Educational Research and Reviews

Full Length Research Paper

Intercultural sensitivity levels of Turkish pre-service foreign language teachers: Examples from education faculties of two universities in Turkey

Veda Aslim Yetiş* and Çiğdem Kurt

Anadolu University, Turkey.

The aim of this study is to determine whether intercultural sensitivity levels vary among foreign language teacher candidates in terms of variables such as target language, year of study (grade), and gender in both intra and inters programs. Research sample consists of 1,049 Turkish freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior foreign language teacher candidates who are studying German, English and French Languages at two universities during the spring semester of 2015 to 2016 academic year. The research employs survey model, a quantitative research method which uses a positivist paradigm. Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) was used as data collection tool. All research data were subjected to inferential analysis via Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis H, Friedman Tests, and Kendall's tau_b correlation analysis in terms of participant related and environmental variables. Research findings revealed that inclusion of intercultural approach into foreign language teaching programs equipped Turkish foreign language teacher candidates with high level intercultural sensitivity. In this regard, it is of paramount significance to incorporate intercultural approach into the curricula of education faculties in order to have future foreign language teachers who can serve as intercultural models, negotiators, and mediators. Based on the need to reform general qualifications of teaching profession in accordance with contemporary requirements, the roles of intercultural model, negotiator, and mediator should also be added as part of the approach into the current conceptual framework of professional qualifications for foreign language teachers which is in a restructuring process.

Key words: Foreign language teacher competence, intercultural communication skill, intercultural attitudes, intercultural sensitivity, intercultural mediator.

INTRODUCTION

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, published by Council of Europe in 2001, has brought radical changes into learning, teaching, and assessment of foreign languages with its Action Oriented Approach. Action-oriented approach can be considered as an extension of communicative approach, which was

*Corresponding author. E-mail: vaslim@anadolu.edu.tr.

introduced to the field of foreign language teaching at the end of the 70s and which surpassed all other foreign language teaching methods. Since then, no new method has been developed; yet the basic characteristics of communicative approach (learner-centered, learner autonomy, motivation, etc.) have been improved and adapted to new technologies and demands emerging as a result of globalization. The most significant result of transition from communicative approach to action oriented approach is the move from "communicative competence", which had been the primary goal of language teaching/learning since the 80s, to "intercultural communication competence" (Puren, 2002; Windmüller, 2011). In this regard, "intercultural communication competence" including five components and developed by Byram (1997) served as the foundational model: which includes (1) knowledge; (2) intercultural attitudes; (3) skills of interpreting and relating; (4) skills of discovery and interaction; and (5) critical cultural awareness.

All these changes and many other reports, along with CEFR in which Council of Europe underlies the significance of intercultural awareness and self-awareness, point that the dimensions of intercultural communication competence have been included within the boundaries of foreign language teaching/learning by the Council (Byram et al., 2002: p.7). Accordingly, "Terms such as intercultural competence, intercultural skills, intercultural awareness, or intercultural communication competence are often referred in texts outlining the goals of foreign language teaching' (Byram, 2011: p.253). Council of Europe has been employing these terms for a long time especially in fields related to teachers' sensitivity to intercultural approach (Conseil de l'Europe, 2002). Underpinning that conceptual complexity has increased together with the recent interest in intercultural sensitivity in today's multi-cultural and globalizing world, Chen and Starosta (1996, 1998; as cited in Chen and Starosta, 2000) noted that the main problem arises from the confusion among intercultural sensitivity; intercultural awareness, and intercultural communication competence. These three concepts that are closely related but different are defined as follows (Chen and Starosta, 2000: p.3):

1. Intercultural communication competence is an umbrella concept which is comprised of cognitive, affective, and behavioral ability of interacts in the process of intercultural communication.
2. The cognitive aspect of intercultural communication competence is represented by the concept of intercultural awareness that refers to the understanding of culture conventions and how they affect how we think and behave.
3. The affective aspect of intercultural communication competence is represented by the concept of intercultural sensitivity that refers to the subjects' active desire to motivate themselves in order to understand, appreciate,

and accept differences among cultures. Comprising the affective aspect of intercultural communication competence, 'intercultural sensitivity' serves as the basis for Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Development Model (Bennett, 1986; 1993; Hammer et al., 2003). This model consists of 6 stages ranging from resistance to openness for intercultural differences. The first 3 stages of this process are ethnocentric phases (in which an individual assesses the other cultures based on his/her culture): (1) denial: in which one denies the existence of cultural differences among people; (2) defense: one's struggle against differences; (3) minimization: in which one accepts the similarities but conceals the differences among cultures. The second 3 stages of this process are called "etnorelativist phases" (in which an individual attempts to know and understand the other cultures without using the value judgments of his/her own culture): (4) acceptance: in which one accepts and respects the cultural differences; (5) adaptation: in which one starts interacting/communicating with the members of other cultures; (6) integration: in which one regards and experiences the differences as a part of life (Figure 1). Intercultural competence and intercultural communication competence are two different concepts. Intercultural competence 'is a competence that a native speaker has or can develop, which enables such person, among other things, to interact with people speaking their language as a foreign language (second language)' (Risager, 2007: p.125).

