

AN EXPLATORY CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHERS WITH STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCES:
INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE RELATED
PERCEPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

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Study abroad and student exchange opportunities in pre-service teacher training programs give language teacher candidates a chance to improve their intercultural communicative competence by developing personal and professional relationships in communities where they use the target language as the medium of communication. This research reports the results of a research study that investigated the effectiveness of the sojourn experiences of a group of language teachers on their self-reported ICC development. 9 English language teachers working at a private university in Ankara, Turkey, participated in the research project. Data were collected via a detailed background questionnaire followed by semi-structured face-to-face interviews and 2-hour of classroom observations. SPSS 17.00 was used to develop frequency tables of the time-spent abroad, personality traits of the participants, and the frequency of the themes emerged from the data transcribed from the interviews. As a result, the activities, materials, and teaching methods were listed and culture-related items were identified and they were combined with the results of the classroom observations.

As a result of the study, a definition of intercultural communication, interculturally competent speaker, the importance of ICC for a language teacher and a learner, the ways to apply ICC into teaching, the skills associated with ICC knowledge, and

possible problems related to the curriculum, materials, student-profile, and classroom activities were derived from the responses, and knowledge and motivation were identified as important components of ICC. It was found out that curriculum should be evaluated to enable teachers integrate their ICC knowledge into their teaching practices.

Keywords: Intercultural Cultural Competence; ICC; Study Abroad Programs

ÖZ

KISA SÜRELİ YURTDIŞI TECRÜBESİ OLAN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİ ÜZERİNE İRDELEYİCİ BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI: KÜLTÜRLERARASI İLETİŞİM BECERİSİYLE İLGİLİ ALGILARI VE UYGULAMALARI

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İngilizce öğretmenlerinin en büyük sorumluluklarından biri de dilin gramer yapısının yanı sıra dilin iletişimsel işlevlerinin de başarılı bir şekilde öğretilmesidir. Bu sorumluluğu yerine getirmek için, ilk olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kendilerinin kültürlerarası iletişim becerilerini geliştirmeleri (ICC), İngilizceyi iletişim sırasında etkili bir biçimde kullanmaları gerekmektedir. İngiliz Dili Öğretimi programları sırasında bulunan değişim programları, İngilizce öğretmen adaylarına İngilizcenin kullanıldığı ülkelerde bulunma şansı sağlayarak, adayların İngilizceyi kişisel ve mesleki alanlarda kullanmalarına imkân vererek, onlara ICC gelişimleri için olanak sağlar. Bu çalışma bir grup İngilizce öğretmenin Erasmus ve Comenius deneyimlerinin, adayların ICC gelişimleri ve programların kişisel, sosyal, dil gelişimi ve profesyonel açıdan hayatlarına etkilerini içermektedir. Katılımcılar lisans eğitimleri sırasında Erasmus ya da Comenius deneyimine sahip olan ve çalışmanın yapıldığı süreçte Ankara’da bir vakıf üniversitesinde İngilizce okutmanı olarak çalışan öğretmenlerden oluşmaktadır. Veriler katılımcılarla yapılan detaylı mülakatlar ve sınıf gözlemlerinden elde edilmiştir. Erasmus ve Comenius programlarına katılımın pedagojik etkileri, değişim programlarının öğretmenlerin ICC gelişimi ve bu becerinin meslek gelişimine sağladığı faydalar, ve karşılaşılan problemler ve olası çözümler tartışılmıştır.

Çalışmanın sonucunda, öğretmenlerin ICC becerisine sahip olduğu ve bunun İngilizce öğretmenleri ve öğrencileri için gerekli bir edinim olduğunu düşündükleri bulunmuştur. Bunun yanı sıra müfredatın, öğrencilerin dil seviyesi ve motivasyonlarının, sınıf içi aktivite ve kullanılan materyallerin uygun olmadığı öğretmenlerin büyük bir çoğunluğu tarafından belirtilmiştir. Bu nedenden dolayı, müfredatın yeniden gözden geçirilmesi ve kültür eğitimini mümkün kılacak, geliştirebilecek materyallerin hazırlanması gerektiği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültür, Erasmus, Comenius, Dil Öğretimi

To My Parents

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ	vi
DEDICATION	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF SYMBOLS/ABBREVIATIONS	xiv
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.2. Purpose and Significant of the Study	5
1.3. Definitions of the Terms	6
1.3.1. Definition of Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	6
1.3.2. Definition of Interculturally Competent Speaker.....	6
1.3.3. Definition of Study Abroad.....	7
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
2.1 Intercultural Communicative Competence	8
2.1.1. Communicative and Pragmatic Competence	8
2.1.2. Speech Acts.....	10
2.1.3. Definition of Intercultural Communicative Competence.....	13
2.2. Study Abroad and Intercultural Competence.....	18
2.3 Interculturally Competent Speaker	20
3. METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Research Questions	23
3.2 Study Design	23
3.3 Method of Research	24
3.4 Setting	26
3.5 Participants.....	28

3.6	Data Collection Procedures	31
3.7	Data Collection Tools	32
3.7.1	Semi-Structured Interview	32
3.7.2	Class Observation	34
3.8	Data Analysis	36
4.	FINDINGS	
4.1.	The Findings of Each Case	38
4.1.1.	Case I.....	38
4.1.2.	Case II	45
4.1.3.	Case III.....	51
4.1.4.	Case IV	57
4.1.5.	Case V	62
4.1.6.	Case VI.....	67
4.1.7.	Case VII	71
4.1.8.	Case VIII	75
4.1.9.	Case XI.....	79
4.2.	Summary of the Findings	83
4.2.1.	Summary of the Interview Questions.....	83
4.2.2.	Summary of the Classroom Observation	90
5.	DISCUSSION	
	Discussions of the Findings	92
6.	CONCLUSION	
6.1	Conclusion	96
6.2	Limitations of the Study	98
6.3	Pedagogical Implications for Teacher Education	98
	REFERENCES.....	101
	APPENDICES	
	Appendix A Frequency Tables of Personality Adjectives	107
	Appendix B Background Questionnaire& Semi-Structured Interview.....	111
	Appendix C Familiarity with the Term ICC	116
	Appendix D Skills Related to ICC	117
	Appendix E The Necessity of ICC for a Language Learner and a Teacher.....	118

Appendix F Participants' prior knowledge, motivation level, time-spent abroad, personal, social, language and professional development	119
Appendix G Changes in Participants' Teaching Philosophy; ICC Integration into the Teaching Practices	120
Appendix H Possibility of Raising Students' ICC knowledge, Appropriateness of the Student-Profile and Possible Ways	123
Appendix I Appropriateness of the Curriculum, Materials and Resources	124
Appendix J Summary of the Thesis	125
Appendix K Kütüphane İzin Formu	135

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

TABLE 1: Bachman's Model of Communicative Competence

TABLE 2: Participants' Study Abroad Programs, Host Countries, Duration of Stays,
Experience as a teacher and Experience at the Institution, Language Background

TABLE 3: Educational Background of the Participants

TABLE 4: Observation Protocol

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICC	:	Intercultural Communicative Competence
MC	:	Main Course
RW	:	Reading and Writing Course
LS	:	Listening and Speaking Course
ELIT	:	English Language and Literature
ELT	:	English Language Teaching
MA	:	Master of Art
BE	:	Beginner-Elementary Level
PIN	:	Pre-Intermediate Level
INT	:	Intermediate Level
UPPER	:	Upper-Intermediate Level
ADV	:	Advanced Level
REP	:	Repeat Level

CHAPTER 1

In this chapter, brief introduction to the topic, statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study and lastly definitions of the terms used in the study are presented.

1. 0. INTRODUCTION

Identification of one's own cultural patterns, accepting and appreciating the patterns of others, and eventually developing skills and abilities to live and work with culturally different people are becoming more and more important in today's world. According to Lundgren (2004), the integration of communicative competence, cultural competence and intercultural competence is the key to develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC), which enables to be part of the developing world. Study abroad and exchange programs are mostly believed to increase the intercultural communicative competence of the students. Therefore, over the last several decades, there has been an increase in the number of students participating in study abroad programs, as well as the number of higher institutions supporting these programs. Foreign language learners are in need of developing ICC to increase their familiarity with the cultural concepts and to integrate themselves with their own culture and the culture of the target language as well. Hence, the responsibility of language teachers may mean confronting students with the communicative functions of the language besides teaching them the linguistic functions. By providing language teachers or candidates with a real life experience in the target culture, exchange programs give them a chance to reconsider their assumptions and stereotypes about the culture of the target language. Textbooks or the Internet cannot be the complete reflections of cultural aspects since experience may be thought as one of the most needed and reliable ways of getting to know the cultural norms. Hence, various levels of exchange relationships from face-to-face dealings with family, friends and colleagues are needed to be investigated to gain a better understanding of this notion, which is primarily concerned with the interpersonal relationships.

In order to convey one's message to people with a variety of backgrounds, besides linguistic competence, intercultural communicative competence, here by referred as ICC, is needed indeed. No matter how grammatically correct one speaks, there will be no communication without consideration of the pragmatic aspects of language. Therefore, considering the increase in cross-cultural interactions in business, in education and in the awareness of living in a multi-cultural society; gaining intercultural competence has become a necessity in language learning and teaching. Since teachers are the key participants of the acquisition of ICC, they take the responsibility of both gaining ICC skills themselves and helping learners acquire it. In addition to teachers, stakeholders have a leading role in the ICC integration to the curriculum by means of choosing materials and designing the courses. Last but not the least, the study abroad or exchange programs such as Comenius or Erasmus are the unique elements of this ICC puzzle. Like a puzzle, without the combination of all those parts- teachers, curriculum and the study abroad programs-, the acquisition of ICC may be almost impossible.

The world shrinks, and paradoxically, the world expands. As we come in contact with people from cultures other than our own- in our neighborhoods, in our schools, or in our workplaces- we begin to understand communication as a transactional process. Viewing communication as a transactional process means that we develop a mutually dependent relationship by exchanging symbols. This definition suggests several axioms or truths about communication. First of all, communication is a process. In other words, it is symbolic, irreversible, and unrepeatable (Cooper, 2007, p.3). Therefore, meanings are in people, not in words. Put it in another way, words do not have meanings, people do. In order to communicate effectively, we must have common meanings for these symbols. The problem is that meanings are not transferable, only messages are. I can say, "I love you" (that's the message), but I can't control your meaning for those words (Cooper, 2007, p.3). In short, communication is a quite complex issue that requires more than one's perceptions or understanding. Accordingly, Cooper (2007) states that when two people communicate, there are actually six people communicating: my self-perception, my perception of you, my perception of your perception of me, your self-perception,

your perception of me, and your perception of my perception of you (Cooper, 2007, p.5).

According to Neuliep (2003), intercultural communication occurs whenever a minimum of two people from different cultures or micro cultures come together and exchange verbal and nonverbal symbols. Micro cultures are described as groups of people that exist within the extensive rules and guidelines of the dominant culture, but are distinct in some way: racially, linguistically, or according to their occupations, ages, or sexual orientations. Due to these distinguishing features, they often have histories that make them different from the dominant cultural group (Cooper, 2007, p.7).

Similar to distinctive factors between micro and macro cultures, there are variances in communication within the cultures. Intercultural communication, like all communication, is contextual. What is meant by context is a combination of factors- situation, setting, circumstance, the people involved, the relationship of those people, and so on. Thus, not all communication is appropriate in every context. For example, one communicates differently with his/her parents than with his/her teachers (Cooper, 2007, p.7). In other words, how one communicates depends on a lot of contextual variables. Therefore, communication may be called even as a theatrical production, i.e. what is on stage can be seen, but all the activity backstage cannot be reflected. The roles of interlocutors or their relationships towards each other may not become clear. All you hear is the words, like the ones uttered in a theatre. It is the backstage activity that enables action on stage to be effective, though (Cooper, 2007, p.8). If the understanding, acceptance or communicative abilities are missing, then words will be doomed to lose their precious meanings as well.

Inasmuch as establishing a mutual meaning is significant, some definitions also need to be updated to get a mutual understanding. In the light of this change, the definition of being a good teacher goes beyond the one having linguistic competence with the addition of being interculturally competent as well. Living in a multicultural society or involved in cross-cultural relationships requires being aware of cultural aspects. Therefore, in today's world, being interculturally competent is one of the most

important qualities that students should acquire throughout their learning process. Hence, teachers are the ones who should be interculturally competent in the first place. According to Thomson (1987), teachers' key role is to help their learners to gain language competence which refers to both linguistic and communicative competences. In order to achieve this, teachers should themselves have language competence to a greater degree than what is expected from their learners (Thomson, 1987, p.34). In other words, teachers' opinions gain a great deal of importance in this process. According to Yero (2002), how teachers behave in classrooms is affected by their beliefs (as cited in Kılıç, 2013). Consequently, exploring teachers' beliefs on the necessity of ICC education, their definitions are required to get an insight about the problems in the implementation process.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Gaining intercultural competence is necessary to be a part of 21st century education, which makes governments do substantial investment to exchange programs such as Comenius, Erasmus, or study abroad. As a result, the number of students participating in study abroad programs has gone up in the last few years. Most of the higher education institutions (both private and state universities) are supporting study abroad programs with the belief that these programs will increase the intercultural competency of the students. Although there are many studies conducted to support the benefits of these programs, there is not much research done about their efficiency in Turkey. Whether these programs facilitate the development of intercultural competence of language teachers and whether the ELT curriculum and the materials provided in the institutions encourage improvement of ICC knowledge are unknown. Hence, this study aims at finding out the inferences of having a study abroad experience on language teachers' teaching practices, identifying possible problems hindering the application process and lastly suggesting possible ways to encourage the effective integration of ICC knowledge into their teaching practices.

1.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

Traditional pedagogies based on the native speaker model usually define language learners in terms of what they are not or at least not yet, i.e. whether they have the right French accent or British accent etc. On the other hand, encouraging learners to identify, through contrast with others, the cultural voices in their own texts may make them better to evaluate themselves for the desired outcome.

The duty of a language teacher is to confront students with the meanings associated with the specific uses of words, not with spiritual ideas and beliefs (Byram, 2008, p.31). In other words, the responsibility is mainly to teach the culture as it is mediated through language, not as it is studied by the social scientists and anthropologists (as cited in Byram, 2008, p.31). In other words, if students are made to understand the comparable similarities between their own culture and the culture of the target language, the acquisition of the distinguishing concepts may become easier. Otherwise, there may be a complete rejection affecting the process of the learning as a whole. Therefore, higher educational institutions take this responsibility of making learners more world-minded by knowing their own cultures and world cultures as well via study abroad programs.

One of the most fundamental notions of studying the effects of exchange programs on language teachers is their function as a social glue keeping societies together (as cited in Byram, 2008). Hence, various levels of exchange relationships like personal or impersonal ones should be investigated to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of effective communication. If we are to thrive in “a world lived in common with others”, we must step outside of our own frame of reference and interact meaningfully with different cultural realities (as cited in Bennett, 2009). According to Guskin (1991), our way of living is only one way of viewing the world, and we don't have a clue about what is really going on (as cited in Bennett, 2009). Consequently, identification of our own cultural patterns, accepting and appreciating the patterns of others, and eventually developing skills and abilities to live and work with culturally different people are becoming more and more important in today's world. Since the teachers are the key participants in this undergoing change, their

ICC and its effects on their teaching, and possible problems in their classroom practices had better be explored to gain insights about the whole integration progress.

1. 3. Definitions of the Terms

In order to get a reliable finding out of the data, it was crucial to define the terms prior to the data analysis. Therefore, the definitions of ICC, interculturally competent speaker and study abroad as they were used in the study are presented below:

1.3.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Although there is no full agreement on the definition of intercultural competence, a single definition has to be defined as a starting point for the future attempts to measure the construct (Deardoff, 2004). The resulting definition was used to guide the study in terms of individual and interactional level, and each level consisted of two separate steps. In the first level, the individual one, the participants' attitudes of respect and value of other cultures, openness and their ability to withhold judgment, and curiosity to discover ambiguity were included. Then, whether they developed a specific knowledge and comprehension that would include cultural self-awareness, deep knowledge, and sociolinguistic awareness in addition to the skills like listening, observing, analyzing, interpreting and relating were included. At the second level, internal and external outcomes were defined. The internal outcomes included the increased adaptability, flexibility, and empathy while the external ones were related to one's development of effective and appropriate communication skills in an intercultural situation (Salisbury, 2011).

1.3.2. Interculturally Competent Speaker

According to Sercu (2002), intercultural speaker is determined to comprehend the other person's culture and to enhance his/ her own cultural knowledge by means of engaging multicultural relationships (Sercu, 2002, p.33). Inasmuch as the aim of teaching a language is no longer believed as teaching only the general linguistic information, learners need to become intercultural speakers. As Byram and Zarate (1994) have proposed, foreign language learners, rather than trying to become like native speakers, should be taught instead how to become 'intercultural speakers'.

Hence, there is a shift from the native speaker norm to an intercultural speaker issue. Research has shown that assessing intercultural competence is not with methods or tools but rather in defining what it is we are measuring and ensuring that the goals are aligned with overall mission and purposes of the course, program or organization (Deardoff, 2009). Therefore, the question is how a graduate student can be called as interculturally competent depends on the definition of ICC.

1.3.3. Study Abroad

In this study, Erasmus, and Comenius were chosen as study abroad experiences. Traditionally, in Erasmus program, students go to a European university, and they attend courses to get credits at host institutions for a semester or a full academic year, and they have a chance to fully immerse themselves into the local culture by either living with a host family or living in a typical university residence with other students with a variety of backgrounds. On the other hand, in Comenius programs, ELT students- both graduates and undergraduates- can go to a European country and work there as teaching assistants changing from 13 weeks to 45 weeks. They also have a chance to live the culture of the host country by either living with a host family or living with other assistants coming all over the world. For the purposes of this study, a study abroad experience is basically defined as the enrollment in the programs stated above.

CHAPTER 2

2.0. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, previous studies about intercultural communicative competence, study abroad and intercultural competence and lastly interculturally competent speaker are displayed.

2. 1. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

In the following section, communicative and pragmatic competence, speech acts and lastly broader definition of ICC and related research are presented.

2.1.1. Communicative and Pragmatic Competence

It is generally accepted that mastering the grammar of language is not sufficient for foreign language learners to be called as communicatively competent. They need to know and apply the pragmatic functions of a language in an appropriate way. This is best described with the term communicative competence which is developed by Hymes (1967; 1972), who found Chomsky's idealized notion of linguistic competence inadequate and restricted. The concept of communicative competence was later extended for teaching and testing purposes by Canale and Swain (1980) who divided communicative competence into four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. This model by Canale and Swain (1980) was further broadened by Bachman (1990), and according to Littlemore and Low (2006a, 2006b), Bachman's model is "the most straightforward and unproblematic" one (Canale & Swain, 1980, p.89). Bachman's model of communicative competence is displayed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Bachman's Model (1990) of Communicative Competence

Organizational Competence		Pragmatic Competence	
Grammatical Competence	Textual Competence	Illocutionary Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence
Vocabulary or variety	Cohesion	Ideational functions	Sensitivity to dialect
Morphology	Rhetorical Organization	Manipulative functions	Sensitivity to register
Syntax		Heuristic functions	Sensitivity to naturalness
Phonology/ graphology		Imaginative functions	Ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech

Bachman's main aim for extending earlier models of communicative competence was to define the abilities he wanted to measure so that based on these definitions he could develop appropriate language tests. What makes his framework more comprehensive is the detailed explanation of each process. The framework is prepared based on an empirical study (Bachman& Palmer, 1982), and includes a language test designed to measure grammatical competence (morphology and syntax), pragmatic competence (vocabulary, cohesion, and organization), and sociolinguistic competence (sensitivity to register, naturalness, and cultural references). The categorization of the framework is done according to the results of the study. The changes made in the framework can be listed as the redefinition of the pragmatic competence and the addition of the morphology, syntax, vocabulary, cohesion, and organization to the organizational competence. Moreover, under "pragmatic competence", they included not only the sociolinguistic competence but also various functions performed through language use. There was no change made

in the components of sociolinguistic competence since the distinctiveness of the components described for this competence was supported by their study. The result has shown that language competence or communicative language ability consists of organizational and pragmatic competence. While organizational competence includes the ability to produce and recognize grammatically correct sentences, to comprehend their propositional meaning and to organize oral and written texts; pragmatic competence includes the ability to perform speech acts, to use the language in an appropriate way with the knowledge of sociolinguistic rules of appropriateness, cultural references and figurative language.

2.1.2. Speech Acts

As Rubin (1983) has pointed out, speech acts reflect fundamental cultural values that may be specific to a speech community. She further states that lack of speech act knowledge may cause breakdowns in intercultural and interethnic communication (as cited in Quasay& Sattar& Che Lah& Raja Suleiman, 2011). Since words derive their meanings from the contexts where they are being used, they are the combination of both lexical meaning and conversational implications (as cited in Lin, 2009). Hence, it can be said that besides grammatical and lexical competence, pragmatic competence is vital to communicate appropriately. According to Fraser (1983), pragmatic competence is “the knowledge of how an addressee determines what a speaker is saying and recognizes the intended illocutionary force conveyed through subtle attitudes” (as cited in Abed, 2011). Therefore, it can be stated that interlocutor’s interpretation of the message is as important as the message itself. As a result of this, the way people interpret the same message brings the topic of language and culture.

Since the language is shaped through the context and the culture where it is spoken, people can understand the same language in different ways according to their perceptions. Empirical studies reveal that same speech acts and strategies can vary according to the conceptualization and verbalization of the L2 learners’ own culture and language, which is related to the concept of socio-cultural knowledge. In other words, when second language learners engage in conversations with native speakers,

difficulties may arise due to their lack of pragmatic competence, which may eventually cause pragmatic errors (Abed, 2011).

As Thomas (1983) pointed out pragmatic errors, which can lead to misunderstandings, or misjudgments of people or be called as rude or impolite, can be more detrimental than linguistic errors, which may only reflect speaker's less proficiency in the target language (as cited in Umale, 2011). Hence, cross-cultural misunderstandings encountered by non-native speakers (NNS) may be associated with their inability to communicate appropriately in social contexts rather than their foreign language proficiency levels (as cited in Sasaki & Beamer, 2002).

With its relation to language, research has shown that different cultures have been proved to vary drastically in interactional styles, leading to different preferences for speech act behaviors (Quasay et al., 2011). A different perspective is brought to intercultural studies with a discourse approach theory proposed by Scollon and Wong Scollon (1995). They claim that successful discourse depends on knowing what your discourse partner is talking about and making sure your discourse partner knows what you are talking about (Scollon& Wong Scollon, 1995, p:74). Therefore, it is important to be aware of the fact that nationalities have different discourse strategies. Accordingly, they propose that deductive and inductive discourse strategies are used in communication. Although the aim, which is to reduce the ambiguity of the discourse, is same in both of the strategies, initiating the topic is different in each strategy. While primary attention is given to the end of the conversation in inductive pattern (topic-delayed), beginning of the conversation is the main part in the deductive (topic-first) pattern (Scollon& Wong Scollon, 1995, p.74-75). Therefore, in inductive pattern, arguments, explanation or clarification are expressed before the decision or the actual answer, whilst deductive pattern requires the reply in the beginning and supportive arguments later. Though it is assumed that Western tend to use more deductive patterns and Asian use more inductive patterns of discourse, both discourse patterns are used in all the societies. In short, being aware of different discourse patterns may help a language learner to communicate effectively and to avoid possible misunderstandings.

As stated by Bruner (1957), here are micro and macro-level of categorization systems that enable individuals to reflect their cultures (Bruner, 1957, p.10). In micro-level labeling, sample categories like defining the objects around us are found whereas these minor abstract classifications lead to the establishment of macro-world level views (as cited in Fox, 1997). These categories reflect the way that each individual sees the world, and eventually affect his/her own attitudes about the host culture and the people having different categories. Therefore, most of the sojourners have some stereotypes about the host culture prior to their experience. Since the pre-existing categories are different from the ones in the host culture, they need to adapt them, or add new categories. According to Detweiler (1980), the broader the categories, the easier the sojourner can tolerate the differences (Detweiler, 1980, p.279). If the categories are narrow, the individuals are less likely to adapt themselves to the new environment. In contrast, they tend to have more stereotypes and ambiguities towards the culture. Classification or categorization enables individuals to have similar perspectives, or behaviors, which prevents the chaos or possible problems; however, it also hinders their adaptation to a different environment. Besides the categories in people's minds, there are other filters such as the context, or the relationship between the interlocutors, which may all affect the way people adapt themselves to a new environment and the way they communicate. Being competent in one particular cultural concept and adapted to that culture do not guarantee being interculturally competent. According to Kim (1991), ICC is an internal capacity within each individual and adaptability is the capacity of an individual's internal ability to alter his/her existing attitudes and behaviors with the ones demanded by the new environment (Kim, 1991, p.268).

