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# Applied linguistics and language education research in Turkey: 2016–2022

Deniz Ortactepe Hart[1] (iD) and Julie Aydınlı[2]

[1]University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK and [2]Ankara Social Sciences University, Anakara, Turkey
**Corresponding author:** Deniz Ortactepe Hart; Email: deniz.ortactepehart@glasgow.ac.uk

## Abstract

This systematic review of 170+ journal articles showcases the current trends and developments in Turkey-based applied linguistics and language education research between 2016–2022. The current review presents similarities to the previous reviews (Alptekin & Tatar, 2011; Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018) in terms of trends and practices that indicate a vibrant research scene and a community of practice in Turkey within language education and applied linguistics research. While certain research areas such as instructional technologies remain widely popular among Turkey-based scholars, there has been growing interest in multiculturalism, social justice language education, critical pedagogy, and culturally responsive teaching. It was also clear in our analysis that the demands by the Higher Education Council for academic promotion exacerbated some of the already-existing challenges also noted in the previous reviews. Some of the concerns include pre- and post-test study designs that focus on practical concerns and outcomes rather than on processes that would lead to conceptual or theoretical development; and lack of engagement with broader (inter)disciplinary debates. We hope that this review will help establish conversations among fellow scholars in terms of future directions that applied linguistics and language education research in Turkey can take in order to contribute to the larger discussions in the field.

## 1. Introduction

In this third review paper on Turkey's applied linguistics and language education, we provide a glimpse of Turkey-based research between 2016 and 2022 and its contributions to the wider field of applied linguistics and language education. Building upon Alptekin and Tatar's (2011) article covering research conducted in Turkey between 2005 and 2009, and our own work covering works between 2010 and 2016 (Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018), this current review introduces high-quality Turkey-based research that may not be known outside Turkish academia. It points to recent scholarly developments that have occurred in Turkey and sets these within the context of recent shifts in language education and applied linguistics research worldwide. This review also draws attention to challenges Turkey-based scholars face, while also making recommendations to improve the scholarly activities in Turkey. The reviewed works, representing 170+ articles that appeared in locally published online peer-reviewed academic journals, cover a wide spectrum of timely topics that are categorized into three main areas: language learning and learners; classroom processes and instructional practices; and teacher education and professional development. The following sections will first present the academic scene in Turkey in relation to the fields of applied linguistics and language education; then address the three main categories of research that emerged in our systematic review; and finally conclude with a discussion on the strengths and challenges of Turkey-based research in a way to encourage conversations that

would lead to future directions applied linguistics and language education research may take in Turkey.

## 2. The academic scene in Turkey within applied linguistics and language education

Both Alptekin and Tatar (2011) and Aydınlı and Ortaçtepe (2018) provide detailed insights regarding the academic scene in Turkey when it comes to applied linguistics and language education. While we do not want to repeat these reviews, we would like to reemphasize the role of certain organizations (e.g., The Higher Education Council) and mention additional ones that have either not been discussed in our previous review or have more recently emerged during the past few years in Turkey.

To begin with, the Higher Education Council (HEC) remains as the most dominant organization in Turkey impacting the scholarly activities of Turkey-based scholars not only in applied linguistics and language education, but across all disciplines. The promotion criteria that were discussed in our previous review still pushes Turkey-based applied linguists and teacher educators to publish in international journals, while they are also required to publish at least three articles indexed in the Turkish Academic Network and Information Centre (ULAKBIM). While the latter requirement for promotion might be seen as an effort to emphasize local knowledge on the part of the HEC, a comparison of the weight given to an SSCI-indexed publication (20 points) compared to an ULAKBIM-cited one (8 points) shows the continued prestigious status of international outlets. Nevertheless, the pressure to publish ULAKBIM-cited articles has had perhaps unexpected consequences, such as increasing the turnaround time for the Turkey-based journals, with some journals taking as long as two years to complete their peer review process and others deciding to charge manuscript submission fees from authors. The overall shortage of local outlets in which to publish has also led to the emergence of new journals in the field such as *Language and Technology*, *Focus in ELT,* and *World Language Studies*.

In Aydınlı and Ortaçtepe (2018), we also discussed several organizations – such as English Language Teacher Education Research (ELTER), the English Language Education Association (ELEA, or by its Turkish acronym, INGED), and the British Council – that have been contributing to English language teaching (ELT) practices and research in Turkey. While ELEA/INGED has been a Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Affiliate, in 2017, Turkey-based scholars founded TESOL Turkey. Formerly known as Trainers' Professional Learning and Unlimited Sharing (T-PLUS Turkey), TESOL Turkey aims to advance the quality of ELT in Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Similarly, the Fulbright Commission, through its exchange programs (e.g., the English Teaching Assistants program for US citizens to teach in Turkey; the Foreign Language Teaching Assistants program for Turkey-based teachers to teach Turkish in the United States; as well as master's, doctoral, and postdoctoral grants), has been supporting language teaching and learning practices in Turkey since 1949.

In addition to these organizations, one other institution that deserves acknowledgement here is the US Embassy in Turkey. The US embassy, through the Regional English Language Office (RELO), has been supporting ELT research and practices through various professional development activities and events. The US Embassy Ankara also supports researchers and practitioners through its programs such as the English Language Specialist, English Language Fellow, and English Access Microscholarship. Its Small Grants Program allows scholars, in all disciplines, to carry out projects in Turkey with the larger purpose of strengthening US-Turkish ties. One of these initiatives within the field of language teacher education has been the four-year long project Deniz Ortaçtepe Hart, Adnan Yılmaz, and Servet Çelik have been carrying out across eight universities in Turkey. The *Social Justice in ELT* project, funded by the US Embassy, aimed to raise the capacity of pre-service English language teachers to integrate social justice issues in their classes, and as a result, raise social justice and equity in less privileged areas in Turkey.

The US Embassy also funded a virtual intercultural exchange program that aimed to develop pre- and in-service teachers' intercultural communicative competence in ways that would prepare them to

work with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations (Akayoğlu et al., 2022). Lastly, the US Embassy supported two symposiums focusing on social justice language education, through its Small Grants and English Language Specialist programs. The 2nd International Symposium on Social Justice in ELT was held at Sinop University, between 20–21 October 2022 with more than 100 attendees of pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and teacher educators (Social Justice in ELT, 2022). Given the emphasis on social justice within the fields of applied linguistics and language education, with several special issues in, for instance, *TESOL Journal* (Ortaçtepe Hart & Martel, 2020), *Applied Linguistics* (Avineri & Martinez, 2021), and *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* (Mackey et al., 2022), as well as international conferences focusing on this theme (e.g., British Association for Applied Linguistics, 2022), these initiatives as well as the US Embassy's support are highly commendable.

## 3. The present review: Rationale and criteria for selecting articles

Our review process was similar to that used in our previous review except for the inclusion of language education as a general field rather than ELT only. This change meant that we included articles that focused on teaching additional languages other than English (e.g., French), Turkish as a foreign language, and Turkish-Kurdish bilingualism. We followed a rigorous three-step process, each phase including a set of criteria that helped us determine the rigor and significance of each article. The first step included identifying the peer-reviewed journals that are available online and retrieving those articles related to applied linguistics and language education. Our initial selection criteria were:

1. Turkey-based online journals with double blind review,
2. Articles written in English or with at least an abstract in English,
3. Articles focusing on language education and applied linguistics published between 2016–2022,
4. Articles written by authors in Turkey and Northern Cyprus.

After identifying a list of 35 online peer reviewed journals, the second step was to narrow down the list of total articles based on their content. This second step excluded articles that:

a. Developed a teaching material with no empirical evidence regarding its implication in language classrooms,
b. Presented only a literature review,
c. Evaluated a policy or practice that no longer exists in Turkey,
d. Provided only teaching strategies and tips,
e. Presented a textbook evaluation with limited scope,
f. Presented a case study based on one institution without any rationale as to why.

The second step gave us around 350 articles that met the criteria listed above. The third step was to examine the articles in terms of their research quality and scope. Similar to our previous review, we adapted the American Educational Research Association's (AERA, 2016) Standards for Reporting on Empirical Social Science Research by using the first five categories (problem formulation, design and logic, sources of evidence, measurement and classification, and analysis). We also developed a sixth category called 'significance,' which included the following criteria:

- Has relevance to issues and topics that are under discussion internationally,
- Has a clear, sound theoretical stance,
- Presents adequate data/examples and discussion to contribute to the literature,
- Deals with local data and issues but has implications that may apply to other contexts/countries.

The thematic analysis of 170+ articles we arrived at as a result of this third stage revealed three main categories: language learning and learners, classroom processes and instructional practices,

and teacher education and professional development. In the next sections, we will first unpack each of these categories and then present a discussion of the current research on applied linguistics and language education in Turkey in relation to its strengths, challenges, and potential directions.

