PERCEPTIONS OF A STATE UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS RELATED TO INTEGRATING TARGET CULTURE IN AN EFL CLASSROOM

Ezgi Aydemir

Namık Kemal University, Turkey

Enisa Mede

Bahçeşehir University, Turkey

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions and classroom applications of the Turkish EFL instructors working in language prep programs at a state university in Turkey in relation to integrating target culture in their classroom. A sample of forty state university language preparatory program instructors participated in this study. The quantitative data were obtained through a questionnaire, and the qualitative data were collected from semi-structured interviews.The findings of the study revealed significant implications with respect to integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

Keywords: Target culture, Classroom Applications, EFL.

Introduction

The era in which we live is an era of communication. Due to internet, mobile phones, tablets and other technological devices, people interact with each other in a tremendous speed and are well-aware of what is going on, both domestically and internationally. Unlike the conditions of even a few decades ago, people today are more aware of what other people do, how they live and how they are similar to or different from each other thanks to English, the world language of this era.

Owing to enhancement in technology, the amount of acculturation has increased and its effect has spread all over the world. Therefore, the debate on culture and language teaching has gained importance. The relation between language and culture has been discussed for a long time (Byram, 1999; Crystal, 2001; Hardy, 2004; Önalan, 2005; Prodromou, 1992; Sowden, 2007).

Prodromou (1992, p. 39) says, "English, as the foremost medium of international communication at the present time, is called upon to mediate a whole range of cultural and cross-cultural concepts, to a greater degree than in the past." The effect of English being the world language is quite obvious even in Turkey. People tend to name shops, a new product, TV programs, magazines, food and many other things in English. For instance, at breakfast we generally have some cheese, olives, tomatoes, cucumbers, bread and tea. However, these habits have changed and the new generation has begun to ask for pancake, which is actually a traditional food, "akıtma", our ancestors have cooked for decades. Additionally, Byram (1999) claims that language teaching aims to develop both linguistic and cultural competence: in other words, intercultural communicative competence.

Crystal (2001) estimates that there are 37 million English speakers in India, 36 million in the Philippines, 156 million in Pakistan, 2 million in Sri Lanka, 2 million in Hong Kong and 1 million in Singapore. The numbers reveal that the people who use English as L2 or foreign language are higher in number than the people using it as L1.

With such overwhelming and increasing numbers, it can be inferred that the importance of teaching English is a crystal-clear fact. There are some issues that should be taken into consideration while teaching English. Hardy (2004, p. 22) states that, "When teaching an international language   such as English, teachers must consider the characteristics of such a language, the role culture plays in teaching, and language teaching in specific, the role language plays in the cultural expressions we make, and the role the teaching materials and methods we use."

Culture has always been an important topic to study. Most teachers have neither the cultural awareness nor the knowledge to incorporate culture into their teaching. The question of whether or not we should integrate culture into teaching has been debated for decades. Researchers have been trying to determine how important it is to integrate culture into our classrooms. Other research has been done to determine if teaching culture in the classroom has the same impact as learning about it in its natural context; or if it will be a problem for students to learn about culture. These questions have been considered, discussed, and studied by the researchers since communication and the meaning gained importance. It is understood that knowing the grammatical structures is not enough when there is a problem with getting the meaning and the context which include cultural components different from the learners' own country.

From the latest researches it can be inferred that the idea of "involving culture into teaching" is still not clear for the teachers. On the other hand, Önalan (2005, p. 217) claims that, "Within the past decade, the problems resulting from not teaching culture with language have started to be recognized. Language teachers try to avoid turning out fluent fools by deliberately helping students learn to experience reality in a new way through culture. Many international and national foreign language associations have begun to address this problem by integrating culture in their standards." The role for the teachers here is to have an adequate cultural awareness and develop their learners' awareness. Additionally, Sowden (2007, p. 305) states that, "Teachers need to be aware not only of the cultures of their students and their environment, but also of the cultures that they themselves bring to the classroom, whether they are nationals or expatriates." It can be inferred that the ideas, beliefs, experiences and knowledge of teachers on involving culture and which culture into their teaching has gained importance.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions and classroom applications of the Turkish EFL instructors working in language prep programs at a state university in Turkey in relation to integrating target culture in their classroom. The findings of the study will provide information about integrating target culture in English Language Preparatory Programs at other state and private universities. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the perceptions of the state university language preparatory program instructors in relation to "target culture?"
2. To what extent are the following concepts perceived to be important by state university language preparatory program instructors while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom:

