

**GlobELT 2016 Conference**  
An International Conference on Teaching and Learning English as an Additional Language  
14-17 April 2016, Antalya - Turkey  
WOW Kremlin Palace Hotel

**GlobELT**


## Integrating Culture into ELT Classes: What, Why, and How

Özlem KARAĞAÇ TUNA  
Salim RAZI

## Outline

- Introduction
- Purpose of the Study
- Research Questions
- Methodology
  - Setting
  - Participants
- Instruments
  - Inventory of Cultural Components
  - Interviews
- Data analysis
- Findings and Discussion
- Implications for Further Studies

Integrating culture into ELT



### Example One:

(Su-chun, 2007, p. 4)

- Mary: You look beautiful in that skirt.

Integrating culture into ELT



### Example One:

(Su-chun, 2007, p. 4)

- Hong: No, this skirt is old. I don't think it's beautiful.

Integrating culture into ELT



### Example One:

(Su-chun, 2007, p. 4)

- Mary: You look beautiful in that skirt.
- Hong: No, this skirt is old. I don't think it's beautiful.

Integrating culture into ELT




### Example two:

(Su-chun, 2007, p. 4)

- Once a foreign teacher told her student of the journey back to school which she took. She said that she had just come back from a place of interest and was still a little tired.
- Her student said immediately: "You should take a good rest today; you can not overwork at such an old age."

Integrating culture into ELT



## Example two:

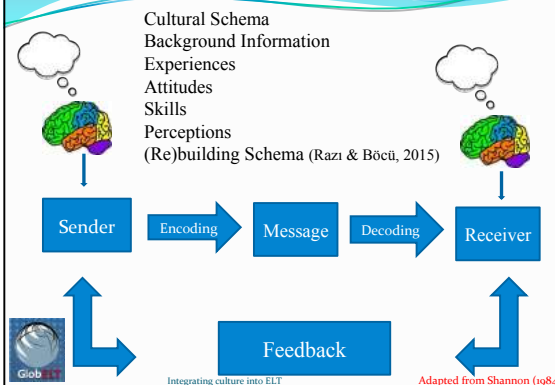
(Su-chun, 2007, p. 4)

- The teacher was very unpleasant: “I don’t think I am that old. Please don’t worry about it.”

Integrating culture into ELT



## Communication Process



Integrating culture into ELT

Adapted from Shannon (1984)

## Cultural schema and retrieving meaning

- Message from any conversation differs according to interlocutors' background knowledge.
- Lack of relevant background knowledge may result in comprehension problems (Johnson, 1981).
- Consider the role of culture in such problems.
- Cultural schema: as a sub category of schema, deals with cultural background knowledge (Yule, 1996).
- Individuals may receive different meanings from the same message due to their cultural schema.
- Rebuilding schema is necessary for the people in the examples to be able to understand each other.

Integrating culture into ELT



## Purpose of the Study

- Investigate how the components that form the cultural schema are considered to be integrated into language teaching by pre-service and in-service foreign language teachers.

Integrating culture into ELT



## Research Questions

- Do the students of the department of English Language Teaching at Pamukkale University (pre-service teachers) think that cultural elements should be included in language teaching?
  - Which category of cultural elements do they think should mostly be included?
- Do the English Language Instructors at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages (in-service teachers) think that cultural elements should be included in language teaching?
  - Which category of cultural elements do they think should mostly be included?
- Do the views of the instructors (in-service teachers) and the students of the English Language Teaching department (pre-service teachers) on teaching culture differ from each other?

Integrating culture into ELT



## Methodology

- Qualitative and quantitative.
  - Inventory of Cultural Components
  - Interview

Integrating culture into ELT



## Setting

- 2015-2016 academic year fall term
- Pamukkale University, Department of ELT
- School of Foreign Languages

Integrating culture into ELT



## Participants

- **For the inventory:**
  - 43 instructors
  - 75 4<sup>th</sup> grade students
- **For the interview:**
  - 4 Instructors
  - Five 4<sup>th</sup> grade students

Integrating culture into ELT



## Inventory of Cultural Components

- Developed by Razi (2012).
- 45 items in nine sub-categories.
- Reliable:  $\alpha = .94$ .
  - Focuses on how to deal with ICC in EFL classes.