## 4. Language learning and learners

Similar to the findings in our earlier review of applied linguistics and language education literature in Turkey (Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018), certain themes related to language learning and language learners continue to be the focus of considerable attention in recent research. The most common among these are works looking at issues of anxiety, motivation, and learner autonomy. Changes that can be noted are an increase in studies on language transfer and student – as opposed to teacher – efficacy, as well as a growth in studies on topics such as self-esteem and self-attribution.

### 4.1. Anxiety

Anxiety remains a very common topic of study, with descriptive studies examining students' foreign language learning anxiety (Gürsoy & Korkmaz, 2018); intervention studies aiming at lowering anxiety (Kılıç et al., 2018; Yaylı, 2017); and studies attempting to understand anxiety as a construct by exploring how it relates to other affective factors such as well-being and self-efficacy (Eğinli & Solhi, 2020; Kamalı-Arslantaş & Tokel, 2018; Uzun, 2019). For instance, Kılıç et al. (2018) investigated whether psychoeducational group training could reduce students' English-speaking anxiety. This quasi-experimental study offered ten extra-curricular sessions in which the experimental group received training in cognitive behavioral techniques (CBT) and subjective wellbeing-increasing activities, while the control group was led in 'fun' activities such as movie watching. The findings showed significantly reduced levels of anxiety among the experimental group, which the researchers linked to their higher wellbeing and positive feelings. Relating learners' affective domain to instructional technologies, Kamalı-Arslantaş and Tokel (2018) explored how task-based activities in an online environment (Second Life) could contribute to three interrelated factors: anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence in speaking. The students reported that acting with avatars in the 3D environment created a relaxed and less stressful context for gaining experience in interacting with native speakers, and expressed that through this activity they became more comfortable with the idea of making mistakes when speaking and felt they had gained more confidence.

While many studies on foreign language learning anxiety naturally focus on language learners (e.g., Kamalı-Arslantaş & Tokel, 2018; Kılıç et al., 2018), several studies instead looked at English language teacher candidates – who, in countries like Turkey, are themselves continuing language learners (Eğinli & Solhi, 2020; Gürsoy & Korkmaz, 2018; Yaylı, 2017). Gürsoy and Korkmaz's (2018) participants largely placed blame for their moderate levels of speaking anxiety on the Turkish education system, noting that until entering university they had received language training that focused only on grammar and vocabulary memorization. Yaylı (2017), on the other hand, aimed to test whether various humanistic techniques of Community Language Learning (e.g., allowing them to do activities in small, self-selected groups rather than individually; and having the teacher assume the role of counselor in helping them understand their foreign language listening anxieties) might have an effect on pre-service teachers' foreign language learning anxiety levels in general, and on their listening anxiety in particular. Similar to Gürsoy and Korkmaz (2018), the most frequently cited reason at the outset for the students' anxiety was the 'inadequacy' of their previous education, leading to their failure to understand words when spoken. In post-treatment interviews, however, most of those interviewed reported feeling gradually more comfortable, having added strategies for dealing with their listening anxiety, and having enjoyed the opportunity to work in groups for listening tasks, noting that it allowed them to help each other and thereby reduced stress.

## 4.2. Motivation

Motivation also remains one of the most commonly investigated areas of research (e.g., Asmalı, 2017; Aytekin-Yüksel & Eren, 2020; Şahan & Şahan, 2021; Şimsek & Kuru-Gönen, 2020). To begin with, Şahan and Şahan (2021) compared full and partial English-medium instruction (EMI) programs in terms of engineering students' motivations, beliefs, and self-assessed English proficiency. Aytekin-Yüksel and Eren's (2020) quasi-experimental study explored whether explicitly helping high school students understand the practical relevance of their English lessons and tasks contributed to their attitude, boredom levels, and overall achievement. The results showed that the group who completed a perceived instrumentality form each week saw significantly higher achievement on a standard English test, better attitudes, and reported lower levels of boredom.

Interestingly, in recent years there has been increasing interest in the more general theory of motivation encompassed by attribution. Two studies focused exclusively on this issue – the first aiming to develop a scale for measuring learners' causal attributions (Erten & Çağatay, 2020), the second using that scale with a large group of university students (Çağatay & Erten 2020). In the latter study, Çağatay and Erten (2020) aimed to see whether the students' 'ideal L2 self' (one's imagined future self in the second language (L2)) affects their attributions of results on an exam (e.g., ability, school system, teacher, family, classroom environment) and whether past attributions could predict future achievement. Perhaps unsurprisingly they found that students with high ideal L2 self-scores tended to have more 'promising and adaptive attributional styles' (p. 350), in other words, they were more likely to attribute success to things more within their control rather than uncontrollable factors like 'luck' or 'health.' Drawing on similar principles to attribution theory, Demir-Ayaz and Erten (2021) surveyed university students to explore the effect of various factors – self-regulated strategy use, language learning effort, ideal L2 self, and imagination capacity – on their Directed Motivational Current. Similarly, focusing on university English as a foreign language (EFL) students' L2 motivational self-systems, Course and Saka (2022) investigated the relative impact of language learning experience versus future images of their L2 selves on learners' motivation to learn English. The past experience component was by far the strongest predictor of intended learning effort and thus motivation, both in terms of positive motivational impact, often attributed to particularly kind or effective teachers, and negative motivation (e.g., frustration over not seeing enough progress).

## 4.3. Learner autonomy

Several studies explored learner autonomy in relation to parental involvement and academic achievement (Poyraz, 2017), meta-affective factors (Köksal & Dündar, 2018), self-regulated learning (Kuluşaklı, 2022), and gender-based differences (Gönen, 2020). Köksal and Dündar (2018), for example, developed a scale for exploring the use of self-regulated L2 learning strategies. The resulting scale has 35 items with six embedded factors of meta-affective, metacognitive, sociocultural-interactive (SI), Meta-SI, affective, and cognitive strategies, and can be used both for identifying L2 learners' strategy preferences and for measuring the extent to which they use them. In Kuluşaklı's (2022) study, measuring learners' self-regulated learning skills in an online English course, students reported generally 'good' levels of metacognitive skills and environmental structuring capacity, and moderate levels for time-management, persistence, and seeking help. Problems were noted, however, with respect to managing time efficiently, and a certain reluctance was seen in seeking help from teachers in online courses. Gönen (2020) also sought to identify the types of activities that autonomous learners engage in and whether there are gender-based differences. The study was conducted in a voluntary intensive English program at a public university, one which, the researcher writes, sees high levels of student dropouts, as there are no negative outcomes for students who fail to succeed or complete the program. Based on data from an Autonomy Perception Scale, approximately 25% of the students could be categorized as 'autonomous,' while the vast majority of both male and female students showed equally low levels of autonomy. In terms of

specific activities, the autonomous-identified students pointed to activities such as taking advantage of technological resources; actively seeking exposure to English TV, music, and films; and studying with friends as contributing to their learning.

### 4.4. Self-efficacy

Student self-efficacy was a common topic of research outside of its possible connection with anxiety (Aydoğan, 2017; Dişlen Dağgöl, 2019; Güvendir et al., 2020). Güvendir et al. (2020), for example, developed a scale for measuring projected self-efficacy beliefs specifically in relation to students' expectations about study abroad. Acknowledging the problems many Turkish university students experience in English communication, Dişlen Dağgöl (2019) explored their possible roots by looking at the relationship between self-efficacy, learning climate, and attribution of success or failure in learning English among high school students. The 9th and 10th grade participants generally reported moderate levels of autonomy and had neutral to somewhat positive self-efficacy, attributing success in language learning largely to personal factors, with an overwhelming emphasis placed on 'effort.' Lastly, Aydoğan (2017) explored the interrelation among self-esteem, metacognitive strategy use, and five other factors that have been attributed as having positive impact on foreign language learning outcomes: individual effort; teacher's skills; collaboration with peers; communicating with native English speakers; and watching English TV/listening to English music. While the university students in the study reported finding all five of the 'other' factors important for language learning, as with Dişlen Dağgöl (2019), they attributed the greatest impact on learning outcomes to their own individual effort, with the teacher's educational skills coming in a close second.

## 5. Classroom processes and instructional practices

The studies in this category took a closer look at classroom processes and instructional practices that aim to develop language learners' proficiency through the use of instructional technologies, parental involvement (Poyraz, 2017), differentiated instruction (Yavuz, 2020), Socratic pedagogy (Balbay, 2019), life-focused language education (e.g., active transfer of what is learned) (Uslu, 2018), and active (Yenen & Dursun, 2019) and project-based learning (Kemaloğlu-Er & Şahin, 2022). The next sections will present these issues in relation to the use of instructional technologies and developing language learner proficiency.