Hence, it may be stated that each individual has his/her own filter, internal capacity, categorization system, and these filters implicitly or explicitly affect the way we communicate (Fox, 1997). In multicultural contexts, the function of these filters gains importance since there is a large variety of different lenses comparing to the ones in the same cultural area. Consequently, each individual interprets the situations in accordance with his/her own filter, which may cause the misunderstandings, miscommunication or conflicts. As it is pointed out by Gadamer (1989), when we

confront such a situation, all we need to do is to learn how to break the text. What is meant is to start with the smallest part in order to get the main idea (Gadamer, 1989, p.268).

2.1.3. Definition of ICC

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is becoming much more important day by day since the people in the world no longer have distant connections with each other. Therefore, they need to learn how to communicate effectively, appropriately and meaningfully in different contexts. Compared to the past, people are no longer obsessed with the cultural boundaries, and they are much better in appreciating the goodies in various cultures. As a research field, and practical applications such as training, sojourning, participating in daily conversations; ICC, has a limited history of about 50 years (Arasaratnam& Doerfel, 2005). However, there is still not a precise consensus on the definition of ICC since creating a culture-general model may be subjective.

According to Gudykunst (2002), ICC is often described as a communication between people from different cultures, and mostly it is limited to only face-to-face communication (Gudykunst, 2002, p. 179). Since there are a variety of different perspectives on the definition, the study may be influenced by the researcher's own definition of ICC. Hence, the definition of ICC has a major role in the application process of the research. Though the development of the communicative skills seems as the central point in most of the definitions, there are some other factors such as cultural knowledge and awareness, and tolerance of ambiguity that affect the successful ICC acquisition (as cited in Spencer-Rogers& McGovern, 2002). In order to reach an acceptable ICC level, individuals are expected to meet the challenges of these factors. What is meant by challenges is the prejudices that people may have towards different cultures, which may affect the way they approach learning the language and their communication with people with different cultural backgrounds. Besides prejudice, lack of desired linguistic knowledge and the abilities to adapt oneself in a multicultural society also limit becoming an interculturally competent person.

According to Ting-Toomey (1993), affective, cognitive and behavioral components are the leading variables that connect interpersonal communication to intercultural contexts (Ting-Toomey, 1993, p.73). Hence, intercultural competence is the capability to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior according to the cultural similarities and differences (as cited in Dejaeghere& Cao, 2009). In other words, an individual is expected to blend his/her own worldview, perceptions with his/her new experiences in a different country. This individual may be called as a stranger, in this case the sojourner, who will experience a brand-new individual progress in the adaptation progress to a host culture (as cited in Fox, 1997). Kim (1988) stated that “the cross-cultural adaptation process is essential to become a member of the society” (Kim, 1988, p.59). Accordingly, cross-cultural adaptation is a crucial factor to be a part of the host society and not to be called a stranger any longer.

In terms of language teaching, prospective English Language Teaching (ELT) candidates and also teachers are expected to gain ICC knowledge since teaching English is not only limited to having linguistic abilities but also it requires knowledge in the cultural aspects. According to Thornbury (1997), language awareness is defined as the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of language that enables them to teach effectively. He further states that the advantages of language awareness are anticipating learners’ difficulties and providing assistance on time; effective preparation, adaptation and evaluation of the materials; and lastly, reliability and validity of the syllabus and assessment tools (Thornbury, 1997). Being competent in language can also make a language teacher capable of providing more clear explanations and enhance his/her knowledge as a guide or facilitator. Hence, the aim of adding the cultural aspects of communication to teaching is to achieve a better understanding of the language and broaden the perspectives of language learners.

Regarding the comprehensive explanation of ICC, Lundgren (2004) makes a clear distinction among “communicative competence”, “cultural competence” and “intercultural competence” and argues that the integration of the three components can result in the achievement of ICC. Therefore, ICC requires the development of all these competences. While communicative competence involves the fluency in four

language skills with sensitivity to genres and registers; cultural competence involves the knowledge of everyday culture, popular culture, ideas, beliefs, perceptions, artefacts, behavior, institutions, history, geography, literature, art, music, age, gender, class, etc.; and intercultural competence involves “a cross curricular general proficiency including adaptability, tolerance, accepting other views, empathy, flexibility, cultural awareness” along with the knowledge of the concepts such as ethnocentricity, stereotyping, and social constructivism (Lundgren, 2004, p.2). Overall, the goals of ICC as stated by Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) are;

to give learners intercultural competence as well as linguistic competence; to prepare them for interaction with people of other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviors; to help them see that such interaction is an enriching experience (p. 10).

Therefore, the aim on the part of language learners is not to become native speakers but to become intercultural speakers, who can act as mediators between two cultures, interpret and understand other perspectives (Lundgren, 2004).

Another reason of the increasing number of intercultural competence studies is related to the awakening awareness in the importance to exchange/ study abroad programs. Being aware of the cultural dimension of their interaction with others is as necessary as having a linguistic knowledge. Hence, in order to have a good command of English, learners need to develop ICC as well. Successful cross-cultural communication depends mostly on the acquisition of abilities to understand different modes of thinking and living, as they are embodied in the language, and to reconcile or mediate between different modes present in any specific interaction (Byram, M., 2008, p.12). Although the term intercultural competence is related to communicative competence, it goes beyond the using the same language appropriately in contexts by adding the concept of appropriate use of language across cultures. According to definitions given above, intercultural competence can be defined as the ability to communicate with people with a variety of backgrounds in a culturally appropriate way.

Research has shown that there are various aspects affecting intercultural communication. The motivation of university language learners is mainly affected by

their interest in the foreign people and their culture (as cited in Byram, 2008). However, what is more important than this curiosity is the knowledge about the home country's culture. According to Michael and Byram (2008), in order to develop intercultural competence, learners first need to be aware of their own culture (Byram, 2008, p. 98). The challenge for both learners and teachers is to know how to teach the culture effectively. Research has shown that whether the culture of the target language should be taught or how to be taught is a crucial point in terms of the possible difficulties and effectiveness of the teaching process. Since the non-native teachers are not deeply acquainted with the culture, it will be a challenge for them to convey the cultural norms in a natural way. Besides, there is a question about how to deliver the culture. Research has shown that there are two ways of delivering the cultural norms: using the target language or using the native language of the learners. On one hand, it will be easier for students to gain a better understanding of the target culture if it is explained in their own language. However, that will risk the quality of message, which may eventually cause misunderstandings about the culture. On the other hand, learners may find some aspects unfamiliar or uncomfortable if the target language is used as a medium of instruction. Therefore, one solution to this problem may be the acquisition of ICC knowledge through study abroad programs. By negotiating with learners with a variety of backgrounds and by exploring the language by interactions in a real context, learners have a chance to adapt themselves into the target culture, to reconsider their stereotypes and lastly to combine the cultural aspects in two cultures.

As it was stated earlier, ICC has many definitions. It is also called "global mind-set", "global learning", "culture learning", "intercultural effectiveness", "cultural intelligence", "global intelligence", "global leadership competence", "intercultural communication competence" and lastly, of course, "intercultural competence" (as cited in Bennett, 2009). No matter what it is called, there is clear agreement on the properties of intercultural competence, namely as the cognitive, affective and behavioral skills enabling learners' effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts (as cited in Bennett, 2009).

Increasing global interactions makes the educators find effective ways to make the learners acquire ICC. Intercultural positioning system is one of these ways and it involves four steps: fostering attitudes that motivate us, discovering knowledge that informs us about our own and others' cultural position, assessing the challenge and support factors that affect our adaptation and lastly developing skills that enable us to interact effectively and appropriately.

Similar to intercultural positioning system, GPS also proposes some steps. As it is known, GPS technology is used to find the exact location by getting signals. Stoddard and Cornwell (2003) use GPS as a metaphor used to describe the process of the acquisition of intercultural competence. Similar to GPS, to gain intercultural competence, one needs to get perspectives from differently situated knowers and citizens around the world in order to make informed judgments, and to have a sufficient basis of knowledge (as cited in Bennett, 2009).

To identify one's own cultural position among other cultures, first parallelism via developing culture maps is needed. Hence, one can assess his/her own cultural views in relation with other cultures. In GPS system, the first step is to locate ourselves by developing our own cultural self-awareness through the comprehension of cultural patterns. Then, it is time to explore the differences between our values, beliefs and behaviors and those of others. Lastly, the acceptance of different cultural values and adaptation oneself to these values are essential to gain an intercultural competence (Bennett, 2009).

According to Deardoff (2009), motivation and curiosity are the critical factors in developing intercultural competence (as cited in Bennett, 2009). The concept of teachable moments comes into existence when learners come across the things that they have not experienced before in their lives. These teachable moments are crucial since they are the keystones of developing intercultural competence via filtering and adapting oneself to the newly-experienced situations (Bennett, 2009). According to Bennett (2009), besides curiosity, suspension of judgment, cognitive flexibility, cultural humility, and tolerance for ambiguity are critical core components of the affective dimensions of intercultural competence (Bennett, 2009).

Empathy, perspective taking and adaptability are the three common themes that can be found in Western models of intercultural communication (Deardorff, 2006). Moreover, research has shown that an inclusive identity orientation and a strong identity security (the degree to which an individual feels secure in his or her identity) are both important in successful intercultural engagement, which in turn leads to greater degrees of cultural empathy, flexibility and adaptability (as cited in Deardorff, 2009).

Lastly, as it was previously discussed, teachers' beliefs have a great importance in ICC acquisition and teaching. According to Kılıç's study (2013), the highly ranked three ICC objectives by teachers are to promote the acquisition of learning skills that will be useful for learning other foreign languages; to assist pupils to acquire a level of proficiency in the foreign language that will allow them to read literary works, and lastly to enthuse their pupils for learning languages (Kılıç, 2013). Although they do believe that it will help the learners in a variety of ways, they do not focus on the cultural aspects. General linguistics skills are attributed to the objectives of ICC teaching, yet a little focus is implied in the teaching process. Moreover, teachers were reported to be indecisive about what ICC really means and when and how to introduce it into teaching (Kılıç, 2013, p.58).

2. 2. Study Abroad and Intercultural Competence

The motto of study abroad is the belief that 'to know them is to love them', which focuses on the assumption that a substantial time spent abroad will inevitably lead to cultural understanding that will eventually cause an easier acquisition of the language by having more positive attitudes towards it.

The concept of intercultural competence goes back to 1600s when Comenius "the apostle of international collaboration in education itself" proposed the idea that multiplicity of perspectives was not only helping the acquisition of the knowledge but also encouraging mutual understanding between people of different backgrounds (as cited in Cushner & Mahon, 2009).

According to Comenius, education is not merely the training of the child at home or at school; it is a process affecting man's whole life and countless social adjustments he must make (as cited in Cushner & Mahon, 2009). Therefore, the acceptance of another culture, adaptation and integration to it are important components that learners have to develop not only to succeed in their studies but also to gain a character that suits well in different situations and environments. All in all, it can be stated that gaining intercultural competence is not a mere necessity to gain an academic achievement but a way to succeed in our whole life.

Current efforts in Europe to develop language learners' intercultural or transnational communicative competence strive to increase the quantity and quality of contacts between learners across national borders and through student exchanges (Byram, 2008, p.27). The aim is to help learners analyze, reflect upon and interpret foreign cultural phenomena when using the language in contact with foreigners. In other words, the objectives of the exchange programs are mainly stated as to gain personal maturity and independence, to have a better cultural insight and lastly to improve foreign language proficiency (Byram, 2008, p.45). Since most of the definitions of foreign language proficiency include a sociolinguistic/ socio-cultural competence and associate language proficiency with the sympathy of the learners towards the culture related to the target language, it is clear that there is a strong connection between the linguistic competence and cultural competence (Byram, 2008).

In previous studies, the effect of residence abroad on learners' perception of people and country where they have spent a substantial time are analyzed, and it is found that learners may return with stereotypes reinforced, or even with more negative impressions than they first set out (Byram, 2008, p.13).

In a study searching intercultural competence among university language learners, it was found out that language students have clear national stereotypes; secondly, that extended residence in the target language community will not influence these stereotypes except to reinforce them; and thirdly, many of the students will return from residence abroad with a more negative view of the target language community than is held by those who have not yet undertaken residence abroad (as cited in

Byram, 2008). Whether exchange programs help eliminate cultural stereotypes or strengthen them, how the attitudes of the learners change after their study abroad periods, and whether the learners should be alerted about the existence and their acceptance of socially-constructed stereotypes before their study abroad periods are some of the vital topics that need to be addressed immediately. Therefore, in this study, the prior knowledge of the teachers about the host country and the changes if there were any; their level of motivations; and lastly reported personal, social, language and professional developments were analyzed to get an idea about the overall changes following their study abroad experiences.

2.3. Interculturally Competent Speaker

In most of the studies, intercultural communication is defined as the effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations. Therefore, acting appropriately in specific contexts can mean being an interculturally competent person. Since gaining intercultural competence is an ongoing process, it is significant to assess learners' competence throughout a targeted intervention. Considering the ongoing nature of intercultural competence, it is also essential to measure the development of critical thinking skills of learners, which is a valuable part of intercultural cultural competence. Besides critical thinking skills, attitudes, open-mindedness, and curiosity as it is stated above are the crucial factors to be investigated. In addition to these aspects, the concept of having a cultural empathy is an important part of the assessment. By addressing the ability to see from others' perspectives, and in this way assessing global perspectives and the ability of comprehending other worldviews, are becoming more and more crucial in intercultural studies. Last but not the least, the knowledge about the historical, political and social contexts is a necessary component. Learners are to be aware of not only the surface-level conversations such as greetings, foods, and customs but also deeper concepts such as the history and politics. In order to be part of the social context and to gain deeper communication skills, individuals need the development of schemas. Thus, research on schema development implies that there are 5 axioms in this process (as cited in Nishida, 1999). Three of them are closely related to the ICC acquisition so that they are presented. According to the first axiom, people need

to repeat the action to be stored in the long-term memory. As stated by Chase and Ericson (1982), people learn better if they connect their performances to meaningful chunks, which may turn into abilities in the long term (as cited in Nishida, 1999). The second axiom is explaining the failures in the adaptation process of sojourners to the host culture. Since they do not have any previous knowledge about the current problem or situation, they fail to retrieve the suitable interaction at that moment. Therefore, they need to establish meaningful chunks as it is stated in the first axiom. The last chosen axiom is about the interrelations of the schemas with each other. Sojourners need to develop schemas based on the ones that they develop in the host culture, which is a significant part of the cultural-adaptation process. Apparently, the sojourner needs to take a few steps in the adaptation process. In the first place, they experience the ambiguity since the host culture is different from their own culture and they do not have any suitable pre-existing schema. Therefore, they need to add new schemas to their native-culture schemas through establishing meaningful chunks to adjust to the host culture (Nishida, 1999).

In short, gaining ICC knowledge is claimed to be more significant for foreign language learners and teachers. In order to foster ICC development, study abroad and exchange programs are thought valuable. Although there were a number of studies conducted to find out the possible effects of study abroad and exchange programs on ICC development, there are few studies done about ICC knowledge in Turkey. Unfortunately, in Kılıç's study (2013), it was found out that language teachers working at primary and high schools of the Ministry of National Education in Turkey did not have an idea about ICC knowledge or the possible ways to integrate their knowledge into their teachings. Even though the definition of ICC and intercultural competent speaker are clearly defined through empirical research, possible implementation ways as well as the problems in the application process are needed to be defined clearly. Therefore, present study aims at finding out whether language teachers teaching at a university level are aware of ICC, how they think can apply their knowledge into their teachings and lastly what the possible problems and solutions might be in the implementation.

This chapter has provided some basic concepts about intercultural communicative competence, study abroad programs and interculturally competent speaker. The next chapter will deal with how this research has been conducted and the details about it such as study design, setting, data collection tools and procedures, and the participants of the research.

CHAPTER 3

3.0. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, research questions are presented in the first part, and then the details of study design, research method, setting, participants, data collection procedures and tools and lastly data analysis are explained.

3.1. Research Questions

- 1) How do ELT graduates with study abroad experience define ICC?
 - 1a. How do they define interculturally competent speaker and which skills are perceived as indicators of ICC?
- 2) What are their perspectives on the ICC instruction in the institution?
 - 2a. What are the personal, social, language and professional developments and changes in their teaching philosophy succeeding their study abroad experience?
 - 2b. How do they reflect their ICC knowledge on their teaching practices?
 - 2c. How necessary is ICC knowledge for a language teacher and a language learner?
 - 2d. How appropriate are the curriculum and materials of the institution for ICC application?
 - 2e. How ready are the students for ICC instruction?

3.2. Study Design

According to Gall&Gall&Borg (2003), case study is “an in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon” (p.545). Since participants’ experiences and their

practices were thought as valuable in this research, case study was thought to be the most reliable way. Regarding the in-depth study, Creswell (2013) states that “a case-study involves multiple sources of information such as observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, documents and reports and reports a case description and case themes (p.97)”. Therefore, interviews and classroom observations were chosen as data collection tools.

Since relying on one source of data is not thought to be as adequate to develop an in-depth understanding (Creswell, 2013, p.98), interviews and classroom observations were decided to be conducted in the research. As the interpretations of the researcher is important in a case study (Peshkin, 2000), only researcher’s colleagues were chosen for the study, which is believed to increase the validity of the interpretation. According to Creswell (2013), a good case study research involves a description of each case. Therefore, researcher also had a chance to interpret and describe the each case as reliable as possible since she was quite familiar with the setting (curriculum, materials, resources, student profile, working schedule etc.).

3.3.Method of Research

According to Deardorff’s study (2006), it was found out that multi-method and multi-perspective are essential to get reliable and valid assessment results. Therefore, triangulation is inevitable in the data collection procedures and later in determining the suitable goals, objectives and tools (as cited in Deardorff, 2009).

Research has shown that there are a variety of data collection tools in the measurement of intercultural competence. E-portfolio method, custom-developed self-reports, journals, observation of the host family, supervisor observations, embedded-in-class assignments, interviews, focus groups and portfolios can be given as examples for the tools used to measure intercultural development. In this study, questionnaires, and interviews were used to collect data. Additionally, classroom observations were conducted with seven of the participants during the fall-semester in 2013.

The present research can be classified as a case study based on qualitative data collection tools. Qualitative research (through the use of semi-structured interviews and class observations) was chosen to collect a more comprehensible and descriptive data about the experience of the participants. Interviews are very helpful in reflecting the ideas, beliefs, experiences and knowledge. According to Seidman (2006), "... interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p.9). He also added that "... interviewing provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior" (Seidman, 2006, p.10). Through quantitative methods, such as a questionnaire, it may be difficult to get an ample data on participants' perspectives about intercultural communicative competence and their self-reflections on their experience. On the other hand, semi-structured interviews are claimed as the most appropriate way to collect data since they allow one to find out the participants' point of views (as cited in Peltokarpi, 2010). Similar to self-reports, which are claimed to be a better way of reflecting the communication behavior, interviews may give more freedom and flexibility to the participants in terms of expressing their ideas (Arasaratnam& Doerfel, 2005, p.159).

If the researcher's aim is to understand the experiences and beliefs of the participants in a more detailed way, interviews were chosen as an effective way of inquiry (Seidman, 2006, pp. 10-11). Since the aims and questions of this study need an in-depth analysis of subjects' beliefs about ICC and their experiences abroad as well as their teaching practices in Turkey, interviewing has been identified to be the most effective data collection instrument for the study. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were designed for 9 participants. Before interviews, brief daily conversations were used as ice-breakers to comfort the participants and to get them ready for the interview. Prior to interviews, a background questionnaire was used to collect data about the participants' ages, the countries they stayed as sojourners, the languages they can speak, their hometowns, and lastly their characters.

3.4. Setting

This study conducted in a private university in Ankara, Turkey. A detailed description of the curriculum, schedule, student profile, books, teaching hours, and number of teachers at the institution was presented in the following paragraphs to help the readers visualize the context where the study was conducted.

Regarding the curriculum of the institution, it is divided into three semesters for Beginner& Elementary (BE), Pre-Intermediate (PIN), Intermediate (INT), Upper-Intermediate (UPPER), Advanced (ADV) and Repeat (REP) level students. In the first term, Beginner & Elementary and Pre-Intermediate levels start with a book which includes five different sections: reading, listening, grammar, vocabulary and lastly skills. In the skills part, focus was mostly on pronunciation and writing. On the other hand, Intermediate levels start the term with the same book's second level. Although the sections are divided in the same way, the concepts are more difficult and comprehensive than the first one. Similarly, Upper-Intermediate students use the same book, yet more challenging extra-worksheets are provided during the semester. Different from these levels, advanced-level students begin the term with a grammar book. Since they have a chance to take the TOEFL ITP exam in three months, they have a more comprehensive grammar focus in their courses. Lastly, repeat students have the least proficiency level. Therefore, they use the simplest book and they start with the basic grammar points such as articles or present simple tense.

In terms of schedule, BE and INT level students have 30 hours per week, 6-hour class every day whereas UPPER, ADV and REP students have 25 hours per week, 5-hour per day. Considering the division of courses per week, BE and INT level students have 15-hour MC, 10-hour RW and 5-hour LS courses while UPPER, ADV and REP levels have 10-hour MC, 10-hour RW and 5-hour LS courses. At the time of the research, there were 54 English language teachers working at the institution. Every teacher is supposed to be teaching for at least 20-hour per week. Teachers may teach to the same level or different levels randomly. There is not any criterion defining the levels each teacher is supposed to teach.

Considering the books used in MC, RW and LS courses, there are 2 books used in each semester. In the MC, a grammar book consisting of 5 sections is used for 2 semesters in all levels except for advanced and repeat students. The content of the book is mainly based on teaching grammar along with vocabulary items in each unit. Every unit is designed around a subject like travelling, global warming, friends etc. The first section is reading as well as vocabulary items. In the second part, there is a grammar topic to be covered and a brief reading passage is also presented. In the next part, there is a listening section around the same topic and there are also vocabulary items. On the other hand, following two sections are devoted to skills-teaching and they include language tips in pronunciation and writing parts. Unlike this book, the grammar book used in advanced levels has a great focus on grammar teaching. In each unit, there is one reading passage endowed with vocabulary items as well as sample sentences about the grammar topic. In the following pages of the unit, detailed description of the grammar rules and exercises are presented. A variety of exercises are chosen changing from listening comprehension questions to mechanical language practice ones such as fill-in-blanks with a suitable form of verb. The fill-in-the-blanks exercises are given through a reading passage, though. Lastly, REP students use a book similar to the ones used by BE, PIN, INTER and UPPER students; however, the level of the book is lower than theirs. That book has 4 sections namely as reading, vocabulary, grammar and listening. They also continue with the series of the book in the following two semesters. As it was stated above, these books are used only in the first two semesters. On the other hand, in the last term of the year, all of the students, except for the repeat ones, continue with the grammar book, advanced levels use in the first term.

Regarding the books used in RW courses, every level of students, except for repeat ones, use the same brand of book in two semesters. Each book has 10 units in different topics such as animals, holidays, consumption etc. Every unit starts with a pre-reading activity changing from brief questionnaires to open-ended questions related with the topic. Afterwards, there are two reading passages preceded with 10 vocabulary items. Subsequent to reading passages, there are comprehension questions about the main idea and details of the each passage. The books have also

online activities in vocabulary, part of speeches of each word, and writing. Students are also responsible for the online activities. Different from all levels, repeat students have a different RW book, which includes a reading passage and vocabulary items chosen for each unit. This book used in repeat levels are surprisingly in a higher level since the reading passages are longer and vocabulary items are more challenging.

