EXTENSION OF TEACHER KNOWLEDGE: DEVELOPING THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF PRE-SERVICE FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN TURKEY

Yeşim BEKTAŞ-ÇETINKAYA[1]

Abstract: Due to the increased interconnections among people, there has been an increasing awareness of the need to extend the knowledge of teachers to include global perspectives and cultural awareness. The objective of the study is to develop the intercultural competence of pre-service foreign- language teachers in a classroom context in Turkey. The study employed a mixed research method to examine the effect of a cultural content program on pre-service teachers' intercultural competence. Quantitative data were collected using Intercultural Competence (IC) Instrument before and after the instruction, and qualitative data were collected through participants' weekly written reflections, intercultural tasks, and post study open-ended questions. The cultural content instruction was found to have significant effects on developing the cultural knowledge, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness, but resulted in no significant attitudinal change in these pre-service teachers in a Turkish EFL context. The results indicated that, to a certain degree, it is possible to develop the intercultural competence of foreign-language pre-service teachers through systematic instruction in teacher-education departments in the absence of study abroad experience.

Keywords: Pre-service teacher education, developing intercultural competence, cultural awareness, teacher knowledge, EFL

Özet: Günümüzde insanlar arasında artan iletişime bağlı olarak, öğretmenlerin bilgilerinin küresel bakış açılarını ve kültürel farkındalığı kapsayacak şekilde artırılması gereği giderek daha çok hissedilmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı yabancı dil öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliklerini Türkiye de sınıf ortamında geliştirmektir. Çalışmada, kültürel içerik programının öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliğine etkisini araştırmak için karma araştırma deseni kullanılmıştır. Nicel veriler uygulama öncesi ve sonrasında verilen Kültürlerarası Yeterlik ölçeği ile toplanmış; nitel veriler ise katılımcıların haftalık olarak yazdıkları yansıma notları, sınıf içinde tamamladıkları kültürlerarası çalışmalar ve çalışma sonrası cevapladıkları açık uçlu sorular ile toplanmıştır. Çalışma sonucunda kültürel içerik programının kültürel bilgi, kültürlerarası beceriler ve kültürlerarası farkındalık kazandırma açılarından anlamlı bir etkide bulunduğu fakat öğretmen adaylarının tutumunda anlamlı bir değişime yol açmadığı bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar, yabancı dil öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliklerinin, yurtdışı deneyimi olmaksızın, sınıf ortamında belli bir dereceye kadar geliştirilmesinin mümkün olduğuna işaret etmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Öğretmen eğitimi, kültürlerarası yeterlik geliştirme, kültürel farkındalık, öğretmen bilgisi, İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretilmesi

1. Introduction

In the fast-shrinking globalized village of the 21st century, individuals from different backgrounds come together with increasing frequency as a result of technological advances and mobility that has been increased through various exchanges (e.g., business, tourism, academic). In this context, individuals must possess a certain degree of cultural knowledge and awareness to effectively communicate with one another. It is critical for teachers (particularly foreign-language teachers) who have the responsibility to teach a foreign language and how to communicate effectively in that language to possess intercultural competence.

The need to extend teacher knowledge from the knowledge of subject and teaching techniques to include global perspectives and multicultural education has been voiced by many in the

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[1] Dr., Department of Foreign Language Education, Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey, yesim.cetinkaya@deu.edu.tr

teacher-education field. (Gorski, 2009; Holden & Hicks, 2007). Similarly, in foreign-language teaching, the same necessity to integrate intercultural aspects into practice and teacher-education programs has been felt more heavily and voiced by many in various English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts (Alptekin, 2002; Atay, 2008; Byram, 1997; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; Erling, 2008; Garrido & Alvarez, 2006; Holliday, Hyde & Kullman,2004; Kramsch, 2005; Larzen-Östermark, 2009; Lurda,2008; Matsuda, 2006; Sercu, 2005; Sercu, 2006). Furthermore, national and supranational authorities have felt the urgent need to address culture in language teaching. In the USA, the *Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* (2002) and in Europe the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001) reflect the importance of cultural awareness and promote intercultural competence in foreign-language education.