1. cultural components
2. aspects of language
3. major sources of knowledge

Methods and Procedures

This study employs both quantitative and qualitative research methods. To begin with, quantitative research method was chosen to provide objectivity and clarify a cause and effect relationship. In other words, it enables a researcher to look into certain common or specified characteristics of a selected population which, in fact, provides the researcher with the opportunity to generalize the relationship among variables in the study (Hohmann, 2006).

Specifically, this study investigates the state university language prep program instructors' perceptions about integrating target culture while teaching in an EFL classroom. The quantitative data were collected via questionnaire to obtain reliable and valid results from a large number of subjects (N=40). The collection of data was fixed and designed prior to the data collection. The purpose was to indicate the quantitative results; therefore, this was descriptive research. Quantitative data were analyzed via SPSS 16.0.

Furthermore, qualitative research method was chosen for this study since it is commonly used in order to study social and cultural issues (Hohmann, 2006). This method reveals the perceptions of the instructors much more clearly and provides them with the opportunity to be free during the data collection process. Taylor (2005, p. 101) stated that qualitative research allows researchers to examine in full context and interact with participants while collecting data mostly face-to-face from them. Gass and Mackey (2005, p. 173) claimed that interviews, which are a way of collecting qualitative data, can allow researchers to investigate phenomena that are not directly observable. They are interactive and therefore researchers can elicit additional data if initial responses are vague, incomplete, off-topic, or not specific enough. The researcher utilized onequalitative data collection method namely, semi-structured interview. First, the randomly selected instructors were provided with a semi-structured interview and the results were interpreted according to Bogdan and Biklen's (1998) framework.

For the purposes of this study, the data were gathered from forty-six (N=46) instructors working in a state university language preparatory program.

According to the data gathered from the questionnaire, the participants were thirty-one males and seventy-two females. Specifically, twenty-nine (N=29) female and eleven (N=11) male state university language prep program instructors participated in the study.

Furthermore, all the participants were Turkish EFL instructors who graduated from different departments. Specifically, twenty-nine (N=29) of the state university language preparatory program instructors graduated from English Language Teaching Department, nine (N=9) from English Language and Literature, and two (N=2) from Linguistics Departments.

As for the participants' degree of education thirty-three (N=33) of state university language preparatory programinstructors had a BA degree. As for their graduate education, five (N=5) of the state university language prep program instructors completed their MA or were still a student of an MA program and two (N=2) either completed their PhD or were still a student of a PhD program.

Finally, the participants had different teaching experiences. The teaching experience of the state university language preparatory program instructors varied from 2 to 11 years and more. Specifically, seven (N=7) of them had 2-3 years of teaching experience, five (N=5) had 4-5

years, thirteen (N=13) had 6-10 years, and fifteen (N=15) of them had 11 years and more teaching experience.

For the purposes of this study, data came from a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview given to the state university language prep program instructors to find out their perceptions on integrating target in an EFL classroom.

The questionnaire was given to the state university language prep program instructors to find out their perceptions on integrating target culture in an EFL classroom. The questionnaire was adapted from Şen's (2010) study which aimed to identify the EFL instructors' definition of target culture, their perceptions of the epistemological sources referring to target culture, and the skills and tasks they integrate while teaching English in their classrooms.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Part 1 and Part 2. In Part 1, the demographic information was gathered based on the following criteria: gender, nationality, department of graduation, educational background, age, years of teaching experience, and the presence of the participants' abroad.

