Research Article

Exploring Pre-Service and Novice EFL Teachers' Intercultural Sensitivity

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Abstract: One of the advantages of teaching culture is to display different cultural frames to develop language awareness and pragmatic usage. Culture is a phenomenon to be searched deeply in terms of English language teaching on the grounds of a scarce number of studies on it. Accordingly, this study examines pre-service and novice EFL teachers' perception of teaching "culture" and its instructional effect on multicultural settings. Accordingly, a 24-item intercultural sensitivity questionnaire developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) was used. Besides, interview and focus group sessions were carried out for the triangulation of the data. In the findings, it is concluded that participants who know more than two languages had more confidence in intercultural interaction. Besides, it was put forward that experience has a positive role in cultivating intercultural sensitivity. It was also recognized that novice English teachers are highly motivated to integrate intercultural elements into language teaching. Additionally, some suggestions, including culture-specific activities, informative multicultural materials, and methods have been provided.

Aday ve Mesleğe Yeni Başlayan İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Kültürlerarası Duyarlılıklarının İncelenmesi

Özet: Kültür öğretiminin avantajlarından biri, dil farkındalığını ve pragmatik kullanımı geliştirmek için farklı kültürel bileşenler sunmasıdır. Kültür, az sayıda çalışma nedeniyle İngilizce'nin öğretimi açısından derinlemesine araştırılması gereken bir olgudur. Buna göre, bu çalışma EFL öğretmenlerinin "kültür" öğretimi algısını ve çok kültürlü ortamlar üzerindeki öğretim etkisini incelemektedir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Chen ve Starosta (2000) tarafından geliştirilen yirmi dört maddelik "Kültürlerarası Duyarlılık Anketi" kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca, verilerin detaylı incelenmesi için görüşme ve odak grup oturumları gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgularda; ikiden fazla dil bilen katılımcıların, kültürlerarası etkileşim konusunda daha fazla özgüven duydukları sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca, mesleğe yeni başlayan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, dil öğretimini birleştirerek kültürlerarası unsurları entegre etme konusunda oldukça motive oldukları gözlemlenmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, kültüre özgü etkinlikler, bilgilendirici çok kültürlü materyaller ve yöntemler de dahil olmak üzere bazı öneriler sunulmuştur.

1. Introduction

With the influences of globalization, developments in technology, and mobility, people have been interconnected worldwide. The inevitable interconnectedness has introduced some debatable issues such as cultural diversity, intercultural communication, and competence for different disciplines. Specifically, foreign language teaching is one of the disciplines that need to focus on integrating cultural elements with the practice of language teaching. Therefore, teachers need to enlarge their perspectives, increase their awareness toward different cultures and pay attention to their role in syncretizing language teaching and culture in diverse classroom settings. As a result, intercultural competence has been one of the most remarkable qualifications of today's world. However, researchers have not achieved consensus on the term "intercultural competence." Still, Deardoff defined this concept as "effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations (2011, p. 65). On the other hand, Hesse and Göbel (2007) suggest that intercultural competence consists of the cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor components as well as explanatory information such as communicative and interactional competencies. As one of the major elements of intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity is defined as the developmental process carried with positive emotional reactions of interculturally competent people during, before, or after a cultural communication (Chen & Starosta, 1996). Intercultural sensitivity is related to different disciplines of social sciences. Therefore, it is a complex and broad term. Intercultural sensitivity requires the development of cultural awareness and attitudes (Bennett, 1986). Bennett suggests that intercultural sensitivity develops with the acceptance of being different, and this principle would boost the effectiveness of intercultural communication. According to Hammer et al. (2003), intercultural sensitivity can be conceptualized as "the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences," and it is claimed that the higher level of intercultural sensitivity can be associated with the more significant potential for intercultural competence (p. 422). As EFL teachers are also expected to advance their students' potential and different skills according to the time's necessities, their perspectives and sensitivity have a vital role in improving that discipline.

