

## **TERTIARY LEVEL EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

---

**İlkim Merve Yildiz, Deniz Ortaçtepe**

Middle East Technical University, Turkey

---

Culture has become an integral part of language learning due to the increase in interaction among people from different cultural backgrounds. This change has affected language teaching in a way that culture teaching, specifically intercultural communicative competence (ICC), is now integrated into the current education policies. ICC is defined as a composite of abilities to communicate with others from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Byram, 1997). The studies conducted so far (e.g. Young & Sachdev, 2011) have shown that culture integration remains mostly in theory and language teachers and teacher trainers are recommended to incorporate intercultural awareness into their teaching. In this paper, the findings of a case study on tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers' ICC perceptions and practices in relation to cross-cultural experiences are presented. The purpose of the study is to answer the following questions; a) what kinds of cross-cultural experiences affect the EFL teachers' ICC perceptions, b) what are these teachers' perceptions of ICC, and c) what are their classroom practices of ICC. The questionnaire was administered to 81 EFL teachers to answer questions *a* and *b*. According to the results of the questionnaire, four of the teachers who showed the highest ICC levels were selected for classroom observation. The observations were carried out for three weeks to examine their actual performance of ICC. With the current foreign language education policies in question, determining how teachers perceive ICC and how much they integrate ICC into their classes would help paint a startup picture of the current situation. Additionally, the results of the study will encourage providing workshops to inform teachers on ICC.

### **REFERENCES**

- Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Young, T. J., & Sachdev, I. (2011). Intercultural communicative competence: Exploring English language teachers' beliefs and practices. *Language awareness*, 20(2), 81-98.