prof. Dr. Mithat Özsan Lecture Hall also has the capacity for exhibitions with its 450 people capacity broad foyer. The Faculty of Agriculture and the Faculty of Medicine have giant meeting halls as well. 2186 academic staff in total are working at Çukurova University while 49.711 students are studying, including 44.697 undergraduate and associate degree students and more than 5.014 graduate and PhD students, according to recent declaration.

3.3. Participants

The participants of the study were three professors, four associate professors, three assistant professors, two lecturers and three research assistants working in the ELT Department of Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey. That's to say, the sample consisted of 15 academic staff who voluntarily participated in the study.

4. Findings and discussion

In this section, the results of the study and the findings are described based on the data obtained from the participants by means of the instrument. Besides, the results and the findings are described based on the related research questions. They are grouped under the items from the interview.

4.1. Results pertaining to "How should the minimal required physical conditions of an ELT department be for a teacher education program of high quality?"

This group of perspectives consists of 10 themes categorized with each emerging number (time-of-mention=ToM). In Table 1, we observe frequencies of perspectives about the minimal physical requirements of a language program needed for a teacher education of high quality.

As observed in Table 1, for the 1st item, 14 participants indicated that the classes should be equipped with the acquired technology in which multimedia devices, videos, DVD players, music players, cinema systems, smart boards, projectors, audio systems, computers and internet are properly available. Besides, the 2nd Item the classes should be suitable for every season of the year emerged 8 times while the 3rd Item there should be comfortable and moving seats emerged 8 times again. Additionally, the 4th Item there should be course materials such as posters, pictures and more up to date items rather than simple PowerPoint presentations available emerged 3 times. Furthermore, the 5th Item the classes should be lighted up properly and the 6th Item the buildings should be new and architecturally esthetic, the 7th Item the rooms are not big enough for overcrowded classes, the 8th Item we don't have enough technical staff emerged 2 times. Lastly, the 9th Item there should be a material room, the 10th Item the order of seating in the classes is not suitable for interaction and the 11th Item such classes in which the language is used authentically in its natural context should be available, the 12th Item there should be a language laboratory emerged once in the interview.

Table 1. Themes of perspectives on the minimal physical requirements of a language program needed for a teacher education of high quality

Perspective	ToM
1. The classes should be equipped with the acquired technology in which multimedia devices, videos, DVD players, music players, cinema systems, smart boards, projectors, audio systems, computers and internet are properly available.	14
2. The classes should be suitable for every season of the year.	8
3. There should be comfortable and moving seats.	8
4. There should be course materials such as posters, pictures and more up to date items rather than simple PowerPoint presentations available.	3
5. The classes should be lighted up properly.	2
6. The buildings should be new and architecturally esthetic.	2
7. The rooms are not big enough for overcrowded classes.	2
8. We don't have enough technical staff.	2
9. There should be a material room to keep education materials.	1
10. The order of seating in the classes is not suitable for interaction.	1
11. Such classes in which the language is used authentically in its natural context should be available.	1
12. There should be a language laboratory.	1
Total	45

4.2. Results pertaining to "Do you think your department has the minimal physical requirements for a teacher education program of high quality?"

This group of perspectives consists of 3 themes categorized with each emerging number (time-of-mention=ToM). In Table 2, we observe frequencies of perspectives about the physical state of the department in terms of having the minimal requirements.

Table 2. The Physical state of the department in terms of having the minimal requirements

Perspective	ToM
Yes 13. We have the minimal physical requirements for teacher education.	3
No 14. As a result of weather conditions, being too cold in winter and too hot in summer, we are not able to do our courses properly having insufficient heating and air conditioning systems.	7
15. Being very old, the buildings are not suitable for alterations, so new buildings should be constructed.	2
16. I don't know why but we don't have the necessary physical conditions.	1
17. We don't have the necessary physical conditions, but we might have them.	
18. We don't have the necessary physical conditions as a result of financial problems.	1
	1
Partially 19. We partially have the required physical facilities and better facilities should be supplied.	6
20. The institution constructed two new technology based classrooms but since there are many classes waiting to use it, my turn hasn't come yet.	2
Total	23

It is easily understood from Table 2 that majority of the respondents complain about not having the necessary physical conditions in their departments. By looking at the 13th Item regarding we have the minimal physical requirements for teacher education, only 3 emergences have appeared. On the other hand, the 14th Item with reference to as a result of weather conditions, being too cold in winter and too hot in summer, we are not able to do our courses properly having insufficient

heating and air conditioning systems emerged 7 times which means that the department highly lacks such a vital requirement according to what the respondents declared. Besides, 2 emergences have occurred in terms of the 15th Item with respect to being very old, the buildings are not suitable for alterations, so new buildings should be constructed. The 16th Item I don't know why but we don't have the necessary physical conditions, the 17th Item we don't have the necessary physical conditions, but we might have them, and the 18th Item we don't have the necessary physical conditions as a result of financial problems emerged just once in the interview. Furthermore, by looking at the Item 19 which refers to we partially have the required physical facilities and better facilities should be supplied, 6 emergences appeared in terms of partly having the necessary physical conditions. Lastly, the Item 20 stating that the institution constructed two new technology based classrooms but since there are many classes waiting to use it, my turn hasn't come yet emerged 2 times in the interview.

4.3. Results pertaining to "Do you think the institution can respond to the mentioned physical requirements of the department for a teacher education program of high quality?"

This group of perspectives consists of 4 themes categorized with each emerging number (time-of-mention=ToM). In Table 3, we observe frequencies of perspectives on whether the institution can respond to the mentioned physical requirements of the department for a teacher education program of high quality.