1.1. Theoretical Framework

The concept of intercultural sensitivity has crossed paths with intercultural competence and effectiveness. Chen and Starosta (1996) suggest a model aiming to contribute to integrating cultural differences, tolerance, and respect, which would transform individuals into global citizens. The model has three aspects and IS is the effective process of intercultural competence. It also has four foundations: self-concept, open-mindedness, non-judgmental attitudes, and social relaxation.

Bennett (1986) also describes the Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) as a culture-general model which has the first three stages of denial, defense, and minimization directed to ethnocentric and the last three stages of acceptance adaptation and integration directed to ethnorelative. After the theoretical continuum stages, one starts to experience the cultural difference and realize the essence. DMIS is assumed as a credible and trustworthy measurement of intercultural sensitivity with its stages and statistical scale scores. The intercultural development inventory (IDI; Hammer & Bennett, 2003) is an assessment tool of the intercultural sensitivity of groups and teachers. This instrument is based on Bennett's DMIS model, which diagnoses the continuum from ethnocentric to ethnorelative. Chen and Starosta (2000) also state that "Intercultural sensitivity is a quality that enables people

to achieve a multicultural mindset" (p. 27). Additionally, they identify four personal characteristics of intercultural sensitivity: "(a) self-concept: an optimistic outlook that inspires confidence in intercultural interactions; (b) open-mindedness: one's willingness to express themselves openly when it is appropriate and to accept others' explanations; (c) non-judgemental: holding no prejudices that will prevent one from listening sincerely to others during intercultural interactions; and (d) social relaxation: the ability to overcome uncertain emotions during intercultural communication" (Chen & Starosta, 1998). Later, they identified IS as the ability to develop a positive emotion that promotes appropriate and effective intercultural communication behavior to make sense of and evaluate cultural differences.

However, Chen (1997) declares that this model's perception of sensitivity is identical with the intercultural communication competence and also proposes that IS concept as the affective aspect which deals with the emotion. Additionally, this model assembles intercultural awareness (cognitive) and sensitivity (affective) to build up intercultural competence (behavioral). Components of IS are categorized as self-esteem, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction involvement, and non-judgment, which promote positive emotions to comprehend and appreciate cultural differences. The present study focuses on the structure of IS from this model's perspective because it differentiates the related but separated intercultural concepts. Additionally, it enables us to examine different aspects such as intercultural interaction and enjoyment and respecting cultural differences.

In the Turkish educational context, interculturality is emphasized, and some changes in programs and efforts to evoke intercultural awareness have been performed for many years. According to the national qualification framework of The Council of Higher Education (2011), knowing national and international cultures, living in and adapting to different cultures are some of the qualifications for teacher training and education. Also, many studies focus on IC or the cultural sensitivities of pre-service or novice teachers of the English language in the Turkish higher education context. A very recent qualitative research with the participants who were pre-service English teachers and attended to Erasmus student mobility program in England revealed that students were interculturally unprepared, and there was a need for systematic efforts involving international offices, national organizations, teacher educators, and students (Çiftçi & Gürbüz, 2019). From another aspect, Harmandaoğlu's (2013) research examined pre-service English teachers' intercultural communicative competence and the use of social networking through longitudinal interviews and reports. This study concluded that pre-service teachers had different ideas about different cultural elements such as body language symbols or family relations and revealed that Twitter is a way of developing pre-service English teachers in terms of intercultural communication and attitudes. By using the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) (Chen & Starosta, 2000) as a data collection tool, another study from Turkey was conducted, and Yücel (2016) found that the intercultural training course helped pre-service teachers to analyze interculturalism from a global perspective and the general concept of education. Similarly, Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2014) examined the influence of provided cultural content instruction on the skills, attitude, and awareness of pre-service English teachers who participated in the cultural content program. It was concluded that many pre-service teachers progressed and their IS raised as a result of acquired cultural content instruction.

