ENGLISH LECTURERS' BELIEFS REGARDING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

This present study aims to investigate the role of intercultural competence in Turkish tertiary EFL teaching. More specifically, the study was carried out in order to reveal English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural competence. Data were collected from 368 English lecturers in İstanbul via a questionnaire and a scale. The findings have revealed that English lecturers do not believe that culture learning is among the primary objectives of English language teaching and believe more in attitudinal dimension of culture teaching. Also, English lecturers agree with intercultural language teaching and believe that they are sufficiently familiar with foreign cultures.
Keywords: *Lecturer, Culture, Intercultural Competence, Belief*

İNGİLİZCE OKUTMANLARININ KÜLTÜRLERARASI EDİNCE İLİŞKİN İNANÇLARI

ÖZ

Bu çalışma kültürlerarası edincin, üniversite düzeyinde İngilizce öğretimindeki yerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Daha özel olarak çalışma, İngilizce okutmanlarının kültürlerarası edince ilişkin inançlarını tespit etmek amacı ile yapılmıştır. Araştırma verileri, İstanbul ilinde görevli 368 İngilizce okutmanına uygulanan bir anket ve ölçek yardımı ile elde edilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda; İngilizce okutmanlarının kültür öğrenimi amacının, İngilizce öğretiminin öncelikli amaçları arasında olduğuna inanmadıkları ve İngilizce okutmanlarının kültür öğretiminin daha çok tutumsal boyutuna inandıkları tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmada ayrıca, İngilizce okutmanlarının kültürlerarası dil öğretimine katıldıkları ve yabancı kültürleri yeterli düzeyde tanıdıklarına inandıkları tespit edilmiştir.
Anahtar Kelimeler: *Okutman, Kültür, Kültürlerarası Edinç, İnanç*

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language teaching, as other social sciences, is a dynamic field which is vulnerable to any changes experienced in political, economic, social and technological fields. Especially, globalization has greatly influenced foreign language teaching.

Despite dating back to late 19th century, globalization has gained significant importance in the 21st century. Globalization was firstly used as a term in economics, but soon, it has been widely used, especially in the last three decades, in almost every science. Although there is little agreement about the definition of globalization, Giddens (1990: 64) defines globalization as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and

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vice versa". Nations of the 21st century feel themselves obliged to have international contacts in every field in order to catch up with the other nations in the world. Since globalization is seen as an influencing force everywhere in the world, people are advised to think globally and act locally (Hui, 2001: 126). To achieve this ultimate objective, communication between nations has become the core of point. A common language, namely English, has been preferred to pursue communication among nations. Thus, English has become global language of communication, education, business, aviation, media, entertainment, safety and the Internet (Guo and Beckett, 2007: 118; Crystal, 2003: 86-114).

The spread of English in the world has been very quick and indispensible. The new status of English has been termed as lingua franca (ELF), which implies that people with different first languages use English to communicate. According to Jenkins (2011: 1), lingua franca is "a contact language used among people who do not share a first language and is commonly understood to mean a second (or subsequent) language of its speakers". Seidlhofer also defines English as a global lingua franca which is shaped more by its non native speakers than its native speakers (2005: 339).

Alptekin (2002: 60) mentions that owing to social and economic globalization, English has become the language of international communication. The number of people using English as their native or nonnative language in 1985 was one and a half million. There is a possibility that nonnative speaker of English will exceed its native speaker. According to Alptekin, English as the medium of academic studies, professional contacts and commercial pursuits, has gained the lingua franca status which in turn has yielded nonnative to nonnative interaction. At this point, he questions the validity of teaching sociocultural norms of English people, and highlights the necessity of a radical rethinking of traditional notion of communicative competence.

Communicative competence dating back to the works of Dell Hymes in 1972 has been expanded to intercultural competence (Byram, 1991; Kramsch, 1993; Hismanoglu, 2011: 805). Intercultural competence, a subfield of communicative competence (Deardoff, 2004), entails cultural awareness, personal attitudes like empathy and flexibility, self awareness and understanding others' values, norms and beliefs to cope with cultural differences effectively (Penbek, Yurdakul and Cerit, 2009).

