

Language and Communication Research Around the Globe

Exploring Untested Ideas



Editor
Hüseyin Öz



Untested Ideas Research Center®

This book is a compilation of empirical quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research articles covering various aspects of the interdisciplinary study of language and communication. This edited collection of articles comes from a successful international collaboration and aims to explore untested ideas in language and communication research in a variety of areas from an international perspective. The book comprises eleven chapters divided into two parts focusing on language and communication research. Each chapter represents a stand-alone examination of research in a specific area of language and communication research. This edited collection will be of interest to a broad range of professionals seeking to engage with the latest research in the multi-faceted domain of language and communication.



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Preface

Hüseyin Öz
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Language and communication research is a multi-faceted investigation of language and its communicational functions shared in common by those who work in a broad range of teaching and research areas, including linguistics, applied linguistics, cultural studies, discourse analysis, multimodality, forensic linguistics, linguistic anthropology, philosophy, the politics of language, pragmatics, psychology, rhetoric, semiotics, and sociolinguistics. As language is integrated with various aspects of communicational activity and interactional behaviour, the interdisciplinary study of language and communication tries to promote approaches to learning and teaching without any limitation imposed by present disciplinary boundaries.

Language and Communication Research around the Globe: Exploring Untested Ideas is a compilation of empirical articles covering various aspects of the multi-faceted domain of language and communication. This edited collection of articles comes from a successful international collaboration and aims to explore untested ideas in language and communication research around the globe. This book considers two aspects of language acquisition: teaching and learning.

This book consists of eleven chapters which are divided into two sections. Part one of the book focuses on language research. Part two of the book focuses on communication research. Each section of the book presents a collection of empirical research articles. The primary objective of this book is to explore untested ideas in language and communication research.

Chapter 1 reports a study that investigated English as a foreign language (EFL) freshman students' perceptions of peer editing and the extent to which collaborative writing led to improvements in their essay writing. The participants for the study included a total of twenty-seven EFL freshman students enrolled in an English writing course at a state

university in Turkey. Peer and teacher evaluation forms, personal notes in self-editing, and a semi-structured questionnaire as well as achievement tests were used to collect data about the participants' perceptions of peer, teacher and self-revision, and writing performance. The findings revealed that EFL students had a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, and tended to correct contextual and structural errors via peer and teacher revision in addition to individual efforts such as proofreading and rewriting after the revision. The findings also indicated that the tripartite essay writing process (self-editing, peer editing, and teacher editing) significantly contributed to the writing achievement of EFL freshman students. This study concludes with some implications for EFL essay writing classes to maximize the benefits in similar contexts.

Chapter 2 is based on a study that investigated pre-service English teachers' metacognitive awareness. Since little research has been done in studying the metacognitive awareness of teachers who are required as part of their teaching to model metacognitive skills so as to help learners consider what goes on during the learning process, it was important to explore pre-service English teachers' levels of metacognitive awareness, and to determine relationships among metacognitive awareness levels and other independent variables such as gender, grade point average (GPA), and type of practice school. The Metacognitive Awareness Inventory for Teachers (MAIT) was used to collect data from 87 pre-service English teachers enrolled in an English language teaching department at a major state university in Ankara, Turkey. Findings revealed that overall, the participants had a high level of metacognitive awareness and that there were significant relationships between the components of metacognition, as well as between GPA and metacognitive awareness. However, the results did not reveal any significant differences among the metacognitive awareness levels of the participants by either gender or the type of practice school. On the basis of the evidence currently available, this study proposes that metacognitive training is beneficial for trainee teachers and that it deserves instructional time for language teachers. It is argued that further studies into practicing and prospective language teachers' metacognition are needed for a growing body of literature for the subject.

Chapter 3 presents a study that investigated professionalism in ESOL teacher education through critical incident analysis and evaluation. Currently Accreditation bodies have included professional dispositions as part of teacher preparation and candidate evaluation, yet many ESOL teacher educators are understandably confused about how to assess them in their programs. Teacher educators are charged with fostering the qualities and dispositions that will help their teacher candidates be successful in the classroom. Yet how do we change attitudes and dispositions in teacher candidates who may enter preparation programs with a mindset that will be detrimental to diverse students? This paper reflects on the authors' own practice in addressing professionalism in general and professional dispositions in particular, and suggests effective practices in addressing them, including the importance of modeling the practices during teacher training so teacher candidates can learn to apply them to their own practice. The authors use detailed descriptions, evaluations, and implications of a critical incident of an ESOL teacher candidate's field experience; offer suggestions and specific activities that can be used by teacher educators to address professionalism; and, based on their experiences as program directors, raise compelling arguments for the use of critical incident analysis and evaluation in teacher preparation programs.

Chapter 4 presents a study that provides valuable insight into the emergence of a "different self," or the L2 self, as perceived by bilinguals when learning and speaking a second language (L2). The study also describes the phenomenon of a different self (L2) perceived among bilingual speakers whose L1 is Japanese and L2 is English, or vice versa, and to discover the correlation between the L2 proficiency and such a different-self phenomenon. The central claim in this study the researcher wishes to purpose is the interrelation between the cognitive developments in an L2 and the emergence of the L2 self.