Intercultural communication competence, on the other hand, "is a competence that enables a person to interact with others whilst speaking a foreign language (second language)" (ibid.). Similarly, Byram (1997:p.71) underlines the differences between these concepts as follows: "someone with Intercultural Communicative Competence is able to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language. They are able to arrive at a mode of communication which is satisfactory to them and others, and they are able to act as mediator between people of different cultural origins" (Byram, 1997: p.71). "Cultural mediation", which determines the difference between intercultural communication competence and intercultural competence and which is actually the most immediate reason of this difference, is also one of the end goals of "intercultural attitudes", which is one of the components of intercultural communication competence. "Firstly, developing cultural attitudes means under-standing and accepting other cultures. There must be an awareness and appropriation of the other culture. Ultimately, attitude aims internalizing of own values and development of a system of values promoting otherness and empathy; the ultimate goal is to play the role of cultural mediator in situations of tension, conflict" (Lussier et al., 2003: p.198-199). The term "mediator", which is one of the most important factors of intercultural communication competence, was first used in the

Denial → Defense → Minimization → Acceptance → Adaptation → Integration

ETHNOCENTRISM   **ETHNORELATIVIZM**
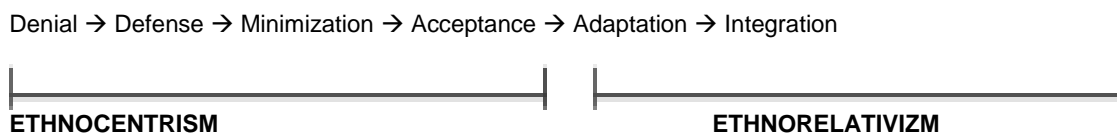
Figure 1. Intercultural sensitivity development model; Source: Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman, 2003.

conceptual part of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001). However, Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe clearly states how significant the role of an intercultural mediator is in foreign language education/ teaching: "Intercultural communication competence is crucial in the development of mutual understanding of 'different groups, and is the role of *intercultural mediators* of all kinds, from travel guides, to teachers, to diplomats and so on. Intercultural competence and the capacity for intercultural mediation are thus, one of the potential goals of language teaching" (Beacco and Byram, 2003: p.34).

Many researchers (Zarate et al., 2003; Gohard-Radenkovic et al., 2003; Gautheron-Boutchatsky and Kok Escalle, 2003; Byram, 2008, 2009; Rozon, 2011; Vergues, 2011) have also focused on the role of intercultural mediator, among many others, for foreign language teachers since the publication of the Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe. This is because teaching a foreign language requires performing the role of a mediator; the mediator teacher builds connections between linguistic and cultural differences, makes these differences acceptable for the students […] (Gautheron-Boutchatsky and Kok, 2003: p.45). In fact, the prefix "inter" bound to the word "intercultural" means establishing more connections, relations, transitions, and interaction between cultures rather than holding simple comparisons (Porcher, 1995; Conseil de l'Europe, 2002; Chaves et al., 2012). In this regard, the role of a "cultural mediator" turns each speaker, especially the foreign language teacher, into a "cultural mediator" (Zakhartchouk, 1999; Kohler-Bally, 2003). "The teacher as a mediator helps the student make progress by anticipating situations and levels of difficulty. His function is not only to transfer knowledge, but also to help overcome obstacles which may be encountered in academic and cultural environment. He becomes a "cultural mediator" by helping the learner to be self-sufficient in discovering and decoding the culture of their host country" (Kohler-Bally, 2003: p.140).

As stated by Davcheva (2002: p.78), "Mediation is, thus, not only a matter of improving understanding of the "other", but also of creating reflexivity and self-awareness." This is a reminder that teachers may also display reactions towards other cultures just like other people. Byram et al. (2002) state that teachers may have difficulty staying interested, and the clichés and bias they

bear should be analyzed with respect to their potential influence on the students. Since students regard foreign language teachers as avenues to communicate with the country of the target language, the assessments and comments concerning of such countries and cultures by the foreign language teachers are broadly accepted as the most reliable information; thus, foreign language teachers' cultural representations may have monumental effect on students. Therefore, how sensitive foreign language teachers are matters significantly within the cultural domain? In today's multicultural world where intercultural interaction is constantly increasing, foreign language teachers shoulder a major responsibility as an intercultural mediator with respect to building a peaceful world based on mutual understanding and tolerance among cultures. Thus, "a teacher should question and redefine his/her traditional roles for today and tomorrow" (TED, 2009a: p.144). So, it would be wise to reconsider the roles and responsibilities of foreign language teachers. In this sense, many researchers propose that foreign language teachers should also be considered as educators and cultural mediators (Lazar, Huber-Kriegler, Lussier, Matei and Peck, 2007: p.41). On the other hand, Byram and Doyé (1999; Byram, 2008) strongly underline that teachers have to have an acceptable level of intercultural communication competence and intercultural skill in order to function as foreign language instructors. If all the above were to be accepted, what is the level of intercultural sensitivity adopted by Turkish foreign language teacher candidates who are expected to play the roles of intercultural model, mediator, and or negotiator? This research aims to identify whether intercultural sensitivity levels of freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students studying at Foreign Language Education Departments of Education Faculties vary across participants in terms of environmental variables such as target language, grade, and gender, and also to determine if there is any statistically significant difference intra and inter programs. Accordingly, the following research questions were asked:

1. What is the level of intercultural sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates, and what are the sub-dimensions of their intercultural sensitivity?
2. What is the distribution of their intercultural sensitivity and its sub-dimensions across programs?
3. What is the distribution of their intercultural sensitivity

across grades?
4. What is the distribution of their intercultural sensitivity across genders?

METHODS

Focusing on intercultural sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates, this study employed survey model that follows the positivist paradigm, which is one of the quantitative research models.

Research model

Due to the fact that the aim of this research is to determine the intercultural sensitivity levels of foreign language teacher candidates inter and intra programs, its design is in accordance with survey model. "Survey research model is often employed to determine a relatively large sample or participants' (larger than those in other research models) features such as opinions, interests, skills, talents, or attitudes concerning a topic or a case." (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008: p.177). On the other hand, according to Creswell (2013: p.201), survey method "provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population."

