Meeting in the Center: Writing Centers in Turkey
Dear Colleagues,

This year is the 15th anniversary of our Academic Writing Center and we wanted to celebrate this by bringing together all language professionals interested in academic writing center work under the conference theme ‘Meeting in the Center: Writing Centers in Turkey’. We hope to meet the writing center professionals of all academic writing centers in Turkey as well as everyone who plans to establish a writing center in their institution in the near future. We aim to provide an opportunity for researchers and practitioners to present different perspectives in the field and to contribute to the continual growth and progress of writing centers. We thank you for sharing your writing center stories, practical ideas, theoretical insights, and questions, and hope they will stimulate discussion on current writing center theory and practice in EFL contexts and allow us to draw the route maps to give direction to writing center work in Turkey.

Deniz Saydam & Cahide Çavuşoğlu
Conference Organizers
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We express our deepest gratitude to our sponsors for their support to the conference.
OUR PLENARY SPEAKER

DİLEK TOKAY

Dilek Tokay, a freelance in education management and a scholar in curriculum design, materials production, professional development, writing across the curriculum [WAC], and Writing Center work after her retirement from Sabancı University Writing Center in January 2014, has been serving for the European Writing Centers Association [EWCA] as a senior Board member, instrumental in its inception and growth since 2001; past President [2005-2007] and a webmaster for its home website [2003-2014] as well as EWCA 2005 and EWCA 2006 Conference websites.

Tokay started her career as an instructor at the Middle East Technical University [METU], School of Foreign Languages and served within the years 1970-1983 as materials producer, curriculum designer and elected Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, as well as University Council “instructor” representative. Having received her M.A and continued her Doctorate studies in English Literature at Hacettepe University while she was at METU, she received certificates from Sussex, Stirling, and Brighton Universities [UK] in interactive classroom methodologies and use of audio-visuals/media in ELT.

When she transferred to Boğaziçi University in 1983 where she would work until 1999, she was to undertake responsibilities as an instructor, curriculum designer, materials producer, teacher trainer, PD facilitator for the Royal Society of Arts [RSA] Diploma Course [1984-1989] at the School of Foreign Languages, Curriculum Committee. She coordinated the Advanced English Program and taught English through Literature/ Expository Writing at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences/ Western Languages and Literatures.

Tokay’s love of interdisciplinary work, discourse mobility, project management, networking, and outreach brought her to Sabancı University [SU] where she served as Freshman and MBA English curriculum designer and instructor at SU School of Languages in the period 1999-2001. Taking an active role in the foundation of SU Writing Center, she served as Undergraduate & Outreach Programs Coordinator in 2000-2014 and Writing Center Webmaster in the period 2002-2011.

Methodology in English language skills development; curriculum design with high focus on learning outcomes; materials production; professional development; teaching of English through literature; critical thinking and expository writing; philosophy and pedagogy of Writing Center work including linkages between Secondary and Higher Education writing curricula; and international networking have been Dilek

Tokay, a graduate of ÜAL [Class‘64], is a member of numerous organizations & associations. Highly valuing the JOY of hard work and creating & developing together, she’s been honored with the IWCA 2010 Muriel Harris Award for her sustained dedication to the European Writing Centers Association, as well as being the recipient of 2010 Sabanci University Outstanding Work Award for her contributions to SU Writing Center.

References:
Website: http://myweb.sabanciuniv.edu/dilekt
LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/pub/dilek-tokay/6/7b7/585
http://writingprogramsworldwide.ucdavis.edu/index.php/turkey/
Writing Programs Worldwide: Profiles of Academic Writing in Many Places: An anthology to capture the emerging writing programs and initiatives at 40 different universities in six different continents, through the essays of which we can describe the struggles and success of shaping writing programs.
Chapter 36, A Writing Center Journey, Dilek Tokay

Dilek Tokay’s Keynote Address:

The METU Writing Centers Conference keynote address will focus on reasons for and steps in establishing writing centers; their institutional and societal mission, vision, kind, and composition, considering linkages with academic and administrative entities within an institution and beyond.

Possible “inreach” and “outreach” programs at different levels of sophistication, designed after “needs analysis”, and a variety of teaching-learning activities, as well as assessment techniques will be discussed together with “10 MUSTS” observed and experienced in the “to DO” lists of many 10-60 year old international writing centers, allowing space for “CHANGE”.