English language teachers' beliefs are of great importance for the promotion of intercultural competence in EFL classes. Investigation of teacher beliefs is a necessary way of educational inquiry for research (Pajares, 1992). Yero (2002) suggests that beliefs affect how teachers behave in the classroom. In this study, teachers' beliefs regarding intercultural competence in EFL classes, which are considerably important for creating a global language learning atmosphere and increasing awareness towards becoming a world minded citizen, will be explored. A review of literature has shown that there is little research on how English lecturers envisage intercultural competence teaching and on the lecturers' beliefs about it.

The reason for investigating the role of intercultural competence in tertiary EFL teaching arises from the fact that higher education plays a pivotal role in students' lives. Although every level of education is very important in shaping students' lives, higher educational institutions differ from other educational institutions in the sense that they are the most influential factors which will determine students' success in life, both social and occupational. Therefore, one of the priorities of higher educational institutions should be the

promotion of intercultural competence in order to increase the employability and mobility of university graduates (Mughan, 1999: 59), and transform them into a critical citizen of the world.   English courses at the university   integrated with intercultural competence will become of great significance for raising more world minded citizens.

Statement of the Problem

Realizing the significance of intercultural competence has lead to a great paradigm shift in the objectives and the methodology of English language teaching in theory. But, the fundamental questions as to whether English teachers advocate such a paradigm shift needs to be answered in order to achieve intercultural goals of foreign language teaching. So, this core question will try to be answered with this study. After the analysis of the reported notions of intercultural competence of English lecturers, some recommendations will be made in order to increase inclusion of intercultural competence at these institutions, thereby contributing to the development of global citizenship.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this research is to explore English lecturers' beliefs and practices regarding intercultural competence. In line with this main objective, the actuality of intercultural competence in Turkish higher education will be reflected through the research. More specifically; following research questions will be investigated:

1. What are English lecturers' beliefs regarding the objectives of English language teaching?
2. What are English lecturers' beliefs regarding the objectives of culture teaching in English language courses?
3. What are English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural language teaching?
4. What are English lecturers' beliefs regarding their familiarity with foreign cultures?

METHOD

The research is a quantitative descriptive research. Since questionnaires and scales are less intrusive and more appropriate for reaching large samples, data of the study were gathered by means of these tools. The research's questionnaire and scales were developed from Sercu et al.'s questionnaire (2005). In the study, a questionnaire, composed of four sections, and a scales were used. The questionnaire is composed of four sections: First section of the questionnaire aims to find out some personal data .Second section of the questionnaire aims to find out English lecturers' beliefs regarding the objectives of English language teaching. This section is composed of eight 5- point Likert scale items. Third section of the questionnaire aims to find out English lecturers' beliefs regarding the objectives of culture teaching in English courses. This section comprises of nine 5- point Likert scale items.Fourth section of the questionnaire aims to find out English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural language teaching. This section comprises of twelve 5- point Likert scale items.

A scale was designed to find out English lecturers' beliefs regarding their familiarity with foreign cultures. The scale comprises of ten 4 -point Likert scale items. The content validity of the questionnaire and scale were examined and approved by three different experts studying on this subject. The construct validity of thre scale was investigated by exploratory factor analysis respectively. According to KMO and Barlett's test results, the value of Kaiser Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling adequacy was, .894, and Approximate

Chi Square value of Barlett' Test of Sphericity was 1835.395. According to the results of Principal Component Analysis performed for the scale, Familiarity with Foreign Culture has one-factor structure explaining 52.94 % of total variance and Scree Plot shows that the scale is one- factor. The factor loadings of the items included in this factor ranged between .63 and .80.. Reliability of the scales was also examined by Cronbach's Alpha analysis. The questionnaire was firstly piloted to 105 lecturers in September, 2011. According to the analysis, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was .90.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data for the study were collected between the years 2011 and 2012. In order to increase the number of returned questionnaires and scales, the universities were visited several times. And finally, at the end of 2012, data collection procedures were finalized and 500 questionnaires and scales were distributed to English lecturers and 368 English lecturers working for twelve different universities (9 foundations and 3 states) completed the data collection instruments.

