Exploring Intercultural Communication Apprehension, Global Citizenship, and Willingness to Communicate in English among EFL Learners of Tourism Guidance Department

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between the Intercultural Communication Apprehension (ICA), Global Citizenship (GC), and Willingness to Communicate (WCT) in English of EFL learners who are studying at the Tourism Guidance Department in a public university. A quantitative research design was adopted in this study, and a questionnaire was implemented, including demographic questions, the ICA scale, the GC scale, and the WCT in English. A total of 94 students were included in the study who were enrolled in the Department of Tourism Guidance. The data analysis included t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and correlation analysis to examine the relationship among gender, class, and the dependent variables. The findings of this study revealed that there was no statistically significant effect of gender on WCT in English or on ICA. However, gender was found to have a significant effect on GC beliefs. Furthermore, the results revealed that there were significant correlations between ICA and both GC and WCT in English. However, no significant correlation was found between GC and WCT in English. These findings offer valuable insights into the dynamics of programmes offered in the tourism guidance departments of universities.

Key words: Intercultural Communication Apprehension (ICA), Global Citizenship (GC), Willingness to Communicate (WCT) in English, Tourism Guidance.

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Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğrenen Turizm Rehberliği Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Kültürlerarası İletişim Kaygıları, Küresel Vatandaşlık Algıları ve İngilizce Dilinde İletişimde İsteklilikleri

ÖZ

Bu araştırma, bir devlet üniversitesinde Turizm Rehberliği Bölümünde öğrenim gören İngilizce yabancı dil öğrencilerinin Kültürlerarası İletişim Kaygısı, Küresel Vatandaşlık ve İngilizce Dilinde İletişim İsteklilikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Nicel araştırma deseni benimsenen bu çalışmada demografik sorular, Kültürlerarası İletişim Kaygısı ölçeği, Küresel Vatandaşlık ölçeği ve İngilizce Dilinde İletişim İstekliliği ölçeğini içeren bir anket uygulandı. Turizm Rehberliği Bölümünde kayıtlı olan toplam 94 öğrenci çalışmaya dahil edildi. Bu çalışma, veri analizi, cinsiyet, sınıf ve bağımlı değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek için t-testleri, varyans analizi ve korelasyon analizini içermektedir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, cinsiyetin İngilizce Dilinde İletişimde İsteklilik ve Kültürlerarası İletişim Kaygısı üzerinde istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Ancak, cinsiyetin Küresel Vatandaşlık inançları üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğu bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, sonuçlar, Kültürlerarası İletişim Kaygısı ile hem Küresel Vatandaşlık hem de İngilizce Dilinde İletişimde İsteklilik arasında önemli korelasyonlar bulunduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Küresel Vatandaşlık ile İngilizce Dilinde İletişimde İsteklilik arasında anlamlı bir korelasyon bulunamamıştır. Bu bulgular, üniversitelerin Turizm Rehberliği Bölümlerinde sunulan programların dinamikleri hakkında öngörüler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kültürlerarası İletişim Kaygısı, Küresel Vatandaşlık, İngilizce Dilinde İletişimde İsteklilik, Turizm Rehberliği.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the tourism industry has played an important role in enhancing cultural interaction and exchange globally (Djouhaina, 2022). University students who take courses on tourism guidance are often presented with opportunities to engage with individuals coming from various cultural backgrounds. Given that tourism guidance students engage with tourists, local communities, and colleagues from diverse cultural backgrounds, effective communication plays a critical role in the tourism industry. The presence of intercultural communication apprehension (ICA) henceforth can be preventive in effective communication and may lead to a range of negative outcomes, including misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and conflicts (Cherdchoopong, 2020).

It is quite significant that individuals from different cultural backgrounds are relatively more open to accepting other cultures, which also fosters inclusive tourism. According to Şahin (2012), university students in the Department of Tourism Guidance who possess knowledge of Intercultural Communication Competence (ICA) are better at understanding the needs and sensitivities of tourists coming from diverse cultural contexts. Considering the fact that individuals working in the tourism industry may encounter a range of cross-cultural challenges, including but not limited to misinterpretations of cultural norms, linguistic obstacles, and divergent communication approaches (Bozkaya & Erdem Aydın, 2010), comprehending the concept of ICA can empower these students to anticipate and address such challenges. Thus, potential intercultural conflicts can be resolved before they grow.

