

## TEACHING TURKISH CULTURAL VALUES THROUGH NARRATIVES WITH A PLOT-STRUCTURE ANALYSIS APPROACH

### ANLATILARLA TÜRK KÜLTÜREL DEĞERLERİNİN ÖĞRETİMİNDE KONU YAPISI İNCELEME YAKLAŞIMI

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This study offers a plot-structure analysis approach in analyzing narratives on problematic intercultural encounters for teaching cultural values in the foreign language classroom. It argues that the plot-structure of narratives about such intercultural communication situations have characteristic features which are related to key elements of intercultural communication. Foreign language learners' awareness on reasons of conflict in intercultural encounters, including lack of knowledge on cultural values, can be increased by exploring these characteristic elements. This study, first of all, presents a plot-structure analysis of two personal narratives written by foreigners who lived in Turkey. Then, based on this analysis, it proposes the distinctive features of plot-structure in narratives about a difficult intercultural encounter. Both of the narratives are about hospitality which is an important value in Turkish culture. Therefore, the analysis would be especially useful for learners of Turkish as a foreign language who would like to explore and learn Turkish cultural values. The two personal narratives which are "Rescued by Village Intelligence" and "Hediye" are chosen among the collection of memoirs titled Tales from the Expat Harem: Foreign Women in Modern Turkey first published in 2005. While one of the narratives reflects on how a display of hospitality turned out to be almost life-saving for the author when she was in desperate need for help, the other deals with the author's experience about Turkish hospitality as an unfamiliar and quite disturbing issue for her.

#### Anahtar Kelimeler

Turkish culture, cultural values, plot-structure analysis, narrative, intercultural awareness.

#### Abstract

Bu çalışma, kültürel değerlerin yabancı dil sınıfında öğretilmesinde, bir sorun içeren kültürlerarası iletişim deneyimleri üzerine yazılmış anlatılarda kullanılmak üzere bir konu yapısı inceleme yaklaşımı sunmaktadır. Çalışmada, olumsuzluk içeren bir kültürlerarası deneyim üzerine yazılmış anlatıların, konu yapılarının kültürlerarası iletişimin önemli unsurlarını yansıtan ayırt edici özelliklere sahip oldukları öne sürülmektedir. Yabancı dil öğrencilerinin kültürlerarası iletişim deneyimlerinde, kültürel değerler konusunda bilgisiz olunması gibi, iletişim problemlerine sebep olabilecek durumlar ile ilgili duyarlılıkları bu ayırt edici özelliklerin üzerinde durularak geliştirilebilir. Çalışma ilk olarak, Türkiye'de yaşamış yabancıların yazdığı iki kişisel anlatının konu

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yapısı incelemesini sunmaktadır. Daha sonra, bu incelemeye dayanarak, zor bir kültürlerarası iletişim deneyimi üzerine yazılmış anlatıların konu yapılarının ayırt edici özellikleri öne sürülmektedir. Seçilen iki anlatı da Türk kültüründe önemli bir değer olan misafirperverlik ile ilgilidir. Dolayısıyla, inceleme özellikle Türkçe'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilere Türk kültürel değerlerinin tanıtılmasında ve öğretilmesinde faydalı olacaktır. "Rescued by Village Intelligence" ("Köy İstihbarat Birimlerince Kurtarılma") ve "Hediye" adlı iki anlatı ilk olarak 2005 yılında yayımlanan Türkçe Sevmek: Türkiye'de Yaşayan Yabancı Kadınların Gözüyle Türkler adlı anı derlemesinden seçilmiştir. Anılardan biri misafirperverlik örneklerinden birinin yazarın en çok ihtiyacı olan bir zamanda nasıl hayat kurtarıcı bir etkisi olduğundan bahsederken, diğeri ise yazarın hayatında Türk misafirperverliğinin ne kadar rahatsız edici bir hal aldığı ile ilgilidir.