The distribution of research participants per university are presented in the following table:

After finalizing the data collection process, the data were entered in Statistical Package for Social Sciences Programme, SPSS 15.0. In this section, statistical analysis for English lecturers' beliefs' regarding intercultural competence was performed under four sections; the objectives of English language teaching, the objectives of culture teaching in English language courses, intercultural language teaching and familiarity with foreign cultures.

RESULTS

English Lecturers' Beliefs Regarding the Objectives of English Language Teaching

One of the research questions was to investigate how English lecturers perceive the objectives of foreign language teaching. In order to reveal their beliefs regarding this topic, English lecturers were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with eight English language teaching objectives.

Table 1: Objectives of English Language Teaching

The Objectives of English Language Teaching	Sa	A	U	D	Sd	Mean	SD
To promote the acquisition of learning skills that will be useful for learning other foreign languages	211 (57.3%)	126 (57.3 %)	23 (34.2%)	4 (6.3.)	4 (6.3%)	4,45	0,8
To assist my pupils to acquire a level of proficiency in the foreign language that will allow them to read literary works in the foreign language	189 (51.4%)	150 (40.8%)	23 (6.3%)	4 (1.1%)	2 (.5%)	4,41	0,7
To enthuse my pupils for learning foreign languages	201 (54.6 %)	127 (34.5%)	30 (8.2%)	8 (2.2 %)	2 (.5 %)	4,40	0,8
To promote the acquisition of an open mind and a positive disposition towards unfamiliar cultures	167 (45.4%)	149 (40.5 %)	36 (9.8 %)	12 (3.3 %)	4 (1.1 %)	4.25	0,8
To assist my pupils to acquire skills that will be useful in other subject areas and in life (such as memorize, summarize,put into words, formulate accurately, give a presentation, etc.)	162 (44 %)	153 (41.6%)	37 (10.1%)	13 (3.5%)	3 (.8%)	4,24	0,8

To assist my pupils in developing a better understanding of their own identity and culture	143 (38.9 %)	148 (40.2 %)	54 (14.7%)	19 (5.2%)	4 (1.1%)	4,10	0,9
To promote my pupils' familiarity with the culture, the civilization of the countries where the language which they are learning is spoken	115 (31.3 %)	193 (52.4%)	39 (10.6%)	18 (4.9)	3 (.8%)	4,08	0,8
To promote the acquisition of a level of proficiency in the foreign language that will allow the learners to use the foreign language for practical purposes	117 (31.8 %)	143 (38.9 %)	62 (16.8 %)	39 (10.6 %)	7 (1.9 %)	3.88	1

(Sa: Strongly agree, A: Agree, U: Undecided, D: Disagree, Sd: Strongly disagree, SD: Standard Deviation)

According to the results obtained from the frequency analysis, the item that has the highest mean ($\overline{X}$: 4.45) *is to promote the acquisition of learning skills that will be useful for learning other foreign languages.* 211 of 368 respondents strongly agreed with this item, which makes up 57.3 % of all the respondents. The objective having the second highest mean score ($\overline{X}$: 4.41) from the respondents is *to assist my pupils to acquire a level of proficiency in the foreign language that will allow them to read literary works in the foreign language.* 189 out of 368 respondents strongly agreed with this statement percentage of which is 51.4 %. And the objective which is third in rank ($\overline{X}$: 4.40) is *to enthuse my pupils for learning foreign languages. The objectives; to promote the acquisition of an open mind and a positive disposition towards unfamiliar cultures* ($\overline{X}$: 4.25) and *to assist my pupils to acquire skills that will be useful in other subject areas and in life (such as memorize, summarize ,put into words, formulate accurately, give presentation, etc.)* ($\overline{X}$: 4.24) ranked as the fourth and fifth objectives of English language teaching.

And, last three favored objectives in the research were found to be *to assist my pupils in developing a better understanding of their own identity and culture* ($\overline{X}$: 4.10), *to promote my pupils' familiarity with the culture and the civilization of the countries where the language which they are learning is spoken* ($\overline{X}$: 4.08) and *to promote the acquisition of a level of proficiency in the foreign language that will allow the learners to use the foreign language for practical purposes* ($\overline{X}$: 3.88).