The Tourism Guidance Department students are highly responsible for carrying out ethical and sustainable tourism practices as prospective members of the tourism sector. By integrating the principles of global citizenship (GC) henceforth, it is possible to encourage ethical tourism practices, enhance appreciation for other cultures, and protect natural resources. According to Akkari and Maleq (2020), recognising and appreciating other cultures and being aware of human rights are the fundamental elements of GC. Similarly, as echoed by Şahin (2012), it is important for tourism guidance students to have the necessary skills for comprehending and appreciating diverse cultures, traditions, and customs. By adopting a global citizenship mindset, these students can develop cultural sensitivity and promote respect and understanding among tourists during their interactions. Having a global perspective and an understanding of worldwide concerns is supported by the concept of global citizenship (Etzkorn & Reese, 2022). Thus, tourism guidance students can enhance their perspectives as global citizens in order to communicate proficiently across different cultures and increase the standards for visitors in intercultural interactions (Şahin, 2012).

The predominant language in the tourism sector is English, since it has global reach. Tourism guidance students are expected to possess effective communication skills in English to interact with non-native speakers of English, who constitute a significant proportion of foreign visitors (Prachanant, 2012). Thus, understanding tourism guidance students' willingness to communicate (WCT henceforth) in English proficiency can help with language assistance and instruction, which is the main aim of eliminating any hindrances or challenges while interacting with English-speaking visitors (Gürbüz et al., 2022). In this sense, tourism guidance students are expected to be proficient speakers by carrying out clear and succinct conversations. Hence, it is important for academic institutions to devise a suitable language curriculum to enhance the English language proficiency of students and increase their WCT in

English. Especially considering the fact that the tourism industry places significant importance on English language proficiency, the university students studying at these tourism-related departments are expected to have proficient communication skills to engage better with international visitors, which is also the priority of most employers in the tourism sector (Mantra et al., 2020). This is also important for other interactions in the tourism sector because tourist guides are expected to interact with tourism-related stakeholders, including locals, travel agencies, and business experts (Leung et al., 2018).

Investigating the relationship between ICA and WCT in English can reveal the potential problems in communication and can help institutions devise better lessons by being more focused on the need. Thus, the university students' apprehensions can be reduced, and their motivation to use English in their interactions can be enhanced. Moreover, examining the correlation between GC and WC in English proficiency levels can enable instructors to understand to what extent their students' GC values are manifested in using English. According to Fang and Baker's (2021) research, an increase in GC values may potentially enhance students' tendency to interact in English. Thus, the aim of this research is to understand the relationship among ICA, GC, and WTC in terms of English proficiency to highlight the necessary competencies and skills required in the tourism industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Intercultural Communication Apprehension

Intercultural communication is defined as the exchange of information between individuals from different cultures (Aririguzoh, 2022). During this type of communication, individuals develop an awareness and understanding of their environment (Byram, 2020). When individuals are highly interested in engaging in intercultural conversations and participate actively in this process, they have the most effective environment for intercultural communication. Hence, having strong relationships depends heavily on the willingness of people to pursue conversations (Zeng, 2010). Sometimes, anxiety can be preventive for this type of pursuit. Anxiety has been defined in various ways by many researchers in the literature. Basically, it is the state of nervousness, worry, and fear, and this can be mild or severe (Ma, 2023). Anxiety is not favourable, and individuals can feel uncomfortable (Ma, 2023) during unclear situations, which can hinder the effectiveness of communication (Kim et al., 2022). People who have different norms and values can experience anxiety during their conversations with people from other cultures because of cultural differences (Trisasanti et al., 2020). This is also observable in ICA, as it also refers to feeling worry and fear while engaging in conversations with people from various cultural backgrounds (Trisasanti et al., 2020). Sometimes people can have limited knowledge about each other during their first interactions, and this may lead to uncertainty for these people (Khukhlaev et al., 2020). These uncertainties may result from the unfamiliarity of cultural differences (Khukhlaev et al., 2020). If individuals have self-confidence in communication, they are found to be experiencing less anxiety in intercultural communication (Su, 2021), but individuals with high

levels of anxiety show avoidance in communicating with others from different cultures (Hu, 2024).

