REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

# A SUGGESTED SYLLABUS FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COURSES OF ELT DEPARTMENTS

MASTER'S THESIS

BESTE SEZEN

SUPERVISOR
ASST. PROF. DR. MUSTAFA TEKİN

ÇANAKKALE – 2025

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**T.C.**
**ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART ÜNİVERSİTESİ**
**LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ**

Beste SEZEN tarafından Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Mustafa TEKİN yönetiminde hazırlanan ve **04/08/2025** tarihinde aşağıdaki jüri karşısında sunulan "**A Suggested Syllabus for Intercultural Communication Courses of ELT Departments**" başlıklı çalışma, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü **Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı**'nda **YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ** olarak oy birliği ile kabul edilmiştir.

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## ETHICAL STATEMENT

In this thesis, prepared in compliance with the Thesis Writing Guidelines of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University's Graduate School, I affirm that all data, information, and documents presented were obtained and utilized in accordance with academic and ethical standards. I confirm that every source referenced in this work has been properly cited, no data has been altered, and the research is entirely original. I accept full responsibility for any consequences resulting from violations of these principles.

## ETİK BEYAN

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Tez Yazım Kuralları'na uygun olarak hazırladığım bu tez çalışmasında; tez içinde sunduğum verileri, bilgileri ve dokümanları akademik ve etik kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi, tüm bilgi, belge, değerlendirme ve sonuçları bilimsel etik ve ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduğumu, tez çalışmasında yararlandığım eserlerin tümüne uygun atıfta bulunarak kaynak gösterdiğimi, kullanılan verilerde herhangi bir değişiklik yapmadığımı, bu tezde sunduğum çalışmanın özgün olduğunu, bildirir, aksi bir durumda aleyhime doğabilecek tüm hak kayıplarını kabullendiğimi taahhüt ve beyan ederim.

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04/08/2025

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***This Master's Thesis is dedicated to my beloved mother and to all people, who endeavour to make the world a better place through respect and the acceptance of differences as a source of enrichment.***

Beste SEZEN

Çanakkale, Ağustos 2025

# ÖZET

## İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLİĞİ BÖLÜMLERİNDEKİ KÜLTÜRLERARASI İLETİŞİM DERSLERİ İÇİN İÇERİK ÖNERİSİ

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04/08/2025, 89

Bu çalışma, kültürlerarası iletişim derslerinin İngilizce Öğretmenliği programlarına zorunlu dersler kategorisinde dahil edilmesine ilişkin öğretim üyeleri ve öğretmen adaylarının bakış açılarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Elde edilen veriler doğrultusunda kültürlerarası iletişimin eleştirel ve dinamik boyutlarını yansıtacak şekilde bir ders izlencesi önerisi sunulması çalışmanın birincil amacıdır. Bu bağlamda çalışma çok boyutlu karma desen yöntemi ile gerçekleştirilmiş ve 104 öğretmen adayı ile beş öğretim görevlisi katılım göstermiştir. Nicel veriler öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası iletişim yeterliğini ölçmek için tasarlanmış bir ölçek ve beraberinde zorunlu bir kültürlerarası iletişim dersinin içeriğine ilişkin beklentileri belirlemek amacıyla çeşitli konu önerilerinin yer aldığı bir kontrol listesi aracılıyla toplanmıştır. Nitel veriler ise hem öğretim üyeleri hem de öğretmen adayları ile gerçekleştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Bulgular son sınıf öğretmen adaylarının birinci sınıf öğretmen adaylarına kıyasla nispeten daha yüksek bir kültürlerarası iletişim yeterliğine sahip olduğunu fakat tüm ölçme aracı dikkate alındığında bulunan farkın istatistiksel olarak anlamlı olmadığını göstermiştir. Ölçme aracının alt boyutları incelendiğinde ise kültürlerarası iletişimin eylem boyutunu ölçen ölçekte anlamlı bir fark bulunmuştur. Bununla birlikte öğretmen adaylarının büyük çoğunluğu İngiliz Dili Eğitiminde zorunlu bir kültürlerarası iletişim dersine ihtiyaç duyulduğunu belirtmiştir. Nitel verilerden elde edilen bulguların da nicel bulgularla paralellik gösterdiği ve hem öğretmen adaylarının hem de öğretim üyelerinin zorunlu bir kültürlerarası iletişim dersinin programa entegre edilmesine olumlu yaklaştığı görülmektedir. Yanı sıra öğretim üyeleri ile yapılan görüşmelerde bu tür bir çalışmanın standart bir kültürlerarası iletişim eğitimi oluşturarak

daha sistematik bir eğitim verilmesine olanak sağlayacağın ifade edilmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda kültürlerarası iletişimin öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına entegrasyonuna ilişkin çeşitli öneriler sunulmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Dinamik/Akışkan kültürlerarası iletişim, Eleştirel kültürlerarası iletişim, İngiliz dili eğitimi ve kültürlerarası iletişim, Kültürlerarası iletişim ders izlencesi tasarımı

## ABSTRACT

### A SUGGESTED SYLLABUS FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COURSES OF ELT DEPARTMENTS

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School of Graduate Studies

Department of Foreign Languages Education Master of Arts Thesis

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04/08/2025, 89

This study aimed to investigate the perspectives of English Language Teaching (ELT) professionals and pre-service teachers regarding the inclusion of the Intercultural Communication (IC) courses into the compulsory courses of the English Language Teacher Education Program (ELTEP). The primary objective was to suggest a compulsory IC course syllabus sample that reflects the critical and dynamic dimensions of IC. In this respect, a multidimensional mixed-method design has been employed with the participation of 104 pre-service teachers and five ELT professionals. Quantitative data were collected through a scale designed to measure pre-service teachers' ICC, as well as a checklist consisting of topic suggestions to determine the expectations regarding the content of a compulsory IC course. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with both ELT professionals and pre-service teachers. The findings demonstrated that, when the entire scale was analysed, senior pre-service teachers had slightly higher ICC than first-year pre-service teachers, without any statistically significant difference. However, the analysis of the research instrument's sub-scales revealed a significant difference in the action scale. Besides, the majority of the pre-service teachers indicated a need for a compulsory IC course. The results from the qualitative data were consistent with the quantitative findings, and both participant groups demonstrated a positive stance to the integration of a compulsory IC course into ELTEP. Additionally, interviews with ELT professionals indicated that such a course would enable a more systematic education by establishing a standardisation in IC education. The study concluded with various implications regarding the integration of IC into FLTE.

**Keywords:** Critical intercultural communication, Dynamic/fluid intercultural communication, English language teaching and intercultural communication, intercultural communication course syllabus design

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Page No**


JURY APPROVAL……..……..... i
ETHICAL STATEMENT…… ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS…… iii
ÖZET……... v
ABSTRACT……. vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS……... ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS…… xii
LIST OF TABLES……. xiii
LIST OF FIGURES……... xiv

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview of the Chapter…… 1
1.2. Background of the Study……..... 1
1.3. Statement of the Problem……..... 4
1.4. Significance of the Study……..... 6
1.5. Purpose and Research Questions of the Study……..... 7
1.5.1. Research Questions……. 8
1.6. Definition of Terms……. 8
1.7. Limitations of the Study…… 9
1.8. Summary of the Chapter……. 10

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW 11

2.1. Overview of the Chapter……..... 11
2.2. Definition of Culture…… 11
2.3. The Relationship between Language and Culture……... 12
2.4. Changes in Approaches to Culture……... 13

2.4.1. Static/Solid vs. Dynamic/Liquid Understanding of Culture…… 13
2.5. Models of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)……..... 14
2.6. Critical (Inter)cultural Teaching and ELT..... 17
2.7. IC Studies in ELT……. 19
2.7.1. Critical and Dynamic IC Education Studies……. 20
2.7.2. IC Syllabus Design Studies…….. 21
2.8. Summary of the Chapter……. 23

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY 24

3.1. Overview of the Chapter…… 24
3.2. Research Design…… 24
3.3. Setting and Participants……. 26
3.3.1. Sampling Procedures……. 27
3.4. Research Instruments…… 28
3.4.1. Survey for Measuring Pre-service Teachers levels of ICC……. 29
3.4.2. Semi-Structured Interviews…… 30
3.5. Data Collection Procedures……. 31
3.6. Data Analysis Procedures…… 34
3.6.1. Analysis of the Scales of ICC……. 34
3.6.2. Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews……. 36
3.7. Summary of the Chapter……. 38

CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS 39

4.1. Overview of the Chapter……..... 39
4.2. Findings of the Scale of Intercultural Communicative Competence…… 39
4.2.1. ICC Levels of Pre-service EFL Teachers……. 39
4.2.2. Pre-service Teachers' Expectations on the Requirements of a Compulsory IC Course……. 42
4.3. Results of the Semi-Structured Interviews……. 43
4.3.1. Results from the Pre-service Teachers' Interviews……. 43
4.3.2. Results from the ELT Professionals' Interviews……. 55

4.4. Summary of the Chapter……. 66

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS 68

5.1. Overview of the Chapter……. 68
5.2. Discussions of Findings…… 68
5.3. Conclusions…… 71
5.3.1. Conclusions for Research Question 1……. 72
5.3.2. Conclusions for Research Question 2……. 72
5.3.3. Conclusions for Research Question 3……. 73
5.3.4. Conclusions for Research Question 4……. 73
5.3.5. Conclusions for Research Question 5……. 74
5.3.6. Conclusions for Research Question 6……. 75
5.4. Implications…… 75
5.4.1. Implications for Pre-service Teachers…… 75
5.4.2. Implications for Teacher Educators…… 75
5.4.3. Implications for Curriculum Designers…….. 76
5.4.4. Implications for Policy Makers…….. 76
5.5. A Suggested Intercultural Communication Course Syllabus…… 77
5.6. Suggestion for Further Research…… 80
5.7. Summary of the Chapter……. 81
REFERENCES……. 82
APPENDICES……. I
APPENDIX A. SCALES OF ICC…… I
APPENDIX B. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS……. V
APPENDIX C. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ELT PROFESSIONALS……. VI
APPENDIX D. THE ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL…….. VIII
APPENDIX E. THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE APPROVAL……. IX
APPENDIX F. SAMPLE LESSON PLAN…… X

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| CEFR | Common European Framework of Reference for Languages |
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| CoHE | Council of Higher Education |
| CP | Critical Pedagogy |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| ELF | English as a Lingua Franca |
| ELT | English Language Teaching |
| ELTEP | English Language Teacher Education Program |
| EU | European Union |
| FLE | Foreign Language Education |
| FLTE | Foreign Language Teacher Education |
| IC | Intercultural Communication |
| ICC | Intercultural Communicative Competence |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Sciences |

## LIST OF TABLES


| Table No | Title | Page No |
|---|---|---|
| **Table 1** | Recommendations for IC Education | 22 |
| **Table 2** | Demographic Variables of the Participants | 26 |
| **Table 3** | ICC levels of Pre-service Teachers according to Subscales | 41 |
| **Table 4** | Frequency of the Preferred course Contents | 43 |
| **Table 5** | Participants Perceptions of Themselves in Intercultural Interactions | 45 |
| **Table 6** | Participants Perceptions regarding the Challenges of IC | 46 |
| **Table 7** | ELT Professionals Perceptions regarding the Challenges of IC Teaching | 63 |
| **Table 8** | Compulsory IC Course Syllabus Sample | 78 |

## LIST OF FIGURES


| Figure No | Title | Page |
|---|---|---|
| **Figure 1** | Phases of multi-dimensional design of the study | 25 |
| **Figure 2** | Data collection process | 34 |
| **Figure 3** | Statistical analysis of scales of ICC | 36 |
| **Figure 4** | Data analysis process for semi-structured interviews | 37 |

# CHAPTER ONE
# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Overview of the Chapter

This first chapter has been composed of the scope, purpose, significance, theoretical framework of the study, as well as the research problems that initiate the study. Furthermore, the fundamental terminologies of the study are defined, and the limitations of the study are elucidated. Eventually, a summary is presented to conclude the chapter.

## 1.2. Background of the Study

A communication network has evolved in which the geographical and social boundaries are transcended, and a vast array of diversity is encompassed due to the rapid changes and advancements in the world. Regarding this, Tuncel and Paker (2018) emphasized that several significant factors such as technological advancements, economic reasons and global mobility due to wars lead to a complex and inevitable interaction between societies over time. Similarly, Khan et al. (2023) indicated the significance of this globalisation effect on communication by stating "With the world becoming increasingly connected, the ability to effectively communicate across cultural boundaries has become a critical skill" (p. 130). In consideration of all these, it can also be stated that the development of this critical skill, which is required to keep the pace with this complex societal structure, implies a careful consideration of several possible challenges and necessity of a meticulous preparation. The significance of education, which can be considered to have a transformative effect on society, can be underlined at this juncture. Especially, foreign language education compels attention in this regard due to being regarded as a discipline which provides a basis for frequent realisation of interaction between diverse cultures. In this respect, Sercu (2002) stated that "[…] speaking a foreign language always means entering a cultural world that may to a lesser or a larger extent be different from one's own. Therefore, all language education should always also be intercultural education" (p. 72). From this perspective, it can be inferred that a detailed discussion on the bilateral relationship between language and culture is required.

Yule (2014) described cultural transmission as a distinctive trait that differentiates language from other communication models. In addition to this perspective, Sevimel-Sahin (2020) viewed culture as an inextricable component for communication due to its role of providing necessary background information. From these two associations, it can be inferred that language serves as a transmitter for culture, while culture forms the context in which linguistic performances are shaped.

In consideration of these significant relations and advancement in this ever-shifting social structure, language education policies and environments have also been undergone renewal process. For instance, the shift in perceiving language as a communication instrument rather than "system of rules" had an influence on the role of education stakeholders. Regarding this, it was denoted in Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) report (2020) that "the CEFR takes an innovative stance in seeing learners as language users and social agents and thus seeing language as a vehicle for communication rather than as a subject to study" (p. 29). Similarly, Kramsch and Hua (2016) indicated that globalisation effect emerging from the end of the second world war resulted in the integration of culture into ELT with the purpose of considering diverse cultural backgrounds in language classes. All these transformations in societal structures, classroom settings and student profiles have also brought innovation to teacher roles. To illustrate, Lallana and Salamanca (2020) emphasized that all these circumstances escalating the intercultural encounters noticeably has also entailed a necessity in improvement on their role of intercultural mediator, trainer, and social agent.

The significance of the teachers' roles as intercultural trainer was highlighted by Hoa and Vien (2019), who stated that teachers, as the education stakeholder having the most knowledge of their classroom profile such as students' language proficiencies, interest and cultural identities, has a significant position in adapting the intercultural content to be provided since none of the textbooks are suitable for all educational contexts but they are mediators. "In the case of English language teachers, having intercultural sensitivity for the other culture will help them teach the foreign language effectively and create more windows to look at the world from different perspectives" (Tuncel and Paker, 2018, p. 209). From this perspective, it can be expressed that teachers who broaden their students' horizon and shift

their perspectives on world might fulfil the requirements of being intercultural mediator. Lastly, regarding the role of social agent, Smakova and Paulsrud's (2020) standpoints can be exemplified. The researchers stated that teachers are not obliged to be only information providers in the classroom, and they can also get involved in the process of cultural diversity learning with their students. This trait of teachers illustrates that they can also be social agents, both constructing the intercultural teaching and being constructed by intercultural learning.

All these roles mentioned in the previous paragraphs also imply some challenges and requirements. To illustrate, Conti (2025) states that:

> Teachers play a pivotal role in driving these changes, yet their ability to do so is often constrained by traditional teacher training approaches, which frequently fail to equip them with the competences needed to foster inclusive, participatory, and critically reflexive learning environments (p. 430).

In this respect, it can be asserted that the significance of teacher training programs is equal to that of teachers. As it was stated previously, changes and developments require a renewal process. In this context, renovative studies has been carried out in teacher training programs, especially in ELTEP. In relation to this, it was denoted in Cesur and Balaban's (2020) study that the Council of Turkish Higher education (CoHE) pioneered the latest innovation processes in language teaching programs in 1997, 2006, and 2018. In the scope of these developments, regulations were made pertaining to the number and categorisation of the elective courses.

In summary, the concept of IC comes into prominence as intercommunal mobility accelerates due to several factors such as technological advancements, globalisation, wars, migrations and economic relations. As a matter of fact, FLE occupies an important place in this context where the reflection of the interconnectedness of culture, language and therefore communication concepts might be distinguished more straightforwardly. Along with all these changes, the perceptions regarding the teachers' and students' role in education in a multicultural context has also altered. Upon this circumstance, various regulations have been required in teacher training programs, which have a crucial role in training of teachers who

can keep themselves updated on the latest developments. Therefore, this study, which focuses on the investigation of the extent to which culture and IC are reflected in these programs as one of the research phases, finds its place in this framework.

### 1.3. Statement of the Problem

The blurring of the social boundaries due to globalisation and several other parameters, as well as the influence of multicultural education settings, has brought some challenges required to be addressed. As the starting point, the approaches to the inclusion of culture teaching within FLE can be addressed. Upon this issue, Lázár (2007) noted on the report published by Council of Europe (CoE) as a guide for the development and assessment of ICC that "there is still very little emphasis placed on the cultural dimension of language learning because very few teacher training institutions include intercultural communication training in their curriculum, and intercultural competence usually does not feature among their graduation criteria" (p. 5). In the forthcoming years, the requirement of an institution regulation was elaborated on several studies. Accordingly, Bektaş-Çentinkaya (2014) remarked that teacher training programs need to encapsulate the development of pre-service teachers' knowledge on the integration of intercultural competence. Similarly, Razı and Tekin (2017) underlined that the results of their study can be utilized in ELT departments in an attempt to revise the programs in view of pre-service teachers' cultural needs. Besides, Civelek and Toplu (2021) put the emphasis on the inadequacy of addressing some cultural components in teacher training curricula and propounded the necessity of revising teacher training programs with the objective of qualifying pre-service teachers' both knowledge and skills of incorporating all the cultural aspects. Eventually, it has been indicated that transformation in teacher education is indispensable. Concordantly, teachers should be equipped with both implementing the intercultural education and actively engaging with the incorporation of a co-constructive and dialogical learning methodologies into their professional development. Intercultural education must be interpolated as a central paradigm into teacher training rather than an alternative supplement. The complete realisation of its transformative potential can only be possible after that perspective shift, and this shift should be implemented in all levels of formal education to perceive intercultural education as an essential framework for 21st century language education (Conti, 2025). Upon examining the

focal points of all these studies, this study has been conducted as a response to the requirement for a renewal in teacher education programs.

Aside from the above-mentioned aspects of teacher education programs, it was noteworthy that there was a need for a paradigm shift in the conceptualisation and instruction of culture. In respect to this, Razı and Tekin (2017) indicated that to acquire a true comprehension of ICC, pre-service teachers need to be guided towards interculturality. In addition, they stated that realisation of a rigorous consideration process is required for the incorporation of this skill into the current curricula of ELT departments in a potential curriculum revision. Similarly, the results of the study conducted by Maijala (2018) demonstrated that pre-service teachers felt the deficiency of knowledge and skills for the systematic integration of liquid/dynamic approaches to culture into practice; therefore, they had remained in between the solid/fluid cultural approaches. Upon the examination of a more recently conducted study by Lallana and Salamanca (2022), similar results had been encountered. They stated that the participants' perceptions were relatively narrow and nationalistic despite the gradual improvement of the teaching programmes in terms of interculturality. In accordance with these studies, it can be inferred that there has still been a requirement for a transformation from static cultural understanding to a dynamic one in ELT departments.