English Lecturers' Beliefs Regarding the Objectives of Culture Teaching in English Language Courses

English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural competence were investigated in the research. In order to reveal the lecturers' beliefs' about intercultural competence, they were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with the nine statements considered to be among the objectives of culture teaching in English language courses. English lecturers' beliefs regarding the objectives of culture teaching in their courses were illustrated below.

Table 2: English Lecturers' Beliefs Regarding the Objectives of Culture Teaching

	Sa	A	U	D	Sd	M	SD
To develop openness and tolerance towards other people and cultures	217 (59.0 %)	123 (33.4%)	19 (5.2 %)	6 (1.6%)	3 (.8%)	4,48	,74
To provide information about daily life and routines	164 (44.6 %)	174 (47.3 %)	23 (6.3 %)	5 (1.4 %)	2 (.5 %)	4.33	,70
To promote the ability to empathize with people living in other cultures	177 (48.1 %)	144 (39.1 %)	36 (9.8 %)	8 (2.2 %)	3 (.8 %)	4,31	,80
To promote the ability to handle intercultural contact situations	169 (45.9 %)	153 (41.6 %)	37 (10.1 %)	6 (1.6 %)	3 (.8 %)	4,30	,78
To provide experiences with a rich variety of cultural expressions (literature, music, theatre, film etc.)	164 (44.6 %)	163 (44.3 %)	30 (8.2 %)	7 (1.9 %)	4 (1.1 %)	4,29	,78
To promote reflection on cultural differences	163 (44.3 %)	152 (41.3 %)	44 (12.0 %)	7 (1.9 %)	2 (.5 %)	4,26	,78
To provide information about shared values and beliefs	138 (37.5 %)	174 (47.3 %)	43 (11.7 %)	10 (2.7 %)	3 (.8 %)	4.17	,80
To promote increased understanding of students' own culture	129 (35.1 %)	151 (41.0%)	68 (18.5%)	14 (3.8%)	6 (1.6%)	3.88	,91
To provide information about the history, geography, and the political conditions of the foreign cultures	71 (19.3 %)	174 (47.3 %)	92 (25.0 %)	27 (7.3 %)	4 (1.1 %)	3.76	.88

As illustrated by frequency table provided above, English lecturers believe that the main objective of culture teaching is *to develop openness and tolerance towards other people and cultures.* This item had the highest strongly agree frequency, 217 (59 %), and the highest mean ($\overline{X}$: 4.48).

After this objective, the item*, to provide information about daily life and routines* had the second highest mean score ($\overline{X}$: 4.33). 164 (44.6%) participants strongly agreed with this item. Third in rank was the item , *to promote the ability to empathize with people living in other cultures and* 177 (48.1 %) participants strongly agreed with this objective.

English lecturers ranked the following three objectives of culture teaching as the least preferred. The items, *provide information about shared values and beliefs* ($\overline{X}$: 4.17), *to promote increased understanding of students' own cultur*e ($\overline{X}$: 3.88) and *to provide information about the history, geography, and the political conditions of the foreign cultures* ($\overline{X}$: 3.76) *were strongly agreed by 138 (37.5%), 129 (35.1 %) and 71 (19.3 %) participants of the research.*

English Lecturers' Beliefs Regarding Intercultural Foreign Language Teaching

In the third section of the questionnaire, English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural foreign language teaching were investigated. In this section, twelve statements were given to the lecturers and asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with the given statements by using 5 -point Likert scale. The frequency analysis of the responses relating to each statement is given below:

Table 3: English Lecturers' Beliefs Regarding Intercultural Foreign Language Teaching

