Post-Pandemic Trends in Language Studies
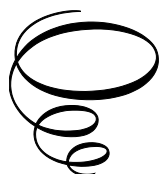
Post-Pandemic Trends in Language Studies

Edited by

Dilşah Kalay

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Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

...to Mustafa Kemal ATATÜRK
the founder of Turkish Republic

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Asst. Prof. Dr. Dilşah KALAY
June 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The book comprises several of the best-selected and adapted papers on the theme of some trends in language studies following the COVID-19 Pandemic. The selected and adapted articles are of interest to academicians, teachers, and graduate/undergraduate students involved in the field of language education, literature, and linguistics and essentially represent the various perspectives of the aforementioned topics under the umbrella term "language studies". Each chapter in this volume has been characterized by the authors' approaches to particular issues, ranging from broad scope to specific focus, and the central theme is the post-pandemic trends in the "language" literature.

Ankıt, in **Chapter One**, presents an analysis of different views on pronunciation teaching in language classrooms. Her study aims to examine Turkish instructors' teaching beliefs and classroom practices regarding pronunciation. In **Chapter Two**, İçöz and Kalay focus on the effects of socio-affective factors on second language writing performance. The primary purpose of their study is to investigate the relationship between the level of perfectionism and L2 performance among Turkish EFL high school learners. Chapter Three engages the validation of a Questionnaire on Gelotophobia. Kahraman and Hişmanoğlu, in **Chapter Three,** aspire to develop and use a self-reported instrument to determine the existence of the gelotophobia construct in foreign language learning and to find out the gelotophobia level of language students. In **Chapter Four**, with the title "Rise of Posthumanist Androids in Detroit: Become Human: An Example of Post-Cyberpunk Fiction", Meydan discusses the deconstruction of human and nonhuman distinction as a grand narrative in the post-cyberpunk and posthumanist context through the characters of the console game *Detroit: Become Human*. Šajinović Novaković, Tomić, and Muhić analyze "*surely*" and "*certainly*" as two modal adverbs which express conviction in **Chapter Five**. They compare and contrast these adverbs regarding their semantics, equivalents in translation and the syntactic environment in which they occur. In **Chapter Six**, Seis and Keskin conduct a comparative study examining Appositive Relative Clauses (ARC) in Polish and Turkish. With this analysis, their goal is to reject the traditional, homogeneous approach to ARC research in order to broaden their understanding of ARC in Polish and Turkish, using authentic

examples from the Narodowy Korpus Jzyka Polskiego (NKJP), Turkish National Corpus (TNC), and existing literature. Şahin and Karacan, in **Chapter Seven**, focus on the term "motivation" during the COVID-19 Pandemic. With a qualitative study, they explore the motivation and motivational sources of Turkish EFL teachers in the post-lockdown era. In **Chapter Eight**, Taşçı aims to measure the technological knowledge level of pre-service English language teachers and to reveal how teachers use technology in their classes. The term "acculturation" is highlighted in the paper by Topal in **Chapter Nine**. He carries out a cross-cultural analysis and presents the acculturation orientations of immigrants portrayed in Little America. Finally, in **Chapter Ten**, Tunaz scrutinizes the speaking anxiety level of the students and its effects on student talking time. He further examines whether gender affects students' anxiety or their talking time.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Dilşah KALAY
June 2023

CHAPTER ONE

THE PRELIMINARY STUDY OF BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF TURKISH INSTRUCTORS REGARDING PRONUNCIATION

BÜŞRA ANKIT

Abstract

In the past few years, there has been a substantial development in learning and teaching pronunciation. Although various studies and materials have been published in this area, it is crucial to determine whether they have influenced instructors. This research aims to investigate Turkish instructors' teaching beliefs and classroom practices regarding pronunciation. An online survey was distributed to Turkish instructors through a Google Form, which is a web-based survey management platform. The online questionnaire was shared with instructors in private and public universities. The survey items were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Since only three people answered the open-ended questions, their data were excluded from the analysis. The findings indicate that instructors hold favorable views and attitudes about pronunciation instruction. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that language instructors have limited experience in practicing pronunciation in the classroom. Although most professors (60%) frequently teach pronunciation in their classes, they expressed a desire for training in pronunciation teaching, consistent with earlier findings in EFL situations (Foote et al., 2011; Huensch, 2018).

