İNGİLİZ DİLİ ÖĞRENİMİNDE TÜRK KÜLTÜRÜNE AİT OLMAYAN KISA HİKAYELER İLE TÜRK KÜLTÜRÜNÜ İHTİVA EDEN KISA HİKAYELERİN KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI: ÖĞRENCİ ALGILARI*

Aykut DEMIRYÜREK**
Erdoğan BADA***

Öz

Yeni bir dil öğrenirken kültürel normları, değerleri ve uygulamaları tartışmaktan kaçınmak imkânsızdır. Araştırmacılar, kültürlerarası çatışma ve kafa karışıklığının ortaya çıkma ihtimali sebebiyle İngilizce öğrenenlerin yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenirken hedef kültürü ihtiva eden metinlere maruz kalıp kalmamaları gerektiği konusunda tartışmışlardır. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de İngilizce öğrenenlerin İngilizce öğreniminde iç çember (hedef kültür), dış çember (Türk kökenli hariç-uluslararası kültürler) ve Türk kültürünü içeren kısa öyküleri nasıl algıladıklarını incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Demiryurek'in (2002) tamamlamış olduğu yüksek lisans çalışmasından üretilmiş olan bu çalışmaya ortaokul öğrencileri katılmıştır. Bu çalışmada, sıralı açıklayıcı karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Nicel verileri toplamak için Likert tipi bir anket kullanılmış ve tanımlayıcı istatistiklerin gerçekleştirilmesi için SPSS 25 yazılım programı kullanılmıştır. Araştırmacı bir sınıf gözlem formu doldurmuş ve nitel verileri ortaya çıkarmak için beş katılımcıyla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapmıştır ve daha sonra veriler Quirkos 2.4 kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgulara göre, yaklaşık tüm katılımcılar Türk kültürüne ait kısa hikayelerin kullanılmasını İngilizce öğretim ve öğreniminde daha olumlu algılamışlardır. Katılımcılar, Türk kültürüne ait hikayelerde ilgili şemaların daha fazla yaygınlığı sayesinde kısa öyküleri yerel kültürle anlamanın çok daha basit olduğunu öne sürmüşlerdir. Ayrıca Türk kültürüne ait olmayan kısa öykülerin (Türk kökenli hariç dış çember ülkelerine ait) diğer kültürleri daha iyi anlamalarına, yerel kültürlerini dünya kültürleriyle karşılaştırmalarına, diğer bakış açılarını takdir etmelerine ve kültürlerarası farkındalıklarını geliştirmelerine aynı zamanda kültürlerarası yetkinliklerini geliştirmelerine yardımcı oldukları konusunda hem fikir olmuşlardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kısa Hikayeler, Kültürlerarası, Yerel Kültür, Hedef Kültür, Türk Kültürü

Comparison of Non-Turkic and Turkic Content Short Stories in ELL: English Learners' Perceptions

Abstract

When learning a new language, it is impossible to avoid discussing cultural norms, values, and practices. Scholars are divided on whether or not learners of English should be exposed to texts with target culture (inner circle content) when studying English as a foreign language because of the potential for intercultural conflict and confusion. This study aimed to examine how English learners in Türkiye perceived short stories that featured inner circle content, outer circle (excluding Turkic origin), and Turkic content in English learning. The secondary school students participated in the current study, which was produced from Demiryurek's (2002) master's thesis. Mixed methods sequential explanatory design was utilized in this study. A Likert-scale survey was used to gather the quantitative data, and SPSS 25 was employed to perform descriptive statistics. The researcher filled out a classroom observation form, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with five participants to elicit the qualitative data, which was then analyzed using Quirkos 2.4. According to the

findings, approximately all the participants perceived the utilization of short stories with Turkic content as more beneficial to teaching and learning English. The learners suggested that understanding the short stories with local culture was much simpler, thanks to the greater prevalence of relevant schemata in the stories with Turkic content. They also agreed that the non-Turkic short stories helped them better understand other cultures, compare their local cultures with world cultures, develop an appreciation for other viewpoints, enhance their intercultural awareness and improve their intercultural competence.

Key Words: Short Stories, Intercultural, Local culture, Target culture, Turkic content

INTRODUCTION

English is crucial in today's world beyond cultural and geographical barriers. It has evolved into a position as a lingua franca (ELF) and appeared as an international language (EIL) (Crystal, 1997; McKay, 2003a, 2003b; Seidlhofer, 2004, 2005, and Sharifian, 2009). Because English plays such an important role on a global scale, it is essential that teaching and learning English should be conducted under the most relevant educational methodology (Rodliyah et al., 2014). This is in line with the suggestion of McKay (2003a, 2003b) that EIL should be taught differently. In this sense, culture can be considered one of the most crucial issues in English learning and teaching. Without a shadow of a doubt, it has been regarded as the most crucial concept in teaching and learning languages from the beginning until now. Furthermore, Bada (2000) stresses the crucial role of culture in EFL/ESL classes since it helps learners avoid communication difficulties when exposed to cultural aspects. Genc and Bada (2005) stressed that language learning without including culture could be considered incorrect and incomplete. According to Kramsch (1998), culture may be defined as "belonging to a discourse that includes a shared set of ideas and values, as well as a shared social history and geography" (p. 10).

People who lived in the past were not compelled to communicate with people of other cultures as we are required to do today. They travel from their countries to other regions for several reasons, such as doing business, education, tourism, and other objectives. People should interact with individuals from various cultural backgrounds, and as a result, they should be aware of the wide range of ways in which various cultures are distinct from one another. Because of this, it is essential to be knowledgeable of other cultures and have received training on communicating effectively across cultural boundaries in today's globalized world. Due to the diversity of cultures and the variety of non-verbal and verbal behavior standards today, it is necessary to be aware and trained in intercultural communication and have intercultural competence. Hence, cultural integration in teaching and learning English can be considered a must today since the world is called a global village (Patil, 2015). As English has become more widely spoken, there has been a shift away from stressing the value of integrating target cultural information to emphasizing the relevance of including local culture in teaching resources (McKay, 2003a). However, in language education, teachers of English are puzzled to determine which culture should be taught in reading classes (McKay, 2003a & Zacharias, 2005).