Including the need as well as the obstacles for Writing in the Disciplines [WID] and Writing across the Disciplines [WAC] at both Primary & Secondary and Higher Education levels in Turkey, a SWOT Analysis of Writing Centers will be presented and shared with scrutiny for institutionalization and internationalization to promote sustainable growth and ever-growing excellence of these centers, still to be well comprehended and bloomed in Turkey.

Emphasis will be on “DREAM - BUILD - SUSTAIN” models with collaborative efforts and JOY, making tools of “Professional Development” work among the senior and junior members, appreciating the
contributions of both the visionary and logistics persons, prioritizing tutor-training and tutor exchange to enhance “learning by doing” and allowing discourse mobility.

In this presentation of a brief holistic picture about the WHY, WHERE, WHEN, HOW of writing centers, the message will be: “If your educational role makes you set your mind solidly in youngsters and even adults’ better analysis; better critical thinking and expression—verbally, visually, and numerically—all definitely creatively—you need to have a deep confidence in the power and value of writing centers, may the wording vary somehow."
Istanbul Sehir University is a young private English-medium university in Istanbul, Turkey. All students are non-native speakers of English, most are Turkish L1 with the balance native of more than a dozen other languages from neighbors in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Most of Sehir Master’s students must write an English dissertation and the Academic Writing Center (AWC), housed within the university’s graduate institute, is explicitly set up to help students with this challenge. To date (February 2016), some seventy Master’s students have completed their degree. All students at Sehir receive a computer and write using MSWord. AWC protocol collects these documents (proposals, chapter drafts, and full submissions), leading to a data set of more than 30,000 pages of longitudinal dissertation writing, including students who received AWC assistance (AWC interventions were in the form of “didactic editing” (Burrough-Boenisch, 2013) and “control” students who wrote without AWC assistance. Using a variety of objective and reproducible measurements (grammar, mechanics, style, plagiarism, minor/major corrections as an outcome of the defense presentation, time-to-complete, and on-time completion) students’ dissertations were compared. Thirty-five students with AWC intervention from the beginning until final acceptance were compared to an equal-sized control group over the same two-year period. Writing was compared new draft production to new draft production over the period, with a minimum of eight writing samples. Results showed AWC interventions improved writing by over 50% in grammar, mechanics, style, and plagiarism when compared to the control group. The more frequent the interventions, the greater the improvements seen, with no plateau observed. Also, 77% of the students who completed within the allocated time used the AWC. Concluding AWC intervention students learned how to achieve a higher quality and timelier dissertation.

David R. Albachten received his BS and MA from the University of California and The University of Iowa, respectively. He taught in the Preparatory Program at Boğaziçi and Şehir’s Preparatory Program before starting the Academic Writing Center and Graduate Writing Program. In 2011 David began extensive research into preparatory, freshman, and graduate student academic writing, surveying nearly 1,000,000 pages of student writing, and since has been a regular presenter at national and international ELT/Writing conferences in Turkey, Europe, the USA, and Asia. He is an internationally certified IELTS writing and speaking examiner, as well as an IELTS MasterClass trainer.
Challenges in academic writing

Sinem Bezircilioğlu, Dr.

This proposal focuses on the difficulties that a graduate student has undergone while writing her master dissertation. These difficulties are related to her being a science student as well. As academic writing is a significant part of their career, scientists must be good at writing. Considering this fact, at Izmir Institute of Technology, Academic Writing Centre assists graduate students to improve their skills in dissertation and article writing. The problems in the dissertation of the master student are related to sentence structure, paraphrasing when referencing. As the coordinator of the Academic Writing Center, I studied with the student in person just focusing on the written work she brings for the tutorial, which I found completely insufficient. Being the students of a technical university, they have difficulty in writing both in their mother tongue and in English. On the other hand, they must cope with this difficulty due to the fact that as a significant part of their academic career, they are expected to review the required literature for their studies, which means a lot of reading and they are supposed to write articles for scholarly journals in order to convey the studies they made. One of the most important functions of writing in their lives is communication as clearly seen. Unless an intensive writing course for graduate students given by the Writing Center is prepared, writing discipline cannot be achieved. Enabling the students to focus on writing process is related to the psychological aspect of writing. Writing is a process which is the product of the intense concentration of an individual. Accordingly, students must be encouraged to believe that they can accomplish this task which requires concentration and enthusiasm. The fact that writing is a voyage to one’s inner world should be kept in mind no matter which subject is being taught. There is a common misconception that perfect grammar means perfect writing; nonetheless, writing is something holistic, which means there should be coherence and cohesion, communicative value, the writer’s identity on the paper. Therefore, writing cannot be said to be a mechanical system based on the product; on the contrary, it is a process which can be shaped by creativity, discussion, reading, and critical thinking.