### 5.1. The use of instructional technologies

#### 5.1.1. Online education

Online education in a more general sense, but also in relation to flipped learning (e.g., Ekmekçi, 2017; Girgin & Cabaroğlu, 2021; Gürlüyer & Elkılıç, 2020), multimedia learning (e.g., Cananoğlu & Akpınar, 2022; Onat, 2018; Yeşildağ & Sadık, 2021), Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) (Yaşar, 2020), telecollaboration (Akayoğlu et al., 2022; Sarıcaoğlu, 2021), and digital game based learning (e.g., Alyaz & Genç, 2016; Musaoğlu-Aydın & Akkuş-Çakır, 2022) have been within the research interests of Turkey-based scholars in recent years. Ekmekçi (2017) and Alyaz and Genç (2016), for instance, both found positive learning outcomes and positive learner attitudes when it comes to flipped learning and digital game-based language learning pedagogy, respectively. Studies have also examined the use of online resources to improve EFL learners' oral communication skills (Sağlam, 2021; Yaşar, 2020). In Yaşar's (2020) mixed-method study, the EFL learners in Oral Communications course participated in a three week-long MOOC course, What Makes an Effective Presentation?, hosted on the FutureLearn MOOC platform developed by the University of Coventry. The pre- and post-achievement test results indicated significant improvements in their English communication skills, while students also expressed positive attitudes towards MOOC for being fun, surprising, challenging, simple in terms of design, interactive, as well as universal in terms of accessibility and openness. While we appreciate

the author's interest in this area, the study could have made a more significant contribution by drawing Turkey-based scholars' attention to the recent discussions in the field regarding open education and open scholarship (Liu et al., 2022).

The personalization principle of multimedia learning in online platforms has also gained the attention of the Turkey-based applied linguists/language education scholars (Onat, 2018; Yeşildağ & Sadık, 2021). Onat's (2018) EFL learners in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course seemed to have learned better in the non-personalized, more formal narration in the multimedia presentation, contradicting the previous research that suggests that a more conversational, informal style might lead to more positive learning outcomes (Mayer, 2005; Mayer et al., 2004). Onat (2018) explains these findings by underlining the difference between earlier studies working in the participants' first language (L1), while in this study the L2 users 'were expected to process information in the target language in order to receive the transmitted message while dealing with challenges related to the academic discourse' and therefore might have missed 'the more subtle differences in language use such as personalization and politeness' (p. 109). Similarly, Yeşildağ and Sadık (2021) found no difference between the EFL groups who listened to multimedia presentations in conversational versus formal styles in terms of their listening achievement, though the learners had more positive attitudes towards the former in terms of authenticity and interactivity.

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted teaching and learning processes all around the world, Turkey being no exception. While the use of instructional technologies, just as in our previous review (Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018), has been one of the most predominant themes in the current analysis, only a few articles focused more on the preparedness of EFL teachers to teach synchronous and asynchronous online classes during the pandemic (Aydın, 2022; Erdoğan & Yazıcı, 2022). Erdoğan and Yazıcı's (2022) study with 155 English teachers of kindergarten, primary, secondary, high school as well as tertiary level examined the challenges they faced while teaching online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although their participants indicated being competent in terms of lesson planning and teaching grammar and vocabulary both synchronously and asynchronously, they felt less prepared in terms of addressing the needs of those learners with disabilities and sustaining learner motivation and interaction during online classes. In another post-COVID-19 study exploring English teachers' preparedness in retrospect, Aydın (2022) revealed that most teachers indicated feeling competent to teach online at the beginning of the pandemic. Participating teachers also managed to develop their online education skills on their own rather than relying on their institutions, as many indicated problems in relation to administrative support, student orientation, and infrastructure.

### 5.1.2. The use of new media

One of the new trends within the research on instructional technologies was the use of new media, which includes social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Whatsapp as well as Web 2.0 tools (e.g., blogs, wikis, podcasts), and mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) in general. Aydın and Özdemir's (2019) qualitative study, for instance, explored 30 pre-service Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions of Facebook in terms of their reasons to use it, perceived harmful effects, and the utilization of Facebook as a language learning environment. The participants in their study indicated using Facebook to communicate with 'native and foreign speakers of English' (p. 24), to access authentic materials in English (e.g., texts, videos, songs), as well as to play grammar and vocabulary games designed for instructional purposes. In a mixed-method study, Elverici (2021) compared a control and an experimental group of high school EFL learners who used instructional technology and social media (Facebook), respectively. The pre- and post-test results indicated a significant increase in the experimental group's social presence – that is, their sense of feeling real and present in the virtual space. Genç and Köksal's (2021) case study with secondary school students, on the other hand, revealed interest in new media as a factor that contributes to EFL learners' self-perceptions of success, affinity towards English, and language learning effort in general. Similarly, Savran Çelik and Aydın (2021) revealed positive effects of wiki-based online writing environments

on EFL learners' motivation to write. Lastly, Bilki and Irgın's (2021) study with 24 freshman B2 level students (according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)) in an online academic writing course revealed that as L2 writers provided blog-based peer feedback, they gradually shifted their attention from local areas (e.g., mechanics, word choice, spelling) to more global ones (e.g., content and organization).

Approaching social media from a more pedagogical perspective, Çetinkaya and Sütçü (2019) examined the effects of the multimedia annotations sent through WhatsApp on 9th graders' acquisition of vocabulary. Over a period of two months, a total of 64 messages, each consisting of 16 'text,' 'text + audio,' 'text + picture,' and 'text + picture + audio' were randomly sent to students one by one per day. Students' pre- and post-achievement tests of multiple-choice items revealed that 'Text + Picture + Audio' and 'Text + Picture' annotations were the most effective in terms of facilitating learners' vocabulary acquisition. Mobile-assisted language learning has also been emphasized in the studies of Çakmak (2021) and Zeybek and Sayın (2022). While Çakmak (2021) focused on self-regulated listening in MALL environments, Zeybek and Sayın (2022) investigated augmented reality (AR)-enhanced reading practices and their effect on EFL learners' smartphone acceptance levels in EFL learning. Focusing on MALL again, Yücetürk and Bergil's (2021) experimental study revealed significant developments in young learners' listening and reading skills after their use of *Voscreen*, a platform designed for learning English through short videos.

## 5.2. Developing language learner proficiency

### 5.2.1. Teaching productive skills

Studies that focused on teaching writing often had an experimental nature, looking at the effect of, for instance, collaborative writing (Ayan & Seferoğlu, 2017; Savaşçı & Kaygısız, 2019), the use of L1 (Tanış et al., 2020), peer/teacher feedback (Demirel & Enginarlar, 2016; Taşkıran, 2022; Taşkıran & Göksel, 2022), integrated writing assessment (Göktürk Sağlam & Yalçın Duman, 2020) and personal-goal setting and task planning on learners' writing skills (Öztürk, 2019; Yıldız & Yeşilyurt, 2017). Savaşçı and Kaygısız (2019), for instance, compared the effectiveness of individual, pair, and group writing conditions in L2 writing classes, while Ayan and Seferoğlu (2017) related students' use of *EtherPad* platform for online collaborative writing tasks to Oxford's (1990) language learning strategies. Both studies underlined the affordances of collaborative writing on developing language learners' writing skills.

Peer and teacher feedback have also been at the center of experimental or quasi-experimental studies that aimed to improve learners' performance in L2 writing. In Demirel and Enginarlar's (2016) experimental study, the control group received only teacher feedback on organization, content, grammar, and mechanics, while the experimental group first received peer feedback on content and organization, and then in their second revisions received teacher feedback on grammar and mechanics. The experimental group condition was found to be more effective in terms of creating more positive attitudes towards peer feedback and self-revision. Taşkıran and Göksel's (2022) study with EFL students in an open and distant education context revealed preference for teacher feedback rather than the feedback provided by an automated feedback software on *Write and Improve* platform. Lastly, the two corpus-based studies by Öztürk (2018) and Yılmaz and Özdem Ertürk (2017), examining publications in applied linguistics and ELT, respectively, provided research-driven practical insights for academic writing for postgraduate students and novice researchers.