Since English is becoming a global language, it is more important than ever to include elements of the local culture in EFL classes. Learners may get a more nuanced understanding of their own culture by exposure to their own culture, which improves their ability to articulate their cultural understanding in English (McKay, 2003b). Learners could be more interested in discussing local culture-related subjects than target culture-based topics (Rodliyah et al., 2014). In this regard, teaching English in native situations or in a way that perpetuates stereotypes is illogical since it gives students knowledge that is not essential. For students to improve their English skills and acquire information about global concerns and the human experience, Alptekin (1993) suggests that they construct bridges between cultural ideas known to them and those foreign to them. In addition,

Alptekin (2002) underlines the need for language learners to possess the requisite linguistic and cultural understanding to communicate successfully in foreign settings. Moreover, Alptekin (2010) asserts that there seems to be a decline in textbooks' target cultural superiority as publishers learn more about ELF and its global impact. In a nutshell, the integration of multicultural content into curricula and inter-ELF dialogue has increased. Furthermore, he claims that international issues, not only those of the inner circle, have recently been included in EFL course books. He also explains how ELT textbooks are increasingly touching on world issues and stressing the need for openness and tolerance. Since ELF has no native speakers and no identifiable culture, he argues, it is everyone's language. He then explains how ELF encourages diversity by ignoring the customs of the original speakers. Therefore, it is important for people who use English as a second language to learn about other cultures. Within this context, the utilization of texts with target culture has been hotly debated by scholars due to possible intercultural conflict faced by the students.

Some scholars assert that using texts with a target culture might benefit learning (e.g., Bachman, 1990 or Brown, 2001). On the other hand, Alptekin (2002) suggests that the materials embedded with local culture should be employed in English learning. He claims that the current model for teaching and learning foreign languages is not to assimilate a new culture but for an instrumental reason. Literature, particularly short stories, can be considered a good tool to reflect and teach culture in language learning. Reading short stories in learning English is an effective technique to increase one's awareness of cultural differences and similarities, enhance comprehension, cultivate empathy, and broaden their worldview (Saka, 2014). Reading involves three different types of knowledge that readers employ to extract the text's meaning; graphophonic knowledge (knowledge of the link between sounds and letters), syntactic knowledge (structure of the language), and semantic knowledge (knowledge of the world) (Goodman, 1967). Without this background information (semantic knowledge), knowing the sound-letter connection and the structure of the language is not enough to ensure proficient reading. This is connected to the concept of the schema theory, which describes "how the information we have acquired about the world is arranged into interconnected patterns based on our prior experiences and knowledge." (Gibbons, 2002, p.78). Schema theory has been used to study the function of background knowledge in reading (Bartlett, 1932; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). This theory argues that good readers use certain kinds of culturally learned knowledge to help them understand what they are reading (Anderson & Pearson, 1984).

There are different types of schema theory; formal, content, and cultural. The formal schema refers to a comprehension of language and linguistic principles, which involves a knowledge of how the texts are organized; the key qualities associated with particular types of literary genres (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Carrell, 1987, 1988; Alderson, 2000). The content schema may be divided into two main types: knowledge about the subject matter (information that may or may not be relevant to the subject matter of a certain work) and background information (inseparably associated with the material that is being read and the topic that is being discussed) (Alderson, 2000; Carell, 1983). The third one is a cultural schema (Yule, 1996). The term "cultural schema" refers to the role of "cultural citizenship," which is necessary in order to fully grasp the message that the author is trying to convey (Ketchum, 2006). The cultural schema includes the issue of cultural familiarity. Several instructors employ ready-made materials without addressing the content (Zacharias, 2005), despite the relevance of this material or cultural knowledge in learners' English understanding. Learners may develop a favorable attitude toward reading if they are familiar with the subject matter. Contrariwise, unfamiliarity with the subject might result in comprehension issues in reading. Regarding this, content must be considered when selecting resources for reading texts so that learners of English can successfully utilize all of their knowledge while reading. Subjects associated with the learner's local

culture are likelier to pique their attention than those associated with the target culture (Rodliyah et al., 2014). It is consistent with what McKay (2003a) has indicated, namely that local culture may also inspire learners to understand their local culture better; therefore, they can share their cultural knowledge while using English with people from various nations. According to Fisher and Frey (2009), students' reading comprehension levels are significantly impacted by the extent to which they have prior knowledge about the subject matter of the text they are reading. This finding highlights the need to acquire relevant background knowledge.

In light of the information above, we can say that there has been some discussion on cultural teaching. One of them is the viewpoint that recommends target culture should be incorporated into English language education in order to familiarize language learners with the cultures of English-speaking nations (Byram & Flemming, 1998). On the contrary, regarding English's current status as a lingua franca and international language, some opinions strongly oppose the idea of teaching target culture in English learning (McKay, 2003a, 2003b, 2009a; Seidlehofer, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Sharifian, 2009; Royani, 2013). One view supports the idea of inclusion of local culture (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999) materials in English teaching and learning. In conclusion, as a language that belongs to those who use it, those learning English as a second language must have a broad cultural understanding, not only of American and British cultures. This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of English learners in Türkiye regarding using short stories with inner circle content, outer circle (excluding Turkic origin), and Turkic content. Thus, the following research questions were investigated by the researchers of this study:

1. What are the perceptions of learners of English in Türkiye regarding the utilization of short stories with inner circle content?
2. What are the perceptions of learners of English in Türkiye regarding the utilization of short stories with outer circle (excluding Turkic-origin) content?
3. What are the perceptions of English learners in Türkiye regarding using short stories with Turkic content?

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides information about research design, participants, data collection tools, selection of short stories, data collection procedure, and data analysis

Research Design

The primary purpose of this research is to explore how Turkish English language students perceive using non-Turkic and Turkic short stories in ELT/ELL. A mixed-methods research design was employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative information. The phrase "mixed methods research design" represents a way of conducting research incorporating quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This research method involves more than just the collection and examination of both types of data; it also incorporates the use of both methodologies inside a body; as a result, the power of an investigation is far greater than that of either quantitative or qualitative research (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p.4). Furthermore, the mixed methods sequential explanatory design is frequently adopted by researchers (Ivankova et al., 2006). In conclusion, the study utilizes an explanatory mixed methods approach to comprehend the research problem thoroughly. This involves collecting quantitative data, then qualitative data to explain results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Participants

34 8th-grade learners studying in Imam Hatip (Religious Vocational) Secondary School in Hatay, Türkiye, participated in the study voluntarily. As a result, the quantitative data were obtained

from 34 eighth-graders, 18 of whom were female, and 16 of whom were male. Nonetheless, qualitative data were acquired from five of the participants. The Religious Vocational Secondary Schools are recognized public schools associated with the Turkish Ministry of National Instruction, which offers religious and moral education in Türkiye.