From another point of view, Aleksandrowicz-Pędich et al. (2003), who studied foreign language teachers' standpoints on the inclusion of ICC into language teaching, reported that both pre- and in-service teachers expressed a necessity for the inclusion of a systematic ICC training in FLTE with the integration of various IC teaching materials along with their guidance of implementation. In a more recent study conducted by Tosuncuoğlu (2019), the need for a systematic IC instruction was underlined as it was stated that the cultural dimensions are required to be systematically internalised, conceded and encompassed by language teachers to ensure the enhancement of IC in language classrooms. Lastly, Le et al. (2023) pointed out the deficiency of the teachers' competency, unsuitability of materials and inefficiency of instructional pedagogies for ICC instruction as impediments to the EFL students' ICC development. Similarly, the importance of material development and lesson plans were emphasized by Liddicoat as "While language curricula increasingly

include intercultural understanding or awareness as a goal for language education, there has been little guidance for teachers in curricula about what this means in terms of teaching" (2024, p. 98).

### 1.4. Significance of the Study

This study initially aims to investigate the need for a compulsory IC course from the perspective of both ELT professionals and pre-service teachers and propose a compulsory IC course syllabus including a dynamic and critical approach to IC instruction. In this respect, this study intends to fulfil the requirements addressed by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2014), Razı and Tekin (2017), Civelek and Toplu, (2021), and Conti (2025). Correspondingly, Duisembekova (2020) suggests that needs analysis on pre-service teachers' expectations from intercultural education, and accordingly course and material designs can have an impact on pre-service teachers' ICC beliefs and the integration of ICC into ELT departments. Given these suggestions, it can be stated that this study is aimed as an instrument in contributing to the field of IC research. In addition, various studies (i.e., Díaz and Moore, 2018; Tuncel and Paker, 2018; Uğurlu et al., 2022) put emphasis on the necessity of the compulsory IC courses. In this respect, the study also attempts to conduct a more detailed investigation to fill this gap in the literature by providing a starting point regarding how this compulsory IC course requirement of the education stakeholders can be addressed.

An emphasis on different teacher roles in the suggested syllabus is another distinctive feature of this study. As it was previously stated by Lallana and Salamanca (2020), teachers' changing roles resulted in preventing them to be solely a source of knowledge; therefore, they have been assigned different roles, such as the role of intercultural mediation. From this perspective, teacher education programmes need to realise necessary innovations to graduate teachers who will be able to fulfil the requirements of these roles. It can be remarked that equipping teachers with relevant theoretical knowledge may not be sufficient for them to fulfil the requirements of this active role. Hence, teacher education needs to combine both theoretical instructions developing the knowledge of teachers on IC, and practical instructions developing their skills on how to integrate this knowledge into their teaching practice. In relation to this, this study significantly contributes to the problem indicated by

Maijala (2018) in the previous section, which is having the deficiency of skills to put the knowledge into practice effected participants' stance upon cultural perceptions.

Finally, adopting a critical approach in designing the compulsory IC course syllabus and relevant materials is another significant factor that distinguishes this study from its counterparts in the literature. With the critical perspective, a distinction has been propounded for two forms of education systems, which are banking education and problem-posing education. Freire (2005) explains banking education system as a pedagogical paradigm in which students are regarded as passive recipients of information such "receptacles" or "containers" to be filled by the instructor. Hence, the range of activities that learners are allowed to engage in is limited to obtaining, processing and storing the knowledge. However, problem-posing education put emphasis on the significance on consciousness in conceptualisation of reality. In other words, "[…] people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world […]; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation" (Freire, 2005, p. 83). Besides, problem-posing education dismantles the concept of the dichotomisation of student-teacher roles. Students are regarded as coresearchers in interaction with their instructors rather than passive listeners. From this perspective, it can be stated that this study intends to encourage pre-service teachers to both learn the subject of IC from a critical point of view and teach the subject by adopting the same perspectives in their English teaching practices. To sum up, this study is oriented towards eliminating the previously addressed void and contributing to the relevant literature by providing a sample compulsory IC course syllabus, as well as a sample lesson plan complementary to this syllabus.

### 1.5. Purpose and Research Questions of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to develop a suggested syllabus for a compulsory IC course based on the data obtained from the perspectives of ELT professionals and pre-service EFL teachers. Along with this objective, incorporation of several subjects into lesson plans and IC teaching materials is deemed significant by the researcher of the study, such as critical IC and a dynamic/fluid approach to culture. Furthermore, while designing the suggested syllabus, pre-service teachers' two different roles as both learners

and prospective teachers of IC are considered. Accordingly, presenting both theoretical- and practice-oriented course syllabus is the secondary aim of the study. In other words, the objective of this syllabus is twofold: contributing to the improvement of preservice teachers' IC knowledge and facilitating the development of their IC teaching skills.

### 1.5.1. Research Questions

1. What are the Intercultural Communicative Competence levels of pre-service EFL teachers?

1.1. Is there a statistically significant difference in the IC competence levels of pre-service EFL teachers according to whether they have taken the elective IC course or not?

2. What are pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions regarding culture in general, and more specifically intercultural communication and its place in EFL classes?

3. What are ELT professionals' perceptions regarding culture in general, and more specifically intercultural communication and its place in EFL classes?

4. What are pre-service EFL teachers' opinions regarding the integration and possible content of a compulsory IC course into ELT teacher training programs of Turkish universities?

5. What are ELT professionals' opinions regarding the integration and possible content of a compulsory intercultural communication course into ELT teacher training programs of Turkish universities?

6. How can an IC course syllabus be designed both content-wise and material-wise based on the findings of the present study, as well as some recent discussions regarding culture teaching in language classes?

## 1.6. Definition of Terms

Communicative Competence (CC): According to Hymes (1967), CC refers to the ability of a community member to be knowledgeable about when to speak, when to maintain silence, as well as how to utilize communication codes, where to say what and whom to address.

Cross-cultural Communication: Piller (2017) describes that cross-cultural communication initiates with the assumption that cultural groups are distinctive, and this phenomenon examines these groups' communication practices in a comparative manner.

Intercultural Communication (IC): "[…] intercultural communication generally refers to interpersonal communication between individuals or groups who are affiliated with different cultural groups and/or have been socialized in different cultural (and, in most cases, linguistic) environments" (Jackson, 2014, p. 3).

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC): This term refers to the ability to communicate with individuals from different countries and cultures in a foreign language, and to mediate between people having different cultural backgrounds (Byram, 1997). Similarly, it was reported by Deardorff that, this term was defined as "the ability to communicate effectively, and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (2004, p. 184) in Delphi study.

### 1.7. Limitations of the Study

Considering the findings presented in this study, it can be stated that there are limitations in two aspects of the study. Firstly, data collection in a limited time frame with a cross-sectional methodology can be considered the primary limitation. The data pertaining to pre-service teachers ICC levels were collected from first year and senior-year pre-service teachers with an attempt to focusing exclusively on the influence of the elective IC course on the participants' ICC development. In this regard, conducting a longitudinal empirical study would be more advantageous to interpret the effectiveness of IC courses more comprehensively.

Secondly, investigation of the research problem with a small sample group in a specific higher education institution can be a limiting factor for the generalizability of the findings. The study investigated the perspectives regarding the necessity of the integration

of a compulsory IC course in ELTEP with a sample size of five ELT professionals and four pre-service EFL teachers. In order to minimize this limitation, the data were triangulated. However, including participants from the ELT departments of several higher education institutions of Türkiye would be more efficient to present a more comprehensive interpretation.

## 1.8. The Summary of the Chapter

The first chapter of the study elucidates the background of the study which refers to the theoretical framework in which this study is incorporated. This framework has been developed by starting with the review of the variables that accelerate intercultural communication. Afterwards, it proceeds to discussing the requirement for equipping individuals with contemporary skills that are critical for being compatible with the changing global order. Consequently, the pivotal role of education, most notably language education, is elaborated and the interconnection between language and culture has been elucidated.

Subsequently, the discussion was centred on addressing pedagogical innovations and the evolution of roles in education. The challenges stemming from these changes were meticulously delineated in the scope of problem statement. Generally, the necessity for a reform in teacher education programs created several concerns such as the deficiency in systematic cultural education, the dearth of materials for cultural or intercultural teaching, as well as the need for a paradigm shift in cultural understanding from static to dynamic.

Consequently, following the significance of the study, the purpose and research questions were presented. However, it is important to note that this study is not without certain limitations. The chapter presents a detailed explanation of these limitations and possible recommendations for overcoming these limitations.

# CHAPTER TWO
# REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

## 2.1. Overview of the Chapter

The literature of the study elaborates on three significant subtopics. The initial focus is on the most fundamental aspects of culture such as the definition of the term, the relationship between language and culture, and the significance as well as the role of culture in ELT. Thereafter, the changing approaches to cultural perceptions in FLE, leading to a considerable difference in this study from other intercultural studies in the literature, are explored. Subsequently, the concept of IC that forms the basis of the study is pivoted around the literature; as such it is examined through various perspectives such as the definition of this essential term and the transition process from CC to IC. Furthermore, the IC and ICC models created by the leading researchers in this field are reviewed. In addition to the studies that discuss how IC is addressed in FLE, the reflection of IC on various courses of ELTEP is presented in a detailed way. Finally, the section concludes with a summary of all the topics discussed in the chapter.

## 2.2. Definition of Culture

Given the comprehensiveness and immenseness of the term culture, it can be considered that constituting a single definition adequately encompassing all aspects and dimensions of the term can be a challenging endeavour. In relation to this point of view, it was also denoted that "As a dynamic concept, culture may be perceived from different perspectives and is difficult to define" (Smakova and Paulsrud, 2020, p. 692). Nevertheless, there have been some attempts by some scholars to define the term. Kramsch (1998) defined the term as:

> […] membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings. Even when they have left that community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common system of standards for perceiving believing, evaluating and acting. These standards are what is generally called their "culture". (p. 10)

However, in the forthcoming years Kramsch and Hua's (2016) study indicated that the comparative and nation-based approach to culture, adopted alongside the positivist paradigm in 1980s and 1990s, was shifted in 2000s with the evolvement of constructivist paradigm. In accordance with this paradigm shift, definitions of culture have also been changed. For instance, Liddicoat (2024) defined the phenomenon as "Cultures are emergent, constructed, variable and contingent and are created by participants in groups through their experiences of being together and communicating with each other" (p. 101). It can thus be concluded that this paradigm shift had had an impact on how culture is perceived. To illustrate, culture was considered from the perspective of common denominators, in other words standards, that served as an indicator for comparisons in 1990s, whereas the same phenomenon was perceived as a dynamic entity through the lenses of constructivist paradigm. This changing approach towards culture has been delineated in the following sections.

### 2.3. The Relationship between Language and Culture

The relationship between language and culture have been addressed from diverse perspectives so far. Jiang (2000) remarked that "[l]anguage simultaneously reflects culture, and is influenced and shaped by it" (p. 328). Gün (2023) elaborated on the reciprocal relationship between language and culture; and expressed that the impact of culture is associated with serving as a means for shaping lexicon, expressions and communication practices, whereas the effect of language on culture is related to serving as a tool for the transmission of traditions, values, beliefs and social standards, and facilitating the protection and evolution of cultural identity.

From another perspective, the interrelation of culture and language is associated with meaning making. In respect to this aspect, Liddicoat (2024) stated that linguistic meaning depends on its context, and culture, as a context for communication, plays a role in the making of meaning and interplays with linguistic meaning. The issue is not only about understanding but interpretation what is conveyed in the context in which it is expressed. To sum up, language and culture are two mutually interacting phenomena. The process of meaning formation is considered one of the most significant aspects of this interaction.

Hence it can be concluded that it is necessary to develop the linguistic competence in conjunction with the ability to interpret the cultural context.

## 2.4. Changes in Approaches to Culture

As it was addressed in defining the concept of culture, a paradigm shift has been aroused in early 2000s with the effect constructivist paradigm. This shift has brought about a change in the approaches to culture. As a result, static cultural understanding, also labelled as solid (Dervin and Dirba, 2006), which reinforces the essentialist cultural approach, gradually transitioned to fluid/dynamic cultural understanding. The terminology and the reflections of this transition on ELT were thoroughly elucidated in the following subsection.

### 2.4.1. Static/Solid vs. Dynamic/Liquid Understanding of Culture

According to Lou (2023), "[…] the 'solid' understanding regards culture as a solid and unchangeable heritage of communities with objectified and identifiable characteristics, such as languages, clothing styles, nationalities and religions" (p. 95). In 1980s and 1990s, solid cultural understanding was visible in studies and definitions of culture. For example, Hofstede's (1984) IBM study can be considered as one of the prominent studies in which the nation-based categorisation adopted within the static cultural understanding was reflected. Conti (2025) argues that Hofstede's (1984) study consists of oversimplified cross-cultural comparisons in which stereotypes are underpinned, and in which cultures are viewed as a collection of static attributes overlooking the heterogeneity and intricacy of the personal experiences. Culture is conceptualised as a phenomenon having a major connection with society rather than individuals, their opinions and behaviours.

Considering these, essentialism, which is explained by Conti (2025) as "Essentialism posits that cultures possess inherent, fixed characteristics that define them, leading to rigid categorisations of individuals based on national or 'ethnic' backgrounds" (p. 419), can be deemed as a term that is very similar to static/solid culture. Therefore, it can be inferred that individuals showing the indicators of static cultural understanding may also have an

essentialist approach to culture. In other words, the influence of society on the construction of culture is emphasized in the scope of static cultural understanding. Apart from that, individuals having static cultural understanding may be inclined to articulate cultural categorisations and generalisations.

Unlike the static understanding of culture, fluid/dynamic cultural understanding puts emphasis on individuals and their social interaction in the construction of culture. In 2000s, the fluid/dynamic culture concept has gained importance along with the development of constructive paradigm. The effect of the constructive paradigm on individuals' cultural understanding can be clearly identified in Spencer-Oatey and Franklin's (2009) definition of culture, which is "Culture is associated with social groups, but no two individuals within a group share exactly the same cultural characteristics. Culture affects people's behaviour and interpretations of behaviour. Culture is acquired and/or constructed through interaction with others" (p. 15).

### 2.5. Models of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Although there are various models focusing on different aspects of culture, IC and ICC, two of the most prominent ones are Byram's (1997) ICC model and Deardorff's (2004) model of intercultural competence were elucidated under the title of models of ICC. Byram's (1997) model of ICC was constructed based on five components, which are savoirs (knowledge), savoir être (attitudes), savoir comprendre and savoir apprendre/faire (skills), savoir s'engager (critical cultural awareness).

According to Bayram's (1997) explanation, the first component, that is knowledge (savoirs), refers to the comprehension of cultural practices, products, social and personal communication patterns of social groups belonging to both the heritage culture and foreign cultures. The other component which refers to the affective domain of ICC, that is savoir être, refers to the affective traits of intercultural speakers including curiosity, openness, and deconstruction of beliefs about individuals' own culture and of disbeliefs about the culture of the interlocutors. As to savoir comprendre and savoir apprendre/faire, both concepts refer

to the skills component of ICC. Accordingly, savoir comprendre is defined as "ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own (Byram, 1997, p. 52). Savoir apprendre/faire which refers to skills of discovery and interaction is defined as "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (Byram, 1997, p. 52). Finally, savoir s'engager is the component that focuses on the critical cultural awareness and political instruction parameters of ICC. This component refers to the identification of cultural evaluation criteria and accordingly evaluating the cultural practices, products and perspectives by adopting a multicultural perspective. In the model, the interrelation between the intercultural competence and competencies that constitutes CC has been also portrayed.

In one of the latest models of CC proposed by Celce-Murcia (2007), discourse competence that refers to the meticulous selection, placement and organisation of lexical items, linguistic structures and expressions to convey a cohesive and coherent verbal message takes place at the centre of communication. The other components including the linguistic, formulaic, sociocultural, interactional and strategic competencies, are depicted in a reciprocal interaction with discourse competence. Therefore, the model represents that having the knowledge of linguistics, where to use this knowledge, how to use it in different social structures or situations, how to engage in a conversation, and how to overcome communication breakdowns can be sufficient for an effective communication. As to the conceptualisation of culture in this model, Celce-Murcia (2007) stated that cultural and cross-cultural education should be integrated in language education in the form of geographical, historical, literary, and sociocultural knowledge associated with the target community. Therefore, CC models are considered as having deficiency in terms of the integration of intercultural component. From this point of view, it can be inferred that Byram (1997) intended to make a significant contribution to the preceding CC model rather than propounding an entirely unconsolidated model.

However, various criticisms have been expressed against this model. Hoff (2020) argues that Byram's (1997) model is attributed to rather simplistic and static conception of national culture resulting in a misinterpretation of contemporary societal patterns as well as

constraining the roles that individuals having multicultural and multilingual traits may adopt in the process of learning a language. Byram's (1997) propensity to connect the word "country" with culture in the descriptions of savoirs and objectives of the model was presented as the reason for this critique. It was also enunciated by Hoff (2020) that the notion of identity in Byram's (1997) model was portrayed as a unidimensional phenomenon disregarding its multifaceted structure.

The model is also criticised because of its approach to intercultural learning. According to Díaz and Moore (2018), in such IC models, intercultural learning is conceptualised as a linear, gradually progressive developmental phenomenon. Therefore, this perception might lead to the assumption that there is a seemingly perfect and final accomplishment, such as the idealised intercultural communicator, which individuals can achieve. Consequently, despite the model's comprehensive scope encapsulating critical IC, there were some major issues such as reinforcement of the notion of static/solid culture and reduction of the profound and complex dispositions of identity and intercultural learning.

Another prominent model for IC instruction was constructed by Deardorff (2004). In this model IC was depicted in two different modes. In the first mode, the development of IC was expounded with a pyramid model. Afterwards, this model was transformed into a cyclical mode to reflect the process-oriented and multifaceted essence of IC development. As Deardorff (2004) states, this model has progressed from individualism to interactionism. In other words, the model initially centralises equipping the individuals with positive attitudes. Thus, it aims to establish a ground for the actualisation of necessary skills in interpersonal/intercultural interactions. In this model, four stages including several components have been identified. The first stage, which is requisite attitudes, comprises affective components such as holding other cultures in esteem, adopting a non-judgemental stance and having tolerance of ambiguity. The following stage compels attention to the cognitive domains of IC and encapsulates building self-cultural awareness and extending sociolinguistic, contextual and culture-specific knowledge regarding various communities. The skills for the realisation of this stage are also presented; and an interaction between these two components is demonstrated. It can thus be deduced that skills are required in the

acquisition of knowledge; and knowledge may be a prerequisite for mastering the higher order skills such as interpreting, analysing, relating.

This model differs from its counterparts by involving two distinct stages identifying the reflections of the actualisation of previous stages, which are titled as "desired internal outcomes" and "desired external outcomes" (Deardorff, 2004). The internal outcomes, such as adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelative stance and empathy may be interpreted as an individuals' inner system of reference applied to fulfil the external outcomes. The external outcomes, on the other hand refers to the establishment of a successful communication drawing upon all the values gained in the previous stages. The model does not have successive phases, however. That is, individuals may actualise the external outcomes stage immediately after the attitude or knowledge stages.

Ethnorelative perspectives presented under the category of the internal outcomes can be regarded as another distinctive feature of this model. Ethno-relativism, which is theorised by Bennett (1996), is described by Deardorff (2009) as recognizing other cultures feasible in their own merits and striving to comprehend them within their own environment. In addition, ethnorelativism regards the perception of an individual's own beliefs and behaviours as just one of the ways in the construction of reality. Considering these, ethnorelativism promotes the embracement of cultural diversity and contradicts with essentialism. To sum up, the model proposed by Deardorff (2004) has been devised with an innovative approach to the critiques discussed in Byram's (1997) model, adopting a cyclical and multifaceted structure and avoiding the essentialist/static notion of culture by acknowledging the phenomenon of ethnorelativism.

### 2.6. Critical (Inter)cultural Teaching and ELT

Arcagök and Yılmaz (2020) express that in current Turkish EFL setting, English lectures offered in higher education institutions intend to empower pre-service teachers with both knowledge and awareness of culture. Similarly, Karakaş (2021) underlines the considerable influence of the historical, social, political contexts on the objectives of

language education, particularly in ELT setting. Despite its undeniable significance, merely integrating the concept of IC into ELT may not be sufficient. According to Liddicoat (2024), contrary to the static conceptualisation of culture in Byram's (1997) ICC model, learners are active interpretative and respondents of linguistic and cultural knowledge rather than passive recipients. Even though Byram's (1997) approach underscoring the active engagement of learners into IC has adopted an innovative stance in IC education, there are still weak points in the integration of dynamic and critical IC.