Universe and sample

The research universe consists of 2467 foreign language teacher candidates studying at Education Faculties of a university in central Anatolia (University A) and one another in Mediterranean Region of Turkey (University B). The research sample, on the other hand, are 749 female and 300 male participants (a total of 1049) aged between 18 and 54, all of whom are freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior Turkish foreign language teacher candidates studying German, French, and English Languages in Education Faculties at Universities A and B. The foreign language teacher candidates in question have a compulsory preparation class for one year. After the successful completion of the one year, they continue their aforementioned programs in education faculties, and then they graduate as foreign language teachers at the end of a four-year training.

Since foreign language teacher candidates of the university study different programs, the research employed a heterogeneous structure, which led to use of stratified sampling technique in order to reach the required number of participants for the research sample. In stratified sampling, the universe is divided into strata, and random sampling is conducted from each stratum in a number proportional to the stratum's size when compared to the universe (Beaud, 2009; Neuman, 2009). Provided that enough number of samples is guaranteed, stratified sampling is more representative than other simple random sampling methods. Within this scope, the numbers of English, German, and French language teacher candidates from each university were identified through use of Sample Size Formula for Continuous Data by Cochran (Bartlett et al., 2001, p.46-47). In accordance with stratified sampling, Programs in English, German, and French Language Teaching were divided into 4 sub-groups (freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior), and each was represented within the sample proportionate to their sizes via random assignment. The researchers made effort to reach 50% more participants than the minimum number of foreign language teacher candidates at both universities in order to prevent data loss that might happen during the return of scales.

Based on the figures provided by relevant units at Universities A and B, total number of candidates in foreign language teaching department of University A is 1142 (823 ELT, 214 GLT, and 105 FLT) while a total of 1325 candidates (815 ELT, 391 GLT, and 119 FLT) study at language programs of University B. Following the use of Sampling Size Formula, adequate number of candidates (from both universities) to partake in the research was calculated to be 316 for ELT, 256 for GLT, and 176 for FLT, which adds up to a total of 748 foreign language teacher candidates. Because the researchers wanted to reach 50% more candidates than the adequate amount, the numbers of participating candidates from each department ended up as 494 for ELT, 371 for GLT, and 184 for FLT (a total of 1049 candidates). Accordingly, Tables 1 the numbers of participating candidates across each program and grade at both universities.

A closer examination of Table 1 reveals that the total number of ELT candidates in both universities is 1638, 823 in University A and 815 in University B. Based on the results of stratified sampling calculations, the minimum number of ELT candidates from each university had to be 158, a total of 316. On the other hand, the minimum numbers of students from each university and each grade had to be 33, 34, 38, and 53 (158) for freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior grades respectively for University A, and 35, 25, 50, and 48 (158) (in the same order) for University B. So, total number of candidates from both universities was 316. However, the researchers had to reach 50% more candidates than the minimum number in order to eliminate possible data loss. Therefore, 272 students (38, 62, 79, and 93 freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior candidates respectively) from University A and 222 students (37, 30, 83, 73 freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior candidates respectively) from University B partook in this study. On the whole, 494 EFT teacher candidates (more than the minimum number required) participated in this research, which is a large enough sample.

Table 1 also shows that total numbers of GLT candidates from Universities A and B are 214 and 391 respectively, a total of 605 candidates. Based on the results of stratified sampling calculations, the minimum numbers of GLT candidates were 117 and 139 for Universities A and B respectively, a total of 256. On the other hand, the minimum numbers of GLT students from each university and each grade had to be 29, 32, 25, and 31 (117) for freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior grades respectively for University A, and 22, 23, 38, and 56 (139) (in the same order) for University B. So, minimum total number of candidates from both universities was calculated to be 256. However, the researchers had to reach 50% more candidates than the minimum number in order to eliminate possible data loss. Therefore, 153 students (31, 49, 29, and 44 freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior candidates respectively) from University A and 218 students (46, 49, 56, 67 freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior candidates respectively) from University B partook in this study. On the whole, 371 GFL teacher candidates (more than the minimum number required) participated in this research, which is a large enough sample.

Total numbers of FLT candidates from Universities A and B are 105 and 119 respectively, a total of 224 candidates (Table 1). Based on the results of stratified sampling calculations, the minimum numbers of FLT candidates were 85 and 91 for Universities A and B respectively, a total of 176. On the other hand, the minimum numbers of FLT students from each university and each grade had to be 36, 19, 19, and 11 (117) for freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior grades respectively for University A, and 27, 20, 28, and 16 (139) (in the same order) for University B. So, minimum total number of candidates from both universities was calculated to be 176. However, the researchers had to reach 50% more candidates than the minimum number in order to eliminate possible data loss. Therefore, 86 students (36, 19, 20, and 11

Table 1. Distribution of English, French, and German Languages Teaching Candidates within the Universe and Sample across Grades and Universities.

	Grade	The Number of Teacher Candidates in the Universe		Sufficient Sample Number		Real Sample Number	
		N		n		n	
Universities		A	B	A	B	A	B
English Language Teaching Program	Freshmen	174	182	33	35	38	37
	Sophomore	175	128	34	25	62	30
	Junior	198	254	38	50	79	83
	Senior	276	251	53	48	93	72
Total		**823**	**815**	**158**	**158**	**272**	**222**
Grand Total		**1638**		**316**		**494**	
German Language Teaching Program	Freshmen	53	62	29	22	31	46
	Sophomore	58	65	32	23	49	49
	Junior	46	106	25	38	29	56
	Senior	57	158	31	56	44	67
Total		**214**	**391**	**117**	**139**	**153**	**218**
Grand Total		**605**		**256**		**371**	
French Language Teaching Program	Freshmen	45	35	36	27	36	32
	Sophomore	23	26	19	20	19	20
	Junior	23	37	19	28	20	30
	Senior	14	21	11	16	11	16
Total		**105**	**119**	**85**	**91**	**86**	**98**
Grand Total		**224**		**176**		**184**	

Table 2. Mean Scores of Foreign Language Teacher Candidates Concerning Levels of Intercultural Sensitivity and Sub-categories of Intercultural Sensitivity.

