

French Foreign Language Teacher Candidates' Evaluation of the Computer Assisted Language Teaching Course

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Abstract: The aim of the present study is to determine the foreign language teacher candidates' evaluation relating to the elective *Computer Assisted Language Teaching* course which was conducted for four semesters between the academic years of 2007-2010 at Uludag University. The study group consists of 40 teacher candidates enrolled at Uludag University Faculty of Education, French Language Teaching Department. A questionnaire composed of one open-ended question was administered to the teacher candidates who had taken the course. At the end of the course, the candidates were asked to evaluate their experiences of the course, classroom practices, gains and teacher-student interaction. Therefore, a blank sheet of paper was distributed so that the candidates could write their answers in detail. The candidates' answers were decoded and interpreted by means of content analysis, a qualitative analysis method. Findings of the research revealed that the course was learner centered, the candidates had gained wide knowledge in both technical and educational points of language teaching, they were able to critically evaluate the language teaching websites, and finally, they had concerns relating to course assessment.

Key Words: French language teaching, teacher candidates, computer assisted language teaching, course evaluation.

Introduction

In today's modern societies, the formal teaching process is one of the most important processes in the raising of the individual. The institution called school embeds programs designed for individuals of the same age group and same level. Teachers have a vital role in the implementation of these programs in organized educational processes. Therefore, in order to preserve the importance of the teacher's role, teacher training programs need to be continuously evaluated so that problems arising within the system can be traced and overcome effectively. The most important aims of teacher training programs is to define how to prepare quality teachers, explore how to train the teacher candidates in this direction, and to evaluate their achievement of these aims. As known, program development is a dynamic and continuous process. Baştürk (2009), states that the effectiveness of teacher training programs can be reached by overcoming the problems and deficiencies of the program.

Technology, especially in the last quarter of the century has become an indispensable component of educational settings (Birişçi, ve Karal, 2010). The computer is the primary type of technology used in an educational setting. Today, it can be clearly seen that in every level of education, from pre-school to higher education, the process of teaching is supported with information and communication technologies. One of the most widely spreading areas of this support is language learning/teaching.

An investigation of the related literature in our country, shows that there are studies based on the teacher candidates' evaluations of courses conducted in the various programs of Faculties of Education (Güven, 2006; Çoklar & Şahin, 2008; Öztürk & Darıca, 2003; Acer, 2011; Arıkan, Ünver & Saraç-Süzer, 2007). However, it was observed that there was no research based on the evaluation of the *Computer Assisted Language Teaching* (CALT) course. The present study aims to determine the teacher candidates' evaluation of the CALT course. At the end of the semester, the teacher candidates' were asked for a pedagogically-oriented evaluation of the CALT course that they had taken. The findings revealed by this aim, will assist CALT instructors in teacher training programs to evaluate the current program and reorganize their course material by developing the course context for future semesters.