Opening Remarks from Deniz Hanım

A: WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

BAHÇEŞEHİR

- had a task based syllabus until 2 years ago using Total English
- positive observations 2 years ago - speaking fluency good, ss were satisfied, active, and self-confident
- negative observations 2 years ago - no accuracy in speaking in writing
- innovation 2 years ago - skill based, multi strand, equal emphasis on vocab and grammar – Language Leader
- positive observations - content knowledge, content vocab
- negative observations - too much time spent on vocab & grammar, ss lack speaking skills
- new for next year – integrated speaking skills and strategy training

DOĞUS UNIVERSITY

- had a module system 3 years ago
- problem - objectives were too vague and there was overlap
- decided to link the objectives to CEF
- this year – needs analysis with ss & ts; training with ts on CEF

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

- background info: syllabus is aligned with CEF; integrated approach A1 to B2; B1 minimum exit level (about intermediate)
- now redefining our exit level, in terms of syllabus & tests - looking at needs and transition to faculty – need more study skills work – listening & reading skills are suffering
- recent change – portfolio, can dos (according to CEF and the syllabus), continuous assessment, language dossier (training was required for this), special focus on writing and speaking – 40% required

ESKİŞEHİR OSMANGAZI

- questionnaires and study showed a change of coursebook was necessary - daily language did not meet the needs of ss
- new - added an online technical English course; a business English – they are separated for 2 hours a week
- negative observations - too intensive, ss did not have time to study
- Basic book and EAP materials (reading, listening & grammar) and articles (for discussion) – with a focus on academic vocab
- positive observations - ss had more of the necessary vocab; ts had more time to prepare things for students – the load was less for them; ss are happy with this new system
- contact hours - before 3 days of 7 hours, now max. 6 hours a day

Main coursebook – Success
Technical English – Pre-Intermediate Intermediate- for 2 hours

HACETEPE

- background - 30% university courses are English; 4 different progs; repeat progs; professional English – take the YDS exam (the ones who will go into one of the 5 English departments; exit level = B2 – however, ss have different performances in different skills; 2 Proficiency exams – 2 different levels – low & high intermediate
- course was content based, skill based, with no assessment of speaking
- Innovation – oral presentation graded (group then individually)
- need to integrate more oral assessment and promote learner autonomy
- now comparing can dos and assessment standards – in all different skills

İSİK

- background - All faculty courses are in English; 4 modules – graded, need to get 70 to continue with their class, if not they are separated; slow learners get a chance to revise areas that they have problems with; exit level = intermediate – need 70 overall
- Problem – all the skills were separated therefore ss can not practice their grammar and vocab
- now working on an integrated syllabus – have not decided on course book yet; speaking assessment – pair discussion on a topic – 3 assessors have a criteria; repeating students – worked on students motivation, drop out rate

İSTANBUL AYDIN

- background - 4 tracks with own exit level exam – B1 level
- problem – ss can not talk
- using TPRS – reading and storytelling, also used a book for writing – focus on performative skills i.e. student is a listener, then gradually ss start talking – no focus on accuracy
- feedback – some ss felt that they were not learning anything; however, ts thought it was effective
ISTANBUL TECHNICAL

- were using writing portfolios – ss doing writing assignments on a regular basis and the teacher would assess
- ss did not take it seriously, they did not do the writing assignments or hand them in on time
- New – Student performance grade = 20% – 3 steps – portfolio, participation & presentation
- Portfolio - each writing assignment evaluated & graded, plus 2 writing exams
- Participation – ts were given criteria
- Presentation – ss were trained, practise done in class, then an exam presentation in a group – graded individually
- Feedback – ss took more responsibility for their own learning
- Next – look at the content and application of proficiency exam – want it to be more skills based as it is more on Use of English – will add listening and restatement

İZMIR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

- problem – no curriculum team; no feedback from students and teachers; too much in a limited time; system did not let ss start even though they were ready
- innovation – modular system – ss could start their faculty when they were ready – achievement exams used (gateway)
- positive feedback from faculty members
- negative observations – need to work on writing syllabus – the structure was there but ss could not get the message
- flexibility in doing the book without labelling – then ts were lost
- integrated skills but need to decide on books
- 1st Success; 2nd New Headway; 3rd World English intro - ss can take the proficiency exam at the end

KOCAELI

- Problem – 2000 ss and 80 teachers with so many contact hours; no curriculum team; compulsory prep year for students who may not need it
- did needs analysis, spoke to ts and faculty members and defined objectives
- 30% of courses are in English at the uni – only these ss will do the prep programme
- portfolios and presentations this year – good feedback from ss; intensive training for took 2 days and continuous
- next step – course design with more academic skills integrated

KOC
• problems – pbt toefl used; skills separate – no integration; more lower level students
• focus in courses – speaking, listening, structure, reading
• ss feedback – complain about the system but success rate is high
• no standardised assessment but books are all common – ss complain because ts have autonomy to give the grades they choose
• 2.0 GPA to start their faculty plus TOEFL
• how do we integrate the curriculum with TOEFL? the course is not helping the students pass the exam

**METU NORTH CYPRUS**

• problem - level of ss is lower, motivation, family pressure
• out of 450 – 250 are beginners, all kept together
• curriculum is the same as the main campus – minor changes and suggestions can be made
• all ss take the proficiency exam – only 10% of beginners can pass with 65
• trying – extra homework, individual lessons, remedial work to get more students through in one year

**OKAN**

• earlier - separated skills with summative assessment only (not formative e.g. speaking), writing was a weak area
• innovation – introduced process writing and Teacher Assessment (10% each) – 3 assessed writings per semester – moving from paragraph to essay
• feedback – ts say it has improved ss writing skills very much; however ts did not have ownership of the change
• process writing – all the steps of the process are being assessed and therefore the progress, the end product does not have to be great to get a high grade – ss learn a lot through these steps