As for Part 2, there were two subcategories: A and B. The first subcategory (A) included 34 items in a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) through 'strongly agree' (5). As for the second subcategory (B), there were four basic questions. The first question had four different statements (e.g. the characteristics of home, family nature, and interpersonal relations in a community). Specifically, the instructors were asked to choose one of the given statements according to the order of importance namely (1) extremely important and (5) useless. The second question aimed to find out which language skills the participants most commonly integrated into target culture while teaching in an EFL classroom. Specifically, they were asked to choose 3 of the language skills (e.g. speaking) and rank them as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. Finally, the last question investigated the sources of knowledge (e.g. films) the participants had to choose in terms of target culture.

Before the questionnaire was administered to the instructors, it was piloted with seven English prep program instructors. Reliability estimate was α=0.729 for the whole questionnaire which indicates a high internal consistency of the items in the scale (Gliem and Gliem, 2003).

Another primary source of data for this study were the semi-structured interviews which aimed to find out what the instructors understood of the concept of target culture. By using the semi-structured interviews the researcher tried to gather detailed information about the instructors' knowledge on target culture, and their perceptions about integrating target culture in their classrooms. The interview questions were adapted from Şen's study (2010) as well.

The interview contained four open-ended questions. Question 1 aimed to find out what state university language prep program instructors understood of the concept "target culture" while teaching English in their classroom. In question 2, the participants were asked to comment on the cultural components provided by the researcher. Question 3 attempted to investigate the aspects of language the participants perceived important to integrate while teaching target culture. Finally, in question 4, the researcher provided some sources of knowledge about target culture. The instructors were asked to choose which ones they perceive to be important and briefly comment on them.

Furthermore, two major steps were followed for the data collection procedure in this study: questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

In the first step, the researcher prepared an online version of the questionnaire via Survey Monkey. The questionnaire was sent to the participants (N=60) via email. The participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire and send it back to the researcher within two weeks. 40 (N=40) state university language prep program instructors out of 60 returned the questionnaire back to

the researcher. The aim was to find out the state university language prep program instructors with respect to the concepts of "culture," "target culture" and "integrating target culture into EFL classrooms."

The second step of the data collection procedure was the semi-structured interview. The questions of the interview were similar to the questionnaire items. The instructors were asked what comes to their mind when they think of "target culture;" its components; and which aspects of language they perceived crucial to focus on while teaching target culture in their classrooms. Additionally, as the researcher was interested in which sources of knowledge the instructors helped raise their awareness on integrating target culture into their lessons.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed statistically using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 16.0 version for Windows. Descriptive statistics (percentages, means and standard deviations) were evaluated in order to identify the perceptions of the state university language preparatory program instructors in relation to target culture.

The data collected from the questionnaire were supported via semi-structured interview carried out with six (N=6) state university language prep program instructors. According to Bogdan and Biklen's (1998) framework, the recorded answers were first transcribed, and then by reading each participant's transcripts the conceptual themes, namely: cultural components, aspects of language and major sources of knowledge were identified by the researcher according to the recurring words and ideas. These conceptual categories were used to create a matrix of major themes which were sorted under specific heading.

Findings and Interpretations

Findings related to the Perceptions of the State University Language Preparatory Program Instructors about Target Culture in an EFL Classroom
In this part, the findings of the questionnaire (Part 2-A) in relation to the first research question will be analyzed to reveal the perceptions of the state university language preparatory program instructors on what they understand about the concept "target culture". Their percentages are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentages of the perceptions of the state university English language
preparatory program instructors in relation to "target culture".