Studies that focused on various aspects of teaching speaking had a more exploratory nature than the ones on writing. For instance, Öksüz-Zerey and Cephe (2020)'s survey of 296 tertiary level EFL students revealed a positive relationship between learners' willingness to communicate and their perceptions of the classroom environment in terms of student cohesiveness, teacher support, involvement, investigation, task orientation, cooperation, and equity. In another correlational study, Arpacı-Somuncu (2016) found a positive relationship between tertiary level EFL students' willingness to communicate, cognitive flexibility, and communication strategies. Looking at an EAP context, Demirkol et al. (2021) indicated that

giving speeches and asking and answering questions in conferences were the most difficult task for undergraduate learners in EMI universities. In addition to those studies that had a more experimental nature, for instance, looking at the role of extensive reading (Yakut, 2020), the use of Pecha Kucha technique (Solmaz, 2019), the use of L1 (Yüzlü & Atay, 2020), as well the effect of pressured online planning (Tuzcu & Yalçın, 2020) on L2 learners' speaking and pronunciation, researchers have also adopted a more naturalistic approach to examine the ways in which EFL teachers promoted extended student talk (Gümüşok & Balıkçı, 2020) and provided oral corrective feedback (Ölmezer-Öztürk & Öztürk, 2016). Based on natural classroom observations, Kemaloğlu-Er and Özata (2020), for instance, revealed codeswitching in group work to be a builder of solidarity and a means of task achievement and interactional fluency. In another study, Kemaloğlu-Er and Şahin (2022) examined the effect of project-based learning on rural school students' linguistic and non-linguistic competencies. Their study revealed that the oral presentation phase of students' projects was the most helpful in terms of developing learners' vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills.

While most of the above-mentioned studies centered on language learners, there were also some researchers who focused on pre- or in-service teachers, and their speaking skills and practices of teaching speaking to their learners. For instance, Dağtan and Cabaroğlu (2021) and Koşar (2020) focused on pre-service EFL teachers' oral proficiency, both raising concerns in terms of their low-level of proficiency, fluency, and confidence in speaking. In Yağız's (2018) study, although the EFL teachers found pronunciation important, their content knowledge on teaching pronunciation was limited to segmental features, lacking emphasis on the suprasegmental ones. Lastly, adopting a conversation-analytic approach, Daşkın (2017) underlined the connection between classroom interaction and informal formative assessment, calling for more emphasis on interactional competence within classroom-based assessment.

### 5.2.2. Teaching receptive skills

Our analytical review revealed relatively fewer studies that focused on receptive skills, listening having even less emphasis than reading. Irgın and Erten's (2020) EFL young learners, for instance, showed improvements in their listening performance and strategy use after a 12-week strategy instruction, as well as a self-reported increase in their awareness of listening, self-confidence, and willingness to use listening strategies. Özgen and Gündüz's (2020) experimental study, on the other hand, underlined the pedagogical benefits of using authentic captioned sitcoms on EFL learners' listening comprehension. Lastly, İnci-Kavak and Kırkgöz's (2022) study, that examined tertiary level students' translanguaging as they took notes during lectures, revealed several functions of translanguaging in notetaking: making use of multimodalities and the multilingual repertoire, commenting on the comment, restating the information multilingually, making space for creativity, catching the fast-flowing lecture, and translating.

Studies have also explored the ways in which language learners' reading skills and lexical knowledge can be developed (e.g., Aktan-Erciyes, 2020; Altay, 2017; Bayram et al., 2019; Er Doğan & Mede, 2016; Nişancı, 2017; Öztürk & Şenaydın, 2019). For instance, Bayram et al. (2019) found advantages of content and language integrated language learning (CLIL) over non-CLIL contexts in terms of improving learners' reading comprehension as well as receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. Nişancı (2017) illustrated the role of extensive reading in promoting high school EFL learners' implicit phonological knowledge and improving their word recognition fluency at large. Adopting a bilingual approach, Mergen and Kuruoğlu (2018) compared the lexical processing of Turkish-English bilinguals in both languages. The results coming from the lexical decision task that included letter strings of real and non-words revealed that Turkish-English bilinguals, who learned both languages from birth, responded faster and more accurately to real words than non-words both in Turkish and English. Lastly, Dolgunsöz and Sarıçoban's eye tracking research (2016) compared B1 and B2 proficiency level students based on CEFR in terms of their eye movements during L2 reading, revealing total fixation duration (i.e. time spent on each word) and first pass time (i.e., gaze duration) to be highly correlated with proficiency.

### 5.2.3. Teaching grammatical competence

Studies that focused on grammar often did so in relation to writing (Sarıcaoğlu & Atak 2022; Yılmaz, 2018; Yılmaz & Dikilitaş, 2017), speaking (Sarandi & Çelik, 2019), and reading (Uludağ, 2020a), while only a few strictly focused on developing learners' grammatical competence (Arslan & Işık-Doğan, 2020; Özbay & Olgun, 2017; Soruç, 2020). Yılmaz's (2018) experimental study based on a nine-hour intensive treatment on noun clauses with regard to the form-meaning-use framework indicated improvements in L2 learners' knowledge and performance of using complex linguistic structures in their writing. In addition to the experimental studies of Arslan and Işık-Doğan (2020) and Yılmaz (2018), researchers have also taken a more descriptive approach to analyzing EFL learners' grammatical competence. Sarıcaoğlu and Atak (2022), for instance, revealed significant variation among the argumentative essays of lower and higher-level proficiency English language learners in terms of three syntactic structures (finite complement clauses controlled by nouns, words before the main verb, and passives), but not in lexical complexity, suggesting the predictive power of the former in language proficiency. In another descriptive study that evaluated the argumentative essays of high proficiency EFL learners, Yılmaz and Dikilitaş (2017) found that EFL learners tend to overuse adverbs and often use them inappropriately in academic writing, underlining a need for raising learners' awareness of meaning and functions of adverbs through explicit instruction. Uludağ (2020a), on the other hand, compared the real-time sentence processing of Turkish learners of English and native English speakers in terms of their attachment preferences for relative-clause attachment ambiguities. His eye-tracking study suggested that decisions around L2 sentence processing are not made randomly, but systematically, driven by the principle of structure-based parsing, underlining L2 learners' capacity to construct syntactic processing of structures as hierarchically deep and detailed as that of native speakers.

### 5.2.4. Teaching pragmatics and socio-cultural competence

In Aydınlı and Ortaçtepe (2018), we identified teaching pragmatics as a blooming area in Turkey-based applied linguistics and language education research. That trend seems to have continued as our present review revealed quite a few studies that focused mostly on speech acts (Bababaylı & Kızıltan, 2020; Bakırcı & Özbay, 2020; Gazioğlu & Çiftçi, 2017; Karagöz & Isısağ, 2019; Önalan & Çakır, 2018; Satıç & Çiftçi, 2018), but also on formulaic expressions (Yılmaz & Koban Koç, 2020; Yılmaz Yakışık & Dişli, 2017) and implicatures (Rızaoğlu & Yavuz, 2017). Discourse completion and evaluation tasks (DCT/DET) were quite common in studies that surveyed EFL learners' use of gratitude (Bakırcı & Özbay, 2020), refusal (Satıç & Çiftçi, 2018), request (Karagöz & Isısağ, 2019), and complaint strategies (Önalan & Çakır, 2018). Again, using DCTs – but this time focusing on implicatures and Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle – Rızaoğlu and Yavuz (2017) found understated negative criticism to be the most difficult implicature among upper-intermediate level tertiary EFL learners. Bababaylı and Kızıltan (2020), on the other hand, carried out a textbook analysis that compared three CEFR B1-B2 level Turkish and three Azerbaijani EFL textbooks. In all of the textbooks, 'friend–friend' speech situation was the most common, with 'suggesting' being the only statistically different speech act that occurred much less in Turkey-based textbooks. Lastly, Yılmaz and Koban Koç's (2020) quasi-experimental study suggested the positive effects of corpus-based teaching to improve EFL learners' comprehension and production of formulaic expressions.

Although relatively more limited in number, there were studies that also focused on the socio-cultural aspects of language teaching (Bozdoğan, 2016; Özışık et al., 2019; Şimşek, 2017; Taşdemir, 2019; Zorba, 2020). Focusing on Bourdieu's (1986) cultural capital, for instance, Taşdemir (2019) examined EFL teachers' methods and techniques to develop their learners' cultural capital through language teaching. Although we find it problematic that the study aimed to measure EFL teachers' cultural capital through a survey, the findings were interesting in the sense that none of the ten teachers interviewed in the study had heard of the term 'cultural capital,' indicating a possible gap in language teacher education programs regarding the socio-cultural, and also economic, dimensions of language teaching. In another mixed-method study, this time on Byram's (1997) intercultural communicative

competence (ICC), Özışık et al. (2019) underlined the need for developing the knowledge and skills of language teachers for assessing learners' intercultural competence. Taking a more critical perspective, Şimşek (2017) surveyed 58 pre-service English teachers' attitudes regarding gendered and alienating content in local and global textbooks, with the larger purpose of identifying their culturally-responsive preferences and rationales for material adaptation. Şimşek (2017) drew attention to a 'censorship path' taken by some of the participants who rejected the use of gendered and alienating content in order to, for instance, avoid conflict in the classroom, without considering adaptations or finding ways to lead to classroom discussions that can challenge deeply ingrained gender stereotypes in Turkey. Lastly, Zorba's (2020) study on Ladson-Billings' (1995) culturally responsive teaching (CRT) surveyed 415 primary and secondary school English teachers in terms of their readiness for and perceptions of CRT. The results underscored the deficiency in language teacher education programs in Turkey in terms of preparing teachers for CRT and multicultural education. Given these problems indicated by Turkey-based scholars regarding the rapidly increasing cultural diversity in classrooms and teachers' lack of knowledge and experience for equity-based, critical pedagogies, Balbay's (2019) longitudinal study has been exemplar: Balbay (2019)'s study focused on Socratic pedagogy, rooted in questioning false-dichotomies and deeply-held assumptions, to develop pre-service teachers' critical awareness of political, economic, and cultural dimensions of language education. Balbay's (2019) study calls for critical pedagogical content integration into language teacher education programs in order to develop a sensitive and critical attitude towards language education that is more equity and social justice oriented.