	Sa	A	U	D	Sd	M	S.D
Teaching culture is as important as teaching the foreign language	114 (31.0 %)	175 (47.6 %)	48 (13.0 %)	25 (6.8 %)	6 (1.6 %)	3.9	.92
Intercultural education has no effect on pupils' attitudes	8 (2.2 %)	25 (6.8 %)	59 (16.0 %)	182 (49.5 %)	94 (25.5 %)	3.89	.93
I would like to promote the acquisition of intercultural skills in my class.	67 (18.2 %)	218 (59.2 %)	63 (17.1 %)	17 (4.6 %)	3 (.8 %)	3.89	.77
A foreign language teacher should present a realistic image of the foreign culture, so negative aspects of the cultures should be presented	95 (25.8 %)	162 (44.0 %)	79 (21.5 %)	25 (6.8 %)	7 (1.9 %)	3.85	.94
Intercultural education is best undertaken crosscurricularly	76 (20.7 %)	186 (50.5 %)	95 (25.8 %)	9 (2.4 %)	2 (.5 %)	3.8	.77
It is impossible to teach foreign language and foreign culture in an integrated way.	23 (6.3 %)	41 (11.1 %)	36 (9.8 %)	173 (47.0 %)	95 (25.8 %)	3.75	1.14
Foreign language teaching should enhance pupils' understading of their own cultural identity.	73 (19.8 %)	169 (45.9 %)	89 (24.2 %)	29 (7.9 %)	8 (2.2 %)	3.7	.93
Intercultural skills cannot be acquired in the schools.	10 (2.7 %)	35 (9.5 %)	79 (21.5%)	181 (49.2 %)	62 (16.8 %)	3.68	.96
A foreign language teacher should present a positive image of the foreign culture.	78 (21.2 %)	152 (41.3 %)	84 (22.8 %)	43 (11.7%)	11 (3.0%)	3.6	1.03
Before teaching culture, pupils should have a high level proficiency in the foregin language	27 (7.3 %)	55 (14.9 %)	78 (21.2 %)	172 (46.7%)	36 (9.8%)	3.36	1.08
In the foreign language classes, pupils can learn additional cultural information, but not intercultural skills.	21 (5.7 %)	71 (19.3%)	125 (34.0 %)	125 (34.0 %)	26 (7.1 %)	3.17	1.00

(Sa: Strongly agree, A: Agree, D: Disagree, Sd: Strongly Disagree, SD: Standart Deviation, M:Mean)

The table above represents the lecturers' degree of agreement or disagreement with the given statements. According to the data presented in the table, the lecturers ranked first the item; *teaching culture is as important as teaching the foreign language.* This item had the largest mean score among all the other items; ($\overline{X}$:3.9). 114 lecturers (31.0 %) strongly agreed, 175 lecturers (47.6 %) agreed, 48 lecturers (13 %) were undecided, 25 lecturers (6.8 %) and 6 lecturers (1.6 %) strongly disagreed with this item.The lecturers ranked second the item; *The more pupils know the foreign culture the more tolerant they are.* The item had the second largest mean score ($\overline{X}$: 3.96). 104 lecturers (28.3 %) lecturers strongly agreed, 177 lecturers (48.1 %) agreed, 62 lecturers (16.8 %) were undecided, 19 lecturers (5.2 %) disagreed and 6 lecturers (1.6 %) strongly disagreed with the statement.

The two items; *I would like to promote the acquisition of intercultural skills in my class* and *Intercultural teaching has no effect on pupils' learning*, were ranked third by the lecturers. The averages of the relevant items were $\overline{X}$: 3.89. Specifically, 67 lecturers strongly agreed (18.2 %), 218 lecturers (59.2 %) agreed, 63 lecturers (17.1 %) were un-

decided, 17 lecturers (4.8 %) disagreed and 3 lecturers (.8 %) strongly disagreed with the item; *I would like to promote intercultural skills in my classes*. And 8 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 2.2) strongly agreed, 25 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 6.8) agreed, 59 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 16.0) were undecided, 182 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 49.5) disagreed and 94 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 25.5) strongly disagreed with the item; *Intercultural teaching has no effect on pupils' learning.*

The item; *Intercultural education is best undertaken crosscurricularly* was placed in the fourth rank, ($\overline{X}$: 3.88). 76 lecturers (20.7 %) strongly agreed, 186 lecturers (50.5 %) agreed, 95 lecturers (25.8 %) were undecided, 9 lecturers (2.4 %) disagreed and 2 lecturers (.5 %) strongly disagreed with the item.