	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Not Decided	Strongly Agree/Agree
	SULPPI	SULPPI	SULLPI
Culture and language cannot be separated.	10	0	90

Teachers should know about target culture.	7.5	0	92.5
English can be taught without reference to culture.	70	5	25
My students ask questions about target culture.	10	2.5	87.5
The best way to learn something about target culture is to go and live there.	10	15	75
I do not teach target culture in my lessons.	77.5	5	17.5
Giving cultural information is boring for my students.	87.5	10	2,5
I have difficulty in giving cultural information in my lessons.	75	12.5	12.5
I find it useful to compare Turkish and target culture in my lessons.	12.5	7.5	80
I try to learn more about target culture in order to use in my lessons.	12.5	5	82.5
Target culture should focus on the teaching of	17.5	2.5	80

monumental aspects of culture (i.e. famous people, famous paintings, best-sellers, buildings).			
My students like learning about culture.	7.5	10	82.5
I feel uncomfortable when a question is asked about target culture.	35	37.5	27.5
ELT teachers should be equipped with cultural patterns of target language.	5	0	95
I tell my students what I heard (or read) about target culture.	0	10	90
Course curriculum should also cover the cultural information in addition to the linguistic information.	2.5	5	92.5
I make sure that my lesson plans include information about target culture.	12.5	12.5	75
I talk to my students about my own experiences in the foreign country.	15	12.5	72.5
ELT teachers should only teach language, not culture.	85	10	5

I tell my students why I find something fascinating or strange about target culture.	7.5	7.5	85
It is important for me to include aspects of culture as part of my classroom teaching.	7.5	15	77.5
Target culture should focus on the teaching of material culture (i.e. food, clothing, transportation, facilities etc.).	7.5	15	77.5
I try to teach the effects of culture on language (i.e. not so common *have a good meal* versus mandatory *afiyetolsun*).	7.5	2.5	90
I provide contrasting cultural examples (i.e. In Turkish we say this but in English they say that).	5	2.5	92.5
The course books I use contain a lot of cultural information.	17.5	12.5	70
The term target culture means the culture of everyone who speaks English.	52.5	22.5	25
I find it enjoyable to give cultural information in my lessons	5	2.5	92.5

I believe culture is very important in establishing appropriate communication.	0	5	95
It is impossible to learn target culture without living in that country for a while.	52.5	20	27.5
I need to learn more about target culture.	7.5	10	82.5
Culture changes overtime.	17.5	12.5	70
I select the cultural elements according to the characteristic (i.e. age, level etc.) of my students.	12.5	10	77.5
Culture is often a part of my lessons.	7.5	15	77.5
Target culture should focus on the teaching of beliefs (i.e. religion, likes and dislikes, values, taboos etc.).	22.5	30	47.5

Note: SULPPI=State University Language Prep Program Instructors

According to this table, the participants perceived the following items to be crucial to focus on (as a combination of strongly agree and agree) while teaching culture in an EFL classroom: culture and language cannot be separated (SULPPI: M=4.30, SD=0.99); teachers should know about target culture (SULPPI: M=4.35, SD=0.69); students asking questions about target culture (SULPPI: M=3.97, SD=0.80); the best way to learn something about target culture is to go and live in that country (SULPPI: M=3.97, SD=1.02); finding it useful to compare Turkish and target culture in their lessons (SULPPI: M=3.85, SD=0.86); trying to learn more about target culture in order to use in their lessons (SULPPI: M=4.07, SD=0.97);target culture should focus on the teaching of monumental aspects of culture (i.e. famous people, famous paintings, best-sellers, buildings) (SULPPI: M=3.80, SD=1.01); and their students like learning about culture (SULPPI: M=3.95, SD=0.87); ELT teachers should be equipped with cultural patterns of target language

(SULPPI: M=4.37, SD=0.74); telling their students what they heard (or read) about target culture (SULPPI: M=4.27, SD=0.64); course curriculum should also cover the cultural information in addition to the linguistic information (SULPPI: M=4.40, SD=0.70); making sure that their lesson plans include information about target culture (SULPPI: M=3.85, SD=1.00); talking to their students about their own experiences in the foreign country (SULPPI: M=3.90, SD=1.10); telling their students why they find something fascinating or strange about target culture (SULPPI: M=4.15, SD=0.86).