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#### **Keywords**

Türk kültürü, kültürel değerler, konu yapısı analizi, anlatı, kültürlerarası farkındalık.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching culture is an indispensable part of foreign language teaching. The aim of this study is to suggest that plot-structure analysis with an intercultural communication perspective can be used to analyze types of narratives written about a problematic intercultural encounter. It is also claimed that this analysis would be useful especially for exploring cultural values in the foreign language classroom as it enables to focus on concepts such as stereotypes, prejudices, conflicts and ways of conflict resolution. In this way, literature, especially memoir as a genre, can be used as a means to increase language learners' intercultural awareness.

By analyzing two narratives taken from a collection of memoirs, hospitality, a significant value in Turkish culture is explored through the experiences and perspectives of two foreign women who lived in Turkey. Especially learners studying Turkish as a foreign language would benefit from this analysis as they can explore this cultural value by the suggested plot-structure analysis which draws attention to the key elements of intercultural communication. The study aims to contribute to the fields of foreign language teaching and intercultural communication by offering a plot-structure analysis approach that particularly focuses on intercultural communication.

### 1.1. Using Literary Texts for Developing Intercultural Awareness

Narrative inquiry has been increasingly used as a method in a wide range of disciplines such as education, medicine and psychology (Trahar 2009; Webster & Mertova 2007). Moreover, narratives have been widely suggested to be analyzed in intercultural communication research (Giovanangeli & Oguro 2016; Mendez Garcia 2017). In addition to this, in the field of foreign language teaching, developing intercultural competence by using literary texts has been discussed by several researchers (Gómez R. 2012; Zacharias 2005). Personal narratives like memoirs enable an analysis of one's personal reflections about an event in their lives and cultural issues may have a role in the outcome of these events. As cited in Gertsen and Søderberg (2011):

*... as pointed out by cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner, narratives generally spring from the dialectic between what was expected by the narrator and some unforeseen course of events that took place instead. And, as he phrases it: "culture is, figuratively, the maker and enforcer of what is expected" (Bruner, 2002: 15).*

Zacharias (2005) points out that literary texts help develop intercultural awareness mainly by addressing the cognitive and affective aspects of intercultural understanding and fostering critical self-awareness. Similarly, Thanasoulas (2001) claims that literary texts help learners increase their awareness of cultural values as they can compare and contrast their beliefs and values with other cultures. Corbett (2010), from another perspective, emphasizes the benefits of literary works for developing tolerance and empathy in learners, which are key components of intercultural competence. Fostering action orientation is another benefit of reading and writing personal narratives as suggested by Kilianska-Przybylo (2012: 125), who emphasises that the experience of meeting a person from a different culture is unique and "thinking about it, and consequently narrating it promotes reflection, understanding, and brings change."

## 1.2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical background of this study is based on two frameworks. The first one is *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* produced by a group of researchers (Byram et al. 2009) whose fields of study are foreign language teaching and intercultural communication. *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* was initiated by the Council of Europe as a tool to analyze narratives with the claim that analyzing self-reflections about intercultural communication situations provides many benefits. The document consists of questions that the learners are required to answer about an intercultural communication encounter that they experienced. The ten components of this tool are based on theories in intercultural communication research such as acknowledgement of identity, tolerance for ambiguity, respect for otherness, empathy, communicative awareness, knowledge discovery, interpreting and relating, critical cultural awareness and action orientation (Byram et al. 2009). These components are:

1. Who I am (optional)
2. The encounter
3. The other person or people
4. Your feelings
5. The other person's feelings
6. Same and different
7. Talking to each other
8. Finding out more
9. Using comparisons to understand
10. Thinking back and looking forward

The other framework used in this study is Freytag's (2008) diagram of plot-structure analysis used in literature and literary studies. This diagram is similar to Labov's (1972) structural approach to narratives which has six elements, which are abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution and coda. Freytag's structural approach, on the other hand, is used to analyze the dramatic plot-structure of narratives in five parts: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution (Freytag 2008). While Labov's structural analysis is more commonly used in stylistic and sociolinguistic analysis of narratives, Freytag's analysis focuses on the themes in the narrative such as the feelings, conflicts and events as in the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*. Therefore, as it is more suited to focus on the cause-effect relationship of events in intercultural encounters, this study takes Freytag's analysis approach as one of its frameworks. Stages involved in Freytag's Pyramid, the name used to refer to his diagram of plot-structure, are defined as follows (ELLSA 2014):

**1. Exposition:** Setting the scene. The writer introduces the characters and setting, providing description and background.