Sub-categories	N	n	Ss
Intercultural interaction		4.03	0.43
Respect for differences		4.20	0.54
Interaction confidence	1049	3.72	0.72
Interaction enjoyment		4.21	0.65
Interaction attentiveness		3.87	0.58
Intercultural sensitivity	1049	4.01	0.41

Table 3. Results of Correlation Analysis Regarding the Sub-categories of Intercultural Sensitivity among Foreign Language Teacher Candidates.

variables	Intercultural interaction	Respect for differences	Interaction confidence	Interaction enjoyment	Interaction attentiveness
Intercultural interaction	1	0.347	0.314	0.378	0.350
Respect for differences	0.347	1	0.137	0.317	0.178
Interaction confidence	0.314	0.137	1	0.490	0.147
Interaction enjoyment	0.378	0.317	0.490	1	0.224
Interaction attentiveness	0.350	0.178	0.147	0.224	1

freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior candidates respectively) from University A and 98 students (32, 20, 30, 16) freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior candidates respectively) from University B partook in this study. On the whole, 184 FLT teacher candidates (more than the minimum number required) participated in this research, which is a large enough sample.

Data collection tool

Developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) and adapted to Turkish by Küllü-Sülü (2014), Intercultural Sensitivity Scale was employed in this study. Cronbach alpha coefficient of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale was found to be 0.758 during the translation and adaptation study (op.cit. p.35 to 36). Containing 24 items, it is a 5 point Likert type scale ranging as follows: "1=Definitely No; 2= No; 3=Indecisive; 4=Yes; 5=Definitely Yes." Items 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20, and 22 have a reverse score pattern. This scale consists of 5 sub-categories which are Intercultural Interaction (items 1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, and 24), Respect for Cultural Differences (items 2, 7, 8, 16, 18, and 20), Interaction Confidence (items 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10), Interaction Enjoyment (items 9, 12, and 15), and Interaction Attentiveness (items 14, 17, and 19). Within the scope of this research, foreign language teacher candidates were asked to state their Program and gender on the scale form. Data obtained through the scale were assessed in averages/means. Accordingly, the averages between 1.00 and 2.59 point individuals with "Low Intercultural Sensitivity", those between 2.60 and 3.39 indicate participants with "Moderate Intercultural Sensitivity" whereas those between 3.40 and 5.00 show individuals with "High Intercultural Sensitivity".

Data analysis

Scores obtained from the scales administered to foreign language teacher candidates were analyzed through the use of SPSS. Distribution of those scores were compared with normal distribution criteria to see if they deviated meaningfully or not across participants and other environmental variables both intra and inter programs. Skewness and kurtosis values of the scores were used in order to make sure if they matched with normal distribution criteria or not, and neither of the values was found to be between -1.96 and +1.96. Furthermore, distribution of the scores was once again determined to deviate from the normal pattern based on central distribution criteria and Kolmogorov-Smirnov

Test. Therefore, instead of parametric tests that require normality hypothesis, non-parametric tests were employed for all inferential analyses. Accordingly, Kruskal Wallis H test, a non-parametric test, was utilized in order to determine if intercultural sensitivity levels of foreign language teacher candidates varied across environmental variables such as programs and grades. Likewise, Friedman Test, another non-parametric test, was used to see whether the difference among the sub-categories of intercultural sensitivity levels of foreign language teacher candidates were statistically meaningful or not. Moreover, the level of relation among these sub-categories was identified via Kendall's tau_b corelation analysis. Lastly, Mann-Whitney U test, another non-parametric test, was also employed in order to understand if gender, as a variable among participants, had any meaningful effect over intercultural sensitivity of teacher candidates.

Validity and reliability of the study

As part of reliability efforts, Cronbach Alpha coefficients were calculated to be 0.86 and 0.88 in two different practices during the development of Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (Chen and Starosta, 2000). Chen and Starosta (op. cit.), who developed the scale, stated that Intercultural Sensitivity Scale was a reliable one, and advised the use of it across different contexts and variables. In this regard, Fritz et al. (2002), tested Intercultural Sensitivity Scale on a German sample in a different context by using confirmatory factor analysis, and concluded that the scale was reliable in general.

FINDINGS

Table 2 presents findings regarding levels of Intercultural Sensitivity and Sub-categories of Intercultural Sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates. A closer look at Table 2 yields that foreign language teacher candidates have higher levels of intercultural sensitivity ($\overline{X}$=4.01). With respect to sub-categories of intercultural senstivity, "Interaction Confidence" ($\overline{X}$=3.72) and "Interaction Attentiveness" ($\overline{X}$=3.87) are two most neglected categories although, mean scores of foreign language teacher candidates are considerably high. On the contrary, "Interaction Enjoyment" ($\overline{X}$= 4.21) stands as the most significant sub-category followed by "Respect for Differences" ($\overline{X}$= 4.20) and "Intercultural Interaction" ($\overline{X}$= 4.03) for the participants. A non-parametric test, Friedman test was employed to determine if the difference across sub-categories was statistically meaningful or not. Since the significance value was (p=0.000) smaller than 0.01, teacher candidates' levels of intercultural sensitivity across sub-categories were concluded to vary significantly. Besides, Kendall's tau_b corelation analysis was administered in order to determine the level of relation among these sub-categories. Results indicated that the strongest relation was between "Interaction Enjoyment" and "Interaction Confidence" (r=0.490, p<0.01). In other words, foreign language teacher candidates who care about interaction enjoyment as part of intercultural sensitivity also assign importance to interaction confidence. However, this is a moderate level positive relation (in case of r=0.30 to 0.64, the relation is classified as moderate level relation) (Ural and Kılıç, 2013, p. 244). The weakest relation (r=0.137, p<0.01) was found to be between "Respect for Differences" and "Interaction Confidence." The results of Kendall's tau_b correlation analysis are given in Table 3.

