E-Teacher Professional Development Workshop
University of Maryland, Baltimore County and
University of Oregon, Summer 2012

Training EFL Teachers in Effective Assessment of Young Learners
Ümit Cebeci, Turkey

In September 2012, the proposal for a professional teacher training course called “Effective Assessment of Young Learners” will be presented to the Turkish Education Association Karabük College as a part of their training plan for the academic year 2012 - 2013. The course will be offered entirely via a face-to-face workshop to a group of 6 teachers of English as a foreign language. The content of the workshop will include materials taken from the U.S. Department of State E-Teacher Scholarship Program course on Teaching English to Young Learners (ELC 6886 Fall 2011) at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), and from the 3-week E-Teacher Professional Development Workshops at UMBC held between July 22-August 13, 2012. The training will promote the development and implementation of effective assessment of young learners.

Hosts: Turkish Education Association Karabük College

Participants: 6 English teachers

Program: 90-minute face-to-face professional development training

Schedule: September 26, 2012

Goals: The goal of the professional development project is to train teachers to:

- Gain key concepts of assessment;
- Recognize the Rationale behind assessing young learners;
- Follow the Guidelines of assessment planning; and
- Develop various formative and summative assessment instruments for young learners.
**Problem Identification**

English has been taught as a foreign language in Turkey ever since French lost its status as a lingua franca. French was the language of nobility during the first years of the Turkish Republic but the situation changed after World War II when British and American influence was felt in our education system. In the past, English was initially taught in the 8th grade. Now, the law of compulsory primary education dictated that English be taught in the 4th grade. The main reason why English is taught earlier and earlier in Turkey is that English has become a global language used as a medium of communication across the spectrum of channels of communication and for multiple occupations. Moreover, research says that education from an early age provides a solid foundation for children’s intellectual, physical, linguistic, emotional and social development. For this reason, most private schools in Turkey start foreign language education in kindergarten. Therefore, English is being taught at even earlier ages these days and as a result of this change teachers require immediate specialized training in assessment in language teaching to young learners due to the lack of knowledge and precision in the topic of language teaching assessment for young learners.

Furthermore, as learning differs from person to person, tests, commonly-used tools of assessment and evaluation in terms of validity and reliability, which are applied in any class, may not work in another class—in which there may be students whose interests and needs are different. Therefore, teachers need specific Professional Development in assessment to achieve better results in the area of measuring objectives via assessment in their classroom effectively. Therefore, this PD program for Turkish teachers will address the question: How can we assess young learners effectively?

**Contextual Analysis**

In the past, the structure of the general education system of Turkey was similar to Europe’s. According to the Ministry of Education of Turkey, the duration of years to complete basic education was formerly 13 years—being the entry age 6 years of age. Since 1997, the years studied in primary education has officially been changed to 8 years of primary school and 4 more years of secondary school. Formal basic education starts in the pre-k level and goes as far as the 12th. In this new educational scenario, mandatory English education starts in the 4th grade of primary school system for public schools.

On the other hand, English education in private schools starts in the kindergarten level, which is different from public schools. Specifically, English education is given as early as the age of five in Turkish Education Association (TED) Karabük College. TED has got 25 schools around Turkey where Immersion programs are applied in some of TED’s high schools such as TED Ankara College. The Program is currently offering 10 EFL classes on a weekly basis. Normally, two classes are offered daily; they run for 40 minutes each. Finally, I am using this observation as the basis of my proposal. TED Karabük College will be the site in which all the training will be conducted. Here is a table that summarizes foreign language education at TED Karabük College:

- Starting age for learning English: 5 years old
- Starting grade for learning English: Kindergarten
- English lessons per week: 10 lessons
- Length of each class period: 40 minutes

In addition to well-scheduled hours of English lessons, all classes of TED Karabük College are fully equipped with the latest educational tools such as projectors, interactive boards, moveable desks and chairs, wireless Internet access, and boards for English lessons. Also, there is a language lab that also serves as a library in which students and teachers have access to multiple resources and supplementary material. Moreover, English language teachers are given regular in-service training programs to prepare them with the latest most innovative teaching trends on methodology and technology. My training proposal will be a part of the in-service training of English language teachers at TED Karabük College.
**Learner Analysis**
The trainees of this professional development program will be 6 English language teachers of Turkish Education Association Karabük College. The ages of trainees fluctuate between 26 years to 55 years of age. There will be five female trainees and one male, all of whom have received permanent training and are interested in continuing this practice. See the web site of the institution (www.tedkarabuk.k12.tr) for further information about the trainees. Interestingly enough, I will fulfill both roles as a teacher and a teacher trainer in charge of conducting the in-service training at TED Karabük College. To substantiate more my training need and to attempt to meet the needs of the trainees, I have collected additional data on the trainees through personal interactions, class observations, training session about the trainees for a period of two years, to be exact, between 2010-2012. Considering this study, I will be using the collected information as a basis of my training proposal to take place at TED Karabük College.

**Content Analysis**
The aim of this training is to raise questions and find solutions on the topic of assessing young learners. The content will be based on the materials provided by the U.S. Department of State. E-Teacher Scholarship Program course called Teaching English to Young Learners ELC 688 Fall 2011, and the content from the E-Teacher Professional Development Workshops held at UMBC from July 20 to August 11. In addition to the latter, I will also include the content of the materials received at the “Turkish Education Association 5th ELT Conference Empowering the Learner: Linking Assessment to Learning” held in Istanbul on 24th March 24, 2012.