The research (Seyitoğlu et al., 2015; Koçak, 2022; Van Essen, 2020) has shown that there is a significant relationship between the experiences of university students their intercultural communication and adaptation in different academic environments. The study conducted by Seyitoğlu et al. (2015) aimed to evaluate the degrees of intercultural communication apprehension and satisfaction among tourism students. The findings revealed that there is a combination of low and moderate levels of communication anxiety among the participants. This highlights the possible difficulties encountered by international students, such as insufficient assistance in locating suitable housing and accessing healthcare facilities. In a similar vein, Koçak's (2022) research examined the relationship between intercultural communication willingness and apprehension. This study revealed that anxiety has a negative effect on individuals' willingness to participate in intercultural communication. In another study, Van Essen (2020) conducted research on international students in the United States and found that being fluent in English and having cultural sensitivity are important for adapting to different cultures. These studies highlight the complex and varied intercultural communication experiences of university students. They emphasise the need for systematic support to help them integrate and succeed in diverse educational settings.

2.2. Global Citizenship

Global citizenship is defined as a view that includes belonging, responsibility, and political activity on a global scale, contrary to the narrow-mindedness and lack of knowledge that are encouraged by local kinds of citizenship (Hernández Guzmán & Hernández García de Velazco, 2024). According to De Wit (2016), global citizenship involves the training of individuals to become global citizens, enabling them to effectively function and reside in the globalised world. Additionally, GC is seen as the state of being aware, caring, and accepting of cultural diversity while advocating for social justice and sustainability (Akçay et al., 2024).

GC has three key terms that are named similarly with slight differences by various researchers (Schattle, 2009; Morais & Dogden, 2010). According to Morais and Dogden's (2010) GC, it includes three interconnected dimensions: social responsibility, global competence, and global civic participation (see Figure 1).
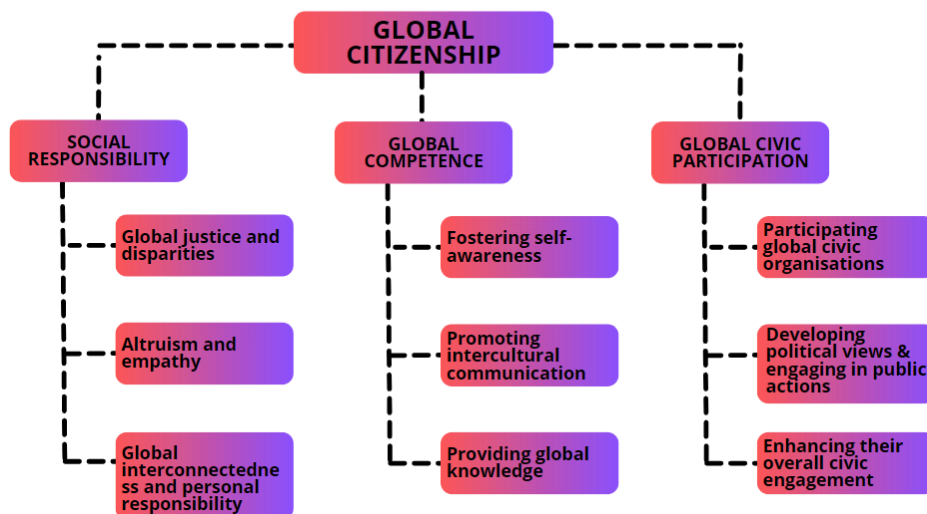
Figure 1. Dimensions of GC

Social responsibility can be categorized into three main areas. Firstly, it falls under the domain of global justice and disparities, where individuals gain knowledge about social issues and actively engage with examples of global justice and disparities. Secondly, it encompasses altruism and empathy, where individuals explore various perspectives and develop an ethical understanding of social service, considering both global and local issues. Lastly, it involves global interconnectedness and personal responsibility, where individuals uncover the links between their local actions and the resulting impacts on a global scale. The second component, global competency, consists of three distinct parts: 1) fostering self-awareness, where individuals develop an understanding of their own strengths and limitations to engage in intercultural relations; 2) promoting intercultural communication, where individuals acquire the essential skills for connecting with people from different cultures; and 3) providing global knowledge, where individuals learn about global issues and events. Global civic engagement encompasses three main components. Firstly, it involves individuals actively participating in volunteer work for global civic organizations. Secondly, it entails individuals developing their political views based on their global knowledge and engaging in public actions. Lastly, it includes individuals engaging in local actions that align with global agendas, thereby enhancing their overall civic engagement (Morais & Dogden, 2010).