In postmodernist paradigm, which challenges diverse forms of essentialism, language and culture are considered as dynamic, hybrid, and multifaceted entities. Therefore, critical approach is deemed necessary to transcend the reductionist and essentialist approaches in which intricacy, creativity and variety of individuals' actions are overlooked (Kubota, 2012). From this perspective, critical IC education needs to be meticulously incorporated into language education to overcome essentialism, static/solid culturalism and ethnocentrism. Otherwise, even in approaches asserting to adopt critical cultural stance, it may still be possible to detect the traces of static culture understanding and essentialism. To manage this integration successfully, it needs to be determined from which perspective criticality is going to be addressed.

Kubota (2012) noted that the word critical is frequently associated with critical thinking, which aims to enhance individuals' cognitive abilities such as higher order thinking skills; however, this criticality frequently neglects to question the sociopolitical dimension and power structures. In relation to this, Piller (2012) explains the other meaning of the term critical by stating that "[…] critical study of intercultural communication needs to ask who makes culture relevant to whom, how, in which context and for which purposes?" (p. 12). The description of this secondary meaning can be detailed by Coşkun-Ögeyik's (2021) statement, which is "[…] CP basically intends to help learners become conscious of their life conditions, power relations oppression etc. and empower them to oppose the dedicated roles and the shared they get" (pp. 90-91). Another prominent scholar of critical IC education, who is Halualani (2011) elaborates on her own critical intercultural teaching by stating that she intends to guide her students to interrogate inequalities and power structures. She emphasizes the role of being a lifetime agent of change by expressing that through taking

action towards the issues of injustice and power imbalances in the scope of culture and IC, positive social transformation can be established. Similarly, Özcan and Gürsoy (2021) argue that CP pursuits a positive change in classroom settings in accordance with its overreaching objective of contributing to societal transformation by means of education.

To sum up, the term criticality refers to two distinct, but at the same time similar, concepts. To start with, individuals are supposed to apply higher order thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis and synthesis to interpret the cultural and intercultural cases or issues. Criticality addressed in the scope of CP also deals with socio-political aspects of IC. All in all, incorporating the critical dimension into IC maintains its importance in any way.

### 2.7. IC Studies in ELT

IC studies have been conducted for years. In this subsection, several studies encompassing IC education in ELT is going to be presented to portray a comprehensive picture illustrating the place of culture and IC in ELT context. Firstly, Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2014) conducted a mixed method research study with pre-service foreign language teachers to investigate the effect of a cultural education on their intercultural competence. As a result, the instruction was found to be influential on the participants' knowledge of culture, intercultural awareness and skills. However, it was stated that the instruction did not demonstrate any significant impact on their cultural attitudes. The author suggested that a systematic IC education with the inclusion of several topics into speaking classes such as stereotypes, ethnocentrism, culture, values might promote the intercultural competence.

The study of Genç (2018) investigated 145 prospective English teachers' ICC considering several parameters. Pre-service teachers were found to demonstrate a rather low performance in the questionnaire; senior EFL teachers and participants having overseas experience outperformed in the ICC scale compared to others. Considering the effect of overseas experiences in the participants' ICC development, the researcher suggested that EFL teachers should be encouraged to be involved in programmes supporting intercultural mobility in a systematic manner.

In the study conducted by Köksal and Genç (2020), a total of 200 pre-service teachers' stance towards culture teaching was investigated. It was found that there was a significant relationship between participants' study year in ELTEP and their cultural or intellectual stance. In other words, the last two years of ELTEP had significance in pre-service teachers' culturalist or interculturalist stance. A change in third and senior year pre-service teachers' perspectives towards cultural issues was revealed. Thus, the importance of (inter)cultural training in ELTEP was emphasized.

The study conducted by Gedik-Bal and Savaş (2022) intended to investigate state school EFL teachers' intercultural language teaching practices and perceptions. Interviews conducted with 30 teachers revealed that professional training and materials were necessary for teachers to further develop their students' intercultural competence.

The other study conducted by Hua and Lee (2025) with Vietnamese EFL teachers. They underlined several requirements for facilitating the integration of cultural sensitivity in language education. Accordingly, it was recommended that teachers needed to be supported with curriculum flexibility, technological supplies, and professional training.

### 2.7.1. Critical and Dynamic IC Education Studies

In another study, Fang and Elyas (2021) conducted a case study with ELT instructors. The researchers aimed to examine the incorporation of critical literacy into Chinese teacher education. Pre-service teachers were found to be unaware the power of critical education. It was stated that after a training session some of the participants indicated the significance of problematising the conventional, essentialist culture notion.

In Yaprak and Özmen's (2021) study, the integration of critical thinking skills into ELTEP was addressed. It was an empirical study including a total of 34 participants. Critical thinking skills were found to be crucial in promoting intercultural awareness, knowledge and sensitivity.

In Lou's (2023) study, the cultural perceptions of Chinese EFL teachers were investigated with a critical, fluid cultural framework. Teachers were found to have a complicated and contradictory cultural understanding, which fluctuated between static and fluid cultural understandings.

The other study conducted by Gurney and Demuro (2025) investigated the participants' cultural understanding from the perspective of fluid/fixed, essentialist/non-essentialist. The study was exploratory qualitative, and 14 participants participated. It was explored that participants were inclined to adopt only one approach, either the essentialist or the dynamic one. The researchers suggested that this binary notion needed to be approached from a critical perspective, and that having knowledge of both dynamic and static culture would be beneficial.

### 2.7.2. IC Syllabus Design Studies

Dombi (2011) conducted a study focusing on the comprehensive examination of a total of 10 IC course syllabi taught in various higher education institutions. As a result, it was revealed that the predominant approach was to teach IC from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Besides, qualitative content analysis indicated that cultural studies, communication studies and linguistics were the predominant concepts addressed in the syllabi.

Kural and Bayyurt (2016) conducted a mixed method study exploring the effect of an intercultural competence syllabus on their participants' global communication development. Consequently, it was revealed that the participants developed in terms of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) awareness, sociolinguistic knowledge, intercultural sensitivity, (inter)cultural attitudes in global communication. Besides, the significance of lecturer's IC and ELF awareness on IC preparation of the participants was indicated.

In Mighani et al.'s (2020) study, the aim was to explore the influence of an IC course on the improvement of the participants' ICC level. A total of 33 pre-service teachers participated in the study. It was revealed that mediating IC tasks and activities had a significant impact on the participants' ICC levels. It was also found that taking an IC course resulted in a significant difference in the improvement of the participants' IC levels in terms of the cognitive and behavioural aspects.

In Uğurlu et al.'s (2022) research, the aim was to develop a curriculum for both World Englishes and IC courses. A total of 53 participants took part in the study. One of the most remarkable results of the study was that more than half of the participants stated that IC and World Englishes courses needed to be included in the ELTEP as compulsory courses. The Table 1 below represents a summary of the recommendations on IC education indicated in the beforementioned studies and the relevant literature.

Table 1

Recommendations for IC Education

| Recommendations for IC Education | Studies |
|---|---|
| **1. Training for professional training regarding the development of IC form several perspectives** | Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2014); Hoa and Vien (2019); Köksal and Genç (2020); Mighani et al. (2020); Fang and Elyas (2021); Gedik-Bal and Savaş (2022); Conti (2025); Hua and Le (2025) |
| **2. Training for critical IC education** | Fang and Elyas (2021); Lou (2023) |
| **3. Training for the development of dynamic/fluid IC** | Civelek and Toplu (2021); Fang and Elyas (2021); Gurney and Demuro (2025) |
| **4. Revision of teacher training and curriculum from several aspects** | Belli (2018); Díaz and Moore (2018); Tomak and Karaman (2019); Arcagök and Yılmaz (2020); Yaprak and Özmen (2021); Hua and Le (2025) |
| **5. The need for a compulsory IC course** | Díaz and Moore (2018); Tuncel and Paker (2018); Uğurlu et al. (2022); Conti (2025) |

Table 1 continued

| | |
|---|---|
| **6. The need for a theory-and practice-based IC education** | Mighani et al. (2020) |
| **7. Incorporation of IC education as early as possible** | Mighani et al. (2020) |
| **8. Systematic IC education** | Maijala (2018); Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2014) |
| **9. Appropriate materials and resources** | Mighani et al. (2020) |

## 2.8. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter elucidates the comprehensive review of the literature. First, it addresses the description of culture from different perspectives. Afterwards, the interrelation of culture and language is thoroughly delineated. Then, two prominent IC models are discussed considering their strengths, weaknesses and critiques. Subsequently, critical cultural education is addressed from diverse perspective including its definition and significance for FLE. Lastly, several prominent studies conducted in the field of IC and FLE are elaborated.

# CHAPTER THREE
# METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. Overview of the Chapter

This chapter comprehensively elucidates the research methodology comprising research design, setting, participants, research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures. First, a comprehensive explanation regarding the research design is provided along with the rationale for adopting this design. The research purpose and research questions are also given here. Subsequently, the setting and participants are thoroughly described encompassing the sampling procedures of the study population and demographics of the sample group. Following this, the chapter proceeds with an in-depth explanation of data collection instruments including validity and reliability measurements of the questionnaire, and the development of the interview questions. Thereafter, data collection procedure is thoroughly delineated for each phase of the study. Eventually, data analysis procedure is presented considering each phase of the study, and a brief summary of the chapter is provided.

## 3.2. Research Design

This study primarily investigates the necessity for a compulsory IC course in ELTEP from the perspective of ELT professionals and pre-service EFL teachers with the purpose of submitting a sample syllabus. The initial phase was to conduct quantitative measurements to establish IC levels of pre-service EFL teachers. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted for an in-depth examination of the participants' considerations regarding the place of culture teaching, as well as the integration of a compulsory IC course in ELTEP. Accordingly, a multi-dimensional mixed method research design was implemented in this study.

Multi-dimensional mixed method design can be clarified by the term multiphase mixed-method design, which is one of the mixed method research strategies. According to

Creswell (2012), multiphase mixed method design refers to the investigation of a subject or problem through a series of stages or independent studies. Therefore, in contrast to other sequential or convergent mixed method designs, one phase of the study may not be required to be explanatory or exploratory for the other phases. In the Figure 1 below, a detailed description of each phase is presented.

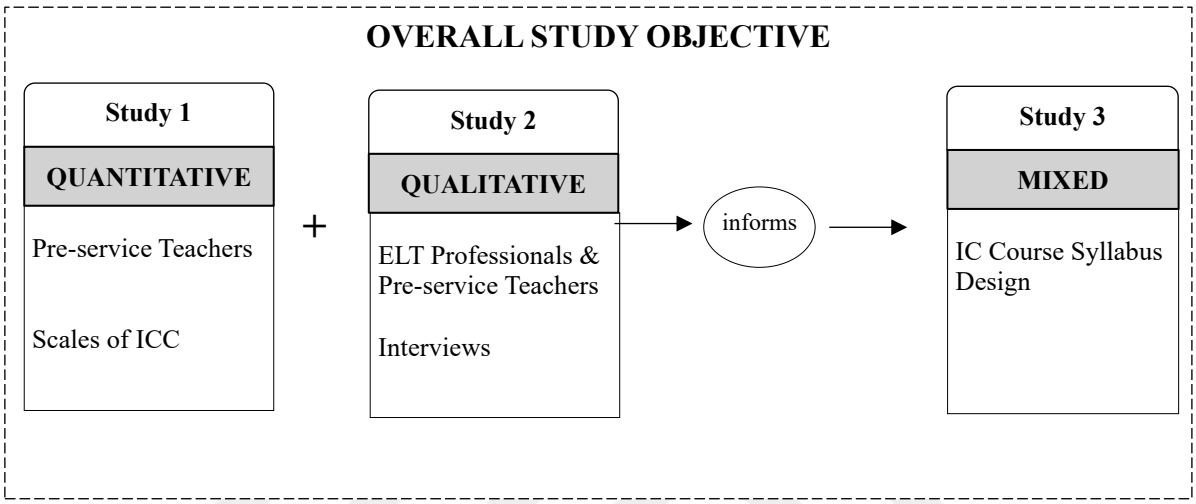



Figure 1. Phases of multi-dimensional design of the study

There are two justifications that come into prominence in the implementation of this model. Primarily, the mixed method design is considered convenient for addressing multifaceted research problems by assembling statistical data and various qualitative data such as individuals' standpoints to provide an in-depth understanding (Creswell and Creswell, 2023). Additionally, Creswell (2012) underlines that the multiphase mixed methods design is effective in terms of conducting multiple projects to gain a complete understanding of the overall program objective. Thereby, multi-dimensional mixed method may be regarded as one of the most suitable approaches in addressing the overall objective of this study, which is exploring the perceived necessity of a compulsory IC course in ELTEP; and how to design a syllabus for such a course by incorporating critical and dynamic IC perspectives.

### 3.3. Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in the ELT department of the education faculty of a state university in Türkiye during 2024-2025 academic year. A total of 113 pre-service EFL teachers took part in the quantitative phase of the study, and nine participants were involved in the qualitative phase, five of whom were ELT professionals and four of whom were pre-service EFL teachers, including two first year students and two seniors. First year pre-service participants were required not to have any IC education experience to reveal the effect of the "Intercultural Communication and Language Education" elective course on pre-service EFL teachers' ICC development. Therefore, the participants, who reported themselves as second-year or sophomore pre-service teachers or did not state their class, were identified to have the possibility of violating the reliability of the quantitative data since they have the possibility of taking the elective IC course or any other culture-related courses such as "World Englishes and Culture" encompassing IC as a subtopic. Consequently, nine participants were eliminated, and 104 participants were involved in the quantitative data analysis process. The average age of the participants was 20,2; and their age range varied from 18 to 25. Detailed information on demographic variables of the participants is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Demographic Variables of the Participants ($N$ = 104)

| Variable | First Year | | Senior Year | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | *N* | *Value (%)* | *N* | *Value (%)* | *N* | *Value (%)* |
| Female | 45 | 73,8 | 17 | 39,5 | 62 | 59,6 |
| Male | 16 | 26,2 | 22 | 51,2 | 38 | 36,5 |
| Not Specified | 4 | 0 | 4 | 9,3 | 4 | 3,8 |

Demographic information regarding the participants who has taken part in the semi-structured interviews demonstrated that the group of ELT professionals consisted of three female and two male participants, while the group of pre-service EFL teachers consisted of

three female and one male participants. The mean value regarding the ELT professionals' teaching experience was 21,4 and ranged between 14 and 30 years. As to the pre-service EFL teachers, the average age of the group was 20,5 ranging between 18 and 23 years. In reference to the question investigating their language learning experience, all pre-service teachers asserted that their English learning process had a history dating back almost to their childhood years. In addition, three of the four participants stated that they previously had the opportunity to interact with diverse cultures as a result of their abroad experience in various countries such as Azerbaijan, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greek, the Netherlands and the United States of America, while the other participant stated that she gained experience with various cultures by communicating with people having diverse cultural backgrounds through touristic activities and online games despite not having any experience abroad. Both sample groups were composed of participants who had an extensive background on intercultural interactions; therefore, their standpoints on the integration of IC into ELTEP carried considerable importance for this study.

### 3.3.1. Sampling Procedures

As Dörnyei (2007) elucidated, the objective of the sampling procedure is to identify representatives who are highly similar to the study population; and this procedure can be categorized into two strategies termed as probability and nonprobability samplings. Probability sampling including random, stratified random, systematic and cluster sampling methods, refers to the identification of participants regardless of any expository parameters. However, non-probability sampling refers to the identification of participants considering various factors in relation to the research purpose; hence, this category is also referred as purposive sampling. While the non-probability sampling strategy is utilized in large-scale studies for generalisation purposes, small-scale studies targeting two or three distinct groups or a particular group frequently employ purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2018).

Different sampling methods were employed for each phase and group of this study. In the quantitative dimension of the study, the criterion sampling method was utilized to establish the groups to whom the ICC scales were given. This sampling method is described by Dörnyei (2007) as the identification of the participants based on their compliance with

predetermined criteria. Whether the participants had attended any IC course or not was determined as the sampling criterion. The first-year pre-service teachers, who were not required to attend any cultural courses or elective IC courses according to ELTEP and senior-year pre-service teachers, who had enrolled in the elective IC course titled as "Intercultural Communication and Language Education" were identified as the sample groups. Thus, it was also intended to investigate whether an elective IC course would exert a significant influence on the participants' IC level. The pre-service teachers who were in their second or third year in the ELTEP were not included in the study since taking other culture-related courses such as World Englishes and Culture might have produced a confounding effect in determining the influence of the IC course. Pertaining to the sample size, Cohen et al. (2018) indicated that there are diverse views in the literature and explained that minimum 30 participants are considered as sufficient for the entire sample in one of these views, while minimum of 30 participants are recommended for each variable or sample group in the other views. Considering these views, it can be stated that sample size of the pre-service EFL teacher group can be considered as sufficient since the study consists of four variables and two research groups.

In the qualitative dimension of the study, purposeful random sampling that refers to employing a random sampling method with a relatively small group of participants (Mertens, 2015) was utilized in selecting the participants for the semi-structured interviews. Regarding the advantages of purposeful random sampling, Mertens (2015) notes that it may prevent the selection of cases that solely reflect positive or negative aspects of the investigated subject. From this viewpoint, Mertens' (2015) statement can be presented as the justification of adopting this sampling methodology for semi-structured interviews. Pertaining to the sample size for the qualitative studies, it is stated that this number may vary depending on different circumstances (Dörnyei, 2007). Considering that there is a total of nine cases in this study, the sample size can be considered sufficient for the qualitative phase.

### 3.4. Research Instruments

To ensure the data triangulation, a variety of quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments were utilised in this study. The scales of ICC developed by Göncü

Ergün (2016) was administered to the participants in the quantitative phase while semi-structured interviews were conducted in the qualitative phase. The findings from the quantitative phase have significance in ascertaining the participants' current levels of ICC, as well as in detecting their expectations regarding the integration of a compulsory IC course into their education program. The findings from the qualitative phase have significance in exploring the participants' cultural and intercultural approaches, their stance on the place of culture and IC in ELTEP. The features of the data collection instruments and relevant information about their reliability and validity are going to be thoroughly elucidated in the subsequent sections.

### 3.4.1. Survey for Measuring Pre-service EFL Teachers' Levels of ICC

The "Scales of ICC" developed by Göncü Ergün (2016) was administered to measure the extent to which first-year and senior-year pre-service EFL teachers developed ICC. The components of ICC addressed in the report of CoE formed a basis for the development of this scale. It consisted of 28 items categorized under four components entitled as "Attitude Scale", "Knowledge Scale", "Skills Scale" and "Action Scale". The original scale is presented in Appendix A. Explanatory factor analysis was conducted for each component. The researcher reported that the total variance explained 47,33% in attitude scale, 43,92% in skills scale, 51,30% in knowledge scale, and 51,12% in action scale. Additionally, the validity of the scale was established by t-test and correlation analyses measuring the linguistic equivalence of each component. It was reported that the English and Turkish versions of the scales did not differ significantly.

As to the reliability procedures of the scales of ICC, Göncü Ergün (2016) stated that Cronbach Alpha coefficient, split half correlation and test-retest correlation analyses were conducted for each component. According to the results, Cronbach Alpha coefficients were calculated as $\alpha = .80$ for attitude scale, $\alpha = .78$ for skills scale, $\alpha = .84$ for knowledge scale, $\alpha = .83$ for action scale. Drawing upon these findings, Göncü Ergün (2016) revealed that the scales fulfilled the requirements of having a high degree of internal consistency. Therefore, they are considered to be valid and reliable tools for this study. In addition to the validity and reliability of the instruments, the fact that it concentrates on each component of ICC and

utilizes the descriptions addressed in a significant report as a guide during the scale development process can be regarded as the justifications for implementing this instrument in this study.

