

2015-2016 Bahar – CPD Liderleri

Teacher Leader

Özlem Canaran

(in charge of overseeing **Reflective Teaching and Learning Program**)

Who am I?

My name is Özlem. I have been teaching English for 13 years but I feel that I am still a beginning teacher as I am just very recently able to describe “who I really am” in my profession. I believe it gets harder to tell who you are with more knowledge and experience you get one year after another. I have now more to say about myself but I will keep it short here with a brief account of my professional life. I graduated from Hacettepe University, American Culture and Literature Department in 2004. I completed my M.A. at Hacettepe University, English Language Teaching Department and wrote a thesis on “Enhancing Composition Writing Skills of the English Preparatory Students through Critical Thinking Skills”. I began attending PhD courses in the same department in 2012. I am currently writing my dissertation on continuous professional development for EFL teachers, which is my recent area of focus and interest. Previously, I taught at TOBB University and worked in the Curriculum Development and Testing Office. I started working at UTAA, Department of Foreign Languages in 2011 and I have been in charge of academic and administrative affairs since then. I am also interested in reflective & collaborative teaching and learning, curriculum development, testing and assessment in language teaching.

How do I feel about being a teacher leader?

It all begins with awareness... but I hadn't known that until a colleague of mine came to observe my class...It never dawned on me that I had to see myself from others' eyes if I wanted to move up to a further level in my profession. These might sound familiar- like the very first sentences of a novice teacher's vignette in a professional development book or a popular cliché you might hear in any CPD event.

I wish I were that lucky to be able to write them in my teaching journal or watch my lesson with a colleague to see myself from my students' eyes in the early years of my practice. But it didn't happen that way... neither did I videotape my lessons nor receive any feedback from a colleague to learn a better teaching practice. Just kept going in and out of classes...only with some consciousness....

It happened this way... My classes were just like a boring replication of one another and my students were all bored to death even though they pretended to listen to me. I hadn't noticed that my blindness unfavorably affected my teaching and my students as a beginning teacher until I saw a colleague of mine teaching her class- the moment of awareness...

Deciding to take a stance against my routine, isolation and sameness, I began to think about myself. I began to think about my students, teaching practice, my voice, my language in class- and do something to change for the better... the moment of reflection...

I began to think about the best practices, look for the ways to share, work and consult with my colleagues- the moment of collaboration...

Over the years, all these critical moments have quietly transformed me into a teacher and a leader who is well aware that learning how to teach never ends. Both in reflective teaching and learning and team teaching programs, the job of the teacher leader is altered by each unique case and the content is planned exclusively and mutually with the participants to get the most out of the process with the aim of improved teacher, teaching and student outcomes. Through this shared purpose with my colleagues, I have ended up with richly varied ideas and experiences that have contributed to my own professional learning as a teacher.

Now, being a teacher leader, I keep thinking more about my job, learning more about it, and sharing what I have learned with my colleagues. It gives me the most and best job satisfaction, motivation and encouragement for thinking about it more....and it always leaves me with the idea that it all begins with awareness but never ends...

Teacher Leader

Ilknur Bayram

(in charge of overseeing Reflective Teaching and Learning Program, Lesson Study and Book Discussion Club)

Who am I?

I've been working at UTAA, DFL since 2011 as a teacher, curriculum developer and test writer. Recently I've become interested in teacher-led professional development especially since I got to know Lesson Study, a Japanese professional development model, and I'm looking for ways to integrate it into our school culture. I hope we – and more importantly our students-will benefit a lot from it.

How do I feel about being a teacher leader?

As a teacher who has been involved in many aspects of English Language Teaching, I've always believed there is a lot of things we can learn from each other no matter how much experience we have got in the field. For this reason, I appreciate the opportunity to work with fellow teachers as part of the Reflective Teaching and Learning Program (RTLTP) during 2015-2016 Academic Year, Spring Term. In this exciting journey, teachers have the chance to record their classes and reflect on their teaching not only by themselves but also with the help of a peer and a supervisor. RTLTP is a process during which teachers stop and think about what they do and how and why they do it. Therefore, reflection is a very crucial aspect of RTLTP. Once we as teachers know how we can reflect, I'm sure we will begin to reflect continually about our teaching, which will lead us to a better point in our profession.

In addition to RTLTP, I am also a big believer that Lesson Study is a great professional development model because it also helps teachers become more reflective and student-focused. Although not well known both in Turkey and in the field of ELT, I think it deserves to be tested out. We are happy to be one of the first (maybe the very

first) institutions to try it out in our school. We are piloting it with three volunteer teachers this term and are excited about sharing our experiences with everyone else during ELT Fusion 1.

Teacher Leader

Neşe Ekici Gençgün

Who am I?

Immediately after my graduation from METU, Foreign Language Education Department in 1998, I started working at Başkent University, ELDBU. I was involved in teaching EAP, ESP and Translation courses at freshman, sophomore and tertiary levels. In 2003, I completed my master degree at METU, Educational Sciences Department. My specialisation is Curriculum Development and Instruction. Besides teaching, I actively assumed responsibilities for Curriculum Development Unit and Test Development Unit for different departmental courses at Başkent University between 2000-2014. In September, 2014, I started my two-year journey at UTAA, FLD, during which I taught both Preparatory School students and freshman students. My special interest areas are Curriculum development, EAP and ESP courses, translation and professional development.

How do I feel about being a teacher leader?

English Language Teaching is a field providing the instructors with a huge number of resources both in theory and practice. Along with the practices in classes, instructors have the opportunity to develop themselves professionally, sometimes with the guidance of the institutions they work for or sometimes with external support. Institutions which adopt professional development as a part of institutional vision are usually strongly welcome by instructors if they are provided with a bunch of alternatives in terms of the activities to be carried out. As the leader of the professional development activities carried out in UTAA in 2016, 2nd Term, I love the idea that the instructors were provided with alternatives to choose from. Self-monitoring, peer-observation, teaching journal, book discussion and lesson study as teacher development activities, enabled the teachers to become aware of their current knowledge and skills and to use them as a basis for self-appraisal. Each with different qualities added a lot to teachers practicing those activities. Introducing those activities to the instructors and guiding them during the practice of those activities was not only fun but also contributory to me as well both cognitively and affectively. To be honest, what was more fun was the Event *ELT Fusion*, which we organized with a group of instructors to reflect on their experiences with the development activities in the form of sessions. Finally, I would like to thank all English language instructors at UTAA for their hard work during the practice of the activities and for their contributions to the ELT FUSION.