## 5.3. Teaching languages other than English

### 5.3.1. Turkish as a second language

Perhaps one of the most interesting new areas of research to have emerged in earnest in recent years is that of the learning and teaching of Turkish as a Second Language (TSL). The obvious impetus for such a surge is undoubtedly the massive rise in non-Turkish speaking populations in the country, in particular the millions of Syrian refugees who have settled in Turkey.

Unsurprisingly, the participants of the studies on TSL frequently are – and occasionally the focus of them is on – Arabic L1 learners of Turkish (Arı & Top, 2018; Gezer & Kıymık, 2018; Tanrıkulu, 2020). Gezer and Kıymık (2018), for example, explored the difficulties faced by L1 Arabic speakers when learning to write in Turkish. They presented an error analysis of the written texts of 11 students, identifying the phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic errors, and attributing them largely to reasons of transfer from the native language. Arı and Top (2018) also looked at TSL writing of L1 Arabic speakers but focused on the role of peer feedback in reducing ambiguity and improving coherence in students' texts. In addition to revealing similar errors to those described in Gezer and Kıymık (2018), their study also showed a statistically significant difference in the experimental group's (peer + teacher feedback group) performance, with fewer errors of all types, a change not witnessed in the control group. Tanrıkulu (2020) also worked with university level TSL students from Syria, but focused on listening, exploring the impact of digital storytelling (DST), that is, multimedia presentations that combine digital elements such as images, videos or social media elements, within a narrative structure – on the students' listening skills and motivation levels. Both advanced and lower proficiency TSL learners in Tanrıkulu's (2020) action research reported a preference for DST-enhanced listening lessons, finding them more interesting and effective.

Given the rapid growth in the field of TSL, it is important for researchers to evaluate the still limited materials available for teachers. Şimşek and Gün's (2021) work is an effort to do this. They presented a corpus study of the vocabulary and parts of speech used in five commonly used CEFR A1 level TSL textbooks, and compared the words used with the 1,000 most frequently used words in Turkish according to a previous corpus-based study (Aksan, 2017, cited in Şimşek & Gün, 2021). In a detailed reporting of the findings, the researchers showed that while the words used in the textbooks tend to overlap somewhat with those of the most frequently used words, the variety of verbs, and adjectives in particular, needs to be increased.

## 5.3.2. Teaching other foreign languages

Given that applied linguistics or education journals in Turkey are published almost exclusively in English or Turkish, it is perhaps unsurprising that works looking at the teaching and learning of other foreign languages are quite rare. A few recent ones that can be noted, however, including Dağhan-Aslan and Kıray (2020), who offered one of the few studies on translanguaging, an area of study that has not yet received much attention in Turkish journals (two exceptions being Karabulut & Keşli Dollar, 2022; Yuvayapan, 2019). In their work with German as a Foreign Language (GFL) learners, Dağhan-Aslan and Kıray (2020) investigated the use of translanguaging in a high school class, in which the teacher provided instruction to the Turkish students in a mixture of English (their L2) and German (the target language, and the students' third language (L3)). Based on class observations and interviews, the findings demonstrated a highly fluid use of translanguaging by the teacher, which seemed to result in increased participation by the students. Interestingly, the study also found that the teacher's use of translanguaging strategies was done naturally, without deliberate planning. Ünal et al. (2019) also considered GFL learners but focused on the idea of classroom interactional competence. By conducting a needs analysis based on the reporting of 63 German language teachers in schools around Turkey, the study explored what GFL teachers need in terms of classroom interactional competence and provided guidelines for teacher trainers in foreign language education departments.

The other works looking at foreign language learning and instruction in languages other than English or Turkish tend to focus on classroom practices. This is the case with Aydoğu et al. (2017) and Özkan-Gürses and Bouvet (2017), both of which focused on French as a Foreign Language (FFL). Aydoğu et al. (2017) presented an action-research of a teacher assigning an extracurricular task-based project to her students and exploring their motivation, degree of collaboration, and development of language and cultural skills. The analysis of the students' projects, observations, focus group interviews, and student and researcher diaries revealed certain challenges in relation to the experiment: difficulties in ensuring equal degrees of participation within groups; technical problems with finding time to arrange the out-of-class project work; and inability to ensure use of the target language (French) during the project preparation. Yet, both students and teachers reported an increase in learner language development, growth in self-confidence, and self-organization (e.g., planning, organization, and technical skills). On the other hand, Özkan-Gürses and Bouvet (2017), through the use of think aloud protocols, explored Turkish FFL learners' self-monitoring and strategic behaviors when reading French literary texts, underscoring the need to incorporate strategy training into language instruction at all levels.

## 5.4. Teaching English as a lingua franca (ELF) and World Englishes (WE)

Among the relevant studies that have been published in recent years, most seem to focus on attitudes towards ELF/WEs, either in relation to participants' current awareness and openness towards ELF/WEs (Altınmakas et al., 2019; Cesur & Balaban, 2020; Çeçen & Serdar Tülüce, 2019; Geçkinli & Yılmaz, 2021; Yücedağ & Karakaş, 2019), or in relation to the changes in attitudes following specific training, out-of-class communications in English, or experience abroad (Biricik Deniz et al., 2020; Irgın, 2020; Kaçar, 2021; Kemaloğlu-Er & Bayyurt, 2022; Uğurlu et al. 2022). Çeçen and Serdar Tülüce (2019), for example, examined pre-service EFL teachers' attitudes towards speakers coming from the three 'circles' of English (Kachru, 1985). In open discussions after listening to the various speakers, the participants' overall evaluations of quality and intelligibility reveal a strong conformity to native-speaker norms. However, the discussions also showed evidence of these future teachers' growing awareness of the different varieties of English and even a certain degree of 'ownership' of the validity and function of their own ELF variety. This degree of openness was much less evident in Geçkinli and Yılmaz's (2021) survey of nearly 600 EFL students who agreed that adhering to native-speaker norms was not necessary when interacting, yet they still showed reservations about incorporating ELF into language classroom practices. A similar mixed attitude was found in a very different community, that of Turkish business professionals working in multinational corporations

(Altınmakas et al., 2019). Similar to the teachers and students in the foreign language education realm, these professionals revealed that they were in a stage of flux, expressing a shared linguistic solidarity when engaging with other Business English as lingua franca (BELF) speakers, but still valuing highly native-speaker norms and considering 'inner circle' varieties of English as standards to be approximated.

Given that concepts like ELF and WE remain still somewhat new in Turkey and, as the above studies show, less than fully embraced by the individuals who may be using them, it is unsurprising that several studies explored how different experiences may serve to change attitudes about them. Uğurlu et al. (2022) conducted a survey with ELT academics and students for the purpose of designing a course on World Englishes and Intercultural Communication, while both Biricik Deniz et al. (2020) and Kemaloğlu-Er and Bayyurt (2022) reported on the implementation of pre-service teacher courses designed to introduce students to these concepts. For instance, Biricik Deniz et al.'s (2020) longitudinal qualitative study describes one university's experience offering a theoretical course on ELF to their 4th year senior ELT students, while also trying to raise their critical awareness of ELF-related pedagogical activities. Biricik Deniz et al. (2020) revealed the initial (mis)conceptions held by the pre-service teachers about ELF and how their understandings evolved over the course of the semester (e.g., questioning assumptions about native norms in ELT and the dominance of Standard English) and a gradual embracing of ELF as a linguistic and cultural concept and as a pedagogical tool. Looking outside of the classroom, Kaçar (2021) examined changes experienced by Turkish pre-service EFL teachers actively engaging in an ELF context as they participated in the Comenius language assistantship program in Europe. Among the changes related specifically to the participants' understandings of teaching and learning English from ELF/WE perspectives, there was evidence of increased awareness and appreciation of the plurality of Englishes, the multiplicity of norms, and the value of multilingualism. The experience is seen as helping shift the participants' mindsets from the native-speaker norms that were deeply ingrained in their educational background.