However, studies conducted in various countries have demonstrated that many EFL teachers have not attained the expected levels of intercultural awareness; therefore it is necessary to systematically develop the intercultural competence of pre-service and in-service foreign-language teachers (Atay, 2005; Bayyurt, 2006; Byram & Risager, 1999; Larzen-Östermark, 2009; Sercu, 2005; Sercu, 2006). There is a considerable amount of research focusing on developing the cultural competence of teachers in general (e.g. Dooly, 2010; Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Tang & Choi, 2004) and some research on pre-service foreign language teachers (e.g. Elola & Oskoz, 2009). Most of these studies focused on one of two themes: documenting the effect on pre-service teachers' intercultural competence development of either overseas experience (Dooly, 2010; Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Tang & Choi, 2004) or of some type of technology use (e.g. Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Liaw, 2006). Although they documented positive development, it is not feasible for all teacher training programs to send their pre-service teachers abroad for a practicum or to provide opportunities to interact with foreigners through the internet. Therefore, given the limited opportunities for interaction with foreigners, the current study focuses on developing the intercultural competence of pre-service English teachers through instruction in classroom context.

2. Theoretical Framework
2. 1. Culture and intercultural competence
Culture, which is an elusive phenomenon by nature, can be defined at macro and micro levels. At the macro level, as the culture of a nation, it could be described as the "Cumulative deposits of knowledge, beliefs, views, values, and behaviors acquired by a large group of people, and passed on from one generation to the next" (Porter & Samovar, 1991). However, as Bourdieu (1991) has noted, there is a dialectical relationship between individuals and society. Individuals gain 'social capital' through socialization and education and in return transform the culture of their communities. At the micro level, culture can be defined with reference to the individual as a member of various sub-cultural systems, such as ethnicity, gender, generation, occupation, and region. Thus, in the process of communication, each individual is simultaneously positioned within a number of micro-level sub-cultural systems in addition to the macro-level national culture. During interaction, individuals who are positioned in similar macro and micro cultural systems are likely to communicate more easily compared to those from different macro and micro cultural systems.

Bennett (1986, 1993) proposed a framework that is referred to as the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) to identify the dimensions of intercultural competence. He identified three ethnocentric (Denial, Defense, Minimization) and three ethnorelative (Acceptance, Adaptation, Integration) orientations "that people seem to move through in their acquisition of intercultural competence" (Hammer, Bennett, Wiseman, 2003:423). At the

ethnocentric stage of Denial, "one's own culture is experienced as the only real one" (p. 424) and at the Defense level "as the only viable one" (p. 424). At the Minimization stage, "elements of one's own cultural worldviews are experienced as universal" (p. 424). At the ethnorelative stage of Acceptance, "one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews" (p. 425). At the Adaptation stage, "the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture" (p. 425). At the last stage, which is known as Integration, "one's experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews" (p. 425). According to Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman (2003) at ethnocentric stages, individuals avoid cultural differences, and at ethnorelative stages, they seek such differences.

Byram (1997) proposed a comprehensive model of intercultural competence in the foreign-language education field. According to his model, intercultural competence has four dimensions: knowledge, attitude, skill and critical cultural awareness. The knowledge dimension involves knowledge regarding one's own culture and that of one's interlocutor's country as well as regarding "concepts and processes in interaction". "Attitude" refers to "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about one's own" (p. 50). "Skill" involves the skill of interpreting a document or event and relating it to one's own culture, the skill of discovering new cultural knowledge and practices, and the ability to use such skills in interactions. "Critical cultural awareness" refers to "an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (p. 53).

In this study, intercultural competence is defined in terms of possessing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness required to think and act appropriately in any form of intercultural interactions: from face-to-face interaction to interaction with a document produced in another culture.

2. 2. Previous research on intercultural competence of teachers

Research on the intercultural competence of foreign-language teachers appears primarily focused on determining the cultural awareness of prospective teachers (Atay, 2005; Bayyurt, 2006; Bektaş-Çetnkaya & Börkan, 2012; Byram & Risager, 1999; Larzen-Östermark, 2009; Sercu, 2005; Sercu, 2006). Research on practicing teachers in Denmark and Britain (Byram & Risager, 1999) illustrated that despite an awareness of the necessity of teaching for cultural competence in foreign-language classrooms, the framework was lacking. Another study on practicing teachers in Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Spain, and Sweden (Sercu, 2005) indicated that "teachers' current foreign language-and-culture teaching profiles do not yet meet those of the envisaged 'foreign language and intercultural competence teacher'" (p. 55). A more recent study on pre-service teachers in Finland (Larzen-Östermark, 2009) revealed that cultural aspects were not adequately addressed in teacher training programs, which were found to require a much clearer and stronger focus on culture.

Some studies have recently examined pre-service teachers' development of intercultural awareness during teaching practice programs abroad (Dooly, 2010; Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Tang & Choi, 2004). In the context of a teacher education institution in Hong Kong, Tang and Choi (2004) examined the intercultural competence development of four primary education pre-service teachers specializing in English and Mandarin, who had field experience in Australia, Canada, and mainland China. The results of these case studies indicated the development of different levels of cultural awareness and knowledge. Dooly and Villanueva, (2006) and Dooly's (2010) research with primary school pre-service teachers

from eight European countries also indicated the development of various levels of intercultural awareness and knowledge, in addition to the adoption of a more positive attitude towards multicultural classes.