**ÖZYEĞİN UNIVERSITY**

• problem – too early to tell, gap between performance and the expectations of faculty members
• innovation – new strand – information skills, ed. tech, adaptation to uni life, research skills (one year orientation) - these could take place in the afternoon, after the normal English lessons in the morning

**SABANCI UNIVERSITY**

• Our concern was planning – we had our syllabus, vocab lists, topic lists all separate – difficult for teachers to plan and focus and be aware of the objectives
• Our innovation was to create a document to bring everything together – for ss and ts – the Teaching & Learning Programme
• feedback – now a working document for both ts and ss – topics, vocab, objectives – for planning and studying
how much time did it take? one month intensive

YASAR UNIVERSITY

- before – elementary started with paragraphs, then upper did essays
- this year – start with sentences, then paragraph in pre int, later essays; devoting one task per track
- next – writing evaluation; integration of graded readers

YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

- before – ss were good at grammar and multiple choice and not much else
- now – more focus on listening and speaking; speaking assessment - 1\textsuperscript{st} speaking circles with a written instruction – ss have time to plan and then do it, 2\textsuperscript{nd} one is a debate in pairs; 2 assessors – daily language and then prompts to test the particular structures; ss prepare notes on many topics and then find out on the day which one will be tested

B: FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

Group 1: Enabling Low-Level Learners’ Success

A Disadv that ss bring with them:
lack of general knowledge; lack of study skills; lack of clear purpose

Possible Solutions:
- last one or 2 hours of the week for a review in Turkish of the week’s work and what to do next
- extra materials to support and links/films in print packs etc
- separate study skills in L1 e.g. adaptation problems, time management (psychologist support)
- pre-lesson homework e.g. the vocab etc from the TLP
- meeting with faculty members – to experience lectures; to get advice

B Disadv (non-institutional) that ss bring with them:
mindset; adaptation problems; lack of alternative approaches; lack of motivation as time passes

Possible Solutions:
- start with ‘traditional’ approach for familiarity, then move slowly to alternative methods
- at least one L1 speaking teacher
• one to one contact time with one of their teachers

C Problems created by Institution’s expectations
our expectations are high i.e. A1 – B2 in 9-15 months; mixed ability classes

Possible Solutions:
• pre-orientation for study skills etc
• teacher training on expectations
• first 3 or 4 weeks put beginner and elementary ss together – give ss a test – then resuffle
• study buddy groups (possibly using wikis) – high and low level ss together
• tutorials and self-access – with a specific problem perhaps identified by the class teacher (promoted by an extra percentage in homework/participation grade)

Discussion:
it is unrealistic to expect beginners to become proficient users in 9 months
it is an interesting research area – what ss expect on how they learn best from the high school experience – we gain a lot from what students have experienced, from their reflections – to find solutions

**Group 2: Fostering Independent Learner Competencies**

Solutions:
• autonomy awareness raising – progress tutorials; student needs analysis; mirroring (inner self exploration); explicit teaching of study skills
• can-do statements (for transparency) – tailored to institutional needs; simplified syllabus for teachers and students (for transparency and then a study guide)
• teacher autonomy – through pre-service and in-service training
• putting it on the students’ agenda – visiting speakers (lecturers, field professionals); electives (debate; drama; speaking; reading)
• use of technology – moodle; blogs; chat; video journals (ss record themselves talking about a subject they have studied or a graded reader they have read); games; social networking sites e.g. facebook; technological devices e.g. mobile phones
• out of class – projects; clubs; movies or music – according to their interests
• assessment – homework options i.e. ss choose according to their individual preferences, perhaps from 2 or 3 options (may increase the amount of student production); open book exams (students note take at home and bring in to the exams); take home exams

Discussion:
teacher autonomy – the teachers need to be treated as individuals in order to expect that from their students; the book limits the teachers; they should use the syllabus in their own way
Group 3: Reflecting Learners’ Future Academic Needs

1. Interactions with Faculty
   - collaboration and communication – meetings to analyse the needs; focus groups to take points further example: EMS – 50 minute lecture in the dept. with language support from us
   - needs analysis and data collection – regularly, every 3 or 4 years
   - perceptions – consider the expectations of the faculty members; the proficiency test must match this
   - training – to faculty members on e.g. how to give lectures in English or how to write clear questions; working with TAs or ADP
   - AWL/Technical words
   - study skills – for their academic life e.g. extra points for self-access participation

2. Writing
   what to teach i.e. sentence, paragraph, essay;
   how to teach i.e. using content to make it more meaningful;
   assessment i.e. related to texts, process/product, portfolio;
   when to teach i.e. elementary or later?

ROUND-UP SESSION

Key items to take away:

Group 1.
   - training on study skills
   - allocating 1 or 2 hours for recap the objectives of that week and counselling in L1
   - giving options for homework and exams (take-home or open-ended)

Group 2.
   - prioritizing curriculum problems
   - sense of relief ☺

Group 3.
   - booklet for Ts and Ss with a simplified syllabus, objectives, word list, can-do statements
   - learner autonomy
   - teacher training
   - assessment variety
Group 4.
- simplified syllabus for Ss (for transparency and to encourage autonomy)
- training/collaboration with faculties
- content-based writing assessment using students’ notes taken from reading/listening lessons

Group 5.
- learner training and study skills strand (also with learners as ‘teachers’)
- exploring the idea of electives (but without making them compulsory)

Group 6.
- looking at the idea of critical thinking from a student perspective
- inviting guest speaking to prep classes i.e. professors and students from the faculty