

T. R.
GAZİANTEP UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES TEACHING
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM

The Relationship between Intercultural Sensitivity and English Language Achievement

Master of Arts Thesis

FATMA ÇİLOĞLAN

Gaziantep
June, 2018

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The information contained here is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with these guidelines, the University's policy on conflict of interest and any other condition laid down by the Gaziantep University Research Ethics Committee or its Sub-Committees. I have attempted to identify all the risks related to this research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I have declared any affiliation or financial interest in this research or its outcomes or any other circumstances which might present a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest, in accordance with Gaziantep University policy on Conflicts of Interest.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

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Date: _____

DEDICATIONS

To my loving parents,
my siblings and my friends



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First of all, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Mehmet Bardakçı whose office was always open whenever I was in a distressing or had a question about my research or writing. He consistently allowed this paper to be my own work but steered me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed. I would like to present my thanks to Dr. Emrah Cinkara, the Head of the Department of Foreign Languages, for his support. I also would like to express my gratitude to the jury members Prof. Dr. Arif Sariçoban and Dr. Mehmet Kılıç for their invaluable constructive criticism.

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ÖZET
KÜLTÜRLERARASI DUYARLILIK İLE İNGİLİZCE BAŞARISI
ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

Çilođlan, Fatma

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi

Tez Danışmanı: Ph.D. Faculty Member Mehmet BARDAKÇI

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Küreselleşen dünyada, farklı kültürel özelliklerle karşılaşmak ve farklı kültürel geçmişlerden gelen insanlarla etkileşim kurmak kaçınılmazdır. Günümüzde, kültürün dil öğrenimi ve dil öğretiminin temellerinden biri olduğuna inanılmaktadır. Avrupa Konseyi, kültür kavramını Avrupa bağlamında açıklamayı amaçlamakta ve farklı kültürel geçmişten gelen insanlar arasındaki kültürel farklılıkları ve kültürlerarası iletişimi teşvik etmeye çalışmaktadır. Kültürlerarası iletişimi teşvik etmeyi amaçlayan bu girişimler ışığında, bu çeşitliliğe uyum sağlamak ve faydalanmak mevcut eğitim sisteminin de iyileştirilmesi için yardımcı olacaktır.

Bu betimleyici çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenenlerin kültürlerarası duyarlılıkları ve İngilizce dil kazanımları arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını araştırmaktır. Çalışmanın amacı için nicel veri toplama metodolojisi kullanılmıştır. Kadın katılımcıların sayısı 120, erkek katılımcıların sayısı ise 205'dir. Çalışmaya bir devlet üniversitesinde yabancı dil hazırlık okuyan rastgele küme örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmiş toplam 325 öğrenciler katılmıştır. Niceliksel verileri elde etmek için Chen ve Starosta (2000) tarafından geliştirilen "Kültürlerarası Duyarlılık Ölçeđi" uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler Sosyal Bilimler İçin İstatistik Programı (SPSS) ile analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırmanın bulguları, kültürlerarası duyarlılık ile İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenenlerin İngilizce dil kazanımları arasında zayıf bir pozitif ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte, katılımcıların kültürlerarası duyarlılık puanları ile İngilizce dil seviyeleri arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar, İngilizce dil seviyesi arttıkça, kültürlerarası duyarlılık puanlarının da yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Son olarak, kadın ve erkek katılımcıların kültürlerarası duyarlılık puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunamamıştır. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, kadın katılımcılar ve erkek katılımcılar birbirlerine yakın kültürlerarası duyarlılık puanına sahiptirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kültürlerarası duyarlılık, İngilizce başarıları, kültürlerarası yeterlilik.

ABSTRACT
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

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In a globalizing world, it is inevitable to encounter different cultural characteristics and interact with people from a different cultural background. Today, culture is believed to be one of the fundamentals of language learning and teaching. The Council of Europe aimed to illustrate the concept of culture in the context of Europe and tries to promote cultural differences and intercultural communication between people from a different cultural background. In the light of these attempts like encouraging intercultural communication, adapting to and benefiting from these diversities is for the improvement of the ongoing education system.

The present descriptive study aimed to investigate whether there is a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of learners of English as foreign language in Turkey. For the purpose of the study, quantitative research methodology was used. The number of the female participants was 120, and male participants were 205. A total of 325 participants who were attending preparatory school at a state university selected by using cluster random sampling. The “Intercultural Sensitivity Scale” developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) was used to obtain the quantitative data. The obtained data was analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The findings of the study indicated that there is a weak positive correlation between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of learners of English as foreign language in Turkey. However, there was a significant difference between the intercultural sensitivity scores of the participants regarding the English language proficiency levels. The results showed that the higher the English proficiency level, the greater the intercultural sensitivity scores are. Additionally, findings indicated that there was not a significant difference between intercultural sensitivity scores of the female and male participants. According to the results, the intercultural sensitivity scores of female and male participants are close to each other.

Keywords: Intercultural sensitivity, English language achievement, intercultural competence

TABLE OF CONTENT

DEDICATIONS	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ÖZET.....	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
LIST OF APPENDICES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	1
1.2 The Aim of the Study	2
1.3 The Significance of the Study	3
1.4 Assumptions	4
1.5 Limitations	5
1.6 Definition of Key Terms	5
CHAPTER II.....	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.0. Presentation	6
2.1 The Relationship between Language and Culture	6
2.1.1 Culture	6
2.1.2 Language and Culture	11
2.1.3 The Connection between English as a Lingua Franca and Culture	12
2.2 Sociocultural Theory	14
2.3 Competence.....	15
2.3.1 Linguistic Competence	16
2.3.2 Pragmatic Competence	16
2.3.3 Sociolinguistic Competence	17
2.3.4 Communicative Competence.....	17
2.3.5 Intercultural Competence	23

2.4 Intercultural Sensitivity	33
2.5 Related Studies on Chen and Starosta's Model	35
CHAPTER III	37
METHODOLOGY	37
3.0 Presentation	37
3.1 Methodology and Procedures	37
3.2 Research Design	37
3.3 Research Population and Sampling	38
3.4 Instruments	38
3.4.1 Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)	38
3.4.2 Piloting Procedure	39
3.4.3 The EFL Language Proficiency and Achievement	40
3.5 Data Collection Procedures	41
3.6 The Context of the Study	41
3.6.1 Description of the Preparatory Program	42
3.7 Data Analysis	42
CHAPTER IV	43
FINDINGS	43
4.0 Presentation	43
4.1 Findings Related to the First Question	43
4.2 Findings Related to the Second Research Question	44
4.3 Findings Related to the Third Research Question	47
CHAPTER V	51
DISCUSSION	51
5.0 Presentation	51
5.1 Is there a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey?	51
5.2 Is there a significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the proficiency levels?	52
5.3 Is there a significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the gender?	54
CHAPTER VI	55
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	55
6.0 Presentation	55
6.1 Conclusion	55

6.2 Recommendation.....	56
REFERENCES.....	58
APPENDICES.....	67
Appendix I. Permission form from the state university	67
Appendix III. English version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale	68
Appendix IV. Turkish version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale	69
Appendix IV. Permission mail from Prof. Guo-Ming Chen	70
VITAE.....	71



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Correlation between Preparatory Schools students' ISS scores and their English language achievement	44
Table 2. Descriptive analysis of Preparatory School Students' Intercultural Sensitivity Scale Scores	45
Table 3. Analysis of Variance for Preparatory School Students' ISS Scores and Language Proficiency Levels.....	46
Table 4. Post-Hoc Test (LSD) Language Proficiency Levels and ISS Scores of Preparatory School Students.....	47
Table 5. Independent t-test results of Preparatory School students based on gender.....	48
Table 6. Descriptive statistics related to the participants' answers to each statement in ISS.....	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence	28
Figure 2. Deardorff Box Shaped Model of Intercultural Competence.....	29
Figure 3. Experience Stages of Cultural Differences.....	30
Figure 4. Byram's Intercultural Competence Model	32



LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix I. Permission form from the state university.....	67
Appendix II. English version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale.....	68
Appendix III. The Turkish version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale.....	69
Appendix IV. Permission mail from Prof. Guo-Ming Chen	70



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ISS: Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

EFL: English as Foreign Language

ESL: English as Second Language

ELF: English as Lingua Franca

L2: Second Language

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

With the increased interest in intercultural sensitivity in the globalizing and multicultural society all through in recent years, disorientation related to this concept has raised, too. Intercultural sensitivity, as an element of intercultural competence, has not entirely been comprehended yet. According to Chen and Starosta (1996), the major problem of the disorientation is to misperceive these three concepts; “intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness and intercultural communication competence” (p. 2). The three are separate concepts, even though they are closely related. Intercultural communication competence is a generic term that is composed of interactants ability to be effective, behavioral and cognitive in the process of intercultural communication. Namely, intercultural awareness is expressed through intercultural communication competence’s cognitive elements which mean “the understanding of cultural conventions that affect how we think and behave” (Chen, 2010, p. 35). The intercultural sensitivity concept which means the subjects' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures” (Chen & Starosta, 1996, p. 367) stands for the affective aspects of intercultural communication competence. Bennet (1998) defined intercultural sensitivity as the ability of interactants to transform themselves cognitively, effectively and behaviourally from refusal phase of the aspect of cultural differences to inclusion phase of this cultural variation in the intercultural communication developmental process. It means that people who have intercultural sensitivity, are capable of proceeding to the dual identity level and appreciate cultural diversity by progressively outfacing the problems of concealing or denying the existence of diversities of culture and taking a step to maintain their perspectives and progressing enhance empathic ability to embrace and orient themselves to different cultures. The confusion in these concepts confuses the intercultural training programs as well.

Intercultural training programs are directly affected by these confusions in these concepts; hence, it also impacts foreign language learning. Cognitive training, affective training, cultural awareness training, behavioral training and self-awareness training, which are some of the intercultural training programs, intended to aid participants to build an understanding and appreciation of interactional skills and cultural stimuli (Cushner, Brislin, 1996). Therefore, it is also relevant to language learning because every language inherits the cultural characteristics of its own and one who aims to learn another language is required to accept the cultural characteristics of that language as well.

For this reason, many research dealt with intercultural communication competence in language learning (Lo Bianco, et al, 1999; Alptekin, 2002; Byram, et al., 2002; Bayyurt, 2013; Sariçoban & Öz, 2014); as a result, the intercultural sensitivity is left behind, and its importance in language learning was ignored. Although intercultural sensitivity can be assumed as an aspect that is closely related to language and language learning, there have been few studies investigating the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and language learning (Engle & Engle, 2004; Jackson, 2011) which will be mentioned in Chapter III.

In creating the research questions and the data collection of the present study, the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1997) and Deardorff's (2006) research concerning intercultural sensitivity and its connection with language learning and achievement played a large role. In planning the investigation, the research literature and models were examined in order to find what they provide or do not provide to us on the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement.

1.2 The Aim of the Study

In recent years, Turkey, which has always been a country that is placed in a multicultural and multilingual setting, faced a rapid change in the environment with the arrival of the immigrants and it is still in the process of adjusting to keep pace with this variance. People have also started being involved in that culture and language along with many other languages that have been dwelling in the same land. This variety of languages may create an understanding of people towards foreign

languages, and they might sympathize with different languages that they are not very much familiar with.

The purpose of the present thesis is to investigate whether there is a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey. In this study, if there occurs a correlation between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of EFL learners is obtained, this result has an important value for the language learners and teachers in support of the betterment of language learning and teaching. In short, the present study aims to provide a new aspect that might be beneficial in language learning and teaching; and can lead to new studies which may broaden the path between intercultural sensitivity and foreign language achievement. For this purpose, some response to the following research questions were sought in accordance with the outcomes of this study.

1. Is there a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of intercultural sensitivity scale regarding the proficiency levels?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of intercultural sensitivity scale regarding gender?