Table 4 displays findings regarding levels of Intercultural Sensitivity and Sub-categories of Intercultural Sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates in different programs. According to Table 4 depicting levels of intercultural sensitivity for foreign language teacher candidates in three programs, French language teacher candidates have the highest level of intercultural sensitivity although the difference across programs is not so prominent. While the mean score of sensitivity is 4.13 for French language teacher candidates, English and German Language teacher candidates' average scores

Table 4. Mean Scores of Intercultural Sensitivity and Sub-categories of Intercultural Sensitivity for Foreign Language Teacher Candidates in Different Programs.

Program	Sub-categories	n	X^2	Ss
German Language Teaching	Intercultural Interaction	371	3.97	0.48
	Respect for Differences		4.05	0.59
	Interaction Confidence		3.76	0.71
	Interaction Enjoyment		4.2	0.66
	Interaction Attentiveness		3.83	0.65
	Intercultural Sensitivity		3.96	0.44
English Language Teaching	Intercultural Interaction	494	4.04	0.42
	Respect for Differences		4.25	0.51
	Interaction Confidence		3.66	0.74
	Interaction Enjoyment		4.17	0.65
	Interaction Attentiveness		3.86	0.56
	Intercultural Sensitivity		4	0.41
French Language Teaching	Intercultural Interaction	184	4.14	0.34
	Respect for Differences		4.36	0.39
	Interaction Confidence		3.79	0,69
	Interaction Enjoyment		4.35	0.58
	Interaction Attentiveness		3.97	0.49
	Intercultural Sensitivity		4.13	0.29

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U Test Results Concerning Levels of Intercultural Sensitivity among Foreign Language Teacher Candidates in terms of Gender.

Gender	n	Order mean	U	p*
Female	749	504.14	96727.5	0.000
Male	300	577.08	-	-

p*<0.01.

are 4.00 and 3.96, respectively. Kruskal Wallis H test was utilized to determine if there was a statistically significant difference across sensitivity levels, which revealed noteworthy differences (X^2 = 21,737; p (=0.000) <0.01). With respect to order of mean scores, French language teaching program has the highest score (613.65), English language teaching is the second high (520.57), and German language teaching has the third highest score (486.93).

Another finding shown in Table 4 is that the order of importance concerning the sub-categories of intercultural sensitivity is the same for English and French language teacher candidates whereas there is a slight difference in the order for German language teacher candidates. As for both FLT and ELT candidates, "Respect for Differences" is the most important sub-category and "Interaction Enjoyment" is the second one. However, "Interaction Enjoyment" has the highest score for GLT candidates and "Respect for Differences" is the second

most important sub-category. The order of remaining sub-categories is the same for all the participants, which is "Intercultural Interaction", "Interaction Attentiveness", and "Interaction Confidence." Table 5 displays findings regarding the levels of intercultural sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates in terms of their gender across the entire sample while Table 6 shows the same findings in more detail across different teaching programs. A closer examination of Table 5 reveals that there is a statistically significant difference between female and male teacher candidates' levels of intercultural sensitivity, and the difference is in favor of male participants (U=96727.5, p<0.01).

As shown in Table 6, male teacher candidates have higher levels of intercultural sensitivity than female participants in all three programs. However, statistically significant differences are observed only in German (U=12013, p<0.01) and English (U=21328; p<0.01) language teacher candidates, not in French language

Table 6. Mann-Whitney U Test Results Concerning Levels of Intercultural Sensitivity Between Female and Male Foreign Language Teacher Candidates in Different Programs.

Program	Gender	n	Order mean	U	p*
German Language Teaching	Female	260	176.70	12013.0	0.011
	Male	111	207.77	-	-
English Language Teaching	Female	360	239.74	21328.0	0.048
	Male	134	268.34		-
French Language Teaching	Female	129	89.14	3114.50	0.190
	Male	55	100.37	-	-

p*<0.01.

Table 7. Kruskal Wallis H Test Results for Levels of Intercultural Sensitivity among Foreign Language Teacher Candidates in Diffe rent Grades.

Grades	n	Order of mean	sd	X^2	p*
Fresmen	221	536.98	3	8.57	0.036
Sophomore	228	504.88	-	-	-
Junior	296	494.73	-	-	-
Senior	304	560.85	-	-	-
Total	1049		-	-	-

p*<0.01.

Table 8. Kruskal Wallis H Test Results for Levels of Intercultural Sensitivity among Foreign Language Teacher Candidates Studying in Different Grades of Different Language Teaching Programs.

Program	Grades	N	Order of means	sd	X^2	p*
German Language Teaching	Freshmen	77	202.91	3	8.277	0.041
	Sophomore	98	166.44			
	Junior	85	174.15			
	Senior	111	200.61			
English Language Teaching	Freshmen	76	225.58	3	8.351	0.039
	Sophomore	91	247.62			
	Junior	162	232.82			
	Senior	165	271.95			
French Language Teaching	Freshmen	68	90.26	3	1.825	0.610
	Sophomore	39	101.83			
	Junior	49	87.24			
	Senior	28	94.13			

p*<0.01.

teacher candidates (U=3114.5, p>0.01). Kruskal Wallis H Test was employed in order to determine if there was a relation between levels of intercultural sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates in different grades. Table 7 depicts the results across the entire sample while