Furthermore, the perceptions of the participants indicated that the following items were also important with respect to integrating target culture in an EFL classroom: it is important for them to include aspects of culture as part of their classroom teaching (SULPPI: M=3.92, SD=0.82); target culture should focus on the teaching of material culture (i.e. food, clothing, transportation, facilities etc.) (SULPPI: M=3.75, SD=0.77); trying to teach the effects of culture on language (i.e. not so common *have a good meal* versus mandatory *afiyetolsun*) (SULPPI: M=4.10, SD=0.77); providing contrasting cultural examples (i.e. In Turkish we say this but in English they say that) (SULPPI: M=4.15, SD=0.80); the course books they use contain a lot of cultural information (SULPPI: M=3.55, SD=1.06); finding it enjoyable to give cultural information in their lessons (SULPPI: M=4.15, SD=0.69); believing culture is very important in establishing appropriate communication (SULPPI: M=4.15, SD=0.48); needing to learn more about target culture (SULPPI: M=3.97, SD=0.80); culture changing overtime (SULPPI: M=3.60, SD=0.95); selecting the cultural elements according to the characteristic (i.e. age, level etc.) of their students (SULPPI: M=3.80, SD=0.93); and culture is often a part of their lessons (SULPPI: M=3.90, SD=0.81).

On the other hand, the instructors perceived the following items to be unimportant (as a combination of strongly disagree and disagree) to emphasize while teaching culture in an EFL classroom: English can be taught without reference to culture (SULPPI: M=2.42, SD=1.15); not teaching target culture in their lessons (SULPPI: M=2.20, SD=0.96); giving cultural information is boring for their students (SULPPI: M=1.87, SD=0.68); having difficulty in giving cultural information in their lessons (SULPPI: M=2.20, SD=0.88); and ELT teachers should only teach language, not culture (SULPPI: M=1.67, SD=0.94)

Conversely, the instructors perceived the following items neither important (as a combination of strongly agree and agree) nor unimportant (as a combination of strongly disagree and disagree): I feel uncomfortable when a question is asked about target culture(SULPPI: M=2.57, SD=1.21);The term target culture means the culture of everyone who speaks English (SULPPI: M=2.50, SD=1.08); It is impossible to learn target culture without living in that country for a while (SULPPI: M=2.70, SD=1.09); and target culture should focus on the teaching of beliefs (i.e. religion, likes and dislikes, values, taboos etc.) (SULPPI: M=3.30, SD=1.11). One possible explanation behind this finding might be the fact that English has become a world language, an international language and a "lingua franca" due to economical, strategic, and technical developments of the countries using English as their native language. It has been discovered that the people using English as a second or foreign language outnumbered the native speakers. However, some of the instructors consider British or American culture as the main focus of culture teaching. Therefore, the instructors were undecided on the item that target culture refers to the culture of everyone speaking English. Additionally, some instructors were not able to decide on whether it was necessary to learn target culture without living in that country for a while. Apparently, the instructors were not sure about the necessity or the consequences of living in the country of target culture or the impact of it on learning target culture. Another undecided item was on whether target culture should focus on the teaching of

beliefs (i.e. religion, likes and dislikes, values, taboos etc.). A possible reason for this finding might be the fact that the instructors did not have the adequate knowledge on the cultural concepts. Therefore, they were not aware of what target culture should or should not include.