Some studies focus on pre-service teachers in terms of IS. For instance, Pappamihiel (2004) examined 28 pre-service teachers who probably would work with English language learners, and she found out that most participants were within the minimization stage of Bennett's model because they did not view cultural differences as negative. However, they trivialized them to a certain extent as one of the conclusions of the study, the importance of emphasizing culture and different implications within the teacher education program was highlighted. Yazdanpanah's (2017) longitudinal qualitative study with pre-service English teachers aimed to explore the development process of intercultural competence. Through weekly interviews, the benefits of the intercultural exchanges to their awareness and understanding of diverse cultural practices were observed. The positive outcomes of bringing diverse cultural practices and perspectives into second/foreign language classrooms consisted of a more significant part of pre-service English teachers' intercultural teaching experience.

Some other studies also spotlight IS from the perspectives of novice teachers. Estaji and Rahimi (2018) examined the effect of EFL teachers' level of instruction, education, and experience on their perceptions of intercultural communicative competence, and 111 participants were selected for this. The results showed no meaningful relation between years of experience or level of education and the ICC. However, qualitative analyses revealed that teachers' perceptions of instruction and their self-perceived ICC were positively related. Therefore, this study suggested that language teachers needed to be competent in intercultural communication by considering the effects of globalization. A recent study about teachers' perception of IS was conducted among college teachers. This study also collected the data using a 24-item Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), and the scores revealed that there was no significant difference in perceptions of IS depending on sex, ethnicity, or years of experience. One of the significant findings of the study suggested that there was no difference in classroom management perceptions of participants with a high or average level of intercultural sensitivity (Walker, 2019). A study aimed to explore the novice teachers' perspective of intercultural sensitivity, and factors such as bilingualism, institutional diversity, education level, age, sex, and ethnicity were determined as the predictors of the level of intercultural sensitivity. The data showed that non-controlled features such as race, sex, or age did not provide enough evidence for intercultural sensitivity but learning a second language or achieving a degree would remarkably contribute to an individual's intercultural sensitivity development (Spader, 2015). From the perspective of novice teachers, Martin (2012) conducted a study with teachers who taught in culturally diverse contexts with one year of teaching experience were interviewed, and they stated that they realized there had been more similarities than the differences among their ESL students who had different cultural backgrounds. Also, the majority of the participants noted that they felt like they needed to embrace the differences to celebrate each child's unique place in their classroom.

When the previous studies were reviewed, it was concluded that many studies were conducted about intercultural sensitivity. In view of its potential consequences on teaching, the present study centralizes intercultural sensitivity, which can be labeled as the emotional perspective of intercultural competence by centralizing stereotypes, understanding and showing respect in multicultural, specifically teaching environments which include teaching-learning processes that can be affected by culturally diverse and interdependent global factors (Cushner, 2011; Hesse & Göbel, 2007). This study focuses on pre-service and specifically novice English teachers who are not often subjects of research on intercultural sensitivity. Distinctly, this study aims to examine intercultural sensitivity levels

of pre-service and novice English teachers by comparing them to see the impact of teaching practice on intercultural sensitivity and investigate the effect of the teaching experience of novice English teachers and their developmental process, which integrates background knowledge with teaching practice in different classroom settings. The purpose of the study is to reveal the differences and similarities between pre-service English teachers' and novice English teachers' intercultural sensitivity levels so that some additional support can be provided for English teachers, such as language courses, extended exchange programs, or some training to raise intercultural sensitivity.

1. Is there any statistically significant difference between the intercultural sensitivity of pre-service and novice English teachers?
2. Is there a statistically remarkable difference in the intercultural sensitivity scale scores regarding the sex and age of the participants?
3. Is there any statistically significant change in participants' sensitivity levels who are instructed with another language during their formal education?
4. What are the novice English teachers' teaching experiences of intercultural sensitivity?