Table 8 shows the same results across different language programs. Based on the order of means, values depicted in Table 7 indicate that the difference among different grades is in favor of senior students. Statistical analysis of the means revealed that the difference was

significant (X^2 = 80.57; p<0.01) across levels of intercultural sensitivity among foreign language teacher candidates in all grades. As for the order of mean scores, senior students have the highest level of intercultural sensitivity followed by freshmen, sophomore, and junior students. As for the candidates in German language teaching program, freshmen have the highest level of intercultural sensitivity followed by senior, junior, and sophomore students. There is a statistically significant difference across grades (X^2 = 8.277; p<0.01). Considering English language teaching candidates, senior students' level of intercultural sensitivity is the highest, followed by sophomores, freshmen, and junior candidates. The difference among these candidates is also statistically significant (X^2 = 8.351; p<0.01). With respect to French language teacher candidates, intercultural sensitivity level is the highest for the sophomore, followed by senior, freshmen, and junior teacher candidates. However, the difference across different grades is not statistically significant for this program (X^2 = 1.825; p>0.01).

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

Research results have indicated that Turkish foreign language teacher candidates bear high levels of inter-cultural sensitivity, which is an indispensable component of intercultural communication competence. However, detailed analysis of sub-categories has yielded that "Interaction Competence" and "Interaction Attentiveness" are two least important categories for foreign language teacher candidates while "Interaction Enjoyment" is the most favored one followed by "Respect for Differences" and "Intercultural Interaction." Besides, statistically significant differences have been noted among the levels of sub-categories for teacher candidates, and a very strong relation has been determined between "Interaction Enjoyment" and "Interaction Confidence" while the weakest one has been found between "Respect for Differences" and "Interaction Confidence." Examination of current curricula in all three programs has shown that all have integrated intercultural approach into their programs, which may be noted as a reason as to why foreign language teacher candidates in this study have high levels of intercultural sensitivity. Nevertheless, inclusion of intercultural approach into the curricula does not necessarily mean improving intercultural communi-cation competence due to heavy loads of courses such as advanced reading, writing, listening, and speaking courses designed to enhance communication skills. Therefore, the fact that only these four basic components of communication skill are studied in all the programs can be stated as the reason why "Interaction Confidence" and "Interaction Attentiveness", components of intercultural communication competence, are two least important

aspects of "intercultural attitude" for the participants.

In this sense, "Interaction Confidence" and "Interaction Attentiveness", the sub-categories of intercultural sensitivity, are two dimensions that Turkish foreign language teacher candidates should improve on. The strong relation between "Interaction Enjoyment" and "Interaction Confidence" indicate the need to incorporate activities that will increase foreign language teacher candidates' motivation in order to help them feel more confident during intercultural interaction. Accordingly, it is of great importance to design lesson plans in a way that will include intercultural communication competence as well as communication skill for courses that focus on communicating in the target language. Comparison of foreign language teacher candidates' levels of intercultural sensitivity across programs has revealed that FLT candidates are the most sensitive, ELT candidates are the second, and GLT candidates are the third, although, the difference is minimal. With respect to the sub-categories of intercultural sensitivity, the order of importance is the same for French and English language teacher candidates, which is as follows: "Respect for Differences", "Interaction Enjoyment", "Intercultural Interaction", "Intercultural Attentiveness", and "Intercultural Confidence." As for German language teacher candidates, the order of sub-categories remains the same except for a change in the first two ones: "Interaction Enjoyment" and "Respect for Differences." The finding that "respect for differences" dimension of intercultural sensitivity is one of the most important sub-categories for foreign language teacher candidates is consistent with the results of Cubukçu's study (2013), stating that English language teacher candidates have sympathy and tolerance for other cultures. So, it is possible to conclude that foreign language teacher candidates have confidence issues especially during intercultural interaction although they generally have higher levels of intercultural motivation.

Another result of the current study points that intercultural sensitivity required for intercultural communication competence, is higher in male Turkish foreign language teacher candidates than in the female participants. Integrating inconsistent studies such as those concluding that intercultural sensitivity is higher for females (Banos, 2006; Holm et al., 2009; Talib and Hosoya, 2010) with those stating that intercultural sensitivity does not vary across gender (Fretheim, 2007; Westrick and Yuen, 2007; Bayles, 2009; Spinthourakis, 2009; Yazıcı et al., 2009), Üstün (2011) concludes that there is no statistically significant difference between female and male teacher candidates' levels of intercultural sensitivity. In addition to many studies (Eisenberg and Fabes, 1998; Karniol, Gabay and Ochion, 1998; Zhou et al., 2002) indicating that intercultural sensitivity is emphatically in favor of female participants, Holm et al. (2009) also concluded that women are a lot more

sensitive than men. Considering a large body of research conducted on the effect of gender over intercultural sensitivity with inconsistent results, this study has yielded totally different findings favoring male participants over female teacher candidates. At this point, it is conceived that further research to be designed in order to specify if gender is an influential variable or not in terms of intercultural sensitivity will significantly contribute to the literature.

With respect to the relation between levels of intercultural sensitivity and Turkish foreign language candidates' grades, it has been recorded that senior students graduate with the highest level of intercultural sensitivity. Subsequently, freshmen are the second, sophomores are the third, and junior are the fourth in terms of levels of intercultural sensitivity. Likewise, a more detailed analysis of intercultural sensitivity levels across grades in different teaching programs has revealed that freshmen participants from GLT are the most interculturally sensitive group, followed by the senior, junior, and sophomore. As for ELT candidates, senior students bear the highest level of intercultural sensitivity, followed by the sophomore, freshmen, and junior. However, the highest level of intercultural sensitivity in FLT candidates belongs to the sophomore, followed by the senior, freshmen, and junior. A closer examination of curricula employed in these programs has shown that both compulsory and elective courses relevant to intercultural approach are compiled especially in sophomore and junior years, which leads to higher levels of intercultural sensitivity on behalf of senior students. However, when others studies are examined, it is seen that is not always so. For example, the majority of students teachers in the Yuen and Grosman's (2009: p.349) study "tended to see the world from an ethnocentric perspective and tended to simplify or polarize cultural differences." and "showed difficulties in comprehending and accommodating complex cultural differences". That's why, researchers recommended to develop a suitable intercultural training program for future teachers.