Apart from this, the parts are divided in the same way, reading, vocabulary and comprehension drills. Similar to RW course books, LS books are same in all levels. The book has more challenging topics than MC and RW books. The topics are mostly about architecture, business, communication etc. There are 12 units in each level of the book and the units have 4 different sections. In the first section, there is a brief conversation activity about the topic of the unit and it is followed by vocabulary items about the content. Following the vocabulary items, phrasal verbs or prepositions specifically used with some verbs are introduced. Afterwards, there is a listening section and students are supposed to answer the main idea and detail-part questions while listening to tracks length approximately 8 minutes. Lastly, there is a video in each unit and students are supposed to fill-in-the-blanks during watching. Moreover, each week one-hour is devoted to online activities of the course book. Students have to bring their computers to the classroom and do the activities online. Online activities include vocabulary, pronunciation and speaking practices. To begin with, vocabulary activities consist of sentences and students have to choose the appropriate word for each blank. Then, they watch a brief video about the utterance of a sentence with that word and in the following they are supposed to read out the sentence. They get points according to how well they do in each activity.

3.5. Participants

Nine English language teachers with Erasmus or Comenius experience participated in the research project. Criterion sampling was chosen since all of the participants were required to have an either Erasmus or Comenius experience during their bachelor or graduate studies. All of the teachers were working at a private university, in Ankara, Turkey. Participants were graduates of English Language Teaching, English Language and Literature, Linguistics and Translation and Interpreting

Studies departments. Five of them graduated from English- medium universities. 3 of them had Erasmus experience while six of them had Comenius experience. Two of them had their Erasmus experience during their bachelor degrees, and one of the participants had their Erasmus experience in her second year during her MA. On the other hand, three of the participants had their Comenius prior to their graduation, in their senior, while the rest three had their experience just upon their graduation. Six of the teachers had a MA degree. Each participant was given a pseudonym and detailed information about participants' host countries, study abroad experience, the duration of stays, experiences as a teacher and experiences in the institution, and language backgrounds were displayed in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Participants' study abroad programs, host countries, duration of stay, experience as a teacher and at the institution, and language backgrounds:

Pseudonym	Country/ Program	Duration of Stay	Experience as a Teacher	Experience at the Institution	Languages
Ayşe	Poland Erasmus	5-month	2-year	1-year	English-Advanced German- Pre-Int
Betül	Spain Comenius	4-month	2-year	1-year	English-Advanced Spanish-Int German-Beginner
Ceren	UK Comenius	9-month	4-year	3-year	English-Advanced
Dilara	Italy Comenius	8-month	6-year	2-year	Turkish-Bilingual Urdu-Bilingual Italian-Elementary English-Advanced
Elif	UK Erasmus	10-month	2-year	8-month	English-Advanced
Filiz	Germany Erasmus	4-month	1-year	1-year	English-Advanced German-Inter French-Pre-Int. Spanish-Beginner

Table 2 continued

Gözde	UK Comenius	8-month	3-year	1-year	English-Advanced French-Bilingual Turkish-Bilingual
Hülya	Sweden Comenius	10-month	4-year	1-year	English-Advanced
İsmail	Austria Comenius	8-month	4-year	2-year	English-Advanced Kurdish-Int. German-Int.

In terms of participants' abroad experiences prior to their Comenius and Erasmus experiences, each participant's situation is explained in a detailed way. First of all, Ayşe had not been abroad before her Erasmus. Similarly, Betül had not visited any countries before her Comenius. Ceren had been in the U.S.A. for three months within the work and travel program prior to her Comenius. Dilara had been in Pakistan several times for visiting her relatives and had been in the United Kingdom for a month for a holiday. Elif had been in Poland for two weeks for a Socrates project. Filiz had been abroad several times prior to her Erasmus. She had been in the United Kingdom for a month for a language course and she had been in Canada for three months for a language course in French and lastly she had been in France for a week for a visit. Gözde had been in Belgium for 5 years since her father was working there. Hülya and İsmail had not been abroad prior to their Comenius experience.

On the other hand, teachers' detailed educational background information was shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Educational Background of the Participants

Pps	Educational Background
Ayşe	Linguistic- BA
Betül	ELT- BA
Ceren	ELT- BA ELT- MA

Table 3 continued.

Dilara	ELIT- BA Gender Studies- MA
Elif	ELT- BA Applied Linguistic- MA
Filiz	Translation and Interpreting Studies- BA, MA
Gözde	ELT- BA Comparative Literature- MA
Hülya	ELT- BA
Ismail	ELT- BA ELT- MA

In terms of age and gender of the participants, except for Ismail, all of the participants are female English language instructors at a private university in Ankara, Turkey and their ages change from 23 to 28 year-old.

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

First of all, each participant was asked to give an appointment for the interview. All of the interviews were conducted in a week. In order to ensure the consistency of the data collection, all of the interviews were done in the researcher's office at the university. With the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the data, the interviews were conducted like conversations. Prior to the interviews, they were asked to fill in a detailed background questionnaire. Then, the interviews took place and each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes, and in total 255 minutes. The questions were asked according to a defined order; however, the researcher also elaborated on some points when she found it necessary and tried to make the transitions in a more smooth way. Following the interviews, appointments for the class observations were arranged and the researcher observed 2 Reading & Writing (R&W) or Main Course (MC) class hours of the participants. Although Listening & Speaking (L&S) class hours were claimed to be better compared to the main course in the interviews, time

limitations did not allow making an observation in these hours. As L&S courses are only 5 hours per week, the researcher could not arrange her schedule accordingly. Hence, the researcher observed the pre-defined two classes of each participant, in total 14-class-hour, 12-hour, observation, and took notes according to the criteria defined in the observation protocol displayed in the data collection tools part (see page 34).

3.7.Data Collection Tools

In this case study, a semi-structured interview and in-class observations were used to collect data. Additionally, a detailed background questionnaire was applied to back up information about the participants' personal experience. In the beginning, participants were asked to sign a consent form to approve their participation to both interview and classroom observation. Then, the interview took place in the researcher's office. Lastly, the researcher observed the in-class performance of 7 of the participants as 1 of them quitted the job in the beginning of the semester. An observation protocol was designed and used during the data collection procedure.

3.7.1. Semi-Structured Interview

As Seidman (2006) stated, the purpose in in-depth interview is not only to get answer to questions or evaluate the hypotheses (p.9). The main purpose is being interested in the stories of the people since their experience is worth it (Seidman, 2006, p.9). As making meanings out of people's actions are difficult and unreliable, interviewing enable the research to get a chance to understand the actions through participants' own perspectives and own meanings from their experiences (Seidman, 2006, p.9). Now that this research is closely concerned with the experiences of each participant and their expressions, interviewing was decided to be used to comprehend their study abroad experiences and its relation with their teaching practices.

The interview questions were basically focusing on teachers' theoretical knowledge about ICC and their perspectives on ICC instruction in the institution. In terms of theoretical aspects, participants were asked to define ICC and interculturally competent speaker in their own words and they listed the skills that might reflect ICC

knowledge. Besides theoretical knowledge, in the light of their study abroad experiences and its effects on their teaching philosophy and classroom practices, the participants stated their opinions about the necessity of ICC knowledge for language learners and teachers, appropriateness of the curriculum of the institution and materials provided and lastly the readiness of the students for ICC instruction. All of the questions including the background questionnaire were presented in the Appendices (see appendix B). Additionally, a detailed explanation of each question item was presented in the following paragraph.

The purpose of Q1 was to identify what the participants' understanding of intercultural communication was. Whether they were aware of the concept of ICC or how they defined it based on their own general knowledge was questioned. Responses to this question were used to arrive at a definition of ICC. Hence, the first grouping was related to the definition of ICC. Q2 was designed to get a definition of interculturally-competent speaker. How the participants described a person who could be called interculturally-competent was interrogated and the second grouping was termed as the description of an interculturally-competent person. Q3 was composed to allow participants to list the skills that they think are the indicators of ICC. This group was to elaborate the skills included in ICC. Next two questions, Q4 and Q5, were designed to get participants' ideas on the importance of ICC. How important they think a language teacher and a language learner should have ICC made the fourth group questioning the significance of ICC in teaching. The purpose of Q6, Q7 and Q8 was to gain an insight about participants' Erasmus / Comenius experience and their self-reflections on their attitude change, motivation towards the host culture, and their development in terms of personal, social, language and lastly in professional sense. Thus, the fifth group was related to participants' study abroad experiences from their own point of views. Q9 and Q10 allowed participants to reveal the changes in their teaching philosophy, if any, in their teaching practices back in Turkey following their Erasmus/ Comenius experience. The purpose of these questions was to identify the effects of the sojourner experience on the actual teaching practices in the home country. Q11 was designed to get the participants' beliefs on the possibility of raising ICC awareness of their students. This question

was used to define the ways to integrate ICC into the courses and to get the perspectives of teachers on the readiness of such integration. The last question, Q12, enabled the researcher to collect data based on the classroom practices of the participants and figure out the potential problems that might cause the unsuccessful integration of ICC. Four areas, namely as the curriculum, materials and activities, the student profile and resources, were chosen as the core points that might be thought as the milestones of an effective ICC teaching. Therefore, this question was used to clarify the possible drawbacks in the application process of ICC in classroom practices.

With the help the questions in the semi-structured interview, the data was anticipated to provide answers for the pre-defined nine groups: the definition of ICC, the definition of an interculturally competent person, the skills in ICC, the importance of ICC teaching, study abroad or sojourner experiences and its effects on the development of personal, social, professional, language, and attitudes, the application and integration process of sojourn experience into teaching, the insights of language teachers about the ICC teaching, and lastly possible problems that might challenge teachers to integrate ICC into their teachings.

3.7.2. Class Observation

Based on the consent form, participants agreed on classroom observations during the fall semester. The researcher observed two class hours of each participant and took notes in accordance with the designed observation protocol. The purpose of the items in the chart, displayed below, was to elaborate on how many percent each participant integrated cultural items into the classroom activities and the ways they used them. Besides focusing on intercultural items, the researcher also took notes about each activity applied during the course, time spent on each item, topics covered, students' integration, their perceived motivation, and teacher-student interaction. The observation protocol used in the study is displayed below in table 4:

Table 4: Classroom Observation Protocol

Name of the Teacher

Class/Course

Time

Number of Students

Proficiency Level of the Students

Topic of the Course

Activities used

Materials Used

Notes on Teaching Practice

(How many times did the teacher refer to the cultural issues?/ Did s/he refer to her/his own Comenius/ Erasmus experience?/ Were the students motivated and did the cultural items catch their attention)

An observation protocol was developed according to the research questions. To begin with, the proficiency level of the students was added to analyze the possible effects of students' language proficiency on their classroom performance and teachers' use of English as a medium of instruction and lastly the activities used during the course. Then, the topic of the course was thought to be crucial to see the relationship between the use of cultural items and themes and topics presented in the books. Similarly, the activities and materials were added to get information about teaching practices as a whole and whether the teacher used any culture-related items. Lastly, the researcher took notes about the classroom environment including the teachers' instructions, students' participation and the steps of the course.

Unfortunately, only 7 of the participants were observed since Elif quitted her job and Ismail went to complete his military service duty. Therefore, the researcher could only observe 7 of them for two hours in the first week of the spring semester. 3 Reading& Writing (RW) and 4 Main Course (MC) courses were observed for two hours in two weeks. The students were grouped as Beginner& Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate, Advanced and Repeat according to their English levels based on the exam that was done in the beginning of the

semester. While Beginner& Elementary students were the lowest level, Advanced level students had the highest scores in the exam applied in the beginning of the semester. On the other hand, repeat students' second year in the university and they could not pass 450 in TOEFL ITP exam in their first year. In the spring term, when the observations took place, the classrooms were divided in accordance with the points students got in the fall semester. In other words, Upper-Intermediate-1 is better than Upper-Intermediate-2 respectively in accordance with their cumulative scores in the first term. The same procedure is also applied in the last term of the school and students are replaced accordingly.

3.8.Data Analysis

For this research, SPSS 17.0 packet program was used to analyze the background questionnaire, and the frequency of the themes emerged in the interviews. Frequency tables were prepared for the time each participant spent abroad, the personality traits, and each theme emerged in the replies for every research question.

Considering the analysis of the semi-structured interview, each participant was given pseudonym and interviews were analyzed to emerge codes, categories and the themes. In order to analyze the audio- recorded interviews, each interview was transcribed for accurate analysis and explication. Firstly, each participant was given a folder and his/her transcripts along with observation notes were stored there. A total of nine folders were printed separately and read several times intensively through marking the important words, phrases and paragraphs. Afterwards, each word, paragraph or phrase under every question was organized in a separate word document. For each question and sub-question, one word document was used to gather data. This step helped the researcher to find out the crucial points in every one of the questions. Through intensive reading of transcripts under each question, general themes that could explain the phenomenon were established. The themes were explained in a detailed way and direct quotes were used so as to ensure that manual coding was done properly. As it was stated by Stake (2005), "Most naturalistic, ethnographic, phenomenological researchers will concentrate on describing the present case in sufficient detail so that the reader can make good

comparisons" (p. 457). Additionally, these direct quotes would also provide the reader with the perspectives of the respondents working in this institution. Besides the quotations, personal stories of the respondents were also presented to reflect their experiences and assumptions.

Regarding the analysis of the classroom observations, the researcher designed an observation protocol involving the activities, materials, teaching practices, units' topic etc. In this way, it became possible to see how each respondent designed his/her course; how many students were in the class and how many of them participated in the lesson; which warm-up activities were used; which methods and materials they used to explain the topics. Moreover, the researcher analyzed the narratives of the observations by marking stimulating cases, coding and then interpreting them.

The data including the notes about the number of students in the class, their language proficiency, materials used in the lesson, the topic of the course, materials and activities used by the teacher, and teacher's attempts to use culture-related aspects was coded with a focus on the core concepts. In the last step, all of the coded data were merged into the coded interview results to define the emerging concepts.

CHAPTER 4

4.0. FINDINGS

Considering the adjectives that each participant chose according to their characters, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Through SPSS, the frequencies of the adjectives that reflect the participants' characters best were found out. According to the results, 66, 7% of the participants stated that they were self-confident and self-reliant. In terms of being curious and flexible, 77, 8% of the participants said yes to these items. All of the participants stated that they were adaptable to new situations and could accept the differences. Similarly, all of them claimed that they had a good sense of humor. 88, 9% of the participants stated that they were open-minded while only 55, 6% of them agreed on being empathetic and having a clear sense of self. Only 44, 4% of the participants stated that they could tolerate the ambiguity and were patient. Lastly, 77, 8% of the teachers asserted that they were motivated. The frequency tables are displayed in the appendices (see appendix A).

4.1. The Findings of Each Case

In the following part, each participant's case was presented separately and each one was divided into three sections- participants' background information, their perspectives and knowledge of ICC and lastly their classroom practices.

4.1.1. Case I: Ayşe's Case

1) Background Information

Ayşe is a 24-year old female teacher and has a 5-month Erasmus experience in Poland in 2009. Prior to her Erasmus, she had not been abroad. She graduated from Department of Linguistics of a state university in Ankara. She had a 2-year teaching experience in total and she was working at the institution only for about a year. Besides English, she has a pre-intermediate level in German. In terms of personality traits, she described herself as flexible, tolerable to differences, adaptable to new situations, motivated and lastly empathetic. Before her Erasmus experience, she

knew only a little bit about the country such as their religion, region and location. However, she stated that she was highly motivated to learn more about the people and the country. Since she believes that it would contribute to her knowledge, experience and personality; she was eager to experience this opportunity. Regarding her motivation level prior to her study abroad experience, she stated in the interview:

I stayed there for five months and I was with different people. I just wanted to enjoy my time. I wanted to learn about their culture, people living there.. Not just Polish but also different people from all over the world because I was living in a dormitory which included many people all over the world. Even from USA. So it was kind of motivation for me to know about new people, about a new culture. Eventually, it will contribute to my knowledge, my experience and my personality as well.

As she expected, she reported multiple changes in her personal, social and language developments. First of all, she stated that she became more self-confident and flexible person. Before her study abroad experience, she experienced some difficulties in her social relationships like engaging social interactions or being part of a group. Additionally, she gained a different perspective in the way that she understands people. In other words, she mentioned that most of her prejudgments about the country, such as not being unfriendly, or judgmental, changed in a positive way and she became more aware of her power in terms of controlling her relationships with other people. During the interview, she elaborated on this topic via stating that:

It was quite effective for me. After I returned Turkey, I was a different person. All my friends told me so. I became more self-confident and more flexible. I made most of my prejudices get lost. I was more understanding towards the people, especially foreign people. I realized that I can stand on my feet wherever I am.

Similar to her personal development, she stated that her social skills were enhanced through involving a variety of social interactions. For example, before her study abroad experience, she explained that she did not have many friends and she was a shy person, which affected the way she interacted in social settings. Lastly, in terms of language development, she did not experience radical changes in her second language skills. The only change was the improvement of her speaking skills.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Ayşe stated that she was familiar with the term ICC and defined it as an ability to communicate well in different cultures and she thought that if a person could get along with the people in a different culture and express their ideas or feeling effectively, it would mean that she/he could be called an interculturally competent person. During the interview, she explained the interculturally competent person with the words stated below:

If you are in a different culture with different people and if you can get along with them in the best way and communicate your ideas of feeling effectively, then this means you are competent communicatively.

Besides, she added that speaking and understanding were the basic skills that might reflect ICC knowledge. In terms of its importance for a language teacher, she stated that it was a crucial factor since teaching a language effectively was directly related to being communicatively competent. Therefore, she associated speaking and understanding the people with being interculturally competent person. In other words, she believes that as an interculturally competent person, you are to understand the people and respond them. She further added that foreign languages were part of culture and teaching a language also requires teaching the cultural items and being part of the culture. Similarly, she asserted that ICC is necessary for a language learner. She believed that culture and language are inseparable and they are just part of each other. In other words, students should be exposed to cultural items as well as the grammatical expressions when they are taught English.

On the other hand, she stated that students were not encouraged enough to integrate cultural items into the course. Since they have to pass an exam at the end of the course, they are more interested in learning about the grammatical rules or techniques needed for the exam. Besides, she thinks that students are lazy and they are too blind to realize that they are learning a language. She added that they were always complaining about things such as the exam system, the university or the books and they did not want to participate in the lecture in any way. Regarding the student profile, her statements in the interview are presented below:

Even though we are, students are not that motivated here. Unfortunately, the student profile is a bit low here. They are lazy. All the time, they complain about things. Even if you want to show the best parts of something, they are just too blind to see it. If they are not that interested, whatever you do is not that important. You try to give it but they don't want to take it. So the profile of the students is very important and here it is not good enough.

Considering the teaching philosophy, she reported positive changes in her teaching practices. To begin with, she stated that teachers in the host country were totally different from the ones in Turkey. She indicated that those teachers were caring about students' needs and their emotions. Accordingly; Turkish teachers gave more importance to the topics than students' preferences. Additionally, she thought that those teachers saw their students as individuals and treated them accordingly unlike Turkey. In contrast, she believed that students are treated more like children. For example, it is always the teacher controlling the pace of their learning. In other words, they cannot take the control of their own learning. Following her experience, she stated that she changed the way she treats her students and makes them responsible for their own actions. For example, instead of warning them not to submit their homework late, she did not remind them and made them experience the results of their actions. During the interview, she elaborated on the changes in her teaching philosophy with the words presented below:

The way I treat the students changed. I was a student at that time, but all the experience contributed to my teaching philosophy. I learned that I am an individual and my students are also individuals and I learned how to behave towards them like adults, like young adults.

Moreover, she asserted that she uses her experience via telling stories or anecdotes to motivate her student. She asserted that she was using telling examples to elaborate on the topics in the reading passages. Besides that, while teaching reading or writing skills, she stated that she tried to focus on the differences and similarities between different countries. A part of her exact words concerning the integration of her ICC into her teaching are presented below:

I sometimes use it for students' motivation. I talk about my experiences. For example, during writing assignment, I use some examples from the things I experienced there. For example, while teaching compare and contrast essay,

I listed the differences between the Poland's capital and Ankara. Here we have a program so I can't do everything I want.

She thinks that her experience can contribute to her teaching when it comes to the effective use of textbooks. She further added that cultural figures or information can be blended with the study abroad experience, which can make the learning more interesting and effective for students. Furthermore, more activities can be designed to support the reading passages in the text books. On the other hand, she reported several problems hindering the integration process resulting from the curriculum to be followed; materials and resources provided at the institution. Her exact words regarding the problems in the application process are displayed below:

Actually, I don't think so. I mean curriculum is too limited in a way we are teaching the culture. All the time we are motivating our students to watch series or we have readers or text books that they learn the culture, but it is limited and we are not allowed to do this. Our program is restricted and maybe it is not just about the program. It is Turkish education system so I think it is really restricted. We should change the things radically.

As it can be seen from the excerpt, she believed that with the current curriculum, it was not easy to integrate culture teaching into the materials or into the weekly-program. Therefore, she added that we- as teachers- need to develop new ways to control our own teaching and to make the materials more effective in terms of teaching cultural items.

In terms of the materials, she asserted that although the textbooks or the readers have some information about the cultural items, there is not enough time to elaborate on the presented topics. Then, most of the materials were reported as unsuitable for effective culture integration. Most were about science, general knowledge or literature so that students could not be exposed to culture as much as needed. Similarly, the materials and even the pages were assigned by the institution so that teachers were not flexible to use extra-materials and they did not even have time to create new ones due to the excessive amount of weekly-program topics.

Lastly, she thinks that the institution provides a lot of resources; however, they are not integrated with cultural items. In contrast, most of them only focus on

grammatical parts. Since the materials in the self-access study room only include TOEFL questions such as listening, structure or reading passages, they do not provide insights about cultural factors. On the other hand, she mentioned that reading room can be quite useful; however, the students are not guided enough to read them effectively. Because of the course requirements, they cannot spend much time on enjoying themselves and reading different books in the reading room.

3) Classroom practices

The classroom observation was done in the 3&4 hours of the schedule and there were 19 BE level students in BE-9. In the first hour, the focus was on speaking and the students were practicing if clause type 2. The teacher asked them some questions related to if clauses such as *what would you do if you won the lottery* or *what would you do if you met your favorite movie star*. She did not use extra-materials in addition to the course book. While practicing the type two, some of the students asked her whether she knew *Fringe* or *Mentalist* since they wanted to give examples from those TV series. However, she was not familiar with those TV series and she could not comment on much these items. Following this, the students switched to Turkish and they briefly explained the characters and plot of the series. Then, they continued trying to give other examples by using if clauses. In the second hour, they continued the lesson with another topic which was about sports. It was about the world cup football and there were some pictures of fans around the world. She asked about the countries of these fans and the students answered the questions. She also asked about the last champions of the world cup and then students answered the questions. There was a talk about the football for about 10 minutes. Afterwards, the teacher asked whether they were interested in football. Some of the students, especially the male ones, stated that they love football and watch the games. Then, they talked about Turkish football and the teams. Some of them switched to Turkish again to support their teams and talk about them. Besides Turkish football teams, a few of the students talked about American or European teams and their matches with Turkish ones. After this speaking activity, students started reading the passage silently and then they answered the questions.

Unlike the activities mentioned in the interview, there was almost no focus on cultural items in the observed two hours. To begin with, as she stated, students did not seem motivated and they were not focusing on the lecture. When she asked some questions to practice the grammar points, only a few of the students uttered some sentences such as 'If I won the lottery, I would buy a Bentley' or 'If I met with my favorite star, I would ask her to have a dinner with me'. However, they had some difficulties in making these statements and Ayşe helped them by restating the words they used. The rest was only staring at the teacher and they did not even seem to understand the topic. Since the level of the students was beginner, their speaking skills were not fully developed. Another issue was related to the use of materials. Ayşe only used the textbook without any extra-materials during two hours. She only used the pictures on the book without bringing any other real-life related pictures. Additionally, she did not ask any further questions about the countries presented on the book or whether the students were familiar with those countries or their traditional practices. What she wanted was to finish the reading passage and answer the comprehension questions, which was the only thing the students were supposed to do. During the reading passage, there was not any interruption and the students just read the passage silently. She did not elaborate on the topic via asking some comprehension questions. She did some corrections in answering the comprehension questions, though. For example, when a student used if clause incorrectly, she restated the sentence and used her intonation to make the student aware of his/her mistake. She was patient and friendly in correcting the mistakes.