Keywords: Teaching beliefs, classroom practices, instructors

Introduction

The experts argue that clarity and understandability, rather than nativeness or accent reduction, should be prioritized in the realm of pronunciation education in recent years (Derwing & Munro, 2005). During this period,

the finding has shown that pronunciation is an important component of effective communicative competence (Derwing & Munro, 2005), that pronunciation learning improves listening skills (Huensch & Thompson, 2017), and that a meta-analysis has shown that pronunciation instruction is truly effective (Lee et al., 2014).

According to Hurtado and Estrada (2010), pronunciation should be considered one of the most influential aspects of teaching in the second language (L2) context. This is because it enables L2 speakers to communicate effectively with native speakers and directly demonstrates their proficiency level in speaking ability (Müller, 2013; Riney, 1996). Derwing (2018) suggests that the primary aim of teaching and learning any language is to be able to communicate in the target language. The significance of accurate pronunciation lies in achieving communicative competence for speakers (Huensch, 2018). EFL learners at the B2 level should strive to be comprehensible and avoid forcing listeners to decipher their intended meanings (Li et al., 2021). Kim and Billington (2018) have emphasized that pronunciation is one of the crucial skills, with comprehensibility being a central focus at all stages. Additionally, improved pronunciation enhances communication and spoken language abilities (Gordon & Darcy, 2016), as it plays a vital role in avoiding misunderstandings and building speaking confidence. Despite being an important aspect of proficiency in second language acquisition (SLA), pronunciation is not studied as extensively in EFL classes compared to other language skills (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Nagle et al., 2018). Bai & Yuan (2019) state that due to schools' emphasis on exam results, teachers are often required to prioritize teaching reading, grammar, and writing over pronunciation. Previous studies (Dağtan, 2020; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Moedjito, 2009; Wei & Zhou, 2002) have indicated that teachers in many different parts of the world do not invest as much effort in teaching pronunciation as they do in other skills, leading to its neglect. Throughout the language teaching process, teachers are aware of the need to address mispronunciation since it can be challenging to correct entrenched incorrect pronunciation patterns.

According to Gilbert (2008), the neglect of pronunciation teaching in EFL classrooms can be attributed to two main reasons. The first reason is the lack of time dedicated to pronunciation. If this issue is addressed, teachers can allocate more attention to teaching pronunciation through various activities and authentic materials. The second reason is students' anxiety regarding mispronouncing words, as many feel more comfortable focusing on grammar and vocabulary. To overcome these obstacles, EFL teachers

need to remind their learners that the goal of pronunciation learning is not to acquire a native-like accent but rather to pronounce words in a way that is understandable to other speakers.

In addition to Gilbert, Kelly (2002) presented two significant reasons why English pronunciation continues to be neglected in many EFL classrooms. The first reason is that teachers do not feel confident in their ability to teach pronunciation, while the second reason is that teachers have limited knowledge about effective pronunciation teaching methods. According to Yağız (2018), pronunciation is often overlooked in Turkey because it is not included in the curriculum, with more emphasis placed on individual sounds. Harmer (2001) highlights the lack of adequate pronunciation materials and insufficient time allocated for pronunciation practice as factors contributing to the unwillingness to teach pronunciation.