1.3 The Significance of the Study

In the present study, the relationship between intercultural sensitivity, which has not been studied in the context of language learning or acquisition, and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey will be investigated. Although there have been some studies related to Intercultural Sensitivity (Lo Bianco, et al, 1999; Alptekin, 2002; Byram, et al., 2002; Engle & Engle, 2004; Jackson, 2011; Bayyurt, 2013; Sarıçoban & Öz, 2014), there have not been any studies similar to the purpose of this research in the context of Turkey. Therefore, this study aims to bridge the gap in this field in the Turkish context. The result of this study might be important for language learners and teachers because of providing them with the aspect of intercultural sensitivity, which might positively affect the language learning process.

Because of being a multicultural country, Turkey consists of diversities and tries to create a unity in this diversity. The difficulties that many of the English language learners in Turkey suffer from might arise from this aspect of intercultural sensitivity. It can be claimed that our learners fail to learn English proficiently because of not paying attention to this side of language learning and because of trying to complete the puzzle of language learning with some parts missing. Another significance of this study could be providing some suggestions to Ministry of National Education (MoNE), curriculum and material designers and publication companies to form a more efficient language teaching and learning environment for the learners. The results can be applied by language teachers and designers to increase the achievement level of English language learners by integrating activities or teaching methods by considering intercultural sensitivity. In consideration of the findings of this study, some techniques or programs can be developed to enhance the level of intercultural sensitivity of the learners and to facilitate the success in language learning. It might even be used by learners themselves individually. If learners are aware of this issue, they can develop themselves accordingly.

In respect to theoretical concerns, the study aims at introducing the significance of Intercultural Sensitivity improvement as an element of L2 performance skills important for academic achievement in English language courses. Khawaja and Stallman (2011), and Poyrazlı and Kavanaugh (2006) stated that students with low academic achievement show a lower level of English proficiency and greater overall regulation strain. It can be simply expected that lack of adequate intercultural competence could have a significant negative effect on the strain of adjustment that these students experience. Even though this study does not explicate the great variability of the success in English language achievement of all Turkish foreign language learners, its purpose is to offer a base for future research that might entirely investigate the potential existence of the problems caused by lack of intercultural sensitivity. It may also provide a base for conducting research in intercultural settings and can draw the attention of the authorities of higher-education to the issue.

1.4 Assumptions

The following assumptions were made for the purpose of the study.

1. The participants give accurate information related to the scale statements during the study.

1.5 Limitations

In the present study, two limitations can be mentioned.

The first limitation was not being able to reach more than one universities. Although 325 participants were involved in this study, this study could have been done with more students from different universities in order to reach a more generalizable data.

The second and last limitation was the unequal number of participants from each proficiency levels. Although the aim was to achieve a nearly equal number of participants from each proficiency levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1) the aimed number of participants did not achieve because A1, A2, B2 and C1 proficiency levels had fewer students compared to B1.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Intercultural competence: It is comprised of skills, knowledge, awareness, and attitudes to allow a person to cooperate efficiently with people from different cultures (Deardorff, 2006, p.256).

Intercultural communication: Intercultural communication “has tended to focus on individuals’ attitudes and behaviors, with larger forces being encapsulated regarding their impact on individual speakers and listeners.” (Meierkord, 2007, p.56)

Intercultural sensitivity: “The positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication” (Chen & Starosta, 1997; p. 5).

English as Lingua Franca (ELF): “is a contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication” (Firth, 1996, p. 240).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Presentation

This chapter discusses definitions of intercultural sensitivity, the theoretical perspectives behind it and provides an overview of previous studies concerning this topic. It also concerns with the review of the literature regarding the effect of Intercultural Sensitivity on Language achievement and proficiency.

2.1 The Relationship between Language and Culture

2.1.1 Culture

Culture is a concept difficult to describe; it is a complex concept (Eagleton, 2000; Williams, 1976, p. 87). The concept was first tried to be described in the 19th century (Levy, 2007, p. 104); there have been more than three hundred different definitions of the concept in a great variety of disciplines (Baldwin et al., 2006, p.139). In this part, the definitions of culture in the language learning and teaching context will be discussed rather than its early definition as “unchanging and homogeneous, and all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine human behavior” (Atkinson, 1999, p. 626). In fact, limiting culture to a linguistic code or a nation or state is believed to be misleading (Atkinson, 1999, p.627, 634). Indeed, culture is a “fuzzy concept” (Strauss & Quinn, 1997, p.7) and cannot be restricted to geographical limitations since cultures are created from “people’s shared experiences” (Strauss & Quinn, 1997, p. 634).

Nowadays, culture is believed to be one of the foundations of language teaching and learning. The Council of Europe aimed to illustrate the concept of culture in the context of Europe and tries to promote cultural differences and intercultural interactions of individuals with different cultural background. The central aim of the Council of Europe is summarized as:

- To share different world visions, to discover and learn from the ones who see the world from a different perspective than us,
- To notice and differentiate the diversity in cultural traditions and worldviews,
- To build a consensus for resolving the disputes without violence,
- To provide help to manage cultural diversities democratically,
- To connect the gap between the ones who see differences as a treat and the ones who perceive it as enrichment,
- To talk about cultural practices especially in intercultural communications
- To progress in doing new projects together.

(Council of Europe, 2013)

Namely, performing intercultural communication is a way to be acceptant the different cultures and to create a peaceful multicultural environment to live in. In the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, these objectives are also clearly stated as “socio-cultural knowledge” and “intercultural awareness” (2001, p. 82).

However, the perception and teaching of culture have changed greatly until the understanding of the intercultural approach as we perceive today. In the 19th century and until the second half of the 20th century, the teaching culture included “the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity” (Williams, 1976, p. 90), which means it was evolved around art forms and philosophy mostly. This culture was related to the elite classes of the 19th century and was a representation of “high culture” (Hall, 1997, p. 2)

Since the 1960s, the teaching of culture changed considerably (Chambers, 2004) when “high culture,” which was defined as “the way of life of a people, community, nation or social group” (Hall, 1997, p. 2), started to lose its favor. The reason behind this change was the socio-cultural shift in some of the European countries as a result of the increased immigration. Another reason was the introduction of “the communicative approach in modern language teaching which supported the use of authentic materials” (Chambers, 2004, p. 16). This approach supports the use of materials which are relatable to the students. As “culture in the anthropological sense is synonymous with the everyday life” (Williams, 1958, p. 3) of common people, the new culture notion is mentioned as “ordinary culture” or “popular culture” (Hall, 1997, p. 2)

The concept of culture has been perceived differently by the scholar. One of these scholars who influenced the definition of culture is Halverson's (1985) who perceived the concept as a culture with a "big C" which stands for the high culture and culture with a "little c" that is the anthropologic culture (p. 328). The former stands for the features of "civilization" including, arts, history, geography and literature, the subjects usually taught in schools, the latter, on the other hand, represents less distinctive aspects because of not being included in the curriculum. This notion is furthermore conceptualized as "objective culture" in opposition to "subjective culture" (Bennett, 2008; Deardorff, 2009). In the latter, culture is perceived as a silent language (Furstenberg et al., 2001; Hall, 1973) which is concealed (Lo Bianco & Crozet, 2003).

In the language learning and teaching context, culture is mostly perceived as "the total set of beliefs, attitudes, customs, behaviors, social habits of the members of a particular society" (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 94). Byram includes "the shared meanings of a social group," and states that "behaviors can be verbal or non-verbal" (1997, p. 39). That is to say; it stands for the common experience: "a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 3). Lado briefly explains it as "the ways of a people" (1957, p. 110). Kramsch also describes culture as "something which is the result of human intervention as opposed to nature" (1998, p. 205), and separates it into three parts: diachronic, synchronic, and imagination: The first part is associated with a historical element which consists of the common traditions and past of a community. The second stands for the place where the social group progresses, and the third part refers to the thoughts of people which form their choices. Kramsch and Widdowson (1998) claim that culture is a constantly changing heterogeneous concept, which means "there is a variety of cultures within a community" (p. 10) such as different experiences, ethnicity, gender, age.

The notion of culture was defined by foreign language practitioners Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) as three different aspects: the first aspect named as "products" stands for the folklore, music, artifacts, and literature. The second aspect "behavior" includes habits, dress, foods, leisure and customs; and the third aspect "ideas" consists of, institutions, values, and beliefs.

Holló and Lázár (2000) claim that culture consists of three different features: civilization, discourse structures and skills; and behavior and speech patterns. The first feature includes customs, values, literature, geography, history; the second feature comprises figures of speech logic, mediation, connecting ideas and developing an argument in spoken and written texts. The third feature consists of body language, all the speech acts, and tools of socializing

Another researcher, who also recognizes the difficulty of the concept of culture, Levy (2007) divides it into five categories: (1) “culture as elemental, (2) culture as relative, (3) culture as group membership, (4) culture as contested, and (5) culture as individual” (p. 12). Additionally, Levy offers suggestions to improve knowledge regarding the culture in foreign language learning and teaching. He mentions how people acquire culture at birth and states that as growing up they acquire linguistic proficiency in the native language and they adopt a certain lifestyle mostly they were “unaware of [their] own cultural orientation” (Levy, 2007, p. 105). Therefore culture is “elemental” due to being pervasive, even though it is invisible or intangible. In the language learning and teaching domain, this means that when learning a new language, learners reflect their cultural values and beliefs onto that language. That is to say, their ‘birth culture’ affects the way they see the new culture without wondering it. This kind of reflection might be resulted in the rejection of the L2 culture because of preventing the objective reflection on the target language’s culture if the values of the native language’s culture do not meet the values of the L2 culture. Consequently, language education should be “opening the minds of learners to difference and otherness” (Lo Bianco, 2003, p. 34) and “to a certain extent, students may be introduced to the target culture from the beginning.” (Sarıçoban & Çalışkan, 2011, p. 13).

Secondly, culture is “relative,” which means “it can merely be understood and being valued when it is compared with another culture” (Levy, 2007, p. 107). In the domain of foreign language learning and teaching, this occurs when learners confront the cultures and make a generalization about it. On the other hand, these kinds of approaches have some negative aspects such as “oversimplification of the richness and variety within cultures” (Guest, 2002, p. 154) which might be resulted in creating stereotypes.

To be able to understand the concept of culture fully, it is also important to know the notion of “group membership” (Levy, 2007). Individuals tend to associate themselves as a member of a community (e.g., school, family, home country and social class) in which they feel they have a common ground and share similar values. As growing up, people start to get involved in communities founded on their religion, political views, age group, geographical location, career choices, and sports practices. (Levy, 2007, p. 108) That is to say, culture is multiple and layered “all human beings exist in multiple social worlds, have multiple social allegiances, and play multiple social roles – all of which, additionally, are continuously changing” (Atkinson, 1999, p. 643).

The concept of “group membership” (Levy, 2007) is quite related to “groupness” (Lindsay et al., 1999, p. 27), in other words, people quickly understand whether they are connected with a new group that they met or they have different behaviours and values compared to the new group. In the language education context, ‘groupness’ is defined as a common language above all. This shared linguistic code provides the group members to create a “speech community” (Hymes, 1974).

Moreover, Levy (2007) as well perceives culture as a “contested” feature. In fact, meeting a new culture and its values and beliefs might be difficult for individuals because of the multi-layered and dynamic nature of the culture. Under some circumstances even, a “culture shock” (Furnham, 1993; Oberg, 1960) which is cultural disorientation, can occur in the individuals.

To conclude with, culture is “individual,” or more specifically “the understandings of culture are subject to personal interpretation” (Levy, 2007, p. 111). For example, one culture can be understood and interpret differently by two different members of the same culture. As Atkinson (1999) explains it “[No], two people can be said to share precisely the same cultures [...], and all cultural groups are made up of individuals” (p. 640-41).

To sum up, the definitions of culture mentioned above show that the culture in the language education covers a great variety of factors. Therefore, culture is a

collective concept consist of and information about beliefs behaviors values and civilization.

2.1.2 Language and Culture

The works of Whorf (1956) and Sapir (2004) is the starting point to discuss the association between culture and language or perception and language. In the analysis that they perform on Native American languages, they created the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis which concludes that language significantly affects perceptions and behaviors. The most debated statement of the hypothesis claims that our native language determines the way we perceive things:

“We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. [...] We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language.”