In accordance with her interview, what was observed was pretty similar. As she was stated that she could not integrate the cultural items because of the unmotivated students or classroom materials, she did not attempt to apply her experience in classroom setting. As she reported at the end of the course, she was supposed to finish grammar topics and two reading passages and several vocabulary items in a week so that she did not have much time to add any extra-materials.

All in all, she was familiar with the term ICC and she could define it in accordance to the definitions stated in the literature review part. Besides, she experienced a positive personal, social, language and professional development. As she stated during the

interview, she became more self-confident in both her teaching and in her social relationships since she seemed confident during the lesson and had a good rapport with her students. Although they seemed demotivated and unwilling to participate to the course, she got them to answer her questions patiently. Additionally, her fluency in English developed and she learned to adapt the materials in a culture-related way, which could be seen in the warm-up part of the course. She chose her questions having connection with the real-life experiences. According to Ayşe, her teaching skills were greatly influenced by the host country's education since she tried to make her students get the most out of the topic. Additionally, she stated that she learned various materials and activities enabling the integration of ICC into her teaching practices. On the other hand, she mentioned about the problems in the integration process because of the curriculum, materials, and student profile. Therefore, not surprisingly, she could not use many culture-related materials during the course. Similarly, her students seemed to be uninterested in the course, which was also stated during the interview.

4.1.2. Case II: Betül's Case

1) Background Information

Betül is a 23-year old female teacher and has a 4-month of Comenius experience in Spain in 2011 in her senior year. Prior to her Comenius, she had not been abroad. She graduated from Department of Foreign Language Teaching of a state university, in Ankara, Turkey. She has a 2-year teaching experience in general and she had one-year teaching career at the institution. Besides English, she has a beginner level in Spanish and intermediate level in German. She described herself as a flexible, patient, curious, open-minded, motivated, self-reliant, empathetic, and self-confident person. Additionally, she asserted that she could tolerate ambiguity and differences; had a clear sense of self; and lastly could adapt herself into new situations. Before her Erasmus experience, she stated that she was familiar with Spanish traditions, culture, lifestyles and songs. Besides, she mentioned that she was highly motivated to learn more about them and ready to experience their lifestyles by herself. Similarly, she reported positive changes in her motivation level following her experience. To exemplify, she stated that she experienced the daily life and had a chance to get to

know Spanish people. After spending four months with them, she expressed the change in her motivation by stating that:

... I wasn't expecting such a warm environment and such warm people. I heard that they are enjoyable and they make their life better by their lifestyles. When I went there, I saw further than what I was thinking.

Concerning her personal development, she made a connection between her personality and her capability of getting to know people in a better way. Accordingly, she expressed that she developed a better understanding of people via living in a multi-cultural society like Spain. Similarly, during the interview, she mentioned that she met with a lot people and had a chance to learn Spanish through social interactions. Unlike other participants, she stated that her third language, Spanish, developed and her English not changed dramatically. Since she was living in Spain, most of the people were not able to speak English fluently. Therefore, she did not report any improvement in her language skills, except for her Spanish. A part of her statement regarding the personal, social and language developments is presented below:

As personal development, when you see different people and live in a country like Turkey, you may think that we understand the people and tolerate them. It is not real. When you live there, it is totally different. When I was there, I made a lot of friends from America, and Spain. They thought me their language so it was quite interactive.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Betül stated that she heard about the term ICC and defined it as an ability to communicate with people from other cultures. Besides, she added that ICC does not only require knowing the language but also personality traits, cultural knowledge and perspectives towards diversities are some of its necessities. In order to define an interculturally competent person, she talked about the pragmatic knowledge and the use of ICC knowledge effectively in social settings. Concerning interculturally competent speaker's definition, she stated that:

A person who is able to communicate to people from other cultures and from other countries can be. That person should be able to understand other cultures. Let's say their jokes.

In terms of the skills indicators of ICC, she listed the communicative skills, mainly as listening and speaking. She believed that listening had a great importance owe to its effects on understanding. She further added that without listening and understanding other people properly, it was impossible to have a conversation. Regarding the importance of ICC for a language teacher and a learner, she stated that it was crucial for both parts. She mentioned that students needed to know how to enroll in social interactions even if they did not have that chance now. In the same way, teachers might teach in another country and might need it to be aware of cultural differences. During the interview, she stated ICC's importance with the words stated below:

Surely it is important because we may have different students from different cultures. Even though, we don't have multicultural classroom, it is important to be able to teach our students how to communicate with other people from different countries.

Unlike Ayşe, Betül stated that the students were eager to learn more about other cultures and they were dreaming of experiencing them by themselves. For example, she mentioned that when the students spent time with Canadian and American students, support-teachers, they kept asking questions about their traditions, cultures or languages. Therefore, she claimed that almost all of her students were really motivated to learn more about cultural items.

On the other hand, regarding her teaching philosophy, she clarified that she had not had a concrete teaching philosophy prior to her experience and she did not work as a teacher professionally except for the compulsory internships. However, she still thought that she experienced an intimate and friendly classroom environment, which had tremendous effects on her teaching practices. She further explained that teachers and students had a good communication and personal relationships, which affected the lectures in a positive way. For example, they did not experience any communication problems or classroom management issues such as students' losing their focus during the course. All in all, she stated that being productive in terms of the use of materials effectively and the importance of having good teacher-student relationship were crucial changes in her teaching philosophy.

According to Betül, besides realizing the importance of building a good rapport with students, her experience also thought her how to develop materials according to students' needs. Additionally, she asserted that in Spain, communicative teaching was a priority and students were encouraged to learn via games or communicative activities; however, she thought that it was not a common practice in Turkey. As she continued, she added that teaching structure and grammar were considered more valuable in Turkish classrooms while the acquisition of speaking and listening skills were highly valued in Spanish classes. Regarding the changes in her teaching practices, during the interview, she stated that:

Even though I am a university lecturer now, when I was there I worked with young learners. That's why it did not contribute to my educational level in that meaning but if I were working with young learners, it would contribute. The teachers used to use a lot of games and a lot of communicative activities. In turkey, it is not the case. We just teach grammar, reading skill and we don't teach communicative skills.

On the other hand, she reported several problems in the integration process caused by curriculum, materials, and resources. Similar to other participants, she alleged that the focus of the courses was always the exam, TOEFL ITP, and she was supposed to teach the grammatical aspects of language rather than daily language. Considering the effect of curriculum, she asserted in the interview that:

I don't think that curriculum is suitable because the curriculum is focused on ITP. So we are teaching the structure, reading and the materials are not authentic enough to make them interculturally aware.

In terms of the effective use of textbooks, she stated that it depended on the students and the teachers. For example, she mentioned telling her experiences through reading passages. She said that she tried to integrate the basic aspects of Spanish culture or their rituals when the passage had something related to it. She also believed that Turkish people were like Spanish people in the way they lived so that her students were really interested in her stories. They asked further questions about them, which could be seen as a motivating factor. All in all, she claimed that she could integrate her experience as long as the topics were about cultural items. Therefore, she thought that textbooks could be adapted to enable the integration of cultural items. In contrast to textbooks, the reading books in the reading room, and the materials in self-access center were alleged not to be useful. She thought that students were not aware of the

right strategy of using the books in the reading room. In other words, they were not capable of choosing the books by themselves. Therefore, they needed to be guided about the types of books, magazines or journals that might be appropriate for them. Similarly, she added that students used self-access only when they had exams. Apart from that, she did not believe that students used it for their own studies or reading time. Besides, since the materials in the room were exam-oriented, students did not have a chance to learn any culture-related items. Different from the self-access center and the reading room, extra-curricular activities were stated as very effective. Since the students wanted to spend time with native speakers of English both to have fun and to learn more about them, most of them were willing to participate to the clubs offered by those students.

3) Classroom Practices

In Betül's class, PIN-8, there were 20 students and the observation was done in the third and fourth hours of the day. The topic was about texting and besides the course book; she also used a listening track. Betül started the lesson by asking some questions about the previous lesson such as "You have learned some idioms, so what was this one". There were idioms on the board and she asked a few questions about them. One of the idioms was to feel like a fish out of water and one of the students gave an example and stated that when you left your country, you would feel like a fish out of water. She said that it was totally correct and she continued explaining other idioms. Another one was 'Go Banana' and she gave an example by stating that 'I went banana last night when I had a big fight with my boyfriend'. Then, they continued the lesson with the vocabulary part. She asked some of the phrasal words like *fall behind* or *keep up with* and she made students connect the words into the real life context. Two of the students were absent the other day so she told them: 'you fell behind the class and you had to study harder to keep up with the rest of the classroom'. When she asked about another phrasal word, *get by*, one of the students said that 'I could get by in England if I learned English'. Then, during the first hour, the students all tried to use the phrasal verbs in sentences and they uttered them to the whole class. The students seemed motivated and were eager to make sentences

with the new vocabulary items. Although most of them were not good at composing sentences, they all wanted to try one. The teacher seemed patient and friendly. In terms of correction, she used her intonation, restatement and clarification questions such as '*Are you sure*' to correct the mistakes in grammar, pronunciation and meaning. In the second hour, the students made a brainstorming about the advantages and disadvantages of texting. Firstly, Betül asked them how often they texted per day, to whom they texted and lastly about what they talked via texts. Then, she listed three headlines on the board, and she wrote students' statements there. Most of the students stated that they texted most to their friends or boyfriends/girlfriends. Besides, a couple of them said that they even texted to their parents instead of calling them if they were in the course. Regarding the number of text messages, they stated that they were using whatsapp or snapchat more than 10 hours per day. Additionally, most of the students thought that texting was more suitable to talk about petty issues. If there was something vital, they asserted that calling should be preferred. Betül was listing the topics on the board while the students were discussing the questions. Then, she asked them to list the advantages and disadvantages of texting. When they stated the advantages one by one, she patiently wrote them on the board and got the approval of the whole class before writing them. She also checked their understanding via asking clarification questions. For example, when someone said that *texting was waste of time*, she asked to the rest of class *why it is a waste of time* and encouraged them to contribute to the topic. In the last 20 minutes of the course, they listened to a short dialogue between two people twice and first tried to answer detail part questions and later main idea questions. During the listening, she stopped the track a few times if there was a new vocabulary item. Besides, she wanted them to list down the advantages and disadvantages of texting while they were listening. In the last 10 minutes, they checked the answers and she explained the questions one by one. She dealt with the mistakes of each student separately and gave Turkish explanations when necessary.

To summarize, Betül stated in the interview that she was familiar with the term ICC and knew how an interculturally competent person acted or behaved in social interactions. Besides reporting positive personal and social changes such as

developing a different viewpoint towards the life, she also stated several changes in her teaching philosophy and practices, which were observed in her teaching. Like she stated in the interview, she managed to develop a good rapport with her students. Even though the level of the students was low, they tried to take part in the course and tried to speak English. The classroom atmosphere was so relaxed and peaceful and the students were eager to participate. The way she thought the unknown vocabulary items was in accordance with her statements in the interview. As she stated during the interview, she adapted the textbook and spent more time on practicing the vocabulary items through classroom discussions than only writing their definitions on the board one by one. The examples students gave such as *you felt like a fish out of water when you went abroad* might display the integration of cultural items.

4.1.3. Case III: Ceren's Case

1) Background Information

Ceren is a 26-year old female teacher and has a 35-week Comenius experience in the United Kingdom in 2009 just after her graduation. She graduated from Department of Foreign Language Education of a state university in Ankara, Turkey and had an MA degree in English Language Teaching at the same university. She has a 4-year teaching experience in total and she had a 3-year teaching career in the institution. She has been the coordinator of the testing unit for 2 years. In terms of her language proficiency, she has an advanced level in English. Prior to her Comenius, she had been in the U.S.A for three months via work and travel program. She defined herself as a flexible, curious, open-minded, motivated and self-confident person. Besides, she stated that she could tolerate differences, had a clear sense of self, and could easily adapt herself into new situations. Regarding her motivation level, she asserted that motivation was one of the fundamentals of these programs, and she elaborated on the topic further with the statements presented below:

I was highly motivated. Motivation is one of the key words. Without it, you cannot go to that country and you cannot spend nine months with people with whom you have never met and never seen before. I think motivation is really important.

Since she was highly motivated to learn more about British culture, she tried to get an idea about them through searching online or asking previous visitors. Nonetheless, she emphasized that learning about the culture through these ways was not reliable at all and experience the country by living there was a totally different experience. Similarly, as she expected, following her Comenius, she asserted several changes in her attitudes towards the people. Besides her attitudes, there were also changes in her personality, and her language proficiency. To begin with, she reported a positive change in the way she described the British people. Before she went, she had been told that British people were cold, unkind and unfriendly unlike Turkish people. In contrast to what was said to her, she found them friendly and she could establish close relationships with them, which is claimed as to be like a mother and child relationship. Regarding the changes in her thoughts about the characters of British people, during the interview, she stated that:

Before I went there, everybody was keep saying that those people are not really nice and kind and they are not very sincere and you cannot have close relationships with them. However, when I went there, I realized that they were very close. I was like a kid to them so it was a very nice experience for me.

Considering her personal development, similar to other respondents, she stated that she became a more self-confident person and learned how to stand on her own feet. Since that was her first time living away from her parents, she had to deal with everything by herself, which gave her a chance to get to know her strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, she believed that she became a better person in terms of appreciating others and developing a new viewpoint. However, she reported almost no change in her social development. She mentioned that she was socially accepted person and had quite a lot friends prior to her Comenius and this situation did not develop further even after her Comenius. On the other hand, she asserted that there was a remarkable change in her proficiency level in English, especially in her speaking skills. Even though she described herself as a fluent speaker even before her Comenius, she stated that she became like a native speaker following her UK experience. She further elaborated on the topic by giving an example stated below:

It definitely affected my language proficiency. Because just last week, I had a small part time job, I had to be interpreter for three hours and the comments

that I got were marvelous. They were from Germany and they kept saying that it is obvious that you spent some time in a foreign country. I do believe that it affected my fluency.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Ceren stated that she was not familiar with the term and she defined it in her own words. Accordingly, she explained it as an ability to communicate with people from other cultures. Differently, she added that your general knowledge about the culture, and your tolerance towards the differences were as important as your personality and your language proficiency to have a proper communication. Regarding the definition of interculturally competent person, she asserted that if someone knew the language of the country and had information about their cultural items, it meant that person might be called as culturally-aware. Accordingly, she added that having good communication skills was the main indicator of being an interculturally competent person. Hence, she listed speaking as the key skill to be an indicator of ICC, which was claimed by her to be the most frequent way of getting touch with people. Unlike most of the participants, Ceren thought that ICC was not crucial for language teachers and language learners. For teachers, she asserted that ICC was not a requirement; it might be helpful, though. Although she stated that teachers might get benefit from it in terms of the effective use of textbooks and avoiding the classroom problems; they still did not have to be interculturally competent in Turkey. Her further statements are presented below:

It might be very useful because in some of the text books, you may see a topic or text that might be related to the culture of English or American people. You may not be familiar with that and you may have some problems with the students but I can't say it is a must. I am not very sure. It might be.

Similar to her response to the importance of ICC for a teacher, she stated that students might need it; however, it was not a must. She elaborated on the issue by asserting that learning a language does not mean only knowing how to use the language and it requires getting to know people, culture and having an idea about different lifestyles. Nevertheless, she thought that it was not necessary for the language learners. Speaking of the learners, she thought that not all of her students

were willing to learn more about other cultures; however, there were some students having been abroad and they were acting like role-models for rest of the class, which might motivated the others. On the other hand, she stated that teachers could act as a guide or helper; however, students were the ones who would decide whether to learn beyond the linguistics aspects of language or not. Regarding students' willingness to learn more about cultural aspects of the language, her statements during the interview are presented below:

We have a few students who have been abroad and it is like a good role-model for the other students. They might be a guide to them. Maybe some them will gain enthusiasm about learning more and we can do it. I don't want to say that all are students are not motivated or they don't want to learn the culture. They don't want to learn anything about the language. And it really depends on the teacher. You may make them aware of the host culture, but again it is up to the students. He is the one who will decide on learning about the culture or not. You can be a guide or helper.

Considering her teaching philosophy, she reported several changes in terms of teacher-student interaction, classroom activities, and teacher-talk time. She stated that unlike Turkey where students were just silent and listening to the teacher, students were actively participating to the course and experiencing the language in the UK. Therefore, it was alleged by Ceren that there was a huge difference between Turkish and British educational system in terms of teacher- student interaction. Moreover, she thought that teachers gave more time and chances to take part in the course in the UK whereas teachers were claimed to discourage students' participation in Turkey. Therefore, following her Comenius experience, she stated that she decided to give more chances to her students and tried to have a better teacher-student interaction. Regarding her changing, she asserted that:

When I came back, I started to teach in this institution, and I also tried to use the skills that I learned from the teachers back in England. I also try to make my students participate more and I want to talk less, which was the attitude in England and I kind a adapted it and used it in this environment.

Besides changing teacher-student interaction and decreasing teacher-talk time, she stated that she tried to integrate her experience into her teaching through games. Instead of having a lecture-based course, she was supporting her course via using a variety of games as ice-breakers or in warm-ups to raise her students' attention during the course. For example, when the students got bored, she tried to add a game

to get their attention. Moreover, she believed that sharing her UK experiences such as her trips or her rituals back there attracted their attention.

Unlike other participants, Ceren thought that curriculum, materials and resources did not hinder ICC integration. Although she admitted that it might be a little hard due to the strict program and time limitations, it was the teacher who could manage to adapt the course accordingly. She further added that this university was not different from other institutions in terms of the hard schedule. Therefore, teachers were the ones who could adapt the programs and make it possible by creating some time to teach the cultural aspects. In the same way, she associated the effective use of materials with the right strategies chosen by the teachers. She claimed that teachers could adapt the textbooks or classroom materials in a way that students had a chance to learn more about the culture of different countries. Additionally, she emphasized the importance and usefulness of extra-curricular activities conducted by native student-teachers. She thought that it was best to learn about the culture from the person who experienced it. Besides extra-curricular activities, she also thought that the resources like magazines, newspapers or the books in the reading room were quite useful and might be a good way to learn about the culture.

3) Classroom Practices

In Ceren's classroom, PIN-5, there were 18 students and the teacher was teaching the vocabulary items before the reading passage. The topic was about generations and family tradition. It was the first two hours of the day. She directly started the course by ordering students to open page 45. Then, she told them to have a look at the vocabulary items and told her whether they knew any of them. A few students were familiar with a couple of words. After that, she started teaching the vocabulary items one by one. The unit's vocabulary items were *manage*, *expert*, *unity*, *corporation*, *courage*, *design*, *strength* and *expand*. She wrote each word one by one on the board, asked students to find the synonyms or antonyms of the words. If the students said an incorrect synonym or antonym, she corrected him/her by repeating the word and changing her tone of voice. Afterwards, she gave the definition of each word and gave students some time to note down the vocabulary items. In the last ten minutes,

she wanted them to take a piece of paper and try to write down a sentence with the each word listed on the board and later change the key word with *apple*. The *apple game* was to change the key word with *apple*. She chose one of the words and composed a sentence with apple as an example, and students tried to guess it. The teacher was making sentences by replacing the key word with apple and the students were guessing the word. After that each student wrote one apple sentence and read it out to the whole class and rest of the students tried to find the apple word. In the second hour, they continued with the reading passage. The students read the passage silently in 15 minutes and then they answered the questions in the main idea and details parts. They were given 15 minutes to answer those questions; however, prior to that Ceren asked some comprehension questions related to the passage apart from the ones written in the book. When the students had difficulty in finding the answers, she guided them and made them find the lines where the answer was written. She was patient when dealing with those students. Then, she checked the answers and asked whether they had any problems or not.

All in all, during the classroom practice, unfortunately, Ceren did not try to integrate cultural aspects into the reading passages. As she stated in the interview, she cared about the teacher-student interaction and made the students take control of their own learning progress. Instead of reading out the passage, she asked them to read it by themselves, which might help students to take their time and concentrate better on it. On the other, most of the students seemed motivated and were willing to participate. Especially, during the apple game, most of them wanted to utter their sentences. Ceren also asked some students to read out their sentences, and she gave them some time to get ready, which also reflected her carefulness about students' time control. Moreover, she also made the students talk more than her, and gave them a chance to actively participate in the lecture.

4.1.4. Case IV: Dilara's Case

1) Background Information

Dilara is a 28-year old female teacher, and has an 8-month Comenius experience in Italy in 2010 just after her graduation. She graduated from a state university in

Ankara, Turkey, with an English Language and Literature degree and she is still doing her master degree in another state university in Ankara in the field of Gender Studies. She is from Pakistan so she is Turkish- Urdu bilingual. She has a 6-year of teaching experience and a 3-year of experience at the institution. Besides English, she has an elementary level in Italian. Prior to her Comenius, she had been in Pakistan several times for visiting her relatives and had been in United Kingdom for a month for holiday. She described herself as flexible, patient, open-minded, motivated, and self-confident person. She could also tolerate differences, and adapt to new situations easily. Before she went to Italy, she stated that she learned a little bit about the country from her father. She stated that he gave her some language tips and some information about the life standard and people there. Besides, she also made some internet search. However, she stated that she learned a great deal about it by experience. In terms of her motivation level, she asserted that she was highly motivated since she was supposed to teach to Italian kids and she believed that the only way to do that was to be in their shoes through learning more about Italian culture.

In contrast to other participants, Dilara reported that she did not experience any changes in her attitudes towards Italian people following her Comenius. She added that her ideas prior to her experience were almost same with what she experienced there. On the other hand, she reported a few changes in her personality, social manners and language skills. To begin with, she was not a talkative person in general; however, she mentioned becoming more talkative following her Comenius. In the same way, she stated that she became more confident in using English since she got a chance to use it in a real context. Moreover, she alleged that social confidence could be associated with language development. She asserted that the more fluent she became, the more sociable she turned out to be.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Dilara said that she was not quite familiar with the term yet she described it as communication ability with different cultures. Following her statement, she focused on her own experience since she grew up in a multicultural society and stated that it could be experienced in a culture which includes many different ones. Besides

different cultures, she thought that the experience should be in a society where different languages were spoken, too. On the other hand, she associated being interculturally competent with having some personality traits. Regarding the definition of an interculturally competent person, she stated that:

A person who can do this must have some specific qualities. For example; this person should be open-minded and should be tolerating the others' understanding of life and lastly should be open to changes.

In terms of the skills indicators of ICC, speaking was to be alleged by Dilara as the first skill and then listening since she thought that culture was something that could be conveyed through speaking. She stated that if someone was good at speaking, then it means that person was good at listening, too, which reflects the facts that they are interrelated. Considering ICC's importance for a language teacher, she asserted that it depends on the country that you are working as a teacher. Although in Turkey you might not need it, it must be something that a teacher should have in her teaching practices in a multicultural class abroad. Actually, in the beginning she stated that she was not sure about teachers' sides. Although learners are automatically open to different cultural things and learning new things, teachers are not doing that. However, when the researcher asked the ways that a teacher without an ICC could possibly raise his/her students' awareness and their knowledge in that field, she changed her reply a little bit. Even though she agreed on its necessity in terms of this aspect, she still claimed that it was not one of the priorities in teacher education. On the other hand, she thought that it was not something really necessary for language teachers; she believed that it was a must for language learners. Regarding ICC's importance for language learners, she further elaborated on the issue with the statements presented below:

He or she must have it. This is true, but I am not sure about teachers' side. Of course a teacher must have it, but it is not something necessary. Learning a language requires person to have these qualities. I mean being open to these multicultural things. Learner will automatically open to these things because he is learning a new culture, but for a teacher, I am not very sure.

Considering the student profile and their motivation, she stated that the age of the students made them totally appropriate to teach cultural stuff since they are open-minded and open to learn new cultures. Different from high school, they are in

university and they want to learn more about the life not only in Turkey but also in different countries. Hence, she added that as long as the program supports it, they might get benefit from it in a great sense.