The beginning of the presentation will be dedicated to the rationale behind teaching and assessing young learners. In addition to the reasons for assessment, the techniques of assessment for young learners will be discussed so as to provide teachers of young learners with different assessment ideas closely related to learning process. The content of the training will focus on the following:

- Key concepts of assessment;
- Rationale behind assessing young learners;
- Guidelines of assessment planning; and
- Assessing young learners and techniques.

**Delivery Analysis**
A PowerPoint presentation will be prepared for the training workshop which will focus on assessing young learners and alternative methods and techniques of assessment such as presentations, project work, self-assessment, peer-assessment, observation, and project-related group assessment. The trainer will mostly address trainees using the communicative approach leaving room for plenty of meaningful interactions. There will be question-answer sessions that will allow the trainees to internalize, analyze, and expand on the content critically.

**Project Plan**
The training will be in the first term of the academic year on September 26 in 2012. The training will consist of two 90-minute sessions. This training will be offered to participants as a part of their regular in-service teacher training at TED Karabük College.

**Design**
Effective Assessment of Young Learners: 90-minute Training
The purpose of this training is to introduce participants to the key concepts and terms of assessing, stages of planning assessment, rationale behind assessing young learners, and assessing young learners. Trainees will be engaged in pair-work and group activities so as to enhance learning to application. Trainees will be provided pictures and videos of different assessment types of young learners. The 90-minute training will consist of 4 parts as shown below:

- Part 1: Key concepts of assessment
Part 2: Rationale behind assessing young learners
Part 3: Guidelines of assessment planning
Part 4: Assessing young learners and techniques

Rationale for Sequence
The parts of the training were ordered sequentially to introduce trainees to the basic terms and concepts and engage them effective assessment of young learners. As assessment and evaluation are terms of assessment that are usually mistaken one for the other; it is necessary to build the trainees’ background knowledge for them to recognize the established differences. This practice will set the stage for assessing during instruction and set guidelines for the application of effective assessment methods and techniques. In addition, the characteristics of young learners will be examined in-depth before applying the new knowledge about assessment, specifically tailored to assess young learners. Also, there will be discussions and cooperative activities conducted in pairs and in groups to consolidate the content of the training.

Development
In the first part of the training, the concepts and terms of assessment will be discussed and defined to engage and energize the trainees and motivate them to begin the training on effective assessment of young learners. In this part of the PD plan, the first part of the training is taken into consideration and by

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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Learning/Training Activity</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. By the end of the 1st part of the training, trainees will be able to recognize the terms and concepts of assessment thoroughly by matching them with the correct definitions.</td>
<td>Concepts and terms of assessment: • Assessment • Testing • Evaluations</td>
<td>Brief presentation on the terms and concepts</td>
<td>Read and match the definitions</td>
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<td>2. By the end of the 2nd part of the training, trainees will be able to explain the guidelines of assessment planning clearly.</td>
<td>The stages of planning assessment: • Purpose and Objectives • Methods of Assessment • Quality of Assessment</td>
<td>Experiential Activity: Participants will order guidelines of assessment and they will look at students’ exams</td>
<td>Pair work and presentation to explain how to use guidelines to assess students’ work</td>
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<td>3. By the end of the 3rd part of the training, trainees will be able to describe concisely the rationale behind assessing young learners.</td>
<td>Necessity of assessing young learners: • Characteristic of young learners • YLs’ motivation and interest towards language learning</td>
<td>Lecturing on learning styles of young learners</td>
<td>Jigsaw discussion how to assess young learners</td>
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<td>4. By the end of the 4th part of the training, trainees will be able to recognize the methods and techniques of assessing young learners.</td>
<td>Assessing young learners: • Methods • Techniques</td>
<td>• Introduction of methods and techniques • Sharing videos and photos of assessing young learners</td>
<td>Group activity: Choose and describe the way of assessing young learners in their contexts</td>
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the end the trainer will be able to recognize the terms and concepts of assessment thoroughly by matching them with the correct definitions. Here is a breakdown of the nine events of Instruction I will be using based on Gagne’s model.

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<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gain attention</td>
<td>There will be a cartoon in the first page of the presentation to grab participants’ attention to the terms and concepts of assessment.</td>
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<td>Inform learners of objectives</td>
<td>The objectives will be told and shown to trainees in the beginning of the training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stimulate recall of prior learning</td>
<td>Participants will write and share their definitions of assessment related words.</td>
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<td>Present the content</td>
<td>The trainer will lecture on assessing young learners with the help of citations from different authors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guide learning</td>
<td>Pictures and videos of young learners will be shown to participants to show methods and techniques of assessment.</td>
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<td>Elicit performance (practice)</td>
<td>Participants will share their experiences of assessment with their pairs and they will present it to whole class.</td>
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<td>Provide feedback</td>
<td>Participants will be provided immediate feedback when they are given an activity such as definition match activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess performance</td>
<td>Participants will work in pair and group in jigsaw activities and they will be provided some texts and they will be asked to do a read and match activity.</td>
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<td>Enhance retention and transfer</td>
<td>Participants will be introduced to assessing young learners in the second part of the training.</td>
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**Implementation Checklist:**

**Items**
- Projector
- Speakers
- Board markers
- Flipcharts

**Tasks**
- Copying handouts
- Technical Assistance

**Evaluation**
During the training, participants will be engaged in pair work, group work and presentations as well as jigsaw activities intended to be part of formative assessment of this project. The trainer will monitor their progress based on these activities and adjust instruction as necessary based on participants’ ability to achieve the objectives. Also, at the end of the training, trainees will be required to complete an online survey and provide feedback on the training, i.e., summative assessment of the training in terms of materials, presentation, feedback and activities.