(Whorf, 1956, p. 213)

The concept of linguistic determinism that is language determines thought, has been extensively criticized by linguists and sociolinguists (Kramsch & Widdowson, 1998, p. 11-14; Martin, 1986; Pinker, 2003, p. 53), and today the belief in this hypothesis is decreased. As an alternative, linguistic relativity took the place of linguistic determinism which claims that culture and language are embrangled: “language expresses cultural reality” (Kramsch & Widdowson 1998, p. 3). Undeniably, it is identified that “language is not a culture-free code, distinct from the way people think and behave, but, rather, it plays a major role in the perpetuation of culture” (Kramsch & Widdowson, 1998, p. 8). Language fills the blank with the sounds when we interact with the culture. Language is in culture, and culture is loaded with language.

This claim indicates that it is essential for language teachers to develop the cultural sensitivity of the learners to provide them a successful language learning “Since language and culture are inseparable, we cannot be teachers of language without being teachers of culture – or vice versa” (Byram, 1994, p. 7). Genç and Bada (2005) also state that “The classes in language and culture aimed at improving one’s understanding of the language and the people who speak it. Trained to be

prospective teachers of English, for students of ELT, studying English culture is not an arbitrary but a necessary activity.” (p. 80). Similarly, Valdes states that teaching culture is inevitable:

“From the first day of the beginning class, culture is at the forefront. Whatever approach, method or technique is used, greetings are usually first on the agenda. How can any teacher fail to see the cultural nature of the way people greet each other in any place in any language? [...] Not calling it a lesson in culture does not prevent it [from] being one.”

(Valdes, 1990, p. 20)

To conclude, language carries shared hidden implications or cultural features: “Native speakers of a language speak not only with their own individual voices, but through them they also speak the established knowledge of their native community and society, the stock of metaphors this community lives by, and the categories they use to represent their experience” (Kramsch, 1993, p. 43). This statement is also correct when a dominant language takes the place of a minority language and when speaking with the new language, the minority language speakers replicate the cultural behaviors (Saville-Troike, 1992). Consequently, being proficient in a language not only indicates specializing in linguistic aspects such as vocabulary, syntax, and grammar but also implies recognizing the social circumstance in which it is performed. This notion is called as cultural competence.

2.1.3 The Connection between English as a Lingua Franca and Culture

Currently, English has become the medium of universal and intercultural communication as a global lingua franca. Cinkara (2017) emphasized that in the globalizing world English is being taught and used as a medium of international communication as today’s lingua franca. The number of non-native English speakers has noticeably outnumbered the native speakers of English. It is speculated that 80% of English communication involves a foreign or second language use rather than including the language use of native speakers of English (Crystal, 2002, p. 22). A variety of terms which are different from the native-norm based definitions such as ESL and EFL were used to define the global nature of English. McKay (2002, p. 132) uses the term “International English” to describe it as “a language used by native speakers of English” (Gnutzmann, 2000, p. 357) and “bilingual users of English for cross-cultural communication” (Gnutzmann, 2000, p. 357). McKay

shows that International “English can be used in a local sense between speakers of diverse cultures and languages within one country and in a global sense between speakers from different countries” (p.132).

To refer to the global nature of English were used more or less interchangeably which include: “English as a lingua franca”: (Gnutzmann, 2000), “English as a global language” (Crystal, 2013), “English as a world language” (Mair, 2003). All of these terms represent a variation from the default language notion. That is to say, the code and conventions applied by its native speakers, commonly indicating a kind of recognition that in the use of ELF circumstances have which are dissimilar to the circumstances when a language is overtly related to its place of origin, and its native speakers. It does not matter if it is spoken by the native speakers or by people who have not learned it as a foreign language, diverse perceptions, expectancy surpass and variety of norms performed.

Although English is considered as lingua franca, given all its global nature as a connecting language in all different cultural contexts, it is also a “cultura franca” (Gilmore 2007) or “multicultural language” (Honna, 2012).

Therefore, Alptekin (1984, p. 16) add propositions to “de Anglo-Americanize English,” both culturally and linguistically. In their suggestion, Alptekin (1984, p. 15-17) do not consider the “cultural load of the target language” as unrelated; they even presuppose that “the host country runs the risk of having its own culture totally submerged.” Additionally, Alptekin (1993) suggests English as a global language by emphasizing its inseparability from its target cultures “it would be more realistic to speak of one language which is not always inextricably tied to one particular culture, as is the case with English” (p. 140).

In short, “English as a global language” (Crystal, 2013) or “lingua franca” (Gnutzmann, 2000) or even as cultura franca cannot be considered only as a language which covers one single culture. On the contrary, it is an intercultural language which adapts itself within any culture; it is like a meeting point for people from different cultural backgrounds.

2.2 Sociocultural Theory

In identifying and framing the scope of the research, the sociocultural theory was benefited from (Vygotsky, 1997). The reason for using it is that the sociocultural theory can provide an adequate theoretical perspective which is by the perspectives in many EFL/ESL literature. This theory emphasizes that the language is developed socially because of being a social product, the development occurs through interactions. It also perceives development and learning as a continuous united process of social interactions and; participation and expert guidance have a vital role in this process.

The sociocultural theory perceives the mental operation of individuals regarding its connection with institutional, historical and cultural context. Therefore, it focuses on the roles of the participants in culturally organized activities and social interactions which shape the psychological development. “The social dimension of consciousness is primary in time and fact. The individual dimension of consciousness is derivative and secondary.” (Vygotsky, 1979, p. 30). This view shows that the mental operation of individuals does not occur merely from social interaction, it requires the particular processes and structures formed by the individuals can be tracked to their exchanges with other individuals. In the sociocultural theory, Wertsch (1991) identifies three major themes that explain the nature of interdependence between the social progression and language development of the individuals. The first argument stated that the origin of individual development is in social sources. As the learners internalize the effects of working together by participating in a wide range of joint activities and, they acquire different knowledge, culture, and strategies. The second argument in the theory is that human activity is mediated by signs and tools –semiotics, at both the individual and social levels. Semiotic mediums consist of “language; various systems of counting; mnemonic techniques; algebraic symbol systems; works of art; writing, schemes, diagrams, maps and mechanical drawings; all sorts of conventional signs and so on” (Wertsch, 1991, p. 137). The theory’s third argument is that the first two arguments are best evaluated through developmental or genetic investigation. The argument shows that historically examining something refers to investigate in the process of transformation; that is the basic demand of dialectical methods.

The sociocultural theory emphasizes the occurrence of EFL as a social product. According to the theory, the interaction between individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds is the source of EFL development. This development process emerges due to the exchange of identities and cultures through interaction between the interlocutors. As a result of this exchange of the differences a “communities of practice” is formed which could be identified by the three themes stated below (Wenger, 1998), (i) mutual involvement in common practices, (ii) involvement in some mutually negotiated enterprise, and (iii) benefiting from the common repertoire of the members.

Deardorff's (2006) model, which includes continues negotiation, collaboration, and interaction, it also demonstrates the view of sociocultural theory in the learning process. According to Deardorff's (2006) model, learners are encouraged to achieve development and form their perspectives by internalizing the peripheral knowledge presented to them. Deardorff's (2006) model conceptualizes intercultural competence development as an ongoing process. In this process, individuals are provided occasions to reflect on and assess the critical thinking and intercultural development of themselves over time. It is also important in acquiring and evaluating knowledge, attitudes (especially openness, curiosity, and respect). It also contributes as the core of collaboration and socialization for knowledge's co-construction, which affects all the other scopes of intercultural sensitivity improvement.

According to the model, the ability to empathize and to perceive the world from the point of views of others is a fundamental base of intercultural competence development. Since the sociocultural theory pays great attention to competence, especially intercultural competence as a foundation of exchanging cultural difference, it is necessary to mention competence and its subcomponents to be able to comprehend the notion of sociocultural theory fully.

2.3 Competence

Competence is one of the most contentious terms in both general and applied linguistics. It is believed that Chomsky has been mostly associated with the introduction of competence to linguistic discourse with his groundbreaking book

“Aspects of the Theory of Syntax” uncover the differentiation between “competence” (language knowledge of the monolingual speaker-listener) and “performance” (the definite exercise of language in actual circumstances).

There are many different competence types in the field of language teaching and learning, such as linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, sociolinguistic competence, (Brown & Williams, 1996) communicative competence, intercultural competence. Although each competence covers a specific need particularly in language, linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence will be briefly mentioned. In order to provide a broader frame for the present study, communicative competence and intercultural competence will be discussed in detail due to their direct link to intercultural sensitivity.

2.3.1 Linguistic Competence

According to Hymes, linguistic competence as a term is used in two different ways. The first usage refers to “the object of study of a true sociolinguistics: the actual linguistic abilities of definite persons in a definite social life.” The second usage refers to “the abilities that scholars must have.” (Hymes, 1976, p. 236).

2.3.2 Pragmatic Competence

“Pragmatics” of “pragmatic” as a term is involved in linguistics as a result of a specific theory of semiotics. (Lyons, 1977; Levinson, 1983; Leech, 1983). Until the mid-1970s the term “pragmatics” was not used by linguists commonly. Towards the end of the 1970s, Chomsky (1977, p. 3) began to use “pragmatic competence” as a term. Pragmatic competence is “the knowledge that enables a speaker to express his/her meanings and intentions via speech acts (e.g., requests, invitations, disagreements and so on) appropriately within a particular social and cultural context of communication.” (Nguyen, 2011, p. 19). It includes both having linguistic means for expressing speech acts and understanding the socio-cultural constraints on the use of these means (Canale, 1983). Pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication and constitutes one of the core components of one’s ‘communicative competence’ (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

2.3.3 Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic competence is related to Hymes's (1972) concept of communicative competence. The trigger for Hymes (1972) to redefine the notion of communicative competence as "sociolinguistic competence" is the narrowness and insufficiency of the Chomsky's description (Davies, 2003, p. 98). According to Hymes (1972), it is not only important to understand and create grammatical utterances but also important to learn about cultural rules to evaluate the social circumstances properly and to produce appropriate speech.

The concept of sociolinguistic competence is defined as "the capacity to recognize and produce socially appropriate speech in context" (Lyster, 1994, p. 263). In his study, Labov (1972) connects linguistic differences with independent variables such as social features and the extent of importance given to form by the speakers.

2.3.4 Communicative Competence

Subsequently following the definition of the concept of competence and performance proposed by Chomsky, it was advocated with a communicative perspective in applied linguistics (Savignon, 1972) stated their strong disagreement in using the concept of linguistic competence solely as a theoretical base of the learning methodology, language teaching, and testing. Therefore, Hymes's (1972) communicative competence is used as another option for Chomsky's concept of competence because they believed that it has a more realistic and comprehensive notion of competence. Hymes (1972) defines communicative competence as the usage of grammatical competence in diverse communicative circumstances rather than being only an innate grammatical competence. Therefore, it adds the sociolinguistic point of view to the linguistic perspective of Chomsky's competence.

There was a great interest, and significant contribution to improve the concept of communicative competence during 1970s and 1980s since a number of the applied linguists focused on the language learning acquisition and testing theory. Some of them who had a significant impact on the communicative competence theory will be mentioned in the following along with their empirical works. For example, after the definition of Widdowson, who is considered one of the first who

contributed to the relationship between competence and performance, the interest in performance has increased.

Widdowson (1983) distinguished between competence and capacity, to be able to explain the communicative competence concept. He benefited from his knowledge and experience in pragmatics and discourse analysis in defining the notions mentioned before. In this regard, he perceived competence (communicative competence) from a linguistic and sociolinguistic point of view. By capacity he referred to a communicative or procedural capacity, he perceived the capability to use knowledge as a medium of constituting meaning in language. For Widdowson (1983), the capacity does not become competence; it is not one of the constituents of competence. , but it is “an active force for continuing creativity” (Widdowson, 1983, p. 27).

In their communicative competence concept, Swain and Canale (1980) and Canale (1987) perceived communicative competence as a combination of a fundamental structure of skill and knowledge required for communication. According to this concept, knowledge stands for the knowledge of the language both consciously or unconsciously. They identified three types of knowledge: knowledge of the usage of language in a social context to perform a communicative task, knowledge of how to link communicative functions and utterances, knowledge of fundamental grammatical principles. Additionally, according to them the concept of skills signify how knowledge can be used in real communication. For Canale (1987) a further differentiation is required between the fundamental capacity and its expression in actual communication, in other words, in performance.

