



*The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal*  
Volume 19, Number 2, September 2019

***Language for Teaching Purposes (2018)***

Emma Riordan

Macmillan

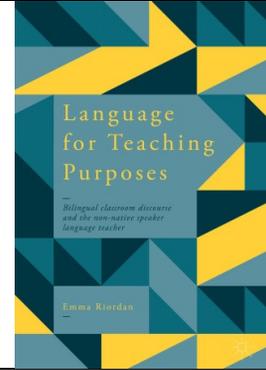
Pages: xv + 227

ISBN: 978- 3-319-71004-4

Cost: \$89.99

*Reviewed by Oktay Yağız*

Atatürk University Turkey



**Language for Teaching Purposes, Riordan, Emma. Macmillan, Cork (2018). 227 pp., Hardcover: \$89.99, ISBN: 978- 3-319-71004-4, E-book: \$74.96, ISBN: 978- 3-319-71005-1**

*Language for Teaching Purposes* is designed to provide a reference source for non-native speaker of language teachers (NNSLTs) taking part in teacher training, language teaching and the research of classroom discourse. Therefore, the book was largely dedicated to spoken language needs of NNSLTs and how to serve these needs. This applied work investigated native English-speaking teachers of German in the research site of Ireland. The motive behind the book is the need for a particular development program with which NNSLTs could have a flair for fluent speaking because, for the author, language needs of NNSLTs and general language users are different, therefore, should be addressed distinctively. *Non-native Language Teachers* (Llurda, 2006) seem to be the nearest resource to this book, though it is a compilation from a large scope of study areas on communication problems of non-native language teachers. As to the general framework, the book is composed of eight chapters and one appendix. A subject index is included at the end of the 227-page book. Also, the references are provided at the end of each chapter.

Chapter one introduces the book to the readers. The research rationale, aims and context are written in detail. This chapter offers a perspective for the readers regarding what they should expect from the book, which seems to be beneficial for reader to acquire background knowledge. On the other hand, this 10-page chapter could be written more concisely, particularly the title of *Overview of Chapters* makes an impression of redundancy on the reader. Still, detailed presentation of the book through this chapter is an optional addition of the author for the readers; therefore, those who are curious about exploring the book may omit it readily.

Chapter two consists of literature review, methodological definitions and framework. It starts with an overview of LSP and then draws attention to the importance of LSP in that NNSLTs can only take the advantage of on-field language courses instead of general language courses, which are considered inefficient by the author. This argument is aimed to be confirmed in this chapter. The author elicits the methods that could be used in LSP and then tells about her own data collection methods. However, that the author provides all the methods in LSP seems to be redundant. This part might have been shortened by eliminating the redundant subtitles. However, the chapter is of utmost importance for informing the readers about the history of LSP and for providing a multilateral background.

Chapter three is dedicated to in-class discourse. The author creates a constructivist relation between in-class talk and learning; that is, teachers should prepare a setting in which students freely express themselves and hence they reveal what they know. The author also effectively addresses an in-class situation where students have different schematic knowledge, and make some suggestions for the NNSLTs. The classroom environment, for the author, is somewhat a real discourse community and the teacher should act as a facilitator for the students to sustain their participation; however, non-native speakers of a language who lack the knowledge of discourse may have difficulties in performing this task. The chapter ends with the provision of corrective feedback as an important component for in-class success.

Chapter four carries the issue of discourse in general classrooms to foreign language classrooms, and focuses on the pros and cons of L1 through NNSLTs. The author discusses the use of target language and L1 in learning medium, and reports when and why teachers and learners tend to use L1. This chapter also informs about the challenges of striking a balance between moderate use of L1 and target language. Some valuable results as to the classroom discourse such as the most frequent prepositions and words are provided, and teachers are recommended to avoid complicated sentences; however, the chapter does not include any sample sentences from the classroom discourse so that the readers themselves could obtain a chance of seeing how plain sentences teachers could be used in their classrooms. Under the title of *Factors Affecting Teachers' Target Language Use*, the author highlights a positive correlation between socio-economic status of the school and the use of L1 in learning medium, but there seems no adequate data and findings to reach this conclusion, i.e. further investigations are needed for more reliable results about the issue.