Another noteworthy finding of the present study is that the level of intercultural sensitivity for ELT candidates follows an ascending pattern from the freshmen year up until to the senior year whereas GLT and FLT candidates start with a considerably high level of intercultural sensitivity even in their freshmen years when courses are mostly directed to improve communication skills in the target language. Because, English language is the primary foreign language in Turkey, all foreign language teacher candidates (be it English, French, or German) study either German or French language as part of their compulsory or elective curricula; so, they start university by already knowing some German or French. Compared to ELT candidates, both French and German language teacher candidates continue their education in their second or third foreign language, which reminds us that multilingualism may have a crucial influence over intercultural sensitivity. Moreover, the fact that German and French language teacher candidates, unlike ELT candidates, go through a compulsory preparatory year to learn a language different from English when they start university, it is possible to deduce that multilingualism may have an important effect over intercultural sensitivity. Besides, student exchange programs offered by universities throughout four years and the faculty acting as an intercultural model, negotiator, and mediator may also be contributing positively to intercultural sensitivity.

There are "6 qualifications, 31 sub-qualifications, and 233 performance indicators" in the current national report published by the Ministry of National Education on general teacher qualifications (MEB, 2008). One of the sub-skills of "Personal and Professional Values-Professional Development", "Caring about National and Universal Values" defines one of the performance indicators as 'A teacher is able to help students develop national and universal values, and act as a role model' (MEB, 2008, p.10).

In this regard, MNE stipulates that all teachers be role models about national and universal values. However, a closer study of English language teachers' qualifications published by MNE (MEB, 2008) as part of general qualifications of foreign language teacher candidates yields that communication skills are heavily underlined, and English language teachers are advised to become role models for speaking skill.

This "model" expecting foreign language teachers to be role models in only communication skills is rather shallow based on 21st century teaching qualifications. In addition, foreign language teachers should save themselves from these traditional roles and adopt new roles as intercultural models, negotiators, and mediators as required by the contemporary professional qualifications of teaching.

It is obvious that general teaching qualifications determined by MNE is far beyond our time; so, Turkish National Committee of Teacher Training, Board of Higher Education, MNE, and Education Faculties should collaborate in order to associate teacher qualifications with pre-service and in-service training programs that would provide constant supervision to establish more qualified teacher training programs (TED, 2009a, 2009b). In this sense, the conclusion of this research that foreign language teacher candidates bear high levels of intercultural sensitivity should be seen as an outcome of joint and coordinated policies and practices. Being highly sensitive interculturally, the participating candidates are expected to become intercultural role models, negotiators, and mediators. Considering that professional qualifications of teachers is still under construction in Turkey, especially qualifications concerning foreign language teachers should be recast in accordance with

contemporary standards, and the roles of "intercultural model, negotiator, and mediator" should be incorporated within the conceptual framework of those qualifications based on intercultural approach.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

REFERENCES

Bartlett JE, Kotrlik JW, Higgins CC (2001). Organizational research: Determining appropriate sample size in survey research. Information Technology. Learn. Performance J. 19(1):43-50.

Beacco JC, Byram M (2003). Guide for the development of Language Education Policies in Europe: From Linguistic Diversity to Plurilingual Education (Draft 1 rev.). Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/FullGuide_EN.pdf

Beaud JP (2009). L'Échantillonnage. Dans B. Gauthier (Ed.), Recherche sociale de la problématique à la collecte des données (5ème Ed.) (pp. 251-283). Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec.

Bennett MJ (1986). A developmental approach to training for intercultural sensitivity. Int. J. Intercultural Relations, 10(2):179-196. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(86)90005-2

Bennett Milton J (1993) Towards ethnorelativisim: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. Michael Paige (Ed.). Education for the Intercultural Experience (pp. 21-71). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Büyüköztürk Ş, Kılıç-Çakmak E, Akgün ÖE, Karadeniz Ş, Demirel F (2008). Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemleri. Ankara: Pegem A Yayıncılık.

Byram M (1997). Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram M, Doyé P (1999). Intercultural competence and foreign language learning in the primary school. In P. Driscoll and D. Frost (Eds). The teaching of modern foreign languages in the primary school. (pp. 139-152). London: Routledge.

Byram M, Gribkova B, Starkey H (2002). Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching: A Practical Introduction for Teachers. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Guide_dimintercult_EN. Pdf

Byram M (2008). From foreign language education to education for Intercultural citizenship: Essays and reflections. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram M (2009). Sociétés multiculturelles et individus pluriculturels : Le projet de l'éducation interculturelle. Strasbourg: Conseil de l'Europe. Retrieved from http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/EducInter_FR.asp

Byram M (2011). La compétence interculturelle. Dans P. Blanchet & P. Chardenet (Eds.). Guide pour la recherche en didactique des langues et des cultures: Approches contextualisées (s.253-260). Paris: Editions des Archives Contemporaines .

CEFR (2001). Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Strasbourg: Cambridge University Press.

Chaves RM, Favier L, Pélissier S (2012). L'Interculturel en classe. Grenoble: PUG.

Chen GM, Starosta WJ (2000). The development and validation of the intercultural sensitvity scale. Hum. Commun. 3 :1-15.

Conseil de l'Europe (2002). Figures de l'interculturel dans l'éducation. Strasbourg: Conseil de l'Europe. Retrieved from http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/ebooks/files/Coe14.pdf

Creswell JW (2013). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. London: Sage publications.