**2. Rising action:** The story builds and gets more exciting.

**3. Climax:** The moment of greatest tension in a story. This is often the most exciting event. It is the event that the rising action builds up to and that the falling action follows.

**4. Falling action:** Events happen as a result of the climax and we know that the story will soon end.

**5. Resolution:** The character solves the main problem/ conflict or someone solves it for him or her.

In this paper, first of all, two personal narratives on an intercultural encounter will be analyzed based on their plot structure by referring to the stages of Freytag's Pyramid and the components of *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*. Then, characteristic features of narratives written on a problematic intercultural encounter will be presented.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE NARRATIVES

### 2.1. "Rescued by the Village Intelligence" ("Köy İstihbarat Birimlerince Kurtarılma")

**Exposition:** The story begins with a setting that portrays the situation of the author who is suffering from an extremely heavy flu – an Australian woman who lives in a small house in the central Anatolian town Göreme at a difficult winter time – and her desperate need for being rescued by someone. She feels like she is about to die; and the exposition part of the story forces the reader to feel sorry for the author. In the first paragraph of the narrative, moreover, there is an abrupt beginning where the author's Christian identity is overtly exposed as she emphasizes being alone in a land where the majority of people are the members of a Muslim community:

*I pray to God and then curse him for causing my pain. I attempt an 'Our Father' prayer but get stuck on the seventh line. Having been lazy in my Catholicism since seventh grade at Saint Agatha's Primary back in Brisbane, I can't remember what comes after 'as it is in Heaven.'* (Ashman & Gökmen, 2006: 253)

The author lived in Çanakkale and Antalya before; and she thinks that central Anatolia, where she lives now, is 'another world away' compared to these two cities. The author talks about the motive of her settling in Göreme as:

*Moving to this town of three thousand at the beginning of winter, the plan was to experience Turkey at its most traditional. After the brash commercialism of the Aegean coast, I wanted to try living among a community less consumed by tourism, less prone to call after me 'Aussie, Aussie, Aussie' based on my looks alone.* (p. 254)

The author's reference to how she was called after by Turks shows that she was exposed to stereotyping by Turks and was disturbed by this. The exposition part continues with the negative descriptions of the author about the place where she lives such as "this cement box I call home" (p. 254), and "prison" (p. 255). Although the author is having a hard time in getting used to the challenging winter conditions in Göreme, she does not want to ask for help from the villagers. She says: "I don't want anyone to know that the new foreigner in town is struggling with everyday life" (p. 254). This may be due to the fact that she is a capable woman who has a culturally individualistic nature, a woman who was able to survive in other cities of Turkey so far. She almost appears to prove herself and others in town that she will be able to do the same here. When the author talks about how bad she felt about not being able to take a shower in the last few days, she emphasizes her difference from the others in town by referring to what the waiters in a café told her:

*It seems most people in Göreme aren't concerned by several days without water to bathe anyway; they only get wet once a week in winter, according to the waiters at the café, who explained that for the rest of the week, villagers strip down to the last few layers of clothing at bedtime, and in the morning replace the same top layers. This may be acceptable to them, but I am utterly miserable.* (Ashman & Gökmen 2006: 255)

So far in the narrative, the narrator heavily focuses on the idea of loneliness. This situation might be the result of the West versus the Other dichotomy. There is a heavy tone of loneliness

and she is like a shipwreck on an unknown island that is removed from civilization. Still, the author is trying not to be so direct by stating that it is not her, but the villagers themselves who state the above words. Overall, the exposition part of the memoir is characterised by how the author portrays her identity as a European (Western) and Christian, which emphasizes how different she is from the others as well as her loneliness. Her search for experiencing Turkey at its most traditional has unexpected consequences as the story unfolds.

**Rising Action:** While the author is hopelessly praying for help, she suddenly screams when she sees the shadow of someone standing outside and hears a knock on the door. She hardly finds the energy to open the door, and when she opens it, she sees a Turkish man. The author draws a description of this man as follows:

*I stand up, stabilize my dizzy head, and wrench open the door. A mustachioed man with almond brown eyes looks back at me. He wears no coat but dons coarse woolen trousers and a yellowing shirt. I glance down to confirm socks and sandals, the uniform of the traditional Turkish man in small towns. (p. 256)*

In this description, we see a stereotyped image of Turkish men living in small towns. The repetition of 'mustachioed man' several times in the text also reinforces this stereotyped image.

