

## **Teachers' Views on Digital Educational Tools in English Language Learning: Benefits and Challenges in the Turkish Context**

**August 2014 - Volume 18, Number 2**

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### **Abstract**

Despite the clear benefits provided by digital educational tools, Turkish teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) are often seen as failing to take advantage of computing technologies in the classroom. Deficiencies in terms of teachers' digital literacies are often faulted for this omission. The majority of studies concerning Turkish EFL teachers' technology use have focused on measurable aspects of their skills and practice. However, the researchers believed that the perceptions of Turkish teachers of English concerning their own level of competence, as well as other issues involved in applying digital tools, could provide insight into whether educators have the capacity to take full advantage of available learning technologies. Accordingly, a series of interviews was applied with 6 elementary and high school teachers. The results revealed that, in contrast to much of the existing research, the participants felt generally confident about their level of skill in applying these resources. Furthermore, they found digital tools to be motivating and to improve students' attitudes toward language learning, as well as increasing their proficiency. On the other hand, limited access to computers and the Internet often prevented teachers from taking advantage of digital media in their teaching.

**Keywords:** Curricular reform, digital literacy, digital literacies, EFL, English as a foreign language, English language instruction

## *The Advantages of Digital Teaching Tools in the Foreign Language Classroom*

In terms of English language learning (ELL) in particular, Craig and Patten (2007) note that digital resources have been shown to support learners in developing verbal interaction skills, increasing their vocabulary, and improving their reading comprehension. Furthermore, access to the Internet and social media develops students' intercultural skills and promotes global awareness. In addition, Warschauer and Healey (1998, as cited in Brown, 2001, p. 145) contend that integrating digital technologies in the English language classroom allows for individualization in large classes; facilitates multimodal practice; encourages collaboration; and increases the "fun" factor for learners.

Yet, despite the widely accepted benefits of computing and online technologies in foreign language learning, educational researchers have pointed out that in many of today's language classrooms, learners are frequently exposed only to traditional teaching methods and instructional materials (e.g., language course books) and have little or no opportunity to engage with digital learning tools (Chen, Belkada, & Okamoto, 2004; De la Fuente, 2003; Karamustafaoğlu, Köse, & Bilen, 2003; Kawaguchi & Di Biase, 2009; Kessler & Bikowski, 2010; Levy, 2009). As Yellend (2001) points out, adherence to traditional teaching methods fails to adequately support learners in developing the skills required for success in today's technology-driven society; and consequently, lack of exposure to online resources such as interactive social media can be viewed as a critical issue, particularly in educational settings where English learners have few occasions to practice their communicative skills in an authentic, interactive environment.

Researchers such as Bingimlas (2009), Brandl (2002), Cüre and Özdener (2008), Karamustafaoğlu et al. (2003) and Maglić (2007) have proposed that this circumstance rests largely on the failure of classroom teachers to effectively integrate digital learning tools in their practice; therefore, a great deal of attention has been focused on understanding the reasons for this failure. In this respect, Bingimlas (2009) refers to two distinctive types of impediments which impair language teachers' use of technology and contribute to their lack of digital literacy: (1) "intrinsic" barriers, which concern teachers' confidence, beliefs, and attitudes toward using digital learning tools; and (2) "extrinsic" factors, including limitations in terms of training, institutional support, time, and access to computer resources (p. 237).

*Intrinsic barriers to technology use.* With regard to intrinsic factors, a deficiency in digital literacies (Bawden, 2001), or insufficient knowledge of technical tools and how to apply them for instructional purposes, have frequently been cited as leading factors in EFL teachers' failure to incorporate digital materials in their practice. As Hockly (2012) points out, language teachers "may not feel confident with technology themselves or have received little or no training in how to use technology" (p. 110). This shortcoming may significantly impair teachers' capacity to provide an instructional environment that allows language learners to take advantage of these valuable educational resources (Cüre & Özdener, 2008; Özdener & İmamoğlu, 2005). A study carried out by Al-Kahtani and Al-Haider (2010)

supports this contention, additionally revealing that resistance to change and “fear that technology will someday replace them” (p. 155) further discouraged Arab teachers of English from attempting to employ digital resources in their lessons. Furthermore, Al-Kahtani (2004) found that EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia often expressed concern that use of the Internet in their teaching created a risk of exposing learners to culturally inappropriate materials.