Consequently, an increasing number of researchers have taken an interest in examining language teachers' ideas and practices concerning pronunciation in the English classroom. These investigations focus on how pronunciation is influenced within the language classroom, which serves as a space for teaching and learning, where effective instruction and perspectives intersect with student behavior (Baker, 2014). The theoretical and practical knowledge possessed by teachers is crucial, and it is essential to evaluate the relationship between their knowledge, beliefs, and practices in order to promote reflective pedagogy and understand the compatibility of beliefs with empirical research findings (Basturkmen, 2012). Furthermore, exploring the alignment between teachers' attitudes and research findings may shed light on situations where researchers should re-evaluate the validity of their findings if they do not align with the perspectives of experienced teachers. While investigations into teacher cognition have made progress over the years, researchers have predominantly focused on teachers' beliefs about L2 grammar (Borg, 1999; Phipps & Borg, 2009), reading (Graden, 1996), writing (Scott & Rodgers, 1995), and feedback (Kamiya, 2016; Lee, 2009). In this study, we aim to examine Turkish instructors' attitudes toward teaching pronunciation and their classroom practices. The research questions for this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the instructors' teaching practices related to pronunciation instruction?
2. What are the instructors' classroom practices related to pronunciation instruction?

3. What are the teaching beliefs of Turkish instructors regarding pronunciation?

Literature Review

Considering the impact of beliefs on teachers' learning and actions, studies on teachers' beliefs have made significant progress in the past 20 years, filling many important gaps in the understanding of teachers' beliefs and classroom practices regarding L2 pronunciation (Borg, 2011). Numerous studies have been conducted worldwide on ESL/EFL instructors' beliefs, attitudes, and practices (Breitkreutz et al., 2001; Burgess & Spencer, 2000; Buss, 2015; Foote et al., 2012; Derwing, 2018; Huensch, 2018; Wach, 2011; Yavuz & Keser, 2019).

For example, Breitkreutz et al. (2001) conducted a study with 67 ESL course instructors and coordinators across Canada. The findings indicated that the respondents' beliefs were consistent with the findings from pronunciation research. They believed that pronunciation instruction could be beneficial even after 2-3 years in the L2 context. Additionally, they did not view the purpose of a pronunciation program as eliminating a foreign accent, acknowledging that learners can be understood while speaking with an accent. The respondents reported teaching a combination of individual sounds and suprasegmentals. However, few had received specific training in pronunciation instruction, and some expressed a desire for further professional development in this area. Foote et al. (2011) replicated the study ten years later and found that Canadian teachers' beliefs and practices had not significantly changed despite more training opportunities being available.

Buss's (2015) research examined the beliefs and practices of Brazilian EFL teachers regarding pronunciation. The study focused on self-beliefs in teaching both segmental and suprasegmental features. Data collection involved three measures: background information, educational methods, and participants' beliefs and opinions. The findings revealed that the majority of teachers taught pronunciation in their classes and considered it highly important. Additionally, the participants expressed enthusiasm for learning how to pronounce words correctly. However, the analysis of teaching practices showed that suprasegmental features received less attention compared to segmental features, as teachers tended to prioritize segmental education. Although the participants preferred segmental training, they frequently cited the challenges associated with teaching

segments. Overall, the findings indicated that Brazilian EFL teachers demonstrated competence and confidence in instructing pronunciation.

According to Buss (2015), teachers may feel confident in teaching pronunciation because they and their students do not face the same pronunciation challenges since their first language is the same (L1). Another factor contributing to teachers' comfort in teaching pronunciation could be their prior knowledge of pronunciation instruction. Teachers' beliefs about preparedness, as highlighted by Darling-Hammond et al. (2002), are linked to their self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to achieve instructional goals. This means that when English language teachers possess the necessary knowledge and preparation, they can feel more secure in teaching specific pronunciation features.

Foote et al. (2013) conducted a study with three teachers in Canada to investigate teaching practices related to pronunciation in a second language context. By analyzing videotaped lessons, they found that teachers tended to neglect pronunciation compared to other language-related aspects in their classes. Despite teachers' beliefs, their actual focus on pronunciation was less prominent than on other skills. However, this study did not specify whether there was a discrepancy between teachers' knowledge about teaching pronunciation and what they needed to enhance their capacity to teach it effectively.

In Turkey, Yavuz and Keser (2019) investigated teachers' perspectives on pronunciation teaching and concluded that the participants, who were completing their pre-service programs, increasingly recognized the importance of pronunciation teaching in conjunction with the four main language skills. Surprisingly, most participants agreed that English teachers should be able to understand native speakers' pronunciation levels, and they recommended increasing the emphasis on pronunciation instruction in teacher preparation programs.