Regarding the teaching philosophy, she reported several changes. First of all, she stated that she became a better communicator. What she meant was not her language skills but her communication skills. Prior to her Erasmus experience, she was giving more importance to the message and her ideas more than the audience. In contrast to considering her ideas, she started focusing on the audience, the people who would read the message and their minds, and the way they might think of the message afterwards. Furthermore, she also realized that she did not have to switch to the native language while teaching English. During her Comenius experience, she used English all the time during the courses and afterwards she started using English without any Turkish explanations in her teaching experiences in Turkey. She gave further explanation about the topic by stating that:

Professionally, I had only one year of experience with kids. It improved my skills on young learners. I learned how to behave with them, how to catch them, and how to communicate with them. It was actually different from teaching to Turkish kids because they did not know anything. We had only English to communicate, but here we can switch to Turkish, but there only way was English and I realized that they are trying hard to communicate with me and trying to use English. I realized that I can use English in my lessons and after that I am trying to use only English in my lessons and I took advantage of being a foreigner in my classes.

Besides using English all the time and caring about the audience more than the message, she also reported a few changes in her teaching practices. After spending some time as a teacher in Italy, Dilara realized that they were actually using communicative approach and teaching was beyond only verbal explanations. Students were parts of the teaching progress via playing games or making language practices. Hence, she mentioned that she started using more practices or games instead of basic instructions or theories in the grammar. For example, she stated that she tried to make her students use the given information through games and practice it by themselves. Moreover, in addition to games, she asserted that she changed the classroom activities that she integrated into her course. As she clearly observed during her own study abroad experience, students learned better when they actually

took part in the activities, and when they communicated with each other. Therefore, she wanted her Turkish students to learn in the same- by communicating. Besides communicative activities, she also mentioned that she was using some anecdotes related to her past experiences. She realized that when she personalized the topic, the students liked it better and they were happy to hear her stories. Additionally, she stated that her students were encouraged to learn about new cultures and wanted to go to those places. Hence, she believed that she raised their awareness about other cultures. One more thing was about the skills that she was integrating to her experience. She emphasized that apart from grammar teaching, cultural topics could be applied to all parts of the course like writing, reading, speaking or listening. She further claimed that personalization could be one method and maybe the best one to be used in culture- integration. In other words, she stated that we could encourage the students to use internet for the purpose of communicating with others or to go abroad. On the other hand, she still believes that going abroad is a must and it is not possible to raise students' awareness in class since it is limited and they have to experience the cultural things by themselves in the first place.

Although she stated that the classroom setting was limited, she found the curriculum suitable for ICC integration. She alleged that most of the topics, especially the writing ones, could be applied to teach cultural aspects of language and she elaborated on the topic with the statements displayed below:

First of all, the writing topics can be given about cultural interactions, cultural stuff and also in speaking it can be applied. It totally depends on the topic. If we can find these different cultural materials, we can totally apply them in four skills.

In terms of the appropriateness of the materials, Dilara thought that productivity of the materials changes according to the topics presented in the book. She expressed that especially the writing materials were really useful in this sense. Apart from that, she emphasized again the possibility of blending the cultural items with every activity. Lastly, she said that extra-curricular activities helped them yet she did not think the readers were as effective as they were thought so. Although they were about different stories belonging to a variety of cultures, they could be applied in a much better way to make the students interculturally aware.

3) Classroom Practices

Dilara was teaching to BE-7 and there were 21 students. For two hours, they made a revision of the two units. There were a variety of grammar topics like present perfect tense, present perfect continuous tense, simple past tense and passive voice in simple past tense. The students did the exercises on the book one by one and then they checked the answers. The teacher explained the necessary parts and mistakes on the board. The exercises were all grammar ones like filling the blanks in a paragraph or rewriting the given sentences. She assigned the exercises one by one and checked them afterwards. Dilara tried to use English all time when explaining the answers; however, sometimes she switched to Turkish. Since students' level was elementary, they had some difficulties in understanding the grammatical expressions. Throughout the lesson, Dilara was patient to explain everything in detail and she had a calm and friendly attitude towards the students. Since the students had an upcoming exam, they had to cover all of the unit revision part in those two hours. Therefore, she did not have a chance to prepare activities or materials to enhance students' interaction. Even though the students had an exam, they did not seem motivated to learn and practice the grammatical parts. Quite a few of them were using their phones during the course so that Dilara had to warn them a few times. She told them to focus on the practice test. Despite the fact that all the grammar topics were covered in the previous lecture, they still had a lot of difficulties. Some of the students even asked whether they were taught present perfect tense. Nevertheless, the teacher patiently explained every topic patiently and wrote the basic rules on the board. For example, she wrote the time expressions, formulas and differences between the tenses on the board. In spite of the level of the students, she rarely switched to Turkish, which reflected her statements in the interview. Unlike the interview, she could not find any chance to integrate her experience into her teaching because of the topic assigned to those hours.

4.1.5. Case V: Elif's Case

1) Background Information

Elif is a 25 year-old female teacher and has a 10-month Erasmus experience in the United Kingdom in 2008 in her junior year. Prior to Erasmus, she had been in Poland for two weeks for Socrates project. She graduated from a state university, in Ankara, Turkey, with an ELT degree and she completed her master in Linguistics in a state university, in London, the UK. While she has a 2-year of experience in total, she worked in the institution for 8 months. She described herself as a flexible, curious, open-minded, motivated, self-reliant, empathetic, and self-confident person. Besides, she stated that she could tolerate differences and ambiguity, had a clear sense of self, and lastly could be adaptable to new situations. Before her Comenius, she said that she had a lot of knowledge about the host country. Since the UK has a quite mainstream country and most of the books, movies and music are in English, she asserted that she was quite familiar with the country. Although she stated that she did not have any particular interest towards the British culture, she was interested in learning about other cultures. Hence, she asserted that she was highly motivated for that experience.

Following her Erasmus, she reported several changes in her attitudes and ideas about the host culture. The biggest change was that she realized that we should not talk about only one culture like British culture, American or Dutch culture since there were also lots of diversities in each culture. Therefore, instead of generalizing, she chose seeing people as individuals. Regarding the changes in her attitudes, she elaborated on the topic with the statements presented below:

A lot of things have changed. It is difficult to verbalize. The first thing I understood was that I was in London for a year for this Erasmus experience, and what I saw was that there were a lot of people in the city. It was quite metropolitan. It is difficult to talk about British culture. There was not only British culture there. There are a lot of people from different contexts. In my university, British ones were the minority. People with different ethnic backgrounds were the majority. What I saw was that the world is changing so it is difficult to talk about homogenous cultures. We cannot talk about one single culture. Before going there I though there were cultures like British culture, American culture, Dutch culture, but I realized that there were not only one culture. There are lots of diversity is in it. So I started to understand

people and communicate with them individually. So I stopped doing some generalizations about cultures.

In order to describe her Erasmus experience, she used the statement of *the year of experiencing yourself*. In other words, she thought that she became a better communicator in terms of changing the way of expressing herself. Before her Erasmus, she stated that she was caring more about conveying her ideas than the audience. For example, she said that after her Erasmus, she started thinking about the best way to convey her ideas to her audience. Hence, she believed that she became a better communicator. Additionally, she mentioned becoming more self-confident in her conversations, which also affected her social relationships. Although she had experienced more difficulty in entering to social gatherings prior to her Erasmus, she asserted that it became much easier for her to open a conversation, introduce herself or enter a new community afterwards. In terms of language development, Elif reported several changes in her language use. As she stated, she realized that what we learned in university was standardized English, yet actually there were lots of varieties in English. In other words, there was not only one way of saying things.

There were some other factors like geography, society or history affecting your words. Additionally, she added that becoming a good speaker in English definitely requires more than being familiar with the dictionary meaning of the words since each word has its own background and you should actually live there to feel it. Regarding her language development, her further statements are displayed below:

... I became much more tolerant to hear different ways of saying things. This can be the vernacular languages- standard languages. If you want to be a good speaker in that language, you should not learn the words from a dictionary. Because these words have their own history and you should live there.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Elif stated that she was quite familiar with the term and explained it as understanding different cultures and knowing how to communicate effectively and appropriately with people with different backgrounds. Regarding the definition of interculturally competent speaker, she mentioned that some personality traits such as understanding the others and speaking in a culturally appropriate way are needed to be called as a

competent person. Additionally, she stated that she/he should know how to say things or how to manage challenging situations, which can be related to having good communication skills. She believed that expressing yourself clearly was not enough to be understood since you were also supposed to know the background of your audience. On the other hand, she emphasized the importance of communicative strategies and she pointed out that certain communicative skills such as nominating a topic, starting or ending a conversation could be indicators of ICC knowledge. Besides these strategies, she stated that empathy and understanding the feelings were also important indicators.

Considering the importance of ICC for a language teacher, she alleged that a teacher should definitely have an ICC to teach it and to guide the students. She thought that we should teach our students discourse skills and sociocultural communicative competences and make them familiar with cultural concepts. It was the teachers' duty to make students gain culture awareness and help them understand that there are a variety of ways of speaking, writing, organizing your ideas and so on in different languages and cultures. Similarly, she added that it is also necessary for language learners. If they want to be good speakers in a particular language, they should know the appropriate way of doing it. Besides speaking, they also need to know different discourse structures and be familiar with them to be good at writing, reading, and listening as well. She elaborated on the importance of ICC for a language teacher by stating that:

... It is not only speaking, it is also important in reading as well. When you read something, for example, in different discourse communities, they have different discourse structures. Our students should be familiar with them. If they want to write something in English, they should write it in an appropriate way. Even listening is important as well. In these four skills, ICC knowledge is important.

Regarding the student profile, Elif was in agreement with Ayşe on the motivation of the students. She also believed that students were not motivated enough to learn about cultural items. She further added that they are only motivated to pass TOEFL ITP and they will not have a chance to use English in their lives following their prep school education. Therefore, they do not have any opportunity to relate the things they learned in class to their own lives. Most of them do not have a chance to go

abroad; however, she stated that she tried to encourage them to go abroad for education or for having fun. In this way, she hopes that she could motivate them a little bit more.

In terms of changes in her teaching philosophy, she stated that she realized the differences between the theories and their classroom practices. She mentioned realizing the importance of pragmatic competence. As she stated, bare grammar teaching is not enough to be a part of the community where the language is spoken. Hence, teaching pragmatic competence became more important for her afterwards. Regarding the changes in her teaching philosophy, her further statements are presented below:

Definitely it did. Possibly I realized the importance of ICC and I realized that in language teaching it is not enough to give the structures or grammar to the students. There is something much more important than this, which is pragmatic competence. As you know we were ELT students and we got this education. One of our lessons was about pragmatics and we learned a lot of theoretical things. They gave examples about people from different cultures and understanding the things in a different way. We had a lot of examples and theories in our minds, but when I went there, I realized that it is something really important. If you want to be a good speaker in language, it is something vital. Then, I thought about it and I decided to give more time and space to pragmatic competence, so it changed me a lot.

As she reported several changes in her teaching philosophy, she decided to change her teaching practices accordingly. First of all, Elif believes that her lessons became much more colorful and enjoyable after her Erasmus experience. She started using stories by means of telling her experiences during the course to make it more interesting to her students. For instance, while teaching pronunciation, besides giving the standardized ways, she also taught them more other ways of pronunciation like Scottish or Afro-American way. Her further statements about her teaching practices are presented below:

Since I lived something different, I lived in a different world, and I had a lot of different experiences, I always shared them with my student and my students always paid a lot of attention. For example, if you are teaching a word, most of the time you give its pronunciation in a standard way. I also gave my students an afro American friend's pronunciation. You know the Indian way, you know the Scottish. Articulate these words! I always give my students such examples and that made my lessons more enjoyable.

Moreover, Elif asserted that she was organizing some role-play activities such as ordering a food from a restaurant, seeing a doctor, being in an airport and she was building her lessons around these topics which are related to real life. She believed that by using notional-functional teaching method, she could build her lessons around the topics related to the daily life. She mentioned being a role-model for the students in the beginning of the activities, and then encouraging her pupils to use the words or phrases which might be used in that situations, in an airport, restaurant, hospital etc.

No matter how important she thinks ICC for language learners, Elif still believes that raising ICC awareness of students is quite difficult. Since the students are outside the target community, they do not have any authentic materials. Hence, as a teacher, she tried to bring some real materials into the class. However, she added that adapting these authentic materials like movies, or texts, was quite difficult and might be frustrating. Unlike textbooks, these materials were not designed or prepared according to the level of the students and unfortunately students might feel themselves drowned or overwhelmed in this high level of language. Therefore, she added that teachers' responsibilities became much more important in this process. On the other hand, in addition to the scarcity of authentic materials, she reported several problems resulting from the curriculum. She expressed that curriculum was quite strict in the institution and there is no space for teachers. She went further by stating that there is too much pressure on the teachers and the learners because of the requirements of TOEFL ITP exam. Hence, she stated that whenever she spent some time on teaching or talking about cultural aspects, she fell behind the other teachers. Because of the weekly syllabus that must be followed, she admitted feeling a bit under pressure to use extra-materials. Nevertheless, she still thought that teachers could adapt the textbooks. She stated that there are certain topics in the book such as globalization, energy or business meetings and these give teachers a chance to teach students extra vocabulary items or certain concepts related to these topics. Hence, she believes that with adaptation and support via extended conversations, topics in the textbooks could be totally useful. Lastly, she asserted that the resources were not enough. She stated that the project with Canadian students working as support

teachers was effective and mostly beneficial for the students since it gave them a chance to talk with native speakers; however, it was still not enough.

4.1.6. Case VI: Filiz's Case

1) Background Information

Filiz is a 27 year-old female teacher and has a 4-month Erasmus experience in Germany in 2010 in her second year in MA. She had been abroad several times prior to her Erasmus. She went to the UK for a month for a language course and she went to Canada for three months for a language course in French and lastly she went to France for a week for a visit. She graduated from a state university in İstanbul, Turkey, with a degree on Translation and Interpreting Studies and she had a master degree in the same field at the same university. Filiz has only one year of teaching experience in the institution and as a whole. In terms of her personality traits, she described herself as a curious, open-minded, empathetic and patient person. Besides, she also mentioned being tolerable to differences and adaptable to new situations. Contrary to other participants, Filiz had some idea about the host country since she visited Germany before. She also stated that learning about Western culture was easy as there was a lot of information in TV, movies or books. Therefore, she alleged that she thought she knew much about them. Nevertheless, she asserted that she was quite motivated to adapt herself to the host country since she wanted to feel like being a part of the culture and get to know how to behave appropriately in daily situations. Filiz reported several changes in her attitudes towards host culture; and her personal, social and language developments following her Erasmus. Different from other respondents, she changed her attitudes towards Turkish people living in Germany rather than German people. She stated that her ideas changed since she realized that Turks were depicted in a different way than their actual life back there. In other words, she thought that Turks were rude and uneducated prior to her Erasmus; however, it turned out to be the opposite. She asserted that while she was conducting a research, she interviewed with some of the Turks and they totally changed her mind with their politeness. Regarding the changes in her personal development, Filiz used the word *cliché* and described her Erasmus as an eye-opening experience, which

broadens your horizon. Before expressing her social development, she mentioned being an introvert person and stated that it was always difficult for her to enter different communities. Therefore, she thought that meeting with people from different nationalities would be more challenging for her. In contrast to what she expected, she overcame her fear and she had a chance to get to know more people. Lastly, in terms of language development, she stated that she improved her English skills just a little bit since she learned how to speak the native language of the country, which was German in her case. However, she was happy to improve herself in another language besides English.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Filiz stated that she had no idea about ICC and she could not relate it to any field. She added that it might be some competence that you have in your relationships with people from different cultures. Like other participants, Filiz stated that an interculturally competent person could tolerate the differences and should be possibly aware of different cultures. Additionally, she stated that even if that person does not accept those cultural accepts, she should have the capacity to tolerate them.

In terms of the skills, she only listed speaking as an indicator of ICC knowledge. Regarding the importance of ICC for a language teacher, Filiz stated that learning a language and acquisition of culture of the target country are closely connected. Therefore, she believes that they are inseparable. Hence, she added that it is a must to learn the culture to understand what is actually going on there. Similarly, she alleged that it is vital for language learners. She stated that as a learner, you are supposed to know what is going in other countries and how to behave appropriately in particular situations.

In terms of the changes in her teaching philosophy, Filiz stated that she did not know whether her professional skills developed or not since she was not working at that moment. Nevertheless, she stated that there were various differences in teacher-student relationships between Turkey and Germany. She asserted that German teachers had more intimate and relaxed relationships with her students. According to her own experience, most of the teachers in Turkey were strict about the rules and

classroom management; however, in Germany, she thought that teachers were more relaxed and calm during the course. Therefore, she took them as an example in her teaching. She wanted to become more than an instructor and to encourage the learners to search for themselves or to express themselves in a friendlier environment. Considering the integration of her ICC into her teaching practices, she stated that she was using some anecdotes and telling personal stories about her experiences to make the students more motivated and to make the course more interesting for them. Since Filiz is married to an American man, she stated that her students were so curious about her life and her husband's life in the USA, which also affected her students' motivation in a positive way. Additionally, with real-life related materials like movies or conversations and adapting classroom activities by adding more real-life role play situations were also alleged to be appropriate ways of integration. She further elaborated on the topic with the statements that:

It is possible. First, we need some real materials, even like films and real audios, conversations. Maybe we can create these types of role play situations like how would you react if you are in the UK registering for something or booking a room at the hotel. So if you create these types of situations, they can practice it.

On the other hand, Filiz also reported some problems in the integration process owing to the curriculum, and materials. In terms of the curriculum, she approached to the topic with a new perspective and asserted that it depends on the course that you are teaching. She thought that listening- speaking and even reading-writing courses are suitable for this integration yet it is almost impossible for main course because of the time-limitations. Similarly, she stated that the materials are exam-oriented so that they are mostly not suitable to teach the cultural items. In contrast to classroom materials such as textbooks or extra-materials related to exams, she asserted that the resources are good, especially the extra materials of reading-writing books. Since they have information about how to behave in an interview etc., students can get benefit from them if guided properly. Besides extra materials, she stated that communicative activities with native student- teachers are obviously good for the development of their intercultural skills.

3) Classroom Practices

In BE-15, there were 18 students in the classroom and the observation was done in first two hours of the day. The topic was sports, and Filiz used a video besides the course book. The video was taken from an American sports program and it was about the increasing number of female fans in the stadiums. Since the topic was about the female fans, the video was totally appropriate for the course. The students seemed interested in the video and they watched it carefully. She started the course by writing NFL on the board, and asked students about its meaning. The students stated their answers and she wrote the each word standing for each letter on the board. Then, she wrote NBA and asked some questions about it. Lastly, she wrote World Cup on the board, which was the topic, and asked about the teams taking part in the tournament and about the fans. Then, she nominated a topic about the national teams, football fans and gender of the fans. Afterwards, she showed video, news, about the football fans and the percentage of men and women in the stadiums. After the video had finished, Filiz asked some questions about it such as *what was it about or do they thought that it was true*. As it was stated above, besides the female fans, it also included the advertisements designed for women and men. Then, Filiz asked the advertisements in the Turkish stadiums and whether they were mostly designed for men or female fans. The students were also encouraged to talk about whether they were fans of any sport and how often they watched the games. Since the student profile was low, she had to translate most of the questions into Turkish. When a student answered a question in Turkish, she patiently translated it into English and repeated the answer again. In the next hour, she started writing the new vocabulary items on the board, and they discussed the meanings of each word one by one. They continued with the same topic and this time she focused on the adverts in the stadium. Then, the students talked about the types of ads and the target audience of ads displayed in the stadiums. They seemed quite interested in the topic so that they all tried to participate to the lesson and state their ideas. Lastly, they looked at the pictures on the textbook, which showed fans from different countries, and they talked about the countries and nationalities in the pictures. In most of the pictures, there were female fans and the reading passage was about the advertisements designed for

them. The students managed to guess all of the nationalities presented in the book. Later, they also had a brief discussion about Turkish female fans. Although most of the discussion was in Turkish, Filiz encouraged them to participate to the lecture and did not warn them about the use of Turkish frequently. Afterwards, the students started reading the passage silently and following that they answered the questions on the book. When they needed any help, she approached them one by one and answered their questions patiently. The classroom atmosphere clearly showed that she had a good relationship with her students. As she stated in the interview, she could establish her desired teacher-student interaction. Moreover, bringing authentic video was also one of the ways she suggested during the interview.

4.1.7. Case VII: Gözde's Case

1) Background Information

Gözde is a 26-year old female teacher and has an 8-month Comenius experience in the UK in 2009 in her senior. Prior to her Comenius, Gözde had been in Belgium for 5 years since her father was working there. She graduated from a state university in Ankara, Turkey, in the field of ELT and she is doing her master in another state university in Eskişehir in Comparative Literature. Gözde has 3-year of experience and only 1 year of it is in this institution. She described herself as a flexible, curious, open-minded, motivated, and self-reliant. Moreover, she also stated that she had a clear sense of self, and could be adaptable to new situations easily. Gözde stated that she was already interested in British culture prior to her Comenius experience and hence she had knowledge about the life, schools and universities there. Besides, she asserted that she was definitely motivated to see the life there.

Unfortunately, unlike other respondents, Gözde did not experience positive changes in her attitudes towards host country following her Comenius. Although she expected a more intimate environment and more friendly students, she thought that her students were despising her and were not highly interested in Turkish culture. Regarding the changes, she further elaborated on the topic with the statements presented below:

Because I was really motivated, I liked the way they lived, the way of speaking and all the things but I found them a bit prejudiced, not motivated to show their own culture. When a foreign person comes here, we are very open, good hosts, but there I didn't feel so welcome. Especially, in the second/third months and especially with the students, I was expecting more welcoming students, but they were underestimating, not really interested about my culture.

Considering her language development, she asserted that Comenius had a great impact on her speaking skills, especially on her pronunciation. Moreover, in terms of her personal and social development, she stated that she has already been familiar with foreign cultures since her childhood because of her father's job. She said that she is used to the way of socializing in another country. Additionally, she asserted that she travelled a lot and went to lots of musicals during her Comenius, which affected her personality and social development. Regarding her social development, her further statements are presented below:

I was familiar with coping with foreign cultures when I was little I lived in Belgium but back then I was with my family. In England, I lived with Spanish and French assistants and I got used to the way of socializing. We used to have a lot of parties, which we don't have here. I got used to travelling alone, backpacking. I went to lots of musicals; we don't have them here either.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Gözde stated that she did not know ICC and she thought that it might be related to the ability to communicate with people with different cultures. Then, she described being an interculturally competent person as having an ability which enables one to communicate with others who have a different background, could understand the way others live, lastly could speak their language, and be able to tolerate the differences. Regarding the skills indicators of ICC, Gözde listed listening, reading and speaking. Moreover, she asserted that productive skills are important signs of ICC knowledge. Considering the importance of ICC for a language teacher, she stated that it is absolutely necessary for a language teacher since the first step is to get into the culture and to learn the specific cultural aspects effectively via communicating with others. As a teacher, she believes that you are the one to know the cultural factors in the first place to teach them effectively. Additionally, she alleged that students think that teachers with Erasmus and Comenius experiences are

more successful and impressive since they admire them more than others. In order to explain why students thought her impressive and admirable, she used the statements presented below:

When I enter the classroom and talked about British and American things, European stuff, I am a different person to them and they want to learn the language, because they want to feel different as well. Especially, it is important to make the learning process more interesting.

On the other hand, she thinks that the necessity of ICC for a language learner depends on students' aims; however, she asserted that she did not know how to assure that. Although she thought that it is definitely necessary for teachers, being open-minded is more important to be a part of the developing world. Additionally, she mentioned the extra-curricular activities conducted by visiting native student-teachers, and she believed that students need to gain cultural awareness to have a proper conversation with them. Nevertheless, she emphasized that they also need to develop their languages skills to pass the TOEFL ITP exam. Then, they may have a chance to enhance their knowledge in cultural aspects. Contrary to other respondents, Gözde thinks that our students are not suitable for ICC teaching since they have prejudices against foreigners. For example, she claimed that when they could not comprehend native teachers' statements, they got angry and they thought that they were despised. Nonetheless, she also asserted that comparing to old generations, new generation is more open minded and open to cultural stuff.