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Sinem Bezircilioğlu graduated from Dokuz Eylül University English Language Teaching Department in 2000. Following her BA, she completed her MA in 2004 and her PhD in 2008 at the same department. She started her teaching career as an instructor at the School of Foreign Languages, İzmir Institute of Technology in 2000. After working in different positions between 2000 and 2013, she became the director of the School of Foreign Languages. She has been the coordinator of the Academic Writing Center since 2011. She is teaching academic writing and technical writing courses at the faculties.
Adjustment of Feedback on Postgraduate Writing to Optimize Uptake

Filiz ETİZ

The importance of written feedback on L2 student writing is widely accepted. What seems to be unclear is which form of feedback proves to be most effective. In tertiary education settings where the medium of instruction is English, instructors of academic writing are also challenged with making decisions in prioritizing between genre-specific and L2-specific feedback. Despite the fact that genre-specific and language-specific feedback is constantly given to student writing, much of the end-product still includes mistakes ranging from minor grammatical errors to major genre-specific problems. This study was carried out to determine to what extent postgraduate students revise their drafts according to the feedback given on their writing. A number of essays were collected at the end of the semester, consisting of a first draft with instructor feedback and a second final draft produced according to this feedback. Types of written feedback provided by the instructor were examined and were related to the quality of response given by students in their final draft. Taking the findings of this examination into consideration, ways by which written feedback on postgraduate student writing can be adjusted in order to optimize student uptake were identified.

Filiz Etiz works as an instructor of English at the Department of Modern Languages, and as a tutor at the Academic Writing Center at the Middle East Technical University. She teaches academic reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills both at undergraduate and graduate levels. She holds two BA degrees, one in Translation-Interpretation (Hacettepe University), and the other in Spanish Language and Literature (Ankara University). She also holds an MA in Foreign Language Teaching (Ankara University), and her PhD studies in ELT (METU) are still in progress. Her interests are teacher development, the assessment of speaking, and graduate writing.
 Established in Spring 2010, the Istanbul Technical University Academic Writing Center (AWC) is a student-centered center aiming to help the English Preparatory students improve their academic writing skills by meeting their individualized learning needs. The AWC encourages its English prep students to improve and explore their writing abilities by contributing to them becoming autonomous learners. Primarily utilized by students, it also serves to support teachers’ needs and administrative requests.

With two members of staff (full-time teachers, one Turkish, one native-English speaker), the AWC serves up to 3,000 students and offers one-on-one tutoring, skill-based seminars and multi-tiered workshops, creative writing sessions, and an online publication ‘Bee Writer.’

While the academic target of the Center is increasing student confidence in writing cause-effect and compare-contrast essays by the end of the year, the overall target is to foster a relationship with writing, by encouraging ease in academic writing in a foreign language. With a growing social media presence, the AWC utilizes the most popular tools used by students to help the Center regarding outreach, create a space for student interaction, and establish an arena for students to also sign-up for in-house seminars. The Center maintains a multi-functional website that is used for not only announcements but also a source for useful links and additional resources. However, in addition to its successes, ITU’s Academic Writing Center also faces its fair share of challenges, similar to other academic writing centers throughout Turkey, primarily stemming from the lack of staff, office hours, and funding needed to fully execute projects and tutoring to their maximum potential. Despite these issues, the Writing Center strives to achieve the goals set forward each academic term, while fully utilizing the limited resources provided.

İlknur Karaman Ada has been working at ITU for ten years, primarily as an instructor and simultaneously running the university’s Writing Center, which she founded and launched in 2010. The introduction of the online student-led publication ‘Bee Writer’ has been the highlight of the Center, and its success has been instrumental for the preparatory program. She also regularly serves in an advisory role to the campus library. In her spare time, she volunteered for education-based NGOs, such as TEGV and TOG. She is also undertaking a PhD in English Language Teaching, focusing on blended learning (educational technology) at Istanbul University.