Savignon (1972) attach major importance to the ability in their communicative competence concept contrary to Hymes, Canale, and Swain or even Widdowson (1983, 1972). Savignon (1972) defines communicative competence as “the ability to function in a truly communicative setting – that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors” (Savignon, 1972, p.8). She and numerous theoreticians (Skehan, 1995, 1998; Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman & Palmer, 1996) believe that communicative competence has a dynamic nature which is interpersonal and relative.

To distinguish competence and performance, Savignon (1972) defines competence as a fundamental capability, and performance as an open expression of competence. According to her the only way to observe, develop and maintain competence is through performance. Savignon (1972) considers communicative competence as equal to language proficiency like many others in the language teaching and learning field (Stern, 1985). Based on this and the contradiction in the use of “competence,” Taylor (1988) suggested the term “communicative proficiency” instead of “communicative competence”.

Bachman (1990) proposed to use the expression “communicative language ability” by arguing that the proposed expression cover the meaning of both communicative competence and language proficiency. He described the new term communicative language ability as a combination of competence or knowledge and sufficiency to use the knowledge appropriately in contextual communicative language usage. To expand this description, Bachman established a unique interest in the usage of language, in other words, the usage of language to achieve a specific communicative objective in a particular situational communication context.

2.3.4.1 Models of communicative competence

Contemporary empirical and theoretical studies related to communicative competence is mostly being founded on three different communicative competence models: the model of Bachman and Palmer (1996), the model of Canale and Swain (1980, 1981), and the definition of Common European Framework (CEF) on the communicative language competence.

2.3.4.2 Canale and Swain’s Model

In the first model of Canale and Swain (1980, 1981) there are three primary elements (skills and knowledge fields: sociolinguistic, strategic and grammatical competence). Canale (1987) introduced the fourth component in a subsequent version of the model; Canale added a fourth component “discourse competence” by transferring some constituents from sociolinguistic competence.

Grammatical Competence: The grammatical competence of Canale and Swain (1980, 1981) is mostly influenced by the linguistic competence of Chomsky. As a

result, many research of some theoreticians (Savignon, 1983) is primarily on the basis of the model of Canale and Swain (1980, 1981). The grammatical competence is related to the proficiency of the linguistic code both verbally and non-verbally which involves knowledge of syntactic, morphological, phonetic, orthographic, and semantic rules as well as vocabulary knowledge. It provides the speaker to use the skills and knowledge necessitates comprehending and articulating the literal meaning of expressions.

Sociolinguistic Competence: It includes the knowledge of conventions and base which emphasize the proper language use and comprehension in a variety of sociocultural and sociolinguistic contexts, in accordance with Hymes's conception of the convenience of the usage of language in different social situations.

Discourse Competence: The discourse competence of Canale (1987) stands for the knowledge of rules that designate to the meanings, and forms should be linked to create a meaningful unity both in written and spoken texts. This unity can be achieved by the coherence in meaning and the cohesion in form. The cohesive devices (e.g., conjunctions, pronouns, corresponding structures, synonyms), which contribute to connecting individual utterances and sentences to a complete structure, are required to be able to form cohesion. There are mediums such as consistency, progression, the relevance of ideas, repetition to establish the organization of meaning and enable a logical connection between utterances.

Strategic Competence: In Canale and Swain's model, the strategic competence is comprised of knowledge of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies which are reclaimed to substitute for failure in communication because of inadequate proficiency in one or more constituents of communicative competence. These strategies consist of reluctance, circumlocution, themes or structures, modifications of messages, paraphrases, changes of style and register, repetitions, avoidance of words, guessing. As Canale (1987) highlighted, the strategic competence can be used to increase the efficiency of communication. Unlike the other three components of communicative competence, strategic competence involves non-cognitive aspects like readiness to take risks, self-confidence and is not a kind of stored knowledge. It provides learners to overcome the lack of competence in one of the fields of competence due to having interaction with other components.

Although being simple, Canale and Swain's (1980, 1981) model has been dominant in the field of foreign language acquisition, learning and language testing. Additionally, even though Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) suggested a more inclusive and elaborate communicative competence model, this model was remained to be used and referred. The reason behind still being used by many researchers of communicative competence could be the easiness of application of Canale and Swain model.

2.3.4.3 Bachman and Palmer's Model

In the late 1980s, by considering the previous empirical and theoretical studies, Bachman proposed the model of communicative ability as a new communicative competence model. In the mid-1990s the model was relatively revised by Bachman and Palmer (1996).

For Bachman and Palmer (1996) there are many aspects of speakers such as their language ability, topical knowledge, affective schemata and some general characteristics that affect the communicative language ability.

Language Ability: The language ability is a combination of two comprehensive areas: strategic competence and language knowledge.

Language Knowledge includes pragmatic knowledge and organizational knowledge which constitutes each other in accomplishing an efficient use of language in communication.

Pragmatic Knowledge: It includes knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions to create and interpret sentences of the language. The aim is to create and interpret the sentences which are suitable for a specific situation of language use (sociolinguistic knowledge) and knowledge of pragmatic conventions. So that substantial language performance can be expressed, and the performative ability of discourse or utterances (functional knowledge) can be interpreted. It stands for the ability to create and interpret discourse.

Organizational Knowledge: In Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model, organizational knowledge under the language knowledge is the combination of the abilities that concerned with controlling the formal language structure such as textual and

grammatical knowledge. Textual knowledge provides production and comprehension of written or spoken texts. It includes the conventions knowledge for linking utterances or sentences into texts, namely, cohesion knowledge (ways of creating semantic connections among two or more sentences in utterances in a conversation or in written texts) and organization of conversation (conventions for initiating, maintaining and closing conversations) or rhetorical organization knowledge (way of comparisons classifications, building descriptions, , narrative texts etc.). Grammatical knowledge covers knowledge of morphology, graphology, vocabulary, syntax, and phonology. They provide production and recognition of grammatically correct utterances as well as understanding their proposed context.

Strategic Knowledge: It is stated as a group of metacognitive elements which provide the speaker to involve in setting goal, assessing the communicative derivations and planning. Setting goal refers to identifying and choosing the tasks; assessment includes assessing the affective schemata and topical knowledge in relation with the language context; planning includes choosing the way of using the language knowledge and other elements in the language used to complete the preferred task successfully.

The communicative language ability model of Bachman and Palmer (1996) is way more comprehensive, explicit but considered to be more complex in contrast to Canale and Swain's (1980, 1981) model. Although Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model has a more organized definition of primary elements of communicative competence, being more comprehensive and detailed, the model of Canale and Swain (1980, 1981) is preferable due to being easy to apply.

2.3.4.4 The Model of Common European Framework (CEF)

In the CEF (2001) communicative language competence description or model is the final model to be referred to. In the CEF, communicative competence is perceived merely regarding knowledge. It consists of three main elements—pragmatic competence, language competence, and sociolinguistic competence. All of these elements are explained by CEF (2001), and can be summarized as follows:

Pragmatic Competence: It is the ability to employ language efficiently to understand the language in context and to accomplish a specific purpose. The subcomponents of

pragmatic competence are functional competence and discourse competence. Functional competence includes the ability and knowledge to use the schemata (patterns of social interaction) which forms the communication. The discourse competence stands for connecting sentences into a clear and well-designed idea and being able to create related communications.

Language Competence: It includes six sub-components: grammatical, phonological, orthoepic competences, lexical, semantic and orthographic. Grammatical competence is “the ability to understand and express meaning by producing and recognizing well-formed phrases and sentences” (p.113). Phonological competence includes “the knowledge of and skill in the perception and production of speech” (p.116). Orthoepic competence is the aptitude to create accurate pronunciation from a written form. Lexical competence is “the knowledge of and ability to use the vocabulary of a language” (p.110). Semantic competence is related to the control and awareness of “the organization of the meaning” (p.115) by the learner. Orthographic competence includes “the knowledge of and skill in the perception and production of the symbols of which written texts are composed.” (p.117).

Sociolinguistic Competence: The last element in this model is sociolinguistic competence which covers having the skills and knowledge for using the proper language in a social context. This competence’s consequent elements are the language aspects which indicate the social interaction, rules of convenient actions and expressions, variety in dialect stress and register.

2.3.5 Intercultural Competence

2.3.5.1 Definitions and Concepts Associated with Intercultural Competence

Since it is an umbrella term for intercultural sensitivity, intercultural competence is one of the directions that are necessary to be taken into consideration as a vital aspect which is closely related to EFL/ESL communicative competencies. Even though many studies focusing on intercultural competence have been performed in different areas and intercultural competence has been identified differently in respect to the researchers’ interpretations (Hoskins & Crick, 2010; Deardorff, 2006; Hammer et al., 2003; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992a), many of the current research in this field concentrate on intercultural competence as an important

aspect of global communication skills, global citizenship, global culture and their improvement, thus, as an closely connected characteristic of EFL and the improvement of EFL skills.

Initially, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s the main focus area of intercultural competence began to emerge from the research efforts of finding remedies to cross-cultural communication problems experienced by westerners working abroad that refrained collaboration between people from different cultural backgrounds (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007). The scope of intercultural competence research has been extended to a great range from permanent residency in foreign countries to international education since the late 1970s and 1980s.

The research purposes also vary considerably, from the determination of learning outcomes associated with a variety of educational experience to a selection of appropriate participants to sending abroad to cross-cultural mediation. As the purpose and focus of intercultural competence has enlarged, approaches to its assessment and descriptions have changed at the same time from short attitude and personality surveys to more complex self-assessments, behavioral assessments, portfolio assessments, performance assessments and others (Sinicrope, Norris & Watanabe, 2007).

In a wide sense, intercultural competence can be described as “a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are culturally and linguistically different from oneself” Fantini (2006, p.458).

Even though there has been a variation of relatively associated terms used by several researchers to explain intercultural competence in the literature, which also comprise intercultural understanding, such as “interpersonal communicative competence” (Ruben, 1976), “transcultural communication”, “cross-cultural adaptation” (Kim, 1993), “cross-cultural competence”, “intercultural sensitivity” (Bennett, 1993), “intercultural effectiveness” (Stone, 2006), “intercultural competence” (Deardorff, 2006), “intercultural literacy” (Heyward, 2002), “global citizenship” and “global competence” (Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006), there has not been a unity in defining the concepts related to intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006; Freeman, Treleavan, Ramburuth, Leask, Caulfield, Simpson, et al.,

2009; Stier, 2009). Even though the ability to exceed one's own culture and interact with others from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds, Deardorf (2006) state that the difficulty in identifying the specific constituents of the intercultural competence concepts is due to the differences in the terminology used and the lack of specificity in defining intercultural competence.

Stone (2006) proposes "intercultural effectiveness" discussing that it covers a related sort of competences to intercultural competence which is "the ability to interact with people from different cultures to optimize the probability of mutually successful outcomes" (p. 338). In describing the constituents of intercultural competence, Deardorff (2006) prepared an outcome-based description that was accepted by consensus among intercultural competence scholars in her study. In her study, intercultural competence was identified as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes" (p. 247).

Heyward (2002) employs the term "intercultural literacy" to address to "understanding, competencies, attitudes, language proficiencies, participation and identities necessary for successful cross-cultural engagement" (p. 10). Heyward offers that his term intercultural literacy "first conceives of literacy as including competencies, attitudes and identities and addition to understandings, and second it suggests a literacy that crosses cultural boundaries" (p.10).

Hunter, White, and Godbey (2006) state that "global competence" stands for "having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment" (p. 270). Additionally, they emphasized that the disagreement on the definition, or attitudes, skills, experiences, and knowledge, required for global competence has resulted in educational programs' design to be incomplete.

Based on their research in communication and language, Crichton and Scarino (2007) indicated that "students' intercultural competencies can be seen in terms of enhancing their capacities to work with their own and others' language and cultures, to recognize knowledge in its cultural context, to examine the intercultural

dimension of knowledge applications, and to communicate and interact effectively across languages and cultures” (p. 229). As they stated, the description deals with the development of intercultural awareness, its assessment, and evaluation of the intercultural interaction process. Interaction is defined as the cultural and linguistic means of the intercultural competencies development.