The lecturers ranked fifth the item; *A foreign language teacher should present a realistic image of the foreign culture, so negative aspects of the cultures should be presented*, ($\overline{X}$: 3.85). 95 (25.8 %) lecturers strongly agreed, 162 (44.0 %) agreed, 79 lecturers (21.5 %) were undecided, 25 lecturers (6.8 %) disagreed and 7 lecturers (1.9 %) strongly disagreed with the statement. The lecturers ranked sixth the item; *Foreign language teaching should enhance pupils' understading of their own cultural identity* ($\overline{X}$: 3.75). 73 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 19.8 %) strongly agreed, 169 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 45.9 %) agreed, 89 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 24.2 %) were undecided, 29 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 7.9 %) disagreed and 8 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 2.2 %) strongly disagreed with the item.

The item ranked seven by the lecturers was *Foreign language teaching should enhance pupils' understanding of their own cultural identity,* ($\overline{X}$: 3.73). 73 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 19.8) strongly agreed, 169 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 45.9) agreed, 86 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 24.2) were undecided, 29 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 7.9) disagreed and 8 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 2.2) strongly disagreed with the item. *Before teaching culture, pupils should have a high level of proficiency in the foreign language* was ranked eight in importance by the lecturers; ($\overline{X}$: 3.68). 78 lecturers (21.2 %) strongly agreed, 152 lecturers (41.3 %) agreed, 84 lecturers (22.8 %) were undecided, 43 lecturers (11.7 %) disagreed and 11 lecturers (3.0 %) strongly disagreed with the item. Ninth item in the ranking was *A foreign language teacher should present a positive image of the foreign culture*, ($\overline{X}$: 3.66). 78 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 2.2) strongly agreed, 152 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 41.3) agreed, 84 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 22.8) were undecided, 43 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 11.7) disagreed and 11 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 3.0) strongly disagreed with the item.

 The last three items, namely tenth, eleventh and twelfth item in the ranking are as follows:

The lecturers placed, *Before teaching culture, pupils should have a high level of proficiency, in* the tenth rank, ($\overline{X}$: 3.36). 36 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 9.8) strongly agreed, 172 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 46.7) agreed, 78 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 21.2) were undecided, 55 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 14.9) disagreed and 27 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 7.3) strongly disagreed with the item.The eleventh item ranked by the lecturers was *In the foreign language classes, pupils can only learn additional cultural information, but not intercultural skills*, ($\overline{X}$: 3.17). 26 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 7.1) strongly agreed, 125 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 34.0) agreed, 125 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 34. 0) were undecided, 71 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 19.3) disagreed and 21 lecturers ($\overline{X}$: 5.7) strongly disagreed with the item.

English Lecturers' Beliefs Regarding Their Familiarity with Foreign Cultures

In this section of the research, the participants were asked to indicate how much they believe they are familiar with the foreign cultures in the world. In order to determine English

lecturers familiarity with the foreign cultures, ten different aspects of foreign cultures such as history, youth culture, and literature were included in the scale. The lecturers indicated their degree of familiarity with these aspects by choosing the appropriate scale interval. The scale used was 4- point Likert scale: 4 refers to the highest degree of familiarity," *very familiar*", 3 refers to moderate level of familiarity, " *sufficiently*", 2 refers to inadequate familiarity " *not sufficiently*" and finally 1 refers to unfamiliarity, " *not familiar at all*". The frequencies of English lecturers' responses to the different aspects of foreign cultures are given in the table below:

Table 4: English Lecturers' Familiarity with the Foreign Cultures

	VF	S	NS	NF	M	SD
History, geography and political systems	99 (26.9 %)	193 (52.4 %)	74 (20.1 %)	1 (.3 %)	3.06	.68
Different ethnic and social groups	83 (22.6 %)	193 (52.4 %)	89 (24.2 %)	2 (.5 %)	2.97	.70
Daily life, routines, livng conditions, food and drink	154 (41.8 %)	169 (45.9 %)	40 (10.9 %)	4 (1.1%)	3.29	.70
Youth culture	104 (28.3 %)	182 (49.5 %)	75 (20.4 %)	6 (1.6%)	3.05	.74
Education and professional life	107 (29.1 %)	196 (53.3 %)	61 (16.6 %)	3 (.8 %)	3.11	.69
Traditions,folklore and tourist attractions	92 (25 %)	199 (54.1 %)	72 (19.6 %)	4 (1.1 %)	3.03	.70
Literature	135 (36.7 %)	159 (43.2 %)	67 (18.2 %)	6 (1.6 %)	3.15	.77
Music, drama and art	130 (35.3 %)	151 (41 %)	81 (22 %)	5 (1.4 %)	3.11	.79
Values and beliefs	89 (24.2)	202 (54.9 %)	71 (19.3 %)	5 (1.4 %)	3.02	.70
International relations (political, economic etc.) with students' own country and other countries	80 (21.7 %)	178 (48.4 %)	97 (26.4 %)	11 (3 %)	2.90	.78