Athina W. Tesfa-Yohannes has been working at ITU since 2012, and in the Writing Center since fall 2015. She also teaches in the university’s Continuing Education program, which offers IELTS and TOEFL courses to adults. Before ITU, she worked as a Research Specialist in a Turkish think tank, working on the regions of the Balkans, United States, and the Horn of Africa. She spent 5 months working in Brussels as a Balkans intern in a conflict-resolution NGO. She finished a master’s in International Studies, and has bachelor’s in American Studies (with a minor in French Language and Literature).
Academic Writing in Turkey: An Investigation of Dissertations and Theses

Ziya Toprak, Dr. (ziya.toprak@boun.edu.tr)

The interest in graduate studies has been on a sharp increase for a decade and more in Turkey. The number of graduate students in 2000 was 86,807 (65,068 Masters Students and 21,739 students in doctoral education) whereas the number has grown into 420,324 (342,101 Masters students and 78,223 doctoral students) in 2014 (OSYM, 2000; YOK, 2015). The numbers clearly show that there is a growing interest on the expansion graduate studies. However, what we see from these numbers is the quantitative expansion of graduate studies. The question of quality of the expansion remains a mystery since there is not much research about the nature of this expansion. This study holds the idea that the best place to watch the quality of this expansion is to analyze the end product. In the case of graduate studies the end product is writing, i.e. theses and dissertations. By using Ithenticate.com (an electronic plagiarism detector, EPD), this study investigates the originality of master thesis and doctoral dissertations. The idea of originality is vital to research, and thesis writing processes. Moreover, most of the institutions expect theses to have a part where the original contribution of research is explained. Ithenticate.com is a service prepared by the Turnitin, the leading EPD, that analyzes the similarity index of an uploaded text. For this study, randomly selected 320 theses and dissertations, written in 2005-2015 were uploaded to Ithenticate.com. Results indicate that theses and dissertations have similarity index of 26.28%, which is almost twice of the critical rate 15%. In this regard, the paper does not conclude that theses and dissertations are plagiarized, despite the fact that many of them are, but rather offers that graduate students simply do not know to write. The study argues that the current conceptualization of writing by writing centers at the universities in Turkey is insufficient, since most of them see writing as a matter of technicality, grammar and style. The study concludes that academic writing studies need a rhetorical genre approach both theoretically and practically.

Ziya Toprak is a researcher at the Centre for Educational Policy Studies, Boğaziçi University. Ziya is currently conducting a research on the state of academic writing in Turkey. In this respect, he is investigating the quality and originality of dissertations and theses written in the field of social sciences. Having received his PhD from McGill University, Canada, he is studying on his second PhD from Boğaziçi University, Istanbul. His research interests are academic writing, neoliberalization of the Turkish Education System and critical discourse and school studies.
Multiple interrelating factors influencing university students’ academic writing practices in English

Derya Altınmakas

In EFL contexts, attaining a desired level of competence and fluency in academic writing is of vital importance for university students majoring in English-medium undergraduate programs because students’ academic achievements are determined by the texts they produce in English. When Turkish context is considered, it is observed that university students experience difficulties with academic writing when they start their undergraduate studies. Academic writing generally poses frustration on university students as they try to accommodate their existing writing knowledge and experience to the requirements of the new discipline-specific writing and learning situation of tertiary level education, and the challenges are doubled with a combination of linguistic, educational, and contextual factors. The paper will present and discuss the results of an unpublished PhD dissertation on the educational and contextual factors influencing university students’ academic writing practices (Altınmakas, 2015). The study investigated how students’ previous L1 and L2 writing experiences, and contextual factors (i.e. university setting, course requirements, disciplinary-specific text genres, and expectations of faculty members) exert influence on students’ academic writing practices in English at university. The participants of the study were nineteen undergraduate students (12 freshman year and 7 senior year), three EFL teachers, and six faculty members. Upon questionnaires surveying students’ previous L1 and L2 writing experiences and teachers’ general attitudes to writing and teaching of writing, a series of semi-structured interviews and a focus group interview were conducted with the participants. Document analysis of the existing curricula was used as supplementary data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the writing situation in Turkey. The findings revealed that university students’ academic writing practices in English are influenced by an array of multiple interrelating factors, and the present paper will particularly discuss the following factors: (1) local educational value attached to teaching of writing both in L1 and L2 classrooms, (2) the amount and nature of L1 and L2 writing instruction and experience, (3) and teachers’ approaches to teaching of writing and their conceptualizations of academic writing, (4) students’ perceptions about academic writing and disciplinary-specific text genres, (5) prolonged engagement with the academic context and discourse. The insights gained from the study have important implications for academic writing practices of university students in Turkey. Altınmakas, D. (2015). Dynamic interaction of factors influencing university students’ academic writing practices in English: A case study in Turkey. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Boğaziçi University, Istanbul.