Although institutions worldwide have increasingly embraced the concept of GC, the existing literature on this subject often underestimates the importance of English and fails to provide a critical analysis of its role in fostering GC (Cavanagh, 2020). The qualitative study conducted by Cavanagh (2020) revealed that GC is often associated with ability in English fluency and language learning plays a pivotal function regarding GC. Similarly, in another study by Bendeck et al. (2023), it was emphasized that language educators should both broaden their focus on developing linguistic competence and integrate intercultural communication and GC education in their teaching curriculum. In a study on ELT textbooks, the results revealed that these textbooks focus on GC awareness, but present limited activities concerning the key issues like human rights and democracy (Ait-Bouzid, 2020). However, in another study on ELT reading materials, the results showed sufficient inclusion of topics like intercultural

awareness and global responsibility (Xu & Knijnik, 2021). These studies showed that there is no consistency in the integration of GC into English language teaching.

2.3. Willingness to Communicate (WCT)

The term willingness to communicate (WTC) was initially used by McCroskey and Baer in 1985. It refers to "the inclination of individuals to initiate communication when they have the freedom to do so." WCT is related to an individual's tendency to engage in communication when they come across other individuals (McCroskey and Richmond, 1990). This readiness reflects the personality of an individual towards speech, and this is the primary component of communication (McCroskey and Richmond, 1987). Some individuals have a tendency to only talk in response to being addressed, or they may choose not to respond even when someone addresses them. On the other hand, some individuals choose to engage constantly in a conversation, and some people tend to prefer certain situations and receivers over others to talk. This variation in speech patterns can be attributed to a personality trait known as "willingness to communicate" (McCroskey & Bear, 1985). This concept is very similar to second language anxiety, which is also related to experiencing fear during communication (Horwitz et al., 1986). It has been discovered that second language anxiety, which refers to the nervousness felt when speaking in the second language, has a significant effect on WCT. Many second language learners had an overwhelming sense of fear when they were required to engage in English communication. This fear significantly hindered their ability to communicate with the individuals in English. (Dombi, 2013).

It has been noted that modern EFL learners are more involved in English communication through digital environments due to technological advancements and the widespread use of English in digital communication (Sockett, 2014). In a study conducted on intervention programmes, researchers found out that computer-mediated communication, such as digital games, had a beneficial impact on improving the second language WTC of EFL learners (Reinders & Wattana, 2015). Apart from these studies, which focus on digital environments, researchers also investigated WTC in second-language environments. For example,
Ghonsooly et al. (2013) studied the effect of communication confidence and classroom environment on WTC among Iranian undergraduate EFL students. Their study revealed that the students showed a moderate level of WTC in English. In another study conducted by Nagy and Nikolov (2007), the distinction between formal and informal settings in students' WTC was investigated. According to their study, formal situations tend to generate higher levels of fear. In a longitudinal study, Cao (2013) found that individual differences among language learners and the dynamics of the classroom impact WTC over time. Similarly, motivation was also found to be effective on the WTC of EFL learners (Lahuerta, 2014). In Youssef's (2016) study, the effects of academic motivation and English use outside the class were investigated, and the findings suggest that these have moderate levels of effect on WTC among teacher trainees in Malaysia. Furthermore, in Nagy's (2005) study, the correlation among communication apprehension, perceived competence, motivation, and WTC was investigated. The researcher concluded that they have low anxiety and high motivational levels to improve intercultural communication. These studies highlight the intricate relationship among the language learner, his environment, and his motivation, which altogether affect WTC in English.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Method

A quantitative research design is adopted in this study to understand the relationship between EFL learners' intercultural communication apprehension, global citizenship, and their willingness to communicate in English. There are several reasons for employing a quantitative research design in this study. According to Amaratunga et al. (2002), it is recommended to adopt a quantitative design when the aim is to gain accurate and unbiased measurements of variables. Therefore, since the main aim of this study is to quantitatively evaluate and analyse the concepts of ICA, GC, and WTC, a quantitative research approach was selected. Furthermore, the utilisation of quantitative research enables the implementation of statistical analytic methods in order to investigate the connections, disparities, and correlations between variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The present research utilised t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and correlation analysis to ascertain the statistical significance of gender and class disparities, as well as the correlations among the variables of this study. The use of statistical analysis in this study offers a methodical and rigorous framework for deriving meaningful findings from the dataset. In addition, quantitative research is found to be advantageous in its ability to analyse the correlations between various variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). This study examines the relationship between ICA, GC, and WTC. Hence, the use of a quantitative research approach was deemed appropriate for this study as it was consistent with the research aims.