There are a small number of studies in ESL contexts which examined the development of pre-service teachers' cultural awareness in teacher preparation programs in the absence of overseas experience or interaction with foreigners through the internet (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006). Fox and Diaz-Greenberg (2006) conducted a qualitative study with 22 ESL teacher candidates at two universities in the USA. They examined how critical pedagogy and multicultural education helped these teacher candidates to gain multicultural perspectives. Results indicated the teacher candidates "presented a deep understanding of Culture" (p. 411) and "revealed a strong awareness of the importance integrating culture and infusing it into their work on an ongoing basis" (p. 415).

DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) examined the effect of "site-based professional development initiatives", which were informed by Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, on 86 elementary school teachers' intercultural competence. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was applied in five schools before and after each school conducted "their own form" of professional development initiative. The results suggested "a significant change in teachers' overall IDI development score when a school district implemented an intercultural training initiative" (p. 444).

2. 3. The Turkish Context

Research conducted in the Turkish EFL context also suggested that both pre-service and practicing English teachers are not adequately equipped to address cultural issues in English language classrooms (Arıkan, 2011; Atay, 2005; Bayyurt, 2006; Bektaş-Çetinkaya &Börkan, 2012; Bektaş-Çetinkaya & Çelik, 2013). Bayyurt's (2006) study with practicing English teachers indicated confusion existed as to whether to address culture in language teaching, and if so, how. Atay (2005) examined how prospective English teachers gain knowledge about target language culture, and their beliefs regarding the place of culture in foreign language teaching. Her results revealed that none of the prospective teachers had been abroad, and received their knowledge of target culture mostly from the media (Turkish language newspapers, magazines, radio and TV), and that for most of the prospective English teachers, cultural awareness merely meant "knowing and learning about target cultures" (p. 229). Atay (2005) concluded that "the perspectives and practices of the young prospective teachers also seem to be far away from making Turkish learners interculturally sensitive" (p. 233). In a more recent study in Turkey, Bektaş – Çetinkaya & Çelik (2013) found that English pre-service teachers failed to gain a significant degree of intercultural competence during their study in a teacher training program. All these studies conducted in Turkish context indicated the need for raising the cultural awareness of pre-service English teachers in teacher education programs in Turkey.

The aim of the current study is to develop pre-service English teachers' intercultural competence within the teacher training program in Turkey. The overarching research issue in this study is the documentation of the ways in which the cultural content instruction in a teacher training program in Turkey affects pre-service EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence. The study specifically aims to identify whether there is a difference in the knowledge, skill, attitude and awareness of Pre-service EFL teachers according to whether they received the treatments of cultural content (CC) instruction or traditional instruction.

3. Method

The study employed a mixed method, the concurrent embedded strategy (Creswell, 2009). In this case, the qualitative method is embedded within the quantitative. For the quantitative part of the study, the quasi-experimental Nonequivalent Control Group Design was used (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The aim was to test the hypothesis that there would be a statistically significant difference in terms of cultural knowledge, attitude, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness between the pre-service English teachers who received cultural content instruction and those who received traditional instruction. The qualitative part of the study aimed to investigate the effect of cultural content instruction on the intercultural communicative competence of pre-service teachers through the qualitative analysis of the weekly written reflections of the participants, intercultural tasks, and post-study open-ended questions.

3. 1. Context and participants

The present study was conducted in an English-language teaching department of the College of Education at a medium-sized state university in Turkey. The participants were first-year pre-service English teachers who were enrolled in conversation classes. The researcher briefly explained the aim of the study to the students and asked their consent at the first session. Students who volunteered to participate took pre- and post-tests, wrote weekly reflections, did intercultural tasks and answered the post study open-ended questions. Two students declined to participate, and were given the option of fulfilling the course requirement by preparing a speech and participating classroom discussions. Of the 44 pre-service English teachers who participated in the study, 9 were male and 35 were female, which reflected the general male-to-female ratio in the entire department. Participant ages ranged from 18 to 25 years with a median of 19 years.

3. 2. Instruments

The data collection instruments consisted of an Intercultural Competence (IC) instrument, which was used as a pre- and post-test, weekly written reflections by pre-service teachers in the treatment group, intercultural tasks that all of the participants completed at the beginning and end of the semester, and a post-study open-ended questionnaire for the participants in the treatment group.