Data Collection Tools

This research used a questionnaire (5 Likert-type scale), classroom observation form, and semi-structured interview as data gathering tools. The researchers used the triangulation approach to verify reliability. A single technique gives inadequate information; consequently, triangulation decreases the likelihood of bias and increases the reliability and validity of the research (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Following a thorough review of the literature, including Zorba (2019), Pardede (2010), and Rodliyah et al. (2014), a questionnaire was created from the ground up to elicit data on English learners' perceptions in Türkiye regarding using short stories with inner circle content, outer circle content (excluding Turkic-origin), and Turkic content. The questionnaire initially comprised 52 items to form a scale to investigate secondary school students' perceptions about using short stories with inner circle content, outer circle (excluding Turkic origin) content, and Turkic content. The questionnaire was administered to 194 participants in the pilot study. After completing the pilot research, it was determined that the validity and reliability of the 52-item scale were satisfactory for 44 of the items. The short version of the 44-item three-dimensional scale was generated by removing items from the scale that were equal in terms of the measured structure but had significantly distinct language expressions. In all, there were 34 questions asked on the questionnaire used for the research. The overall reliability of the short-form questionnaire, which consisted of 34 items, was found to be 0.956, and it had a good internal consistency. It was developed in Turkish and administered to the participants in that language; hence, the students had no trouble comprehending and filling out each item. In addition, the classroom observation form was designed according to the items included in the questionnaire.

Table 1
Data Collection Tools

Data Collection Tool	Procedure and Product
Questionnaire	• 5 Likert-type close-ended questions related to using short stories with non-Turkic and Turkic content in English learning. • Quantitative data • Voluntary participants (n=34) • Analysis of the Data through SPSS 25. • Statistics of Percentage & Frequency
Classroom (teacher) observation	• Teacher/Researcher observation • Classroom (Teacher) observation form • Thematic analysis
Semi-structured interview	• Pre-determined questions based on utilizing short stories with the inner circle, outer circle, and Turkic content. • Voluntary participants (n=5) • Recording interviews obtaining permission and participant approval, • Descriptions, codes, and thematic analysis

Selection of Short Stories

In the study, six short stories were used. In addition, two short stories with target culture (inner circle content), two with outer circle (excluding-Turkic origin) content, and two with Turkic content were analyzed.

Table 2
The Schedule of the Short Stories

Week 1	King Alfred and the Beggar (inner circle content) (80 minutes)
Week 2	A Story of Robin Hood by James Baldwin (inner circle content) (80 minutes)
Week 3	Be Truthful A Hindi Story by San Kalp Pandy (outer circle content) (80 minutes)
Week 4	What We Plant, We Eat A Korean Story (outer circle content) (80 minutes)
Week 5	Nasreddin Hodja and Cauldron (Turkic content) (80 minutes)
Week 6	Keloglan and Magic Stone (Turkic Content) (80 minutes)
Week 7	Questionnaire and Semi-structured interview

Data Collection Procedure

Before starting to conduct the study, the related permissions were obtained from the relevant authorities. The primary data collection began as the first short story with inner circle content was introduced to the learners. Initially, a six-week classroom observation was conducted. In each session, the researcher observed and asked students questions to acquire more comprehensive information, then filled out an observation form. This observation was completed after six weeks when studying the short stories was implemented. Second, in the seventh week of class, the researcher handed out the questionnaire and had them fill it out once the students had finished going through all the short stories. The approval needed to proceed had been received from their parents in a signed consent form. After completing the questionnaire and the researcher's subsequent collection of their responses, the data were entered into the SPSS 25 program. Thirdly, while the researcher was assessing the quantitative data, he asked who would be interested in participating in the semi-structured interview. They had been assured that participation would be entirely optional. There was interest from five different students to take part in the interview. After discussion and negotiation with the participants, a convenient time and location were identified. During the interview, the participants spoke in the language of Turkish, their native language. They could express themselves more openly due to this increased sense of ease.

Data Analysis

This study employed SPSS 25 to analyze the quantitative data gathered. SPSS is a data analysis tool used primarily in the social and behavioral sciences. (Landau & Everitt, 2004). When evaluating quantitative data collected through a Likert-type scale, descriptive statistical analysis was employed to guarantee that the participants' responses were presented appropriately and helpfully. The frequencies and percentages for each item were provided in the tables. For qualitative data analyses, classroom observation forms and semi-structured interviews were used. Thematic analysis was utilized; thus, the researchers may readily categorize the data. Furthermore, this analysis simplifies the presentation of precise information and reflects thoughts (Boyatzis, 1998). The information was transcribed with the help of a colleague and member checking to establish the data's authenticity and trustworthiness. The qualitative data was elicited using five open-ended questions and analyzed through the Quirkos software program.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

Under this heading, quantitative and qualitative findings were presented and interpreted.

Quantitative Findings

This part includes the English learners' perceptions in Türkiye regarding using short stories with inner circle content, outer circle (excluding Turkic origin) content, and Turkic content, and regarding the utilization of short stories with the inner circle, outer circle, and Turkic content considering the content such as values, beliefs, and interest. The questionnaire consisted of three subscales. The findings of these subscales were presented and interpreted.

Using Short Stories with Inner Circle Content

Taking into account the responses and percentages, it is evident that the vast majority of participants (approximately 82% of the participants, see Table 3) had negative perceptions of the use of short stories with inner circle content, as they found the texts with inner circle content to be difficult, and they were unable to compare their own culture to other cultures using the short stories with inner circle content. For example, 41,2% (n=28) of participants disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statements such as "I like to read English short stories with inner circle content," "If I read English short stories with inner circle content, I can obtain various information." In addition, as a great majority of the participants strongly disagreed and disagreed with using short stories with inner circle content in English learning, all the interviewees (n=5) asserted that they did not prefer short stories with inner circle content in English classes. Those claimed some reasons, such as dissimilarity with their own culture, values and beliefs, difficulty level, and cultural unfamiliarity. For example, an interviewee stated, "No. I don't prefer reading English short stories with inner circle content in English learning. They are challenging. I cannot guess the vocabulary easily. Furthermore, textbooks always contain texts from American and British cultures. So, there are no texts from different cultures in our students' books. I want to observe my own culture and different cultures in textbooks." Table 3 shows the students' perceptions about using short stories with inner circle content.