## 5.5. Language transfer and emergent bilingualism

Drawing on research showing various cognitive advantages of bilingualism, Akıncı (2020) explored whether those advantages are increased in cases of trilingualism, and whether greater proficiency in the L2 or L3 has any relation with enhanced inhibitory control skills. The study was conducted with moderately proficient trilinguals, high proficient trilinguals, and high proficient bilinguals who were measured for accuracy and for response time on Stroop tasks (i.e., tasks featuring incongruent input, such as reading the names of colors printed in different colors of ink, e.g., the word 'red' printed in blue ink). In terms of inhibition demands, the high proficiency trilinguals outperformed the moderate proficiency trilinguals, but no similar significant difference was found between moderate trilinguals and high proficiency bilinguals, a finding interpreted by the researcher as implying that the formers' enhanced inhibitory control abilities were still emerging but had not yet reached the performance level of the high proficiency trilinguals.

Uludağ (2020b) looked at language transfer in cases of processing relative clause (RC) ambiguities (e.g., in a sentence like 'somebody hit the father of the author who was at the café,' was it the father or the author who was at the café?). Uludağ (2020b) compared bilingual L1 Turkish (a high attaching language)-L2 English participants' choices with those of native English (a low attaching language) speakers on a test of RC attachment processing, and subsequently, using eye-tracking methodology, examined the speed of actual real-time processing of these ambiguities in an online task. The results showed that when reading ambiguous sentences in their L1 (Turkish), the participants displayed a preference for attaching the RC modifier to the high attachment site. On the English language task, while English native speakers, as expected, showed low attachment preference (80%), the Turkish L1-English L2 bilinguals displayed a much more even preference (53% high, 47% low) – a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Although the study does not include pedagogical implications, the interesting results make it a worthwhile read.

Yet another investigation into L1 transfer affects is Sönmez Boran (2018a), who drew on a psycho-linguistic model of adult L2 vocabulary acquisition to look at the role of context in semantic transfer in EFL students. The study included three tasks: selecting whether two words in English that have just one meaning in Turkish (e.g., long/tall or little/few) were 'interchangeable' or 'different'; choosing the appropriate words for use in sentences; and direct translation of Turkish sentences into English. While the results were somewhat mixed – when given context, the participants were able to choose the correct word quite accurately, but when asked to translate from Turkish to English the accuracy rates were quite low – the researcher concluded overall that they indicated evidence of L1 transfer. Moreover, the findings provided evidence for a difference between declarative memory – allowing for accuracy in providing the correct words in context – and procedural memory, which would enable them to produce accurate translations. The findings lead to pedagogical recommendations of teaching vocabulary in context and using techniques such as creating pictorial schemata and semantic maps in order to help L2 learners create new semantic systems.

Not necessarily on language transfer but focusing on a Kurdish-Turkish bilingual preschool, Yalçın Su and Çetin (2021) provided an ethnographic view of the school culture in relation to the views of administrators, teachers, and students towards bilingualism. Most of the students in this school context spoke Kurdish as their L1, making the school the place they learned Turkish. The administrators were found to be the key stakeholders determining the role of Kurdish in this context. While some teachers were OK with students drawing from their home culture and language, others totally banned the use of languages other than Turkish in the classroom under the pretext of improving teacher-student communication. Resonating with the findings of Zorba (2020), this study calls for more attention towards culturally responsive (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris, 2012) that draw from learners' funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) to support their educational experience and academic achievement.

## 6. Teacher education and professional development

In our earlier review, we structured the section on teacher education and professional development in terms of two broad methodological themes of descriptive and intervention studies. Owing to the limited number of intervention studies in this review, the following discussion is instead organized in a broadly chronological manner of works investigating pre-service teachers and training; novice teachers and the transition process; and in-service teachers' beliefs, identity, practices, and professional development.

### 6.1 Teacher education

More than a decade ago, Kırkgöz (2009) asserted that English teacher education in Turkey was not achieving its intended outcomes, a study that seems to have paved the way for examining the standards in place for assessing ELT education programs in Turkey (Staub & Kırkgöz, 2019). The sobering results, coming from an analysis of a survey of 101 teacher education faculty members from around Turkey, and follow-up interviews with 23 of them, revealed that despite language teacher educators' reports of fairly high awareness of teaching standards in general, several also expressed beliefs that such standards across Turkey were not in existence or not feasible, and that in reality, even when they were in place, data about these standards are rarely gathered. Staub and Kırkgöz (2019) concluded that ultimately standards assessment is rare and thus largely ineffective for making improvements in language teacher education programs, leading them to call for stronger leadership at both the national and local levels, with the creation of a nationwide standards assessment database and encouraging the growth of a local culture that recognizes the importance of improvement through assessment. In what could be considered a kind of assessment of how well language teacher education programs are preparing teachers to address these skills when they begin teaching, Bedir (2019) explored how familiar pre-service language teachers are with 21st century learning and innovation skills (i.e., 4Cs: creativity,

critical thinking, communication, and collaboration), which is part of the education policies of the OECD, of which Turkey is a founding member; and what they think about their integration into practice. Based on surveys of 124 pre-service teachers and a focus group interview with 12 of them, one overarching reality emerged: The soon-to-be teachers largely connected '21st century teaching' with the integration of technology, rather than the 4Cs. The participants also did not express a high degree of awareness of the national decision to adopt the 4Cs as learning standards and incorporate them into all curricula (Bedir, 2019). On the other hand, Köksal and Çankaya (2019) designed a program evaluation scale for ELT programs at the undergraduate level. The 33-item survey aimed to explore the opinions of pre-service language teachers in regard to their teacher education program in terms of five domains: (a) general overview, (b) goals, (c) content (d) teaching and learning process, and (e) assessment.

In addition to examining the standards of language teacher education programs, studies have also focused on different aspects of them such as the practicum experience (Aydın & Ok, 2022; Karakaş & Erten, 2021; Sarıçoban & Kırmızı, 2020). Both Aydın and Ok (2022) and Sarıçoban and Kırmızı (2020) explored the perceptions of students and their supervisors/mentors during the crucial practicum portion of teacher education programs. In Aydın and Ok's (2022) study, both mentors and supervisors, to a large extent, agreed upon the mentors' responsibilities for various roles (e.g., trainer-informant; role model; protector; assessor-evaluator; facilitator-supporter; collaborator; observer-feedback provider; reflector; and friend-colleague). However, the student teachers expressed much more mixed opinions about their mentors' actual fulfillment of them. For example, the mentors' success as trainer-informants was questioned by many students, though more saw their mentors as serving successfully as 'role models.' Sarıçoban and Kırmızı (2020), on the other hand, used stimulated recalls following four recorded teaching sessions by each participant over one semester, to understand the extent to which the eight macro categories of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) (Moradkhani et al., 2013) were materialized. Perhaps the most surprising and, ultimately, discouraging finding, was the student teachers' low level of English language knowledge, and thus their inability to provide effective input for their students. The researchers drew the inevitable conclusion that the student teachers' English language input received from their own teachers was probably inadequate, an area that needs to be addressed in ELT training. On a more encouraging note, other studies pointed to some positive findings for improved teacher training practices (Bozyiğit & Yangın Ekşi, 2017; Can & Karacan, 2021; Karakaş & Erten (2021). Bozyiğit and Yangın Ekşi (2017), for example, suggested that by using video-assisted written constructivist feedback sessions after micro-teachings, teacher trainers can increase student teachers' involvement and overall attitudes about such feedback sessions. Can and Karacan (2021) and Karakaş and Erten (2021) both reported encouraging findings regarding prospective teachers' identity growth and self-efficacy – the first looking at the role that practicum plays in developing student teachers' self-efficacy and the latter exploring their development of teacher identity and self-efficacy in relation specifically to technology use in teaching.

In terms of the pedagogical content knowledge language teachers are expected to attain as a result of the language teacher education programs, one particular area that stood out in our review was on language assessment literacy (Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydın, 2019; Tekir, 2021). In a mixed-methods case study design, Tekir (2021) focused on the 'English Language Testing and Evaluation' course offered by an EFL teacher education program in central Turkey with the purpose of examining its intended, enacted, received, and assessed curriculum. The comparison of the curricular documents (e.g., course syllabi, course materials and assessment tools) with survey data coming from both teacher educators and pre-service teachers indicated that teacher educators taught 67% of the content in their intended plan (high alignment); they tested 48% of the content in their written curriculum but only 44% of what they actually taught in class (low alignment). Both Atay and Mede (2017) and Ölmezer-Öztürk and Aydın (2019) examined the language assessment literacy of in-service English language teachers at the tertiary level. While Atay and Mede's (2017) participants indicated confidence in assessing vocabulary and grammar, the participants in Ölmezer-Öztürk and Aydın (2019) reported to be most competent in assessing reading and least competent in assessing

listening. Both studies made recommendations for teacher education programs to offer language assessment courses that focus on four skills; to combine theory and hands-on practice to evaluate ready-made assessments; and to design new ones.