Demirezen and Topal (2015) examined the beliefs of in-service teachers from various Turkish cities and found that the teachers agreed that learners' ability to acquire native-like pronunciation is influenced by age. The researchers noted that while teachers were aware of the challenges posed by interference from their mother tongue, they expressed confidence in their ability to overcome these difficulties through intensive practice. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that the teachers' attitudes remained consistent across different characteristics, including age, years of experience, and educational degree.

Yağız (2018) argued that the cognitive inquiry of Turkish instructors regarding pronunciation teaching yielded highly positive results. The participants expressed confidence in providing pronunciation training in their classes and emphasized the importance of intelligibility in teaching pronunciation. However, these beliefs seemed to contradict their actual practices, as they predominantly focused on teaching segmental characteristics of English pronunciation while neglecting the other critical component, suprasegmentals. Another finding revealed that they dedicated most of their effort to correcting mispronounced errors, with less attention given to evaluations and feedback.

Considering that English is taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries and an increasing number of individuals are expected to acquire the language (Crystal, 2003), further research is necessary to understand instructors' perceptions and behaviors in diverse EFL contexts. It is crucial to determine if the findings of pronunciation research have influenced these contexts and to identify the professional development needs of EFL teachers. In the Turkish context, previous studies have been conducted with teacher candidates (Yavuz & Keser, 2019) and English teachers (Demirezen & Topal, 2015; Yağız, 2018). The findings revealed that English teachers have a strong understanding of pronunciation, recognizing its importance (Yavuz & Keser, 2019), and that the participants held favorable views on addressing pronunciation errors but were also focused on resolving such errors (Demirezen & Topal, 2015; Yağız, 2018). However, little information has been uncovered about the pronunciation beliefs and classroom practices of Turkish instructors. This knowledge is crucial for both researchers and educators in the field of pronunciation to ensure that advancements in pronunciation knowledge and practices meet the needs of students and instructors in various language learning environments. The current study directly addresses this issue by examining Turkish instructors' beliefs and classroom practices in both public and private universities. In contrast to previous studies, the current research employs four questionnaires from different studies.

Methodology

Participants/Sample

An online survey was distributed to Turkish instructors through Google Forms, a web-based survey management platform. The study included active instructors in Turkey as participants. While participants were required to answer all questions, except for two optional open-ended

questions, the number of respondents varied for each question. The participant profile was collected through a questionnaire completed by 10 respondents who participated in the survey. Among the participants, the majority (70%) were female, while 30% were male. All participants were between the ages of 24 and 45. Among the 10 participants, half (50%) graduated in English Language Teaching, while the other half (50%) graduated in English Language and Literature. The teaching experience of the participants ranged from one year to over seven years. Half of the participants (50%) worked at public universities, and the remaining 50% worked at private universities. The majority of participants (90%) reported having taught elementary and intermediate levels throughout their careers.

Instruments

An online questionnaire was utilized in this study, prepared using Google Forms, and it included sections on demographic information, teaching and classroom practices, teaching beliefs, and self-reported teaching issues. The Participants' Demographic Information section was adapted from Zhang (2018) with slight modifications to collect participants' age, gender, bachelor's degree, educational background, current teaching status, and academic experience (Zhang, 2018. Instead of including first languages and overall confidence in teaching pronunciation, the questionnaire added a question about the participants' bachelor's degree.

The Teaching and Classroom Practices section was adapted from Breitkreutz et al. (2001), Buss (2015), and Foote et al. (2011) to gather general information about Turkish instructors' teaching and classroom practices. The Teaching Practices section consisted of three questions that aimed to explore instructors' practices related to pronunciation teaching. The Classroom Practices section covered instructors' classroom practices and included 11 questions. The Likert-type scale for this questionnaire was changed to a 5-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, instead of the original 7-point scale. Each option was labeled as follows: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

The Teaching Beliefs section was adapted from Breitkreutz et al. (2001) and Foote et al. (2011) to assess instructors' feelings and opinions about teaching pronunciation. This section consisted of 15 questions, also using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree instead of the original 7-point scale.