Table 3
The Secondary School Students' Perceptions Regarding the Utilization of Short Stories with Inner Circle Content

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Not Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	$\bar{x}$	Ss
I like to read English short stories with inner circle content (American and British culture)	N	14	14	0	6	0	1,94	1,07
	%	41,2	41,2	0	17,6	0,0		
Short stories with American and British culture allow me to compare with my own culture.	N	13	15	0	6	0	1,97	1,06
	%	38,2	44,1	0	17,6	0,0		
I find English short stories with Turkic content interesting and entertaining.	N	0	2	0	1	31	4,79	0,73
	%	0	5,9	0	2,9	91,2		
	N	11	17	0	5	1	2,06	1,1

In English classes, I learn about the target culture (American or British) and some other cultures.	%	32,4	50,0	0	14,7	2,9		
I would like to study English short stories with Turkic content in English classes.	N	0	2	0	3	29	4,74	0,75
	%	0	5,9	0	8,8	85,3		
Reading English short stories from different cultures increases my cultural awareness.	N	2	4	0	19	9	3,85	1,13
	%	5,9	11,8	0	55,9	26,5		
I have to learn the target culture (American and British Culture).	N	12	15	1	6	0	2,03	1,06
	%	35,3	44,1	2,9	17,6	0,0		
I learn English more easily through stories with inner circle content (American and British Culture).	N	13	15	0	5	1	2	1,13
	%	38,2	44,1	0	14,7	2,9		
I can learn about other cultures by reading English short stories with inner circle content (American and British culture).	N	12	16	0	4	2	2,06	1,18
	%	35,3	47,1	0	11,8	5,9		
If I read English short stories with inner circle content, I will learn about different values.	N	11	17	0	5	1	2,06	1,1
	%	32,4	50,0	0	14,7	2,9		
If I read English short stories with inner circle content, I can obtain various information.	N	14	14	0	5	1	1,97	1,14
	%	41,2	41,2	0	14,7	2,9		
Reading English short stories with inner circle content can increase my knowledge of English such as grammar, vocabulary, and so on.	N	4	8	1	18	3	3,24	1,26
	%	11,8	23,5	2,9	52,9	8,8		

Using Short Stories with Outer Circle (excluding Turkic origin) Content and Turkic Content

Approximately all the participants (91,2%, n=32) stated that they preferred to read short stories with Turkic content since they found short stories with Turkic content easier due to cultural schemata. They were eager to observe their own cultures, values, and beliefs while learning English. Short stories with Turkic content might be motivational tools. In addition, most participants (approximately 85,3%) pointed out they preferred to learn about different cultures since they believed short stories with outer circle content made their learning process more manageable, and they could compare their local culture with world cultures while learning English. Those could observe the differences and similarities between their cultures and international cultures. For example, an interviewee (P1) stated, "I prefer reading short English stories about different cultures. They attract me. I like to learn about different cultures. Learning about different cultures provides the opportunity for me to make a comparison between my own culture and other cultures. I liked the short stories with outer circle content because they include moral values similar to our culture. Furthermore, this makes my learning easier. I am becoming more curious while meeting with different cultures in English learning", "I like reading English short stories with Turkic content. There are no short stories with Turkic content in our course books. Most texts are based on our textbooks' target culture (inner circle content). Short stories with Turkish culture are easy for me while learning English because I can guess the meaning of the vocabulary more easily. Also, I feel that they motivate me. They are enjoyable and easy. I feel more comfortable expressing myself when I learn English with short stories with Turkic content. Especially my moral values and beliefs are significant to me. Therefore, short stories with Turkish moral values and beliefs should be integrated into English classes, in my opinion.

I like to see my cultural values and beliefs in English learning." Table 4 presents the students' perceptions about using short stories with outer circle (excluding Turkic origin) and Turkic content.

Table 4

The Secondary School Students' Perceptions Regarding the Utilization of Short Stories with Outer Circle Content (excluding Turkic-Origin) and Turkic Content

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	$\bar{x}$	Ss
I enjoy learning English through short stories with Turkic content.	N	0	2	0	1	31	4,79	0,73
	%	0	5,9	0	2,9	91,2		
I learn English more easily through English short stories with Turkic content.	N	1	1	0	1	31	4,76	0,85
	%	2,9	2,9	0	2,9	91,2		
English short stories with Turkic content motivate me in English classes.	N	0	2	0	1	31	4,79	0,73
	%	0	5,9	0	2,9	91,2		
If I read English short stories with Turkic content, I also learn new things about my own culture.	N	0	2	0	1	31	4,79	0,73
	%	0	5,9	0	2,9	91,2		
Reading English short stories from different cultures (except American and British cultures) makes it easier for me to learn English.	N	0	5	0	23	6	3,88	0,88
	%	0	14,7	0	67,6	17,6		
I enjoy learning new things about different cultures.	N	0	5	0	22	7	3,91	0,90
	%	0	14,7	0	64,7	20,6		
Cultural elements make an important contribution to me in language learning.	N	0	3	0	25	6	4,00	0,74
	%	0	8,8	0	73,5	17,6		
Reading English short stories with outer circle content makes it easier for me to compare with my own culture.	N	0	5	0	25	4	3,82	0,83
	%	0	14,7	0	73,5	11,8		
While learning English, I also learn that there are similarities between the cultures of other countries and my own culture (except for American and British culture).	N	0	3	0	25	6	4,00	0,74
	%	0	8,8	0	73,5	17,6		

Perceptions of Secondary School Students Regarding Using Short Stories with Inner Circle Content, Outer Circle Content (excluding Turkic-origin), and Turkic Content Considering Values, Beliefs, and Interests

A significant number of the students (between 80% and 94%) preferred short stories with Turkic content, including local customs, traditions, values, and beliefs. For example, 8,8% (3) and 85,3% (29) of the respondents respectively agreed and strongly agreed with the statement "I like to read English short stories with Turkic content including moral values," 26,5% (9) and 67,6% (23) of the students respectively agreed and strongly agreed with the statement "The moral values included in short stories with Turkic content motivate me while learning English." In addition, most of the participants preferred to read short stories with outer circle content. For instance, 67,6% (23) and 17,6% (6) of the participants agreed and strongly agreed with the statement, "I like to read English short stories from different cultures because they contain cultural and moral values." 70,6% (24) and 20,6% (7) of the participants respectively agreed and strongly agreed with the statement, "The values existing in short stories from different cultures draw my attention." Most learners, whose percentages

were below, did not prefer reading English short stories containing the target culture, values, and beliefs. Most participants favored short stories with Turkic values and ideas. Due to cultural familiarity, short stories about local culture may also interest them. They appreciated outer circle (excluding Turkic origin) content short stories with cultural and moral elements. While studying English, they were open to new lifestyles, habits, and beliefs.