2. Method
2.1. Research Design

In the present study, a mixed-method research design was used by combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. This method enables identifying the topic deeply since it increases validity and credibility and offers a more comprehensible portrait of the social world with multiple perspectives (Greene, Krayder & Mayer, 2005, p. 275). The researchers employed a survey to collect the quantitative data. The interviews were the source of qualitative data, and they focused on the teaching of IS. Only the novice teachers participated in interviews since they had teaching experience. The survey consisted of two parts. In the first part, a short questionnaire with demographic data like age, sex, cultural identity, years of teaching experience, and linguistic use of different languages was attached to the survey. The second part included the IS level. Guba and Lincoln (1982) noted that validity in qualitative research should be based on trustworthiness rather than validity and reliability and set some criteria (Houser, 2015; Whittemore et al., 2001). These criteria have been included in the literature as the gold standard. Guba and Lincoln (1982) gathered the criteria for credibility under four main headings: credibility, reliability, conformability, and transferability (Table 1). It is recommended to specify one or more of these strategies to check the accuracy of the findings in a study (Creswell, 2003).

2.2. Participants

The study aims at comparing two groups of participants who were considered convenient subjects for the study. Accordingly, this study involves purposeful sampling, which involves "identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). This study included 88 participants 50 of them were pre-service students at the ELT department, and 38 participants were novice English teachers. Purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were used to reach the participants who met the criteria with practicum experience for pre-service teachers and limited years of teaching for novice teachers. The term "novice teachers" was chosen to reflect the individuals' new status in teaching (Jones, 2011). The novice teachers had 1-3 years of teaching experience. There

were 70 female and 18 male participants. There were 41 participants at the age of 18-21, and 41 participants were in the age range of 22-30, and 6 participants were 31-38. Pre-service students were senior students at the ELT department who were experiencing practicum at schools. All of the participants were Turkish, and English as their foreign language. Twenty-seven participants expressed that they had formal education in other languages such as Spanish, German, and Arabic. They took these languages as an elective course during eight semesters at university, and they had two hours of instruction weekly. That is, twenty-seven participants have been exposed to additional languages during their education at university.

2.3. Data Collection

In order to measure the IS levels, the "Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)" was used as the data collection tool, which was developed by Chen and Starosta (2000). The scale comprises twenty-four items five-point Likert, in which the participants decided as "5= Strongly agree", "4= Agree", "3=Partially agree", "2= Disagree", "1= Strongly disagree" for their answers to the expressions. According to the reliability scores, Cronbach's Alpha was found to be .86, which signifies that the internal consistency was relatively high. For the qualitative data collection, seven semi-structured interview questions were asked to the voluntary participants.

The quantitative data were collected by sending an online version of the survey. An online form provider was used for gathering the data because it was user-friendly and easy to follow the answers. The participants answered eight demographic questions and twenty-four questions in the ISS. In the qualitative phase of the study, five volunteer novice English teachers were interviewed. A semi-structured interview was developed by researchers. In these interviews, they were asked seven open-ended questions to see their perceptions towards cultural diversity in the EFL context. The interview questions were about the definition of culture and its relationship with language, the role of culture as a theme in EFL context, the level of emphasis on IS in the classroom, the ways of teaching culture in English lessons, and their suggestions to raise IS level in the classroom.

2.4. Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed via a statistical program. Before the data analysis, normality distribution, Q-Q plot graphics, skewness, and Kurtosis values and variance analysis were checked. 2 datasets were seen as outliers, and they were excluded from the data. Parametric tests were applied because of the normal distribution of data. When two groups of participants (pre-service/ novice, female/male, with/without additional languages) were analyzed, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The impact of age on IS was analyzed through ANOVA, and the differences were identified by Tukey Post hoc analysis since the variances were homogeneously distributed. For the analysis of the qualitative data, the interviews were transcribed, and responses from the participants were recorded in the NVivo program and assigned codes with similar meanings, and twelve codes were created and named from student responses. Twelve thematic codes named were grouped with bearing integrity in mind, and three main themes were generated.

Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant difference in the intercultural sensitivity scale scores regarding the sex and age of the participants?

When the mean scores of female and male participants are examined, it is observed that sex is not a determining factor of IS. However, there were some differences among different sex in some items' results. *"I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures"* had a 3.72 mean score from female participants while male participants' score was 4.22. It can be concluded that males had more confidence than females in terms of interaction. Another difference was seen in the item *"I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures."* The male mean score was 1.67, and the female mean score was 2.05. Therefore, it can be interpreted that female participants rejected the idea of being discouraged easily more strongly than males. In this study, the age factor comprised three subcategories. Group 1 included the 18-21 age range, Group 2, 22-30, and Group 3 represented 31-38. For testing that hypothesis, one-way ANOVA analysis was used, and the homogeneity of variance enabled the Tukey HSD post-hoc test. According to ANOVA results, there were not any significant differences among groups.

Table 3.

One-way ANOVA Results

		Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Interaction engagement	Between Groups	.135	.067	.590	.556
	Within Groups	9.708	.114		
Respect for cultural difference	Between Groups	.267	.133	1.360	.262
	Within Groups	8.345	.098		
Interaction confidence	Between Groups	1.024	.512	2.276	.109
	Within Groups	19.127	.225		
Interaction enjoyment	Between Groups	.117	.058	.203	.817
	Within Groups	24.488	.288		
Interaction attentiveness	Between Groups	.860	.430	1.536	.221
	Within Groups	23.801	.280		

In table 3, it is seen that there is no statistically significant difference in terms of age and sex variable (p>0.05). However, the items showed differences at the item level. Specifically, the item *"I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures."* had 3.70 mean score in the 18-21 age group and 4.12 in the 22-30 age group. When the demographic information was checked, it was seen that most of the novice teachers were 22-30 years old. Therefore, it can be concluded that experience and age were important factors for interaction. Similarly, the item *"I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures."* had 3.66 mean score in Group 1 and 4.10 in Group 2. Both of the items are related to intercultural interaction, and novice teachers were more confident in terms of interaction. Additionally, the item *"I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures"* displayed a meaningful difference between Group 1 and 2. The mean score of Group 1 was 4.42, and Group 2 had 3.98. The results showed that pre-service teachers felt more observant in culturally diverse contexts than novice teachers.

Research Question 3: Is there any difference between the participants who are instructed with another language during their formal education?

After collecting the demographic and personal data of the participants, another hypothesis came out from the data. It was identified that interaction and confidence subcategory had sig. (2-tailed) = 0.024<0.05, so it was a meaningful value. The confidence levels were analyzed, and participants with three languages had 3.54 mean scores while participants with two languages had 3.29. The effect of knowing a third language was analyzed, and it showed that participants who could speak more than two languages expressed themselves as more confident in culturally diverse contexts. The item *"I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures"* was one of the items which had a 4.18 mean score of participants with three languages while participants with two languages mean score was 3.75. The other important item was *"I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures."* The mean score of participants with three languages was 2.07, and participants with two languages mean score was 2.48. Also, participants with the third language mean score in the item *"I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures."* was 4.11, and participants with two languages mean score was 3.70. These statistical values diagnosed an important difference between participants with two and three languages, and it can be deduced that participants who speak more than two languages had more confidence than the ones who could speak only Turkish and English.

Table 4.

Group Statistics

	Effect of 2nd & 3rd language	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Er. Mean
Interaction engagement	No	61	3.8645	.35822	.04586
	Yes	27	3.8764	.28697	.05523
Respect for cultural difference	No	61	2.6530	.32673	.04183
	Yes	27	2.6115	.28920	.05566
Interaction confidence	No	61	3.2918	.49876	.06386
	Yes	27	3.5407	.39542	.07610
Interaction enjoyment	No	61	1.5902	.53192	.06811
	Yes	27	1.5751	.54151	.10421
Interaction attentiveness	No	61	3.9344	.50486	.06464
	Yes	27	3.8137	.59145	.11382

Research Question 4: What are the novice English teachers' teaching experiences of intercultural sensitivity?