*Extrinsic barriers to technology use.* Beyond language teachers’ personal attitudes and their level of competence, Al-Kahtani and Al-Haider (2010) delineate numerous extrinsic obstacles to implementing digital educational resources:

- Lack of onsite technical and administrative support;
- Lack of assistance in supervising students while using technology;
- Lack of specialists available to assist students in developing the necessary computer skills;
- Lack of computer availability;
- Lack of time required to successfully integrate technology into the curriculum;
- High cost of equipment and rapid changes in technology (p. 155)

In addition to these issues, lack of training opportunities in the use of computerized teaching tools is cited by numerous other researchers as an ongoing problem (Balanskat, Blamire, & Kefala, 2006; Bingimlas, 2009; Özden, 2007; Toprakçı, 2006). Du Plessis and Webb (2012) further argue that lack of infrastructure in developing countries often creates a barrier to access of even basic computing tools in public schooling; as a result, there is no opportunity for teachers to incorporate digital resources in their teaching, regardless of their ability to apply these tools and their attitudes toward digital teaching resources.

### *Purpose of the Study*

Along with the current effort to modernize the English language teaching program in Turkey, the Turkish Ministry of National Education has recently introduced an innovative program known as the FATİH project, which aims to equip classrooms throughout the country with SMART Boards and computers, as well as providing learners with tablet PCs, an undertaking which is expected to be carried out over the next several years (FATİH Project, 2012). Therefore, as it is evident that digital teaching resources can be expected to take on an increasingly prominent role in English language instruction, the question of whether foreign language teachers can effectively apply these tools is of substantial concern. With this in mind, the researchers reasoned that in order to assist teachers in making sense of “the role that technology can play in their classrooms” (Al-Kahtani & Al-Haider, 2010, p. 153), it is essential to understand the factors – both intrinsic and extrinsic – that either promote or restrict teachers’ ability to use digital technologies in EFL instruction.

In this regard, the majority of the research concerning digital technology use in Turkish education has focused on measuring teachers’ knowledge and level of

comfort with using technology in the classroom, as well as the extent of their efforts to incorporate digital tools in their teaching. However, the researchers felt that the personal insights of language teachers concerning their competence in using technical materials, as well as their attitudes toward the use of digital technology in language instruction, should not be overlooked. Their attitudes toward technology use may be a significant factor in their willingness, as well as their positive efforts to employ digital tools in their teaching, and therefore, understanding their perspectives may provide greater understanding of the factors that promote or inhibit their ability to take advantage of these important educational resources. Therefore, the current study was designed in order to address the following research questions:

1. How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the use of digital technologies in foreign language instruction?
2. In their eyes, how does the English language teaching curriculum provide for the use of technological tools?
3. How do English language teachers view the availability of digital instructional resources?
4. What are their perceptions concerning their own level of digital literacy; i.e., do they feel that they have the level of confidence and competence needed to effectively apply digital learning tools in their teaching and to instruct learners in their use?

### *Method*

This study was carried out under the aegis of a larger-scale grant project conducted by the first researcher concerning use of digital technology in ELT instruction [1]. The large-scale project involved an investigation of the participants' experiences and intentions with respect to the use of digital teaching tools in the classroom. However, in terms of the present study, the researchers were interested in developing an in-depth understanding of the motivations and attitudes that influenced teachers' use of digital technology, rather than on generalizable data concerning their actual classroom practice; therefore, a qualitative approach to the current investigation was found to be most appropriate (Creswell, 2007).