Table 5

The Perceptions of Secondary School Students Regarding the Utilization of Short Stories with Inner Circle Content, Outer Circle (excluding Turkic-origin) Content, and Turkic Content Considering Values, Beliefs, and Interests

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Not Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	$\bar{x}$	Ss
I prefer to read English short stories with inner circle content rather than English short stories with Turkic content.	n	14	14	0	5	1	1,97	1,14
	%	41,2	41,2	0	14,7	2,9		
I like to read English short stories with Turkic content including moral values.	n	1	1	0	3	29	4,71	0,87
	%	2,9	2,9	0	8,8	85,3		
The moral values included in short stories with inner circle content draw my attention.	n	11	17	0	5	1	2,06	1,1
	%	32,4	50,0	0	14,7	2,9		
The moral values included in short stories with Turkic content motivate me while learning English.	n	1	1	0	9	23	4,53	0,9
	%	2,9	2,9	0	26,5	67,6		
I like to read English short stories from different cultures because they contain cultural and moral values.	n	2	3	0	23	6	3,82	1,03
	%	5,9	8,8	0	67,6	17,6		
The values existing in short stories from different cultures draw my attention.	N	0	3	0	24	7	4,03	0,76
	%	0,0	8,8	0	70,6	20,6		
While learning English with short stories, I learn that different countries have different lifestyles/beliefs.	N	1	2	0	24	7	4	0,85
	%	2,9	5,9	0	70,6	20,6		
The beliefs of the target language (American and English) draw my attention.	N	12	15	0	6	1	2,09	1,16
	%	35,3	44,1	0	17,6	2,9		
I learn English more easily since English short stories with Turkic content reflect my beliefs.	N	0	2	0	4	28	4,71	0,76
	%	0,0	5,9	0	11,8	82,4		
While learning English, I learn that different countries have different lifestyles/beliefs.	N	1	2	0	24	7	4	0,85
	%	2,9	5,9	0	70,6	20,6		
I like to read short stories in English.	N	0	0	0	16	18	4,53	0,51
	%	0,0	0,0	0	47,1	52,9		
I find short stories from other cultures (Ghana, Philippines, Japan, etc.) more interesting.	N	1	4	0	25	4	3,79	0,91
	%	2,9	11,8	0	73,5	11,8		
It is enjoyable to read English short stories with inner circle content.	N	12	16	0	4	2	2,06	1,18
	%	35,3	47,1	0	11,8	5,9		

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, three research questions guided the discussion of the quantitative and qualitative data-based results.

What are the Perceptions of Learners of English in Türkiye Regarding the Utilization of Short Stories with Inner Circle Content?

Students' perceptions about using short stories with target culture were neither overwhelmingly good nor overwhelmingly negative. According to the results, it can be concluded that English language learners did not reject texts with the target culture but preferred to read short stories with Turkish culture (local culture) and outer circle content. To demonstrate, the participants asserted that reading English short stories with inner circle content prevented them from learning about various values. Additionally, they could not examine diverse cultures through short stories with the target culture. Nevertheless, the data also revealed some striking responses. Even though the students found the texts challenging, their responses to the statement "Reading English short stories with inner circle content can increase my knowledge of English such as grammar, vocabulary, and so on." were favorable (52.9 % and 8.8 % of the participants agreed and strongly agreed, respectively). In addition, most participants were uninterested in learning about the target culture. In the questionnaire, only six students agreed, "I have to learn the target culture." In similar research, Hürmüzlü (2020) stressed the significance of culture in language acquisition, yet, the participants were hesitant to acquire the target culture. Few students expressed an interest in seeing American/British culture. All the interviewees (n=5) pointed out that learning the target culture was boring since short stories with inner circle content do not present various cultures, values, and beliefs. In a similar research, ALmhimed (2018) found that students with limited language competence negatively perceived the target culture; hence, their learning process would be tedious.

What Are the Perceptions of Learners in Türkiye Regarding the Utilization of Short Stories with Outer Circle Content (Excluding Turkic-Origin)?

Due to their desire to learn about diverse cultures while learning English, most participants considered short stories acceptable. Because of their curiosity about diverse cultures and beliefs, they preferred to read short stories with outer circle content. They felt that cultural aspects supported their learning process. Incorporating culture into English learning helps students understand other cultures and their own cultures. They also preferred observing their culture and included culture in language instruction and learning. Baker (2009a) states that culture is essential to language teaching and learning, but international cultures should be integrated. Moreover, Yilmaz (2016) emphasized that learning about diverse cultures enabled students to develop a global perspective and an understanding of international cultures. According to the students' comments, it is possible to infer that they were eager to see diverse cultures in their textbooks because they indicated that textbooks and course books include only target cultural components. In English lessons, most students preferred to read short stories with outer circle content. In addition, several studies suggest that short stories may foster intercultural competence in second language acquisition (Stevens, 2014; Derado, 2015; Rezaei & Naghibian, 2018; Çandirli, 2018). In conclusion, it can be said that short stories serve an essential role in communicating cultural elements. Therefore, students preferred short stories with outer circle (excluding Turkic origin) content because they were engaging, had cultural commonalities, included moral values, enhanced intercultural competence, and promoted cultural awareness.

What are the Perceptions of English Learners in Türkiye Regarding Using Short Stories with Turkic Content?

Schema theory suggests that people must find connections between what is written and said and what is in their minds or schema to understand what is written or said. This theory has also helped incorporate local culture into English learning (Young et al., 2003). It has been shown that culture-specific content schema significantly influences reading (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). Learners may guess the meanings of phrases and words using cultural schemata from their local cultures (Yusniawati & Lestari, 2021). It has been shown that integrating local culture into English education increases students' cognitive and emotional engagement (Yusniwati & Lestari, 2021). Utilizing local cultural material is beneficial for strengthening English language skills, such as reading, speaking, writing, and listening, among learners (Rahman, 2019; Nambiar et al., 2020). In addition, Nambiar et al. (2020) found that the learners' confidence in their capacity to learn English increased when local-culturally relevant resources were included in English classes. This research observed local culture through short stories with Turkic content, and the students' perceptions were examined. It is possible to conclude that familiarity with the background information and culture significantly impacts reading comprehension. Regarding learning English, the participants preferred to read short stories about local culture because of the cultural familiarity and background information it provided. The researchers reported that, based on their observations in the classroom, they felt the short stories with Turkic content to be simple to understand and could confidently participate in class discussions about them. According to the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, participants liked to read short stories with Turkic content because they were attractive and enjoyable and included their moral values and beliefs. In this regard, all the students (n=5) who participated in the semi-structured interview agreed they would welcome seeing components of Turkish culture, values, and beliefs reflected in the textbooks to study the language because of cultural familiarity. As a result, students can quickly identify the subject matter and the vocabulary in short stories. In addition, they stated that they felt more at ease when it came to expressing their thoughts when discussing their own cultures in the context of language instruction. Hajar (2017), Reed et al. (2019), and Teng (2020) have all advocated and encouraged English language learners to talk by utilizing local materials and resources in order to become conscious of their own cultural identity within a global framework. In particular, these studies revealed the importance of local context in English instruction and offered a practical means by which students' identities may flourish globally. These studies were consistent with the result of this study.