(VF: Very Familiar, S: Sufficiently, NS: Not Sufficiently, NF: Not Familiar at all, M:Mean, SD: Standard Deviation)

The table above illustrates English lecturers' familiarity with different aspects of foreign cultures. According to the frequency analysis, the lecturers were ranked *Daily life, routines, livng conditions, food and drink* as their first mostly familiar aspect of foreign cultures; $\overline{X}$: 3.29. 154 lecturers (41.8 %) were very familiar, 169 lecturers (45.9 %) were sufficiently familiar, 40 lecturers (10.9 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 4 lecturers (1.1 %) were not familiar with the item at all. *Literature* was the second ranked culture aspect ranked, $\overline{X}$: 3.15. 135 lecturers (36.7 %) were very familiar, 159 lecturers (43.2 %) were sufficiently familiar, 67 lecturers (18.2 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 6 lecturers (1.6 %) were not familiar with the literature of foreign cultures at all.

According to the data above, the lecturers were equally familiar ($\overline{X}$: 3.11) with the two aspects of the foreign cultures; *Education and professional life* and *Music, drama and art*. These cultural aspects were placed in the third rank. Specifically, 107 lecturers (29.1 %) were very familiar, 196 lecturers (53.3) were sufficiently familiar, 61 lecturers (16.6 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 3 lecturers (.8 %) were not familiar with the education

and professional life of foreign cultures at all. Likewise, 130 35.3 %) lecturers were very familiar, 151 lecturers (41 %) were sufficiently familiar, 81 lecturers (22 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 5 lecturers (1.4 %) were not familiar with the music, drama and art of foreign cultures at all.

In the fourth rank, the item, *History, geography and political systems,* was placed; $\overline{X}$: 3.06. 99 lecturers (26.9 %) were very familiar, 193 lecturers (52.4 %) were sufficiently familiar, 74 lecturers (20.1 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 1 lecturer (.3 %) were not familiar with "History, geography and political systems" at all. The lecturers placed *Traditions, folklore and tourist attractions* in the fifth rank, $\overline{X}$: 3.03. 92 lecturers (25 %) were very familiar, 199 lecturers (54.1 %) were sufficiently familiar, 72 lecturers (19.6 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 4 lecturers (1.1 %) were not familiar with the item at all. The sixth rank was given by the lecturers to the item, *Values and beliefs*, $\overline{X}$: 3.02. 89 lecturers (24.2 %) were very familiar, 202 lecturers (54.9 %) were sufficiently familiar, 71 lecturers (19.3 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 5 lecturers (1.4%) were not familiar with the item at all.

The last two items ranked by the lecturers were *Different ethnic and social groups* ($\overline{X}$: 2.97) and *International relations (political, economic etc.) with students' own country and other countries* ($\overline{X}$: 2.90). 83 lecturers (22.6 %) were very familiar, 193 lecturers (52.4 %) were sufficiently familiar, 89 lecturers (24.2 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 2 lecturers (.5 %) were not familiar with the item, different ethnic and social groups, at all. Likewise, 80 lecturers (21.7 %) were very familiar, 178 lecturers (48.4 %) were sufficiently familiar, 97 lecturers (26.4 %) were not sufficiently familiar and 11 lecturers (3 %) were not familiar with the item, international relations (political, economic etc.) with students' own country and other countries, at all.