Integrating culture into ELT



## Demographic information

- Gender
- Nationality
- Mother tongue(s)
- Foreign Language(s)
- Years of experience in teaching / Years of experience in learning a foreign language
- BA departments
- Post graduate degrees

Integrating culture into ELT



## Interview

- Interview questions dealt with more detailed information.
- Expert's view
- Piloting

Integrating culture into ELT



## Data Analysis


- **SPSS 20 was used to analyze the inventory:**
  - *Descriptive statistics*
  - *Independent samples t-test*
- **Interview:**
  - *Inductive content analysis.*

Integrating culture into ELT



### Findings & Discussion


- RQ. 1. & 2. : Do the students of the department of English Language Teaching at Pamukkale University (pre-service teachers) and the English Language Instructors at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages (in-service teachers) think that cultural elements should be included in language teaching?
- "Do you think curriculums of language teaching should include cultural elements?"
  - 'Yes': All participants (75 pre-service and 43 in service teachers).
- This result was different from Önalın's (2005) findings.
  - 62% of the teachers indicated culture should be included into language teaching.



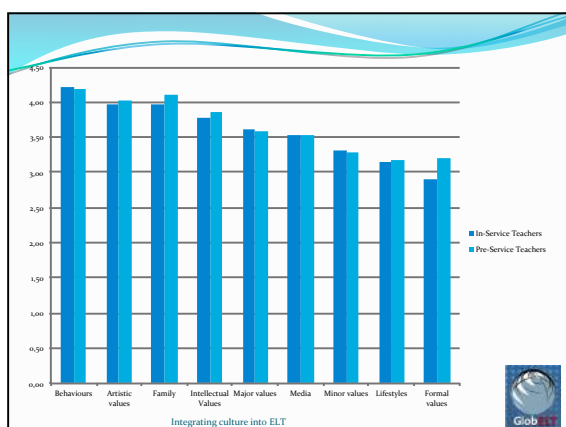
Integrating culture into ELT

### Findings & Discussion

- RQ. 1.a & 2.a:
  - Which category of cultural elements do the in-service and pre-service teachers think should mostly be included?




Integrating culture into ELT

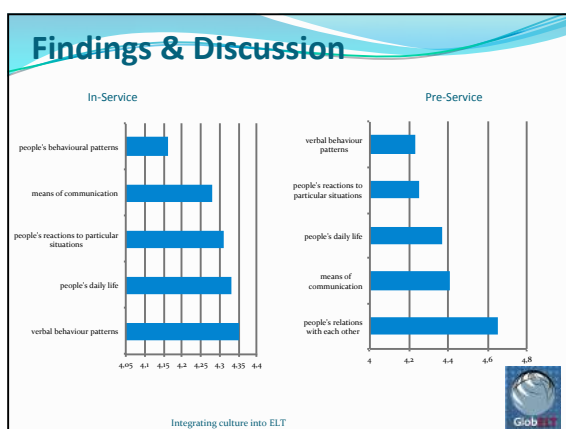


### Findings & Discussion

- Do the views of the instructors (in-service teachers) and the students of the English Language Teaching department (pre-service teachers) on teaching culture differ from each other?
- Independent samples t-test:
  - No significant differences.



Integrating culture into ELT



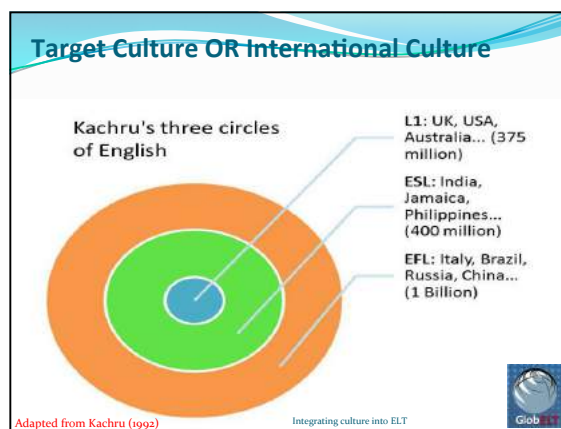
## Culture should be integrated into language teaching