Conclusion

The languages spoken within a culture are intrinsically linked to that culture. The widespread belief that language and culture cannot be separated has resulted in the widespread adoption of English language teaching materials that emphasize the cultures of what is known as "inner circle" nations. These nations include New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Canada. There is a plethora of thought that strongly promotes the integration of local culture into English teaching and learning, and among these ideas are Schema Theory and the phenomenon of World Englishes. It is usual practice in countries such as Türkiye, where English is taught as a second or foreign language, to disregard the need to integrate the local culture into the curriculum. This is because English is the primary language of instruction in these countries. In this regard, short stories can potentially be helpful pedagogical tools that reflect and educate many cultures in language education. This study examines the English language learners' perceptions in Türkiye about using short stories with inner circle content, outer circle content (excluding Turkic origin), and Turkic content. The majority of the participants believed that language instruction should include the reading of short stories with outer circle content. They considered that including short stories with outer circle content would be beneficial for the following reasons:

• The short stories with outer circle content can create cultural awareness

• They were easy for them to understand because of cultural similarities.

• They can help them compare their culture to those of other cultures.

• Since their textbooks do not include texts from other cultures, the participants are excited to read short stories from the outer circle.

In addition, a large majority of the participants strongly agreed and agreed that short stories with Turkic content should be used in teaching English as a second language. The participants stated reasons, which were consistent with the research of Alamsyah (2016), are interpreted and presented as follows:

• Since short stories with Turkic content include more relevant schemata, they are more likely to facilitate a much simpler learning process.

• They may also be used to compare target, foreign, and local cultures, beliefs, and values to make students more aware of the differences, thus resulting in a greater appreciation for cultural diversity.

• Since students do not feature texts with local and international culture, values, and beliefs, the participants said they are willing to observe and analyze the local culture in the classroom.

• If short tales with Turkic content are included in English instruction, the students may be inspired and feel at ease expressing their thoughts in class.

In light of all the information mentioned above, this study might offer some suggestions for further research. The sample is small, and the time is limited. In order to make more generalizations, the number of students can be increased. It is limited to secondary school learners of English in Türkiye. Therefore, it can be obtained different results with different groups. In this study, six different short stories were employed. More short stories can be used in another study to obtain more data about learners' perceptions regarding using short stories with different contents. It can be extended and conducted at different levels, such as high school or the university.

REFERENCES

Alamsyah, A. (2016). The use of local short story in English language learning (a literary review on the use of local sources as an alternative teaching media in EFL). *Online Submission.*

Alderson, J.C. (2000). *Assessing reading*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

ALmhimed, A. (2018). *Students' and Instructors' Perceptions of Teaching Culture in EFL Classes: A Case Study* (Master's thesis, Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU)-Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi (DAÜ)).

Alptekin, C. (1993). Target language culture in EFL materials. *ELT Journal, 47*(2), 136-143. https://doi:10.1093/elt/47.2.136

Alptekin, C. (2002). Towards intercultural communicative competence. *The ELT Journal, 56,* 57-64.

Alptekin, C. (2010). Redefining multicompetence for bilingualism and ELF. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 20*(1), 95-110. https://doi:10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00230.x

Anderson, R. C., & Pearson, P. D. (1988). A schema-theoretic view of basic processes in reading comprehension. *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*, 37-55.

Bachman, L. 1990. *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bada, E. (2000). Culture in ELT. *Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 6*(6), 100-110.

Baker, W. (2009a). The cultures of English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly, 43* (4), 567-592. https://doi:10.1002/j.1545-7249.2009.tb00187.x

Bartlett, F. (1932). *Remembering: A Study in experimental and social psychology.* Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press.

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Byram, M., & Fleming, M. (Eds.). (1998). *Language learning in intercultural perspective: Approaches through drama and ethnography* (pp. 32-44). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Canagarajah, S. (Ed.) (2005). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice.* London: Erlbaum.

Çandirli, B. (2018). *A study on intercultural competence of pre-service EFL teachers through short stories* (Master's thesis, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü).

Carrell, P.L. (1983). Some issues in studying the role of schemata, or background knowledge, in second language comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 1,* 81–92.

Carrell, P.L. (1987). Content and formal schemata in ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly, 21,* 461- 481.

Carrell, P.L. (1988). *Some causes of text-boundedness and schema interference in ESL reading.* Interactive Approaches To Second Language Reading, 101–113.

Carrell, P.L. & Eisterhold, J.C. (1983). Schema theory and ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly, 17*, 553–573.

Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (1999). *Cultural mirrors: Materials and methods in the EFL classroom*. na.

Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J.W. & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods.* Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage. https:/doi.org/10.1177/1094428108318066

Creswell, J. W. & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.

Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). Choosing a mixed methods design. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, 2, 53-106.

Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a global language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dabou, S., Hammoudi, A. & Chibani, R. (2021). Teachers and students' attitudes towards the integration of the target culture in the English as a foreign language class: A case study. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 4(4), 253-266.

Demiryurek, A. (2022). *Comparison of Turkic and non-Turkic content short stories in English learning: Secondary school students' perceptions (Unpublished master's thesis).* Hakkari University, Hakkari.

Derado, S. R. (2015). Fostering cross-cultural communicative competence in business English classes through literary short stories. *ESP Today*, *3*(1), 99-119.

Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2009). Background knowledge. *The Missing Piece of the Comprehension Puzzle*.

Genc, B. & Bada, E. (2005) Culture in language learning and teaching. *The Reading Matrix, 5,* 1.

Gibbons, P.2002. *Scaffolding language, scaffolding Learning: Teaching second language learners in the mainstream classroom.* NH: Heinemann.

Goodman, K. S. (1967). Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *6*(4), 126-135.

Hajar, A. (2017). Identity, investment and language learning strategies of two Syrian students in Syria and Britain. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *30*(3), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2017.1317266

Hesaraki, M. R. (2014). Literature and culture: both interaction and effectiveness. *IAU International Journal of Social Sciences*, *4*(3), 23-25.

Hürmüzlü, A. (2020). *EFL learners' perceptions of culture in foreign language learning* (Master's thesis, İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı).

Ivankova, N.V., Creswell, J.W. & Stick, S.L. (2006). Using mixed methods sequential explanatory design: From theory to practice. *Field Methods, 18*(1), 3-20. http://doi:10.1177/1525822X 05282260

Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching world Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(1), 157-181.

Ketchum, E.M. (2006). The cultural baggage of second language reading: An approach to understanding. *Foreign Language Annals*, 39, 22-42.

Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Landau, S. & Everitt, B.S. (2004). *A handbook of statistical analyses using SPSS*. Florida: Chapman & Hall/CRC Press LLC.

Lee, L. (1997). Using internet tools as an enhancement of C2 teaching and learning. *Foreign Language Annals, 30* (3), 410-427.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S.M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Mahabadi, S. (2013). The role of localized materials in learning of FFL students. *Journal of Languages and Culture*, *4* (5), 65-69. https://doi:10.5897/JLC12.031

Martin, M. &Vaughn, B. (2007). Cultural competence. The nuts & bolts of diversity & inclusion *"Strategic Diversity & Inclusion Management" magazine.1,* 31-36.