Following the survey, pre-service EFL teachers were provided with a checklist prepared by the researcher of this study to explore their expectations regarding the possible content of the suggested IC course syllabus. The topics were determined based on their frequency of existence in language teaching materials. Most of the topics were also compatible with the cultural components provided in the inventory of cultural components developed by Razı (2012). In addition, the topic of 'stereotypes' was included since it was considered as one of the indicators of static cultural understanding. This content suggestion was also in line with the topics suggested in Bektaş-Çentinkaya's (2014) study. Since it was stated by Cohen et al. (2018) that expert review was one of the ways to ensure content and construct validity, the reliability of the checklist was established through expert validation of the supervisor regarding the content of the checklist.

### 3.4.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

To conduct a further investigation on the participants' cultural and intercultural perceptions, semi-structure interviews were utilized. According to Brinkmann (2014), semi-structured interviews can be advantageous in terms of facilitating the follow-up of the research aspects deemed significant by the interviewer and interviewee and also in terms of enabling the interviewees to elaborate on their views regarding the research problem; thus, data-producing potential of the interviews can be utilized more effectively. The implementation of this interview model in this study can be justified by its flexibility. Thereby, the possibility of confronting some problems particular to structured or unstructured interviews such as overlooking some significant perspectives or deviation from the scope of interviews can be prevented; and the investigation can be deepened within the boundaries of the scope of the research.

As to developing the interview questions and ensuring their validity and reliability, the questions were designed by the researcher by taking the relevant literature into consideration. For example, the participants were asked to define culture and IC to reveal their cultural understanding since it was seen in the literature that the changing paradigms influenced the definitions of these concepts. Additionally, their IC education background, and the challenges encountered in intercultural interactions were investigated to reveal the place of IC in ELT. Subsequently, expert validation of the supervisor was employed to ensure the questions' validity and reliability. Following consultation with the expert, the revised questions were implemented to two different participant groups. While the questions posed to the pre-service EFL teachers investigated their IC experiences, their cultural or intercultural understanding, as well as the possible challenges or benefits that may have been encountered, and their possible experiences of taking an IC course in their previous education; the questions addressed to ELT professionals prioritized their opinions on the place of IC courses in ELT and the issues that may be significant in the integration of IC courses into ELTEP. Besides, the ELT professionals' opinions about culture and IC teaching were also explored. The interview questions administered to both pre-service EFL teachers and ELT professionals are given in Appendices B and C respectively.

### 3.5. Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected in three phases during the study. First, approvals of the ethical committee and the institution (see Appendices D and E respectively) were obtained. Subsequently, the administration procedure of the scale of ICC was delicately scheduled in coordination with the thesis supervisor. Administering the semi-structured interviews was the last data collection procedure.

During the administration of the data collection instruments, some measures were taken to enhance the possibility of reaching as many voluntary respondents as possible and ensure the quality of the collected data. According to Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), implementing the survey in real contexts provides considerably higher returns than other administration types such as delivering surveys online or by e-mail. With respect to this issue, in a distant data collection mode, respondents are liable for completing and returning

the surveys; however, this frequently leads to their failure. Accordingly, the first measure was delivering the survey by hand in the classroom environment. Moreover, group administration, which was defined by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) as implementing the instrument when target participants assemble to attend a course, was adopted as the method. The objective was to achieve the maximum number of participants in a small sample group. The presence of the researchers in data collection setting was the second measure. The presence of researchers and an authority figure in the research setting, such as the participants' teachers may have a positive impact on the participants' willingness to take part in the study in terms of creating a positive attitude towards the process, informing participants regarding the research purpose and managing the possible questions and problems (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). Considering these, the quantitative data collection process of the first-year pre-service teachers was conducted in cooperation with the supervisor as an authority for the respondents and the researcher. The rationale was to ensure the data quality by preventing the possible problems that might arise during the process. As to the administration of the scale to the senior-year pre-service teachers, in addition to the previously mentioned measures, the data were collected while they were attending their elective IC course. Hence, it was ensured that the participant group complied with their sampling criterion.

As Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) emphasized, providing participants with adequate initial information about the survey and obtaining their consent to participate is considered an essential stage. In this context, at the beginning of the data collection process in each class, the respondents were provided an informed consent form declaring that they voluntarily participated in the study and gave consent to the use of the collected data for research purposes. Before completing the survey, they were instructed to review this consent form and provide their consent in case they are volunteer to be involved in the study.

The qualitative data collection procedure was completed with five ELT professionals and four pre-service EFL teachers. Immediately after the coding process of quantitative data, invitation e-mails were sent to the sample group of ELT professionals to identify their voluntariness and availability for taking part in the qualitative phase of this study. Along with the rigorous planning of the suitable schedule for ELT professionals, the sampling

procedure for the pre-service teachers was arranged by the supervisor. The voluntary participants were directed to communicate with the researcher. Consequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted in the designated dates.

All interviews were conducted individually and in Turkish, the native language of the participants. The objectives were to facilitate self-expression and verbal fluency; and thus, to gather a more comprehensive qualitative data. Before the questions were asked, all participants were meticulously informed about the objective of the study, the collected data would only be used for research purposes and that only the researcher and supervisor of the study would have the access to the data. It was also precisely stated that their identity would be kept confidential, and their participation would not influence their school achievement under any circumstances. Consequently, both verbal and written consent of each participant were obtained.

Each interview with pre-service teachers lasted approximately eight minutes. On the other hand, the interviews with the ELT professionals approximately lasted 25 minutes. Subsequent to the transcription of all the interviews, the transcriptions were subjected to the respondent validation, which refers to submitting the data or research findings back to the participants to ensure that the researcher had truly captured the investigated social world (Bryman, 2012). Thereby, the credibility of the data was established. Once respondent validation procedure completed, the transcriptions were analysed through content analysis, which is thoroughly explained in the following section. Figure 2 depicts the entire data collection process.

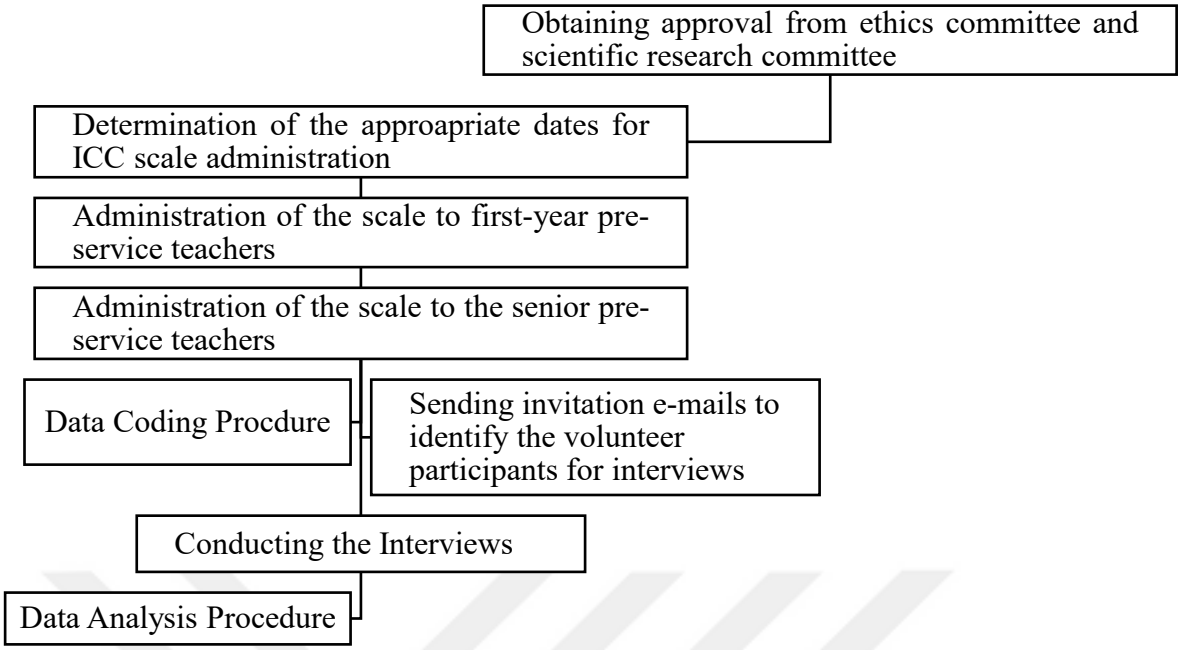



Figure 2. Data collection process

### 3.6. Data Analysis Procedures

Both statistical and qualitative content analyses were conducted on the data. For the study' quantitative dimension, statistical analyses were conducted to explore the responses provided in the Scales of ICC. Concordantly, pre-service EFL teachers' level of ICC was investigated considering all subcomponents of IC. As for the qualitative dimension, semi-structured interviews were meticulously analysed to explore the current status of IC courses in ELTEP and perspectives pertaining to the requirements of a compulsory IC course in these programs. In the following sections, analyses carried out for each dimension of the study are presented with a comprehensive explanation.

#### 3.6.1. Analysis of the Scales of ICC

The 'scales of ICC' was analysed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 26.0 data analysis software. Initially, data coding and labelling procedures were applied to prepare the data for statistical analysis. The data preparation procedure proceeded with the identification of possible erroneous data that might violate the reliability of the

results. Subsequently, the distribution of the sample groups, which was expressed as one of the assumptions required for conducting parametric tests (Kerr et al., 2002), was analysed since the results of normality analysis is a determinant for the type of analysis to be conducted. The results demonstrated that normal distribution was established for both first and senior year pre-service EFL teachers in the entire scale. The skewness and kurtosis values for first-year pre-service teachers were found to be -0,20 and -0,60, respectively. Besides, these values were found to be -0,57 and -0,83 for senior pre-service teachers, respectively. As to the entire participant group, skewness and kurtosis were found to be -0,35 and -0,24, respectively. Considering the values were between ±1, it was inferred that the distribution was symmetrical and suitable for normal distribution. In addition, Shapiro-Wilk test, which yielded more precise results (Field, 2009), resulted as ($W$= 0,98, $p$ > .05) for first year, ($W$= 0,97, $p$ > .05) for senior year, ($W$= 0,98, $p$ > .05) for the entire group of participants. This also demonstrated that the ICC scale scores were normally distributed for both participant groups.

After eliminating unreliable responses and ensuring normality of samples, Cronbach alpha coefficients were re-evaluated to verify the consistency of the scale within the current sample of the study. The results were found to be $\alpha$ = .82 for the attitude scale, $\alpha$ = .77 for the skills scale, $\alpha$ = .83 for the knowledge scale, $\alpha$ = .83 for the action scale, and $\alpha$ = .92 for the entire scale. This indicated that the instrument demonstrated high reliability for the current sample.

Following this data preparation process, descriptive statistics were conducted to analyse the demographic structure of the participant groups, as well as the first and the fourth research questions that explored the ICC levels and expectations of pre-service EFL teachers from the content of an IC course. Besides, independent samples t-tests and Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to reveal the statistical significance of the descriptive analyses. The entire quantitative data analysis process was outlined in Figure 3.

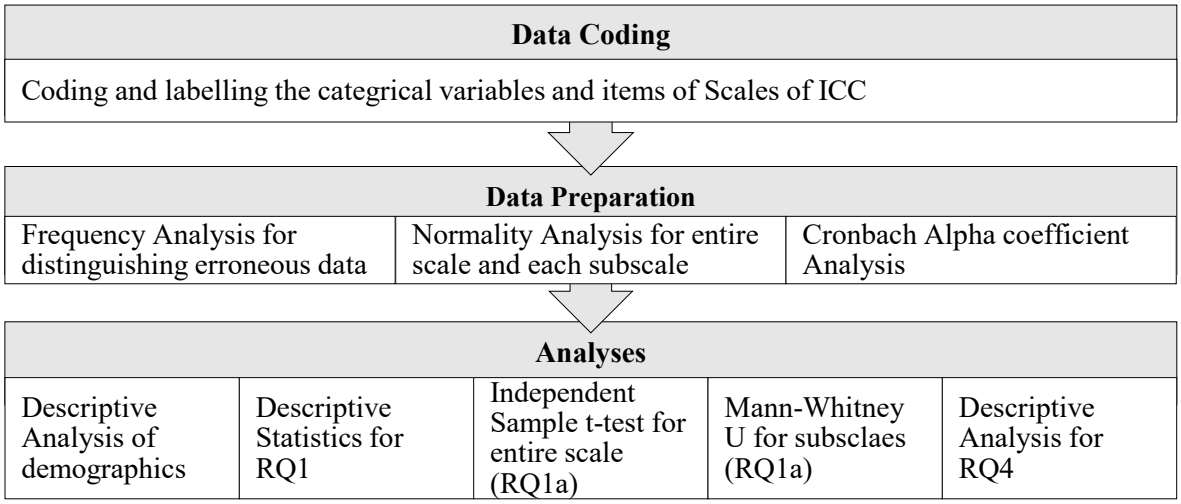



Figure 3. Statistical analysis of scales of ICC

### 3.6.2. Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted within the scope of the second, third, and fifth research questions. The primary objective of the interviews was to shed light on the cultural and intercultural perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers and ELT professionals. In the data preparation process encompassing data transcription and data recording into the analysis program, the responses provided for each question were meticulously transcribed and examined. Subsequently, pre-coding analysis were conducted, in which any data segments having the possibility of producing extensive information for the questions were underlined. Afterwards, as Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested, the process of questioning the purpose or functions of the underlined units were started. Accordingly, each highlighted data segment was labelled.

In pursuit of the data collection process of the semi-structured interviews, which was elucidated in the previous chapter, the analysis procedure was implemented in three phases denominated by Merriam and Tisdell (2016) as data preparation, data identification and data interpretation. According to Merriam and Tisdell, data identification phase, in which qualitative data analysis procedure initiates, refers to the construction of codes for the prepared data. This stage is also entitled as open coding since it requires to be open to any fragment of data that might produce extensive and effective categories for the interpretation

of data. Considering this, the analysis process of the qualitative data started with the open coding of interview transcriptions. Following the open coding, axial, or in other words analytical, coding process was applied. This process refers to the assembling of the similar codes into more comprehensive categories. Lastly, data interpretation procedure that refers to theorisation and construal of the data was adopted. Hence, a fundamental category or hypothesis was propounded. These three cyclical phases were recurrently implemented for each question. The following Figure 4 displayed the data analysis process of the semi-structured interviews.

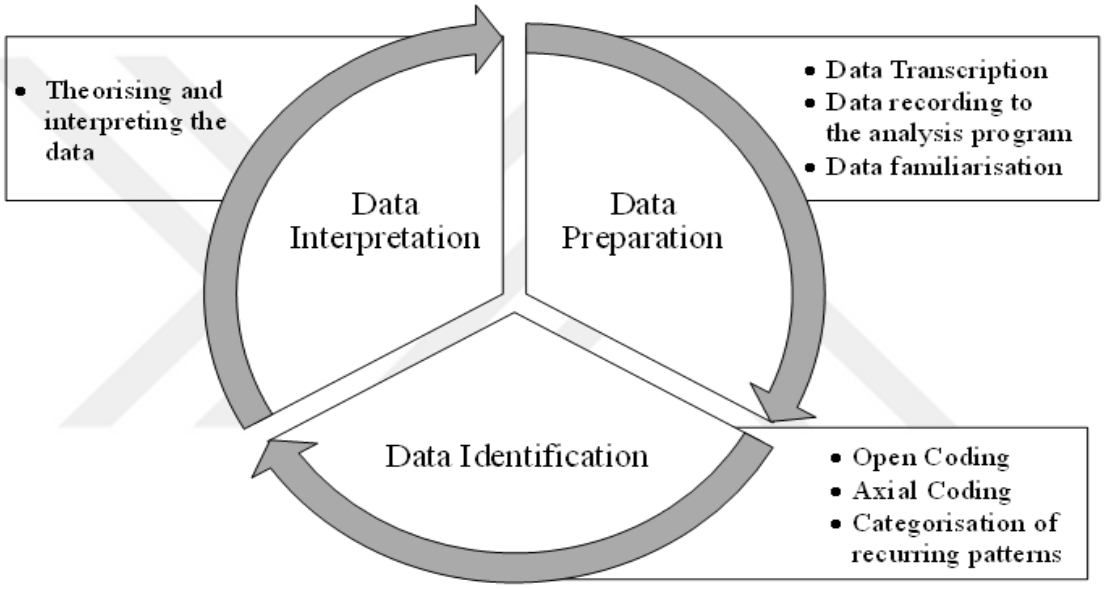



Figure 4. Data analysis process for semi-structured interviews

The credibility of the data analysis was established through prolonged engagement, data triangulation and member checking. According to Brown (2009), prolonged engagement refers to the allocation of a considerable amount of time in research setting or in interaction with the participants. Besides, it may also refer to the intensive collection and analysis of the data in a short period of time. In this study, the data were collected in two weeks and analysed in several intervals. Additionally, the time devoted to the interaction with the participants can be considered as sufficient since the data were collected through individual interviews. The data was triangulated thorough the combination of qualitative and quantitative research phases, and qualitative data collection and analysis were conducted with two different participant groups.

As to the trustworthiness of the data analysis procedures, ensuring transferability, dependability and confirmability can be considered. Brown (2009) defines transferability as the elaborative description of research design, setting and data collection conditions. In the previous sections, transferability of the data was established through the thick description of the entire data collection and analysis procedures. Furthermore, confirmability which refers to the notion of the comprehensive disclosure of the data on which the interpretations are formed, or alternatively ensure the availability of such data, was established through rigorous data recording and the preservation of all data for further examination. The data confidentiality was ensured; therefore, the data and the interpretations were only reached by the supervisor and researcher.

## 3.7. Summary of the Chapter

In Chapter Three, the methodology adopted in the study was comprehensively delineated in such subtitles as the purpose and design of the research, setting and participants, sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures. A multidimensional mixed method, in other words multiphase mixed method, design was adopted. In this regard, data triangulation was adopted. To these ends, three separate research instruments were administered. They were: 1) a survey measuring pre-service teachers' ICC levels, 2) a checklist to investigate participants' need for a compulsory IC course in ELT departments and their content expectations from such a course, 3) semi-structured interviews elucidating ELT professionals' and pre-service teachers' perspectives on culture and more specifically intercultural communication teaching.

# CHAPTER FOUR
# FINDINGS

## 4.1. Overview of the Chapter

This multi-dimensional mixed method study intends to investigate the participants' opinions for the inclusion of an IC course as a compulsory course in ELTEP. The research questions were designed considering three aspects: measuring pre-service EFL teachers' ICC levels and determining whether enrolling in an elective IC course has a significant influence on the development of IC proficiency, identifying the components addressed or ignored in the syllabi of IC or culture-related courses in ELT departments of higher education institutions in Türkiye, and eventually analysing ELT professionals' and pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions on the place of culture and IC in EFL classes; thus, designing an IC course syllabus and materials in accordance with the results of the study. While the first dimension of the research questions requires quantitative analysis of the data collected through a scale, the other two dimensions entail qualitative analyses of semi-structured interviews. The results are explained in three main headings, and the chapter concludes with a brief summary.

## 4.2. Findings of the Scale of Intercultural Communicative Competence

### 4.2.1. ICC Levels of Pre-service EFL Teachers

Considering the aim of the study, six research questions were answered. The first research question and its sub-question (RQ1 and RQ1a) attempt to analyse the ICC levels of pre-service EFL teachers, and to investigate whether the elective Intercultural Communication and Language Education course offered for senior pre-service teachers in the ELT department of the state university where the study was conducted revealed a significant difference in the development of the participants' ICC levels. Pertaining to the RQ1, the data were analysed through descriptive statistics; therefore, mean scores were calculated to reveal the overall ICC levels of both participant groups. Afterwards, the significance of the difference was investigated through independent samples t-tests for the entire scale, in which normal distribution and homogeneity of variances assumptions were

ensured, and non-parametric Mann-Whitney U tests for the subscales by considering the small number of items of each scale resulted in a change for normality assumptions. The findings demonstrated that senior pre-service teachers had a slightly higher level of ICC (*M* = 4,24, *SD* = 0,07) compared to first year pre-service teachers (*M* = 4,08, *SD* = 0,06).