Findings related to the Perceptions of the State University Language Preparatory Program Instructors about the Importance of emphasizing Cultural Components, Aspects of Language and Major Sources of Knowledge in an EFL Classroom

As for the second research question, the findings gathered from the questionnaire were used to report the percentages considering the perceptions of the state university language preparatory program instructors about the importance of emphasizing the cultural components (e.g. the characteristics of home and family), aspects of language (e.g. speaking) and major sources of knowledge (e.g. films) while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

To begin with, Table 2. demonstrates the percentages of the perceptions of the participants in relation to focusing on cultural components (e.g. the characteristics of home and family) while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

Table 2. Percentages of the perceptions of the state university English language preparatory program instructors in relation to emphasizing cultural components while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

	Extremely Important/Important	Not So Important	Not Important At All/Useless
	SULPPI	SULPPI	SULPPI
The characteristics of home, family nature, and interpersonal relations in a community.	95	2.5	2.5
The system that is reflected by the media, cinema, music, literature, and art of a community.	87.5	10	2.5
The customs, traditions, and institutions of a country.	100	10	0

| What people do at work, at home, in their free time and while they entertain. | 92.5 | 7.5 | 0 |

Note: SULPPI=State University Prep Program Instructors

According to the table above, the participants perceived all of the listed cultural components to be important (as a combination of extremely important and important) while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom: the characteristics of home, family nature, and interpersonal relations in a community (SULPPI: M=1.82, SD=0.71); the system that is reflected by the media, cinema, music, literature, and art of a community (SULPPI: M=1.92, SD=0.65); the customs, traditions, and institutions of a country (SULPPI: M=1.55, SD=0.50); and finally, what people do at work, at home, in their free time and while they entertain (SULPPI: M=1.70, SD=0.60).

Furthermore, in order to find out which aspect of language should be taken for granted while focusing on target culture in an EFL classroom, the instructors ranked the following concepts as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd according to their priority (See Table 3.)

Table 3. Percentages of the perceptions of the state university English language preparatory program instructors in relation to the aspects of language while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

	Vocabulary	Grammar	Reading	Speaking	Listening	Writing
SULPPI	82.5	82.5	85	80	80	80

Note: SULPPI=State University Prep Program Instructors

According to the findings the SULPPI perceived all the aspects of language namely: vocabulary, grammar, reading, speaking, listening and writing vocabulary to be important while introducing target culture in an EFL classroom. One possible reason behind this finding might be that the instructors believed it is important to provide students with the knowledge of target culture in all aspects of language while teaching English.

Finally, the participants were asked to choose from the sources of knowledge they perceived to be important while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom (See Table 4.).

Table 4. Percentages of the perceptions of the state university language preparatory program instructors in relation to the aspect of language while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

	SULPPI
TV programs (not including films)	72.5
Films	92.5
Songs	67.5

Realia-artifacts/ Materials	67.5
Websites	80
Social networks (i.e. Facebook, MSN, Twitter etc.)	67.5
Images/ Photos	72.5
Native speakers themselves	72.5
Visits to foreign countries	75
Course books	65
Books/ Magazines/ Journals/ Newspapers/ Comics	80
Teachers training sessions/ Conferences/ Workshops	67.5

Note: SULPPI=State University Prep Program Instructors

According to the findings, the most important sources of knowledge perceived important by the SULPPI while integrating target culture in an EFL classroom were films (92.5%); websites (80%); and books, magazines, journals, newspapers and comics (80%). In addition, visits to foreign countries (75%); pointed images, photos, TV programs (not including films) (72.5%); native speakers themselves (72.5%); songs (67.5%); course books (65%); realia-artifacts/materials (67.5%); social networks (i.e. Facebook, MSN, Twitter etc.) (67.5%); and teachers training sessions, conferences and workshops (67.5%) were also among the important sources of knowledge to introduce target culture in an EFL classroom. Finally, only one SULPPI added an extra point claiming that websites like ePal/eTwinning and Skype could be a good source of knowledge in relation to integrating target culture in an EFL classroom.

The Results of the Semi-Structured Interviews related to the Perceptions of State University Language Prep Program Instructors on Target Culture and integrating Target Culture in their Teaching

The Perceptions of the State University Language Prep Program Instructors on the Concept of Target Culture

When the state university language prep program instructors were asked about what they understood from the concept 'target culture', they stated that it is the culture of all English-speaking countries. Specifically, it is the cultural characteristics of a society the language belongs to. In relation to this point, the instructors made the following comments:

1. Although not being able to give a certain frame of target language, I think it is not solely the British, but the culture of all English-speaking countries.