Cubukçu F (2013). Pre-service English teachers' intercultural sensitivity. Int. J. Hum. Sci. 10(1):832-843.

Davcheva L (2002). Learning to be intercultural. In: Dans G. Alred, M. Byram, & M. Fleming (Ed). Intercultural experience and education

Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. pp.67-86

Fritz W, Mollenberg A, Chen GM (2002). Measuring intercultural sensitivity in different cultural contexts. Intercultural Commun. Stud. 11(2):165-176.

Gautheron-Boutchatsky C, Kok Escalle MC (2003). Retrouver le sens perdu ou les fausses identités du document authentiquement publicitaire. Dans La médiation et la didactique des langues et des cultures (pp. 44-57). Le Français dans le Monde (LFDM), Recherches et Applications, n° spécial, Janvier, Paris : CLE international.

Gohard-Radenkovic A, Lussier D, Penz H, Zarate G (2003). La médiation culturelle en didactique des langues comme processus (pp.225-237). Dans G. Zarate, A. Gohard- Radenkovic, D. Lussier, & H.Penz (Eds.), Médiation culturelle et didactique des langues. Strasbourg: CELV/ Éditions du Conseil de l'Europe. Retrieved from http://archive.ecml.at/documents/pub122F2003_zarate.pdf

Hammer MR, Bennett MJ, Wiseman R (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. Int. J. Intercultural Relations, 27(4):421-443. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(03)00032-4

Holm K, Nokelainen P, Tirri K (2009). Relationship of gender and academic achievement to Finnish students' intercultural sensitivity. High Ability Stud. 20(2):187–200. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13598130903358543

Kohler-Bally P (2003). Médiation et séjour d'etudes: le cas de l'étudiant Erasmus. Dans D., Lévy et G. Zarate (Eds.), La médiation et la didactique des langues et des cultures. (pp. 136-143). Le Français dans le Monde (LFDM), Recherches et Applications, n° spécial, Janvier, Paris : CLE international.

Küllü-Sülü A (2014). The role of native English speaking teachers in promoting intercultural sensitivity, Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent Üniversitesi, Ankara

Lazar I, Huber-Kriegler M, Lussier D, Matei GS, Peck C (2007). Développer et évaluer la compétence en communication interculturelle: Un guide à l'usage des enseignants de langues et des formateurs d'enseignants. Graz: Conseil de l'Europe. Retrieved from http://archive.ecml.at/mtp2/publications/B1_ICCinTE_F_internet

Lussier D, Auger R, Urbanicova V, Armengol M, De la Serna MP, De Miguel MC (2003). Les représentations des Autres et des autres cultures dans le contexte de la formation initiale et continue des enseignants (pp.191- 223). Dans G. Zarate, A. Gohard-Radenkovic, D. Lussier, & H. Penz (Eds.), Médiation culturelle et didactique des langues. Strasbourg: CELV/ Éditions du Conseil de l'Europe. Retrieved from http://archive.ecml.at/documents/pub122F2003_zarate.pdf

MEB (2008). Öğretmen yeterlikleri: Öğretmenlik mesleği genel ve özel alan yeterlikleri. Ankara: Devlet Kitapları Müdürlüğü. Retrieved from http://otmg.meb.gov.tr/YetGenel.html.

Neuman WL (2009). Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches (7th Ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Porcher L (1995). Le français langue étrangère. Paris: Hachette Education.

Puren C (2002). Perspectives actionnelles et perspectives culturelles en didactique des langues-cultures: vers une perspective co-actionnelle co-culturelle. Langues Modernes, 3:55-71.

Risager K (2007). Language and culture pedagogy: From a national to a transnational paradigm. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Rozon P (2011). Intégration de la culture dans les pratiques pédagogiques. Dans H. Fontenay, D. Groux et G. Leidelinger (Eds.). Classe de langues et culture(s) : vers l'interculturalité? (pp. 207-224). Paris: L'Harmattan.

TED (2009a). Öğretmen yeterlikleri. Ankara: Türk Eğitim Derneği Yayınları. Retrieved from http://portal.ted.org.tr/yayinlar/Ogretmen_Yeterlik_Kitap.pdf

TED (2009b). Öğretmen yeterlikleri özet rapor: Öğretmene yatırım, geleceğe atılım. Ankara: Türk Eğitim Derneği Yayınları. Retrieved from http://portal.ted.org.tr/genel/yayinlar/Ogretmen_Yeterlik_Kitap_Ozet_rapor.pdf

Ural A, Kılıç İ (2013). Bilimsel araştırma süreci ve SPSS ile veri analizi

(4. bs.). Ankara: Detay Yayıncılık.

Üstün E (2011). Öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası duyarlılık ve etnikmerkezcilik düzeylerini etkileyen, Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, İstanbul.

Vergues M (2011). Peut-on prétendre développer la compétence de communication interculturelle au niveau aux-débutant ? Enjeux pour le didacticien-pédagogue Dans H. Fontenay, D. Groux et G. Leidelinger (Eds.). Classe de langues et culture(s): versl'interculturalité? Paris: L'Harmattan. pp. 325-353.

Windmüller F (2011). L'approche culturelle et interculturelle. Paris: Belin.

Yuen CY, Grossman DL (2009). The intercultural sensitivity of student teachers in three cities. Compare 39(3):349-365.

Zakhartchouk JM (1999). L'enseignant, un passeur culturel. Paris: ESF.

Zarate G, Gohard-Radenkovic A, Lussier D, Penz H (Eds.) (2003). Médiation culturelle et didactique des langues. Strasbourg: CELV/ Éditions du Conseil de l'Europe. Retrieved from http://archive.ecml.at/documents/pub122F2003_zarate.pdf .