3. 2. 1. The intercultural competence (IC) instrument

The instrument is a self-evaluation tool adapted from the Intercultural Abilities Questionnaire (Fantini, 2006) and the intercultural framework of Byram (1997). IC was used in a previous study (Bektaş – Çetinkaya& Börkan, 2012) in the Turkish context to determine the intercultural competence level of pre-service English teachers. It consisted of four subsections: knowledge (.92), attitude (.81), skill (.77), and awareness (.79).

3. 2. 2. Weekly reflections

The participants in the treatment group were asked to write a reflection each week after class on the topics covered. They wrote 10 reflections in total. The aim of the weekly reflection was twofold: to evaluate the progress of the participants and to help them gain "critical cultural consciousness through constant and continual self-reflection" (Kumaradivelu, 2008, p. 5).

3. 2. 3. Intercultural tasks

The participants were assigned three open-ended tasks at the beginning and end of the study to complete individually. The first task asked participants to identify implicit and explicit values in an American geography textbook (De Blij & Muller, 1991). The second task was to

examine the miscommunication in a conversation between an Indian woman and an American man from the movie "Bride and Prejudice". The third task required the participants to identify stereotypes and ethnocentric perspectives in a short text from a history book (Thompson & Combee, 2002).

3. 2. 4. Open-ended questionnaire
At the end of the semester, the participants in the treatment group were provided with 5 open-ended questions to enable them to report the degree to which their knowledge, attitudes, communication skills, and awareness had changed during the term.

3. 3. Procedure
This study was conducted on first-year pre-service English teachers during a 14-week semester in their conversation classes. There were five first-year conversation classes. Of these five, one class was randomly assigned as a cultural content group and one as the comparison group. The comparison group followed the traditional conversation class procedure. Throughout the semester, the pre-service teachers delivered informative and persuasive speeches on topics of their choice using audio-visual aids. After his or her speech, each pre-service teacher led a discussion on the topic. At the end of each session, the instructor provided feedback regarding the accuracy of speech, vocabulary use, and pronunciation.

The cultural content group followed a specifically designed cultural content program. At the beginning and end of the semester, both groups completed the Intercultural Competence Instrument (IC) as a pre- and post-test in addition to intercultural tasks. At the end of the semester, the participants in the cultural content group answered five open-ended questions regarding their progress throughout the semester.

3. 4. Cultural Content Program
The pre-service teachers participated in the Cultural content program, which was prepared within the framework of Byram's (2007) Intercultural Competence model, and the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008), which was prepared by the Council of Europe. The preparation of the content and intercultural tasks involved many resources in the form of books (Lustig & Koester, 2006; Gill & Cankova, 2010), movies (My Big Fat Greek Wedding, Anna and the King, Bride and the Prejudice), and textbooks (DeBlij & Muller, 1991; Thompson & Combee, 2002). The book 'Intercultural Competence' by Lustig & Koester (2006) was used to present the basic concepts, such as belief, value, norm, stereotyping, and ethnocentrism. The book 'Intercultural Activities' by Gill & Cankova (2010), and the movies My Big Fat Greek Wedding, Anna and the King, and Pride and Prejudice were chosen to present examples of misunderstandings and misinterpretations in intercultural communications due to the individuals' positioning in different macro and micro cultural systems. History and geography textbooks by DeBlij & Muller, (1991), and Thompson & Combee, (2002) were chosen to illustrate ethnocentric perspectives.

During the first four weeks, the instructor asked the participants to complete intercultural tasks to help them understand and internalize basic concepts, such as culture, belief, value, norm, stereotyping, and ethnocentrism. In relation to these concepts, Schwartz's Value Types (Schwartz, Verkasalo, Antonovsky, & Savig, 1997) and Hofstede's Cultural Taxonomy (Hofstede, 2001) were introduced as examples of attempts to conceptualize the cultures and values of the world. The concepts presented in the movie "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" were

analyzed. Then, the pre-service teachers were asked to discuss and reflect on their personal beliefs, values, and norms.

After covering these basic concepts, the participants prepared informative speeches, choosing a topic from the following list of items related to American and British culture: festivals, symbols, cuisine, customs, religious practices, and the conventions of daily life, history, and taboos. The British and American cultures were chosen because of the personal experience of the instructor, who had visited Britain twice and lived in the USA for seven years and thus possessed more knowledge of these particular cultures. The aim was not simply to introduce target cultures but to enable the learners to examine different ways of living, believing, and valuing so that they could gain critical cultural awareness. From the previously mentioned list, each pre-service teacher chose and researched in detail a topic of interest. At the end of each presentation, group work was allowed, and the pre-service teachers were encouraged to share and discuss. At the end of each class, the participants were asked to reflect and write what they thought and felt and how they positioned themselves on these issues.