2. Target culture may be related to the countries where English is actively spoken. This can be American culture, British culture or any culture where English is used.

Furthermore, the instructors related target language with traditions, lifestyles, customs, gestures and values of the English speaking countries as stated in the excerpts below:

1. I think of values, understandings, rituals, customs, traditions, lifestyles and elements as a part of daily life that belongs to the culture of those English speaking countries.
2. Target culture refers to the cultural characteristics of society the language belongs to and includes traditions, customs, social life and values of the English speaking counties.

Lastly, the instructors agreed on the importance and necessity of integrating target culture while teaching in an EFL classroom. They stated that they believed culture and language are intertwined and cannot be separated. Therefore, it was significant and necessary to pay attention not only to the grammatical aspects of the language but also the cultural aspects and components. In relation to this point, the instructors stated that:

1. Knowing that language and culture are intertwined, an EFL teacher should be fairly equipped with different aspects of the culture and the language he is supposed to teach.   She/he should not only teach the grammatical rules but also exemplify gestures, responses and maybe daily situations corresponding to the target culture.
2. Language learning is not just learning the patterns, rules or linguistic units, learners need to have communicative competence and as language and culture are so closely linked, any change within culture is reflected in the language and vice versa. Therefore, it is obvious that language teaching and learning cannot be separated.

Furthermore, state university language prep program instructors were asked which cultural components they perceived important to integrate while teaching English in their classrooms. The results revealed that they emphasized home life, family, nature, interpersonal relations, media, cinema, music, literature, art, customs, traditions, work and free time as reported below:

1. While integrating target culture in my teaching, I mostly pay attention to the home life, family nature, interpersonal relations, media, cinema, music, literature and art related to the target culture as I believe that culture and language are interwoven.
2. When I need to make reference to the target culture, I generally integrate customs, traditions, literature and art components while teaching. Besides, home life, family nature and interpersonal relations are also the components I integrate while teaching.

Additionally, the instructors were asked which aspects of language they perceived important to integrate while teaching target culture in EFL classrooms. Parallel to questionnaire, the results revealed that reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking were all important aspects of language to integrate target culture while teaching English. The participants commented thusly:

1. While teaching target culture related vocabulary, I benefit from grammar, reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. As using the vocabulary in the appropriate context is quite significant, I make the students read, hear and write about the target culture elements.

2. I would rather integrate vocabulary, grammar, speaking, reading and writing aspects of language while teaching the target language and culture. Because in my opinion understanding the cultural elements of a language also means using it in the appropriate written or verbal context and recognize it whenever they hear or read about it.

Finally, the state university instructors were asked which sources of knowledge helped them raise their awareness about teaching target culture in their classrooms. The instructors mentioned TV programs, films, songs etc. as reported below:

1. There are many sources I benefit from which are TV programs, films, songs, materials, course books, magazines, journals, newspapers, comics, native speakers and visiting foreign countries. Additionally, I also follow many websites and social networks.
2. The sources I find quite beneficial and efficient to extend my knowledge about target culture are course books films, songs, magazines, journals, newspapers and comics, social networks, photos, native speakers, visits to foreign countries and also attending to conferences, workshops and conferences.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Target culture was perceived as an important component of language teaching by state university language prep program instructors. The instructors believed that language and culture are intertwined and that they cannot be separated.

Moreover, the instructors defined target culture as neither mainly British culture nor mainly American culture. Rather, they referred to it as the culture of all English speaking countries. This may be because the instructors are aware of the developing and globalizing world which requires the students to improve their linguistic and intercultural competence. Additionally, though their course books are based on British culture, it has been noticed in the recent years many course books include other cultures (e.g. Australian). Therefore, they were aware of the fact that their students need to be informed about other cultures to interact with people from other cultures.