### 6.2. Novice teachers

Numerous studies have explored the sensitive stage when student teachers graduate from their teacher education programs and enter the classroom as novice teachers especially in relation to the development of their knowledge and identity as they gain more experience. Güngör et al. (2019) offered a cross-cultural analysis of novice language teachers' experiences, comparing those in Turkey with those in Poland: two countries that differ widely in history, religion, culture, and socio-political background. In terms of the results, certain common challenges were identified, in particular, classroom management problems, and issues with choosing and adapting materials that would help with student motivation. On the other hand, there were also a few differences, most notably, Turkish teachers reported challenges emerging from the diversity of their students – for example, teaching classes of students with different native languages or from different ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds.

Adding possible insights into the reasons behind the challenges novice teachers face, and therefore, providing further clues on how to address them, Bulut Albaba (2017) provided a longitudinal perspective of five teachers' transition from their language teacher education programs into their early years as novice teachers, taking into consideration particularly the process of teacher learning and cognitive change. Bulut Albaba's (2017) study took a particularly interesting look at what happens when real world school practices and expectations fail to match with what novice teachers were taught in their teacher education programs – including losing their idealism, not being able to use any of the methods or techniques learned, and generally feeling compelled to accommodate to the social, cultural, political, and historical norms of the school cultures in which they find themselves. To better understand the tensions that emerge between what is taught and what is ultimately experienced, it may be useful to consider Bulut Albaba's (2017) study alongside that of Çakmak and Gündüz (2018). According to the 4th year pre-service teachers in Çakmak and Gündüz's (2018) study, the most important characteristics of good teachers were being objective, competent, and consistent, while creating a positive learning environment, managing the classroom, and being well-prepared for the lesson were also emphasized. One can easily imagine how such well-intended goals may become challenged when faced for the first time with the realities and unique complications of actual classroom contexts.

### 6.3. In-service teachers

Given the obvious significance of training, it is not surprising that studies of in-service teachers often find explanations for various behaviors or perceptions that stem from earlier educational experiences that contribute to teachers' identity and beliefs (e.g., Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2016; Yiğitoğlu & Belcher, 2018). In an in-depth case study of three experienced teachers, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2016) examined the impact of their prior language learning experiences on their current language teaching beliefs. Based on data collected through interviews, observations, stimulated recalls, and weekly reflection reports, the researchers found strong evidence of influence of past experiences on teacher cognition. Two factors, in particular, were found to impact these teachers' practices and beliefs. The first was the effect of past teachers, demonstrating the apprenticeship of observation impact as both a positive and negative factor in terms of influencing the participants' preferred and avoided practices, respectively. Second, their own past personal habits as language learners were also seen to carry through to later teaching practices and beliefs. Yiğitoğlu and Belcher (2018) also looked at the impact of past language learning experience on current beliefs and practices, but this time focusing specifically on the teaching of L2 writing. Based on rich qualitative data, this study finds that the two L2 writing teachers' self-perceptions as language learners influence their teaching in several ways – for instance, helping

them develop greater empathy with their students and with the challenges they face; influencing the materials they include and how they present them; and contributing to their own confidence as teachers.

Some of the points raised in Yiğitoğlu and Belcher's work concerning the connection between L2 learning experiences and subsequent language teaching practices also resonate with those studies looking at 'non-native English-speaking teacher' (NNEST) and 'native English-speaking teacher' (NEST) issues. Interestingly, the studies found on this topic still tend to use the NNEST/NEST terminology, unlike Yiğitoğlu and Belcher (2018), who considered such a distinction as suggesting a deficit view of 'NNESTs,' and instead used the terms speakers of English language (EL) and English as an Additional Language (EAL). For instance, in Karakaş et al.'s (2016) study exploring students' perceptions of NNESTs and NESTs, the surveyed students' preconceptions were relatively neutral for both NNESTs and NESTs, though NESTs were seen somewhat more positively in linguistic and professional dimensions, and NNESTs in pedagogical dimensions. Adıgüzel and Özüdoğru (2017), on the other hand, went beyond perceptions to explore whether there are different outcomes in student academic achievement and English language speaking skills between students taught by NNES or NES teachers. In a quasi-experimental design study lasting one semester, no significant differences were found in the post-test speaking skills of the two groups, but students in the NNEST's group showed statistically significant higher academic achievement post-test scores. Rather than tilting the balance in favor of 'NNESTs' or 'NESTs,' the results of this study taken in combination with those of Karakaş et al. (2016) seemed to be more a reminder of the significance of individual teachers rather than broad categorizations of supposed preferred teacher 'types.'

## 6.4. Professional development

Similar to our earlier review (Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018), professional development especially in relation to the impact of various types of professional development activities on teacher learning, efficacy, and motivation has been widely discussed within Turkey-based research (e.g., Fakazlı & Kuru Gönen, 2017; Sönmez Boran, 2018b; Tanış & Dikilitaş, 2017). Pınar et al. (2021) set the stage in a sense by exploring the factors that guide and influence teachers' professional learning, in other words, what makes them ready to take part in the process of 'becoming knowledgeable in and about teaching' (p. 173). The researchers surveyed over 1,000 EFL teachers across Turkey to try and understand which of the following has the greatest influence on teachers' professional learning: cognition and beliefs, emotions, motivation, or contextual variables. The results showed that while all four had a bearing, cognition and beliefs were shown to have a statistically significant greater influence on professional learning than the other factors.

There are also some professional development studies that focus more on collaborative methods and reflection such as team teaching and action research (Aktekin, 2019; Aydın, 2016; Canaran & Bayram, 2020; Tanış & Dikilitaş, 2017). The participants in Canaran and Bayram's (2020) study on team teaching clearly valued being able to plan the lessons together and expressed their appreciation for the broadened perspectives that can be gained by teaching together with someone as well as concerns about whether the time and effort needed for planning such a practice made it worthwhile. Another take on collaborative forms of professional development comes from Aktekin (2019), who looked at the impact of a Critical Friends Group (CGG) as a professional development model for EFL teachers. The study was structured around a year-long series of six traditional workshop trainings for EFL instructors at a Turkish university preparatory school, focusing on topics of interest to the teachers, such as motivation, classroom management, and using technology in the classroom. The findings showed that teachers need to engage in more in-depth, reflective, collaborative forms of professional development that allow them to truly make the connection between theory and practice. With a different take on the themes of reflection and collaboration, Aydın (2016) set out on a year-long professional development journey using herself as a collaborative 'critical friend.' Her goals in doing so were both for her professional development but also to develop an explicit model for how

to conduct self-study through a self-critical friendship process. To conduct the study, she video recorded her one-hour teacher training class each week for a semester and wrote reflective diaries after each session. She then set the data aside for one year to provide a distance and allow herself a more detached analytical perspective. Ultimately, she viewed the data for answers to the questions of 'Who are you?' and 'Do you teach as you preach?' Drawing on rich qualitative data, Aydın (2016) reached various conclusions about herself and about the role of teacher trainers, ranging from the idea that teacher roles overlap and that lesson planning, while important, has to leave room for flexibility, to ideas about the importance of critical self-reflection.

## 7. Discussion: An outlook for future research

In our previous review (Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018), we concluded with cautiously hopeful observations. Applied linguistics and language education research in Turkey at that time was extremely productive, and largely reflected broad international trends such as studying the language learner at the intersection of societal, institutional, and individual factors. In terms of the types of analysis being done, we highlighted progressive areas of research, such as conversation analysis, while also noting others that remained underexplored, such as (critical) discourse analysis. We also drew attention to our concerns about methodological shortcomings, from the lack of interdisciplinary research or true mixed-method studies to the dismayingly large number of studies that suffered from methodological flaws, from ineffective literature reviews to entirely missing discussion sections. Ultimately, we concluded with a call for the local disciplinary community to move beyond a pragmatic and individualist approach to research and the mere application of core theories, and to strive towards building a more creative community that could generate new theories. Five years later, our findings are again of a mixed nature. In the discussion that follows, we will first present the progress Turkey-based scholars have made in terms of, for instance, areas of research that have more recently received attention, and the emergence of a community of practice we have observed within Turkey-based applied linguistics and language education research. We will next raise several concerns especially in relation to the methodological aspects of Turkey-based research and relate them to future directions that Turkey-based scholars might consider taking in order to strengthen the quality of their research in ways that would help them extend their contributions from their immediate local context to more international ones.