Derya Altınmakas (d.altinmakas@iku.edu.tr) is an assistant professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Istanbul Kültür University, where she teaches undergraduate courses on linguistics, cultural studies, academic writing, research, and presentation skills. She received her MA degree in British Cultural Studies and ELT from the University of Warwick, and her Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education from Boğaziçi University. Her research interests include writing in foreign/second language, academic writing, academic literacies, English as Lingua Franca (ELF), World Englishes, and EFL teacher education.
Gorillas in the room: Waking up to my blindness

Murat Aydın

Being a writing center tutor is certainly different from being in a classroom (Simard, 1984) in terms of content, task types, interaction, and environment, and tutors may develop different biases along the way. Harris (1986) draws attention to this fact by asking very specific questions. Thus, it requires a separate set of criteria for evaluating ourselves if professional development is aimed. Since tutors are prone to biases as in any other profession, sometimes it is a good idea to reflect on our tutoring (Kottler, Zehm, & Kottler, 2005) in order to do some spring-cleaning along the way. Over the six years I have been a writing center tutor, I have changed considerably. When compared to my early days at the Middle East Technical University Writing Center, I gained invaluable experience in my relations with clients. However, I have grown some biases as well during this time. This presentation will deal with a self-assessment of these biases, which can be categorized as technical (pedagogical side) and social (personal and interpersonal side) biases, which will be explained with the help of relevant literature and exemplified through personal experience. The presentation will also include the solutions I employ in fighting these biases. This second part of the presentation will take into account the various strategies that are used and that need to be considered. For example, I believe that my strongest asset as a writing center tutor is the genuine interest I show both in the person I am working with and in the subject matter at hand during the session with the client. Significance of the presentation: Self-evaluation is valuable for any teacher, experienced or new, and it is an ongoing process for teachers to update themselves. During this process, it is critical to see and acknowledge that one has biases if we want to best serve our clients in the writing center. The solutions to offset these biases, I believe, will be a motivation for other tutors. But, most importantly, I have benefited from this reflection to become a better tutor.

Murat Aydın has been an English instructor for 19 years. Since 2007 he has worked in the Modern Languages Department of METU. He has been a regular tutor in the METU AWC since 2008. His professional interests include testing, writing, and self-development.
I propose to consider the roles, possibilities, and obstacles of writing centers in English-medium universities in Turkey. I build on experiences and observations drawn from working in the writing center at Bilkent University, from teaching writing-intensive classes to students at every level in the university, as well as from participating in an ongoing colloquium series on writing across the curriculum at Bilkent. I use the word problem in at least two senses. The first is the more positive sense of that which incites us to think more—specifically here, to reconsider how we approach the pedagogical task of writing in university settings, both in writing centers, but also in writing-focused classes across the curriculum, and how this reconsideration might push us to transform, as universities, our teaching practices to create more coherent and effective approaches to university writing. The second sense is the more familiar, negative sense; here, I wish to explore the ways in which aspects of current practices (e.g., overreliance on rigidly formulaic prescriptions or templates, unreasonable idiosyncrasies in our approaches, the reproduction or rewarding of unequal access to a quality pre-university writing and language education) may not be as helpful as possible for creating better student writers. I outline a number of working ideas for how universities might address these problems, namely by deciding on institution-specific approaches to writing and working across different spaces within the university to encourage teaching standards (within reason) for such approaches.