The novice teachers expressed that they became more sensitive to other cultures after they learned English and other languages. For instance, one of the interviewees stated that *"… language is the primary and the main tool for passing down the cultural elements; therefore people who speak the same language will have most likely the same culture and keep improving or contributing to it".* The other theme was teaching culture in EFL classes. All of the interviewees agreed that culture was an inseparable part of EFL, and it had to be integrated into the curriculum because they stated that one of the aims of teaching a language was constructing bridges between different cultures, and language teaching should promote intercultural awareness. When the teachers were asked to give some suggestions to teach culture in class, there were different ideas. One of the ideas was teaching different dialects of English in EFL classes so that learners could be aware of different countries and speakers of English.

Table 5.

Analysis of Interviews

Themes	Codes	Quotations
Language and culture relationship	Effects of culture and language on each other	"We can benefit from a common culture or different cultures while teaching English. If we use a common cultural element in teaching English, students can understand the similarities between communities. They can understand that even if we live in different countries, we have the same cultural elements. That makes them more "world citizens.""
	Communication	"It should include communicational tips like what to say where. For example, students should be aware that "You all right?" is commonly said for two different purposes in Britain and America although both meanings are known in both cultures."
	Cultural transmission and sharing	"We can benefit from different cultures to teach English. In that way, we can build bridges between communities. Students may wonder how different cultures work, what they have. They can even do some research about different cultures. That makes them more "tolerant" to differences of communities."
	Sympathy and respect	"Making the students in touch with international students. When they learn about different cultures, they respect more, and friendship is an important way of having cultural connections."
Teaching of culture	Cultural awareness	"I am including cultural information in my classes. In 8th graders, we study the "In the Kitchen" unit. Under that theme, I'm showing different countries' dishes, how they prepare them, and what their recipes are. I'm using lots of visuals and videos in my lessons. Students are trying to find out differences and similarities between their traditional dishes and ours."
	World citizenship and globalization	"They can understand that even if we live in different countries we have the same cultural elements. That makes them more "world citizens.""
	Creating a context to have effective/ideal communication	"Culture has a huge role in the EFL context. While learners acquire a second language, they may also think that they should be immersed in the target culture and some of them may reject it. That is why the issue of identity is very important in sociolinguistics. Therefore, EFL materials should be culturally-appropriate".
Suggestions for integrating intercultural sensitivity in the EFL classroom	Lifestyles, daily life, habits	"English people's lifestyles, behaviors, food, habits, special occasions, and the way they think. I include some materials about their style of family relationship, friendship, their habits such as eating habits, working habits, and conversation habits".
	National holidays	"Students examine culture themselves through projects that I design. Also, I include materials focusing on cultural aspects of TL such as national holidays, traditions, and figures."
	Traditions	"With the theme cultural days which students are responsible for a country's culture and explain its traditions."
	Cultural elements of language (idioms, proverbs, jokes)	"If you want to teach a language, you might as well teach the culture of that language such as the idioms, proverbs, and maybe even the swears/curses. You can't expect the l1 language user to translate everything to l2 and use it naturally. This won't work."
	Integrating different language skills	"I integrate cultural information into all skills such as in a reading text. They learn more words related to culture. Then, I extend it into a discussion for speaking. "

The qualitative analysis has been conducted with novice teachers purposefully. Since the research question was based on the teaching of culture. That's why the pre-service teachers have been excluded from this part of the study. Accordingly, novice teachers talked about their experiences in the process of teaching culture. They were interviewed and answered the semi-instructed questions developed by the researchers. The participants mainly focused on the language and culture relationship, teaching and integrating cultural themes in the findings of the qualitative analysis.

