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New Trends in Foreign Language Teaching Research in Turkey

The special issue consists of **eight articles** and each of them focuses on essential, hotly debated topics in the field of foreign language education in recent years. Every paper is an example of interdisciplinary work and proposes either a new perspective, framework or evaluative method for some of the major problems in foreign language teaching in general, and in Turkey, in particular. The articles in this issue are also valuable since they show that it is time to start looking for local solutions for urgent local problems, instead of insisting on importing non-fitting ‘alien’ theories and practices.

The first two papers in this special issue focus on foreign language assessment, an area usually neglected in the Turkish educational system (see Hatipoğlu 2010, 2015, 2016, 2017; Haznedar 2012; Köksal 2004). Nilüfer Can Daşkın shows us how new frameworks, scales, collaborative work and slight adjustments can help us move away from the static and usually fruitless testing practices that are employed in foreign language classrooms in Turkey. Serpil Öz and Derin Atay’s article reminds us of the importance of language assessment training and how the lack of it can hinder and obscure classroom assessment practices.

The following two papers discuss the importance of teachers’ underlying beliefs and assumptions for the success of teacher training programs as well as foreign language teaching practices. Çiler Hatipoğlu asks pre-service teachers at different stages of their training (i.e., in the middle and at the end) to comment and evaluate the usefulness of introductory linguistics courses in consolidating and furthering their language competences. She tries to understand what they like, find useful and necessary about them but she also aims to uncover what else could be done to make those courses more beneficial for the students in the Foreign Language Teaching programs in Turkey. Another paper that focuses on teachers’ beliefs is the one authored by Hasibe Kahraman. After showing how important teachers’ beliefs are and how much they influence what is happening in language classrooms, she presents an innovative scale aiming to be a reliable and valid predictor of the sources that might influence prospective teachers’ teaching beliefs.

Çağla Atmaca examines other two “burning issues” in the ELT field, i.e., in-service teachers’ job satisfaction and burnout. Adopting an explanatory research design, and collecting rich and multifaceted data, Atmaca is able to uncover the real experiences of foreign language teachers in the “‘pressure cooker’ known as classroom” (Block & Grady, 2002). This unparalleled look into teachers’ everyday lives allows her to uncover the causes that might lead to burnout among English teachers on one hand, and on the other, to elicit teachers’ suggestions related to the prevention of teacher burnout and possible ways of increasing their job satisfaction.

Fatma Gümüşok and Nevin Bilger show us what happens in pre-service post-practice/micro teaching feedback sessions and look at them from a linguistics framework perspective. Fatma Gümüşok tells us that to cope with criticism Turkish pre-service teachers blend negative and positive politeness strategies; and change the weight of each of those from context to context. Nevin Bilger, uses the Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) and the National Cultures Model (Hofstede 1991) as her theoretical frameworks and examines the characteristics of the evaluative language employed by pre-service teachers after their microteaching sessions. While those two authors show us how linguistic and cultural theories can be used to support and enhance teacher training in pre-service foreign language programs in Turkey, the last paper authored by Pinar Yeni examines official documents within the Critical Discourse Analysis framework and tries to identify how opposing stances linger and combine in the background to present a standpoint difficult to interpret in the foreground.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the authors who contributed to this issue. I want to say thank you for their hard work, meticulous analysis and carefully drawn conclusions. I also want to congratulate them for their courage to tackle difficult and multifaceted but essential problems related to foreign language teaching in our country.

I would like to thank all reviewers for their detailed and constructive feedback on the papers in this issue and let them know that without their hard work the papers would not have reached their full potential.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank the whole editorial board of the *ELT Research Journal* and in particular Prof. Dr. Dinçay Köksal for providing the researchers who contributed to this issue with a platform to share their work and for giving me the opportunity to work with them on this special issue.

We, as a team, hope that the papers in this issue will assist those who are looking for answers for some of the difficult questions in our field; we also hope that the papers in this issue will encourage further research and cooperation in the areas touched upon in this issue and will lead to the advancement of those areas.

Çiler Hatipoğlu

Special Issue Editor

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