

## Editor's Preface

**Mustafa Kirca**

Editor-in-Chief

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We are honored to present the 15/2 issue of the *Çankaya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. This issue has been prepared as a Festschrift issue honoring Assoc. Prof. Dr. Joshua Bear, our "Joshua Hoca," whose decades-long career as a model professor and researcher has had an immense influence not only on his field of expertise in applied linguistics and English language teaching but also on the lives and careers of a considerable number of students who have been lucky enough through all these years to benefit from his experience and mentorship. Dr. Bear began his career in Turkey in the 1960s, when English Language Teaching was gaining considerable significance and going through distinct developments. This was a time when respected institutions of higher education in Turkey were adopting English as a medium of instruction to make sure their graduates were highly qualified professionals who were also highly proficient in English. Middle East Technical University (METU) was one of the leading institutions laying the groundwork for such developments. The "METU English Language Preparatory Division," later called the "METU English Language Preparatory School," was founded in 1961. Dr. Bear was among a handful of professionals who made significant contributions to the development of English Language Teaching in this school, which later set a very good example to preparatory schools founded by other higher education institutions. Dr. Bear's scholarship and exceptional teaching style both in this School and in the METU Department of Foreign Language Education, where he spent most of his later career, have widely influenced generations of language teachers and language and linguistics scholars. We, as his students and colleagues, would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Joshua Bear by dedicating this issue to him.

It is our privilege to give place in this issue to articles which maintain fruitful discussions on language teaching and learning. As in our earlier issues, we continue to cover valuable studies at the intersection of language, linguistics, ELT, language teaching, teacher training, and corpus studies. We are certain the present volume will stimulate further research in these fields. We hope our readers enjoy this issue in honor of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Joshua Bear's valuable contributions to language teaching and applied linguistics.

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The editor-in-chief would like to thank all the authors wholeheartedly for their scholarly contributions and for their collaboration throughout and our referees for their reviews and valuable comments. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Bilal Kırkıcı and Dr. Seher Balbay from Middle East Technical University for their valuable contributions as the guest editors for this issue.

We, as the Editorial Board of the *Çankaya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, would like to thank the Board of Trustees and the Presidency of Çankaya University, and the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for their continuous support.

## **Editorial Preface to the Festschrift Issue Honoring Assoc. Prof. Dr. Joshua Bear**

**Bilal Kırkıcı  
Seher Balbay**

Guest Editors

Middle East Technical University, Turkey

As the guest editors of this issue of the *Çankaya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, we would like to express our gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Joshua Bear, our dear “Joshua Hoca,” for his unique contributions across the years to many a language teacher, linguist, and teacher trainer.

With his exceptional teaching style, especially when developing our ability to more fully penetrate the complexity of texts through discourse analysis and when interpreting and integrating culture laden material into English Language Teaching, he has left an indelible mark on generations of students and young scholars. Joshua Hoca was a rare gem for his students, who were privileged to attend his classes because he was extraordinary as a teacher in his approach to language related materials. It was not uncommon for him to integrate the script on a board marker or Nescafé sachet, an advertising slogan, the name of a grocery store, a shampoo label or newspaper articles into his class. He not only tried to improve our comprehension, but tried to make us aware of the process of comprehension, i.e., how we make sense out of an utterance. His approach to dealing with texts was so original that we referred to it as the Joshua Hoca Method. For those who could contribute to this special issue dedicated to him and for many more of his former students and mentees, it was eye-opening to analyze authentic, real-life language and touch upon the potential culture-driven factors behind language production choices. His students were not theoretically introduced to reading strategies, but rather were actively engaged in a critical reading exercise employing strategies first-hand, guided through his questions that are still disregarded in typical reading comprehension textbooks designed for second language learners.

It was quite usual for his native Turkish students to learn about a specific Turkish cultural practice or the etymology of Turkish expressions or practices in one of his classes or while chatting during a break. Among others, his dexterity in the Turkish language was another contributing factor to his outstanding teaching methods and still leaves us in awe. In his translation courses we were made more aware of the extra-textual information which had to be conveyed in order to make a translation more accurate.

Joshua Hoca has been a role model in the theory and practice of language, its teaching and its use with his distinctive approach to essentially everything language-related, and has left an enduring legacy to us, which helps mold the way we read, interpret and teach. Many of Joshua Hoca's students have become devoted language teachers themselves, teaching at different educational levels, yet always enjoying the zest of dealing with language, be it English, Turkish or other languages. As the special issue guest editors, we believe we can speak for all the contributors of this issue when we state that it is Joshua Hoca's contagious enthusiasm while teaching that has inspired his students and colleagues alike. We hope to disseminate his motivation to teach, honoring Joshua Hoca's commitments to his profession by dedicating this issue to him.



Thank you, Joshua Hocam, for being resourceful at all times whenever we approached you with questions, and thank you for not letting us leave our conversations with fixed answers, but with even more and better informed questions. It is our pleasure and privilege to pass on the inspiration, friendship and guidance you have granted to our students and student teachers over the years, and we hope you enjoy this special issue in honor of your valuable contributions.