When Table. 5 is examined, it is seen that three main themes flourished out of the content analysis. The first theme, language and culture relationship, has four codes. The second theme is the teaching of culture, and it has three codes. Finally, the third theme suggestion for integrating IS in the EFL classroom has five codes.

In the overall evaluation of the codes, it can be concluded that the participants view culture and language as complementary parts of the whole. Besides, they put forward that culture is needed for ideal communication and describe lifestyles, daily-life, and habits as an integral part of fostering IS in the EFL classroom.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In the study, IS levels of senior English pre-service teachers and novice English teachers who had 1-3 years of teaching experience were high, and there was not a very big difference when it was analyzed generally. The scale had five dimensions, and there were significant differences in item levels. Especially, interaction confidence displayed differences, and the experience was one of the factors which affect the results. The higher levels of IS can be considered as a result of many indicators. The changes in higher education programs and the expected qualifications of language teachers can affect the IS of English teachers as well. The exchange programs such as Erasmus and some elective courses in teacher training programs can be some positive sources of the high level of IS. Some studies have touched on the effect of exchange programs and exposure to multicultural contexts. For instance, Mahon and Cushner (2007) reported that teaching abroad programs helped to improve flexibility in terms of adaptation of teaching skills to students with differences. Similarly, this study concluded that knowing another language and being exposed to other cultures had a positive correlation with IS. Also, Dooly (2010) found out that teachers and pre-service teachers who had teaching experiences abroad developed a much more positive attitude when cultural differences were the subjects. Similarly, Çiftçi Gürbüz's (2019) study also identified that students of EFL departments who attended the Erasmus program expressed themselves as more "open-minded" and "tolerant of differences" to other cultures. A study conducted by Tuncel and Paker (2018) investigated the impacts of an elective course taught in the department of English, and the results indicated that the contribution of intercultural communication courses contributed to students' IS. Chen (1997) also emphasized the contribution of educational programs, which gave a great deal of importance to IS by increasing the awareness towards culture and diversity. In this study, there was not a significant difference between pre-service and novice English teachers' IS levels. The similar sensitivity levels of novice teachers and senior pre-service teachers can be an outcome of globalization and its interconnectedness. Jackson (2008) carried out a study to investigate the effect of globalization and abroad experience, and the results indicated that experiencing other cultures affects the IS of students significantly. Deweale and Wei (2012) conducted a study with a larger group of participants, and they found out that multilingualism and being at the advanced level of the foreign language showed a positive correlation between

multilingualism and cognitive empathy. This study had participants with three languages, and their IS was higher than the bilingual participants at some specific items, and it can be an outcome of the effect of knowing a third language. Estaji and Rahimi (2018) obtained consistent results with the literature, and their study showed statistical differences in teachers' perceptions of the effects of cultural practices in the classroom for their teaching and the role of culture as an inseparable element of teacher education. When the novice teachers were interviewed, they expressed that they included cultural elements. Teaching culture was also a common theme for those interviews, and novice teachers agreed with the results of that study.

Being culturally aware, conducting an interaction confidently, and being engaged in an intercultural interaction are some of today's English teacher profile qualifications. Integrating courses, increasing the amount of cultural interaction in the ELT departments, raising awareness of differences and similarities between different cultures are essential elements of EFL teaching. Both pre-service and novice teachers can be offered some coaching, and the initial goal can be training teachers as culturally aware and sensitive to implement critical changes in all settings (Haberman, 1991). The present study indicated that the pre-service and novice English teachers have awareness toward intercultural concepts such as values, beliefs, or languages. Therefore, it can be concluded that both pre-service and novice teachers have the potential to help their students to increase their IS, and novice teachers are already willing to integrate culture in language teaching.

This study has a few limitations, which may lead to further studies in the future. For instance, the numbers were not spread in a balanced manner, so the sample cannot represent the general population. The other limitation comes from the research tool. Also, it was not possible to observe the participants' real interaction in an intercultural context. Therefore, the data only comes from their own experiences and self-reports.

Ethical Issues
The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this paper.

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