John Day began working in a writing center in his second year as an undergraduate, having been nominated by a writing professor to work as a peer tutor, and has maintained an interest in teaching writing since. He holds a PhD (2013) in Social Anthropology, and has been working at Bilkent for the last four years, teaching composition courses to undergraduates of all levels and working at Bilkent’s writing center. He also teaches part-time courses in Political Science, all of which involve a strong writing component. Additionally, he participates in seminars on academic writing for doctoral students at Bilkent, and has initiated an ongoing colloquium series, “Writing Matters”, that brings together faculty and students of all levels to think carefully about writing pedagogy at Bilkent. Skilled in Turkish, and with a strong interest in linguistics, he is also interested in translation, as well as in the particularities of working with writers whose first language is Turkish.
Writing in the Disciplines: Aiding Discipline Specific Writing with a Data Driven learning Approach

Elif Demirel

Writing in the disciplines is a challenging task for specifically novice non-native researchers. The challenge arises from not only using generic academic vocabulary, but also specialized vocabulary in an appropriate way. It is usually the case that, writers of discipline specific research articles use English with the help of only their previous general English education. However, they usually do not receive any assistance in using English in a discipline specific manner. By examining articles in a specific discipline; that of landscape architecture, this study aims at providing assistance for non-native researchers of landscape architecture in using both generic and specialized vocabulary effectively. For this purpose, the study examines the extent to which different subtopics in landscape architecture share discipline specific vocabulary. The study uses a corpus based approach for the analysis and comparison of discipline specific vocabulary. In this way, the study aims at promoting the understanding of variation or the extent of homogeneity in discipline specific writing and to aid the novice writers of research articles in the field in using discipline specific vocabulary. A corpus consisting of articles from 39 journals in the field from 7 subtopics was compiled for the study. The corpus was used to determine the generic and specialized vocabulary in order to aid the writing of research articles in the field by novice researchers. The frequent lexical bundles and words were compared across the subtopics to detect the level of homogeneity within the discipline in terms of the use of generic and specialized vocabulary. The obtained uses of generic and specialized vocabulary were then used in the design of a discipline specific writing guide which uses a data driven learning model. Expert and novice writers from the field of landscape architecture were then presented the writing guide and they were interviewed on their attitudes towards using a data driven learning approach.

Elif Demirel is an Assistant Professor at Karadeniz technical University Department of English Language and Literature. She completed her PhD dissertation on academic writing and feedback in 2009 at Middle East technical University. She carried out post graduate research in the USA under the supervision of Prof. Douglas Biber on Corpus Linguistics at Northern Arizona University. She holds Masters degrees from Bilkent university MA-TEFL program and from Northern Arizona University Applied Linguistics Program. She currently teaches academic writing, applied linguistics and corpus linguistics courses at undergraduate and graduate level at Karadeniz Technical University, English Language and Literature Department. She is the coordinator of the Departmental Writing Center. Her research interests include corpus linguistics and second language writing.
Help in need is help indeed: Why do we need a writing center?

Gamze Oncul, Ph.D.

Like in many other English-medium university settings in Turkey and all around the world, first year EAP courses offered by Modern Languages Program of School of Foreign Languages at Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus are mainly designed with students' academic writing needs in mind. However, narrowing down those needs into manageable course objectives and/or catering for individual and/or department specific needs is not an easy task. What’s more, challenges caused by the disengagement between the disciplinary faculty and EAP instructors, mismatching perceptions, unspoken needs, and students’ lack of motivation and/or not being ready for academic writing instruction add to the complexity of the situation. This paper aims to present a case study conducted through semi-structured interviews with the disciplinary faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students at METU, NCC aiming to identify the extent to which there is a need for a writing center on the campus. It argues that a writing center may well serve to cater for individual and department specific academic writing needs, to bridge the gaps, to engage the disengaged, and above all, to offer the right help at the right time.

Gamze Öncül, Ph.D. teaches English for Academic Purposes at Middle East Technical University, Northern Cyprus Campus. She has more than 20 years’ teaching experience in the field. Her research interests include academic writing, material development, and testing.
Writing in Medicine with Challenges and Recommendations: Alarm Bells Started to Ring

Neslihan O. ÖZDEMİR

“If you don't have integrity, you have nothing. You can't buy it. You can have all the money in the world, but if you are not a moral and ethical [writer], you really have nothing.” Henry Kravis Read