As to the identification of whether these differences were statistically significant, independent samples t-test was conducted for the entire scale and the skills scale, whereas Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted for the attitude, knowledge and action scales due to the distribution of the data. The results of the independent samples t-test indicated that the ICC levels of the senior pre-service teachers' group (*M* = 118,60, *SD* = 1,85) did not significantly differ compared to those of the first-year pre-service teachers (*M* = 114,11, *SD* = 1,68), *t*(102) = -1,77, *p* = .08 in the entire scale. In addition, the results of the independent samples t-test conducted for the skills subscale also revealed that the difference between the senior pre-service teachers (*M* = 29,30, *SD* = 3,51) and first-year pre-service teachers (*M* = 28,08, *SD* = 3,80), *t*(102) = -1,67, *p* = .10 was statistically unsignificant. Consequently, it can be inferred that the elective IC course taken in the last year of ELTEP did not result in any statistically significant change in IC levels of the participants.

As a result of the Mann-Whitney U test, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference between senior pre-service teachers' (*Mdn* = 30) and first year pre-service teachers' (*Mdn* = 29), *U* = 1199, *z* = -0,75, *p* = .46, *r* = .07 total scores of the attitude scale. Similarly, it was found that total scores of the knowledge scale did not significantly differ between the senior pre-service teachers' group (*Mdn* = 31) and first year pre-service teachers' group (*Mdn* = 30), *U* = 1244, *z* = -0,45, *p* = .65, *r* = .04.

As to the action scale, Mann-Whitney U test indicated that the score was significantly higher in senior pre-service teachers (*Mdn* = 30) compared to the first-year pre-service teachers (*Mdn* = 27), *U* = 970, *z* = -2,26, *p* = .02, *r* = .22 with a large effect size.

Subsequently, percentiles were calculated to interpret each participant group's performance in four subscales since the threshold levels were not provided by the developer of the scales. Therefore, the threshold levels were identified through dividing the groups into three percentiles. Accordingly, the participants with ICC levels within the 25% percentile were designated as having relatively low ICC levels, while those with ICC levels within 50% percentile were classified as having moderate ICC levels. The participants who had a performance within the top 75% of the distribution were designated as demonstrating high levels of ICC. To be able to present the distribution of ICC levels between the two groups, was the justification for implementing this methodology. Accordingly, it was indicated that participants who received a score lower than 27 on the attitude, knowledge, and skills scales, as well as 25 on action scales performed less than 75% of the group. Therefore, they were considered to have a low level of ICC. Conversely, the participants, who scored higher than 31 on the skills scale, 32 on the attitude and action scales and 33 on the knowledge scale were regarded to have a high level of ICC as they outperformed 75% of the group. The values between these were also regarded as an indicator of a moderate ICC level. The following Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3

ICC levels of Pre-service Teachers according to Subscales ($N = 104$)

| Scales | First-Year Pre-service Teachers | | | | | | Senior- Year Pre-service Teachers | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | High ICC | | Moderate | | Low ICC | | High ICC | | Moderate | | Low ICC | |
| | *n* | *%* | *n* | *%* | *n* | *%* | *n* | *%* | *n* | *%* | *n* | *%* |
| Attitude | 19 | 31,1 | 23 | 37,7 | 19 | 31,1 | 15 | 34,9 | 15 | 34,9 | 13 | 30,2 |
| Knowledge | 17 | 27,9 | 28 | 45,9 | 16 | 26,2 | 15 | 34,9 | 17 | 39,5 | 11 | 25,6 |
| Skill | 15 | 24,6 | 18 | 29,5 | 28 | 45,9 | 13 | 30,2 | 21 | 48,8 | 9 | 20,9 |
| Action | 14 | 23 | 25 | 41 | 22 | 36,1 | 16 | 37,2 | 19 | 44,2 | 8 | 18,6 |
| Total Scale | 15 | 24,6 | 24 | 39,3 | 22 | 36,1 | 12 | 27,9 | 24 | 55,8 | 7 | 16,3 |

The results of the percentile grouping verified that senior pre-service teachers reported a higher level of ICC than first year pre-service teachers' group. In the attitude scale, high ICC level was observed for approximately 35% (15) of the senior participants, whereas this rate was found to be 31% (19) for first-year participants. Similarly, about 35% (15) of

the senior participants reported a high level of ICC in the knowledge scale; however, it was reported to be approximately 28% (17) in first year pre-service teachers' group. It was revealed in the skills scale that approximately 25% (15) of the first-year participants demonstrated a high level of ICC, while this rate was found to be approximately 30% (13) for senior pre-service teachers. Lastly, in the action scale, the rate of those who demonstrated a high level of ICC was calculated as 23% (14) for first-year group, and this rate was about 37% (16) for senior pre-service teachers. Consequently, it can be indicated that the attitude was the scale in which first year pre-service teachers demonstrated a relatively high level of ICC, while it was action scale for the senior group. On the other hand, the action scale was found to be the one with the lowest high ICC demonstration rate in the first-year group.

### 4.2.2. Pre-service Teachers' Expectations on the Requirements of a Compulsory IC Course

Upon the fourth research question of the study, EFL pre-service teachers' viewpoints on the integration of a compulsory IC course into ELTEP were investigated through a checklist including a yes/no question and several possible topics to be integrated into the suggested IC course syllabus. Accordingly, descriptive analysis revealed that 89 participants, which represents 86% of the entire group, provided an affirmative response to the question whether there is a need for a compulsory IC course in ELT departments. Upon reviewing this result based on participant groups, it was revealed that approximately 85% of the first-year pre-service teachers and 86% of the senior pre-service teachers responded the question in an affirmative way. Considering these high rates, it can be concluded that the participants indicated positive views about the necessity of a compulsory IC course in the ELT departments. Subsequently, the participants, who responded the question as "yes" were asked to express their expectations regarding the content of the course. The frequency of the preferred topics was detailly presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency of the Preferred course Contents ($N = 89$)

| Topics | First Year | | Senior Year | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *n* | % | *n* | % | *n* | % |
| Lifestyles | 41 | 78,8 | 36 | 97,3 | 77 | 86,52 |
| Customs and Traditions | 45 | 86,5 | 29 | 78,4 | 74 | 83,15 |
| Beliefs and Values | 41 | 78,8 | 32 | 86,5 | 73 | 82,02 |
| Festivals | 33 | 63,5 | 25 | 67,6 | 58 | 65,17 |
| Idioms and Proverbs | 30 | 54,5 | 25 | 45,5 | 55 | 61,80 |
| Cuisine | 26 | 50 | 27 | 73 | 53 | 59,55 |
| Holidays | 25 | 48,1 | 25 | 67,6 | 50 | 56,18 |
| Stereotypes | 24 | 48,2 | 18 | 48,6 | 42 | 47,19 |
| Relationships | 19 | 36,5 | 21 | 56,8 | 40 | 44,94 |
| Other | 2 | 3,8 | 3 | 8,1 | 5 | 5,61 |

As it is demonstrated in the table, 'lifestyles' was the most frequently preferred content for both participant groups; and the topic of 'relationships' was expressed as the least preferred content. It was also evident that the participants' content preferences varied based on groups. Additionally, history, slangs, humour, politics, art, heritage, and business were suggested as other contents. Regarding these suggestions, it should also be noted that "slangs" was a content proposed more than once.

### 4.3. Results of the Semi-Structured Interviews

#### 4.3.1. Results from the Pre-service Teachers' Interviews

Within the scope of the second, third, fourth and fifth research questions, semi-structured interviews were analysed through qualitative content analysis to enrich the scope of the investigation and to adopt a holistic approach to gain deeper insight regarding the viewpoints of different education stakeholders on the integration of IC in ELT education. In the interviews with pre-service teachers, the participants were prompted with the questions revolving around their definitions of culture and intercultural communication to gain an in-depth insight on the participants' cultural and intercultural understandings. Furthermore, the

participants' needs and expectations in the field of intercultural communication were sought to be addressed by posing questions about their intercultural communication education experiences.

The pre-service teachers were first asked to introduce themselves. In conjunction with this, an investigation pertaining to their intercultural communication experiences and affective dispositions in intercultural interactions was conducted. The results revealed that the participants had a long-standing language learning background. In addition, it was noteworthy that they engaged in a variety of intercultural interactions. Pertaining to the first interview question, overseas experience was found to be a salient theme in the realm of intercultural communication whereas it was also inferred that several other factors such as online interactions and engaging in touristic activities might have contributed to gaining intercultural communication experience. Interview excerpts shedding light on participants' intercultural experiences are presented below.

> *"...my mother is from Azerbaijan. I went to Azerbaijan, Baku as my first abroad experience. It is also a very different place in terms of its culture compared to Türkiye. Later, ... I went to Czech Republic and Austria. I found that place different as well.... I had a friend that I met in Erasmus... He/she is from Rome. I tell him/her about Türkiye, and he/she tells me about Rome. It's a really good experience for me."* (Pre-service teacher 1)

> *"Unfortunately, I have never had a chance to go abroad, but one of my goals is to go [abroad] and get to know their culture. I have never had a foreign friend, but I tried to talk to foreigners as much as possible via online games or during the summer holidays. So, even if these are simple things, I always tried to at least communicate with them."* (Pre-service teacher 2)

> *"... I have been to Germany and Greece, and yes, I also have foreign friends."* (Pre-service teacher 3)

*"… I've been to United states of America, Netherlands, and Greece. I had a friend from Germany since my high school years…"* (Pre-service teacher 4)

Table 5

Participants Perceptions of Themselves in Intercultural Interactions

| Theme | Codes | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| Affective state in intercultural interactions | Curiosity | Pre-service teacher 2 |
| | Tolerance | Pre-service teacher 4 |
| | Speaking Anxiety | Pre-service teacher 1 |
| | Superiority and Inferiority | Pre-service teacher 3 |

As table 5 demonstrated the participants' affective states in intercultural interactions, both positive and negative affective dispositions were expressed. Therefore, the participants' divergent perspectives on this aspect were noteworthy. To elaborate further, curiosity and tolerance were found to be the positive themes as pre-service teacher 2 and 4 stated. However, one of the first-year pre-service participants underscored speaking anxiety as one of the negative affective states in intercultural interactions by stating that:

*"There is this thing with Turkish people; they hesitate while speaking English. Of course, I have such hesitation. So, no matter how proficient my English is, it is probably something I will always experience. I think this is because I was not born into that culture; and I am not so much familiar with English."* (Pre-service teacher 1)

*"… I rather feel curious. … of course, I have concern because all in all, both cultures cannot exactly approach each other in a natural way. There are always preconceptions or so on."* (Pre-service teacher 2)

*"I think, I am generally tolerant of differences when communicating with foreign cultures…"* (Pre-service teacher 4)

Moreover, a senior pre-service teacher stated their affective disposition in intercultural interactions from the perspective of inferiority and superiority. The participant explained the situation as follows:

> *"I mean, sometimes I consider myself superior if I think that they do something ridiculous in their culture. Sometimes, I also see myself as inferior because of my own culture."* (Pre-service teacher 3)

Subsequently, participants' viewpoints regarding the intercultural communication challenges that they have experienced or possible challenges that might arise during any intercultural interaction were investigated. Regarding this question, three participants stated that they have not encountered any major difficulty during their intercultural interactions. However, it was found that hesitation towards speaking was the prevailing challenge for first year pre-service teachers. Besides, racism and prejudices were stated as the other possible difficulties that may have been encountered. In the interviews with senior pre-service teachers, it was revealed that the diversity in behavioural patterns according to cultures led to a challenge in intercultural communication. The excerpts enlightening the participants' viewpoints on the challenges in intercultural interactions were presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Participants Perceptions regarding the Challenges of IC

| **Theme** | **Codes** | **Participants** |
|---|---|---|
| IC Challenges | Speaking Anxiety | *"... speaking is a bit challenging for me."* (Pre-service teacher 1)<br>*"... people usually hesitate to speak. This is already very common in Türkiye… we label people, and this creates barriers between us, for example. In fact, wealth can be created…* (Pre-service teacher 2) |

Table 6 continued

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Racism | *"... I have never been subjected to racism. However, that is, of course, a problem for those who experienced."* (Pre-service teacher 1) |
| | Behavioural Differences | *"I had a friend from countries in Arab region in particular, and they said that it is not culturally appropriate to touch women or to look at people's face directly in their family, and this surprised me quite a lot.*" (Pre-service teacher 3) |

To unveil the pre-service teachers' cultural understanding, their definitions of culture and intercultural communication were subjected to content analysis. The excepts were provided below.

*"In my opinion, culture is not something personal. It is something constructed by society, and I think that culture has actually been acquired from the first moment we are born, in other words, it exists within us. Something related to the geography where we were born. ... For example, I think, the religion that a person believes in is not related to his / her culture. Religion is something personal. However, one's hobbies, likes, favourite music genre can be related to culture."* (Pre-service teacher 1)

*"... the definition of culture is related to the ability of people to transmit not only culture but also their thoughts, feelings or knowledge to each other."* (Pre-service teacher 2)

*"In my opinion, culture is one's roles in society. ... I think, even the psychology of an individual may be affected [by his / her place in the society] I mean, if she is a woman, what is a women's place in her society? Or if she is a mother, what is a mother's place in society or culture? I think that this is how culture is formed. Yes, exactly. [I think that culture is shaped by society]."* (Pre-service teacher 3)

*"I think, the things that constitute culture are related to the economic situation, climate, cuisine of the geography where that culture is located. I think, the food culture also affects it. For example, lifestyles… there is a concept named "siesta" in Spain… it's a form of behaviour that is completely ingrained in the culture. And I mean, I think even sleeping during the lunch break is a part of culture."* (Pre-service teacher 4)

The excerpts demonstrated that almost all participants viewed culture as a structure constructed or shaped by the society. It can be noted that observable elements of culture appear to be prevail in their definitions. Moreover, considering that culture is viewed as an entity that can be acquired early in life, transmitted, and associated with the geography it would not be inaccurate to interpret that static cultural understanding is the prominent paradigm for both participant groups.

When an explicit question regarding their cultural understanding was posed, it was revealed that almost all participants, apart from participant 1 who identified culture as both fixed and something between solid and fluid, stated culture as a fluid construct. However, only participant 3, who stated that she is taking the elective IC course delivered in the ELT department, truly clarified the fluid nature of culture by emphasizing that it is related to variety in cultural practices. As for the other participants, they had a cultural understanding that was somewhere in between solid and dynamic since they might not have comprehensively captured the meaning of fluidity in culture. It was observed that this concept was mostly associated with the transferability of the culture for these participants, who did not have a background of IC education. The participants responded the question as follows:

*"… I think it is something related to society; however, it should not be an imposition. So, culture is not something solid from my point of view. It may vary from person to person, but it still has a greater relationship with the society in which we live in. That's more of a societal thing rather than individual thing. Sort of… It's a mixture. I think it changes in a variety of way."* (Pre-service teacher 1)

*"In my opinion, culture is something that develops depending entirely on the perception of societies and the environment in which they are raised. In some societies, it can be considered as too solid. But in my opinion, it's a fluid thing because we can transfer culture to someone or receive some things in every way at every point in life. That's why, I think it's a fluid thing because it can be encountered in every aspect of life and in all kinds of ways."* (Pre-service teacher 2)

*"In my opinion, it's a phenomenon that may vary from person to person or even form period to period in one's own life. Sometimes it may be too solid, sometimes it's a bit more fluid. I think, each individual has his/her own subjective cultural background and cultural elements."* (Pre-service Teacher 3)

*"I think, it's pretty fluid not too solid."* (Pre-service teacher 4)

As an interpretation of this result, it can be suggested that IC education might have an influence on participants' cultural understandings since it was revealed that pre-service teachers who did not have any intercultural education background differed from the participant, who took an elective IC course previously. Besides, the results obtained from this question consolidates the results of the previous question by highlighting the discrepancy that participants showed. For instance, participant 1 and 2 stated that they had a fluid cultural understanding but also underlined the greater effect of society on the construction of culture.

Eventually, the question of "Whose culture should be taught in a possible culture-related or IC course?" were posed to reveal participants cultural understandings. The responses were mostly in line with the previous results. The participants who did not have an IC education background frequently defined cultures in relation to nations such as the American culture or British culture by stating their nativism as the reason. On the other hand, the discrepancy between the participants' cultural understanding was also clearly visible in the responses of this question. To illustrate, pre-service teacher 2, who did not take the elective IC course adopted an attitude aligning more with the fluid cultural understanding by

suggesting that she did not deem appropriate to centralise a specific culture. However, the participant who took an elective IC course stated that native English cultures such as American or British, or cultures that shared cultural traits with Türkiye would be appropriate. The expressions were indicated as follows:

> *"For this course, I would like to take a course on English language teaching and culture since I am a pre-service teacher in English language teaching department."* (Pre-service teacher 1)

> *"Frankly, I don't find it much right to focus on one culture specifically because there are so many different and diverse things from so many different cultures. ... That's why I think that we can gain something from different cultures instead of teaching one completely separate culture. At least, we can ensure that they are open to different cultures."* (Pre-service teacher 2)

> *"I find it more appropriate to be taught on American or British cultures, that is native English cultures since I studied in ELT department. But if we look at it from the point of view of Türkiye's needs, I think it is very important to teach cultures that are closer to our society where we have shared cultural traits with them such as Syrians, so that we can built a more tolerant society."* (Pre-service teacher 3)

> *"If I had taken a course called intercultural communication, ... I would have liked to learn about all the cultures, countries that have interaction, trade or any kind of relation with Türkiye, how the people belonging to those cultures live and so on."* (Pre-service teacher 4)

In another question, the participants' IC education background and their needs regarding a compulsory IC course were analysed. The results showed that first year pre-service teachers who did not have such a background gained familiarity with cultural subjects in some courses during high school education. However, it was also accentuated

that these courses were mainly based on theoretical knowledge transmission without any practical aspects. On the other hand, one of the senior pre-service teacher participants indicated that although he did not take any IC education, he was enrolled in World Englishes and Culture course. Regarding the content of this course, the participant stated that the focus was on the use of English in various geographies. On the other hand, the other senior pre-service teacher indicated that she enrolled in elective IC course. Pertaining to the content, the participant indicated that the course incorporated both theoretical and practical IC activities. Regarding her viewpoints on the elective IC course and the expectations from a compulsory IC course, the following statements are provided:

> *"There is only the course that I am currently taking as an elective course at the university. Intercultural communication and language teaching skills. Other than that, I have not taken any other courses. What I learnt on a cultural basis was a bit more superficial, such as how we can … introduce different cultures to children. I think that this was sufficient. But at least, I would have liked my horizons to be broadened. I did not learn anything that I did not already know. It combines both theory and practice. First, we learned how to teach, and then we ourselves prepared a lesson. But nothing much was added to it since we have constantly been taught how to teach things for four years. … as a pre-service English teacher, I do not think that I am a very knowledgeable person about different cultures. I am sure even I have prejudices or misconceptions about different cultures. I would have liked to have a more discussion-oriented course where I can challenge these prejudices and misconceptions. I did not learn anything new, and I maintained my own dogmatic thoughts in this course. I think neither something was destroyed nor something new was established."* (Pre-service Teacher 3). Besides, the participant emphasized the need for a more critical-oriented IC education.

The last question and sub-questions were designed to shed light on the participants' standpoints regarding IC, its significance in language education and the parameters that influenced the effectiveness of IC. Pertaining to their explanation of what IC is, it can be inferred that the focal point was differences in culture, lifestyles, and communication styles. The participants' statements were presented below.

*"... It seems to me that it provides information about the communication styles of different cultures and people having different lifestyles. That is, it answers the questions of "are there any ways for two different cultures to interact with each other? If they do, how do they communicate?"* (Pre-service Teacher 1).