The question of whether students get the maximum benefit either from native or non-native teachers in foreign language classroom is aimed to be answered in the fifth chapter. Furthermore, the chapter aims to argue the relation between NNSLTs' experiences and their language proficiencies. The author regards the notion of bilingualism as problematic because no matter how proficient teachers are in both languages, they may fail to dominate all language components in them. Although the author does not state her own view about whether native or non-native teachers are advantageous, she acknowledges compared to native teachers, non-native teachers have some obstacles to overcome. Having provided definitions of native and non-native teachers, the author notes advantages and disadvantages of both types of teacher and relevant perceptions in respect of learners. This chapter neatly garners information that readers may find some strengths and weaknesses of native and non-native teachers.

Chapter six discusses how a learner can maximize benefit from the non-native teachers, which is called as *model bilingual* by the author. This model sets an example for students in rules, use, pronunciation, grammar, target language user, and polite and informal forms of addressing. This chapter also answers why a bilingual teacher switches between the codes. The author alludes to the advantageous aspects of being non-native teachers that they have an opportunity to be able to explicitly emphasize the language forms and to switch the codes when needed. The chapter also offers some authentic examples, which is useful for readers to witness the real dialogues in the classroom.

Chapter seven underlines the tasks that a teacher should carry out in the classroom, which are regulatory, informative, and include elicitation and feedback. The regulatory task necessitates classroom organisation and management such as structuring the lessons, giving instructions, and maintaining discipline. Though the author has not had any concrete evidence, she regards this task as problematic for NNSLTs since they need to do a code switching from target language to native language or vice-versa while performing this task. Despite alluding to its difficulty, the author has not offered any suggestions regarding regulatory task; now that it is problematic, the author as an expert could offer some suggestions. The informative tasks were separated into grammar and vocabulary; however, there are further dimensions that a

teacher can perform under this category such as informing students about extra-linguistic aspects of a language, because they are also important for interlocutors in understanding the complete message in a dialogue. The last task of a teacher in a language classroom is elicitation and feedback. The author recommends some references and displays questions to elicit students, and alludes to the importance of corrective feedback; feedback is considered as a general classroom event and no specific type of feedback, which might be employed in a language classroom, has been provided. However, the chapter includes useful excerpts from the classroom discourse.

Chapter eight, the last chapter, outlines the concluding remarks and the three tasks mentioned in Chapter seven are discussed again in the light of relevant studies. This chapter also summarizes the whole book from the aims to the conclusion.

The book has many merits. First, it contains reliable authentic excerpts from the classroom discourse which allow readers to compare and contrast them with their own experiences. Although the book has a pile of theoretical information, it provides concrete results thanks to its robust applied implementations of observations, questionnaires, and other structures and semi-structures as the data collection tools.

On the other hand, there are some points where the book falls short. Firstly, the book mentions the importance of corrective feedback throughout the book; however, language pedagogy and the treatment of corrective feedback in language classroom require taking individual differences into account while providing feedback (Younghee, 2011); therefore, given the several informative and valuable titles, allocating a title for feedback in language classrooms and for individual differences would be welcomed by the readers. Another issue on which the book has focused is the importance of culture; however, some insights about the culture could be beneficial and thought provoking for the readers. For example, both students and teachers were German-origin; therefore, the impact of a German-origin teacher on teaching a language with a different culture could be investigated so that readers could see whether the culture has a positive or negative influence on classroom discourse. The author also mentions the importance of L1 use in an English-speaking medium, but she does not propose any insights to what extent it should be used or what reflection with regard to L1 use in a non-immersion classroom can be provided. However, these minor shortcomings should not detract from the positive contribution that this book makes to the self-education of NNSLTs.

As the final remarks regarding this book, given the Anglophone foreign language-teaching world, this book will appeal to NNSLTs involved in language teaching. Bearing in mind that each chapter exhibits a highly concentrated but still legible exploration of the issues in the topic under consideration, this book offers valuable insights for NNSLTs working at all education levels in classroom discourse.

## References

- Llurda, E. (2006). *Non-Native Language Teachers: Perceptions, Challenges and Contributions to the Profession*. New York: Springer.
- Younghee, S. (2011). *Corrective Feedback, Individual Differences and Second Language Learning*. Netherlands: Springer.

*Oktay Yağız is an assistant professor at Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey. He received his doctoral degree on English language teaching as a foreign language. He offers course at undergraduate and graduate levels. His research interests are English academic writing, teaching English to adult learners and English pronunciation.*