3. 5. Data analysis
The quantitative Likert-Scale data, which was derived from Intercultural Competence (IC) instrument (used as a pre-and post-test), was coded on a 5-point scale from 1 (very limited) to 5 (very great). The data was input into SPSS 15.0, and a reliability analysis of the scales, the descriptive analysis, and one-way analysis of variance (ANCOVA) was conducted.

The qualitative data, which consisted of the weekly reflections of the participants, responses to the post-study open-ended questionnaire, and the intercultural tasks, was analyzed through "the inductive application of sensitizing concepts" (Patton, 1990). The sensitizing concepts used in this study were linguistic competence, cultural knowledge, attitude, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness. These concepts were used to examine how a group of Turkish pre-service English teachers gained intercultural competence during a conversation class. Once the analysis was completed, for validity and reliability purposes, a colleague who was not involved in this study read and coded the data. The inter-rater reliability was .90. The disagreements between the researcher and her colleague were resolved through discussion and minor modification of the analysis. The pre-service teachers' names were changed in the presentation of the qualitative data to protect the anonymity of the research participants.

4. Results
4. 1. Is there a difference in the intercultural competence of pre-service EFL teachers according to the treatments of cultural content (CC) and traditional instruction?
Four one-way analyses of covariance were performed on the post-test scores with cultural knowledge attitude, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness as the dependent variables and the pre-test scores for these variables as the covariates. The results of the evaluation of assumption of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances and homogeneity of regression slopes were satisfactory.

The means and the standard deviation of the raw scores for cultural knowledge, attitude, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness (pre-test and post-test) are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Knowledge, Attitude, Skill, and Awareness by Instruction

	Treatment				Contrast		
		Pretest					
	n	M	SD		n	M	SD
Knowledge	22	1.23	.36		22	1.53	.43
Attitude	22	2.98	.39		22	2.57	.43
Skill	20	1.86	.41		19	2.01	.47
Awareness	20	2.35	.88		19	2.17	.47
		Posttest					
	n	M	SD		n	M	SD
Knowledge	22	2.93	.52		22	1.83	.51
Attitude	22	3.27	.45		22	2.92	.55
Skill	22	2.71	.40		22	2.09	.59
Awareness	22	3.21	.54		22	2.45	.78

The ANCOVA results revealed statistically significant main effects for cultural content (CC) instruction on cultural knowledge $F (1, 41) = 71.64$, $p < .000$, intercultural skills $F (1, 36) = 20.74$, $p < .000$, and intercultural awareness $F (1, 36) = 12.06$, $p < .001$ as shown in Tables 2, 4, and 5, respectively. However, as can be observed in Table 3, there was a nonsignificant main effect of cultural content instruction on attitude. These results demonstrate that pre-service students in the cultural content group performed significantly better than the contrast group in terms of gaining cultural knowledge, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness. However, the cultural content and contrast groups did not differ in terms of attitude. Although the pre-service English teachers in the cultural content group gained cultural knowledge, intercultural skills and intercultural awareness, their attitudes did not seem to be significantly altered.

Table 2
Analysis of Covariance of Cultural Knowledge

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Previous Knowledge	2.38	1	2.38	10.92	.002
Cultural Content Instruction	15.63	1	15.63	71.64	.000
Error	8.94	41	.21		
Corrected Total	24.59	43			

Table 3
Analysis of Covariance of Attitude

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Previous Attitude	3.93	1	3.93	22.89	.000
Cultural Content Instruction	.016	1	.016	.095	.760
Error	7.03	41	.172		
Corrected Total	12.28	43			

Table 4
Analysis of Covariance of Intercultural Skills

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Previous Skills	.994	1	.994	4.42	0.42
Cultural Content instruction	4.65	1	4.65	20.74	.000
Error	8.081	36	.224		
Corrected Total	13.12	38			

Table 5
Analysis of Covariance of Intercultural Awareness

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Previous Awareness	4.12	1	4.12	11.17	.002
Cultural Content Instruction	4.45	1	4.45	12.06	.001
Error	13.28	36	.36		
Corrected Total	23.06	38			

4. 2. How does the cultural content instruction affect the intercultural communicative competence of pre-service EFL teachers?