*"As I said, intercultural communication can also be considered community-based, but first of all, I think it needs to be started with the individual because if an individual is raised in a restricted way to get to know a culture, he/she cannot socialize as well. Because he/she might be afraid to step into a culture. These barriers may prevent him/her. For this reason, I think that it can be achieved by starting individually at the beginning, and then getting used to the society by constantly reflecting intercultural communication. Yes, intercultural communication means this to me."* (Pre-service Teacher 2).

*"I think, in order to be able to communicate in a different culture first of all we need already to know the globally recognised rules of respect. Apart from that, there are some cultural elements that are unique to that society such as bowing in Japanese culture, or for example, touching may be considered culturally inappropriate for them, we also need to know these."* (Pre-service Teacher 3).

*"... it refers how the differences between cultures can be understood, how precautions against the difficulties can be taken."* (Pre-service Teacher 4).

As to the factors reinforcing effective IC, self-confidence, respect, open-mindedness, curiosity, tolerance and developing awareness towards home culture stand out as the themes provided as response to this question. While respect was the predominant theme, reflecting the traits of home culture was the noteworthy one. The participants' statements were as follows:

*"I think, self-confidence is very important. This is something I frequently observe in Turkish people, they hesitate to speak [in a foreign language]. When I went abroad with*

*my friends, they refrained from speaking. … Frankly, this bothered me a lot because considering our level of education, we were communicating with people who were in high school, we were just like them, and they were just like us. Why should we be any different? So, self-confidence is very important. Apart from that, in order to reflect our own culture, …speaking by reflecting a bit of our Turkishness is not something to hesitate. That's what I think, and that's all."* (Pre-service Teacher 1).

*"… We need to get rid of our prejudices. We need to be a little more open-minded and curious. You know, this is something that starts within one's own nature. You know, if you are curious and open, there will be lots of things to enrich yourself in life besides culture. Besides these, I think the most important thing is to be respectful because it is necessary to respect every culture, even if you are not curious about them."* (Pre-service Teacher 2).

*"I think that a person who knows these worldwide rules of etiquette and acts respectfully can communicate without having much difficulty, even if he / she is not much knowledgeable about different cultures."* (Pre-service Teacher 3).

*"We need tolerance and education. We need to understand that there can be differences."* (Pre-service Teacher 4).

As to the last sub-question inquiring the participants' standpoints on the importance of IC in ELT departments, it was found that in addition to addressing the importance of IC inclusion into ELT, there was a prominent emphasis on getting knowledgeable about home culture, similar to the results mentioned in the previous question. In other words, while participants indicated the significance of the development of linguistic competence in company with cultural competence, they also accentuated the significance of home culture in developing cultural competence or IC.

*"I definitely agree that it should be included. It is very important because even when we learn English, we talk about English accent or American accent. We learn about their different cultures. ... I think we should learn the culture first and then the language. That is how I think, or we can learn both spontaneously in a complex way."* (Pre-service Teacher 1).

*"I think, it should definitely be included because this is something that we need to learn, ...not only as a lesson but as an individual, as a part of society. I mean, after all, every human being goes through the process of socialisation, not individualisation, and that's why I think children, as individuals, need to be taught how to respect society and different cultures. That's why I think that such a course is necessary."* (Pre-service Teacher 2).

*"I think, it is really important because learning a language is not only about understanding the grammatical structure or vocabulary of that language, but also about understanding a society and how to act in that society. However, there is such a problem: I don't think that our education system is much suitable for this since I think that people should first accept their own culture, learn to live with tolerance, and then learn about different cultures."* (Pre-service Teacher 3).

*"I think culture should be included in language teaching in the following way: introducing British or American culture to young children is quite helpful for them to learn the language. But while doing this, I think that English can be taught more easily by getting them involved with Turkish culture…I mean… by combining those cultures in some way."* (Pre-service Teacher 4).

In summary, several significant findings have been revealed as a result of the semi-structured interviews. Firstly, it was found that the participants were predominantly exposed to IC through overseas experience; however, online interactions or interactions realized through in-land activities might have also influenced on the development of their IC. Secondly, in the light of the questions inquiring the participants' cultural understandings such as the definition of culture and IC or whose culture to be included in the IC course

syllabus, it was demonstrated that they had a complicated understanding of culture; because they were inclined to have static approach towards culture in view of their nation-based cultural classifications or explanations centralising the effect of society on cultural practices whereas they also stated they had fluid cultural understanding. Lastly, it was indicated that there was a requirement for a compulsory IC course in ELT departments since it was found that only participant 3 took the elective IC course offered in the program. Moreover, one of the participants stated her need for a more discussion-based and critical IC teaching. To shed light on whether the message conveyed by stating the need for a 'discussion-based instruction' was related to criticality in IC or not, further questions were asked. Consequently, she confirmed her need for a critical IC instruction.

### 4.3.2. Results from the ELT Professionals' Interviews

In the interviews with ELT professionals, the participants were prompted with questions about their IC teaching practices. The participants' standpoints on the possible revisions to be realised to strengthen the effectiveness of IC education in ELT departments were analysed. Besides, their views on the requirement of a compulsory IC course in ELT departments and the possible content of such a course were investigated.

The findings of the questions regarding the demographic information of ELT professionals revealed that the participants had approximately 21 years of teaching experience. As for the participants definition of culture, it was found that the participants did not find it appropriate to define such a comprehensive concept. Therefore, they initially stressed the complexity of the term. However, when they eventually defined the term, a difference in their focal points was observed between lecturer 1, 3 and 4, 5. While two of the participants focused on differences that constituted culture, the other participant viewed culture as behavioural patterns reflecting the common objectives of people. The expressions were presented below.

*"...In fact, I think there are as many definitions as there are people in the world because everyone's perspective on life, lifestyle, everything they eat, drink, wear, say and think*

*actually determines their culture. Therefore, it is always necessary to avoid making a single definition, but there are general definitions. If we generalise, I can say that the factors that make people human are called culture… I mean, in a nutshell, we actually call the total of people's differences from each other "culture" ... It is actually best to see it as a variety, that is to say, to see it as a richness and based on that to establish an environment of peace, environment of cohesion, or concepts that we can agree on. That's why I first define culture as a tool that we use to understand how differences can actually be lumped together, instead of seeing it as similarities or just as things that only a society does or activities that a person does. In fact, culture is a tool to understand people."* (Lecturer 1).

*"...It's more fluid... if you look at the components of culture, for example, there are components that we can see, that we can refer to as concrete. And then there are components that we cannot see exactly, but we feel them, we relate to them. It's like the visible part of an iceberg and the part that remains under the water. That's why I think of it as a more flexible concept that is shaped by individuals. In short, the literature defines it as a lifestyle. I think this shows that there cannot be a single definition of culture, and culture will inevitably vary from person to person."* (Lecturer 2).

*"I would say fluid. I mean, I cannot really relate that solid concept to culture, to be honest. Culture is a characteristic. It is something that ... distinguishes a community or an individual from others, that make them different. ... It's fluid, it can change. They may change in terms of applicability or perception.* (Lecturer 3)

*"...We can say that culture is frankly the reflections of a spiral of patterns on individuals, which is not one-dimensional, not completely definable, is very complex, is formed by habits, includes factors such as bio, socio, psycho considering its multidimensionality… this is a process that continues to be constructed in every moment. It has intertwined with the individual's own identity processes. You can actually associate everything that an individual encounters, lives, eats, drinks, wears, thinks, reflects his/her view of life throughout his/her life with culture. There are certain behavioural patterns that reflect*

*the common goals of people who are gathered together for a common purpose. It is obviously a very wide-ranging concept. In this respect, although I don't think it is much appropriate to define it, I am in favour of looking at it with different approaches. I mean, for example, there is an essentialist approach and a non-essentialist approach."* (Lecturer 4).

*"Culture is a huge thing. It depends on your perspective. We can think of all of these as small cycles or small drops, forming a chain or cycle of rings that go from small to large. So, there are many things involved. That's why it can be difficult to comprehend… It can be difficult to approach, or the approach may not be taken seriously... I think it's fluid and dynamic because there have been so many changes, especially in the 21st century and perhaps since 2020. People from many different cultures were forced to come together. Let's say they migrated or received migrants. In this sense, there are differences in terms of culture, politics, economics, language, religion,... technology has a huge impact on this. We can come together with people from many different countries at the same time in conferences, projects, and so on ... In this sense, people also need to be more tolerant because it has brought a lot of changes and all our profiles—social, cultural, economic, and so on—are changing."* (Lecturer 5).

As for the definition of IC, one of the participants (Lecturer 1) accentuated the importance of individuals' own culture, in other words home culture, in IC. This result was in line with the prevailing theme found in the definition of culture of pre-service teacher participants. Another common theme was unveiled between this participant and one of the pre-service teacher participants (participant 2), which is starting the IC education from individuals such as attitude development and then expanding the education towards the interaction level such as dealing with IC in society and global level. Additionally, similar to Lecturer 1, Lecturer 3 put emphasis on the regional differences in intercultural practices. The excerpts of the ELT professionals are given below.

*"…What I really want to say here is that the culture of the next-door neighbour is also important. Even the culture of another family in my ancestry may be different. It is also*

*important to recognize, know and respect this. Therefore, the more we communicate with people, the more opportunities for intercultural communication arise… This is what intercultural communication actually means. I mean, starting with our family, starting with our culture. After that, to become more global. In fact, that should be the goal… In other words, in order for there to be intercultural communication, you need to master your own culture so that you can exist there as an individual with that identity, that self, that knowledge"* (Lecturer 1)

*"I would define it as knowing and being aware of the characteristics of that culture and communicating accordingly. For example,… even within a single culture, there can be different practices. Being aware of these, applying them, …, that is the culture that an individual possesses… intercultural communication awareness is being able to talk about them without criticizing or judging, without breaking anything, so to speak, and respecting them."* (Lecturer 3).

As for the definition of the other ELT professional, it was found that this participant considered IC as the interpersonal interaction. It can be concluded that this interpersonal interaction term reflects a similarity between the statement produced by the previous ELT professionals, (Lecturer 1). Therefore, it can be stated that considering every individual interaction as IC is the common theme in IC definitions of ELT professionals. Besides, putting emphasis on individuality can be regarded as one of the indicators of fluid/dynamic cultural understanding. The excerpt of the fourth participant in ELT professionals' group is provided below.

*"Frankly, we can say that intercultural communication is as old as human history. In n other words, we can say that there has been intercultural communication since human beings have existed. Therefore, I would prefer to define intercultural communication as interpersonal communication and the flow and exchange of information… it would probably be appropriate to say that people belonging to different cultural groups somehow come together for some reason and interact with each other."* (Lecturer 4).

Similar to the differences mentioned in definitions of culture, Lecturer 5 also stated that similarities should be focused on in IC rather than differences. Therefore, this participant shared common perspectives with lecturer 4, contrary to Lecturer 1 and 3. The excerpt is presented as follows:

> *"I think that in interculturalism differences should not be focused on. Perhaps we should start with similarities first because in such definitions, prejudices or stereotypes… usually become prominent, and certain familiar expressions…that have been accepted or recognized for some time, come to the forefront. Actually, I think this has also become very fluid because now those boundaries, whether physical, social, economic, or even linguistic, especially with technology and the changes I mentioned earlier, have become very fluid and dynamic… But this situation requires certain things. That is, … The ability to adapt, to show tolerance – … We need to educate individuals in this situation. We need to instil an understanding of tolerance. … Therefore, I believe that adaptability, the ability to review and monitor changes, resolve issues, and possess advanced communication skills are essential. If such a course or program is to be implemented, I believe these skills should be prioritized.* (Lecturer 5)

Another question was promoted in accordance with investigating the ELT professionals' IC teaching practices and viewpoints regarding the content of elective IC courses. The results demonstrated that two of the participants delivered elective IC courses for years. In addition, one of those participants had also offered an elective course titled "World Englishes and Culture" for sophomore pre-service EFL teachers. Pertaining to their IC teaching practices, it was revealed that the participants attached importance to providing both theory-and practice-oriented instruction. The statements provided by the participants are presented below.

> *"Yes, I teach this course, I still do … There is no such syllabus design for the course in general. What you are trying to do now – to put forward something standardised – is actually good in that sense. Since there is no such syllabus design, whoever teaches that course designs a syllabus according to his/her own understanding of culture… Here's how we do it: first, for 6-7 weeks, … I have made presentations on what culture is, … why*

*we should teach culture, strategies and methods of teaching culture in the language classroom and so on. I have delivered theoretical and discussion-based courses… I am trying to raise a consciousness… After the midterm, I give the students the opportunity to practice, and I say, "You identify a cultural issue. It can be similarities between cultures, or awareness, differences, anything. Let's plan an ELT lesson. It is a 40-minute lesson."* (Lecturer 1).

*"This is a very important point. I also attach importance to that dimension because the focus usually remains on theory, and the practical aspect is often overlooked. Apart from what can be done in the classroom, I also ask them to do some things outside the classroom, ... especially in World Englishes and Culture course, I would like to ask them to keep listening journals. Apart from that, ... these individuals… will have a language user profile in terms of both student and teacher. In that sense, for example, I conduct a survey about what they feel closer to in terms of identity and what they aim for in the future. Thanks to that survey, they can become familiar with the different styles of use of English users whose native language is not English, and they can also develop self-efficacy and self-confidence in the future… for example, I had interviews with foreign friends in the other campus in oral communication course that I have delivered in previous years. They also give presentations."* (Lecturer 4).

*"Apart from that, let's talk about the master's degree and the fourth-year intercultural communication course. In these courses, since we are more education-and-teaching-oriented, this time we ask them to prepare the in-class activities or out-of-class activities that we have mentioned… I want them to analyse a book and non-essentialist activities in it. Then, I want them to determine how to adapt them by adopting a non-essentialist approach, if the activities are too essentialist."* (Lecturer 4).

The participants also elaborated on the activities they had conducted in their lessons. The results indicated that they opted for improving pre-service teachers' (inter)cultural awareness through critical thinking. Regarding the challenges that language education stakeholders encountered in IC education, lack of standardisation was found to be the

prevalent theme. Apart from this, difficulty in finding cultural materials, the predominance of native-speakerism paradigm, and insufficiency of class hours were articulated as other themes. They elucidated the challenges as follows:

*"…there is no course content. I mean, it's actually all about the lecturer's view on the subject, how open-minded he/she is… Therefore, I may have difficulty in finding content. I mean, you may also have difficulties in terms of course design. Finding materials and designing the course is important, so it is difficult."* (Lecturer 1)

*"It is currently an elective course in our program. I wish it were compulsory because those who take the course become aware of it, while those who do not take it can develop awareness of it if it is mentioned as a module in other courses. Nevertheless, it needs to be conveyed in a more systematic way. That's why I definitely think it should be included because when we think specifically about English, students can graduate without having a clear answer to Cem Alptekin's question: whose culture? in their minds, and then they might be able to choose material that serves imperialists…"* (Lecturer 2).

*"If I start with the difficulties... for example, since everyone is raised in a different family structure, learning a different culture, especially in the context of a foreign language…there may be individuals who have the potential to perceive it as a threat to their own culture. I can say that this may lead to resistance against the teacher in introducing and teaching that culture. That could also pave the way for the concept of native vs. non-native speakers. Similarly, the differences in accents... Some people, for example, try to use English like a British or an American, but then they ask, "We are Turkish, why should we do that?"* (Lecturer 3)

*"… We see that these courses are offered as electives. However, we observe that there is a lack of… such a continuity and standardization. As I said, in terms of curriculum, I see that it varies individually on the basis of the department and the lecturer's own needs… there are not enough class hours because of the crowded classes, so you cannot devote more hours. In the master's degree, three hours is better, … if we consider the number of*

*English users as [bilinguals], trilingual, that is, multilingual speakers, the ratio is very high. However…on the other hand… if we consider the recruitment rate, 70% EU passport or even British citizenship is expected. So, there is a contradiction… when they categorize the nativeness, they limit the use of English to British English, European English, and they did not take into consideration the other teaching qualifications at all… [in one of the courses during my undergraduate education] The lecturer… said, 'the highest score you can be given is eighty-five because English is not your first language'… It is an obvious reflection of the nativeness/non-nativeness issue"* (Lecturer 4).

*"[Practice-oriented activities] are not possible because the linguistics class is only a two-hour class per week. In that sense, if it were three or four hours I could have them do microteaching, for example. Or I could have them give a presentation or do a small exercise, but unfortunately, we do not have the space for a two-hour class related to this subject."* (Lecturer 5)

As for the other three lecturers, it was stated that two lecturers did not teach an IC or culture-related course; however, one of them delivered intercultural communication course in postgraduate degree, as well as the other lecturers incorporated culture, but not IC, as a subtopic into their courses. Besides, their teaching practices were found to be mainly theoretical-oriented. Related excerpts are provided as follows:

*"There was an intercultural communication course in the PhD program. I did not design the course, but I taught it for a several years... After that, when I started teaching it myself, I adapted it to my own approach. Of course, the main objective was to focus on both research—including sociocultural aspects—and practice, specifically teacher training. We addressed how these PhD students could train teachers in this area."* (Lecturer 2).

*"… I haven't taught a class directly related to that topic or one that includes it…"* (Lecturer 3).

*"I did not teach such a course, but as you know, we have a module on culture in our linguistics course. The relationship or communication between language and culture. … The name of the course is not [intercultural communication], but since culture is part of linguistics, we already highlight the relationship between language and linguistics. First, we define what culture is. … Then, to connect it more to linguistics … There are taxonomies. There is the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis. I cover these types of topics in this course—the language and culture course—because they are a serious part of linguistics..."* (Lecture 5)

Table 7

ELT Professionals Perceptions regarding the Challenges of IC Teaching

| Theme | Codes | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| IC Teaching Challenges | The lack of systematisation | Lecturer 1, 2, 4 |
| | Nativeness non-nativeness issue | Lecturer 3, 4 |
| | Lack of materials | Lecturer 2, 3 |
| | The lack of sufficient class hours | Lecturer 4, 5 |

The other question investigated the participants' viewpoints on the place of culture and IC in ELT curricula. The inadequacy of addressing some points were stated by the participants. To illustrate, the participants stated that language is not approached from a critical perspective and as a living entity. Rather it was addressed by focusing on linguistic or cultural patterns. Furthermore, it was stated that political aspects of cultural education such as language policies and the issue of nativeness were the subjects that were not sufficiently addressed. The viewpoints are as follows:

*"…there are not many cultural elements in our curricula, that is, in the National Education curriculum. There are very few because I also teach program evaluation course in the second semester… I know the National Education program very well. So, when I look at it, yes, there are cultural elements, but not enough, very little. Therefore, this is ignored in our country, and maybe this is one of the reasons why our students find it a little bit difficult to learn English and develop an attitude… a negative attitude*

*towards English. In other words, because we do not teach English as a living entity,…"* (Lecturer 1)

*"…I did not come across many cultural elements, either in my own observations during the practicum course or in the materials used by the practicum students. To be honest, I did not see anything. Yes, I didn't see anything, I did not come across anything..."* (Lecturer 3)

*"I see that the dimension of intercultural communication that is a little bit more related to interpersonal relations regarding behavioural patterns… we can also talk about the political dimensions encompassing socio-cultural dimension. What is this? Simply put, language policies…I see that none of these or the nativeness or non-nativeness … are imparted students in any way. In other words, this dimension is missing according to my observation, and … I try to address this dimension in my own classes"* (Lecturer 4).

*"Unfortunately, [culture teaching] depends on the curriculum of the school where these students undertake their internship, the books they use, or the materials they use. ...the most challenging aspect of our planning...is that choosing one or two textbooks or other resources and using them as the curriculum... Using the book's activities, the book's structure, its flow, without making any changes, that is, in terms of the syllabus and the activities, as well as in terms of teaching language skills..."* (Lecturer 5).