McKay, S.L. (2002*). Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and approaches.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McKay, S.L. (2003a). Toward an appropriate EIL pedagogy: Reexamining common ELT assumption. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *13*(1), 1-22.

McKay, S.L. (2003b). Toward an appropriate EIL pedagogy: Reexamining common ELT assumption. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 13*(1), 1-22. https://doi: 10.1111/1473-4192.00035

McKay, S. L. (2009a). "Pragmatics and EIL pedagogy". In F. Sharifian (Ed.), *English as an International Language: Perspectives and Pedagogical Issues, 11* (227-241). Bristol: Multilingual Matters, St Nicholas House.

Nambiar, R.M., Ibrahim, N., Hashim, R.S., Yasin, R.M., Azman, H., Yusof, N.M. & Mustaffa, R. (2020). Impact of local culture-based reading materials on students' skill development and confidence in English. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(2), 445-453.

Patil, Z.N. (2015). Culture, language and literature: Developing intercultural communicative competence through international literature.

Pardede, P. (2010). Short stories use in language skills classes: Students' interest and perception. *The Proceedings of the 4th International Seminar. Bringing Linguistics and Literature into EFL Classrooms* 1-17.

Rahman, F. (2019). The effect of local culture-based material to improve reading ability of 8th grade students at state junior high school 9 Yogyakarta. In *Proceedings of the 65th Teflin International Conference, 65,*1

Reed, B.S., Said, F., Davies, I., Bengsch, G. & Reed, B. S. (2019). Arabic complementary schools in England: Language and fundamental British values. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 33*(1), 50–65. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2019.1569674

Rezaei, S. & Naghibian, M. (2018). Developing intercultural communicative competence through short stories: A qualitative inquiry. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 6(2), 77-96.

Rodliyah, R.S., Imperiani, E.D.A. & Amalia, L.L. (2014). Indonesian tertiary students' attitudes towards the use of local culture vs target culture reading materials in English reading classes. *Jurnal Pendidikan, 14*(1). https://doi:10.17509/bsjpbsp.v14i1.714

Royani, M. (2013). The use of local culture texts for enthusiastic English reading teaching. *The International Journal of Social Sciences*, *7*(1), 130-135.

Saka, Ö. (2014). Short stories in English language teaching. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET), 1*(4), 278-288.

Seidlhofer, B. (2004). "Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca". *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 209-239.

Seidlhofer, B. 2005. "Key concepts in ELT: English as a lingua franca". *ELT Journal*, *59*(4), 339-341.

Sharifian, F. (Ed.). (2009). *English as an international language: Perspectives and pedagogical issues* (Vol. 11). Multilingual Matters.

Stevens, A. E. P. (2014). *Short stories as a source of cultural insight when teaching English* (Master's thesis).

Tashakkori, A. & Creswell, J.W. (2007). The new era of mixed methods. https://doi.org/ 10.1177/2345678906293042

Teng, F. (2020). Autonomy, agency, and identity in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 00(00), 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2020.1712913

Tseng, Y.H. (2002). A lesson in culture. *ELT Journal*, *56*(1), 11-21. https://doi:10.1093/elt/56.1.11

Yilmaz, D. 2010. "Culture in English Language Classroom: What do students think?", Unpublished Research Project Paper, *TUBITAK - The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey*, Bogaziçi University, Turkey.

Young, J., Klosko, J. & Weishaar M. (2003). *Schema Therapy: A Practitioner's Guide.* New York.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Yusniawati, N.L.P. I., & Lestari, Y.B. (2021, May). The potential of local culture in English language teaching (elt): a response paper to domination of English material in ELT. In *2nd Annual Conference on Education and Social Science (ACCESS 2020)* 318-320. Atlantis Press.

Zacharias, N. T. (2005). Teachers' beliefs about internationally-published materials: A survey of tertiary English teachers in Indonesia. *RELC Journal*, *36*(1), 23-37.

Zorba, A.G. (2019). *Raising intercultural awareness of the 7th grade students through practical English activities,* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Gazi University Institute of Educational Sciences (No: 543808).

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Teaching culture is an inevitable subject matter in language teaching and learning. When learning a new language, it is impossible to avoid discussing cultural norms, values, and practices. Culture is one of the most critical and contentious themes discussed in English classes regarding English language learning. Educators may need help identifying, for instance, which culture to teach in English reading lessons when textbooks are considered a crucial component. Scholars are divided on whether or not learners of English should be exposed to short stories with target culture (inner circle content) when studying English as a foreign language because of the potential for intercultural conflict and confusion. This study aimed to examine how English learners in Türkiye perceived short stories that featured inner circle content, outer circle (excluding Turkic origin), and Turkic content in English learning. Three research questions were investigated in this study; What are the perceptions of learners of English in Türkiye regarding the utilization of short stories with inner circle content? Second, what are the perceptions of learners of English in Türkiye regarding the utilization of short stories with outer circle (excluding Turkic-origin) content? Third, what are the perceptions of English learners in Türkiye regarding using short stories with Turkic content? In other words, in this study, the roles of the target, local and international cultures through short stories were investigated based on the perceptions of English learners in Türkiye.

Cultural integration is a crucial concern in English language teaching and learning. As Tseng (2002) notes, culture is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition since it is a perpetual cycle. According to McKay (2002), it is vital to include the target, international, and local cultures in English education to meet the different needs of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Also, as Canagarajah (2005) stated, cultural traits are shared and intertwined; consequently, they are not confined to a particular geographical place. In addition, the link between culture and literature and their mutual influence is clear, undeniable, and not limited to a single territory. Literature impacts and interacts with culture. Many cultural components occur in happy partnerships and generate specific values and beliefs.