### *Setting and Participants*

The population of interest was English language teachers working in Turkey's state-run schools; therefore, purposive sampling was employed in order to target the individuals from whom the most relevant information could be obtained (Patton, 2002). In this case, the researchers believed that focusing on a small group of participants would be the most effective means of gaining detailed information concerning their perspectives on digital technology use (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). Furthermore, the researchers were interested in the experiences of teachers working in diverse educational settings. In order to reach the desired population in the most efficient manner, the researchers solicited referrals from colleagues in the

field and contacted a number of English language teachers who were working in state-run elementary and secondary schools in a mid-size city on the northeastern coast of Turkey. Of the individuals contacted, six teachers agreed to participate; both males and females were included. One of the participants was teaching in a government-run boarding school, while another was employed in a vocational high school. The remaining participants were working in mainstream public elementary and high schools. Prior to the data collection phase, the participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and written consent was obtained for the use of the interview data. Permission for conducting research with the teachers was obtained in conjunction with the larger grant project.

### *Data Collection*

As Di Cicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) point out, in-depth interviews offer one of the most effective methods of exploring the complexities behind individual perceptions and behaviors; accordingly, the data collection phase of the study was designed around a series of personal interviews with the teacher-participants. As the participants were English teachers with advanced language skills, the interviews were carried out in English. The questions (see appendix) were designed to elicit the participants' views and experiences in order to reveal whether they considered themselves to be competent in the use of computer-based language tools; whether they considered that applying these resources was feasible under the current circumstances in their schools; and whether they felt that digital technologies provided significant benefits in language education. While the questions were formulated prior to the interviews in order to ensure that all aspects of the research questions were addressed, the participants were encouraged to expand on their ideas and to add their own insights to the discussion.

### *Data Analysis and Credibility*

Data collection and analysis were carried out concurrently (Silverman, 2001), allowing the researchers to follow up in a timely manner if clarification of the responses was required. The interview transcripts were read several times by the researchers. During the iterative readings, a number of distinctive themes emerged from the data concerning the participants' attitudes toward technology use. In accordance with these themes, the researchers developed a list of categories and subcategories based on the participants' use of language in describing their views (Denzin, Lincoln, Ryan, & Bernard, 2000; Rand & Bernard, 2003). For instance, a statement such as "I think digital technology is necessary in teaching a language" (Participant 2) was classified under the subcategory *participants' general attitudes toward digital teaching tools*; while a remark that "the current English language curriculum supports the use of digital media" (Participant 6) was classified as *suitability of the current teaching program for the application of technological tools*. A colleague with similar research experience was asked to read the transcripts

independently to verify that the categories identified by the researchers, as well as their interpretations of the responses, were appropriate (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008).

Finally, in order to contextualize the individual responses within the larger data set, the total number of unique responses was counted, revealing 71 individual statements that could be classified under one of the categories/subcategories for interpretation. The responses assigned to each category and subcategory were then tallied; and the frequencies of each response type were calculated as a percentage of the overall number of responses. While the percentage of responses related to a given category is not necessarily indicative of the importance placed on that category by the individual participants, tracking this data allows a pattern to emerge in terms of the topics that received more or less attention from the group as a whole. An inventory of the categories and subcategories identified during the analysis is provided below, in Table 1, along with the related frequencies.

**Table 1. Inventory of categories used in analyzing the participants' responses**

Categories	No. of responses	% of responses	Related subcategories
Pedagogical considerations with respect to technology use in EFL instruction	19	27%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants' general attitudes toward digital teaching tools (<i>8 responses/11%</i>);</li> <li>• Perceived pedagogical advantages of digital technology (<i>9 responses/11%</i>);</li> <li>• Perceived drawbacks of digital technology (<i>3 responses/4%</i>).</li> </ul>

Categories	No. of responses	% of responses	Related subcategories
Attitudes concerning educational support for technology use	44	62%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitability of the current teaching program for the application of technological tools (4 responses/6%);</li> <li>• Access to training opportunities (4 responses/6%);</li> <li>• Administrative support for use of technology in the classroom (12 responses/17%);</li> <li>• Availability and adequacy of digital teaching tools(24 responses/33%).</li> </ul>
Perceptions concerning personal skills and knowledge with respect to digital teaching tools	8	11%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience with technology use in the classroom(3 responses/4%);</li> <li>• Confidence in ability to use technology in the classroom (5 responses/7%).</li> </ul>

### *Results and Discussion*

The results of the interviews are presented here according to the categories outlined above. In order to preserve the anonymity of the teachers, they are referenced as Participant 1, Participant 2 and so on.