Eventually, the participants' expectations from a compulsory IC course content were investigated. They are provided with several topics in the scope of a suggested topic-based syllabus. As a result, it was stated that all the presented topics appeared to be appropriate. Besides, they provided constructive feedback on the topics. In the light of the feedback, it was noted that offering a standardized compulsory IC course syllabus can be advantageous and topics such as cultural landmarks can be included into the syllabus. Sample feedback is provided below:

*"…if it were a compulsory course, the content could be a little different. Maybe if it was a 3-hour course, different things could be done, but those elective courses are usually 2*

*hours. They consist of 2 class hours. So, we have to limit our content a little bit more… it would be even better if it was a compulsory course... Maybe there could be something in it such as… Landscape and geography or something like that. Or maybe something like... places to visit."* (Lecturer 1)

*"…overall, these components are great. They are great, and I definitely think that there could be an application aspect to material production for students. For example, I would expect plans to be prepared for this, and opportunities to be provided for students to produce materials that accompany those plans, perhaps using artificial intelligence tools."* (Lecturer 2)

*"It would be good if it were compulsory. At least we would know in which class, in which branch, that is, in which year it is going to be delivered. For example, this is a course we started in sophomore year. It is a course that is also offered in senior year, but it may be too late in the fourth year. In fact, it can only be offered in sophomore by dividing the elective courses, which I have just mentioned, into two as one in the first semester and one in the second. A part of them may be theoretical, while the other part may be more practical in which the focus is shifted to language education. I mean, if such a standardization is established, I think we can be more compatible with the EU, and so on"* (Lecturer 4)

*"I think it could definitely be a compulsory course; in fact, it should be... In that sense, it should have both a theoretical and a practical dimension... but at the same time, in our program and probably in many ELT programs, it is largely dominated by instructors. This is both beneficial and detrimental... In a sense, it is beneficial because you have autonomy. It gives you autonomy, independence... While giving the instructor some flexibility and autonomy, I think there should be a framework for what I need to teach and how I need to teach it, depending on which side I'm looking at because [culture] is a broad and sometimes sensitive topic... All of the topics you mentioned definitely need to be included... these are all great components, but since our students will be language teachers, I think you could also include topics related to the integration or relationship*

*between language and culture, such as language taxonomies and language units."* (Lecturer 5).

In summary, semi-structured interviews in which ELT professionals participated propounded several significant findings. Most importantly, the requirement of a compulsory IC course syllabus was underlined. Secondly, IC was suggested as an elective course incorporating both theoretical and practical aspects of IC. Besides, the inclusion of critical thinking skills, or stated by the pre-service teacher 3 as 'discussion-based' instruction, was also encouraged. Lastly, in addition to the similarities in addressing culture and IC, and predominant themes pertaining to the viewpoints on requirements for IC education in ELT departments, the possible differences between the instructors' cultural and intercultural understandings that was mentioned by the participants were visible in the results of the definition of IC.

### 4.4. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter elucidates the findings of the study. First, pre-service teachers' IC levels, their cultural and intercultural understandings and intercultural interaction experiences were investigated through the administration of the ICC scale and semi-structured interviews. Additionally, ELT professionals' IC teaching practices, their perceptions regarding the integration of a compulsory IC course into ELTEP as well as the difficulties that they identified in IC teaching were explored through semi-structured interviews.

Quantitative data analysis demonstrated that senior pre-service teachers had a slightly higher level of ICC than the first-year pre-service teachers. The results indicated that there were no significant differences between the two groups in the entire scale. Once each subscale was investigated, the action scale was found to differ significantly for senior pre-service teachers. As for the pre-service teachers' expectations from the content of a compulsory IC course, 'lifestyles' was the most frequently selected topic, while 'relationships' was the least frequently preferred one. Semi-structured interviews conducted with pre-service teachers revealed a need for compulsory IC courses in ELT. It was also identified that the participants were inclined towards static understanding of culture because

they articulated nation-based cultures frequently in their responses, and they underscored the effect of society on cultural practices as a prevalent theme rather than considering the possibility of variation even in a small group in the same society. Furthermore, some expressions stressing generalisations were noteworthy.

In the ELT professionals' interviews, they revealed that offering a compulsory IC course might be deemed significant in establishing systematisation or standardisation in IC education. Moreover, combining knowledge- and skill-oriented aspects of IC was underlined by the ELT professionals. Regarding the place of culture and IC in ELT curricula, they argued that there was a void in inclusion of several cultural aspects, and the materials were regarded as insufficient. Lastly, the ELT professionals intended to foster critical and fluid IC education.

# CHAPTER FIVE
# DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

## 5.1. Overview of the Chapter

This chapter elaborates on the findings. Besides, it elucidates convergent and divergent aspects of this study from the literature. The conclusion section provides an in-depth analysis of the findings to shed light on their significance for the research field of intercultural communication in ELT. Through the comprehensive synthesis of all these aspects, several implications regarding the applications of these results in the ELT context are provided. Furthermore, a sample IC course syllabus, constructed in the light of the results of the study and a comprehensive review of the literature, is suggested. Lastly, the chapter provides several suggestions for further research that might be practical for deepening the findings of the current study.

## 5.2. Discussions of Findings

In the first research question, first year and senior year pre-service teachers' ICC levels were investigated. It was found that they had a high level of ICC with a slight difference between the groups. This result coincides with the findings of several other studies (i.e. Gün, 2023; Sevimel-Şahin, 2020). In reference to these studies, it can be stated that pre-service teachers demonstrate high levels of ICC, and their IC skills can be improved through systematic instruction. Similarly, Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2014) indicated the importance of teacher education programs on the development of pre-service teachers' intercultural competence.

In the sub-research question, whether this slight difference was statistically significant or not was investigated. It was revealed that there was no significant difference within the entire scale; considering the subscales, a statistically significant difference was explored in the action scale. Senior pre-service teachers outperformed in the scale compared to first year pre-service teachers. This finding is similar to the findings reported in Göncü

Ergün's (2016) thesis study. Therefore, it can be inferred that an elective IC instruction contributes to the action component of ICC.

The second research question, which explores pre-service teachers' cultural and intercultural perceptions, revealed two significant findings. First, it was found that the participants are in favour of the inclusion of IC into ELTEP. This was also found in the analysis of the fourth research question. A great majority of the participants indicated their need for a compulsory IC course in ELT. These findings correspond to the ideas of various IC researchers (Conti, 2025; Díaz and Moore, 2018; Tuncel and Paker, 2018; Uğurlu et al., 2022). These findings also present the significance of this study in the field of IC research. Another important finding was that pre-service teachers' cultural perspectives oscillated between solid and fluid, essentialist and non-essentialist cultural approaches. Unlike the other studies, in which the reflection of static cultural understanding was regarded as an adverse result, Gurney and Demuro (2025) remarked that training the IC learners with the knowledge of the essentialist view might be advantageous in teaching the non-essentialist cultural view since IC learners may not differentiate these two phenomena and truly capture their essence without being knowledgeable about one of them.

As another significant result, it was observed that one of the participants demonstrated an ethnocentric approach by making a comparison based on superiority and inferiority. According to Deardorff (2009), articulating differentiations as "they" and "we" or having a condescending manner towards other cultures are also signs of ethnorelativism. In the analysis of qualitative data, such distinctions including "we" and "they" were made several times. From this perspective, the trace of ethnocentric statements was also visible in the results of this study.

The third research question aimed to reveal ELT professionals (inter)cultural perceptions and their views regarding the place of culture in EFL classes. The findings indicated that they emphasized the dynamic nature of culture. This result contradicted with the study of Lou (2023) and Gurney and Demuro (2025). In Lou's (2023) study, it was revealed that the teachers indicated a contradictory cultural understanding, which was in

between fixed and fluid understandings. However, in this study, lecturers underlined the dynamic and ever-shifting nature of culture and intercultural interaction. Unlike this result, Gurney and Demuro (2025) attach importance both static and dynamic culture. Besides, the difference in lecturers' cultural perspectives was noteworthy. Lecturer 1 and 3 claimed that the focus should be on (inter)cultural differences whereas Lecturer 4 and 5 argued that similarities should be highlighted. This also supported the idea presented by lecturer 5 that in addition to the flexibility provided for lecturers in higher education settings, there was a need for a framework to reduce the divergence that might affect the quality of instruction. Similarly, it was stated by Lecturer 4 that systematic and compulsory IC education is significant for compatibility with the education in European Union (EU) standards. This notion was also addressed in Uğurlu et al.'s (2022) study. The researchers underlined Turkish ELT academics' and ELT pre-service teachers' need for the inclusion of IC course into the program as compulsory, as well as revealed that similar courses were delivered in various foreign higher education institutions.

Pertaining to the inclusion of culture or IC into EFL content, almost all participants stated a deficiency such as inadequate incorporation of (inter)cultural concepts into the language teaching and materials (Lecturer 1 and 3), bestowing textbooks the role of curriculum or syllabus (Lecturer 5), neglecting the importance of the political aspects (Lecturer 4) and the systematic IC education (Lecturer 2 and 4). Similar concerns were also stated in the study of Gedik-Bal and Savaş (2022). For example, superficial cultural content of coursebooks and lack of supplementary materials were presented as some of the factors resulting in teachers' feeling of incompetency in teaching IC. Le et al. (2023) also attached importance to the role of teaching materials by emphasizing the adverse effects of insufficient materials on IC development of language learners.

Another noteworthy result of ELT professionals' interviews was the emphasis on the incorporation of theoretical, practical and critical IC education. Liddicoat (2024) and Maijala (2018) addressed same concepts. Maijala (2018) stated the significance of developing practical IC teaching skills during teacher training programs. On the other hand, Liddicoat (2024) attached emphasis on the importance of criticality in IC education. He stated that

criticality is related to self-reflection in response to the interactions with another language and culture.

Last three research questions were related to the development of a sample IC course syllabus and designing its contents referring to the results of the study and the literature. It was revealed that the lecturers' expectations were also in line with the topics provided by the researcher. However, they also significantly contributed to the content of the syllabus by recommending the inclusion of material development education (Lecturer 2) and topics focusing on linguistic aspects in IC education. It was seen that in Uğurlu et al's (2022) study in which needs analysis for ELT pre-service teachers' and academics' were conducted, it was revealed that the needs such as 'the relationship between language and culture', 'ICC', and 'representation of culture in materials' were similar to the needs stated by the participants of this study. Considering these, a sample of compulsory IC course syllabus was designed in accordance with providing critical, dynamic, theory- and practice-oriented, and also topic-based IC education. The combination of IC topics with several cultural components serves the purpose of facilitating pre-service teachers' future practices in real classroom settings.

### 5.3. Conclusions

In this study, the need for a compulsory IC course in ELT departments was intended to be investigated from the perspectives of pre-service EFL teachers and ELT professionals. In this regard, suggesting a sample syllabus for an IC course at undergraduate level was identified as the primary objective of this study. To fulfil this objective, a multidimensional mixed method approach was adopted. Accordingly, pre-service teachers' ICC was measured through the administration of the 'Scales of ICC' (reference needed here). Subsequently, their perspectives were investigated through semi-structured interviews. ELT professionals were also involved in semi-structured interviews in order to investigate both their perspectives regarding the integration of a compulsory IC course into ELTEP and their IC teaching practices in elective IC courses currently offered in the ELT department of the higher education institution in which the study was conducted.

### 5.3.1. Conclusions for Research Question 1

The mean scores of the scales of ICC for the senior pre-service teachers were slightly higher than those of the first-year pre-service teacher group. Subsequently, independent samples t-tests and Mann-Whitney U tests were utilized to identify the significance of this result. The tests demonstrated that there was no difference between the two groups considering the scale as a whole. Subscales were subjected to several analyses to meticulously investigate whether the results differed based on one or more of the four subscales or not. A significant difference was revealed only in one scale that was the action scale. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the elective IC course taken in the last year of ELTEP might have resulted in a significant change in terms of the participants' intercultural communicative actions. The results indicated that the majority of the participants demonstrated a high level of IC competence; but the participants who did not have any IC instruction background demonstrated a slightly lower but not statistically significant level of IC performance.

### 5.3.2. Conclusions for Research Question 2

The second research question aimed to reveal pre-service teachers cultural and more specifically intercultural perceptions. To respond this question, semi-structured interviews were subjected to qualitative content analysis. As a result, it was identified that both pre-service teacher groups attached importance to culture teaching regardless of previously taking an IC course or not. Once their cultural understanding was meticulously investigated through various types of questions such as defining culture/IC or directly indicating their thought regarding the notion of static and dynamic culture, contradictory ideas on this issue were revealed. For instance, there were several verbal clues directly reflecting the static understanding of culture even though they stated that culture should be regarded as a dynamic phenomenon. From this finding it can be concluded that the participants required a more systematic instruction on this subject.

### 5.3.3. Conclusions for Research Question 3

This research question investigated the ELT professionals' perceptions regarding culture, and more specifically IC and the practice of IC instruction. In this respect, semi-structured interviews were subjected to qualitative content analysis, and it was revealed that beyond any doubt they also attached significance to the integration of culture and specifically IC into ELTEP. In this sense, the results were similar to those of the pre-service teachers. However, regarding their approach to defining culture, a slight difference was detected. Two participants preferred to address culture by focusing on differences stating that constant centralisation of similarities may eventually lead to a blockage in construction of culture after a while, whereas the other participants valued the similarities rather than differences. Similarly, the participants remarked that since there was no compulsory IC course in current ELTEP, the instruction method was dependent on the instructors' cultural perception or worldview. Therefore, the previous difference in cultural approaches demonstrated the actual reflection of their perspective into reality. They stated that, it was necessary to establish a systematicity or standardisation for IC education in ELT departments. In addition, they stated that this study might contribute to the fulfilment of this need. Similarly, they stated that the place of culture or IC teaching were restricted because of several reasons such as time restriction and material shortage. In conclusion, it can be stated that the ELT professionals' perceptions regarding culture and IC teaching contributed to the primary aim of this study and indicated that there was a requirement for a compulsory IC course in ELTEP to reduce the effect of divergence in cultural perceptions of instructors in several higher education institutions in Türkiye; and thus establishing a systematic and quality-improved IC education.

### 5.3.4. Conclusions for Research Question 4

This research question aimed to investigate pre-service EFL teachers' opinions regarding the content of a suggested compulsory IC course. After the administration of the ICC scales, these participants were provided with a checklist including various topic-based contents. 'Lifestyles' and 'customs and traditions' were found to be the most frequently selected topics, whereas 'stereotypes' and 'relationships' were found to be the least

frequently selected ones. The interviews revealed that the participants articulated several stereotypical and ethnocentric expressions. From this finding it can be concluded that although many of them did not select stereotypes as a topic for the suggested IC syllabus, their replies demonstrated a need for such an education. Furthermore, the participants were asked the question if they had any theoretical- or practical-oriented IC education. Apart from one participant, they remarked that they had not taken any IC course before and during the implementation of this study. However, they stated that they were taught several isolated cultural topics in the scope of courses which are not directly associated with IC. They also included that approximately all the culture-related instructions they had taken in high school years were theoretical. The participant who enrolled in the elective IC course indicated that the course included a combination of both theoretical and practical aspects. However, her desire was taking a course enriched with critical discussions. As a conclusion of these findings, it can be inferred that participants needed course that adopt critical, discussion-based and practice-oriented approaches.

### 5.3.5. Conclusions for Research Question 5

This question also aimed to explore ELT professionals' perspectives regarding the content of a compulsory IC course. Initially, it was observed that the participants, who have taught elective IC course offered in the department, were adopting a mixed approach about theoretical and practical IC teaching. Apart from this, the participants offered several ideas for the course content. For instance, one participant indicated that landmarks could be integrated into the suggested contents. Besides, the other participants stated that contents that were more relevant to language education could be included, or development of IC teaching materials could be addressed. In conclusion, it can be stated that establishing the balance between cultural subject matter and linguistic subject matter is considered significant by ELT professionals.

### 5.3.6. Conclusions for Research Question 6

The final research question can be answered in accordance with the information presented in the previous questions., It can be concluded that a course syllabus is needed to incorporate critical IC education. Apart from this, as it was discussed in the literature, the multifaceted and dynamic nature of IC education needs to be taken into account. Eventually, Considering the complex roles of pre-service teachers as both IC learners and prospective IC teachers, the course syllabus should be designed incorporating both theoretical- and practical-oriented. Therefore, it serves the purpose of developing both their knowledge and skills of IC.

## 5.4. Implications

### 5.4.1. Implications for Pre-service Teachers

The findings revealed that taking an IC course resulted in a significant difference in action component of IC. Therefore, taking an IC course as early as possible during their training might be advantageous in developing all components of IC. Besides, seizing the opportunities encouraging intercultural interactions such as exchange programs, conferences, participation in student organizations engaging in intercultural activities might be advantageous in developing IC and establishing intercultural networks that might pave the way for various occupational and educational opportunities and experiences.

### 5.4.2. Implications for Teacher Educators

The findings of the study revealed the need of pre-service teachers for discussion-oriented, critical, comprehensive IC education. In relation to this, enriching the activities provided in elective IC course might fulfil these needs of pre-service teachers. Besides, diversify the IC teaching materials or even creating IC or culture-teaching material collections in collaboration with ELT professionals and pre-service EFL teachers from various higher education institutions might be advantageous to solve one of the problems that restrict IC teaching in ELT departments. Therefore, professional development of education stakeholders in the field of FLTE can be promoted.

As another implication, teacher educators' endeavours for incorporating theoretical and practical IC education might be beneficial in developing pre-service EFL teachers IC competencies. To illustrate, establishing a learning and teaching environment embracing cultural diversity and promoting intercultural interactions; and thus, eliminating the restrictive effects of the monochromatic and ordinary teaching activities might serve for the fulfilment of one of the needs of pre-service teachers.

### 5.4.3. Implications for Curriculum Designers

The findings of this study present several implications for IC curriculum development. It was revealed that the participants maintained a stance, which was in between static/solid and dynamic/fluid intercultural understanding. In this respect, it can be interpreted that there is a need for innovation in pedagogical approaches to (inter)cultural teaching curricula. Accordingly, constructivist approaches in (inter)cultural education might be adopted in IC curriculum design. Thus, EFL pre-service teachers' (inter)cultural perceptions might be advanced upon dynamic IC perspectives.

Additionally, it was indicated in the qualitative results of the study that the participants expressed a necessity for a novel IC education curriculum. This curriculum might address the renovation of the theory-based IC instruction. Additionally, it should elucidate the implementation of renewed discussion-based and critical IC teaching practices. Consequently, the prevailing learning outcomes can be revised, or novel IC learning outcomes that are student-cantered, practice-oriented, and aligned with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking can be integrated into the curriculum. Furthermore, curriculum revisions can be implemented to introduce innovations and alternatives in assessment approaches in IC education.

### 5.4.4. Implications for Policy Makers

The findings and conclusions of this study shed light on significant implications for the future of IC education in ELT departments. First, the pre-service teachers taking elective

IC course demonstrated a statistically significant higher level of performance in the action component of ICC. This can be considered as the evidence of the influence of IC courses on pre-service teachers IC development. When these courses are offered as electives, the pre-service teachers who have never enrolled the course may experience a deficiency in their future teachings and practices. Considering this, it can be inferred that providing a compulsory IC course can promote both their IC learning and IC teaching in a systematic manner.

As another significant implication, it can be stated that integrating critical IC teaching into ELTEP may positively contribute to the pre-service teachers' conceptualisation of cultural and intercultural interaction since it was found that their opinions were in between the static and dynamic understandings of culture. Providing a systematic, critical compulsory IC course may also prevent stereotypical, ethnocentric, essentialist misconception of culture and IC.