Consequently, these components may be cultivated through literature. Given that culture is the result of society, cultural features are ingrained in the thoughts of every citizen of a country. Without a doubt, the

connection between culture and literature fosters the growth of both professions (Hesaraki, 2014). Regarding identity awareness and locality in English materials, Hajar (2017), Reed et al. (2019), and Teng (2020) have advocated and encouraged English learners to talk using their local materials and resources in order to be conscious of their own cultural identity in an international setting. Nambiar et al. (2020) found that the learners' confidence in their English-learning abilities increased when local-culturally appropriate materials were utilized in English sessions. It has been shown that integrating local culture into English teaching increases students' cognitive and emotional engagement (Yusniwati & Lestari, 2021). In this regard, in recent years, cultural competence has increased significantly. According to Lee (1997), the primary goal of language teaching and learning is to facilitate realistic interactions with individuals of various cultures; hence, cultural competence is an essential component of language learning. Cultural competence is described as the ability of people from various cultural backgrounds to communicate successfully (Martin & Vaughn, 2007). Concerning the English language, the question of which culture to teach arises since people of many cultures use English. English is widely spoken by those devoid of English traditions and culture. In this respect, the need for multicultural communication skills evolved. In parallel, English learners should be aware of their local or source culture and other cultures. At this point, the issue arises: how might culture be included in language education? Literature is a prime source for integrating culture into language teaching and learning. It is believed that, among literary genres, short stories might be helpful in language learning since they are simpler to read and grasp in a single session. This research may be the first to examine the perceptions of English language learners (secondary school students) about using short stories with Turkic and non-Turkic content in English learning. This study may contribute to English language teaching, mainly since experimental cultural studies, including short stories with international and local cultures, are currently rare in this field.

In order to determine the perceptions of the students, six short stories were discussed in the classroom. Two short stories with inner circle content, two with outer circle content (excluding Turkic origin), and two with Turkic content were studied over seven weeks. The secondary school students (n=34) who study in Religion Vocational secondary school participated in the current research. Mixed methods sequential explanatory design was utilized in this study. Mixed methods research design is a research methodology that mixes or integrates quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In other words, this form of design involves combining quantitative and qualitative approaches inside a single research. Therefore, it is more than only collecting and evaluating both types of data; it also involves using both approaches in a body; therefore, the strength of a study is more than either quantitative or qualitative research singly (Creswell & Plato, 2007; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p.4). In this approach, qualitative data collection and analysis takes priority over quantitative data collection and analysis, whereas quantitative data collection and analysis takes a secondary position (Creswell, 2014). Mixed methods research design is advantageous since it permits comprehensive quantitative data analysis. In addition, the researchers used the triangulation approach to verify reliability. Triangulation refers to the practice of gathering data using many methods. Additionally, a single technique gives inadequate information; consequently, triangulation decreases the likelihood of bias and increases the reliability and validity of the research (Mackey & Gass, 2005). A Likert-type questionnaire which the researchers designed, was used to gather the quantitative data, and SPSS 25 was employed to perform descriptive statistics. The researcher filled out a classroom observation form, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with five participants to elicit the qualitative data, which was then analyzed using Quirkos 2.4.

According to the findings, for the utilization of short stories with inner circle content, most of the participants did not prefer to read short stories with inner circle content. On the one hand, some did not reject the incorporation of target culture into English language learning and teaching since some of the participants (n=6) preferred to read the short stories with inner circle content because of cultural and moral values similarity, increasing their knowledge such as grammar, vocabulary, and so on, being interested in observing target culture and so on. On the other hand, most participants preferred to avoid reading short stories with target culture since short stories with inner circle content were challenging because they lacked cultural background and schemata. The short stories with inner circle content have cultural norms far from their own culture, that is, due to cultural values and beliefs dissimilarity. Additionally, the learners could not observe different cultures through short stories featuring the target culture. In a similar research, Hürmüzlü (2020) stressed the significance of culture in language learning; nevertheless, the participants were hesitant to acquire the target culture. Few students expressed an interest in observing American/British culture. In contrast to the study's findings, for example, Dabou et al. (2021) carried out a study at the University of Sétif 2 to examine the attitudes of instructors and

students regarding incorporating target culture into the EFL curriculum. The findings indicated that all instructors supported incorporating the target culture into EFL sessions. Additionally, the study found that students had positive opinions about the target culture. However, for using short stories with outer circle content (excluding Turkic origin), most participants believed that incorporating short stories with outer circle content (excluding Turkic origin) should be integrated into English language education. They agreed that non-Turkic short stories (outer-circle content, excluding Turkic origin) helped them better understand other cultures, compare their local cultures with world cultures, develop an appreciation for other viewpoints, enhance their intercultural awareness and improve their intercultural competence. The findings on the integration of cultures coincide with Baker's (2009a) statement that culture is a vital component of language teaching and learning; however, global cultures must be integrated. Moreover, Yilmaz (2016) emphasized that learning about various cultures enabled students to develop a global perspective and an understanding of foreign cultures. Additionally, approximately all the participants perceived using short stories with Turkic content as more beneficial to teaching and learning English. The learners suggested that understanding the short stories with local culture was much simpler, thanks to the greater prevalence of relevant schemata in the stories with Turkic content. The reasons asserted by the participants, which coincided with the study of Alamsyah (2016), show that short stories with Turkic content should be integrated into English learning since such texts are easy for learners in terms of their cultural background and schemata. In a study related to using target culture in English classes conducted by ALmhimed (2018), the results demonstrated that the students perceived the target culture negatively since their language proficiency level was low; therefore, their learning process would be tiresome. If the learners of English observe their culture in English language learning, they may estimate the meanings of the phrases or words based on cultural schemata from their mother languages (Yusniawati & Lestari, 2021). Since short stories with Turkic content may misuse the English language features such as idiomatic phrases, pragmatic aspects, and so on, it is expected that short stories with Turkic content will much more influence individuals with lower skill levels. In a similar study, Mahabadi (2013) examined the influence of localized resources on the learning of EFL students in Iran. The research revealed that localizing instructional materials would help students by making them more familiar and pleasurable.

All in all, in countries such as Türkiye, where English is taught as a second language to non-native speakers, the integration of the students' local culture into English education is occasionally neglected. Several approaches encourage the blending of local culture into English teaching and learning. Among these are Schema Theory and World Englishes. According to the results of this research, learning English through short stories with local culture and outer circle content might affect the learning outcome declaratively and inspire students to express themselves freely with the aid of cultural schemata. Local and outer-circle cultural components make learning more exciting and engaging for students. The educational accomplishment of learners of English as a global language in a way that protects local culture is much higher, and they may study locally while thinking globally. Cultural schemata and willingness to create intercultural competence, willingness to examine their own culture, and exposure to a diversity of cultures, values, and beliefs using short stories in English language learning were deemed significant in the context of the study's primary objective.

This study might offer some suggestions for further research. For example, the sample size is restricted, as is the available time. The number of learners may be increased in order to make more generalizations. This research is confined to secondary school students in Türkiye. Hence, distinct outcomes may be achieved with various groups. Six different short stories were used in this investigation. In subsequent research, more short stories may be employed to collect further data on the perspectives of learners towards using short stories with varying contents. The research may be expanded and undertaken at many academic levels, including high school and college. Since experimental cultural studies connected to the target, international, and local short stories are still sparse in the field, research in these areas might eventually help improve language teaching in foreign language learning programs.

Keywords: Short Stories, Intercultural, Local Culture, Target Culture, Turkic Content