The last section, borrowed from Buss (2015), focused on teachers' self-reported teaching issues. It inquired about the tactics or content utilized by teachers and the obstacles they encountered when teaching pronunciation and included two optional open-ended questions (Zhang, 2018).

Survey and Procedure

Data collection for this study involved the use of a Google Form to administer an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed based on the instruments used by Breitkreutz et al. (2001), Buss (2015), Foote et al. (2011), and Zhang (2018). To maintain the original format, all questions were written in English. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 37 questions, addressing three main topics: demographics (8 questions), teaching and classroom practices (14 questions), and teaching beliefs on pronunciation (15 questions). Additionally, two optional open-ended questions were included. The questionnaire employed various formats, such as multiple-choice questions, Likert-type questions, and comment areas following some of the multiple-choice questions.

The questionnaire link was distributed to Turkish instructors, who were encouraged to participate in the survey and share the email with other potential instructors. Participation was limited to instructors working at public and private universities. The online questionnaire was shared with 25 individuals, but only 10 participants completed it. It took approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the survey.

Data Analysis

After data collection, the researcher entered the data into a program called Jamovi to facilitate subsequent analysis using JASP. Several descriptive data analyses, including standard deviation, means, frequency rates, and percentages, were conducted by the researcher. These analyses were utilized to examine and gather information about the teaching beliefs and practices of the instructors.

Results

1. What are the instructors' teaching practices related to pronunciation instruction?

Percentages were used to analyze participants' teaching practices. According to the pie chart, 60% of the participants reported frequently teaching pronunciation in their classes. The majority of them indicated their efforts to integrate pronunciation instruction into their regular English lessons. Additionally, 60% of the respondents expressed a preference for teaching segments.

2. What are the instructors' classroom practices related to pronunciation instruction?

Table 1.1. *The frequency, percentage, and mean of classroom practices*

Classroom Practices	Scale	F	%	M	SD
q12	Strongly Agree	6	60	4.3	1.05
q13	Agree	4	40	2.0	1.05
q14	Strongly Agree	5	50	4.0	1.2
q15	Agree	6	60	3.9	0.8
q16	Agree	5	50	4.2	0.9
q17	Disagree	4	40	3.0	1.8
q18	Strongly Agree	6	60	4.4	0.9
q19	Agree	5	50	3.6	1.2
q20	Disagree	6	60	2.2	1.3
q21	Agree	4	40	3.9	0.9
q22	Strongly Agree	5	50	4.5	0.5

Descriptive statistics were employed to examine the classroom practices of instructors regarding pronunciation. The maximum mean score (3.6) indicates that instructors generally "strongly agree" with the statements about classroom practices in the questionnaire. The highest mean score (4.5) suggests that instructors express a strong desire to cover more topics related to pronunciation in their classes.

3. What are the teaching beliefs of Turkish instructors regarding pronunciation?

Table 1.2. *The frequency, percentage, and mean of teaching beliefs*

Classroom Practices	Scale	F	%	M	SD
q23	Disagree	6	60	2.6	0.84
q24	Neutral	4	40	3.6	0.96
q25	Disagree	5	50	1.9	0.73
q26	Disagree	6	60	1.9	0.87
q27	Strongly Agree	5	50	4.0	1.24
q28	Disagree	4	40	2.7	1.16
q29	Agree	4	40	3.0	1.05
q30	Agree	5	50	4.12	0.99
q31	Agree	4	40	3.8	1.13
q32	Agree	6	60	4.0	0.66
q33	Strongly Agree	4	40	4.1	0.99
q34	Strongly Disagree	6	60	2.2	1.54
q35	Neutral	4	40	2.3	1.25
q36	Agree	4	40	2.7	1.25
q37	Disagree	4	40	3.2	1.13