Furthermore, the results indicated that the instructors found the following cultural components to be important to focus on in their lessons: the characteristics of home, family nature, and interpersonal relations in a community; the system that is reflected by the media, cinema, music, literature and art of a community; the customs, traditions and institutions of a country; what people do at work, at home, in their free time and while they entertain.

According to the findings, the instructors related target culture with traditions, lifestyles, customs, gestures and values of the English speaking countries. Additionally, they stated that home life, family, nature, interpersonal relations, media, cinema, music, literature, art, customs, traditions, work and free time are also components of target culture. This may be due to the fact that most of the instructors mainly follow the course books and teach the target culture the way it is presented. This might also be due to the fact that when target culture is considered, these cultural components generally occur. Lastly, the variety of cultural components perceived important by the instructors may be due their sources of knowledge helping them raise their awareness about teaching target culture in their classrooms.

Moreover, based on the results of this study, all aspects of language, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, grammar and speaking were perceived important to integrate while teaching target culture in an EFL classroom. It can be inferred from these results that cultural components

can be introduced to the students while helping them improve their four language skills, and their grammatical and vocabulary knowledge as well.

All in all, the findings of this study revealed that state university language prep program instructors considered target culture as a crucial part of target language teaching. Additionally, they indicated that they considered home life, family, nature, interpersonal relations, media, cinema, music, literature, art, customs, traditions, work and free time as crucial cultural components to integrate culture while teaching in an EFL classroom. Furthermore, target culture can be integrated while teaching all aspects of language namely, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking. Finally, the preferred sources of knowledge helping instructors' raise their awareness about teaching target culture in their classrooms were as follows: TV programs, films, songs, materials, course books, magazines, journals, newspapers, comics, native speakers and visiting foreign countries.

Depending on the results, the differences between the EFL instructors' perceptions at different language prep programs in Turkey can be compared to gain more various results. Furthermore investigating students' perceptions on target culture and target culture integrated lessons would provide insights into whether the objectives of the instructors' and the universities' match with what students actually require. Additionally, a group of participants can be trained before examining them and there can be a control group which does not get any education or training on integrating target culture while teaching. The results of this empirical study can be compared regarding the fact that whether there are any differences between the previously trained and non-trained groups. Finally, the results of this study can be taken for granted while designing and evaluating language preparatory programs for EFL students.

References

1. Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). Qualitative research for education: An instroductionto theory and methods. Ally & Bacon: Needham Heights, MA.

2. Byram, M. & Risager, K. (1999). Language teachers, politics and cultures. Bristol, PA: Multilingual Matters.

3. Crystal, D. (2001) English as a Global Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

4. Gass, S. M. & Mackey, A. (2005). Second Language Research: Methodology and Design. Lawrance Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

5. Gliem, J. A. & Gliem, R. R. (2003). Calculating, Interpreting, and Reporting Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Likert-Type Scales. Presented at the Midwest Research to Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing, and Community Education, The Ohio State University.

6. Hardy, T. (2004). Language and culture: Teaching methods and materials. Teaching English Now, 6(3), 22. Retrieved from

7. http://tb.sanseido.co.jp/english/newcrown/pdf/ten006/010.pdf

8. Hohmann, U. (2006). Quantitative Methods in Education Research. Retrieved in May 18, 2013 from

9. www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/resined/Quantitative/quanthme.htm.

10. Önalan, O. (2005). EFL teachers' perceptions of the place of culture in ELT: A survey studyat four universities in Ankara/Turkey. Journal of Language and LinguisticStudies, 1(2), 215-235.

11. Prodromou, L. (1992). What culture? Which culture? Cross-cultural factors in languagelearning. ELT journal, 46(1), 39-50.

12. Sowden, C. (2007). Culture and the 'good teacher' in the English Language classroom. ELTjournal, 61(4), 304-310.

13. Şen, S. (2010). A profile of EFL teachers' knowledge of the target culture from theirepistemological sources to classroom applications. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Hacettepe University.

14. Taylor, G. R. (2005). Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in Research.University Press of America.