Table 3. Perspectives on whether the institution can respond to the necessary physical requirements

Can the institution provide...?	ToM	
	Yes	No
the required buildings, classrooms, physical settings	12	3
financial aids	13	2
sponsorships	13	2
technical staff, equipment and other facilities	15	-
Total	53	7

The overall tendency in terms of whether the institution can respond to the necessary physical requirements of the department for a teacher education of high quality is positive by looking at the Table 3. In terms of the availability of supplying the required buildings, classrooms, and physical settings by the institution, 12 emergences appeared positively while 3 emergences were negative. By looking at the availability of the financial aids, it is easily understood that majority of responses with an emergence of 13 were positive while 2 emergences were negative. Namely, regarding the availability of the sponsorships, one can clearly observe that majority of responses with an emergence of 13 were positive while 2 emergences were negative again. Finally, with reference to the availability of technical staff, equipment and other facilities, it is clear from the Table 3 that the overall tendency was positive by looking at the emergency of 15.

4.4. Additional notes of the academic staff

When asked about their additional views on the physical state of their department, a high number of the respondents have stated that they don't have even the simplest physical conditions in which a proper air-conditioning system functions properly. They complained about feeling too cold in the classrooms which affects the education process badly. Maslow arranges human needs

in a hierarchy, where their fulfillment follows a fixed sequence. Firstly, physiological needs including eating, clothing, accommodation, etc. are filled and if they are missing, almost all endeavor goes to fulfilling these basic needs. Whenever these basic needs are nearing total satisfaction, endeavor is allocated to the next level (Hagerty, 1999). Furthermore, four respondents added that the university administration has promptly started to restore and develop other faculties and their faculty is waiting in the row to be restored.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

There are only a few situation analysis studies (Gass, 2012; Al Mudhaffar, 2012) conducted in education field. With this in mind, in this paper, the physical state of an ELT department in one of the oldest and rooted universities of Turkey was tried to be analyzed. The picture drawn by 15 faculty members including professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers and research assistants illustrates that:

- The physical requirements of a language program needed for a teacher education of high quality are first of all technologically equipped, comfortable and properly lighted up big classrooms suitable for every weather condition, secondly such classrooms equipped with moving seats arranged by the proper seating order in which there are plenty of course materials, thirdly esthetically constructed new buildings which are assisted by enough technical staff and which are equipped with the mentioned type of classrooms with laboratories and material rooms which are responding to the requirements of a natural language context.

- Most of the faculty members in the mentioned ELT department are not much content about the physical conditions they have for teacher education and they mostly complain about not having their basic needs in terms of physical setting. According to the Maslow's hierarchy, there are physiological needs which include food, water and shelter at the bottom, which are very basic needs for human survival. The principal is that if a person does not meet his or her basic needs, higher levels in the hierarchy are not reachable since survival is the most basic human need. If the simple needs have been supplied, the person moves to the next level (Benson and Dundis, 2003).

- A high number of the respondents are in the view that their institution can respond to the necessary physical requirements of the department for a teacher education of high quality.

The state, institutional administrations and policy makers should firstly supply the education field with the most required physical settings in order for an effective education atmosphere. The results obtained from this descriptive study may prove to be of some help for educational institutions, administrators and policy makers as well as the researchers studying in the related field.

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Appendix 1

Course Structure Diagram	
1. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Nondepartmental Elective 1	Optional
Atatürk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution I	Compulsory
Introduction To Educational Sciences	Compulsory
Turkish Language I	Compulsory
Contextual Grammar I	Compulsory
Listening and Pronunciation I	Compulsory
Communicating Skills I	Compulsory
Advanced Reading and Writing I	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Effective Communication Skills	Optional

2. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Nondepartmental Elective 1	Optional
Atatürk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution II	Compulsory
Psychology Of Education	Compulsory
Turkish Language II	Compulsory
Contextual Grammar II	Compulsory
Listening and Pronunciation II	Compulsory
Communicating Skills II	Compulsory
Advanced Reading and Writing II	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Vocabulary	Optional

3. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Nondepartmental Elective 1	Optional
Principles and Methods in Education	Compulsory
Linguistics I	Compulsory
Approaches in Teaching English I	Compulsory
Translation English - Turkish	Compulsory
Turkish Linguistics	Compulsory
Literature and Language Teaching I	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Oral Expression and Public Speaking Skills	Optional

4. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Nondepartmental Elective 1	Optional
Research Methods	Compulsory
Education Techniques and Material Development	Compulsory
ELT Methodology I	Compulsory
Linguistics II	Compulsory
Approaches in Teaching English II	Compulsory
English Literature II	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Language Acquisition	Optional

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5. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Nondepartmental Elective 1	Optional
Classroom Management	Compulsory
Teaching English to Young Learners I	Compulsory
ELT Methodology II	Compulsory
Teaching Language Skills I	Compulsory
Literature and Language Teaching I	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Second Foreign Language: French I	Optional
Modern Turkish Literature	Optional

6. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Nondepartmental Elective 1	Optional
Testing and Assessment	Compulsory
Teaching English to Young Learners II	Compulsory
Translation Turkish-English	Compulsory
Teaching Language Skills II	Compulsory
Literature and Language Teaching II	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Community Service	Optional
Second Foreign Language: French II	Optional

7. Semester Course Plan Courses	
School Experience	Compulsory
Counselling	Compulsory
Pyscholingustics	Compulsory
Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Second Foreign Language: German	Optional
Material Evaluation and Adaptation	Optional

8. Semester Course Plan Courses	
Turkish Educational Systems and School Administration	Compulsory
English Language Testing and Evaluation	Compulsory
Teaching Practice	Compulsory
Assessment of Practice Teaching	Compulsory
Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language	Compulsory
Technical Optional Courses	
Discussion Skills	Optional