Descriptive statistics were utilized to examine the teaching beliefs of Turkish instructors. The overall mean value (3.07) indicates that instructors' teaching beliefs are at a moderate level. Moreover, teachers generally "agree" with the statements in the survey. The highest mean score (4.12) suggests that instructors perceive teaching pronunciation as an enjoyable task.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine Turkish instructors' attitudes toward teaching pronunciation and their classroom practices. In response to the first research question, three questions were asked about Turkish instructors' teaching approaches. The majority of professors (60%) reported frequently teaching pronunciation in their classes. While 20% preferred to teach pronunciation all the time, 10% preferred to teach it only occasionally. However, there were some participants who chose the option 'never', similar to Buss (2015). Most instructors stated that they try to incorporate pronunciation education into general English classrooms as

one of their key techniques for teaching pronunciation (50%). Around half of them (40%) frequently correct mispronunciations. However, utilizing additional resources to address common areas of difficulty for learners and consistently working on pronunciation activities provided in the curriculum were fewer common techniques. Participants were then asked which aspect of pronunciation they emphasized most frequently. In contrast to Buss' research (2015), the majority of instructors (60%) claimed they would rather focus on suprasegmentals, while 40% stated that segments occupied half of their instructional time.

The second research question investigated how foreign language (FL) instructors teach pronunciation in their classrooms. A significant percentage of instructors (60%) integrate pronunciation teaching into their classes. Regarding training on pronunciation, 50% of the instructors expressed a desire for more education. This finding aligns with previous research in EFL contexts (Huensch, 2018), highlighting the need for pronunciation teaching training. Interestingly, participants in this survey disagreed (40%) about addressing their students' pronunciation errors that may cause communication problems.

In response to the third research question, the data from the 'teaching beliefs' section revealed that Turkish instructors prioritize pronunciation instruction and generally hold positive perspectives. This finding is consistent with previous research (Breitkreutz et al., 2001; Yağız, 2018). Furthermore, teachers tended to agree that pronunciation teaching serves communicative purposes, similar to the findings of Buss' research (2015). Additionally, when teaching pronunciation, Turkish instructors tend to feel confident and at ease. However, approximately half of the participants strongly disagreed with the idea that pronunciation should be taught exclusively by native speakers.

In summary, the instructors in this study expressed an interest in practicing pronunciation, but their lack of awareness made them feel insecure and hesitant about their teaching methods. Moreover, the participants prioritized the understandability of communication over achieving a native-like accent. There were no specific ideas or practices regarding pronunciation among the participants, indicating the need for further support in addressing their students' mispronunciations and improving their own pronunciation teaching abilities. The absence of pronunciation in the curriculum has left teachers uncertain about how to incorporate it into their lessons.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into instructors' beliefs and practices regarding pronunciation. It contributes to a better understanding of the subject and can aid in the improvement of pronunciation knowledge and practice to meet the needs of instructors in various language learning environments. The findings suggest that the inclusion of pronunciation in class is considered important by nearly all instructors. Overall, instructors hold favorable views and attitudes towards pronunciation instruction. The study also highlights the significance of segment teaching, particularly vowels and consonants. Therefore, further research involving a larger sample of instructors in the context of pronunciation is warranted to build upon these findings and deepen our understanding of the topic.

Limitations and Further Suggestions

This study provides valuable insights into the pronunciation ideas and practices of EFL teachers, but it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the sample size of the study is relatively small as it is a preliminary investigation. Therefore, in order to generalize the findings, a larger and more diverse sample should be included in future studies. Additionally, the study only focused on Turkish instructors in public and private universities, limiting the generalizability of the results to other contexts.

Given these limitations, several recommendations for future research can be proposed. Firstly, increasing the number of participants and providing more detailed background information can lead to more robust and generalizable conclusions. Secondly, incorporating qualitative data collection methods such as classroom observations or focus group interviews can provide in-depth insights into teachers' beliefs and practices regarding pronunciation. These methods can offer a rich understanding of the nuances and complexities of pronunciation instruction.

By addressing these recommendations and conducting further research, a more comprehensive understanding of EFL teachers' pronunciation beliefs and practices can be achieved, contributing to the development of effective pronunciation teaching strategies.