### WHY?



Integrating culture into ELT

Pre-Service teachers	In-Service Teachers
Language has some proverbs and idioms which are much more difficult to understand without knowing the culture.	It ensures the students to have a view of the world, to widen their horizons, to improve their points of view, to be aware of and respect different beliefs and lifestyles, and to see things from others' points of view.
When the culture is integrated, the classes will be more interesting and the students would be more willing to learn the language and the teachers will be more motivated when their students are interested in learning.	If we want to learn a language, we should also know what they eat, how they live, how they spend their time, what is important to them, and what kind of values they have.
Language cannot be fully learned without culture.	In order for a student to be able to internalize the language wholly, culture should also be taught.
Integrating culture frees the classes to be grammar focused and lets the teachers teach different things.	Teaching culture supports the content of language teaching and without it, the language becomes abstract.
Culture is an inseparable part of language. Language and culture are a whole and they cannot be separated.	



## Culture should be integrated into language teaching

**HOW?**  
**THROUGH WHICH TECHNIQUES?**

Pre-Service teachers	In-Service Teachers
Introducing someone from a different culture may be a good way	Do some reading exercises through the simplified versions of the literature
Power-points or videos can be used; a video can be shown on something, like the history, and the customs, clothes and the music can be integrated into the discussions	Videos on the internet that are related to the topic, reading texts that contribute in the cultural knowledge of the students
Films are also a way of integrating culture into language teaching: homework on watching a film can be given to the students and they can be asked to criticize it or to express the cultural elements they have seen in the films	Homework on watching films and role-playing on some scenes of the films can be used to integrate the culture in the class
Songs can be listened to and gap filling activities can be done through the songs,	The books already include a lot of cultural elements like how they spend their days, lifestyle, holidays, festivals, their sports culture, etc. there are reading texts, videos, and listening exercises on these topics and more.
The food can be learnt and cooked as homework and it can be brought into the class to share with the classmates and to talk about it	
Role plays are also a good way to integrate culture into language teaching.	

## Implications (Pedagogical)

- In service training is necessary for ICC.
- For the pre-service teachers, the ELT departments may consider about including a course on ICC in their curriculum.

## Implications (Methodological)

- Further study may focus on:
  - The same topic by discriminating TC and ICC.
  - Interviews provide detailed information.
  - Interviews with more participants: a variety of ideas about the topics what to teach, how to teach and why to teach culture in foreign language classrooms.

**References**

Bennett, J., & Bennett, M. (2004). Developing intercultural sensitivity: An integrative approach to global and domestic diversity. In D. Landis, J. Bennett & M. Bennett (Eds.), *Handbook of intercultural training* (3rd ed., pp. 145-167). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Byram, M. (2008). From foreign language education to education for intercultural citizenship: Essays and reflections. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Johnson, P. (1981). Effects on reading comprehension of language complexity and cultural background of a text. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15, 169-181.

Kachru, B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Önalın (2005). EFL Teachers' Perceptions of The Place of Culture in ELT: A Survey Study at Four Universities in Ankara/Turkey. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 1(2).

Razi, S. (2012). Developing the inventory of cultural components to assess perception in language learning. *Novitas- ROYAL*, 6(2), 169-186.

Razi, S., & Bıcı, A. B. (2015). *Evaluating the textbook 'Life' regarding the development of intercultural awareness in EFL classes*. Paper to be presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> IALIC Conference, Intercultural communication in social practice, 27-29 November, Beijing, China.

Shannon, C. E. A (1948). Mathematical theory of communication. *Bell System Technical Journal*, 27, 379-423.

Su-chun, W. (2007). Culture fusion and English language teaching. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 4(1).

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

Integrating culture into ELT 

 **GlobELT 2016 Conference**  
An International Conference on Teaching and Learning English as an Additional Language

14-17 April 2016, Antalya - Turkey  
WOW Kremlin Palace Hotel

**Thank you  
for listening.**

Integrating culture into ELT 