Regarding the changes in her teaching philosophy, she asserted that Comenius was her first teaching experience, which helped her in the way she teaches today. To begin with, she mentioned that she learned how the classroom management should be. Although she had two internships in Turkey prior to her Comenius experience, she alleged that all we did was to teach grammar in Turkey. Since the students knew nothing, teachers had to talk Turkish at some points during the class. However, while she was teaching Turkish in her Comenius, she realized that there was no need to switch to Turkish and students could perfectly understand the language with the right use of gestures, mimics or body language. On the other hand, in her teaching experiences in Turkey, she used to switch to Turkish or explain the topics in Turkish

at the end of the lesson. However, following her experience, she decided not to use Turkish in her courses and to stick to English all the time. Regarding the changes in her teaching philosophy, she further stated that:

... While teachers were teaching grammar, they could talk Turkish. We were told to teach English using Turkish. To make sure that they understood, I tried a lot. Same thing happened in the high school. I remember I was just saying things about animals, and told them to repeat after me, and then I had to explain them in Turkish. When I was in England, when I was teaching Turkish, I realized that I can't do it with my own language. When I came back to Turkey, in my first job in Eskişehir, I only spoke English with my students. They thought me as a foreign teacher first, and I just talked English all the time. I believe if you communicate correctly, and with the right gestures and everything, you can teach in the foreign language. I believe that and I still do it.

Considering the possibility of raising students' ICC awareness, she stated that the missing thing is foreign people in the learning environment. Apart from that, she also stated that Turkish students are like British students in terms of being open to different cultures. In contrast to British ones, they do not have a chance to spend time with foreign people or share the same environment. Besides student profile, she reported several problems about the curriculum and the materials. Considering the curriculum, she asserted that it is not really encouraging the integration of cultural aspects since it is mostly based on the exams assigned each week. Similarly, she alleged that materials are not appropriate for ICC teaching since they are mostly about the theoretical part of the language. Therefore, she thinks that students do not have enough chance to be exposed to authentic materials.

3) Classroom Practices

In BE-16, there were 18 students and the topic was how to write a contrast paragraph. Since the level of students was low, the teacher started with the basic rules and parts of a paragraph. During two hours, she only taught how to write a topic sentence, how to write supporting sentences and details, and lastly how to write a concluding sentence. While she was explaining the topic, almost all of the students seemed unmotivated. Some of them were staring at her when she was trying to show them the differences between topic sentence and supporting sentences. Not only did

few students listen to the course and writing the rules on the board, but they also did not respond to the questions she asked. For example, she asked them what the topic sentence was and none of them answered it. Then, she explained it one more time. Almost all of the students were using their phones during the course; however, she patiently clarified the topic. Whenever students asked some questions in Turkish, she replied them in English. Moreover, she sometimes used her intonation and body language to get their attention. In the second hour, Gözde continued the lecture via teaching connectors. Firstly, she started lecture with the simple connectors such as firstly, secondly, lastly, etc. Afterwards, she thought them the ones used in contrast paragraph such as while, although, though, even though, unlike, whereas, etc. She wrote an example sentence on the board for each connector. Then, she told them to write one sentence with each connector. Even though most of the students were not following the course, she tried to make each student compose at least one sentence. Lastly, she wrote a sample contrast paragraph with one of the topics presented in the book. While writing the paragraph, she asked the students to help her. However, only a couple of students tried to compose sentences. All in all, although Gözde spoke English almost all the time and briefly gave Turkish explanations, students constantly spoke Turkish and rarely tried to speak English. Nevertheless, as she stated in the interview, she rarely switched to Turkish in two hours and tried to explain everything in English despite the level of her students. On the other and, she did not write any culture related examples on the board to teach the connectors.

4.1.8. Case VIII: Hülya's Case

1) Background Information

Hülya is a 26-year old female teacher and has a 10-month of Comenius experience in Sweden in 2010 in her senior year. She has a 4-year teaching experience and has been working in this institution for a year. She graduated from a state university in Ankara, Turkey, with an ELT degree. Prior to her Comenius, she had not been abroad. Considering her personality, she described herself as a flexible, curious, open-minded, motivated, self-reliant, and self-confident person. Additionally, she asserted that she could tolerate ambiguity and differences and could be adaptable to new situations easily. Before her Comenius experience, Hülya mentioned being so

motivated so that she searched a lot about the host country's traditions, their popular activities or their music. Moreover, she asserted that she had a great admiration for the country and so that she wanted to learn everything prior to her departure.

Following her Comenius, she reported several changes in her attitudes towards host culture; her personality, social manners and language development. In terms of her attitudes, she believed that she gained a new perspective. As she expected, she liked the culture, people and atmosphere. She found them very friendly and helpful in many aspects, which also made her feel more self-confident. In other words, she asserted that the more you knew about the country, the more self-confident you became. Considering her social development, she stated that she learned how to work with different people and how to behave in a socially acceptable manner. She further elaborated on the topic with the statements presented below:

You have to work with so many different people when you go there. It develops your behavior towards other people. You learn team work and how to work with a group of people. You learn consulting to other people and it develops your social way of thinking in so many different ways.

Lastly, regarding her language development, she believed that she was lucky to be in Sweden since most of the people were speaking English perfectly, which gave her a chance to be exposed to language all the time, and which eventually developed her speaking skills.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Different from other respondents, Hülya described ICC as an effective use of language and being aware of grammatical use of language. Considering the definition of interculturally competent person, she focused on having knowledge of the rules and pragmatics of the language. Since she believes that pragmatics and rules are the most important aspects in language teaching and learning, she thinks that they will eventually make that person culturally-competent. In terms of the skills, she listed listening and speaking as the most important indicators of ICC, and then she added vocabulary and grammar since she believes that sub-skills are also important to use the language effectively. Considering ICC's importance for a

language teacher, she alleged that it is necessary for teachers since she believes that a teacher should know it first to teach it effectively and to be competent in her language use. Similarly, she thinks that learners also need ICC to be successful in their future lives. She further emphasized the fact that learners might go to other countries, and ICC is assumed to affect their relationships and communication skills with people from different countries. On the other hand, she thinks that student profile is not suitable since their aim is passing TOEFL ITP and they mostly want to concentrate on studying for the exam.

In terms of the effects of Comenius on professional development, she asserted that she learned so many different methods, ways to cope with classroom problems and to develop materials. In other words, she believes that having a teaching experience in another country enhanced her teaching skills remarkably. For example, she stated that she learned a number of materials that were not used in Turkish classrooms such as assigning daily-life projects to students or different vocabulary games. Besides this, she emphasized that she learned how the European education system works and elaborated on the topic with the statements displayed below:

... When you go there, you learn European way of teaching and how they teach language. You learn too many different methods. My supervisor was so experienced. At first, I was observing her then I started teaching. While teaching, she always helped me and taught me how to deal with classroom problems so I learned classroom management. She helped me to develop materials and with. As I told you, I learned the European education system.

Regarding her teaching practices, she asserted that she had a chance to combine her theoretical knowledge with her teaching practices in Sweden. As a result of her teaching practices, she believes that she learned which theories are practical and useful and which ones are not. Following her Comenius, she stated that she started teaching in a college and had a chance to apply the things she learned abroad. On the other hand, she reported several problems caused by the curriculum, and materials, which hinder her teaching practices in the institution. Regarding the problems in the curriculum, during the interview, she stated that:

... Since we have a schedule, a planned program, it is not possible to change it. Because here the students are aimed to pass TOEFL so there is a planned program to be followed strictly...

As she asserted, due to TOEFL ITP exam, the weekly-program was so comprehensive. Therefore, she alleged that it is impossible to teach like she did in Sweden. For example, in Sweden, she said that students did not have as many exams as this university's students and teachers were allowed to prepare their own course materials. However, in Turkey, she asserted that there is not much space left for teachers. In terms of the types of materials, she claimed that students need more real-life related materials instead of grammar-based ones. Nonetheless, she thinks that some of the activities in listening, reading, and speaking courses are appropriate. Lastly, she believes that native student-teachers were really helpful and they encouraged students to learn cultural items; however, she still thinks that except the activities with native speakers, other resources provided at the institution are not enough.

3) Classroom Practices

Hülya was teaching to BE- 14, and there were 18 students in the class. The topic was about recycling. In the beginning of the course, she asked some questions about recycling. Some of the questions were '*Do you always buy new stuff or try to fix the broken or old items?*', '*How much garbage do you produce each week?*', '*Are you careful about putting trash into the recycling boxes?*', '*Do you read online or print everything?*', '*Are there recycling boxes in your neighborhood?*'. After each question, she gave them some time to think about them and she needed to write down a few of the questions on the board. Since the students' levels were low, they could not understand them and they needed Turkish translation. Hülya explained most of the questions in Turkish and she encouraged them to participate to the course. In order to raise their motivation and get their attention, she walked around the classroom and changed her proximity to the students. For example, in order to warn some of the students, she got closer to them and tried to make them focus on the topic. Unfortunately, most of the students used Turkish all the time and they did not want to answer the questions. After this 20 minutes warm-up activity, she continued with vocabulary teaching. The words were *disposable*, *attitude*, *consequences*, *features*, *possessions*, *consume*, *persuade*, *habit* and *factor*. She wrote each word on the board and asked them their meanings. As most of the students did not know the words, she explained each word one by one through writing definitions and example

sentences respectively. Then, she wanted them to try to give some examples, yet only a few of the students were willing to compose a sentence. In the second hour, the course was based on reading a passage about recycling. The passage was about buying new things when the old one was still working. Prior to reading, she had asked them when they bought new things. Some of the students replied in Turkish and they said that they bought something when they liked it. They mentioned not caring about whether they had already had something similar to it. Hülya asked them to read the passage silently and answer the questions in the details part. During reading, she had to warn them several times because they were not focusing on the passage. Most of them were checking their cell phones or talking to each other. Consequently, when the assigned time for reading was up, Hülya asked them some comprehension questions like the main idea of the passage or the names of the characters in the passage. Then, they answered the questions in the details part. Unfortunately, few students participated to the lesson and answered the questions.

4.1.9. Case IX: İsmail's Case

1) Background Information

İsmail is a 28-year old male teacher and has an 8-month of Comenius experience Austria in 2009 in his senior year in the university. Prior to his Comenius, he had not been abroad. He graduated from a state university in Ankara, Turkey, with an ELT degree and he was still continuing his master at the same university in ELT department at the time of the interview. He has a 4-year of experience in total and he has been working in the institution for 2 years. He is Kurdish- Turkish bilingual. To describe his personality, he chose the adjectives patient, curious, open-minded, motivated, self-reliant, empathetic, and self-confident. He could also tolerate differences, had a clear sense of self, and could be adaptable to new situations. Prior to his Comenius, he had not been abroad. Therefore, he stated that he was highly motivated to learn about different cultures. As he was motivated, he searched about lots of things about the host country via websites or asking people about it before his visit. Regarding his prior knowledge about Austria, his further statements are presented below:

...I checked the websites about it, then more personal websites. I asked my supervisor about accommodation facilities, history of the city. It was not about the Austrian culture but culture in the city.

In terms of his personal, social and language development, and his attitudes towards culture, İsmail reported several changes. Regarding his personal development, he stated that it consisted of three steps: culture shock, happiness, and last feeling homesick. In the beginning, he asserted that he experienced culture shock, yet, afterwards, he enjoyed that new experience. However, eventually, he felt like going back to his country. Considering his personal development, his detailed expressions are displayed below:

First, when I went there, it was like a culture shock. Then, I took it as a novel thing to see new things. After a while, I was homesick and I missed my home culture. They asked to stay there and be a teacher there. For a life time, I could not stay there.

In relation to his personal development, he asserted that his attitudes changed. He thought himself as a narrow-minded person prior to his Comenius so that he had some prejudices about the culture and people living there. In contrast to his former assumptions, he asserted that he liked the way they lived and enjoyed being part of their culture. Moreover, he admitted that some of the things seeming disturbing in the beginning turned out to be quite opposite. Regarding the changes in his attitudes, his explanation through an example is presented below:

... I heard that they were worse than Germans in terms of discipline. Although I was really organized, they gave me a conference about being an organized person. I thought discipline was a negative thing, but then I changed my mind and after a while I got used to it.

Regarding his social and language development, İsmail stated that he was not a very sociable person when he first went there, yet after a while he thought that he became really sociable and met with a lot of people. Similarly, he asserted that his speaking skills were improved via social interactions.

2) Perspectives and Knowledge of ICC

Considering the definition of ICC, İsmail related the topic with receptive multilingualism and he defined it as an efficient way of communication between people with different cultures. In terms of the definition of interculturally competent

speaker, he stated that a person who can communicate with another one with a different cultural background without encountering any cultural problems can be called an interculturally competent one. Regarding the skills, he asserted that it is not only about language skills but also about discourse skills. A person should take into consideration the differences and the things that might be offensive for others. Considering the ICC skills, his example clarifying the topic is presented below:

... One would be writing skills. If that person is student and writing an e-mail to his professor and let say that this professor is from another culture. That student should write an e-mail in a format that can be acceptable to the professor's country.

Regarding the importance of ICC for a language teacher, in contrast to other respondents, İsmail thinks that it is not so important. He believes that ICC is only needed in multicultural societies. On the other hand, a Turkish teacher is not supposed to have it since all of his/her students are expected to be Turkish. During the interview, he continued his speech with the statement presented below:

... If the students need to go abroad, then you need to teach the cultural aspects of language. Because that student may say something that can hurt the others or he may say something that is not in meaningful in that context. They cannot communicate with each other because he just memorized the structures. In that case we need to teach the cultural aspects.

Similar to his explanations about the importance of ICC for a language teacher, he believes that ICC is not compulsory for students. He added that it will depend on students' aims. If they need to go abroad, they will have to learn the cultural aspects of the language. Only memorizing structures will not help them survive in real context. Additionally, he also pointed out another aspect and stated that as teachers we could not teach culture. The only thing we can do can be teaching them the appropriate forms that could be used in different communities and in different situations. Considering ICC's importance for a language learner, he further stated that:

... People cannot teach every culture. Some books try to include cultural aspects and they just choose to interesting ones. So we need to teach a standardized culture or international culture. We need to teach some international norms like how to behave or the body language. For example; they cannot use the words that are used in a sitcom in friendly environment in a business meeting. We need to teach that difference.

In terms of the student profile, he asserted that students are not interested in English; at least not all of them are familiar with cultural topics. As it is expected, girls like to read the topics related with shopping etc. whereas guys mostly like to read about football or games. In the books, there are a variety of topics that might catch both parts' attention. He also pointed out that students in a public university and private university differ in their motivation. According to him, in private universities, students' backgrounds are similar whereas in public university they are coming from different parts of Turkey. Hence, he thinks that students in public universities might be more motivated to learn about cultural aspects.

On the other hand, he reported several changes in his teaching philosophy following his Comenius experience. To begin with, He thinks that there is a clear difference between European education system and Turkish one. He elaborated on the topic by stating that while foreign students learn how to speak first and then learn writing; Turkish students learn how to speak later on not in the earlier stages of teaching. Hence, he believes that those students can speak English in a fluent way and they have more self-confidence; however, Turkish students cannot do that. Therefore, he decided to give priority to encourage his students to participate to the course and he learned how and what to do to teach speaking. Besides, he also believes that in order to avoid pronunciation mistakes, teaching speaking should be given importance.

In addition to the changes in his teaching philosophy, he asserted that he managed to integrate his ICC knowledge into his teaching practices. In general, he alleged that teachers should go to other countries and it does not matter whether it is an English-speaking country or not. With the help of Comenius or Erasmus, teaching might turn into a totally different experience for teachers. In other words, he expressed that following his experience, he became a different teacher in terms of using books or teaching style. By using his knowledge and experience via warm-ups or discussions, he believes that he became an admirable person for his students. Besides, he also believes that teachers with abroad experiences make their students curious about the life outside Turkey.

On the other hand, he reported several problems in the integration process resulted from curriculum, materials and resources. First of all, he stated that the curriculum is too comprehensive and there is no time to teach cultural items in a limited time. Nevertheless, he suggested changing it slightly and adding a culture-hour to the weekly-program. In other words, he proposed that 1st hour of Mondays can be turned into a culture-teaching hour and students might be engaged in activities about other countries or people all around the world. Considering the materials, he asserted that not all of the books are suitable to integrate cultural aspects into the teaching. His further statements about the materials are presented below:

All of the books are piloted and new. They are capable of teaching cultural aspects, but they are not culture specific. They do not include all of the cultures. Some books include one point from different cultures. For example, readings from Africa, thanks giving from USA or Halloween from Europe.

Lastly, İsmail mentioned that while extra-curricular activities provide cultural things, students do not attend them as much as expected. Since the students are exposed to English six-hour a day, they do not have any energy afterwards for extra-curricular activities. Therefore, he thinks that extra-curricular activities should be integrated into our classes.

4.2. Summary of the Findings

The summary of the finding are explained in the following parts. Firstly, summary of the interviews are displayed and then classroom observations are summarized in the next section.

4.2.1. Summary of the Interview Questions

In this part, findings of the study are presented according to each research question asked during the interview. Each subheading presents the outcome of the answers given by participants.

- ***Definition of ICC***

Although some of the participants did not know the term “ICC”, they tried to define it according to their general knowledge. Based on the responds, ICC can be defined as an ability, a competence or an experience that one gained by spending time in a

multi-cultural society and by communicating with people with different backgrounds. It may not be classified only as using the language; it also includes having knowledge about the cultural differences, being tolerant to them, and lastly understanding the diversities among cultures.

- ***Definition of interculturally competent speaker***

Based on these responses, in general interculturally competent speaker can be defined as a person who has the ability and knowledge to get along with people with different cultural backgrounds by having good communication skills and knowing how to manage the situations, which requires being aware of the cultural differences, pragmatics of the language, being open-minded and tolerating the differences without encountering any communication breakdowns.

- ***Skills related to ICC***

All in all, most of the participants focused on the communicative skills, which puts an emphasis on the listening and speaking. They are stated as closely related to each other since being a good-listener brings the change of being a good speaker. Besides listening and speaking, reading, discourse skills and sub-skills like grammar are also stated as a requisite in ICC. In addition to skills, understanding the feelings, and having certain communication skills, namely as turn-taking, nominating a topic or the ability to start and to end a conversation are also indicated as crucial factors.

- ***Importance of ICC for language teachers***

Almost all of the participants agreed on the necessity of being interculturally competent as a language teacher. Most of the teachers pointed out a relationship between teaching a language and teaching a culture. They claimed that being competent communicatively means being more effective in teaching. It is found out that even though Turkey is not a multi-cultural country, and almost all of the students' native language is Turkish, teachers think that learning how to communicate with people is important. Hence, by means of getting into the culture in the first place, they have the capability of teaching the cultural features. Some of the teachers assert that students find them more successful than the ones without study

abroad experience. They seem to be as different people to them since they are talking about different cultures and students want to learn about those cultures and languages just to feel like them, which is to feel different. Another teacher made a relation between effective use of textbooks and having an ICC. Since the textbook include cultural aspects, a certain degree of competence is required to apply them into the classroom. Only one of the teachers stated that ICC education should not be given priority. She agreed on the importance of ICC acquisition for teachers; however, she thought that in Turkey teachers did not really need it. Since the students are all Turkish, there may be no need to blend the cultural factures. On the other hand, she also stated that without ICC knowledge, teachers cannot fully accomplish the teaching of four skills via reflecting the cultural aspects of the language. In short, the results show that having ICC competent enables a teacher make the students be familiar with the cultural concepts, gain awareness of different cultures, languages, functions of languages, and help the learners to solve any culture-related problems. Hence, teachers are seen like the culture guides for the learners.

- ***Importance of ICC for language learners***

When it comes to the importance of ICC knowledge for learners, all of the participants gave the similar reasons. They stated that language and culture are inseparable and students should be exposed to cultural features while learning a language. Knowing a language means knowing people and the culture and it require the knowledge of how to communicate with people with different backgrounds. Hence, as it stated by one of the teachers, as a learner, if they want to learn to learn the language, they should know what is actually going on there. The learners are expected to behave appropriately in a different culture by means of acquiring the cultural factors besides language abilities. Only one of the teachers stated that it is not that necessary since they are not living in a multicultural society; however, he changed his mind when thought about the future possibilities of the learners.

- ***Previous knowledge about the host culture***

Prior to their Erasmus/ Comenius experience, all of the participants stated that they had some previous knowledge about the host culture. One of the participants stated

that she knew about the region and religion of the host country. One other said she was curious about their lifestyle and people living there. Hence, she knew a little bit about the songs, traditions and cultural stuff in the host country. Another participant stated that there was a huge difference between what she heard and read about the country and what she experienced there. Moreover, what she found relevant was the stories she heard from the people having been there before. Similarly, another participant got information about the life standards and people of the country via her father. Hence, relatives, friends or just acquaintances that visited the country before can be the ways that enable cultural interaction in some way. Besides talking to people about their experiences abroad, Internet search is stated as the most common way to learn about the cultural features, religion, region, traditions or sights of the host country. Contrary to the information provided by the people experiencing the culture of the host countries, the information found on the Internet was not stated as reliable and valid. Additionally, the songs, books, movies, and TV channels were listed as other common ways of learning about the culture.

- ***Motivation and Interest prior to their experience***

In terms of motivation and interest learning the culture and adapting them into it, all of the participants stated that they were highly motivated. Getting to know other people and other cultures are presented as contributors to enhance the world-knowledge, experience and personality traits. Besides this, motivation is determined as one of the key words of the adaptation process to a new culture. Lastly, one of the participants stated that she did not want to be an outsider and wanted to learn how to behave and adapt herself into the culture. All in all, learning other cultures, people; adapting yourself into a new culture and the feeling of being an actual part of it; and lastly enhancing your own knowledge as well as your experience, your personality and world-knowledge are asserted as the motivating factors.

- ***Changes after Comenius/Erasmus experience***

After their Erasmus/ Comenius experience, some of the participants had a variety of changes in their opinions about the cultural factors. One of the participants realized that she could not live abroad forever since she found the relationships superficial.

Another one became more positive on her ideas about the people. By their lifestyles and thinking ways, they changed her opinion about the European lifestyle. Prior to her Comenius experience, she thought that European people were not sincere and did not have close relationships; however, she found that they are really intimate and were so kind to her. The most striking reply comes from a participant having Erasmus in London since a lot has changed in her case. She realized the fact that the world is changing and we cannot talk about homogenous cultures anymore. Before going there, she thought there were different cultures such as British, Dutch or Turkish culture. Then, she found out that there was not only one culture yet there are lots of diversities in it. Accordingly, as she stated, she started to see people as individuals and communicated with them beyond her generalizations about their cultures. One other surprising answer comes from a participant having Comenius in Germany. She stated that her ideas about German people remained same. On the contrary, her ideas about Turkish people changed a lot in a positive way. She mentioned that they were not like the way they were depicted in Turkey.

- ***Effects of study abroad on personal development***

All of the participants stated a positive change in their personalities following their study abroad experiences. To describe their personal development, they used statements like being more self-confident, more flexible, more understandable, more tolerable, and better communicator. Moreover, one of them called it as the year of experiencing yourself, and similarly another one called it as the year of getting to know yourself and standing on your own feet.

- ***Effects of study abroad on social development***

All of the participants stated that there was a positive change in their social lives. They asserted that they became more sociable, made lots of friends and became more confident in their relationships. Moreover, it was also called as an interactive progress which helps the participants learn the socially acceptable manners.

- ***Effects of study abroad on language development***

While 3 of the participants stated that there was not a remarkable change in their language skills except for their speaking, rest of the participants said that there was a great change in their languages. It is also stated that the actual meaning of the words in real contexts with their historical, geographical and social meanings became more valuable for the participants.

- ***Effects of study abroad on professional development***

There are a variety of professional developments stated: seeing students as individuals, giving importance to teach communicative skills, activities and materials used in teaching, and developing new ones, using English all the time during the lesson, the ways to cope with classroom problems, and being aware of the different education systems.

- ***Changes in teaching philosophy***

All of the participants experienced different changes in their teaching philosophy. Accordingly, the changes in their philosophy can be listed as the way the students are treated like individuals, more intimate classroom environment, less teacher-talk time, use more communicative activities like games or practices, the importance of teaching pragmatic competence, having a more intimate and relaxed relationships with students, and lastly differentiating the effective and useful methods.