**Climax:** The man greets himself as her neighbour. He says that he and his family could not see her for the last few days and they wondered whether she was all right. The author can not control her feelings, and trying to hide her tears, she closes the door on his face. She describes her feelings as:

*Choking with emotion and embarrassment, I croak that I am fine and close the door in his face. I don't want him to see me burst into a flood of tears. Falling onto the sofa, I cry anew but try to check my tears when another knock sounds. (Ashman & Gökmen 2006: 256)*

The author's description of her emotions is almost a reflection of her regret in emphasizing a negative attitude towards Turks at the beginning of the memoir. Again, she wants to seem strong and hide her tears, trying to appear as a strong woman. After the author hears a second knock on the door and opens it, immediately, she is almost bombarded with a traditional display of Turkish hospitality, but which is at first reported as if it was brutal.

*I gingerly unhitch the latch. The door is firmly pushed open and in marches the mustachioed man. Behind him in a train are four more people ... They don't bother to introduce themselves; instead, they push me down on the sofa and lay out an array of food on my table. Lentil soup, an oily meat stew, fresh bread, and yoğurt. 'Ye,' they order, urging me to eat. Stunned, I do as I am told. (p. 256)*

The author is this time almost a prisoner who does what she is told by these uncivilized people who do not even introduce themselves. We see that the unexpected displays of hospitality accompany the confusion of the author's feelings in the climax.

**Falling Action:** Once the author starts eating the meal, although it is painful for her, she starts feeling much better. All the members of the two neighbour families start doing something to make her feel better. At this point, another significant intercultural communication issue for Turkish people is face-saving. As the author explains, this is displayed when the neighbours pretend not to notice her appearance and her crying.

*While I swallow the scratchy bread and slurp the hot liquids-both painful and relieving-the women begin washing dishes of dirty crockery in my sink, and the men busy themselves with my stove. The young girl just stands at my side, staring and occasionally stroking my arm. I feel self-conscious in my days-old pajamas, but they either don't notice or don't care. When I begin to cry silently in relief, they pretend not to notice that either. (p. 256)*

After the author finishes eating, the neighbours introduce themselves. The older couple take the author to their house. They take care of her by preparing a medicinal tea for her and putting her to bed. They watch television together. The couple shows her some family photos and the author shares her family stories with them, although she has limited Turkish. As mentioned before, communication is an important issue at the Falling Action part. In this story, we see that limited verbal communication is not a problem to maintain effective intercultural communication.

*Kindness envelops me... and I share my stories of family with them as well. The story is well rehearsed on my part, having memorized the Turkish vocabulary after six months of living amidst curious Turks. (Ashman & Gökmen 2006: 257)*

The process of effective communication that leads to conflict resolution is seen at this stage. After having a chat, the author realizes that the neighbours always kept an eye on her even though she was not aware of it, which also explains the author's choice of 'village intelligence' in the title.

**Resolution:** At the resolution part of the memoir, it is seen that both parties, the Turkish neighbours and the American woman, get to know each other and make a long-lasting friendship. The American woman was at first hesitant to open the door as she was afraid. Later, she was overwhelmed by the hospitality shown by the neighbours, which was totally unexpected for her as she did not know them before. The following words of the author show the function of making a joke for building comity.

*They gasp as I reveal my age and then mock me kindly, shaking their head and saying, "Evde kaldın, evde kaldın." I'm a girl left at home. They think I've been left on the marital shelf. Most local girls in town are married at eighteen. (p. 257)*

Instead of feeling offended, the author shows both empathy and tolerance with the locals, knowing that having strong family relationships is important for Turks.

*Then I explain that I am the youngest of four and that my other siblings are married with children. They are normal, if I am not. The fact that I have a big family seems to reassure them ... But I watch their faces and weigh the emotion in their eyes. We all nod, cementing our kinship. (p. 258)*

The author responds to the hospitality of the neighbours by visiting them frequently after she recovers. They form a relationship in which she feels like she is part of the family. In this narrative, it can be claimed that, the hopelessness of the author at the beginning of the story was the main problem. This was probably because of the author's not being familiar with the collectivistic nature of Turkish values, and depending on her individualistic roots. Taking care of people who are new at a place, especially ones who are from a different culture, is a major cultural value for Turks and they take great pride in showing hospitality. The narrative shows that if the author did not hesitate to ask for help from her neighbours when she started having problems, she would not be in such a desperate need of being rescued. In the classroom context, this section of the narrative can be suitable to open a discussion on direct and communication styles.

Being such a deeply rooted value, hospitality of the Turks in Göreme seems to be reflecting one of the most traditional sides of Turkey, which is what the author was looking for when planning to move to central Anatolia. Different from this narrative, in the next narrative titled *Hediye* we see an American woman who immediately finds herself in the traditional exposure of hospitality by her landlady, which becomes disturbing for her after a short time.

## 2.2. "Hediye"

**Exposition:** The writer of the story, an American woman, comes to Bursa to settle there. In the exposition part of the narrative, there is another abrupt opening which portrays a harshly negative image of Turkey in the minds of Americans. In the first paragraph, the author narrates how worried her friend in United States was when she called her on the phone. The following lines reflect on the prejudiced views towards Turks:

*After the news that she heard about Iraq on CNN, she called me as she was so worried that I might have been killed at antiAmerican terrorism which she believed continued so tensely in the whole Muslim world. (Ashman & Gökmen, 2005: 341)<sup>1</sup>*

Again, in the first paragraph, the author points at another prejudiced view of Americans on Turkey: "There is almost no American who does not say "Turkey? Too dangerous!" (p. 341). The negative attitude of Americans about Turks is illustrated more in the following words of the author:

*... in general, Americans are too worried about Turkey. David Sedaris, the American comedian, believes that even Santa Claus is advised to stay away from this country. Although in his book that was published in 2004, Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim, he states that Santa Claus is actually Saint Nikolaus and that he comes from Demre in Turkey, he claims modern Turkey can be no way related to Santa Claus. In his view, Turks can not understand anything from Santa Claus, and there should be nothing to do for him at such an unpleasant place! But unfortunately, fears about Turkey are so widespead. (Ashman & Gökmen 2005: 341)*

The author distances herself from other Americans by telling her own beliefs about Turkey: "I don't find Turkey hostile at all. In fact, the only thing that should be feared can be the Turkish hospitality that is sometimes exaggerated" (p. 341). In the exposition, the author also talks about herself and her motive to settle in Turkey. She rents a house in Bursa and meets her landlady, Hediye, who is a Turkish woman with four children.

**Rising Action:** In the story, we see that some inciting events which are all related to traditional displays of hospitality lead to great confusion on the part of the American author:

*... Hediye was one year older than me and soon she appointed herself as the welcoming committee, guide, and consultant. (p. 343)*

*Although I tried to reassure her that I know how to cook, she shook her head with doubt saying 'you are so skinny.' (p. 344)*

*The countless favours of Hediye never ceased. This was no longer impressing a foreigner with Turkish hospitality or helping a new neighbour who did not yet have an oven. As the time passed, I started to feel myself as a small child accepting the care and teaching of her elders. I did not like this at all. (p. 344)*

The attitude of the Turkish woman makes the author feel a longing for her individualist character which she is not able to show in the collectivistic environment of Turkey. This almost causes an identity conflict for the author:

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<sup>1</sup> The narrative titled "Hediye" does not take place in the English version of the collection edited by Ashman and Eaton Gökmen (2006). It can be found in the Turkish version of the book published in 2005. Therefore, all of the quotations from this narrative were translated from Turkish into English by the researcher throughout the rest of the study.



*At another time and continent, I was a skillful, venturesome, independent, self directed and responsible woman. It was impossible for me to maintain this image here. Especially as my communication skills were just like a four year old child's, my task was much harder. (p. 344)*

The author feels that her attempts to reciprocate for the hospitality shown to her are not sincerely appreciated by the Turkish woman, which is another inciting event for the author to feel bad:

*Once, in order to reciprocate for the favours made for me, I gave Hediye's tray back with lentil soup on it. But this time Hediye brought me her own lentil soup saying 'there is lemon and parsley in it.' This was not two women's comparing their recipes; it was one woman's teaching a child how to cook. (Ashman & Gökmen 2005: 345)*

The last one of the inciting events in the Rising Action part is Hediye's invitation to go to Aydın together where they generally spend their summer. In order not to offend Hediye, the author accepts to join them although she is not willing to do so.

**Climax:** The climax of the narrative occurs when the author feels that she can not cope with Turkish hospitality any more and decides to leave Aydın.

*Hediye was more nurturing than usual in Aydın ... Neither Hediye nor the girls let me move even my fingers. I was not sure whether they were doing this as I was a guest, or because they thought that I was not skilful ... At the end of two weeks, I was about to go nuts. I did not have any space of my own and any time either. (My friend) Allison's fears started to come true: A group of loving, warm and generous terrorists took hostage of me and captured my life. I had to leave ... Hediye never realized that I was disturbed and that there was no way that she would know this. I was expecting her to condemn me openly when she returned in September and I could not blame her for that. I had behaved like a sociopath in Turkish standards. (p. 345)*

In the above lines, we see that the author is able to put herself in the shoes of Turks, and can view her behaviours from their perspective. Her individualist nature is totally different from the Turks. Just like the author of "Rescued by Village Intelligence" states, the loneliness of the author of "Hediye" is something that causes Turks to have a greater feeling of taking care for her:

*I had never thought that it was not just Hediye and her family, but all the Turks who found it something unacceptable that I wished to live alone. When I said that I was not married and did not have children, all the Turks looked at me with eyes of pity ... I saw my loneliness as a right gained with difficulties and a skill of keeping away from responsibilities, not a big gap that had to be filled in my life, as Hediye thought. (p. 346)*

**Falling Action:** The Falling Action in the narrative starts with Hediye's arrival back in Bursa:

*One September day, I saw that Hediye came back ... When she saw me at the balcony, she invited me downstairs by waving at me. I went downstairs with my knitting bag... After she kissed and hugged me, she made a place for me to sit down. I made compliments about the laces that they knitted and they, in return, showed admiration at the Scandinavian patterned glove I was knitting. Hediye took my work and handed it to everyone, so that all the women could see it closely. At least I was happy that I was skilful on a subject that these women would be able to show respect. We all sat doing our work, ate biscuits and had a chat until the sunset. (Ashman & Gökmen 2005: 346)*

The above words of the author shows that Hediye and other women made an effort to show respect towards her identity as an independent woman, which is probably an attempt to

avoid letting the tension escalate between the two women. It is understood that the author is also making an effort to be part of the community of women by showing her skills on hobbies that they share, like knitting. Actually she almost implies that her skill at knitting was the only thing that would deserve respect from the viewpoint of the Turkish women. While the author expects to be respected as an individual, just the way she is, she feels like she has to do something to show that she is not completely different from the others. Both verbal communication of making compliments to each other and nonverbal communication of appreciating her work help the situation arrive at a resolution.

**Resolution:** The resolution is clearly stated at the end of the narrative. Sincere appreciation of Turks for the author's efforts to be part of the community appears to have a significant contribution for successful resolution. Both parties learn to accept the other's difference. The author feels that people eventually show respect for her lifestyle as well as empathy.

*In time, Hediye and I found a middle way. I am aware that she comes to my house less, but I learned to overcome my inwardness and go to visit her from time to time. Knitting helped me keep my relations at a balance. Both Hediye and her children seemed to be sincerely happy with the gloves and hats that I knitted for them ... I learned to accept a plate with stuffed aubergines and yogurt without feeling uncomfortable ... On the other hand, Hediye also seemed to accept that my loneliness had some advantages. One day she asked me: 'Are you really happy alone?' and I nodded my head. She smiled and said: 'A bachelor's life is a king's life.' (p. 346-347)*

### 3. CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF PLOT STRUCTURE IN NARRATIVES ON INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

Based on the analysis of the narratives, the characteristic features for each section of a personal narrative that reflects on a problematic intercultural incident can be broadly claimed to be as the following:

**Exposition:** In an intercultural encounter which is narrated as a personal narrative, the exposition part is where the time and setting of the experience is described. Abrupt beginnings can be found in the exposition part of personal narratives. Moreover, the author's description about his/her identity, his/her reasons of coming to this unfamiliar place/culture, the stereotyped and prejudiced views of others about this new place where he/she lives, his/her feelings about the place/culture or situation he/she is in can be found in this section. We see that exposition part of the narrative can include a description of the other person or people in the encounter and the author's acknowledgement of their identities.

**Rising Action:** In narratives of intercultural encounters, rising action can be a combination of several events rather than one event. While there may be one major reason that leads to the climax and causes conflict, there can also be some minor events which may be confusing for the author. In Freytag's Pyramid such events are also referred to as 'inciting events'. In a narrative about an intercultural encounter, an inciting event is likely to be caused by a misunderstanding, a prejudiced or stereotyped view towards the other person or people, lack of knowledge about the other person or people's cultural values or traditions, perceived threat towards one's identity or feelings of identity conflict. In encounters where communication problems arise due to lack of proficiency in the other person's language, communicative awareness of the author can also be included in this section of the narrative.

**Climax:** Climax is the part of the narrative where the situation gets most tense. One or more of the characters are confused, disappointed, frustrated or upset as a result of the events that

take place at the Rising Action. In an intercultural critical incident, as the incident can finish with the climax, the negative feelings experienced in the incident are very strong. The climax of an intercultural critical incident can be associated with such negative feelings of the people involved. In some cases, only one party experiences this, while the other party feels nothing negative in the experience. In narratives on an intercultural communication encounter, we see that the negative or confused feelings of the author can be a consequence of an unexpected behaviour of the members of the foreign culture. Such feelings can also be caused by a realization of the author that his/her attempts to adapt to the norms and traditions of the new culture do not work and he/she is not understood by the others. In some cases, while one of the parties shows respect for otherness and empathy for the other, the other may not find the same attitudes from others which may cause conflict and lead to the climax.

**Falling Action:** This is the stage of the narrative where a process of conflict resolution starts. There is also an inevitable process of comparing and contrasting the two cultures at this stage, that of the author and the culture of the people where he/she lives. It is seen that the negative attitudes and feelings of the author begin to be replaced by positive feelings at this stage. The author and the members of the foreign culture make attempts to understand each other's feelings and cultural values. The ambiguous and unfamiliar behaviours of each side finally appear to be evaluated by the characters with a perspective of tolerance for ambiguity, empathy and respect for otherness. Both verbal and nonverbal communication plays an important role for effective conflict resolution at this stage.

**Resolution:** This is the stage where the conflict in the encounter is eventually resolved. The narrator finally develops the ability to be part of the community that he/she lives in. Comity is established with the other people in the encounter and people display an acceptance of different worldviews. The author is likely to have developed critical cultural awareness by thinking about the reasons of the conflict and drawing conclusions. He/she may also show action orientation by reflecting on how the incident changed him/her.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the two narratives shows that the narrators of the incidents had lack of knowledge about a significant value in Turkish culture which is hospitality. This shows that differences in cultural values can have a major influence on conflicts in intercultural encounters (Kilianska-Przybylo 2012). The suggested plot-structure analysis in the study allows the readers to focus on details which might be seen insignificant unless paid attention. Therefore, critical instances that cause problems are brought to the attention of the learners by enabling an analysis of the narrative in five sections. The analysis also helps learners view cultural issues with a critical perspective. By highlighting issues such as acknowledgement of identities, the influence of stereotypes and prejudices on the conflict, respect for otherness and empathy, the analysis enables foreign language learners, in this case learners of Turkish, to compare and contrast the values of his/her own culture with the values of a foreigner. Hence, intercultural awareness of cultural values can be developed with this plot-structure analysis approach. The characteristic features of plot-structure in a problematic intercultural encounter are broadly defined and suggested in this study based on the two analyzed narratives. These features would help for the analysis of more narratives on difficult intercultural encounters with an intercultural communication perspective and can be explored in more detail in future studies.

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