4. 2. 1. Cultural knowledge

During the first weeks of instruction, most participants could not define or explain the cultural concepts. Moreover, a number of participants were unable to articulate a single idea or thought regarding the concept of culture and its role in foreign-language communications. One participant stated that "Before taking this class, for me English language was all about grammar. But I realized that it is not the case" (Seval, female). Although this statement may be an extreme example, most participants indicated that in general they were able to significantly increase their knowledge in this area. For instance, Baran (male) said, "I've learned lots of stuff about culture in general. What it really is and what the differences between norms, values and beliefs are." And Sezai (male) reflected, "I learned various concepts such as stereotypes, ethnocentrism that I did not know before. I think what I learned here in this course will help me to have effective intercultural interactions when I go abroad".

In addition to developing an understanding of the basic cultural concepts, such as values, beliefs, norms, stereotypes, and ethnocentrism, the participants believed that they had improved their knowledge of various aspects of American and British cultures and could compare them with corresponding aspects of Turkish culture. The participants indicated that this information enabled them to identify their prejudices and stereotypes and would be helpful in the future while teaching or when interacting with foreigners. For instance, Kamil (male) reflected, "Throughout the semester, I have learned many things about the American and British cultures. Before the class, I had no information about their cultures but many prejudices. I used to judge people without knowing them". Similarly, Alya (female) stated, "Before taking the class, my knowledge of British and American cultures was superficial, stereotypical".

By learning about the target cultures, the participants indicated that they also learned about their own culture. Zehra (female) summarized this sentiment: "I have learned a lot about British and American cultures, and when we compared these with Turkish culture, I learned new things about our culture as well".

Before the instruction, the majority of the participants were unable complete the intercultural tasks because of a lack of knowledge as can be seen in Table 6. (All tasks were administered in English in the classroom, and the Turkish equivalents for the basic terms were provided, but the concepts themselves were not explained). Two thirds indicated that they did not know exactly what "value" meant, so they could not identify values in the text or compare them with their own values in task 1. Similarly, more than two thirds indicated that they were unfamiliar with the terms "stereotype" and "ethnocentric perspective". Therefore, they could not identify these terms in the text in task 3. However, by the end of the course, the number of participants who reported not being familiar with these terms had substantially decreased.

Table 6
Treatment Group Pre-instruction Task Results in Number

	Don't know	Wrong	No Answer	Correct	Partial
Task 1					
Q1	14	5	0	0	3
Q2	16	2	3	0	1
Task 2					
Q1	1	5	2	4	10
Q2	1	7	0	4	10
Q3	4	6	1	4	7
Task 3					
Q1	16	2	0	3	1
Q2	15	2	1	2	2
Treatment Group post-instruction task results					
Task1					
Q1	6	5	1	5	5
Q2	8	2	4	3	5
Task2					
Q1	1	1	1	10	9
Q2	0	0	1	17	4
Q3	0	0	1	15	6
Task3					
Q1	4	8	0	8	2
Q2	3	5	1	11	2

4. 2. 2. Intercultural skills

It appears that throughout the semester the participants developed their intercultural skills of discovery and interaction to a substantial extent. However, their intercultural skills of interpreting and relating developed to a lesser extent. Intercultural Tasks 2 and 3 were designed to examine whether the participants could apply their intercultural skills of interpreting and relating, and their skills of discovery and interaction, respectively. The results shown in Table 6 indicate that at the beginning of the instruction, only a few could complete tasks 2 and 3, whereas at the end of the instruction, nearly all could fully or partially complete task 2, and half fully or partially completed task 3.

For instance, whereas participant Orkun (male) indicated that he did not know what "ethnocentric perspective" and "stereotype" meant at the beginning, he was later able to identify them in task 3 as follows: "The perspective is apparently Eurocentric, ethnocentric. The culture of Africa is considered worthless". "Backward Africa, forward and civilized west. The West considers its civilization to be inherently superior. Africa is considered to develop with Western help and guidance".

At the beginning, most could analyze the conversation at the linguistic level but without being able refer to the social and cultural context beyond the text. Thus, they only partially completed the task. For instance, Ebru (female) identified the miscommunication as follows: "It occurred when William was explaining why the groom chose an arranged marriage. He said "he just wanted it to be simple" and miscommunication occurred. William's intended meaning was that for the groom it is simple to get married this way, but Lolita understood it as meaning that women in India are simple".

After the instruction, most referred to the role of cultural differences in the case of miscommunication, such as when Ebru stated that the miscommunication might have resulted from the cultural differences between "the East" and "the West", although she was unable to

elaborate. Similar to a number of the other participants, she could not explain exactly how cultural difference manifested itself in the conversation to cause miscommunication.