As an ESP practitioner in the Faculty of Medicine, in this presentation, I aim to share my experience regarding under-graduate medical students’ attempts for research writing as a part of a pilot course on discipline specific writing in medical education (n=20). The focus in my talk is discussing unexpected problems medical students encountered not only in writing but also in their research process, their training experience about the significance of research ethics and how to avoid plagiarism and the need for collaboration among faculty members, i.e., medical specialists, ESP practitioner and medical students. Unfortunately, we should accept and face that as a developing country, we have several problems that put us behind worldwide, and I am willing to discuss them openly in the context of writing. For example, while writing, as academics, we tend to discuss and provide feedback on the sentences, grammar, word choice, cohesion, content and deadlines rather than research ethics, plagiarism and the importance of collaborative work, which, I think, hinders the development of academic culture in Turkey since our under-graduate education. As a remedy, to promote critical thinking, medical students have had training, such as reviewing each other’s research proposal as peer-feedback and keeping a research journal to assess themselves. However, medical students faced the chill wind of writing due to hectic course schedules, the need for additional courses to support their writing and lack of collaboration, team work and research culture, which calls for revisiting our academic culture, education goals and programs to move forward in the international academic community. Given that being a writer and awareness of responsibilities as an ethical researcher takes a lot of effort, we should start from educating young researchers as a step to stop the alarm bells through writing centers.

Neslihan Önder Özdemir is coordinating and teaching medical English courses in the Faculty of Medicine at Uludağ University in Turkey. She has had her post-graduate education on ESP in the UK. Her main research interests are ESP, EAP, medical discourse, writing, critical needs analysis, testing in ESP, research ethics and plagiarism.
Gender Role as a Self-Expression in Academic Writing Discourses

Büşra ÇINAR

This study presented an analysis and evaluation of female academic writing in linguistics, literature and foreign languages, through the light of works of literature, writing theories and the concept of écriture féminine. The concept of écriture féminine firstly used by Hélène Cixous was studied in the field of academic female writing through accepting the writing process as a gendered issue. This study aimed to present the fact that cultural identities and environmental factors affect the writing process, especially female writing process. The force and pressure of society on language, cultural barriers and prejudices play an effective and important role in the writing process and the last phases of naming it. Because taking the authority for the writing process and action is a very difficult role and responsibility for a woman actually. Social barriers such as borders of traditions limit the use of language of women and women’s writing. This study also intended to determine the relationship between gender discrimination in academic writing and the language itself. Language as a living structure is an established, constructed and gendered concept. Therefore, it brings the gender differences with itself. As a result, writing process in a foreign language or native language becomes a gender issue itself. Differences of female use in language turn into different literary forms and products as a self-expression at the end of the internalization process of writing for every different woman. This concept of gender role in writing was described through the fact that writing is a quest for and discovering who you are, especially for women. In this context, the study declared the fact that female writing is still a non-traditional act and role, and it is doing beyond conventions and traditions.

Büşra Çınar has been working as a lecturer in Applied English and Translation Department in Istanbul Aydin University for two years. She graduated from Istanbul University, English Language and Literature Department in 2012. She is a postgraduate student in dissertation process in Istanbul Bilgi University, Comparative Literature Department now. Her field of thesis study is “The Disability of Women as a Burden in the Vicious Circle of Patriarchal Order”. Her academic publications are: “A Performative View of Gender Roles: Judith Butler”. International Journal of Media, Culture and Literature. Year.1/Number.1. “Gender Differences in Language Learning”. Second International Conference on English Language Teaching in Higher Education. 9-10 April 2015. Istanbul Aydin University
A Huge Stack of Marking: Learner Centred Feedback for Writing

Katy Muench & Kathy Panton

It’s frustrating for both teachers and learners when similar errors are repeated again and again. This prevents students from developing beyond basic writing skills, as well as adding significantly to the teacher’s workload. The workshop will address practical ways of marking writing and giving feedback that put the onus back onto the student to help them to notice their own errors. Areas to be covered will include:

1. **Student Habits.** Students should have systems and techniques for strengthening their language and written fluency, and also for avoiding the repetition of errors. It is the student's job to have these habits in place but it is the teacher's job to suggest them to the students.

2. **Peer Feedback.** Peer editing is a well-known (though often badly used) technique. Using peer editing correctly, and also going beyond editing to peer feedback, is vital. Peers can feed back to each other in ways that teachers cannot, and their feedback can be genuine, rather than the more artificial classroom environment.

3. **Marking.** Too many teachers write out full corrections onto essays and somehow expect that doing so will magically make the student suddenly write better the next time. Instead of doing this, there are several valuable changes teachers can make to their marking strategies which will ensure that feedback is noticed, valued, used, and applied. Techniques to be discussed will include:
   a. Different ways of highlighting different errors
   b. Motivational strategies to encourage students to self-correct
   c. Comparing the effects of strong/weak language on the reader.
   d. Applying past error correction to future papers: practical techniques

Many teachers rarely give personal and valuable feedback, due to demands from curriculum or large classes making it seem impossible to do it more often. Teachers also tend to fall into habits about their marking and should regularly consider different techniques for offering feedback. It is vital to remember that no one system is perfect. The best system is flexible and changes according to the needs of the students. The workshop will include both discussions about methods of marking and giving feedback, as well as giving participants a chance to try out the techniques shared.