### *Pedagogical Considerations with Respect to Technology Use in EFL Instruction*

The references made by the participants to pedagogical considerations in using digital teaching tools made up 27% of the overall responses. The majority of these were favorable, indicating an attitude that technology use in the language teaching and learning process is not only beneficial, but necessary in preparing students to deal with the requirements of modern society. A few drawbacks were also noted, mainly relating to classroom management of these tools, rather than their pedagogical use.

*Participants' general attitudes toward digital teaching tools.* The participants expressed overall agreement about the effectiveness of digital resources in foreign

language teaching, noting their capacity to motivate students and provide concrete examples of abstract concepts. As Participant 2 explained:

I think digital technology is necessary in teaching a language. Teaching a language requires awakening the sensory organs. This is only possible through using technology. Otherwise, you are only trying to teach abstract things. You have to encourage students' motivation to learn by using technology.

This attitude, which echoes the assertions of Dörnyei (2001), Kawaguchi and Di Biase (2009), and Kessler and Bikowski (2010) that computerized, interactive teaching tools are motivating for learners, was supported by Participant 6's contention that "everybody who wants to learn a foreign language should get a computer and the Internet." In addition, in line with Craig and Patten's (2007) belief in the ability of digital tools to promote effective, individualized instruction that addresses a wide range of learning styles, Participant 5 enumerated the following benefits of computer resources:

Effective time management, an easy and detailed evaluation process, interesting and interactive presentation techniques, support for students' individual development and assessment, home-learning opportunities, and use of various materials which address multiple intelligences can be listed as some of major benefits of technology integration in language classrooms.

Furthermore, the respondents generally expressed that technology is part of everyday life and cannot be overlooked in the learning process. As Participant 5 noted, there is "a strong obligation for the integration of these technologies in our teaching, because the world is totally digitalized, and this is not a matter of question anymore." His view was reiterated by Participant 2, who remarked that:

[Digital tools] play a vital role in foreign language instruction, especially in terms of communicative goals. Our century is a technological one, and we cannot think about the world without technology. Therefore, we have to integrate digital technology into language instruction.

*Perceived pedagogical advantages of digital technology.* In terms of the pedagogical benefits of digital learning tools, the teachers generally expressed that technical resources were highly effective in increasing learners' attention, as argued by Brown (2001). According to Participant 1, "learning new things is easier, and the knowledge is much more permanent in [learners'] minds. Moreover, it is easier to recall the information that was learnt before." In addition, online sources were perceived as beneficial in that they allowed teachers and students to access a wide range of learning materials, as well as to communicate with other language learners. As Participant 6 remarked:

Visual materials and teaching texts are easily available thanks to digital technologies; and besides, students are able to communicate with their peers around the world with the help of the Internet .... In this way, they can use the language and have the opportunity to listen to native speakers.



This view concerning the accessibility of teaching materials, as well as the ability of the Internet to facilitate authentic communication, is widely supported by researchers such as Chen, Belkada, and Okamoto (2004) and Karamustafaoğlu et al. (2003). Furthermore, Participant 2 pointed to the motivational aspect of digital learning, noting that “students are more willing when you use [computer resources], and their motivation levels are higher;” this view reflects the findings of Maglič (2007), Son (2011) and Zeller (2005).

*Perceived drawbacks of digital technology.* For the most part, the teachers’ responses demonstrated that they saw few drawbacks to the use of computer-aided teaching tools. For those who did comment on this issue, classroom management appeared to be the greatest concern, in line with Al-Kahtani and Al-Haider’s (2010) assertion that teachers’ lack of ability to supervise students’ use of interactive media inhibited them from employing digital instructional tools. Participant 4 explained that “while using technology in the classroom, students’ attention can shift easily.” Participant 3 elaborated on this view, noting that “if students are using the Internet, there must be someone to supervise them. Sometimes they spend too much time in front of the computer.” Furthermore Participant 5 commented that:

[Students’] learning motivation may be negatively affected if the teacher cannot manage the process effectively; lack of experienced and well-trained teachers can be one of the deficiencies in the process. Also, mechanical and technical problems and device malfunctions may be problematic and cause extra expense.

His view that teachers’ lack of experience could potentially negate the benefits of digital learning tools is a familiar one in the literature (e.g., Cüre & Özdener, 2008; Hockly, 2012; Özdener & İmamoğlu, 2005); in addition, his concerns about technical problems and the expense of computer equipment mirrors the drawbacks delineated by Al-Kahtani and Al-Haider (2010) concerning inadequate technical support and lack of funding for digital resources.

*Attitudes Concerning Educational Support for Technology Use.* Educational support for the use of technology, including the suitability of the current English language teaching program, administrative attitudes, the availability of resources, and opportunities for training, made up a substantial proportion of the participants’ discussion, at 62% of the total responses. In this case, while opinions were somewhat divided as to whether the current teaching program supported the use of technology, the availability of digital teaching tools and access to the Internet were frequently reported as problematic. The teachers generally felt that their school administrators encouraged technology use, and the majority of them expressed confidence that technical support was available in the event of problems related to equipment or connectivity. Furthermore, while most of the participants agreed that they were offered little in the way of training, they did not see this as an important problem, as they were able to acquire the necessary skills through their own efforts.

*Suitability of the current teaching program for the application of technological tools.* Only one respondent, Participant 6, felt that “the current English language

curriculum supports the use of digital media, because student-centered learning is the main goal of the system.” However, Participant 5 believed that implementing recent changes such as the FATİH project would lead to more widespread and effective use of technology. As he explained:

In the last two years, with the development of the FATİH project, technology integration in classrooms, and also teachers’ integration of educational technologies, has come to be supported by officials. Things will become better in the following years with the inclusion of well-trained young teachers in the system.

His remarks underscore the efforts of the Ministry of National Education to modernize the curriculum and bring it in line with European standards (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of National Education, Board of Education, 2013). However, the perceptions of some of the participants indicate a belief that more progress is necessary. Participant 3, for instance, elaborated that although “the written curriculum claims that using of digital media in learning is important ... in practice, it doesn’t support this claim.” Participant 1 agreed, pointing out that:

The curriculum should have some good songs, games, videos and so on to use with digital technology ... The teacher’s book should have a CD for listening, reading, writing and speaking activities; and it would be useful for [learning] grammar patterns. But there isn’t one.

*Access to training opportunities.* In addition to the shortcomings of the curriculum itself, the participants generally expressed that training opportunities, either through their teacher preparatory programs or through training seminars, were limited or non-existent in the Turkish educational context– an issue which has previously been noted by researchers such as Özden (2007) and Toprakçı (2006). Participant 4, for instance, reported that “I had training seminars about the Internet, [but] I don’t think sufficient training opportunities are available and accessible.” Likewise, Participant 3 explained that:

In the university, we had a course about using computers in our first year. Aside from that, my [own] experiments have helped me to learn to use technology. I think training opportunities are insufficient in our country, but you can learn using technology in your social environment.

Similarly, Participant 1 did not see this lack of formalized training as a problem; in his view, “I don’t feel like I need a training seminar; I can teach myself – I don’t need boring seminars.”

*Administrative support for the use of technology in the classroom.* In terms of administrative support for educational technology, only Participant 1 saw this as any obstacle. As she noted, “I can’t say they support us, because ... we don’t have any digital teaching tools!” On the contrary, Participant 2 reported that “My school administration supports and encourages and even forces us to use technology if we don’t use it.” Participant 5 likewise felt that his institution provided strong support for digital learning; furthermore, he pointed out that his school was well-equipped

to deal with any technological problems that might arise, as “there is ICT branch in our school, so we do not have any problem with technical staff.”

*Availability and adequacy of digital teaching tools.* The issue of access to quality educational tools received more attention than any other aspect of the participants’ responses, accounting for 33% of the total responses identified in the interview data. In spite of current efforts to expand the availability of technology in public school classrooms (FATİH Project, 2012), several respondents described access to computers as an ongoing problem. For instance, Participant 2 explained that “we don’t have computers, projectors or tapes in our school. I can only use colorful pictures and flashcards to teach something new.” Likewise, Participant 6 noted that “my institution hasn’t got adequate facilities. We have a computer lab, [but] only a few of the classrooms have computers. There is only one computer for 80 teachers and one computer room for 1800 students.” Of the teaching tools that were available, Participant 1 described an interactive teaching program known as DYNED:

[It is] very useless and boring. We as teachers are compelled to use that program once a week, but it is nonsense... Only if I use my own laptop and reflect it on the board, then we can use an interactive way of learning.

This lack of adequate computing resources, which was reported by Du Plessis and Webb (2012) as a common issue in developing countries, also prompted Participant 4 to use his personal laptop for his classes, while Participant 1 revealed that “I have bought some teachers’ CDs ... with my own money.” Furthermore, ability to utilize the Internet was seen as problematic, with online access available only in certain parts of the schools. According to Participant 2, “We can only use the Internet in the teachers’ room; there is only one computer in this room, and it is not adequate for us. Participant 3 reported the same situation in his school:

There is only one computer that teachers can use to access the Internet in the whole school. The students have the opportunity to access the Internet only during their information technologies lesson, which is held only one hour per week.

On the other hand, Participant 1 explained that “in my school, we have Internet access, but it doesn’t suffice, because we can’t reach all of the Internet sites. Most of them are restricted by the government.” His comment was echoed by Participant 5, who noted that “The Internet connection which is provided by MEB [the Turkish Ministry of National Education] has an extensive filter that blocks access to most of the useful sources, as well as the harmful ones.”

*Perceptions Concerning Experience with Technology and Confidence in Ability to Utilize Digital Teaching Tools.* The participants’ references to issues relating to their experience and confidence in using digital technology in the classroom were minimal in comparison with the other concerns they expressed, amount to only 8% of their total responses. This could be an indication that the teachers’ ability to employ digital tools was not a matter of great concern.

In this respect, in contrast to much of the literature which contends that language teachers lack experience and/or competence in the use of technical tools (e.g., Cüre & Özdener, 2008; Hockly, 2012; Özdener & İmamoğlu, 2005), the teachers mainly expressed that they had the required skills for using digital resources in their practice, as well as the ability to guide students in their use. Participant 1 reported a high level of proficiency, noting that “I feel comfortable, because I am good at using computers and computer programs.” Participant 5 similarly remarked that:

I have been using computers since 1998, and dealing with technology and technological advances is one of my hobbies, so I am quite comfortable when I use those devices in my classes. I think that I am highly capable to train and teach using technological tools.”

In addition, Participant 6 explained that “I have the necessary skills; I easily use computers, Internet resources [and] audio-visual equipment. Even those teachers who did not consider themselves to be experts believed that they were sufficiently literate to meet the needs of their students. Participant 4, for instance, felt that “in all fairness, I am not professional about using computers, but I can meet my personal needs and use them for my teaching.” Participant 2 shared this view, explaining that “I don’t think I am an expert, but at least I know what to do when I meet a technological device. I can use Word, and PowerPoint, and I can search for things on the Internet. When I have the opportunity to use technology with my students, I think I am sufficient as a guide.”

### *Conclusion*

Contrary to the existing research which holds that Turkish teachers of EFL are frequently unable and/or unwilling to apply technology in their teaching practice, the teachers in this case generally expressed that they enjoyed using computerized educational tools, saw themselves as sufficiently competent in their level of digital literacy, and felt that they could meet the needs of learners in this respect. Furthermore, in terms of their general perceptions concerning the role of digital technologies in language instruction, the teachers were enthusiastic and expressed that digital tools could motivate students, enhance their learning and improve their long-term retention. Although the participants felt that training for use of computing resources was limited, they did not see this as an important problem, believing that they could learn the necessary skills on their own. On the other hand, lack of access to computers and the Internet was cited as posing a significant obstacle, and in instances where these resources were available, the participants reported that governmental restrictions on Internet resources tended to limit their use as teaching tools.

Viewed in terms of Bingimlas’ (2009) categorization of intrinsic versus extrinsic constraints on digital literacy, it can be seen that overall, intrinsic factors such as lack of confidence and lack of ability were not reported by the teachers as major obstacles to their use of technology use in the classroom. On the contrary, extrinsic issues, particularly in terms of the availability of resources, were seen as a

significant problem. Therefore, it can be concluded that, in this case, the teachers perceived that insufficient access to digital tools, rather than their personal lack of digital literacy, was the main factor inhibiting the use of technology in the classroom.

The current study was focused on a small group of participants teaching under similar circumstances, and their views are not necessarily representative of Turkish EFL teachers in general. However, the findings of this study are compelling in that they contradict the perception that teachers do not have the skills to employ digital teaching tools, and therefore, in light of the ongoing efforts of the FATİH project, which aims to equip classrooms with tools such as SMART Boards and tablet computers, it can be reasonably argued that teachers such as these may be motivated and confident in terms of putting these resources to effective use.

On the other hand, further investigation into the training opportunities available to teachers, including surveying the opinions of the teachers themselves concerning their needs, may be useful in support them in the application of these new resources as they become available, as well as in making more effective use of the existing tools.

#### **Note**

[1] The study reported in this article is based on the first author's research project "Restrictions on the Integration of Digital Literacies into Language Education in Turkey" (2010.116.010.1), which was funded by the Scientific Research Unit at Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey. The authors would like to express their gratitude for the support provided. An earlier version of the findings of this study was presented by the researchers at the Conference on Interdisciplinary Research in Education, Kyrenia, Cyprus, in February, 2013 (see Çelik & Aytın, 2013).

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## **Appendix**

### **Interview protocol: Factors affecting the use of digital media by elementary level EFL instructors in Turkish state-run schools**

#### **Section I – Pedagogical/curricular considerations with respect to technology use in foreign language instruction**

1. Given the communicative goals of the current English language curriculum, what is your general opinion concerning the place of digital technology (e.g., personal computers, computer software, PowerPoint, videos, the Internet) in foreign language instruction?
2. What do you consider to be some of the advantages of using digital technologies in teaching English?
3. On the other hand, what do you consider to be some of the drawbacks of using technology in foreign language instruction?
4. What do you see as some of the more useful applications for computer and Internet technologies in language learning?
5. Do you feel a need to include Internet and computer resources in your teaching? Why or why not? If so, which tools do you consider to be the most effective?
6. In your opinion, does the current English language curriculum support the use of digital media in language learning? Please elaborate.

#### **Section II – Opinions concerning the availability and adequacy of digital teaching tools in your institution**

1. Do you feel like your institution has adequate computing facilities (language labs and/or classroom computers) for use in English language instruction? Please explain.
2. What are your opinions concerning the condition of the available facilities?
3. What about Internet resources? Do you believe that your school provides sufficient access to the Internet for teachers and students for use in language learning? Please elaborate.
4. What types of language learning programs are available in your school (e.g., interactive learning software, audio/visual materials, social networking, etc.)? If you could, what would you change about the current situation in your school with respect to available equipment?

#### **Section III – Perceptions of institutional/administrative support for the use of digital resources in language instruction**

1. What are your views concerning the availability of technical support staff in terms of digital teaching tools in your school?

2. Does your school administration encourage/support the use of technology in language teaching? Please elaborate.

3. If you could, what would you change about your institutional environment with respect to use of technology in education?

**Section IV – Beliefs concerning your own skills and knowledge with respect to integrating digital media in English language instruction**

1. How comfortable do you feel about using computers and other digital equipment, either in your teaching or for your personal needs? Please elaborate.

2. What kind of training have you undergone with respect to using digital technology in the classroom (e.g., teacher preparation, professional development programs, training seminars, etc.)? Do you feel that sufficient training opportunities are available and accessible?

3. Do you think you have the necessary technology-related skills to support language learners in the use of digital learning tools?

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