3.2. Participants and Context

The study involved a total of 94 students enrolled in the Department of Tourism Guidance at a certain institution, spanning across several grade levels ranging from English Preparatory Class to Senior Class. The participants were selected by a convenient sampling method (Creswell, 2021) due to their accessibility and voluntary participation in the study. The participants were enrolled in English classes based on their proficiency levels during their academic program. Table 1 displays the demographic distribution based on gender and grade levels.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

		Class					Total
		Preparatory Class	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Gender	Female	15	15	0	18	6	54
	Male	9	10	2	13	6	40
Total		24	25	2	31	12	94

Within the framework of this study, it is anticipated that the participants will engage in a range of English courses spanning many grade levels. In the English preparation class,

students studying tourism guidance are required to participate in a 20-hour curriculum focused on English language acquisition. This curriculum encompasses many components, including grammar and vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. During their first year of college, students often enrol in a total of five credit hours of English courses. These courses encompass several aspects of the English language, including grammar, vocabulary, the development of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and English instruction at the elementary level. Furthermore, within the English Tourism Guidance section, 30% of the curriculum is dedicated to English language instruction. Specifically, students are required to complete a total of 6 hours of English courses. Of these 6 hours, 2 are allocated to the study of grammar, vocabulary, and the development of the four language skills. The other 4 hours are focused on enhancing communication skills, specifically within the context of the tourism industry. In the curriculum for the sophomore class, students are provided with a total of three hours of English instruction, which encompasses the pre-intermediate level. Furthermore, under the English Tourism Guidance department, a total of 30% of the curriculum is dedicated to English courses. Specifically, students are required to complete 9 hours of English instruction. Additionally, there are 3 hours allocated to the subject of "International Tourism," another 3 hours dedicated to "Tourist Behaviours," and a further 3 hours focused on "Current Issues in Tour Guiding." During their third year of study, students are often required to enrol in a three-hour English course at the intermediate level. In the last year of their academic tenure within the department, these students are required to enrol in a 3-hour English course titled "English Communication Skills." In addition to their English coursework, students pursuing a degree in tourism guidance are required to enrol in elective courses focused on a second foreign language throughout each year of their academic program. German and Russian language classes are available, starting at the introductory level and progressing to the upper-intermediate level. The curriculum for tourism guidance students includes a total of 59 hours dedicated to foreign language classes, specifically 18 hours each for German and Russian. These language courses are spread out across the duration of their studies within the department.

From an ethical perspective, all participants provided informed consent by signing consent forms prior to their participation in the study, affirming their voluntary engagement. In addition, the students were assured that their involvement in these activities would not impact their academic evaluations. Furthermore, the study obtained permission from an ethical council affiliated with a state institution.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments and Process

The researchers employed a questionnaire that had three primary parts pertaining to intercultural communication apprehension, global citizenship perspective, and willingness to communicate in English. In addition, the initial part of this questionnaire included inquiries on demographic factors, such as gender and class.

In the first section, a total of 14 techniques devised by Neuliep and McCroskey (1997) were employed. The scale utilised in this study to measure intercultural communication

apprehension is the Personnel Report of Intercultural Communication Apprehension (PRICA) scale, which has a single item. The researchers developed an applied scale to assess individuals' communication problems within an intercultural setting. The scale consists of a 5-point distribution with the following descriptors: '5 = strongly agree', '4 = agree', '3 = undecided', '2 = disagree', '1 = strongly disagree'. The survey instrument is designed in a Likert scale format. Out of the total 14 statements encompassed under the Intercultural Communication Apprehension scale, it is seen that 7 statements (namely, statements 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, and 14) are characterised by a negative sentiment, whereas the other 7 statements (namely, statements 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 12) exhibit a positive sentiment. The Cronbach Alpha value found for this scale in this study is.716.