Treleavan, Freeman, Leask, Ramburuth, Simpson, Sykes, and Ridings (2007, p. 9) said that “Intercultural competence is a dynamic, interactive and self-reflective learning process involving staff and students with the potential to transform values, skills, and knowledge.” Piaget et al. proposed a more detailed explanation, according to Piaget, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, & DeJaeghere (2003) defined intercultural competence as a “dynamic, on-going, interactive self-reflective learning process that transforms attitudes, skills, and knowledge for effective communication and interaction across cultures and contexts.” (p. 476).

In the Council of Europe report, prepared by Barrett, Huber, and Reynolds (2014) it is stated that the first step of understanding intercultural competence necessitates identification of a number of associated notions, including the notions of “identity,” “culture,” “intercultural encounter” and “competence.” According to them, “identity” refers to “a person’s sense of who they are and the self-descriptions to which they attribute significance and value. Most people use a range of different identities to describe themselves, including both personal social identities.” (p. 5). They emphasized that it is not easy to define “culture” because of the fact that cultural groups are legislated by individuals in personalized ways, includes a range of diverse norms and practices which are frequently confronted and altered in time, and these groups are always internally heterogeneous.

Nevertheless, the division can be made between the subjective, material and social characteristics of culture. They describe “intercultural encounter” as circumstances where a person meets with another/others that have a variety of cultural links whether through social, communication media or face-to-face. They point out that in their explanation of intercultural competence, the word “competence” stands for “a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills applied through action in any relevant situation,” rather than referring only to a matter of skills which are used in a prearranged circumstance. Thus, as said by them,

Intercultural competence is “a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills applied through action which enables one, either singly or together with others, to understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself to respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people; establish positive and constructive relationships with such people; and understand oneself and one’s own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural ‘difference’” (p. 7).

The literature emphasizes that intercultural competence and related skills can be understood as the aptitude to communicate and behave appropriately and efficiently in multicultural surroundings, providing that intercultural competence skills development which includes a continuous learning process that consists of self-reflection, negotiation, and interpretation, and which progressively transforms one’s knowledge, skills and attitudes towards cultural variations in which language functions as a way of communication and interaction to assist its progress.

Sinicrope, Norris, and Watanabe (2007) propose that programs such as foreign language and study abroad phase a vital place in providing the chance to establish and improve intercultural competence and Intercultural Sensitivity of the students.

Acquiring these competencies may be vital for the students to enrich themselves and their communicative proficiency and these abilities can be the base for their future careers such as professionals, educator, and leaders which requires collaboration across cultures successfully. A significant number of theoretical frameworks have been developed due to the interest in intercultural competence. Therefore, there have also been numerous attempts to define and measure the intercultural competence.

2.3.5.2 Models of Intercultural Competence

Although defining nearly similar concepts and dimensions, the following models identify intercultural competence in a variety of emphasis and component details. All of these models consists awareness (of the self, of the other), open-mindedness, intercultural skills, and knowledge that directs to effective behavior and

communication as an outcome (Deardorff, 2006; Byram, 1997; Gudykunst, 1993; Gudykunst & Kim, 1984).

2.3.5.2.1 Deardorff's Model

Deardorff (2006) provides a view of achieving intercultural competence by proposing a pyramid-shaped model. The base of the pyramid includes the attitudes of openness, curiosity, and respect. Openness and being respectful of other ideas and values are defined as being open to explore and learn about different cultures which are necessary for intercultural learning. Comprehension and knowledge that interacts with skills build on the basis of the next level.

To be able to achieve intercultural competence, one must be able to self-evaluate and be self-aware. Subsequently, move to the stage of awareness by observing and evaluating the outside, other cultures. At the very top of the pyramid, there is behavior about the preferred internal outcomes.

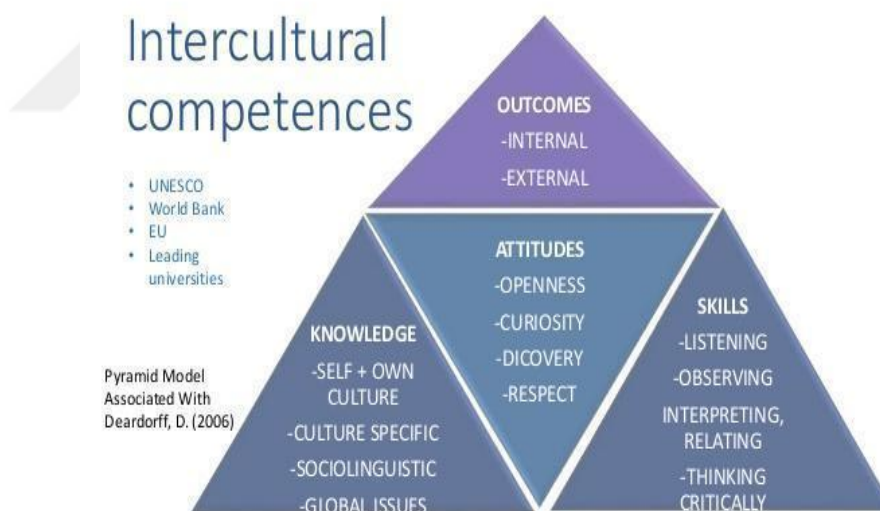


Figure 1. Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006, p.14)

These same components can also be demonstrated in another way: a circle of boxes connected by arrows of interaction. Deardorff suggests beginning with attitude and then working around the circle to knowledge and skills and then to internal and external outcomes.

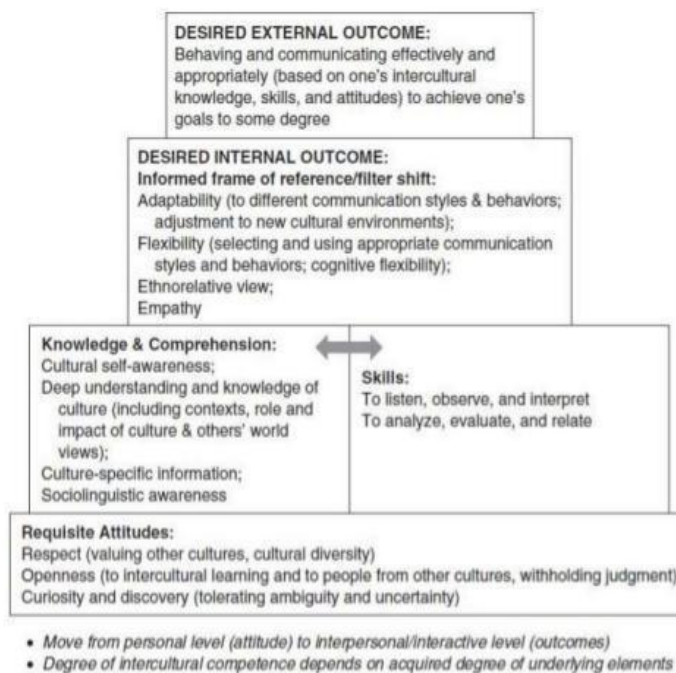


Figure 2. Deardorff Box Shaped Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006, p.13)

2.3.5.2.2. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity of Bennett (DMIS)

A model was developed by Bennett (1993) so as to define the interaction of individuals with different cultures and suggested that this interaction evolves over time. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) includes six stage grouped into three ethnocentric stages (the individual's culture is the central worldview) and three ethnorelative stages (the individual's culture is one of many equally valid worldviews), as follows:

The first ethnocentric stage is denial. A sense of denial emerges where differences between cultures or even the existence of other cultures are ignored during this time. Defense is the second ethnocentric stage. In this stage, a need to defend their culture is developed by devaluing other cultures and by sublimating their culture among all the other cultures as if it is superior and infallible to the rest. Finally, in the minimization stage which is the third ethnocentric stage, the individual is capable of realizing that there are surface-level cultural differences but is incapable of comprehending that the differences are deeper than that.

The three ethnorelative stages of development paved the way for realizing a more complex view in which acts are understood as culturally placed, and cultures are understood in relation to each other. In the acceptance stage which is the first ethnorelative stage, cultural differences are embraced and respected by the individuals. In the adaptation stage, through empathy and pluralism, the individual expands the ability to change his belief system to another culturally different point of view. In the last stage, integration, the individual enlarges and integrate other perspectives into his own worldview.

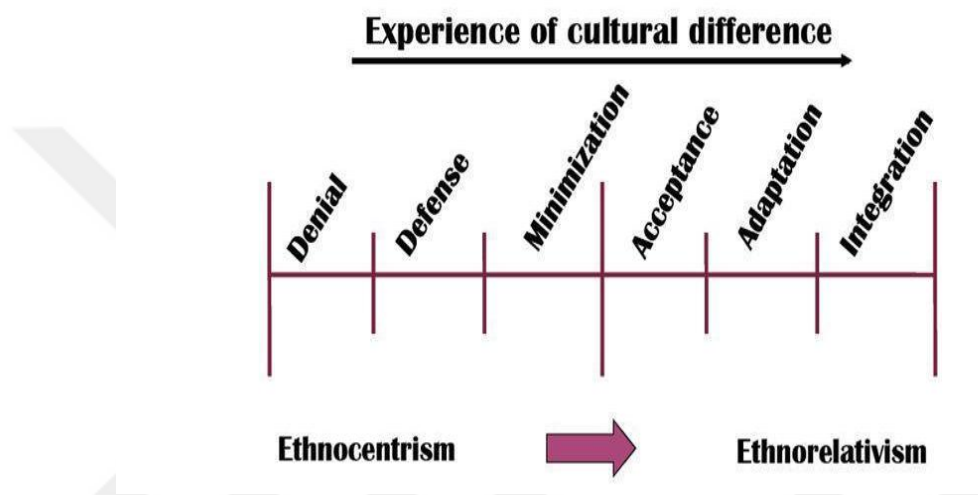


Figure 3. Experience Stages of Cultural Differences (Hammer& Bennett, 2003, p. 428)

When these six stages come together, they create a whole from the most culturally competent to the least competent. They display a dynamic way of modeling the development of intercultural competence.

2.3.5.2.3 Byram's Model

Byram (2000, p. 7) describes that “with some degree of intercultural competence a person is able to see the relationships between different cultures, both internal and external, and is able to mediate each in terms of the other, either for themselves or for others.”. Byram (1997, p. 31) proposes an intercultural competence model that consists of five factors which include the following:

1. "*The attitude factor*", stands for "the ability to relate one's self and value others, and includes curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" (p. 34).
2. "*Knowledge of one's self and others*," refers to the awareness of the system for social interaction and individual. It includes identifying social groups and their customs both in their own culture and in the other culture.
3. The first skill set, *the skills of interpreting and relating*, defines the ability of a person to "interpret, explain, and relate events and documents from another culture to one's own culture." (p. 98)
4. The second skill set, "*the skills of discovery and interaction*", permits the individual to acquire "new knowledge of culture and cultural practices, including the ability to use existing knowledge, attitudes, and skills in cross-cultural interactions." (p. 98).
5. The last factor, "*critical cultural awareness*", defines the ability to use viewpoints, customs, and artifacts in one's own culture and in other cultures in order to evaluate.

