Available online at www.ejal.eu

Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics 1 (2015) 1–3

EJAL
Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics

Editorial introduction to the first issue

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Dear EJAL Readers,

Welcome to our inaugural issue of *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics (EJAL).*

Why a new applied linguistics journal? That was the very question Hüseyin Öz and I had to find an answer to when we had the idea of launching a new journal. This was especially challenging and daunting in an era where there has been a literal boom of academic journals both at home and overseas. Further, publishing a journal online (if not in print) without a budget meant an incredible commitment. The answer to the first was evident in that there was an abundance of journals in applied linguistics and language teaching from second language contexts, with relatively fewer outlets for research originating from foreign language contexts. Therefore, there was an obvious need for a new journal that would accommodate good quality research and theoretical discussions from a wide range of linguistic contexts including both second and foreign language environments. The answer to our latter concern remained unsolved. We had to commit many unpaid yet well-spent hours for the preparation of this opening issue. The outcome, we hope, is worth it.

Launching a new journal is a mission impossible without collaboration. Our team of editors and members of editorial board have contributed to the construction of the principles of the journal. We would like to thank them all for their input. Obviously, our Hüseyin Öz deserves most of the credit with lengthy hours in the development of our web site. He singlehandedly designed the web-site, did the page designing and handled the management of the journal. To this end, EJAL owes much to Hüseyin's computing expertise and skills in online academic publishing, without which this journal would not have come to life. We thank him for everything he has done for our project.

Our other associate editors, Chi Cheung Ruby YANG of the Hong Kong Institute of Education, Gholam Hassan Khajavy of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, and József Horváth of University of Pécs all assisted us during the initial stages of the launch of EJAL and the review of early submissions. Thank you all; we do appreciate your contributions. Our book review editor Ece Zehir Topkaya of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart

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University undertook a meticulous process to get three important books reviewed decently and thus deserves a thankful acknowledgement here. I owe special thanks to our members of the editorial board. They kindly accepted our invitation to be a part of another yet no name journal with literally no budget. Finally, journals can neither flourish nor survive without the input by volunteering anonymous reviewers. We were fortunate to have committed reviewers for our opening issue. Without you all, this venture would not have been fulfilled. Please accept my heartfelt words of appreciation. Thank you.

In this inaugural issue of Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics (EJAL), we have five articles and three book reviews reflecting the international scope of the journal. It was very encouraging for us to receive such diverse yet good quality papers. We would like to, therefore, thank our contributing authors.

Our first papers is by Kenta Yamanouchi. He examines who learners of English in the Japanese context take as models as speakers of English. The analysis of his data showed that despite the fact that his participants reported an aim of developing a native-like competence in English, they considered Japanese teachers of English as speaker models. He concludes that studies are needed to explore the features of speaker models without merely examining their accent and grammar but also paying attention to non-linguistic characteristics.

Ardith J. Meier, in the second article of this issue, re-examines and expands the concept of "noticing" to the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC). She explores the concept of "noticing" in light of two premises: a communication model that attributes significance to context and the negotiation of meaning; and the suitability of employing a culture-general approach to develop ICC. She seeks to show what needs to be noticed for the ICC to develop and ways to help language learners in the language classroom.

The third article of the opening issue is co-authored by Michael John Alroe and Hayo Reinders. In their replication experiment, Alroe and Reinders explored in the Thai context whether the provision of L1 equivalents of L2 words yields better results than when words are merely encountered in the context of L2 sentences. In doing so, they aimed to test the contention that giving L1 meanings can be more conducive to learning new L2 vocabulary. Their findings do not support the arguments in favour of providing L1 translation and raise questions for vocabulary instruction.

Frederick Poole and Koyin Sung, in our fourth article, present their findings from a pilot study that aimed to verify the best teaching approach to teach at a beginner level Chinese course. Motivated by tedious process of character learning in Chinese and the presence of three different points of focus (namely *Focus on Pinyin; Focus on Writing*; and *Focus on Recognition*) at the early stages of language proficiency in Chinese as an additional language, the authors aimed to figure out which method would best serve. No single method was found to yield exclusively better results, with superior outcomes from different methods in different areas of language competence.

The authors call for more research to build up a better model of integration of these skills in the Chinese classes.

Our fifth article is by Karim Sadeghi and Zainab Abolfazli Khonbi who explore patterns of relationships between language learning aptitude (LLA) and language learning strategy (LLS) use among EFL students at an Iranian university. Employing Oxford's SILL and Carroll and Sapon's MLAT, the authors try to demonstrate any possible effects of gender and aptitude on the use of strategies as reported through SILL. The analysis of variance identified a significant effects of aptitude but not for the gender. Having discussed their findings, the authors argue that LLS may be contributing to our LLA and measures need to be taken to provide for strategy instruction in language programmes.

In this opening issue, we have three book reviews. The first is a review by Sercan Uztosun of Rebecca Oxford's seminal book *Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies* published by Pearson Education Limited. He meticulously reviews individual chapters and highlights clearly new developments and changes from Oxford's early 1990 SILL taxonomy. Uztosun believes that the book offers new perspectives to researchers and discussions in the field.

The next book review was undertaken by Sedat Beceren. He reviewed for EJAL *Research Perspectives on Teaching and Learning English in Turkey: Policies and Practices* edited by Yasemin Bayyurt and Yesim Bektas_Cetinkaya and published by Peter Lang. The book is a collection research papers and presents up-to-date research trends in Turkey. After a thorough examination of each chapter, Beceren argues that the book represents the current knowledge and research practice in Turkey and can be a significant reference book.

Finally, Handan Çelik reviews *Review of Research Methods in Second Language Acquisition: A Practical Guide* edited by Alison Mackey and Susan M. Gass and published by Wiley-Blackwell. For this collection of papers, Çelik reviews each chapter and concludes that the book has a lot to offer to its readers. This is simply because, she argues, the book is reader-friendly, rich in information, and easily accessible to its readers.

We have thoroughly taken joy and learned much from working with our authors, reviewers, and editors involved in the preparation of this issue. We do hope that you will find the content as informative as we found it to be. A final note to finish this first editorial is that publishing a journal is recursive and continuous in that we have already started working on the next issue and hope to offer more to read in our upcoming issues.

Happy reading!

İsmail Hakkı ERTEN & Hüseyin Öz

Editors to the Inaugural Issue of EJAL