In the second section, the Global Citizenship Scale developed by Morais and Ogden in 2011 was implemented in order to investigate the participants' global citizenship perceptions. It was adapted into Turkish by Şahin and Çermik in 2014. The scale is a five-point Likert-type measurement tool based on self-report. All of the items in the "Social Responsibility" dimension of the scale are reverse-scored. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis was performed for the validity procedures of the scale, and a three-factor structure was obtained explaining 51.6% variance in the exploratory factor analysis, and the model fit indices of this structure were found to be at a good level. In this context, an item pool was created by writing a total of 30 items: 6 in the dimension of social responsibility, 9 in the dimension of global competence, and 15 in the dimension of global participation. The Cronbach Alpha value found for this scale in this study is.842.

In the third section, the researchers assessed the WTC of the participating students by employing a 12-item WTC scale, which was originally designed by McCroskey (1992) and had high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha =.94). The initial scale was established in the English language. In this investigation, the researchers selected to utilise a Turkish translation provided by Bektaş Çetinkaya (2005) to provide the participants with a measurement instrument in their mother tongue. The scale utilised in the present investigation demonstrated a high level of reliability, as evidenced by a reliability coefficient of.942. The objective of the scale is to assess WTC across various communication situations, including but not limited to meetings, public speaking engagements, interpersonal chats, group discussions, and interactions with diverse sorts of recipients, such as friends, acquaintances, and strangers. The participants were instructed to indicate their level of readiness to communicate in various situations by selecting a numerical score on a scale ranging from 0 to 100. A score of 0 represented a complete lack of WTC, while a score of 100 indicated a strong inclination to engage in communication.

The survey, consisting of three parts, was distributed electronically to students, who were subsequently requested to provide their responses using an online platform. The questions were presented in the students' native language to enhance their comprehension of the survey's inquiries and objects. The survey items, which were not originally prepared in the students' native language, were translated into the students' native language, and their validity was checked using the back translation method.

3.4. Data Analysis

In the initial stages of the data analysis process, this study used descriptive statistics to analyse the data collected from the scales. The mean, median, and mode values obtained for all three scales were very close to each other, indicating a symmetric distribution. In addition to the skewness and kurtosis coefficients for a normal distribution, the histogram graph was also examined. The skewness and kurtosis coefficients were all between -2 and +2, as expected for a normal distribution (Byrne, 2010). The only exception was the kurtosis coefficient for the Intercultural Communication Apprehension scale, which was slightly above 2. This suggests that the scores for the Intercultural Communication Apprehension scale have a slightly steeper distribution than the other two scales. Examination of the histogram graph, however, revealed that the steeper distribution of the Intercultural Communication Apprehension scale did not significantly affect the overall distribution of the data. Since T-Test and ANOVA assumptions are robust against violations (especially normal distribution and type 1 errors), parametric tests are adopted for the Intercultural Communication Apprehension scale, which is slightly off the limits.

4. RESULTS

This section presents tables derived from various statistical analyses conducted based on independent variables, namely gender and class. Explanations of the analysis are provided below each respective analysis table. Finally, the correlation results between the dependent variables are presented.

Table 2. T-Test Results for dependent variables according to participants' gender

		N	X	SD	df	t	p
Willingness to Communicate in English	Female	54	895.370	206.156	92	.910	.365
	Male	40	844.625	332.847			
Intercultural Communication Apprehension	Female	54	37.33	4.509	92	.424	.673
	Male	40	36.87	5.979			
Global Citizenship	Female	54	83.42	13.850	92	2.782	.007
	Male	40	75.40	13.802			

Table 2 presents the outcomes of the t-tests that were done in order to investigate the relationship between the gender of participants and three distinct dependent variables: WTC, ICA, and GC. The t-tests were performed individually for female and male participants, with the corresponding sample sizes (N), means (X), standard deviations (SD), degrees of freedom (df), t-statistics (t), and p-values (p) reported for each variable.

The findings of the study indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between female and male participants in terms of their willingness to communicate in English. This

conclusion is supported by the p-value of.365, which exceeds the conventional significance level of.05. This finding implies that gender does not have a significant influence on WTC in English.

In a similar vein, the analysis of ICA reveals that there is no significant difference according to gender. This result is supported by a p-value of.673. This suggests that the gender of participants does not have a statistically significant effect on their degrees of ICA.