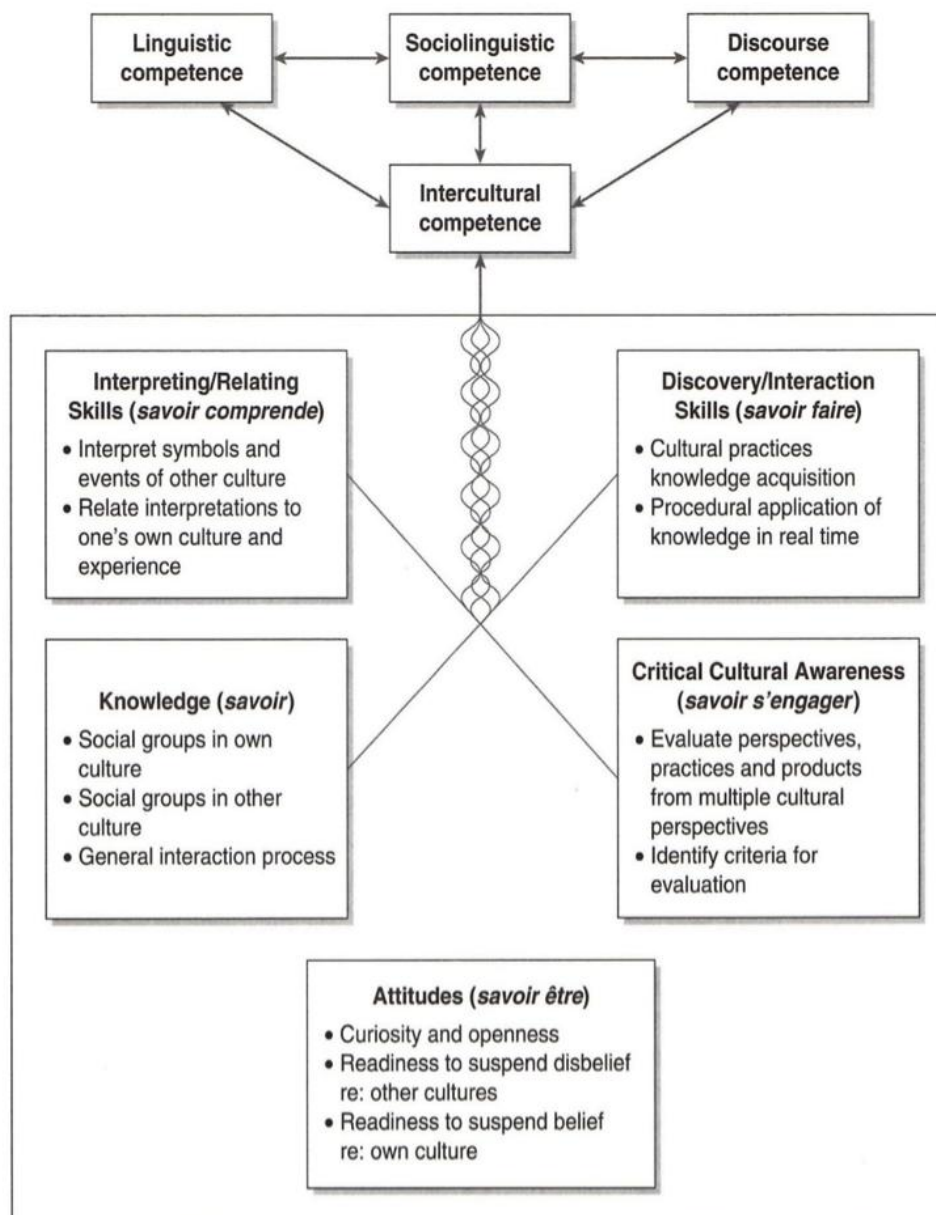


Figure 4. Byram's Intercultural Competence Model (Byram, 2006, p.118)

2.3.5.2.4 Chen and Starosta's Model

According to Chen and Starosta (1996), competence does not merely include one aspect. For example, it is not enough to interact effectively and appropriately at the behavior level. Instead, competence is rooted in an ability to be culturally sensitive, skillful and aware. Each part demonstrates a different level of involvement - affective, cognitive, and behavioral, essential to attain competence. Intercultural awareness, which is "the understanding of cultural conventions that affect how we think what we think and behave" (Chen & Starosta 1998, p. 9), represents the

cognitive aspects of intercultural communication competence. Intercultural sensitivity which is the interactants' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (Chen & Starosta 1998, p. 231) represents the effective aspects of intercultural communication competence. Lastly, intercultural adroitness which is "the ability to get the job done and attain communication goals in intercultural interactions" (Chen & Starosta 1996, P. 367) stands for the behavioral element of intercultural communication competence. If an individual can successfully achieve these three aspects, that individual will achieve a true competence.

2.4 Intercultural Sensitivity

Intercultural sensitivity is commonly conceptualized as "the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences" (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p.422)". The more intercultural sensitive a person is, the more intercultural competent he/she can be as the scholars in this field have noted "greater intercultural sensitivity is associated with greater potential for exercising intercultural competence" (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p.422) similar to some others (Penbek, Yurdakul, & Cerit, 2012). A variety of frameworks and models have been developed within the cultural studies' field, (Hart, Carlson, & Eadie, 1980) with the aim of presenting a deeper insight of intercultural sensitivity by handling the construct as a mindset, a developmental stage (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1983) or an general ability for intercultural communication (Bennett, 1993; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992b). Despite their different point of views, these models and frameworks offered a base for the conceptualizing the intercultural sensitivity.

Chen (1997) indicated that intercultural sensitivity is fundamentally related to emotions, even though it is also concerned with the effective, behavioral and cognitive parts of interactions. Therefore, intercultural sensitivity can be conceptualized as "a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciate cultural differences that promote appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication" (Chen & Starosta, 2000; p. 5). This explanation indicates that people, who are intercultural sensitive, need to be self-motivated to appreciate, welcome and embrace variations amongst cultures (Chen, 1997).

For Chen and Starosta (2000), intercultural sensitivity includes four elements: “self-concept, open-mindedness, non-judgmental attitudes and social relaxation.” (p.6).

Self-concept stands for the perception of an individual of himself or herself. The self-concept of an individual does not just have a role as her or his mean to communicate; it also intervenes the way that the person relates to the world. Self-esteem could also be mentioned here as one of the most vital components of self-concept. Individuals with high self-esteem are more likely to think well of others, are more accepted by others, feel more relaxed when working with superiors (Adler & Towne, 1993).

Willingness to openly express yourself when it is suitable, and accepting the explanations of others are identified as open-mindedness.

Being non-judgmental is not to hold prejudices which will hinder individuals from sincerely listening to others during intercultural communication. The attitudes of being non-judgmental and open-minded increase the enjoyment of cultural differences in intercultural interactions. Three types of enjoyment in intercultural interaction have been identified by researchers who are essential for intercultural communication competence: (a) “the enjoyment of interacting with people from different cultures” (Randolph, Landis, & Tzeng, 1977, p. 106), (b) “the enjoyment of improving working relations with others from different cultures” (Fiedler, Mitchell & Triandis, 1971, p. 98) and (c) “the enjoyment of carrying out one’s own duties in another culture” (Gudykunst, Hammer & Wiseman, 1977, p. 418).

Lastly, social relaxation means the capability to expose minor emotion of anxiety in intercultural interaction. In the first encounter, it is supposed that individuals can feel under pressure and anxious and having crises is acceptable. To be able to achieve intercultural competence, the feeling of anxiety that occurs when interacting with people from diverse cultural backgrounds should be decreased (Barna, 1994).

To sum up, the positive emotions that can provide and support individuals to be respectful and sensitive towards cultural differences is required by the intercultural communication competence.

2.5 Related Studies on Chen and Starosta's Model

Intercultural sensitivity has progressively increased attention in research in diverse disciplines, as a key aspect of intercultural communication competence. An instrument including 24 items under 5 factors was developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) to measure intercultural sensitivity.

Fritz, Möllenberg, and Chen (2001), in the study of measuring intercultural sensitivity in different cultural context, confirmed Chen and Starosta's instrument with 541 German student participants by using confirmatory factor analysis. As a whole, the outcomes indicated that the scale is satisfactory. However, it was noted that the employment of the conceptions in Chen and Starosta's study could be advanced. The scale, in general, was measured as a useful instrument to measure intercultural sensitivity without cultural boundaries.

Vila Banos (2006) analyzed some of the intercultural competencies of secondary students in her study. It appears to be that neither the course nor the age indicated significant differences regarding the students' intercultural sensitivity. On the other hand, sex is considered to be a significant variable since girls have statistically significant difference compared to boys and this difference indicates that female participants are more interculturally sensitive than boys. Also, the use of different languages pointed out significant positive correlations. The acknowledgment of friends coming from a diversity of culture is a characteristic that often associates with a higher degree of intercultural sensitivity.

In Penbek, Yurdakul and Cerit's study (2009), which was conducted with 226 university students from two diverse state universities, it was found that respect of students for different cultures and the ISS scores of the participants improve in line with the engagement level in international interactions.

In another study, Hou (2010) assessed the intercultural sensitivity of EFL learners in China using ISS. The results showed that all the Chinese learners have a comparatively positive attitude toward intercultural communication.

In the study of Kural and Bayyurt (2016), they used the ISS in a multicultural setting in order to "identify how Turkish international graduate students

would respond to the implementation of the ELF-aware IC development syllabus and how it would contribute to their readiness and preparation prior to their departure to pursue their graduate programmes in English L1 countries where English is used as a medium of everyday interactions (ELF context in English L1 countries)” (Kural & Bayyurt, 2016, p. 384). The results showed that implementation of the syllabus improved the intercultural sensitivity levels of the participants.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Presentation

This chapter gives information about the present study regarding its research design, participants, data collection procedure and instruments; and data analysis.

3.1 Methodology and Procedures

This study intended to investigate the relationship between intercultural sensitivity, which is one of the effective aspects of intercultural communication competence (Chen & Starosta, 1998), and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey.

The present study was shaped around three research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and EFL learners' language achievement levels in Turkey?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the proficiency levels?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding gender?

3.2 Research Design

The present study employed a descriptive research design based on a quantitative approach. It is "designed primarily to describe what is going on or what exists" (Trochim, 2001, p. 5). The present study inquires to investigate a major issue in an effort to answer the three research questions mentioned above and was conducted using a correlational survey model.

The first phase of data collection was composed of the administration of the intercultural sensitivity scale to 325 students, who consented to participate in the

study, from different foreign language levels in the preparatory program at a state university.

In the second phase of the data collection process, the participants' final exam scores were collected at the end of the term.

3.3 Research Population and Sampling

The participants were 325 (120 female and 205 male) preparatory class students who were attending Preparatory School in School of Foreign Languages at a state university. The participants were elementary (A2: 32) and intermediate (B1: 228, B2: 65) levels whose age ranged from 18 to 26. The cluster random sampling method was used during the selection procedure. The permission from the School of Foreign Languages was granted for the purpose of this study and the usage of the intercultural sensitivity scale (Appendix I).

3.4 Instruments

The instruments include the Turkish version of the following research instrument presented below. It was used in order to investigate the research questions. The final exam scores of the participants were obtained from the School of Foreign Languages.

3.4.1 Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

Intercultural Sensitivity Scale consisted of 24 statements about the individual's intercultural sensitivity to be answered to in a 5-point Likert-type scale, developed by Chen and Stratosa (2000). The ISS with 1 stands for "Strongly Disagree," and 5 stands for "Strongly Agree" (Appendix II).

The 24 items were clustered under five main aspects as follows:

Interaction Enjoyment: measured by three items (9, 12, 15), such as "I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures." (Appendix II).

Interaction Attentiveness: measured by three items (14, 17, 19), such as "I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures." (Appendix II).

Interaction Confidence: measured by five items (3, 4, 5, 6, 10), such as “I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.” (Appendix II).

Respect for Cultural Differences: measured by six items (2, 7, 8, 16, 18, 20), such as “I respect the values of people from different cultures.” (Appendix II).

Interaction Engagement: measured by seven items (1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, 24), such as “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.” (Appendix II).

In order to analyze a general score from the 24 expressions in the tool, items 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20 and 22 should be reverse-coded before calculating the sum of the 24 items as these items were asked in a negative manner and the questionnaire calculated higher scores as higher intercultural sensitivity.

In recent studies, the ISS has been used by numerous researchers to evaluate intercultural sensitivity (Fritz, Möllenberg & Chen, 2001; Banos, 2006; Kural & Bayyurt 2016). These studies corroborate that the ISS is a valid and suitable instrument for research in this area, and present a concrete basis of previous research whereupon to base the present project. Chen and Starosta (2000) stated that the ISS displays a high internal consistency with .86 and .88 reliability coefficients in two separate studies. The instrument was found to be statistically significant (Chen & Starosta, 2000).