The fields of applied linguistics and language education in Turkey between the years of 2016–2022 have definitely witnessed a tremendous growth in new areas of research such as ELF and WE (e.g., Biricik Deniz et al. 2020; Kemaloğlu-Er & Bayyurt, 2022); more engagement with the native speaker fallacy – though as we discussed above, the dichotomy of NNEST and NEST still remains; and the use of new and innovative methodologies such as eye tracking (e.g., Dolgunsöz and Sarıçoban, 2016; Uludağ, 2020a). Similar to our previous review, conversation analysis still remains as an approach adopted by a small group of scholars in Turkey who are interested in the micro-analysis of teacher-student and student-student interactions in the language classroom. Again, similar to our previous review, the use of instructional technologies (both in the general sense of online education and its specific aspects such as Web 2.0 tools) has stood out to be one of the predominant areas of research among Turkey-based scholars. Yet, despite the vast array of literature on this topic, we were surprised that only a few articles addressed COVID-19 and its resulting impact on teaching and learning processes. Even these studies, rather than giving us a glimpse into what online language education looked like during COVID-19, had a more retrospective look at online education by focusing on the preparedness of EFL teachers to teach (a)synchronous online classes during the pandemic (Aydın, 2022; Erdoğan & Yazıcı, 2022). Having said this, the lack of research on the actual classroom processes during online education might be resulting from the long turn-around/publication time in Turkey, and we hope to see more research on how language teachers and learners (and their parents) in Turkey navigated the challenges of the online education, what kind of institutional support systems were in place, and what lessons were learned moving forward.

We have also noticed a growing interest in multiculturalism/multilingualism, social justice language education, critical pedagogy, and culturally responsive teaching (CRT). Having said that,

Turkish-Kurdish bilingualism as a topic emerged only in one of the articles we reviewed in this paper (Yalçın Su & Çetin, 2021) and Zorba's (2020) study was the only one that focused on language teachers' readiness for CRT. Turkish as a foreign language has also emerged as a field, with many studies focusing on Arabic L1 learners of Turkish (e.g., Arı & Top, 2018; Gezer & Kıymık, 2018; Tanrıkulu, 2020). Turkey presently hosts the largest refugee population in the world, with approximately 3.6 million Syrians and 500,000 asylum seekers from other countries, such as Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (Erdoğan & Erdoğan, 2020, p. 247). According to the Global Impact on Refugees report (2020), more than 1.2 million of the Syrian refugees in Turkey are school-age children (5–17). Given this explosion of multicultural and multilingual diversity in language classrooms, it is of crucial importance that applied linguistics and language education scholars turn their attention to the more socio-cultural aspects of language education, and engage more with topics and pedagogies related to diversity, equity and inclusion (EDI) and social justice in the language classroom.

While progress has been made in relation to the above-mentioned areas of research, the same methodological concerns persist among the studies we reviewed between 2016–2022 – an issue that is by no means unique to the field of applied linguistics in Turkey (Aydınlı, 2022; Sula, 2022; Tetik, 2022). For instance, two of the concerns we raised in our previous review were the lack of genuine mixed-method research and lack of a genuine gap statement/discussion (Aydınlı & Ortaçtepe, 2018). Although many of the studies triangulated their findings through multiple data collection – mostly a combination of surveys and follow up interviews (i.e., sequential mixed-method) – rarely was there engagement with simultaneous mixed-method designs, that is, simultaneously collecting multiple forms of data to answer a broader research question. Similarly, while most studies often explicitly stated a gap in the literature to establish the significance of their research, these often constituted what we call either a 'lazy gap' (e.g., 'this study was not carried out in Turkey before,') or a 'labored gap' (e.g., studies that pulled together enough variables to make them different from other studies). While we believe that the multilingual and multicultural classrooms in Turkey present themselves as rich data sources, researchers need to justify why they believe the results might be different in this country, in this particular institution, or with this particular group of learners or teachers. Comparing two groups of teachers from two different countries, to give an example, although perhaps leading to interesting findings, should be accompanied with a discussion of what makes this comparison worthwhile, and in what ways such a comparison could enrich our understanding of language education research and teaching practices in both countries as well as from a broader international perspective. Without such deeper logical explanations, these only constitute 'red herring' gaps and, sadly, do not help the author truly establish the significance of their study.

Another observation we have made in regard to the methodological aspects of the research we reviewed is the product/result-oriented approach many researchers have adopted rather than unpacking – with thick descriptions through observations, documents, artifacts – the process itself. For many intervention-based studies, inadequate information is often presented for what actually took place in the classroom and what the process looked like. For instance, in a study that looked at the effect of using video games on learners' vocabulary, the data consisted of pre- and post-achievement tests, with no evidence provided into what the actual process looked like when learners used these video games. In experimental studies that compared experimental and control groups, the readers are often only informed about the experimental group condition and are expected to form their own assumptions in terms of what the control group engaged with instead. On a positive note, we noticed that some journals are requiring authors to submit their ethical review board approvals, and these are then published as part of the article information. While we believe that this is an important step forward toward more ethical research, our review also revealed a lack of any kind of positionality/reflexivity statement in most studies, even within qualitative ones. Given the recent emphasis on ethical applied linguistics (De Costa, 2015; De Costa et al., 2019, 2021), we call for Turkey-based applied linguistics and language education scholars to engage more with ethical concerns in their positionality/reflexivity statements to discuss how ethical tensions have been addressed before, during, and after data collection processes with different stakeholders who contribute to their research.

One other methodological observation we made in our previous review, but that did not get mentioned in our discussion, was Turkey-based scholars' engagement with gender as a construct. In this review, we also noticed that gender was often examined as a variable – mostly as part of demographic data – but often with no rationale in terms of how gender might contribute or relate to the other variables at hand. To exemplify, we have observed that studies have looked at gender-based differences not only in relation to concepts like learner autonomy and self-regulated learning, but also in relation to issues such as learners' use of phrasal verbs or comprehension of implicatures. Not only do these studies fail to present a discussion on how gender might possibly relate to such topics, but they also assume an approach that considers gender from a biological and binary view that perceives learners as either female or male. Gender as a non-binary, social construct is being widely discussed by applied linguistics scholars internationally, especially more recently in relation to the work of scholars on gender and sexual identities from the perspectives of queer theory and queer pedagogy (e.g., Cahnmann-Taylor et al., 2022; Nelson, 2006; Paiz, 2019). While we believe Turkey has a long way to go in terms of LGBTQ+ rights as well as gender equity, we would like to reiterate our earlier call for more comprehensive, social-justice approaches to learner diversity that consider all gender and sexual identities, as well as cultures, ethnicities, religions, abilities, and other forms of differences that have an impact on the oppression of some while privileging others.

Despite these issues, our review points to a vibrant community of practice within the fields of applied linguistics and language education. Most of the articles we reviewed heavily cited the works of other Turkey-based researchers, a positive observation, though future research may wish to consider whether this practice holds true in these authors' international publications. The failure to engage in such 'local' citing practices has been noted in other disciplines in Turkey and has been seen as an indication of a disciplinary community that is failing to come together (Aydınlı & Biltekin, 2017). Moreover, a large number of works was written by two or more authors – again, such evidence of collaboration can be seen as a sign of community cohesiveness. To be fair, many of these jointly authored studies are student theses/dissertations converted into articles with their supervisor. While we are aware that some universities require their doctoral students to publish before their graduation, we still see this collaboration of student–supervisor as a form of early career researcher support on the part of the supervisors, and as an attempt for community building at large. We hope that this review, by identifying the strengths and challenges of Turkey-based research, helps establish conversations among fellow scholars in terms of the future directions of applied linguistics and language education research in Turkey and contributes to these efforts to establish a community of practice at large.

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**Deniz Ortaçtepe Hart** is a lecturer in the TESOL programmes at the University of Glasgow. Before coming to Glasgow, Dr. Ortactepe Hart worked at the University of Leeds (UK), Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (USA), and Bilkent University (Turkey). Her research interests are second language socialization, intercultural pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and social justice language education. She has published in *Language Teaching*, *Intercultural Pragmatics*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Journal of Language Identity and Education*, *System*, *TESOL Quarterly*, and *Language and Intercultural Communication*. Her book, entitled *Social justice and the language classroom: A resource book for reflection, action, and transformation*, is published by Edinburgh University Press.

**Julie Aydınlı** is a Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Social Sciences University of Ankara. Her research interests include international higher education, second language acquisition, academic literacy development and genre analysis of academic disciplinary discourse. Her works have been published in journals such as the *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *International Studies Perspectives*, *Higher Education*, *Review of International Studies*, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, and *English for Specific Purposes*, and her most recent book, entitled *International education exchanges and intercultural understanding: Promoting peace and global relations*, is published by Palgrave Macmillan.