On the other hand, the findings indicate a significant difference in terms of gender for the variable GC (p<.05). In particular, it is seen that female participants exhibit a statistically significant higher mean score in their GC levels in comparison to male students.

Table 3a presents the descriptive statistics regarding the three dependent variables. These statistics are further analysed based on the participants' class. The results of ANOVA tests for the dependent variables are presented in Table 3b. These tests evaluate whether there are statistically significant differences between the class groups.

Table 3a. Descriptive statistics for dependent variables according to participants' classes

		N	X	SD
Intercultural Communication Apprehension	Preparatory Class	24	36,9583	4,39841
	Freshman	25	38,0000	4,30116
	Sophomore	2	43,0000	1,41421
	Junior	31	36,0000	6,11555
	Senior	12	37,6667	5,49931
	Total	94	37,1383	5,16106
Global Citizenship	Preparatory Class	24	82,5833	13,93749
	Freshman	25	78,9600	14,11111
	Sophomore	2	62,5000	14,84924
	Junior	31	82,2581	14,84580
	Senior	12	74,1667	12,17922
	Total	94	80,0106	14,32232
Willingness to Communicate in English	Preparatory Class	24	939,6667	187,67656
	Freshman	25	948,5200	208,84147
	Sophomore	2	1080,0000	169,70563
	Junior	31	762,9677	341,50359
	Senior	12	838,1667	218,09749
	Total	94	873,7766	267,05109

Table 3b. ANOVA Results for dependent variables according to participants' class

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercultural Communication Apprehension	Between Groups	131,577	4	32,894	1,248	,297
	Within Groups	2345,625	89	26,355		
	Total	2477,202	93			
Global Citizenship	Between Groups	1366,094	4	341,523	1,716	,153
	Within Groups	17710,895	89	198,999		
	Total	19076,989	93			
Willingness to Communicate in English	Between Groups	724770,101	4	181192,525	2,730	,034
	Within Groups	5907644,208	89	66378,025		
	Total	6632414,309	93			

The ANOVA findings indicate that there is no statistically significant variation across the class groups (Preparatory Class, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior) in terms of ICA (p >.05). This finding indicates that the participants' class did not have a statistically significant effect on their ICA levels.

In the case of GC, the ANOVA findings reveal that there is no statistically significant difference among the different class groups (p > 0.05). Therefore, the class of participants does not have a significant effect on participants' GC levels.

However, the ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference among the class groups in terms of their WTC levels in English (p<.05). Additional post-hoc analyses were conducted in order to understand which class groups exhibit significant differences. However, these further analysis results did not reveal any significant differences in the participants' WTC levels according to their classes.

Table 4 presents the findings of the correlation analysis among the three dependent variables. The table shows the Pearson correlation coefficients (r) for the relationships between two variables, along with the corresponding p-values (Sig.) and sample sizes (N).

Table 4. The results of correlation among three dependent variables

		Intercultural Communication Apprehension	Global Citizenship	Willingness to Communicate in English
Intercultural Communication Apprehension	Pearson Correlation	1	,259*	,458**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,012	,000
	N	94	94	94
Global Citizenship	Pearson Correlation	,259*	1	,034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,012		,748
	N	94	94	94
Willingness to Communicate in English	Pearson Correlation	,458**	,034	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,748	
	N	94	94	94

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation results show that there is a statistically significant positive correlation (r =.259, p < 0.05) between the constructs of ICA and GC. This implies, interestingly, that as ICA increases, GC levels also increase. Second, a statistically significant positive connection (r =.458, p < 0.01) has been observed between the constructs of ICA and WTC in English. This finding suggests that those with higher levels of ICA are more willing to engage in English communication. However, the statistical analysis reveals that there is no significant correlation (r =.034, p > 0.05) between the constructs of GC and WTC in English.

The findings of this study indicate that there is a positive correlation between ICA and both GC and WTC in English levels. This suggests that students who experience higher levels of ICA are more likely to demonstrate stronger GC and have a greater WTC in English.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show various facets of ICA, GC, and WTC at the English level among students who are studying in the Department of Tourism Guidance. The findings of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in ICA levels among participants based on gender. This finding is consistent with previous research by Koçak (2022), which suggests that gender may not be a significant predictor of ICA levels among students. However, it is worth noting that while gender may not directly influence ICA, other factors such as cultural background, language proficiency, and past experiences may play a role in shaping individuals' apprehension towards intercultural communication (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997).