However, in Derya's (female) case, the progress was substantially clearer. Before the instruction, Derya identified the cause of miscommunication between an Indian girl, Lalita, and an American man, William, as follows:

> The first miscommunication stems from Lalita. Lalita thinks that William's hotels are more expensive than DN internationals, but in fact, William means to say that their hotels are maybe a bit more expensive but without any problems with them. The second miscommunication stems from Lalita's not getting the true meaning of "simple". In fact, William implies something different from what was understood when he used the term "simple" in regard to the bride".

After the instruction, Derya explained the cause as follows:

> "The miscommunication in that conversation results from the cross-cultural difference. Because Lalita is an Indian and William is an American, their cultural values are different, too. Whereas William found the arranged marriage a bit strange, Lalita sees it as normal".

Additionally, the participants were able to identify in the movies cross-cultural misunderstanding that resulted from cultural differences. Most identified the role of religion in cross-cultural communication in the movie 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding'. A number of participants connected the baptism of the main character before the marriage, which was necessary to be accepted by the bride's family, with the practice in Turkey whereby a foreign groom must undergo circumcision before being allowed to marry a Muslim woman.

4. 2. 3. Attitude

Although the quantitative results did not indicate a significant attitudinal change for the overall group, individual participants showed major or partial attitudinal change and a more positive attitude toward cultural differences and foreigners. Mustafa (male) reflected on his attitudinal change as follows:

> "I began to overcome my prejudices during this class. Now I believe that each individual is different ... My attitude has changed more in some cases than others. I cannot quite explain why, but I think the more we know about things, the better it is for us. I mean we may have less prejudice".

The participants demonstrated a willingness to learn more about foreign cultures and to communicate with foreigners, as Baran (male) stated: "I kind of look at American/British people different now. Before the course, it never really interested me how they live, behave, think and just do things in general. But, now I kind of feel like learning more about them".

4. 2. 4. Intercultural awareness

At the beginning of the instruction, none of the participants could complete task 1, which was designed to illustrate the degree of critical cultural awareness of the participants. As shown in Table 6, at the end of the instruction, nearly half managed to complete the task fully or partially. For instance, Yasin (male), who indicated that he did not know what "value" meant and could not complete the task at the beginning of the instruction, was later able to identify the implicit and explicit values in the text: "They value people, relationship with people. They see the world as a global village. They also value studying, not memorization". In addition, he compared these values with his values as follows: "My values are about the same. I value

people and the way they communicate. I think the world is a global village. I also value studying ". In general, the participants seemed to find it difficult to identify implicit and explicit values in the text, and even harder to compare these values with their own.

However, they demonstrated an awareness and acceptance of differences among cultures and the awareness of how individuals are shaped by culture through socialization. Derya (female) expressed this recognition as follows:

"Some of my thoughts changed after I took that class. For example, I simply used to think that every culture is similar in terms of their beliefs and values. To exemplify, I used to think that things that Turkish people's beliefs cannot be so different from those in other cultures. But I have learned that they are as different as night and day in some cases. So, my thoughts about differences and similarities between two cultures have changed a lot. I am really satisfied with it because I have improved and developed my knowledge to some extent before I become a teacher or come across and communicate with a foreigner."

Moreover, most of the participants demonstrated an awareness of individual differences within the same culture. After studying stereotypes, Aylin (female) reflected as follows:
"Applying a stereotype to all is related to not seeing the differences between the person and their group. In a group, of course, the members of the group share some basic characteristics, but it doesn't mean that they are the same. They are not clones of one another. Each person has a lot of different characteristics, and the term "group" does not indicate they are all the same."

Additionally, most of the participants were able to discriminate differences in their own culture, as Emrah (male) remarked: "Lifestyles of people are different, even within one country. We should be more careful among our own people, too". During the discussion, these prospective English teachers expressed that what is considered to be a norm for Turks in general may not be a norm for all Turkish individuals and, similarly, that what is presented in the class as a part of American culture, such as fast food, may not be a typical diet of every American. "Turkish people don't arrive at meetings on time. However, this isn't valid for every Turkish person" said Gaye (female).

However, several participants did not seem to notice these differences and preferred to focus on similarities. For instance, Burcu (female) reflected that certain values are similar or universal and that she share these values with American and British people: "I realized that I have mutual habits and values with both Americans and English people. I think some of them are universal".

Overall, the qualitative results seem to indicate that many of these prospective English teachers have progressed toward a more ethnorelative perspective. The results appear to illustrate the characteristics of the Acceptance state of the ethnorelativism orientation in Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). According to Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) "*Acceptance* of cultural difference is the state in which one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. By discriminating differences among cultures (including one's own), and by constructing a metalevel consciousness, people with this worldview are able to experience others as different from themselves, but equally human" (p. 425). At the beginning of the study, most participants seemed to be ignorant of cultural issues or to have a stereotypical perspective, whereas at the end of the process, they seem to gain cultural

awareness and could distinguish differences among cultures, including their own culture, as noted by Derya (female): "Differences are everywhere, even in the same culture, so what is important is that we should respect those differences without giving up our own traditions".