CONCLUSION

With the emergence of globalization in every facet of life, establishing meaning on the basis of communicative competence has been regarded as insufficient. Since the last two decades, the development of intercultural competence has gained considerable attention from the scholars in working particularly in social sciences. The importance of intercultural competence should also be   realized by higher education institutions and the universities all over the world should try to equip their graduates with intercultural competence. As mentioned by Mughan (1999: 59):

Current foreign language (FL) course design in higher education (HE) is questioned for its lack of focus on understanding people of other cultures. It is therefore argued that foreign language degree courses rapidly need to adopt an approach to intercultural learning which prepares students to move with more ease amongst numerous cultures and which is less bound cognitively.

The research has revealed English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural competence. The lecturers' responses as to the objectives of English language teaching illustrate that English lecturers generally agreed with the given language teaching objectives. But, the interesting finding emerged in this section relates to the groups of the objectives ranked firstly by the lecturers. The objectives; *to promote the acquisition of learning skills that will be useful for learning other foreign languages*, *to assist my pupils to acquire a level*

of proficiency in the foreign language that will allow them to read literary works in the foreign language, *to enthuse my pupils for learning foreign languages* were the first three objectives ranked by the lecturers.

Considering Sercu's (2005, 21) classification of objectives of English language teaching, none of these objectives fall into culture learning category. Two of these objectives fall into language learning whereas one of these objectives falls into general skills learning category. According to the results presented above, it is possible to deduce that culture learning objectives were not among the first priorities of English lecturers. This result implies that English lecturers believe that the main objectives of English language teaching offered by the universities are to equip language learners with linguistic and general skills so as to facilitate the acquisition of different languages.

Secondly, English lecturers' beliefs regarding the objectives of culture teaching reveal that English lecturers agreed with the given culture teaching objectives. On the basis of Sercu's culture teaching objectives (ibid.,26), the research shows that English lecturers mostly favored *attitudinal* dimension of culture teaching in their courses, *to promote positive attitudes towards other people and cultures*,. In other words, English lecturers define culture teaching as to try to develop positive attitudes towards different people and cultures. It implies that the success of culture teaching in EFL courses rests on the perception that other cultures also exist in the world, and these cultures also deserve to be respected, approached positively free from all sorts of prejudices. Therefore, it is possible to say that culture teaching is an attitude development process according to the lecturers rather than the imposition of concrete culturals element into the minds of the students by offering the lists of Dos and Donts.

Thirdly, English lecturers' beliefs regarding intercultural language teaching was also investigated. English lecturers beliefs regarding intercultural language teaching imply that English lecturers believe in the incorporation of intercultural competence in language classes. They agreed with most of the items in the list. But, they were undecided about two items; requirement of language proficiency for teaching intercultural competence and the nature of culture teaching: additional cultural information or intercultural skills.

The confusion or indecisiveness experienced by the lecturers could mean that the lecturers are not very clear about how to include intercultural competence in their courses. The lecturers may be inclined to believe that without knowing English linguistically, students may not benefit from intercultural teaching. Even if the lecturers agree with the necessity of the inclusion of intercultural competence, the results illustrate that they still have some uncertainty about what intercultural teaching really means and when to introduce intercultural teaching.

Lastly, English lecturers were also asked to mention how familiar they believe they are with the foreign cultures. The scale was purposefully administered in order to reveal English lecturers' beliefs regarding their competence at *knowledge* dimension of intercultural competence. English lecturers believe that they are sufficiently familiar with the different aspects of the foreign cultures. They did not indicate any cultural aspects in which they considered themselves as unfamiliar. These results indicate that English lecturers believe that they are knowledgeable enough to provide sufficient information about different foreign cultures.

Under these general results obtained from the study, some recommendations can be made in order to increase the promotion of intercultural language teaching:

- The objectives of English language teaching should be redefined in terms of the acquisition of intercultural competence rather than the acquisition of communicative competence.
- The scope of intercultural language teaching should be taught to English lecturers by making a conceptual distinction between intercultural language teaching and teaching additional cultural information.
- New English language teaching materials promoting the acquisition of intercultural competence should be prepared and published.
- English language teaching materials, especially coursebooks, which incorporates intercultural language teaching pedagogy should be selected.
- Measurement and evaluation methods for English language teaching should be adopted to assess intercultural competence.
- The amount of international projects, Erasmus mobility (staff and students) and exchange programmes should be promoted. New international university partners should be searched and the number universities in mobility projects should be increased.

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