### 5.5. A Suggested Intercultural Communication Course Syllabus

The development of the syllabus presented below was founded upon the comprehensive review of relevant research findings. Thereby a multifaceted array of topics encompassing topics frequently addressed in textbooks and language teaching materials and IC-specific topics such as definition of the term and the relationship between language and culture were combined. The selection of subjects addressed in topic-based aspect of the syllabus was guided by Razı's (2012) conceptual framework, which delineates cultural components, while those pertaining to IC in language teaching were selected based on the insights of ELT professionals and the extant literature on IC syllabi examinations. Therefore, the purpose was to broaden pre-service EFL teachers' IC understanding and to enhance their IC teaching competencies, particularly in the evaluation of cultural activities that are anticipated to be frequently addressed in the curriculum and instructional materials. Hence, they can be equipped with the IC teaching skills which might be advantageous in their future teaching practices. In addition to this aspect, this IC syllabus differs from its counterparts in terms of addressing critical IC education and dynamic/fluid intercultural understanding.

Table 8

Compulsory IC Course Syllabus Sample

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Course Title | Intercultural Communication | |
| Course hours | Lecture: 2 | Practice: 2 |
| Course Objectives | The course aims to improve pre-service teachers' ICC in terms of both knowledge and practice. This course is designed to consider pre-service teachers' identities as both IC practitioners and IC teachers. It also introduces an array of instructional strategies within this context. | |
| Course Content | The course includes changing approaches to culture, the relationship between language and culture, identity and culture, models of IC, Critical IC, intercultural citizenship, and IC teaching practices. | |
| **Weeks** | **Content of Theoretical Lectures** | **Assignments for Practical Lectures** |
| 1. | Course introduction:<br>Discussion of the key terms associated with culture and IC<br>relationship between culture and language. | Assignment 1: Reflection Survey – pre-service teachers' background knowledge associated with culture and IC |
| 2. | Solid/Static & Fluid/Dynamic Culture<br>Definition of culture and IC | Assignment 2: pre-service teachers are assigned to define culture. After the theoretical lecture, the definitions are compared, and teachers are expected to identify static/ dynamic cultural concepts in the definitions. |
| 3. | Essentialism vs. non-essentialism:<br>Lifestyles<br>Ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism | Assignment 3: pre-service teachers are assigned to identify essentialist approaches in the given texts including various lifestyles. They are expected to adapt the texts by adopting a non-essentialist perspective |
| 4. | Language, Communication and Culture:<br>Idioms and Proverbs | Assignment 4: Pre-service teachers are provided a mini task in which they elucidate the cultural background of an idiom or proverb that they have selected. |

Table 8 continued

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5. | Identity and Culture<br>Cultural Landmarks | Assignment 5: Pre-service teachers' presentations on the backgrounds of cultural landmarks |
| 6. | Models of IC | Assigning task 6 |
| 7. | Critical IC: Stereotypes | Assignment 6: pre-service teachers are expected to analyse various sources people, texts, media for a week to identify stereotypical and hegemonic cases. They are assigned to present their findings. |
| 8. | Midterm Exam | Midterm Exam |
| 9. | Critical Thinking in IC:<br>Cuisine & Customs / Traditions | Assignment 7: critical writing – pre-service teachers are expected to choose an eating habit or traditions that they find interesting. They are assigned to write a paper reflecting their views on this subject. They are assigned to investigate the cultural background of the subject and write another reflection paper. They are asked to compare the two papers from a critical perspective and report the changes |
| 10. | Identifying and overcoming the (Intercultural) Communication Barriers | Assignment 8: Reflective journals on IC experiences. |
| 11. | Global Citizenship | Reporting the preparation for the following task. |
| 12 | IC Teaching in ELT | IC teaching in practice:<br>Presenting the lesson plans and materials prepared in any subject they have determined |
| 13. | IC Teaching in ELT | IC teaching in practice:<br>Presenting the lesson plans and materials prepared in any subject they have determined |
| 14. | Final Exam | Final Exam |

## 5.6. Suggestion for Further Research

The study' s findings, limitations, and literature review provide a range of suggestions for further research. Primarily, conducting a study with an empirical and longitudinal research methodology can indicate the effect of an elective IC course on pre-service teachers' ICC levels from a more comprehensive and holistic perspective, as the researchers is going to be provided with the opportunity to be a part of the intercultural training process of the participants rather than interpreting only the outcomes of the course. Besides, conducting the research in collaboration with pre-service teachers from several different ELT departments can be more favourable in exploring the effect of these IC courses.

Additionally, the study investigates the perspectives of pre-service teachers and ELT professionals in a specific higher education institution with a limited number of participations. Considering these, conducting the interviews in collaboration with ELT professionals and pre-service teachers from various ELT departments might be beneficial to shed light on the participants' culture or IC teaching practices and experiences, the effect of these practices, and their cultural or intercultural perceptions. This might also add a comparative dimension to the study by providing the opportunity to elucidate the similarities and differences between the practices implemented in different ELT settings.

As another suggestion, conducting a more comprehensive needs analysis by involving participants from other higher education institutions can be recommended. Thus, the expectations and suggestions of both pre-service and ELT professionals regarding the design of a compulsory IC course can be investigated more comprehensively. This also might contribute to investigating the challenges that each participant groups experienced so far, which is one of the questions posed to both participant groups in the interviews for this study.

## 5.7. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter elaborates on the results of the current study. It includes the discussion of the findings of current study with relevant literature. In addition, it elucidates the results of the study based on each research question. The chapter also presents the suggested syllabus which comprises the ground of the study. This syllabus was designed in associating a topic-based syllabus with the most important two aims of the study that are embracing fluid/dynamic notion of culture and adopting a critical stance in teaching IC. The chapter is concluded with several recommendations for further research.

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# APENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## SCALES OF ICC (G…… E……, 2016)

Dear Teacher Candidate,

Please read the items carefully and mark the answer that applies to you most. Your personal information will be kept confidential, and your answers will not affect your class performance or grades in any way. Thank you in advance for your contribution to the study.

**Class:** **Gender:** Male ( ) Female ( ) **Age:**

**(5 = strongly agree 4 = agree 3 = neutral 2 = disagree 1 = strongly disagree)**

| **Attitude Scale** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I value cultural diversity and pluralism of views and practices. | | | | | |
| 2. I respect people who have different cultural affiliations from mine. | | | | | |
| 3. I am open to, curious about and willing to learn from and about people who have different cultural orientations and perspectives from mine. | | | | | |
| 4. I am willing to empathise with people who have different cultural affiliations from mine. | | | | | |
| 5. I am willing to question what is usually taken for granted as 'normal' according to my previously acquired knowledge and experience. | | | | | |
| 6. I am willing to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty. | | | | | |
| 7. I am willing to seek out opportunities to engage and co-operate with individuals who have different cultural orientations and perspectives from mine. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Knowledge Scale** | | | | | |
| 1. I understand the internal diversity and heterogeneity of all cultural groups. | | | | | |
| 2. I am aware of and understand my own and other people's assumptions, preconceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination. | | | | | |
| 3. I understand the influence of one's own language and cultural affiliations on one's experience of the world and of other people. | | | | | |
| 4. I am aware of the fact that other peoples' languages may express shared ideas in a unique way or express unique ideas difficult to access through one's own language(s). | | | | | |
| 5. I am aware of the fact that people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective. | | | | | |
| 6. I have the knowledge of the beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products that may be used by people who have particular cultural orientations. | | | | | |
| 7. I understand processes of cultural, societal and individual interaction, and of the socially constructed nature of knowledge. | | | | | |
| **Skill Scale** | | | | | |
| 1. I am able to decentre from my perspective and to take other people's perspectives into consideration in addition to mine. | | | | | |
| 2. I am able to discover information about other cultural affiliations and perspectives. | | | | | |
| 3. I am able to interpret other cultural practices, beliefs and values and relating them to mine. | | | | | |
| 4. I am able to understand and respond to other people's thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. I am able to adapt my behaviour to new cultural environments – for example, avoiding verbal and non-verbal behaviours which may be viewed as impolite by people who have different cultural affiliations from mine. | | | | | |
| 6. I am able to manage breakdowns in communication. | | | | | |
| 7. I am able to act as a mediator in intercultural exchanges, and translate, interpret and explain. | | | | | |
| **Action Scale** | | | | | |
| 1. I seek opportunities to engage with people who have different cultural orientations and perspectives from mine. | | | | | |
| 2. I interact and communicate appropriately, effectively and respectfully with people who have different cultural affiliations from mine. | | | | | |
| 3. I cooperate with individuals who have different cultural orientations on shared activities and ventures, discuss differences in views and perspectives, and construct common views and perspectives. | | | | | |
| 4. I challenge attitudes and behaviors (including speech and writing) which contravene human rights, and take action to defend and protect the dignity and human rights of people regardless of their cultural affiliations | | | | | |
| 5. I intervene and express opposition when there are expressions of prejudice or acts of discrimination against individuals or groups. | | | | | |
| 6. I challenge cultural stereotypes and prejudices. | | | | | |
| 7. I encourage positive attitudes towards the contributions to society made by individuals irrespective of their cultural affiliations. | | | | | |

**Pre-Service Teachers' Standpoints on Intercultural Communication Course Content**

1. What do you think about having compulsory intercultural communication course in foreign language teacher education programs? Do you think such a course is needed?

   YES ☐ NO ☐

2. If your answer to the previous question is YES, what topics would you like to see in that course?

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Customs and traditions |
| ☐ | Festivals |
| ☐ | Cuisine |
| ☐ | Stereotypes |
| ☐ | Idioms and proverbs |
| ☐ | Lifestyles |
| ☐ | Relationships |
| ☐ | Holidays |
| ☐ | Beliefs and Values |
| ☐ | Other: (If you would like to see any other topics please specify) _____ |

## APPENDIX B

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself?
    a. How old are you?
    b. How long have you been learning English?
2. Have you ever been abroad? Do you have foreign friends?
    a. How do you see yourself in interacting with various cultures? How do you feel while interacting with people from different cultures?
    b. Have you had any difficulties in communicating with those people? What are the difficulties that you have encountered?
3. How do you describe culture?
    a. What constitutes culture?
    b. Is culture a solid, unchanging phenomenon or a fluid and changing phenomenon; or both at the same time?
4. Do you take any cultural-related course or intercultural communication course? If yes, could you briefly describe it please?
    a. What was the name of the course?
    b. What have you learnt in this course?
    c. If no, think about your high school years please, did you do activities related to cultural teaching in your classes? What activities were these?
    d. Do you think it is important to have culture-related courses to be a language teacher?
    e. Whose culture should be taught in a possible culture-related course?
5. Are you familiar with the term “intercultural communication” or “intercultural communicative competence”? What do they mean to you?
    a. What do we need to communicate effectively in intercultural contexts?
6. Would you like to add anything else?

## APPENDIX C

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ELT PROFESSIONALS

1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself?
    a. How long have you been teaching?
    b. How long have you been working as an EFL teacher educator?
2. How do you describe culture?
    a. Is culture a solid, unchanging phenomenon or a fluid and changing phenomenon; or both at the same time?
    b. How do you describe intercultural communicative competence?
3. Do you or have you ever delivered a culture-related course? If yes, could you please briefly describe it?
    a. What was the name of the course?
    b. Was it directly related to intercultural communicative competence (intercultural communication) or was it a course designed to increase pre-service teachers' cultural knowledge, including the transfer of theoretical knowledge about culture to some extent?
4. What are your thoughts regarding culture teaching in English as a foreign language (EFL) context?
    a. What might be the benefits and challenges of the integration of culture / intercultural communication teaching into EFL context?
5. What are your thoughts regarding the integration of culture / intercultural communication teaching into foreign language teacher education?
    a. What do you think about the place culture / intercultural communication teaching in ELT curriculum?
6. What do you think about the approach to intercultural communication in foreign language classes? Is it practice-oriented or theoretical-oriented?
7. As a teacher educator, have you ever included any practices regarding intercultural communicative competence development into your lessons? If yes, what kind of application was it?
    a. What are the most challenging aspects for a teacher in integrating intercultural communication into foreign language classes?

8. What are your considerations regarding the inclusion of a compulsory intercultural communication course in foreign language teacher education programs? Do you think such a course is needed? Why?
    a. If such a compulsory course was included in the program, what subjects would have to be addressed in its content?

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Customs and traditions |
| ☐ | Festivals |
| ☐ | Cuisine |
| ☐ | Stereotypes |
| ☐ | Idioms and proverbs |
| ☐ | Lifestyles |
| ☐ | Relationships |
| ☐ | Holidays |
| ☐ | Beliefs and Values |
| ☐ | Other: (If you would like to see any other topics please specify) |

_____

9. Would you like to add anything else?

# APPENDIX D

# THE ETHICS COMMITTEE APROVAL

T.C.
ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Etik Kurulu
Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği

Sayı : E-84026528-050.99-2400266280 08.10.2024
Konu : Başvuru İncelenmesi

Sayın Beste SEZEN

Yürütücülüğünüzü yapmış olduğunuz 2024-YÖNP-5216 nolu projeniz ile ilgili Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Komisyonu'nun almış olduğu 03.10.2024 tarih ve 14/18 sayılı kararı aşağıdadır.

Bilgilerinize rica ederim.

**KARAR 18**- Sorumlu yürütücülüğünü **Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Mustafa TEKİN**'in yaptığı ve proje araştırmacısı **Beste SEZEN** tarafından gerçekleştirilen "A Suggested Syllabus for Intercultural Communication Courses of ELT Departments (İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölümlerindeki Kültürlerarası İletişim Dersleri için İçerik Önerisi)" başlıklı araştırmanın, ilgili **taahhüt edilen izinlerin alınması** ve Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Komisyonuna sunulması koşulu ile Etik Komisyon ilkelerine **uygun** olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

# APPENDIX E

# THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C.
ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Eğitim Fakültesi Dekanlığı

Sayı : E-68203582-605-2400314260 05.12.2024
Konu : İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programında
Anket Uygulama İsteminiz

Beste SEZEN
İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi

"A Suggested Syllabus for Intercultural Communication Courses of ELT Departments (İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölümlerindeki Kültürlerarası İletişim Dersleri İçin İçerik Önerisi)" başlıklı tez çalışmanız kapsamında Fakültemiz İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programında öğrenim gören 1. ve 4.sınıf öğrencilerine anket uygulama isteminiz Fakültemiz Bilimsel Araştırmaları Değerlendirme Kurulu tarafından incelenmiş ve uygun görülmüştür.

Bilgilerinize sunarım.

**APPENDIX F**

**SAMPLE LESSON PLAN**

| **INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COURSE** | |
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| **General Information** | |
| Topic: | Critical IC & Stereotypes |
| Main Concepts: | Critical Intercultural Communication, Stereotypes, |
| Skills: | Writing, Listening, Discussion, Analysis, Synthesis |
| Allotted Time | 40 min X 3 |

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Students identify stereotypical expressions.
2. Students discriminate between static and fluid cultural understanding.
3. Students analyse learning materials from a critical perspective.
4. Students recognise essentialist, hegemonic ideologies in learning/teaching materials.
5. Students write opinion essays about given questions.
6. Students modify (inter)cultural teaching materials from essentialist, static cultural view to non-essentialist, fluid cultural view.
7. Students prepare lesson plans/activities for critical intercultural teaching.
8. Students express their cultural/intercultural experiences.
9. Students evaluate their cultural/intercultural experiences and ideas from a critical perspective.

**Materials:**

Board, Powerpoint presentations, Visual Materials (Video), Discussion

**Theoretical Course**

| **Time & Interaction** | **Stages** | **Procedures** | **Outcomes** |
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| **T – Ss**<br>**Ss – T**<br><br>**5 mins** | **Warm up** | - Brainstorming activity: Students are asked to write on a piece of paper various generalisation statements about Türkiye that they have heard in their own intercultural interaction experiences or encountered in mass communication. | **2** |

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| | | *"E.g. Turkish people are very hospitable."*<br><br>- Afterwards some of the statements are selected and students are asked, if they are in line with the situation or not?<br>*E.g., "How many of you consider yourselves to be always hospitable?*<br><br>- If needed, the statements can be explained by some examples<br>*E. g. "(Student name)! After having a tough day, can you always be hospitable?*<br><br>- The objective of this analysis is to underscore the fact that these generalizations are incapable of accounting for individual differences, whether they are positive or negative in nature. | |
| **T – Ss**<br>**Ss – T**<br><br>**15 mins** | **Lead in**<br><br>(Creating awareness, Developing consciousness as principle of critical pedagogy) | - Students are presented a video (I Am Not Your Asian Stereotype \| Canwen Xu \| TEDxBoise) and they are asked to identify stereotypical expressions, problems emerged in intercultural interaction such as problems regarding identity, hegemonic notions, racism etc. | **1, 3, 4** |

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| | | *E.g. The speaker addressed how cultural hegemony, and racism led her to question her cultural identity, and how she perceived being culturally different as something disadvantageous rather than embracing this diversity.*<br><br>- This activity serves for creating awareness | |
| **T – Ss**<br>**Ss – T**<br><br>**20 mins** | **Discussion** | - Some discussion questions are provided to students, and they are asked to first discuss the questions in group and then share their ideas or concluding remarks in class.<br><br>*E.g. In any of your intercultural interaction, have you ever heard any stereotypical expression regarding your culture? How have you reacted in that situation?*<br><br>*E.g. Have you ever realised that you have stereotypical expressions regarding a culture, and have you ever experienced the elimination of these stereotypes after any intercultural interaction?*<br><br>*E.g. Have you ever felt left out because of cultural differences? How have you reacted? You can also compare your experiences with the experiences of the TED speaker you have watched? (the questions can be diversified)*<br><br>- This activity aims to improve students' knowledge on stereotypes | **8, 9** |

| **Practical Course** | | | |
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| **Time & Interaction** | **Stages** | **Procedures** | **Outcomes** |
| **T – Ss**<br>**Ss – T**<br><br>**5 min. for each student. (Totally 40 mins.)** | **IC teaching skills**<br><br>(Material) | - Students are asked to prepare an activity focusing on critical intercultural education or identifying and overcoming stereotypes.<br>- They are expected to prepare a 5-minute long in class presentation | **7** |
| | | - (Optional activity) Students are asked to adapt a cultural activity including ethnocentrism, stereotypes or fixed cultural understanding. They shift the focus of the activity towards ethnorelativist, dynamic understanding<br>- (It could be an activity from a textbook, a visual material, or an online activity) | **1, 2, 3,** |
| **T – Ss**<br>**Ss – T**<br><br>**5 min. for each student**<br>**(Totally 40 mins.)** | **IC teaching skills**<br><br>(Lesson plans) | - Students are asked to prepare a lesson plan focusing on either breaking down the stereotypes in intercultural education or critical intercultural education.<br>- They are expected to prepare a 5-minute long in class presentation | **7** |

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| **T – Ss**<br>**Ss – T**<br>**Ss – Ss**<br><br>**(Extracurricular activity)** | **Skills Construction**<br><br>(Ethnorelativism, Critical and Dynamic Interculturality) | - Before theoretical instruction, students are provided several topics and asked to write an opinion essay. The topics can be exemplified as follows:<br>*E.g. What are the motivations behind your decision to learn English? Has learning English as a foreign language had any influence on your own cultural values?*<br><br>*E.g. What are the feelings experienced when communicating in a different intercultural context? Have there been any difficulties experienced? Please explain what these are and provide some examples.*<br><br>*E.g. In any communication, have you ever found a cultural behaviour pattern, habit, or approach to a subject "strange" or "incorrect"? What was the source of this judgment? What do you think about it now?*<br><br>*E.g. What has any intercultural communication challenge you have experienced taught you about your culture? Have you experienced any situations in which you reevaluated your own culture?* | **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9** |

*E.g. What are the key aspects of a culture that someone needs to know to recognize that culture or to communicate well in that culture? Is it enough to know about different cultures?*

- After the theoretical instruction regarding critical intercultural communication and stereotypes, students are handed out the papers by taking their confidentiality into account, and they asked to provide feedback. Both papers and reviewers will be kept anonymous. Then, they were asked to write a brief report on what they found in their peers' paper, what they get as feedback and whether their perspectives have changed or not.

- The objective is to empower students to identify and challenge hegemonic, static, and ethnocentric expressions, fostering the development of a critical perspective.