3.4.2 Piloting Procedure

In the present study, to be able to eliminate the possible misunderstanding, misinterpretation or mistranslation of the statements in ISS by Turkish participants from different English proficiency levels who were attending preparatory school, it was translated into Turkish by two professional translators specialized in English language teaching and back-translated by two other translators to ensure accuracy prior to its administration. Following the translation, the ISS was piloted to 71 ELT students in February 2018 to ensure the reliability and validity of the Turkish version of ISS. Half of the students required to fill the Turkish version, while the other half was asked to fill the English version of the scale. After ten days the same procedure was followed vice versa. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is required to be calculated

and reported for internal consistency reliability for any scales or subscales when using Likert-type scales (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

According to the analysis the Alpha Coefficient for twenty-four items in the ISS scores of participants were found to be .83, signifying that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

The correlation between English items and Turkish translated items was found to be .71. The result indicates that the Turkish version of ISS is valid and reliable and suitable to be used in the Turkish context.

3.4.3 The EFL Language Proficiency and Achievement

Language education at the School of Foreign Language is provided via a modular system in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). These modules are as follows:

- Basic level A1, A2
- Independent level B1, B2
- Proficient level C1

Each module lasts 7-8 weeks. The passing grade for each level is 60/100.

The module average is calculated as follows:

- Student evaluation 5%
- Online self-access 10%
- Quizzes 20%
- Exit exam 65%

Student evaluation grade is given by the instructors of each class according to a set of certain criteria. A student who does not obtain at least a grade of 60 at the end of a module must repeat the module. The in-year grade consists of the average grade of the four modules. Students who have completed Module B1 can take the final exam at the end of the academic year. 50% of the in-year average and 50% of the final exam grade are taken into account to evaluate a student's "Preparatory Year Achievement Grade".

In the present study, the first the final exam administered at the end of the 2017-2018 academic year was used as the source of the participants' English language achievement.

Final Exam: Final exam is administered at the end of the academic year. The exam consists of three sessions. The first session consists of writing (20%), the second session consists of speaking (15%), and the third session includes reading comprehension (30%), listening (20%), and language use (vocabulary and grammar) (15%).

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The foundation of this study was based on the social constructivist approach rooted in the sociocultural theoretical view, and various techniques were used for the purpose of this study. The quantitative data were collected using the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale. The achievement scores of the participants were obtained from the final exam with the permission of the School of Foreign Languages.

Before piloting the ISS, the consent of Prof. Guo-Ming Chen was obtained (Appendix IV). After receiving the permissions, the pilot study was conducted. Based on the piloting, it was determined that the scale is appropriate for the application. After the permission of the School of Foreign Languages was granted (Appendix I), the students, who were attending the Preparatory School, selected based on the cluster random sampling and consented to participate in this study. They were asked to complete the scale under the supervision of the researcher and the lecturer. No further explanations were provided to the participants except for the necessary permission requirements.

3.6 The Context of the Study

The present study was carried out at a state university, where an English preparatory program was offered for students based on a placement test conducted at the beginning of the fall semester. The students were placed into the classes according to their scores. This research was conducted in the 2018 spring term.

3.6.1 Description of the Preparatory Program

The current preparatory program was designed and implemented by a state university in Turkey. The curriculum required the lecturers to provide and develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in line with the Common European Framework (CEFR) within five proficiency levels: A1, A2(basic user), B1, B2 (independent user), C1, (proficient user). The students' proficiency level was determined by their performance in the placement test. After the placement test, students are placed to beginner (A1, A2) intermediate (B1, B2) or advanced (C1) levels according to their performances. The students of the preparatory school were divided into 5 proficiency levels that consist of 17 students in each classroom. The present study includes 3 proficiency levels A2, B1, and B2.

3.7 Data Analysis

The survey used in the present study consisted of two parts. The first part involved a demographic information section and the second part involved the ISS. After completing the data collection process, the SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences, Version 16.0) program was used for the analysis of the data. The responses of the 325 participants to the demographic part of ISS were coded accordingly. Although there were 22 missing final exam scores, the final exam scores of 303 participants were obtained and Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was applied by excluding the missing data. The age of the participants was coded as follows: 1 represents 17-23, 2 represents 24-28 and 3 represents 29-40. The genders and proficiency levels of the participants were coded in the same manner. Before performing any analysis, the normal distribution of the ISS scores was checked, the scores of participants in three proficiency levels and the scores of genders were ensured to find out if the variances were equal. The Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was applied to analyze the correlation between intercultural sensitivity and EFL learners' English language achievement in Turkey. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied to find the difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the proficiency levels, and Independent Sample T-test was performed to assess the difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the gender.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.0 Presentation

In this chapter, the findings are presented based on the research questions, and the quantitative findings of the present study are described.

4.1 Findings Related to the First Question

Is there a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and EFL learners' language achievement in Turkey?

The research question investigates the relationship between Preparatory Schools students' ISS scores and their English language achievement obtained from the final exam administered at the end of the 2017-2018 academic year. Pearson's product moment correlation was used to determine the relationships between Preparatory Schools students' ISS scores and their English language achievement. The correlation was statistically confirmed at 0.01 and 0.05 level. When the Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation Coefficient is evaluated, if the coefficient is lower than 0.30, it indicates that the correlation is weak (Büyüköztürk, 2006).

Table 1.

Correlation between Preparatory Schools students' ISS scores and their English language achievement

		ISS Scores	English Language achievement
ISS Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.810
N		303	303

As can be seen in Table 1, there was a positive correlation between ISS scores and English language achievement. The correlation coefficient was noted .014 and p value was .810 which indicates that there is a weak positive correlation and it is not statistically significant (Büyüköztürk, 2006).

4.2 Findings Related to the Second Research Question

Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the proficiency levels?

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the means of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale of the students from A2, B1, B2 language proficiency levels to find out whether any of these means is significantly different from each other. The independent variables were three different language proficiency levels, A2, B1, B2, and the dependent variable was the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale. The means of the groups and standard deviations were given in Table 2.

Table 2.

Descriptive analysis of Preparatory School Students' Intercultural Sensitivity Scale Scores

Language Proficiency Levels	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
A2	32	90,50	15,48
B1	228	85,63	13,55
B2	65	96,80	11,79
Total	325	88,34	14,11

Table 2 indicates that the intercultural sensitivity scores of Turkish preparatory school students were relatively high with the distribution mean of 88.34. While the minimum score was 39, the maximum score was 120.

The test for homogeneity of variance was not significant [Levene $F(2.524) = .082, p > .05$] indicating that the variance within each of the populations was equal.

Table 3.

Analysis of Variance for Preparatory School Students' ISS Scores and Language Proficiency Levels

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	6468.52	2	3234.26	17.936	.000
Within Groups	58063.18	322	180.32		
Total	64531.71	324			

The significance level for the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is $\alpha = 0.05$. According to the one-way ANOVA of ISS ($F, 17.936 = .000, p < .001$), there was a statistically significant difference in the means of three proficiency levels as shown in Table 3 above.

As the analysis stated, there was a significant difference in the means of three groups of ISS, follow up tests called Post-Hoc tests were conducted to find out the specific significant differences between groups.

Table 4.

Post-Hoc Test (LSD) Language Proficiency Levels and ISS Scores of Preparatory School Students

Dependent Variable	(I) Language Proficiency Level	(J) Language Proficiency Level	Mean Difference	p
ISS Scores	A2	B1	4.86	.056
		B2	-6.30	.031
	B1	A2	-4.86	.056
		B2	-11.16	.000
	B2	A2	6.30	.031
		B1	11.16	.000

According to the results of Post Hoc test, it was found that the mean difference (-6.30) between the ISS scores of A2 and B2 language proficiency levels had a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$). Similarly, the mean ISS scores of B1 and B2 language proficiency levels (-11.16) had a statistically significant difference ($p < .01$). However, there was not any statistically significant difference between the mean differences of ISS scores of A2 and B1 language proficiency levels ($p > .05$).

4.3 Findings Related to the Third Research Question

Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding gender?

An independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the mean of ISS of Preparatory School students regarding genders.

Table 5.

Independent t-test results of Preparatory School students based on gender

	N	M	SD	df	t	p
Female	120	88.95	14.63	323	.596	.551
Male	205	87.99	13.82			

The mean of the female was 88.95, and the standard deviation was 14.63. The mean of the male was 87.99, and the standard deviation was 13.82 and p-value was .551. The mean of female students was greater than the mean of male students. These results suggest that there was not a significant difference in the means of female and male participants as Table 3 displayed.

Furthermore, the analysis of the participants' responds to each statement was provided in Table 6.

Table 6.

Descriptive statistics related to the participants' answers to each statement in ISS

Item	Mean	SD
"1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures."	4,08	,907
"2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded."	4,01	,962
"3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures."	3,26	,881
"4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures."	3,39	1,002
"5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures."	3,04	,881

“6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.”	3,29	,966
“7. I do not like to be with people from different cultures.”	4,06	,942
“8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.”	4,21	,987
“9. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.”	4,09	,940
“10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.”	3,39	,891
“11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.”	3,61	,964
“12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.”	3,78	,964
“13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.”	3,75	,996
“14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.”	3,65	,899
“15. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.”	4,18	,875
“16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.”	3,93	,956
“17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.”	3,78	,987
“18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.”	4,10	,934
“19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart’s subtle meanings during our interaction.”	3,49	,980

“20. I think my culture is better than other cultures.”	2,73	1,268
“21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.”	3,58	,935
“22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.”	3,88	,971
“23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.”	3,53	1,029
“24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.”	3,48	1,023

The mean scores of the items 9 (4.09), 12 (3.78), and 15 (4.18), which are under the “interaction enjoyment” factor, were found to be higher. Similarly, the mean scores of the items 14 (3.65), 17 (3.78) and 19 (3.49), which are under the “interaction attentiveness” factor, were found to be higher. The mean scores of the items 3 (3.26), 4 (3.39), 5 (3.04), 6 (3.29), 10 (3.39) which are under the “interaction confidence” factor, were found to be medium compared to the other items. The mean scores of the items 2 (4.01), 7 (4.06), 8 (4.21), 16 (3.93), 18 (4.10), 20 (2.73) which were under the “respect for culture” factor, was found to be higher compared to the other items. The last factor “interaction engagement” consists of items 1 (4.08), 11 (3.61), 13 (3.75), 21 (3.58), 22 (3.88), 23 (3.53), 24 (3.48) the mean scores of which were found to be both medium and high.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.0 Presentation

In this chapter, the findings are discussed in detail. This chapter represents the discussion of each research questions addressed in the present study by being compared with the previous studies.

5.1 Is there a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey?

The result of the analysis showed that there is not a significant correlation between ISS scores and foreign language achievement. However, the participants of the study have a relatively high intercultural sensitivity score as displayed in Table 2. The number of the participants decreased to 303 in the Pearson's product moment correlation analysis due to the missing data of final exam grades of 22 participants.

Using Chen and Starosta's (1997) conceptualization of intercultural sensitivity, it can be finalized that the greater part of the participants has a high "positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences" and consequently, they also support proper and efficient actions in intercultural communication. Although there are no corresponding studies investigating the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement levels of EFL learners, the findings were compared with the study of Kural and Bayyurt (2016) in terms of implementation of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) aware intercultural competence (IC) development model. In their study, intercultural sensitivity was found to be contributing to the preparedness and readiness of the Turkish international graduate students prior to their departure to study in English L1 countries. It can be said that even if there is no significant correlation between ISS scores and English language achievement, learners would be positively influenced in order to have positive attitudes towards EFL.

Additionally, the finding can also be interpreted as a result of the fact that students are having more experiences with people from different cultural backgrounds in today's society, as travelling is much easier and safer now. It is possible to interact or encounters culturally diverse people, and under some circumstances, it is not possible to avoid getting in contact with them. Furthermore, there are programs for learners to volunteer abroad, go on adventures abroad, study abroad; and this may also allow students to have more opportunities to interact with different and new cultures, thus providing them to develop their intercultural sensitivity.

5.2 Is there a significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity

Scale regarding the proficiency levels?