5. Discussion

With the increased interaction among people in this globalized world, EFL teachers are not only challenged to teach English as a foreign language but also to equip their learners with intercultural competence. Thus, the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness required to think and act appropriately in any intercultural interaction (from face-to-face interaction to interaction with a document produced in another culture) seem to be a critical part of EFL teacher knowledge. The results of the current study demonstrated that the cultural content instruction was effective in terms of developing the knowledge, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness of pre-service teachers, although the instruction did not seem to significant change the attitude of these pre-service foreign-language teachers. However, these pre-service teachers demonstrated a predominantly positive attitude toward interacting with foreigners in English and a willingness to learn more about different cultures. Overall, the results of the study suggested that the intercultural competence of pre-service EFL teachers can be developed to a certain degree in a teacher education program in the EFL context in which language learners and language teachers have limited face-to-face interaction in English with foreigners.

Similar to a previous study with K-12 educators (DeJaeghere and Cao's, 2009), this study suggests that intercultural competence can be developed in the school context through the application of a specific program. Furthermore, the study seemed to support Byram's (1997) theoretical assumption and an earlier study (Bektaş-Çetinkaya & Börkan, 2012) that suggested that cultural knowledge is a prerequisite in gaining intercultural skills and cultural awareness. As the qualitative part of the study revealed, one requires a certain degree of knowledge of culture to be able to perform intercultural skills and demonstrate awareness. Thus, providing cultural knowledge in the form of basic concepts, such as culture, values, norms, beliefs, stereotypes, enabling pre-service teachers to search for and acquire knowledge of a particular culture and guiding them to compare and reflect constantly seemed to be necessary for them to gain critical cultural awareness.

According to the quantitative results, it appears that the cultural content program did not significantly affect the attitude of the pre-service teachers, although the teachers gained knowledge, skills and intercultural awareness throughout the program. This outcome may have several reasons. First, this study only lasted for one semester, which may be insufficient for attitudinal change to occur. Second, the participants already demonstrated a positive attitude at the beginning of the study. The item analysis of the pre-test indicated that the participants were willing to interact with foreigners and to understand new cultural aspects and differences. This attitude did not fundamentally change during the study.

The results of the study indicated that cultural content programs seem to have been successful in increasing pre-service teachers' intercultural competence in a classroom context. Thus, applying these kinds of programs is potentially beneficial, especially in contexts where pre-service and qualified language teachers do not have much opportunity to acquire cultural awareness naturally through contact with foreigners. The current study was conducted in one state university, and therefore the results cannot be generalized beyond this particular university department. . Similar studies need to be conducted in a range of universities to examine the effect of programs in different settings. Furthermore, it is important that the

participants in such studies are examined within their natural settings to determine how far they are able to demonstrate intercultural competence while engaged in the practice of teaching.

6. Conclusion

The necessity of preparing teachers for the demands of the 21st century is obvious. Teacher education programs must and can prepare prospective teachers for these demands through the expansion of teacher knowledge to include intercultural competence. This study indicated that it is possible to develop the intercultural competence of pre-service teachers in a classroom context. It appears that intercultural competence can be gained through understanding the underlying concepts of culture and being aware of how these concepts change across macro (national) and micro (personal) levels of culture. The prospective teachers, who were not aware of the role of culture in language use and had not previously reflected on this role, could gain cultural competence to a certain level in teacher education programs through a process of acquiring the concept of culture, gaining a knowledge and awareness of one's own and other cultures, and constant reflection.

Therefore, it is suggested that concepts such as culture, value, belief, norm, stereotyping, and ethnocentrism should be incorporated into conversation classes, to encourage pre-service teachers to reflect on these concepts and identify their own attitudes toward them. In the next stage, examples in the form of movies and anecdotes can be presented to illustrate how these concepts play crucial roles in intercultural communications. Since English is defined as an international language of communication among people from various micro and macro cultures, it is essential for prospective English language teachers to be aware of the role of culture and cultural differences in communication in English. It is clearly not possible for English language teachers to learn the cultures of all of their prospective interlocutors. It is possible, however, for them to learn how values, beliefs, norms, ethnocentric perspectives and stereotypes all play critical roles in communication in general, and thus help them to become aware of how of their own beliefs, values, norms and stereotypes may influence communication. Through such an approach, they may achieve a level of critical cultural awareness which will allow greater success in international communications in English.

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