**Katy Muench** started her career as a journalist but moved onto teaching English and has been teaching for nine years. She has taught in the UK and Poland and is currently an instructor at Istanbul Technical University. She also works as a teacher trainer, Cambridge speaking examiner, and is half way through the DELTA.
Kathy Panton, who comes from Canada, works at Istanbul Technical University. She has previously taught in the Czech Republic and Hong Kong. She is also an IELTS examiner and teacher trainer.
Write, read, respond, revise, reflect

Defne Akıncı Midas & Şükran Saygı

In this session, the presenters aim to share their observations about the five steps devised into the writing materials. These steps were identified as necessary in the program evaluation project which was undertaken in 2013-2014. It was found that peer feedback and response would benefit both the students and the instructors as one of the steps in process writing. We designed the instructional materials in a way to take the students step by step through the writing process and to involve peers in the evaluation of students’ written product. A simple summary of the steps is: write, read, respond, revise and reflect. We asked the instructors to follow the steps and give us feedback. We also interviewed the students about their views of these steps. Their views seem to show that the instructional value of involving students in giving feedback is high. It does not only give an opportunity to become aware of surface mistakes. It also gives an opportunity to see alternative ways of writing the same idea, see different vocabulary and structures in use, and enjoy the content of an interesting text in L2, which matches their level. In the session, the presenters will share the materials and how the steps were developed in these materials.

Defne Akıncı Midas is a teacher at DBE at ODTÜ. She holds an M. Ed. in ELT & CALL from Manchester University, UK. She has been a teacher for 22 years. She has been a teacher trainer and a writing center coordinator. She’s written ESLP and EAP materials. She’s been involved in program evaluation and needs analysis research work. She’s currently working on curriculum change and innovation, aligning the curriculum to the CEFR, and materials development.

Şükran Saygı holds a master degree in English language teaching from Middle East Technical University. She has been in this profession for twelve years now and working at METU for the last five years. Her research interests are material development, curriculum design and professional development.
Teaching writing in class versus tutoring at the academic writing center at METU:

Focus on the clashes between the dual roles as a teacher and a tutor

Özlem Atar

The presenter aims to share her tutoring experience with colleagues working in various institutions. She will specifically focus on the clashes between her role as a full-time English teacher and her current part-time position as a tutor. While working as a teacher dealing with academic writing skills at the DBE at METU, she follows a predesigned syllabus aiming at achieving certain goals. In her writing classes, she is the authority figure who paces the classroom learning and ensures the implementation of various language and paragraph organization rules. At times, she does not hesitate to lecture on a specific grammar point that her students are expected to use in order to successfully complete a writing task. To a certain extent, she also “determines” the content of a student paragraph as she makes sure that her students are exposed to a lot of reading and listening texts on a given topic. Working as a tutor, however, she cannot control the topic a tutee brings in. It is the tutee who decides the topic, the content and the genre of a piece of writing. Therefore, the tutor feels that she must prioritize her tutee’s authorship above all other issues. In other words, she must pay meticulous attention not to “impose” her own tutor’s voice onto her tutee’s work. Indeed, in order for her to achieve her goal to assist a tutee to become an independent writer, she must be an attentive listener. In addition, she must be knowledgeable about a range of genres of writing and organization patterns. After reviewing literature on the discrepancies between teaching writing and tutoring at a writing center, the presenter will reflect on her actual tutoring practices. In doing so, she will draw on the tutoring model the center advocates, the tutee profile and the types of writing samples she has encountered.

Özlem Atar holds a master’s degree in English Language Teaching. She has taught in various institutions since her graduation from Marmara University in 2003 and started to work at Middle East Technical University in January 2014. Currently, she is teaching basic English to pre-intermediate level students. She has also been working as a tutor at the Academic Writing Center since February 2015. She is a book enthusiast and very much interested in reading on a wide range of topics in social sciences. She is pursuing a PhD in Communication Sciences. She speaks Turkish, English, Spanish and a little German.