When the question that to what extent the factors such as proficiency levels affect the intercultural sensitivity of the participant was investigated, it was found that there is a statistically significant difference between the proficiency levels. After the Post Hoc test, it was determined that there is a significant difference in the means of proficiency levels between A2- B2 levels and B1-B2. This difference might be interpreted as the more proficient the students are, the higher their intercultural sensitivity is. Except for A2 and B1 proficiency levels since participants from A2 proficiency level have a higher score than the B2 level. It could be due to their characteristics or may be resulted from being more in touch with people from diverse cultures. The reason behind A2 level to have a higher ISS score than B1 level might be due to the already multicultural environment of Turkey and also due to the immigration from Syria, and their reflection to the classrooms.

The level of language proficiency has an important role when it comes to interacting with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. As sociocultural theory emphasize that the language is developed socially because of being a social product, the development occurs through interactions. Therefore, the interaction between different cultures is required to be interculturally more sensitive. The theory also perceives development and learning as a continuous united process of social interactions and; participation and expert guidance have a vital role in this process. The willingness and ability to communicate are required to be able to continue and participate in the intercultural communication. Additionally, the personality of the

speakers also determine their approach to a language and “They feel motivated by the interpersonal situation, likely a combination of affiliation and control motives” (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, et al., 1998, p. 548). Thus, the willingness aids the learner to continue the learning process and improve their language proficiency. Therefore, the participants from B2 language proficiency level are more proficient and encouraged to communicate in the target language as an outcome of their level of proficiency. Consequently, the participants who are in the B2 level have a high level of intercultural sensitivity in contrast to A2 and B1 levels.

The answer to one of the most important items, item 1, which states “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures” indicates how open and willing the participants are to communicate and interact with people from other cultures. As a result of the mean scores of the participants in this item as it was stated in Table 6, it can be said that the foreign language learners in Turkey are highly enthusiastic about intercultural communication. Similarly another important item, item 24, which states “I have a feeling of enjoyment toward differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me” supports the previous statement.

According to Vygotsky (1979), the individual dimension of consciousness is derivative and secondary.” (p. 30). This view shows that the mental operation of individuals does not occur merely from social interaction, it requires the particular processes and structures formed by the individuals can be tracked to their exchanges with other individuals. Even though cultural exchanges are necessary, the cultural differences can discourage people from involving in cultural communication. Sometimes the speakers who have different cultural backgrounds have difficulty in acknowledging the cultural differences, and they prefer ignoring them and behave in line with their cultural beliefs and norms. It can be resulting in some misunderstandings. It is necessary to establish empathy and intercultural sensitivity toward people from different cultures to be able to overcome these unpleasant results. However, in the present study, all three proficiency levels demonstrated sensitivity towards differences and they showed their enjoyment in encountering these differences. The ISS mean score of B2 and B1 levels is supported by Wertsch’s (1991) argument of nature of interdependence between the social progression and language development of the individuals which indicates a connection between

social progression and language development. A2 level, on the other hand, showed a different result as in Table 2 and indicated a higher ISS score than B1 level. The reason behind this result could be due to the multicultural environment in the classrooms as a result of the increased number of immigrant students at the universities, especially in the south-east region. The statement is supported by the answer to item 16 “I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.” In this statement, the tolerance and empathy were emphasized towards people from different cultural background. As the mean score of the respondents’ answers in Table 6 indicated, it can be concluded that the participants do not have negative attitudes or opinions towards different cultures and it can also be interpreted that they may have certain knowledge about the differences in cultures. Even though it is not possible to clearly explain the reasons behind the participants’ high score of intercultural sensitivity, it could be as a result of their knowledge, experience regarding cultures or due to their characteristics such as being sociable or open-minded.

5.3 Is there a significant difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the gender?

In the present study, no significant difference was found between male and female participants in the scores of ISS. The result of the analysis showed that the difference between genders is not significant ($p > .05$). According to the finding, female participants and male participants have nearly equal ISS score, although male participants were outnumbered the females. The findings are not in line with the Banos (2006) and Westrick’s (2003) studies which found that female students are interculturally more sensitive than male students. This indicates that the female and male participants in this study have a nearly equal level of empathy, cultural awareness, thus, intercultural sensitivity. The findings are not similar to the statement of Cherniss et al. (1998), who investigated men and women and their empathic abilities in his study. Cherniss et al. (1998) in his study demonstrated that “women do tend to experience this spontaneous matching of feeling with others more than men do” (Cherniss et al., 1998, p. 322).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.0 Presentation

This chapter provides a summary of the study. The implications for practice and recommendations for further research are discussed.

6.1 Conclusion

This study intended to investigate the relationship between intercultural sensitivity, which is one of the effective aspects of intercultural communication competence (Chen & Starosta, 1998), and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey.

As explained in Chapter 1, the present study was carried out by using the social constructivist approach embedded in the sociocultural theoretical view. First, the areas of the research were identified within the range of the research questions. Next, the research design, participants, instrument, and the piloting of the quantitative instrument were explained. Then, data collection and analysis procedures were discussed.

The first research question discovered the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and English language achievement of EFL learners in Turkey. The second research question examined the difference between the ISS scores regarding proficiency levels. The last question investigates the difference in the scores of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale regarding the gender. The motive for these questions came from the proposal by Deardorff (2006), intercultural sensitivity and related literature that intercultural sensitivity and foreign language proficiency dwell on. With the aim of establishing certainty concerning these questions, it was essential to examine the aspects of the intercultural sensitivity by addressing the perspectives of

the colleagues who have studied in this field and the achievement in foreign language.

As a result of the analysis, a weak correlation between ISS scores and English language achievement was found. Although there was a weak correlation between intercultural sensitivity scores and English language achievement of the participants, there was a significant difference between proficiency levels (A2, B1, and B2) in favor of the participants from higher proficiency levels. It suggests that intercultural sensitivity has a significant place in foreign language teaching and learning. It is not certain that whether being interculturally sensitive has a great impact on language development, achievement and proficiency; or being proficient in a foreign language does not state that you have a high level of intercultural sensitivity. However, it is important to be empathic and tolerable towards different cultures to be able to embrace and accept both their cultural and linguistic differences. Therefore, the necessity of developing intercultural sensitivity should be realized by institutions of higher education and universities in order to enhance. As Mughan (1999, p. 59), mentioned “Current foreign language course design in higher education is questioned for its lack of focus on understanding people of other cultures. It is therefore argued that foreign language degree courses rapidly need to adopt an approach to intercultural learning which prepares students to move with more ease amongst numerous cultures and which is less bound cognitively.”

In the present study, there was not a significant difference between the ISS scores of the participants and their gender. The ISS scores of female and male participants were found to be close, although male participants were outnumbered the females. This result was not in line with previous research as it was stated in Chapter V.

6.2 Recommendation

The present study indicates that although the correlation between ISS scores and English language achievement is not significant, ISS influences the learners' perception of cultural differences. Therefore, it is important for language teachers and designers to integrate activities or teaching methods by considering intercultural sensitivity to affect the proficiency level of English language learners indirectly. In

consideration of the findings of this study, some techniques or programs can be developed to enhance the level of intercultural sensitivity of the learners and to facilitate the language learning process.

Based on the obtained results from the present study, some other specific recommendations can be suggested as follows:

- 1) The research was carried out with 325 preparatory school students from only one university. This study could be done with more students from different universities.
- 2) The concept 'intercultural sensitivity can be defined by the language teachers and learners as well. The intercultural sensitivity perception and awareness of the teachers and learners can be compared with the concept of intercultural sensitivity in the literature.
- 3) The ISS scores of the Turkish participants can be compared with other participants from different cultures.
- 4) In order to support the findings of quantitative data, qualitative data regarding intercultural sensitivity could be collected via interviews.

This study is, by no means, comprehensive and conclusive. Further research on the theory and practical implementation is necessary. This study hopes to serve as one of the preliminary steps toward such research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I. Permission form from the state university

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 06/06/2018-31586



T.C.
GAZİANTEP ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

Sayı :35914063/302.08.01/
Konu :Araştırma İzin Talebi

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi :06/03/2018 tarihli, 13879 sayılı ve "Araştırma İzin Talebi" konulu yazı

İlgi yazıya istinaden; İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı 201565877 numaralı yüksek lisans öğrencisi Hala Mahmoud HAWA ve 201623199 numaralı yüksek lisans öğrencisi Fatma ÇILOĞLAN'ın, Yüksekokulumuzda tez araştırması için yapacağı anket çalışması uygun görülmüştür.

Bilgilerinize arz ederim

Dr Öğr. Üyesi Emrah ÇINKARA
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürü

06/06/2018 Söz.Per. : Z. İVİKESİCİ
06/06/2018 Yabancı Diller YO Sek. : D. DALGIÇ

Evrak Doğrulama İçin : <https://abyz.gantep.edu.tr/eor/ikon/Dogrula/NM400FA>

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E-Posta: yabdil@gantep.edu.tr

Faks: 0 (342) 360 15 32

Elektronik ağı: www.gantep.edu.tr

Ayrıntılı bilgi için lirtibat:

Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5. Maddesi ^{1/1} gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Appendix II. English version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SCALE QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: This instrument is composed of 24 statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking whether you:

(1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Are Undecided, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree.

Please work quickly and record your first impression. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I don't like to be with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I think my culture is better than other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix III. Turkish version of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale


Kültürlerarası Duyarlılık Ölçeği


Bu anket kültürlerarası iletişim hakkında 24 cümlede yer alan görüşlerden oluşmaktadır. Cevapların doğru veya yanlış olması söz konusu değildir. **Lütfen her bir ifadeyi hızlıca okuyarak ilk anda oluşan görüşünüzü belirtiniz:**


(1) Kesinlikle katılmıyorum, (2) Katılmıyorum; (3) Kararsızım; (4) Katılıyorum; (5) Tamamen Katılıyorum;


1. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişim kurmaktan hoşlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Diğer kültürlerden insanların dar kafalı olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişimimde kendimden oldukça eminim.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Farklı kültürlerden insanların karşısında konuşurken kendimi rahat hissetmem.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla etkileşimimde ne söyleyeceğimi her zaman bilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla etkileşimimde arzu ettiğim şekilde sosyalleşebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla bir arada olmaktan hoşlanmam	1	2	3	4	5
8. Farklı kültürlerden insanların değerlerine saygı duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişim içinde olduğum zaman çabuk sinirlenirim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişim kurarken özgüvenli hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Farklı kültürlerden insanlar hakkında kanaat oluşturmada aceleci davranmam.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla bir arada iken genellikle cesaretimi kaybederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Farklı kültürlerden insanlara karşı açık fikirliyim.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişimimde çok dikkatli davranırım.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişim kurduğumda kendimi işe yaramaz hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Farklı kültürlerden insanların davranış biçimlerine karşı saygılıyım.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla iletişim kurduğumda mümkün olduğu kadar fazla bilgi edinmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Başka kültürlerden insanların görüşlerini kabul etmem.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla konuşurken onların sözlerindeki imalara dikkat ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Kendi kültürümün diğer kültürlerden daha iyi olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla görüşmem esnasında genellikle olumlu tepki veririm.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Farklı kültürlerden insanlara muhatap olmamı gerektiren ortamlardan kaçınırım.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Farklı kültürlerden insanlara karşı anlayışımı sözlü veya sözsüz davranışım ile gösteririm.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla, kendi aramdaki farklılıklardan dolayı memnuniyet duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5


Appendix IV. Permission mail from Prof. Guo-Ming Chen


 **Guo-Ming Chen**
Alıcı: bana ▾


 İngilizce ▾ > Türkçe ▾ [İletiyi çevir](#)

Dear Fatma, thanks for the request. You have our permission to use the IS Scale for non-profit research purpose.
Attached is a summary chapter of the concept for your possible interest.
Best,


 ICC-Goodboy.pdf

 **Fatma ÇILOGLAN** <fatma.ciloglan@hku.edu.tr>
Alıcı: Guo-Ming ▾

Thank you so much for your permission dear Professor Chen,
I am the most grateful for your support.
Sincerely yours,




VITAE

Degree: Bachelor degree, English Language and Literature
Gaziantep University
Gaziantep-Turkey

Date of Graduation: 2016



ÖZ GEÇMİŞ

Derece: Lisans, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı

Gaziantep Üniversitesi

Gaziantep-Türkiye

Mezuniyet Tarihi: 2016