Chapter 5 presents a study that examined the impact of wikis on writing performance of English as a foreign language (EFL) students. In fact, the use of technology has become an indispensable part of current generation of students often referred to as "digital natives" across the world. To make the educational activities compatible with the present day life itself, an increasing number of universities are seeking to provide students with more flexible and innovative language learning environments through Web 2.0 technologies. One powerful

Web 2.0 tool that has recently attracted great attention in the field of second or foreign language teaching (L2) is wikis. Informed by the constructivist model of learning and by theories in L2 writing, this study aims to explore the impact of incorporating wikis into a writing course on writing performance of EFL learners. Through a quasi-experimental research design, students in the control group (n=17) received only in-class process-oriented writing instruction, and the experimental group students (n=20) integrated wiki tools into their writing process. The main data for the study were collected through writing performance pre-test and post-test. The findings indicated that using wikis had positive impact on the overall writing performance of the participants in the experimental group. This study, therefore, recommends that EFL teachers employ wikis when they seek the ways of promoting their instructional practices through technology-enhanced environments.

Chapter 6 is the first chapter of Part 2 focusing on the analysis of crisis communication during a Natural Disaster. Having learned lessons from Hurricane Katrina (and even Irene) government agencies were proactive in using the media and converged forms of communication to prepare and warn residents as super storm Sandy approached the east coast in 2012. While the storm costs are estimated in the billions, this storm will be remembered in the field of public relations and crisis communications as one in which effective communication played a significant role in saving lives and improving preparation efforts. In constructing this analysis of crisis communication, the author provides a critical analysis of crisis communication strategies and capabilities through a Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) perspective.

Chapter 7 reports a study that investigated the importance of, challenges in, and implications for developing ESOL students' intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Using semi-structured interviews, this study examined six K-12 classroom teachers' perceptions of the importance, challenges, and strategies for developing ESOL students' ICC. The results revealed several distinct patterns of interest: a) how teachers perceive the importance of developing ESOL students' ICC; b) the major challenges in developing their ESOL students' ICC; and c) strategies that teachers use to help develop their ESOL students' ICC. Teachers of ESOL students regard the

development of ICC as important because it helps ESOL students become familiar with American culture, assists them in communicating with English speakers, and allows them to become more comfortable in their interactions with others. They regard cultural and language issues as the most challenging. Important educational implications are discussed.

Chapter 8 presents a study that analyses onomatopoeias and onomatopoeic reduplications in different languages through linguistic and semiotic approaches. This analytic study is two-phased. The first phase presents a linguistic analysis of onomatopoeias and their equivalents in different languages. This linguistic viewpoint aims to describe onomatopoeic words as linguistic signs, with a focus on the acquisition of language in babies and the role of these words in the origin of the human languages. In the second phase, there is a semiotic analysis of onomatopoeic reduplications and their paraphrases in different languages. Both linguistic and semiotic analyses reveal that the symbolic structures have most of interpretants and that they skilfully reflect focal points of interpretants. Attributing such interpretations to onomatopoeic reduplications and their paraphrases as significant structure and signs proceeds from the fact that human mind forms interpretative and structural dimension in its own way, it puts these organized structures forward other human minds for interpreting them and it influences human language. These transfers based upon human mind and logic aim to direct human attention to focal points of interpretants. In addition, they aim to transpose their positive and negative faces. In this regard, considering onomatopoeias, onomatopoeic reduplications and their paraphrases as semantic structures and signs within the scope of the usage in different societies makes certain the occurrence of observing the hidden semantic or semiotic field behind them. The procedural frame of this study consists of lexical analyses of onomatopoeic structures and their mechanism in different languages as well as an analysis of onomatopoeic reduplication as semiotic signs based on C. S. Pierce's semiotic theory.

Chapter 9 looks into discursive practices of increasing credibility of a message and its source deployed in religious discourse for the purpose of boosting its persuasive potential. It is based on the author's research and analysis of a corpus of religious texts and illustrates the use of credibility boosters by presenting examples selected from

sources of several denominations and religious movements (Christians, Latter-Day Saints, Jehova's Witnesses, United Christian Action, etc.). Besides, it statistically maps the distribution of credibility boosters across four samples used by Judaism and Christianity, Church of Latter-Day Saints, Heaven's Gate, and Church of Scientology. It also points out recent trends in some of the persuasive mechanisms deployed to induce a change of individual's opinion and/or behavior.

Chapter 10 uses conversational analysis (CA) as the analytical approach to analyze an audiotaped casual conversation among graduate students from Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Vietnam to illustrate how participants construct interculturality by displaying their expertise in talks about diverse cultural practices. The analysis also focuses on how these multicultural students launch topical talk in their casual lunch conversation and how they categorize their membership identity in and through talk in regard to their discourse identities and social identities. The participants in the data presented in this study repeatedly produce a common set of questions that indicate the participants' presupposition of the other participants' categorizations. The findings of this study suggest that multicultural interactions about specific cultural practices do not necessarily lead to the enactment of cultural difference among participants. Instead, participants may try to find common ground so that they can diminish and discard cultural differences.

Chapter 11 presents a study that looks into semantic and pragmatic web in actual software applications and search engines. As an extension of the regular World Wide Web, the Semantic Web allows users to find, share, and combine information on the web more easily and accurately, and some sophisticated pragmatic tools are increasingly gaining in significance, as in web interfaces known as Social Intelligence, or in Apple's famous Siri. The purpose of this study is to explore whether and where we can identify the boundary between semantics and pragmatics in the software applications used by some available systems. It also examines whether the social intelligence tools have a pragmatic approach to the questions of the user, or the semantic web is just a use of very rich vocabulary through the use of semantic tools.

This book brings together a successful international collection of empirical studies in language and communication by researchers from around the world. Each chapter represents a stand-alone examination of research in a specific language and communication area. This edited

collection of articles is intended to address the needs and interests of a broad range of professionals in the area: researchers, graduate students, and faculty in teacher education and applied linguistics programs, teachers, teacher trainees, curriculum and materials developers, or others who are hoping to learn about the current state of the field before embarking on their own research studies.