- ***Integrating their experience into teaching practices in Turkey***

Participants applied their knowledge into their classrooms in different ways. Giving anecdotes, telling stories about their experiences, organizing real-life related role-play activities, and discussions are the ways stated in the interviews. On the other hand, some of them are used in a variety of ways. For example, some of the students reported that they are using anecdote to motivate students and make the course more interesting for them, and another one stated that she was using them in warm-ups or as ice-breakers to raise their attention. Lastly, one of them found personalization via

telling her experiences as an effective and impressive way to make students focus on the lesson.

- ***Possibility of raising ICC awareness of learners and the possible ways to do that***

Although all of the participants believed that it is possible to raise their students' ICC awareness, they think it is a really difficult process and they suggested some possible ways to help learners gain ICC. Taking a guidance role by explaining cultural aspects via real life examples, encouraging students use internet to communicate with people around the world, bringing authentic materials to the class and adapting them according to students' levels, adapting classroom activities and adding more real-life related role-plays are given as some of the ways to integrate culture into teaching.

- ***How does curriculum affect the application of ICC?***

Almost all of the participants stated that curriculum has a negative effect on ICC integration. Actually, it is given as a basic reason for the drawbacks in the possibility of raising students' ICC awareness or applying ICC related materials. First of all, the program is too limited and restricted to add extra materials. Besides being limited, it also mainly focuses on TOEFL ITP exam. That's why; students are mostly learning structure, vocabulary items, reading and listening techniques. Since curriculum is thought as comprehensive and demanding, teachers have no space and they are under pressure with the requirements and fear of falling behind the curriculum. On the other hand, a few of the participants asserted that curriculum can be suitable with a few changes or adaptations and teachers are the ones who can manage the time efficiently and apply curriculum alterations. They think that RW and LS courses may be appropriate to integrate cultural aspects of language since the topics can be culture-related.

- ***How do materials and activities affect the application of ICC?***

While few of the participants stated that the materials and activities are appropriate with a right strategy of the teacher and small adaptations, most of the participants think that they are not useful because of the comprehensive curriculum, the topics covered in the book and time limitations. Hence, the effective use of materials

depends mostly on the teacher and topics chosen in the book. That's why; only some of the topics related to real life can be perfectly suitable for the integration of ICC.

- ***How does student profile affect the application of ICC?***

While almost half of the participants stated that students are motivated and open to learn about different cultures, most of the participants asserted that they do not have much motivation for learning at all. There are some controversial ideas about the student profile, while two of the participants think that students have dreams of going abroad and that's why they would love to learn about cultural aspects, the rest thinks that they are only motivated to pass TOEFL and not most of the students are also interested in learning about cultural points in English.

- ***How do the resources and extra-curricular activities affect the application of ICC?***

Resources were the books in the reading room, self-access centers in the building and extra-curricular activities like scrabble club, movie watching, table tennis which are organized by coop-teachers coming from Canada.

All of the participants stated that extra-curricular activities are useful and effective since students have a chance to practice their language with a native speaker of English. Hence, they can learn about their cultures, traditions or their language. However, reading room is thought to be not helpful by most of the participants. They think that not all of the books integrate cultural aspects. Some of the materials like newspapers, magazines or books are reported as quite useful yet they can be applied in a better way. It is suggested that teachers can integrate them into their own teaching hours, which makes the use more beneficial for higher number of students. On the other hand, self-access center was not found effective at all.

4.2.2. Summary of the Classroom Observations

During the whole observations, unfortunately only one of the participants used a culture-related material. She used a video as a warm-up activity before the reading passage. Rest of the participants did not use any materials and they just used the

course book. It is realized that the teachers were focusing mostly on the grammar points. In other words, in MC courses, most of the teachers were just explaining the grammar points of the day via exercises on the books. The exercises were fill-in-blanks or rewriting the sentences. Although fill-in-blanks activity was in a reading passage, the teacher did not make the students understand the passage itself and just asked them to find the correct use of grammar items. Similarly, in teaching vocabulary items, instead of using the words in a meaningful context, the teachers focused on the part of speech of each word and their synonyms. In later parts, they made some sentences with the words yet they were not related to any cultural aspects. Likewise, in teaching writing, the focus was only to teach how to write a paragraph. The parts in the paragraph and the connectors were taught yet neither the sample sentences nor the topics were chosen from any culture-related aspect.

CHAPTER 5

5.1. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This study yielded quite important finding related to teachers' use of their ICC knowledge in their teaching experiences and the problems limiting its effective acquisition in Turkish classrooms.

First of all, in this study 9 English language teachers, having Comenius or Erasmus experiences and working at the same university, a private one, were chosen to collect data. Their definitions of ICC and interculturally competent speaker besides the list of skills related to ICC education were investigated. Additionally, the importance of ICC knowledge for learners and teachers were questioned. As it was expected, many of the teachers think that it is necessary for both teachers and learners and they stated that their confidence in their language competence besides their social, personal and professional lives have risen remarkably. Following the questions related to their Erasmus/ Comenius experiences and the changes in their teaching philosophies, the possible problems that may be thought as limiting the ICC teaching were analyzed. As it was assumed, the problematic areas are found to be curriculum, student profile, materials, activities and resources. Hence, the problems are investigated in a more detailed way with possible solutions.

It was also predicted that most of the participants could not integrate cultural aspects into their courses. As a result of the classroom observations, it was found out that many of the teachers did not use any culture-related materials because of the comprehensive curriculum, lack of materials, the topics supposed to be covered in the lesson and lastly the students' profile. Unfortunately, especially the student profile has a tremendous effect since the proficiency level and motivation of the students affect the teaching process in a great sense.

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In the literature, ICC was defined as communication between people from different cultures (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005). Similar to this basic definition, most of the participants in the study defined ICC as the ability to communicate with people with different backgrounds. Moreover, according to Lundgren (2004), ICC is the combination of cultural competence, intercultural competence and communicative competence, which include the fluency in four language skills, the knowledge of the cultural concepts and being adaptable, tolerable and flexible towards the cultural differences (Lundgren, 2004, p.2). In the same way, the participants described ICC as not only using the language but also having knowledge about the cultural differences, being tolerant to them, and lastly understanding the diversities among cultures.

On the other hand, interculturally competent speaker is described as the person who can act as mediators between two cultures and can interpret and understand other perspectives (Lundgren, 2004). Like the previous studies, in this study, it is also defined as a person who has the ability and knowledge to get along with people with different cultural backgrounds and is aware of the cultural differences, pragmatics of the language, is open-minded and tolerating the differences without encountering any communication breakdowns.

As it was stated, there are a variety of aspects affecting intercultural communication and one of them is the student profile. It was pointed out that the motivation of

language learners is mainly affected by their interest in the foreign people and their culture (as cited by Byram, 2008). Similarly, in this study, almost all of the participants stated that student profile should be appropriate for the effective use of the materials. Only two of the respondents stated that students are motivated to learn about other cultures and to visit other countries. Most of them asserted that they are only motivated to pass TOEFL exam and their language proficiency is not good enough to involve them in authentic materials.

Unlike previous studies (Detweiler, 1980& Fox, 1997) stating that most of the sojourners have some stereotypes about the host culture, in this study, only one of the respondents had prejudices towards the host culture. As Ceren mentioned during the interview, she thought that British people were unfriendly and cold; however, she realized that it was just a stereotype and her prejudices were gone afterwards. On the other hand, one of the participants, Gözde, experienced quite the opposite and asserted that British people were quite arrogant and it was not easy to get closer with them. As it can be understood from the perspectives of those two respondents, personality has a quite important effect on becoming social and getting to know people.

In terms of the changes following study abroad experience, there is a parallelism between the previous studies and this research. As it was stated in the literature review, the objectives of exchange programs are to gain personal maturity and independence, to have a cultural insight and lastly to improve foreign language proficiency (Byram, 2008, p.45). In the same way, all of the participants reported positive changes in their personal, social, language and professional developments. The participants asserted that they became more open-minded, more self-confident, and more sociable people and they improved their speaking skills. Unlike previous studies, which stated that learners may return with stereotypes reinforced, or with more negative impressions (Byram, 2008, p.13), none of the participants returned with negative opinions about the host country.

In terms of the integration of the ICC, comprehensive curriculum, unmotivated students, lack of materials and resources are reported as the limitations to teach

cultural aspects of the language. Accordingly, in the classroom observations, teachers were only teaching grammar points, words of the weekly schedule and writing guidelines. There was almost no reference to the cultural points during the class hours.

CHAPTER 6

6.1. CONCLUSION

This study yielded important results for the effects of study abroad programs on teacher development and the possible problems in the ICC integration process. The study was conducted with 9 English language teachers with Comenius/ Erasmus experiences. They were working in the institution at the time of the research and the classroom observations were done in BE and PIN level students in MC and RW courses. The teachers defined the ICC basically as an ability to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds. Similarly, interculturally competent person was described briefly as a person who has the ability to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds and is able to tolerate the differences and open-minded. Listening and speaking as well as the sub-skills like grammar or communicative abilities like nominating a topic or turn-taking strategies were listed as the indicators of ICC. Although most of the participants stated that development of ICC is necessary for both learners and teachers, there were doubts about it. Since Turkey is not a multicultural country, some of the teachers think that ICC knowledge is not necessary. It is surprising to get such an answer since the very same teachers also stated that for the effective use of textbooks and to motivate students, ICC is required. In general, ICC is described as a requirement for teachers to make the course more interesting and motivating for students and to use the course books in the best way. On the other hand, learners need it to feel like being part of the culture and to comprehend what is actually going on in those different cultures.

Prior to their experiences, they were all motivated and curious about living in another country and they learned about it via internet, search engines or people visiting before. They all had positive changes in their attitudes towards the host culture and became aware of the fact that people are individuals and there is not only one culture like Turkish, British or Dutch culture. They stated to become more self-confident, more flexible, and understandable and better communicators. Getting to know themselves and standing on their own feet made the also socially acceptable people.

In terms of professional development, they said that they learned new materials, different classroom managements and applied them in their teachings via anecdotes, stories, real-life related role-plays, games, discussions in the warm-ups or as ice-breakers. They also believed that via these activities, it may be possible to raise their students' ICC awareness. However, in the application process, possible problems were identified in the curriculum, student profile, materials, activities and resources. The curriculum is stated to be too comprehensive and comprehending so that teachers have a limited time and they have to focus on the grammar aspects quite a lot. Similarly, students are motivated to learn the grammar topics since they are studying for an exam. It hinders their motivation and interest towards learning about the cultural aspects in the language. Besides, the materials are exam oriented and activities in the classes are limited because of the time-restrictions and strict schedule. However, it also depends on the teacher to manage the time effectively and adapt the materials and activities in a culture-related way. The only resource found helpful was the extra-curricular activities organized by native coop-teachers.

All these problems hindering the ICC integration into the courses could be observed in the classroom observations. Teachers were only focusing on the grammar topics and they were just trying to finish assigned pages for each course. It does not matter in which course they were teaching since, in all of the courses, the focus was on the grammatical aspects of the language.

All in all, although most of the teachers were competent enough to integrate cultural and pragmatics use of language into their teachings, the curriculum, student profile, limited materials and resources are not allowing this. Consequently, curriculum should be evaluated to enable teachers reflect their knowledge. Learning a language should not be equivalent to pass TOEFL and it should not be only associated with being aware of grammatical rules. The students need to see that they are learning English to be able to understand the feelings of the other people and to learn the contextual meanings of the words.

6.2. Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study may be related to the number of the participants, absence of a pre-observation schedule and a pre-interview part and lastly the number of classes observed during the study.

In terms of the number of the participants, I could not find any other option. Since I am also working in a full-time job as an instructor, conducting research at another institution was almost impossible. On account of this fact, I decided to limit the research only with my colleagues. Besides, unfortunately, only 9 of the instructors, out of 54, had an Erasmus or Comenius experience. Therefore, 9 participants were ultimately chosen for the study.

Regarding the pre-observations and pre-interviews, the nature of such a research may be too much difficult. Inasmuch as almost all of the participants did their experiences in different countries in different years from each other, it makes it impossible for the researcher to conduct these tools. Additionally, almost every one of the participants was most probably working at a different institution prior to his/ her study abroad experience.

Lastly, the observations were done only for two hours due to my working conditions as a researcher. I just had a couple of off-hours per week; consequently, assigned hours for each participant were designed as only two.

6.3. Pedagogical Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

According to research and the presentations made in the 4th International Intercultural Competence Conference (2014) held by University of Arizona, some suggestions and activities that may help the ICC acquisition are provided. One of suggestions is provided by Kelly Hall (2014), which is about the classroom activities. Based on her IRF (teacher instruction- student response- teacher follow-up) theory, language is never fixed; as a result, what we do in classroom fundamentally shape our learners' knowledge. In other words, students should be encouraged to investigate the real world via practical questions relevant to the community

experiences. As a result, purposeful, practical and relevant topics may be added to combine the units with real life experiences; that is, teachers can shape the instruction of each unit through the lenses such as focusing on connections, perspectives, interactions, conflicts etc.

Besides changing the instruction, adding one-hour of culture teaching & discussion, bringing authentic materials to the classroom, creating an interactive curriculum via assigning creative real life tasks for students and making them act like a researcher, and using online discussion forums or creating a website for the course are some of the ways suggested in the conference. Switching the first hour on Monday with a culture course, students may have a chance to get rid of their Monday syndrome and they may practice the language through authentic materials such as videos, short-talks, pictures, etc. Additionally, if the students are given weekly tasks such as taking photos of the places, brochures, or brands including English, they may gain language awareness in an enjoyable way. Moreover, they may also search the international websites such as McDonalds, Burger King, Mango etc. to distinguish the similarities and differences between them. In this way, they can shape their language knowledge through contextualization. Lastly, teachers or institutions can create their own websites for the course; thus, students may interact with each other and join interactive conversations and discussions. To exemplify, e-commu is one of the tools that designed to enable a social reading environment for students.

Besides the suggestions at an institutional level, there are also possible ways to increase the number of teachers and students with ICC in a national level. Universities can add a course facilitating the ICC development of the English language teacher candidates. Additionally, Erasmus and Comenius programs can become a must for future English language teachers. According to the research, spending time abroad, no matter which country, has clearly a positive effect on ICC development and teachers' language and teaching skills. Moreover, in-service training for the experienced and novice teachers are strongly suggested to make them get aware of the cultural items and to integrate them into their classroom practices.

In the future studies, the number of participants can be increased. More importantly, the study may be strengthened via pre and post interviews and observation sessions. Additionally, more hours can be assigned for classroom observations and the observed courses can be chosen from each language level and type of courses.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Frequency Tables of the Personality Adjectives

Patient

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	4	44,4	44,4	44,4
no	5	55,6	55,6	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Lack Sense of Humor

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid no	9	100,0	100,0	100,0

Tolerates Differences

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	9	100,0	100,0	100,0

Clear Sense of Self

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	5	55,6	55,6	55,6
no	4	44,4	44,4	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Adaptable to New Situations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	9	100,0	100,0	100,0

Curious

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	7	77,8	77,8	77,8
no	2	22,2	22,2	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Open-minded

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	8	88,9	88,9	88,9
no	1	11,1	11,1	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Motivated

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	7	77,8	77,8	77,8
no	2	22,2	22,2	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Self-reliant

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
	no	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
	Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Empathetic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	5	55,6	55,6	55,6
	no	4	44,4	44,4	100,0
	Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Self-confident

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
	no	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
	Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Flexible

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	7	77,8	77,8	77,8
	no	2	22,2	22,2	100,0
	Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Tolerates Ambiguity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	3	33,3	37,5	37,5
	no	5	55,6	62,5	100,0
	Total	8	88,9	100,0	
Missing	System	1	11,1		
Total		9	100,0		

APPENDIX B

Dear participant,

My name is Nurhan Tütüncü and I am a Master's student in ELT program at Middle East Technical University. I am investigating the effects of study abroad on the teaching practices of ELT professionals. I am kindly asking you to contribute to my research project by giving me some personal information via an interview.

The findings of the study will be used for research purposes, and all your answers will be kept confidentially and anonymously.

During the interview, I will record our conversation. If you feel uncomfortable, I can stop recording at any time.

The interview should take for 20-30 minutes. If you agree, I will observe your class for 2-3 sessions during fall 2013.

If you have any questions about the survey or are interested in learning more about the results, you may contact me at ntutuncu@etu.edu.tr

Thank you very much for your participation!

Signature

Date: _____

Start Time: _____

Descriptive Information

Gender : Male ☐ Female ☐

How long have you been working as an English language teacher?

How long have you been working in this institution?

Age :

Please write the details about your Erasmus/ Comenius to the table presented below:

	Name of the country	Year	Duration of stay
Comenius			
Erasmus			

I have been Erasmus/ Comenius in my second / third / fourth year in university. (Please underline the all that apply)

Where are you from?

I have graduated from _____ (High school)

_____ (University)

Education level (check your current level)

University ☐ Masters ☐ Doctorate ☐

Have you been abroad prior to your Erasmus/ Comenius? If yes, please write the name of the country/ countries with the purpose of your visit along with the duration

Please write the name of the languages you can speak and your proficiency level in each language as well to the table presented below:

Language	Proficiency level

Please check all the adjectives related to your personality:

Intolerant	
Flexible	
Patient	
Lacks sense of humor	
Tolerates differences	
Clear sense of self	
Adaptable	
Curious	
Open-minded	
Motivated	
Self-reliant	
Empathetic	
Self-confident	
Tolerates ambiguity	

Interview Questions

1. Have you ever heard about intercultural communicative competence (ICC)?
 - a. If yes, please define it in your own words
 - b. If no, what comes to your mind when you hear ICC?
2. How can you define an interculturally competent person?
3. Which language skills do you think are the indicators of ICC?
4. Is the development of ICC necessary for language teachers? Please explain why you think so.
5. Is the development of ICC necessary for language learners? Please explain why you think so.
6. Prior to your Erasmus/ Comenius experience:
 - a. Did you have any idea about the host culture?
 - b. How was your level of interest and motivation towards the host culture?
7. Were there any changes in your attitude towards the host culture following your study abroad experience?
8. As a whole, how can you describe your study abroad experience in terms of :
 - a. personal development
 - b. social development
 - c. language development
 - d. professional development
9. Did your study abroad experience have an influence on your teaching philosophy in any way? If yes, please explain how it did so.

10. Do you integrate your study abroad experience into your teaching in any way?

Prompt: new information/knowledge, personal experience, use of anecdotes, language skills such as using humor, or gaining fluency in speaking

11. As a teacher, do you believe that it is possible to develop the ICC of your learners? If yes, how can you raise their ICC awareness?

12. As an instructor, do you believe that it is possible to develop the ICC of your learners in the context of this institution with:

- a. the curriculum of the institution
- b. the materials and activities used in the class
- c. the student profile
- d. the resources provided at the institution

APPENDIX C

Being familiar with the term “ICC”

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	4	44,4	44,4	44,4
no	5	55,6	55,6	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX D

Skills that reflect ICC knowledge

Speaking

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	9	100,0	100,0	100,0

Communicative skills

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	3	33,3	33,3	33,3
no	6	66,7	66,7	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX E

The Necessity of ICC knowledge for a Language Teacher

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
no	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

The Necessity of ICC knowledge for a Language Learner

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	5	55,6	55,6	55,6
no	4	44,4	44,4	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX F

**Participants' time-spent abroad; their prior knowledge about the host culture;
their motivation levels; social, personal, language and professional
developments**

Time-Spent Abroad

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 5-month	2	22,2	22,2	22,2
	5-month	1	11,1	11,1	33,3
	more than 5-month	6	66,7	66,7	100,0
	Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Prior Knowledge

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
	no	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
	Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Motivation Before Study Abroad

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	9	100,0	100,0	100,0

Social Development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid nochange	1	11,1	11,1	11,1
moreselfconfident	2	22,2	22,2	33,3
moresociable	6	66,7	66,7	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Professional Development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	8	88,9	88,9	88,9
no	1	11,1	11,1	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Personal Development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid More self-confident	2	22,2	22,2	22,2
Stand on your own feet	5	55,6	55,6	77,8
Prejudices-gone	2	22,2	22,2	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Language Development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
no	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX G

Changes In Teaching Philosophy

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid TeacherStudentProfile	3	33,3	33,3	33,3
ClassroomPractices	5	55,6	55,6	88,9
TeacherTalkTime	1	11,1	11,1	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Reasons of Integration

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid motivate	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
To Get Attention	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Integration To Classroom Practices

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Classroom Management	1	11,1	11,1	11,1
Stories	3	33,3	33,3	44,4
GamesWarmups	3	33,3	33,3	77,8
Books	1	11,1	11,1	88,9
RolePlays	1	11,1	11,1	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX H

Possibility of Raising ICC Knowledge of the Learners

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	5	55,6	55,6	55,6
no	4	44,4	44,4	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Possible Ways to Raise ICC knowledge of the Students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Changing Materials	5	55,6	55,6	55,6
Adapting Curriculum	2	22,2	22,2	77,8
Teachers' Roles	2	22,2	22,2	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Appropriateness of Student Profile

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	3	33,3	33,3	33,3
no	6	66,7	66,7	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX I

Appropriateness of the Resources

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes-onlyExtra-Curricular	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
No	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Appropriateness of the Curriculum

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	2	22,2	22,2	22,2
no	5	55,6	55,6	77,8
sometimes	2	22,2	22,2	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

Appropriateness of the Materials

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid sometimes	6	66,7	66,7	66,7
no	3	33,3	33,3	100,0
Total	9	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX J

Turkish Summary of the Thesis

KISA SÜRELİ YURTDIŞI TECRÜBESİ OLAN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİ ÜZERİNE İRDELEYİCİ BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI: KÜLTÜRLERARASI İLETİŞİM BECERİSİYLE İLGİLİ ALGILARI VE UYGULAMALARI

İngilizce öğretmenlerinin en büyük sorumluluklarından biri de dilin gramer yapısının yanı sıra dilin iletişimsel işlevlerinin de başarılı bir şekilde öğretilmesidir. Bu sorumluluğu yerine getirmek için, ilk olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin kendilerinin kültürlerarası iletişim becerilerini geliştirmeleri (ICC), İngilizceyi iletişim sırasında etkili bir biçimde kullanmaları gerekmektedir. İngiliz Dili Öğretimi programları sırasında bulunulan değişim programları, İngilizce öğretmen adaylarına İngilizcenin kullanıldığı ülkelerde bulunma şansı sağlayarak, adayların İngilizceyi kişisel ve mesleki alanlarda kullanmalarına imkân vererek, onlara ICC gelişimleri için olanak sağlar. Bu çalışma bir grup İngilizce öğretmenin Erasmus ve Comenius deneyimlerinin, adayların ICC gelişimleri ve programların kişisel, sosyal, dil gelişimi ve profesyonel açıdan hayatlarına etkilerini içermektedir. Katılımcılar lisans eğitimleri sırasında Erasmus ya da Comenius deneyimine sahip olan ve çalışmanın yapıldığı süreçte Ankara’da bir vakıf üniversitesinde İngilizce okutmanı olarak çalışan öğretmenlerden oluşmaktadır. Veriler katılımcılarla yapılan detaylı mülakatlar ve sınıf gözlemlerinden elde edilmiştir. Erasmus ve Comenius programlarına katılımın pedagojik etkileri, değişim programlarının öğretmenlerin ICC gelişimi ve bu becerinin meslek gelişimine sağladığı faydalar, ve karşılaşılan problemler ve olası çözümler tartışılmıştır.