Moreover, the findings of this study suggest no significant difference in ICA levels according to participants' classes. This suggests that regardless of academic progression, students in the Tourism Guidance Department may experience similar levels of apprehension when engaging in intercultural communication. However, it is important to consider that ICA is a dynamic construct influenced by various factors, including exposure to diverse cultural contexts, language proficiency, and cultural sensitivity training (Cherdchoopong, 2020). Therefore, it is recommended in the literature that educational institutions should implement strategies to decrease ICA and promote effective intercultural communication skills among students, such as intercultural training programmes and immersive cultural experiences (Bozkaya & Erdem Aydın, 2010).

The study found a significant difference in GC perceptions between male and female participants, with female students showing higher levels. Similarly, in Şahin's (2012) study, females were found to have greater cultural sensitivity and awareness, contributing to their higher levels of GC perceptions. GC includes recognition and appreciation of cultural diversity along with human rights awareness (Akkari & Maleq, 2020). Therefore, students with higher levels of GC perceptions may demonstrate greater acceptance of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This is also important in practicing inclusive tourism and developing intercultural understanding (Şahin, 2012).

The correlation analysis results revealed a positive correlation between ICA and GC, suggesting that individuals who experience higher levels of ICA may perceive themselves as global citizens more. Although this result may seem paradoxical at first sight, there may be some potential reasons. Firstly, the students who perceive themselves as global citizens more may have some concerns about reflecting themselves correctly in intercultural environments. Thus, this may lead to being afraid of miscommunication. Similarly, GC requires being aware of cultural diversity and accepting various cultures along with social justice (Akçay et al., 2024). In this sense, students who identify themselves as global citizens may fear that their communication may prevent them from having meaningful communication in intercultural situations in which they want to show their understanding and empathy for other cultures.

Similarly, the correlation analysis showed a positive correlation between ICA and WTC in English levels. This indicates that students who experience higher levels of ICA may demonstrate a greater WTC in English. This interesting finding can be interpreted as meaning

that students who have higher levels of apprehension may be more motivated to overcome their fears by communicating more in English. Thus, they may show higher WTC in English in spite of their apprehension. Therefore, educational institutions should provide more English language courses and interventions to decrease ICA and support students according to their needs to enhance their WTC in English (Koçak, 2022).

The study revealed a significant difference in WTC in English levels according to participants' classes. Students in higher class levels demonstrated higher levels of WTC. This finding suggests that students' English proficiency levels may influence their confidence and ability to communicate effectively in English, which is consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of English language proficiency in the tourism industry (Prachanant, 2012). In the context of this study, the participants are expected to take various levels of English language courses until their graduation. Thus, taking these courses can be interpreted as being helpful to students at WTC in English levels. Therefore, students should be supported by various language courses, which may include extracurricular English sessions to enhance their English communication skills. Hence, they can improve their employability prospects in the tourism sector (Gürbüz et al., 2022).

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the complex relationship among intercultural communication comprehension levels, global citizenship perceptions, and willingness to communicate in English among students in the tourism guidance department. By understanding and addressing these factors, educational institutions can prepare their students in a better way so that they can have successful careers in the tourism industry. This study is limited to the answers of students who are studying in the Department of Tourism Guidance at a state school. The school's location, being in a small district of a small city, may have had an effect on the results of this study, as some of the students, especially the sophomore students, were not very willing to study in the department because of its geographical location. Thus, this led to fewer students studying in the sophomore class and fewer participants from that class. Also, the number of participants is restricted to one school. Further studies may include various schools that have the Department of Tourism Guidance. Also, future research can explore the effectiveness of interventions that aim to reduce ICA and enhance students' GC values and WTC in English. Additionally, longitudinal studies can investigate the long-term impact of these interventions on students' professional careers in the tourism sector. Overall, by fostering intercultural competence, promoting global citizenship values, and improving English language proficiency, educational institutions can empower their students to become effective communicators and global citizens in the tourism sector.

6. STATEMENTS

6.1 Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest in this study

6.2. Contributions

It is stated that each author has equally contributed to this study.

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