Çalışmaya Ankara’da bir vakıf üniversitesinde çalışmanın yürütüldüğü süreçte çalışmakta bulunan 9 Erasmus ya da Comenius deneyimi olan İngilizce Öğretmeni katılmıştır. Çalışmanın öncesinde üniversite de çalışan öğretmenlerden yurtdışında Erasmus veya Comenius programlarına katılan öğretmenler tespit edilmiştir. Sonrasında belirlenen 9 öğretmenle detaylı mülakatlar ve daha sonrasında sınıf gözlemleri yapılmıştır. Mülakat öncesinde katılımcılara kişisel bilgilerini vermeleri için bir anket uygulanmıştır. Ankette katılımcıların yaşları, kaç yıldır öğretmen

oldukları ve kurumda kaç yıldır çalıştıkları, Erasmus ve Comenyus deneyimlerinden hangisine sahip oldukları ve hangi ülkede kaç ay kaldıkları, ve son olarak yabancı dil seviyeleri ve daha önce hangi ülkelerde bulundukları sorulmuştur. Bunların yanı sıra katılımcılardan verilmiş olan kişisel özelliklerinden hangilerinin kendilerine uygun olduğunu seçmeleri istendi. Anketin sonrasında her bir katılımcıyla 20-30 dakika arasında süren mülakatlar yapıldı. Mülakat sırasında katılımcılara 12 adet soru soruldu. İlk olarak katılımcılara kültürlerarası iletişim becerisinin ne olup olmadığını bilip bilmedikleri ve sonrasında nasıl ifade edebilecekleri soruldu. Daha sonra sırasıyla kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi olan bireyin hangi özelliklere sahip olması gerektiği, ve hangi dil becerilerinin onun göstergesi olabileceği soruldu. Bunun yanı sıra bu becerinin dil öğretmenleri ve öğrencileri için gerekli olup olmadığı konusundaki düşüncelerine başvuruldu. İlerleyen sorularda katılımcılardan Erasmus ve Comenyus deneyimleri öncesinde gidecekleri ülke hakkında bilgilerinin olup olmadığı ve motivasyonları hakkında bilgi vermeleri istendi. Bu sorunun devamında motivasyonlarında kaldıkları süreç içerisinde bir değişim olup olmadığı soruldu. Deneyimleriyle ilgili son olarak, katılımcıların kişisel, sosyal, profesyonel ve dil gelişimlerinde deneyimlerinin sonrasında bir değişim veya gelişim olup olmadığı soruldu. Mülakatın son kısmında katılımcıların yurtdışı deneyimlerinin onların öğretim yöntemlerinde bir etkisinin olup olmadığı ve deneyimlerini sınıf içindeki aktivitelere nasıl entegre ettikleri soruldu. Bunların yanı sıra, deneyimlerini öğretme methodlarına yansıttıkları süreçte müfredat, öğrenci profili, meteryal ve aktivitelerden kaynaklanan sorunların olup olmadığı ve bunların kültürlerarası iletişim becerisini öğrencilere aktarmakta ne kadar uygun olduğu soruldu. İlerleyen kısımda ilk olarak mülakatta sorulan her sorunun cevabının özeti ve ikinci kısımda da sınıf gözlemlerinin sonucu sunulmuştur.

1. Mülakat Sorularının Detaylı Açıklamaları

- *Kültürlerarası İletişim Becerisinin Tanımı*

Birkaç katılımcı kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi terimini hiç duymamış olduklarını belirtmelerine rağmen onlarda terimi duyduklarında yaptığı çağrışıma göre bir tanımlama yaptılar. Cevaplar sonucunda, kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi insanların birden fazla kültürün etkisinin görüldüğü bir toplumda farklı ülkelerden insanlarla

iletiřim ierisinde olarak, belirli bir sre orada yařamanın sonucunda kazanılan yetenek, kavrayıř ve deneyim olarak tanımlanmıřtır. Bu becerinin İngilizceyi doėru kullanmanın yanı sıra, kltrler arası farklılıkların bilincinde olma, bu farklılıklara karřı hořgr geliřtirme, ve onları anlamaya ynelik motivasyon kazanma becerisi de olduėu belirtilmiřtir.

- *Kltrlerarası İletiřim Becerisine Sahip Olan Kiři Tanımı*

Cevaplar sonucunda, kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisine sahip olan kiři, farklı kltrel evrelerden insanlarla anlařabilen, iyi iletiřim becerileri geliřtirmiř, kltrel arası farklılıklarda nasıl davranacaėının bilincinde olan ve bu farklılıkların farkında olup onları anlama kabiliyetine sahip; aık grřl ve farklı durumlarda farklı kltrel deėerleri anlama kapasitesinde olan insan olarak tanımlanmıřtır.

- *Kltrlerarası İletiřim Becerisinin Gstergeleri*

Katılımcıların oėu, konuřma ve dinleme becerisinin geliřimini kltrlerarası iletiřimin bir gstergesi olarak dřndklerini belirttiler. İyi bir dinleyici olmanın aynı zamanda iyi bir konuřmacı olmanın řartı olduėu ve bunların birbirleriyle baėlantılı olduėu aıklamasını yaptılar. Konuřma ve dinleme becerisinin yanı sıra, dil bilimi, okuma ve kltrel becerilerin de bu baėlamda geliřebildiėi belirtildi. Katılımcılar, dil becerilerine ek olarak, duyguları anlama, iletiřim becerilerinin geliřimi, konuřma esnasında sz alma ve bir konuřmayı nasıl bařlatıp ve nasıl sona erdirmeye yeteneklerinin de kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisinin olumlu etkilerinin olduėu alanlar olarak sıralanması gerektiėini ifade ettiler.

- *Kltrlerarası İletiřim Becerisinin İngilizce ėretmenleri İin nemi*

Katılımcıların byk bir oėunluėu, kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisinin ingilizce ėretmenleri iin gerekli olduėu konusunda hem fikire vardılar. ėretmenlerin oėu dil ėretmek ve ėrenilen dilin kltr arasında gl bir baėlantı olduėuna dikkat ekti ve kltrel anlamda yetenekli olmanın ėretimde daha etkili olmayı etkilediėini belirtti. Trkiye’de farklı dilleri konuřan insanların sayıca az olması, ve ėrencilerin neredeyse tamamının anadilinin Trke olmasına raėmen, katılımcılar kltrlerarası

iletiřim becerisinin dil retmenleri iin gerekli olduėunu savundular. Yurtdiřında belirli bir sre geirerek, farklı kltrlerle bir arada yařama becerisi geliřtirmenin onlara sonrasında bu kltrleri ğretme de kolaylık tanıyacaėından bahsettiler. ğretmenlerin birkaçı yurtdiřında bulunmuř olan ğretmenlerin ğrenciler tarafından daha bařarılı olarak grldėn iddia etti. Bunun yanı sıra, ğrencilerin ğretmenlerini rnek alma eėiliminde oldukları ve onun gibi farklı kltrlerle bir arada zaman geirerek farklı hissetmeyi istedikleri belirtildi. Bir diėer katılımcı, ders kitaplarını etkin bir biimde kullanmak ve yurtdiřında yařanmışlık arasında gl bir baėlantı olduėunu belirtti ve ders kitaplarında geen kltrel bilgileri vermede deneyimli hocaların daha etkili olduėunu ekledi. Sadece katılımcılardan biri kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisinin btn ğrencilerin Trk olmasından dolayı ğretmen eėitiminde ncelikli olmadıėını belirtti. Diėer yandan, aynı katılımcı bu becerinin konuřma, yazma, dinleme ve okuma becerilerinin ğrencilere aktarılmasında gerekli ve nemli olduėunu szlerine ekledi. zet olarak, sonular kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisi geliřtirmenin ğretmenlere ğrencilerine İngilizcenin kltrel deėerlerinin aktarılmasında avantaj saėladıėı, dilin etkili kullanımına olanak verdiėi ve ders meteryallerinin verimli bir biimde kullanılmasını teřvik ettiėi bulunmuřtur. Bunun yanı sıra, ğretmenlerin kltrel deėerleri yansıtan rehberler olduėu da belirtilmiřtir.

- *Kltrlerarası İletiřim Becerisinin Dil ğrencileri İin nemi*

Kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisinin dil ğretmenleri iin nemine sunulan nedenler dil ğrencileri iin de aynı řekilde belirtilmiřtir. Katılımcılar dilin ve kltrn birbiriyle i ie olduėunu ve bundan dolayı da ğrencilerin dil ėrenimleri sırasında kltrel etmenlere de ařinalık kazanması gerektiėi belirtilmiřtir. Bir dil bilmenin aynı zamanda o dilin kltrn ve insanlarını bilmek olduėu ve ğrencilerin o dili etkili bir biimde konuřabilmek iin o kltrde yařanan hayata da farkındalık kazanmalarının gerektiėi bulunmuřtur. ğrencilerin farklı kltrlerde yařamlarını srdrebilmeleri iin dilin yapısal iřlevlerinin yanı sıra toplumsal iřlevlerinin de bilincinde olmaları sosyal bir stat kazanmaları ve farklı kltrlere mensup insanlarla anlařabilmeleri iin gerekli bir zellik olarak ne srlmřtur. Katılımcılardan bir tanesi, ilk bařta kltrlerarası iletiřim becerisinin ğrenciler iin gerekli olmadıėını

belirtmiş olmasına rağmen öğrencisinin ileriki yaşamında yurtdışında bulunma şanslarını düşündükten sonra bu fikrini değiştirmiş, ve gerekli olduğunu belirtmiştir.

- *Yurtdışında Bulunulan Ülke Hakkındaki Bilgi*

Erasmus ve Comenyus deneyimleri öncesinde katılımcıların büyük bir bölümü gidecekleri ülke hakkında bilgi sahibi olduklarını belirttiler. Katılımcılardan biri ülkenin bölgesini ve dinini bildiğini, bir diğeri ülkenin gelenek ve göreneklerini, onların şarkılarını ve insanların profillerini bildiğini belirtirken, neredeyse bütün katılımcılar ülke hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmek için istekli ve motive olduklarını dile getirdiler. İnternette ülke hakkında bilgi edinimi, kitaplar, filimler ve daha önce o ülkelerde bulunan insanlardan öğrenilen bilgiler faydalı olarak düşünülmesine rağmen, o ülkede yaşamının verdiği kazanımın bunların hiçbirine eşdeğer olarak düşünülmemeyeceği belirtilmiştir.

- *Erasmus/Comenyus Deneyimi Öncesi Katılımcıların Motivasyon Seviyeleri*

Başka bir kültürü öğrenme motivasyonu ve ona adapte olma süreci hakkında tüm katılımcılar çok istekli olduklarını belirttiler. Farklı kültürleri ve insanları tanıma, dünya görüşünü geliştiren, deneyimleri zenginleştiren ve kişisel özellikleri olumlu yönde değiştiren bir etmen olarak belirtilmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, katılımcılar motivasyonun bu deneyimi yaşamada anahtar nokta olduğunun, ve motivasyon olmadan farklı bir kültürde yaşam deneyiminin olanaksız olduğunun altını çizdiler. Katılımcılardan biri o kültürde yaşayan insanlar gibi hissetmek ve kendini onların yaşam tarzına adapte edebilmek ve onlardan biri olabilmek için motivasyonun çok önemli bir etmen olduğunu vurguladı.

- *Erasmus/Comenyus Sonrası Katılımcıların Tutumlarındaki Değişiklikler*

Erasmus ve Comenyus deneyimleri sonrasında, katılımcılardan birkaçı bulundukları ülkenin kültürleri hakkındaki fikirlerinde değişiklikler olduğunu belirttiler. Öğretmenlerden biri, ülkede bulunmadan önce Avrupalı insanların samimi olmadıkları yönünde bir fikrinin olduğunu fakat bu fikrinin tamamen değiştiğini ve onların yaşam tarzını beğendiğini ifade etti. Öte yandan başka bir katılımcı, kültürler hakkında düşüncelerin tamamen değiştiğini ifade etti ve tek bir kültürden bahsetmememiz gerektiğini, kültürlerin içiçe olduğu gerçeğinin vurgulanması

gerektiğini öne sürdü. Erasmus deneyimini Londra’da gerçekleştiren katılımcı, Londra da yaşayan çok fazla farklı kültürel yapıya sahip insanların olduğundan, bu yüzden İngiliz kültürü gibi bir kavramın olmadığından bahsetti. Katılımcı bu deneyimi sonrasında Türk kültürü, Hollanda kültürü veya İtalyan kültürü gibi kavramların kullanılmaması gerektiğini vurguladı ve her bir kültürün kendi içindeki farklılıklarına dikkat çekilmesi gerekliliğini belirtti. Bunun yanı sıra, insanları kültürlerinden bağımsız olarak, bireyler olarak, görmenin iletişim sırasında gerekli olduğunu belirtti.

- *Yurtdışı Deneyimin Kişisel Gelişime Etkisi*

Katılımcıların hepsi yurtdışı deneyimlerinin kişiliklerine olumlu etkilerinin olduğunu belirtti. Kişisel gelişim olarak, kendilerine daha çok güvenen bireyler olmaları, daha rahat, anlayışlı, ve iletişim becerileri yüksek bireyler olmaları cevaplarda sıralandı. Yurtdışı deneyimlerini kendilerini keşfettikleri bir serüven ve kendi ayakları üzerinde durmayı öğrendikleri bir süreç olarak tanımladılar.

- *Yurtdışı Deneyiminin Sosyal Yaşamda Etkisi*

Kişisel özelliklerinde olduğu gibi, katılımcıların hepsi sosyal yaşamlarında da yurtdışı deneyimlerinin olumlu etkilerinin olduğunu vurguladılar. Sosyal açıdan daha kendine güvenen bireyler haline geldiklerini ve arkadaşlık kurmada zorluk çekmediklerini belirttiler.

- *Yurtdışı Deneyiminin Dil Gelişimine Etkisi*

Katılımcılardan 3’ü dil gelişimlerinde büyük değişikliklerin olmadığını belirtmelerine rağmen, bütün katılımcılar İngilizce konuşma becerilerinde kuvvetli bir gelişme olduğunu belirttiler. Dili bulundukları sosyal ortamlarda kullanmanın onlara kelimelerin gerçek anlamlarını anlamalarında yardım ettiğini ve İngilizceyi bulundukları sosyal ortamlarda daha uygun şekilde kullanma becerisi geliştirdiklerini belirttiler.

- *Yurtdışı Deneyiminin Profesyonel Gelişime Etkisi*

Katılımcıların çoğu yurtdışı deneyimlerinin profesyonel gelişimlerine katkısı olduğunu belirttiler. Öğrencileri farklı bireyler olarak görme anlayışının gelişimi, dilin fonksiyonel kullanımına verilen önemin artması, ders meteryallerinin daha etkili kullanımı ve dil öğretiminde kullanılan farklı tekniklerin öğrenilmesi, derste sürekli İngilizce kullanımının teşvik edilmesi, sınıf içinde karşılaşılan problemlere yeni açılardan bakabilme kabiliyetinin geliştirilmesi ve son olarak diğer ülkelerdeki eğitim sistemlerini gözlemleme ve Türk eğitim sistemiyle karşılaştırma şansının verilmesi profesyonel kazanımlar olarak listelenmiştir.

- *Eğitim Felsefesindeki Değişiklikler*

Katılımcıların hepsi eğitim felsefelerinde değişiklikler olduğunu belirttiler. Öğrencilerinin farklı bireysel özelliklerinin olduğunu kabul etme ve onlara olgun bireyler olarak yaklaşabilme yetisinin kazanımı, sınıf ortamının öğrenmeyi kolaylaştıracak şekilde samimi ve rahat olmasının teşvik edilmesi, öğretmenin derste öğrencilerine daha fazla söz vermesi gerekliliği, dilin fonksiyonel kullanımının teşvik edilmesi ve dil öğretiminin oyun ve interaktif aktivitelerle desteklenmesi, ve son olarak farklı öğretim metodlarının edinimi kazanılan değişiklikler olarak listelenmiştir.

- *Yurtdışı deneyimlerinin Türkiye’de uygulanması*

Katılımcılar yurtdışı deneyimleri sırasında edindikleri tecrübeleri sınıflarında farklı şekillerde yansıttıklarını belirttiler. Deneyimlerini kısa hikayeler olarak anlatma, öğrencilere yurtdışında bulunabilecekleri durumlarla ilgili aktiviteler düzenleme ve öğrencilerin rol yapmalarını teşvik etme, ve sınıf içi tartışma konuları belirleme kullanılan yöntemler olarak belirtilmiştir. Diğer yandan, bu aktivitelerin öğrenci motivasyonunu artırdığı, ve dersi öğrenciler için daha ilgi çekici kıldığı belirtilmiştir. Öğretmenler bu aktiviteleri dersin ilk 15 dakikasında konuya giriş yapmak ve dönem başlarında öğrencilerini tanımak için kullandıklarını söylediler. Son olarak, ders kitaplarında geçen kültürel etmenlerin öğretmenler tarafından deneyimlenmiş olmasının öğrencilerin derse olan ilgi ve motivasyonlarını artırdığı vurgulanmıştır.

- *Dil Öğrencilerinin kültürlerarası iletişim becerilerini geliştime yolları*

Katılımcıların çoğu öğrencilerinin kültürlerarası iletişim becerilerini geliştirebileceklerini düşünmelerine rağmen, bunun çok zor bir süreç olduğunu vurguladılar. Gerçek hayattan örnekler vererek dil eğitimini geliştirmek, öğrencilerin dünyanın çeşitli bölgelerinden insanlarla internet yoluyla iletişime geçmelerini teşvik etmek ve bu süreçte onlara önderlik etmek, derse otantik meteryal getirmek ve bu meteryalleri öğrencilerin seviyelerine göre adapte etmek kültürlerarası iletişim becerisini geliştirmeyi kolaylaştıran yöntemler olarak sıralanmıştır.

- *Müfredatın kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi kazanımına etkisi*

Katılımcıların büyük bir çoğunluğu müfredatın kültürlerarası iletişim becerisinin kazanımını olumsuz yönde etkilediğini belirtti. Öncelikle, programın kısıtlı olduğu ve farklı meteryallerin kullanımını zorlaştırdığı söylendi. Kısıtlı olmasının yanı sıra, programın büyük bir çoğunluğunun TOEFL ITP sınavına yönelik olduğu ve bu yüzden öğrencilerin çoğunlukla gramer öğrenmeye mecbur bırakıldığı ve dinleme, çoğunlukla okuma ve kelime ezberleme tekniklerinin öğretildiği belirtilmiştir. Bunların yanı sıra, haftalık müfredatın çok kapsamlı olduğu ve bundan dolayı öğretmenlerin ekstra meteryal kullanımında problem çektikleri eklenmiştir. Diğer yandan, sadece iki katılımcı müfredatın öğretmen tarafından yapılabilecek değişikliklerle kültür öğretimine uygun hale getirebileceğini savunmuştur. Son olarak dinleme-konuşma ve okuma-yazma derslerinin kitaplarda işlenen konulardan ötürü kültür öğretimi açısından en uygun dersler olduğu belirtilmiştir.

- *Ders meteryallerinin ve aktivitelerinin kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi kazanımına etkisi*

Katılımcılardan sadece birkaç tanesi meteryallerin ve ders aktivitelerinin doğru kullanılmak ve küçük uyarlamalar yapılması durumunda uygun olduğunu belirtmelerine rağmen, çoğunluğu uygun olmadığını söyledi. Kitaplardaki konuların etkili ve kültürel öğelerle birleştirilerek aktarımında öğretmene büyük görev ve sorumluluk düştüğünü belirten katılımcılar, yine de konuların büyük bir çoğunluğunun sınava yönelik olduğunu ve kültür eğitimini desteklemediğini belirtti.

- *Öğrenci profilinin kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi eğitimine etkisi*

Katılımcıların neredeyse yarısı öğrenci profilinin kültür eğitimi için uygun olduğunu ve öğrencilerin kültür öğretimine karşı yeterli motivasyon ve ilgiye sahip olduğunu belirtmesine rağmen, diğerleri öğrencilerin dil öğrenimi için yeterince motive olmadığını belirttiler. Öğretmenlerden bir kısmı öğrencilerin farklı kültürleri öğrenmeyi istediklerini ve yurtdışına gitmeyi istediklerini belirtmelerine rağmen, diğerleri öğrencilerinin tek amaçlarının sınavı geçmek olduğunu ve sınava yönelik çalışmayı tercih ettiklerini söylediler.

- *Okulda sağlanan kaynak ve ekstra materyallerin kültürlerarası iletişim becerisi geliştirmeye etkisi*

Okuma odası, bireysel çalışma salonu, ve okula yarı zamanlı olarak okulda bulunan Kanadalı yabancı öğrencilerin düzenlediği aktiviteler okulda sağlanan kaynaklar olarak düşünülmüştür.

Katılımcıların hepsi yabancı öğrenciler tarafından düzenlenen aktivitelerin kullanışlı ve etkili olduğunu belirttiler. Öğrencilerin bu aktiviteler sayesinde yabancı öğrencilerle İngilizce konuşma şansını elde ettiklerini ve onların kültürlerini, geleneklerini, ve dillerini daha iyi öğrenme şansı elde ettiklerini söylediler. Fakat okuma odası birçok katılımcı tarafından faydalı olmadığı yönünde eleştirildi. Okuma odasında sağlanan kitapların ve materyallerin kültür eğitimi katkı sağlamadığı iddia edildi. Bununla birlikte gazete ve dergilerin çok faydalı olduğu ama öğrencilerin bu konuda yönlendirilmediği için onlardan maksimum faydayı elde edemedikleri belirtildi. Öğretmenlerin okuma odasındaki kitapları, dergileri ve gazeteleri sınıf içinde derslerine entegre etmelerinin daha faydalı olacağı katılımcıların birçoğu tarafından önerildi. Son olarak, bireysel çalışma merkezi katılımcılar tarafından etkili ve kullanışlı olmadığı için eleştirildi.

2. Sınıf Gözlemlerinin Sonuçları

Sınıf gözlemleri sırasında, maalesef sadece birkaç katılımcı gözlenen ders sırasında kültürle alakalı materyalleri kullandı. Diğer katılımcılar ders süresince sadece ders kitabına bağlı kaldılar. Katılımcıların birçoğunun genel olarak gramer

konularına ağırlık vermiş olduğu gözlemlendi. Gramer derslerinde, öğretmenlerin gramer konularını açıklamada sadece kitaba bağlı kaldıkları ve kitaptaki aktiviteleri uyguladıkları görüldü. Kitaptaki aktiviteler çoğunlukla gramer alıştırmaları sonrasında öğrenilen konuyla ilgili verilen cümlelerdeki gramer konularını doğru olarak verilen cümlelerdeki boşluklara yerleştirmek veya yeniden o cümleleri gramer açısından doğru olarak yazabilmek. Cümlelerdeki boşlukları doldurma paragraf içinde verilmiş olmasına rağmen, birçok katılımcı paragrafın genel olarak neden bahsettiği veya konusu üzerine yoğunlaşmak yerine kullanılan gramer konularının doğruluğuna konsantre oldu. Benzer olarak, kelime öğretimi sırasında da kelimeleri anlamlı cümleler yada konular içinde öğretmek yerine, katılımcıların çoğu kelimenin fiil, isim, sıfat veya zarf olup olmadığını anlatıp, sonrasında her türde o kelimenin türlerini öğretme konusuna yoğunlaştılar. Daha sonraki kısımlarda, katılımcılar öğretilen kelimelerle benzer ve zıt anlama gelen kelimeleri tahtaya yazdılar. Son olarak kelimelerle ilgili örnek cümleler tahtaya yazıldı fakat katılımcıların verdikleri örneklerin kültürle bağlantılı olup olmaması konusunda dikkat etmedikleri gözlemlendi. Gramer ve kelime öğretimine benzer olarak, yazma işlevinin öğretilmesinde de katılımcıların genel olarak bir paragrafın nasıl yazılması gerektiğine konsantre oldukları, hangi bağlaçların kullanılması gerektiğini detaylı bir şekilde açıkladıkları ama verdikleri örneklerde kültürle alakalı cümleler yazmak yerine daha genel cümleler üzerinden konuyu açıkladıkları gözlemlendi. Sonuç olarak, ne yazma pratiği sırasında verilen konuların ne de öğretimi sırasında verilen örneklerin kültürle alakalı olmadığı tespit edildi.

Özetlemek gerekirse, çalışmanın sonucunda, öğretmenlerin ICC becerisine sahip olduğu ve bunun İngilizce öğretmenleri ve öğrencileri için gerekli bir edinim olduğunu düşündükleri bulunmuştur. Bunun yanı sıra müfredatın, öğrencilerin dil seviyesi ve motivasyonlarının, sınıf içi aktivite ve kullanılan materyallerin uygun olmadığı öğretmenlerin büyük bir çoğunluğu tarafından belirtilmiştir. Bu nedenden dolayı, müfredatın yeniden gözden geçirilmesi ve kültür eğitimini mümkün kılacak, geliştirebilecek materyallerin hazırlanması gerektiği sonucuna varılmıştır.

APPENDIX K
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1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: