

INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

**IMPLICATIONS OF DIFFERENT CULTURES OF ESL CLASSES IN TERMS
OF LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGIES**

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Extended abstract of

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Introduction

It is known that teaching English as a second/foreign language acquired a great importance after the Second World War. English language started to be considered as the language of international communication and there was a demand for studying English by students, immigrants, refugees, and tradesmen. The search for the new methodology brought Communicative language teaching as a new orientation which emphasized the use of authentic material and which introduced the culture-specific phenomenon embedded in the language.

The spread of the word ‘culture’ in European national languages was seen from the late 19th century. As with many other complex concepts, myriads of definitions of culture have been suggested by researchers from all the fields of inquiry into human societies, which tried to schematize different aspects of the word. The definition that tailors the nature of the research study is that **culture is ‘a complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, practices, rituals and lifestyles of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artifacts they produce and the institutions they create’** (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler, 2003, p.45).

Concerns with culture in language teaching have a long history and the connection between language and culture is well proved; ‘culture specific world views are reflected in language’ (Valdes, 2001, p.8). This means that how people think and speak is determined by their culture. Byram (1989) observed that culture represents the ‘hidden’ curriculum in second language teaching and pointed out that language teaching implicitly implies teaching in a culture-sensitive way because language refers to speakers’ knowledge and perception of the world and concept of culture and cultural learning.

What has become evident in recent decades is that pure language learning is insufficient for efficient communication. Only encoding the message does not lead to communication or interaction with a person. Communicative competence which is a well-admitted goal in learning the English language is defined as the linguistic competence and the behavioral expertise. Understanding of the interlocutor takes place only with the knowledge of language and culture from which the language derives. The interference of the lack of cultural knowledge in communication is better illustrated in the communication pattern between Non-Native Speakers and Native speakers as the knowledge of the target culture plays a vital role in understanding.

This is why I think that culture-sensitive English language teaching is vital for learners to achieve a communicative competence in the language. This makes the topic of my research **urgent and important**.

The **goal** of my dissertation is to inquire:

1. the effects of culture-sensitive English language teaching on the acquisition of the English language and motivating students;
2. how English language teachers in Georgia value and practice culture-sensitive English language teaching;
3. whether culture-sensitive English language instruction contributes to students' tolerance towards culture and formation of positive attitudes;
4. how much culture is reflected in the popular textbooks in Georgia.

The **problem questions** of my dissertation are:

1. Is culture-sensitive teaching an effective way to master language skills?
2. Are English language teachers in Georgia ready to use culture-sensitive teaching?

The **hypothesis** of my study is framed through the following issues:

1. Culture-sensitive English language teaching will facilitate and enhance students' acquisition of communicative competence in English language and keep their motivation high.
2. Culture-sensitive English language teaching will raise students' cultural awareness, understanding of outward cultural differences and similarities will help to form positive attitudes towards people from target culture and tolerance towards cultures.
3. Culture-based curriculum will promote students' cultural awareness, engagement, will enhance diverse group relationships and will foster culture-sensitive English language teaching.
4. Culture-rich vocabulary, activities, strategies and methods presented in English language textbooks will have a considerable effect on students' acquisition of linguistic and cultural expertise.

To solve the above-discussed problems I used the following **methods of research**:

- Review and analysis of existing literature on the topic
- Questionnaires
- Quasi-experiment
- Case study
- Observation
- Statistical analysis of obtained through quasi-experiment data

Quasi experiment was used because, due to administrative reasons, it was not possible to assign students to the control and experimental groups at random. However, this format is often used in education due to the same reasons. Its results are trustworthy enough on condition that all variables, except the independent and dependent, are kept under control.

The research is empirical and quantitative, as well as qualitative. The focus group of students for my experiment and teachers for my questionnaire were chosen in accordance with the above problem.

Novelty

While there are lots of studies in the world about inclusion of culture into language teaching, there is **little systematic research** available, especially empirically-based research regarding culture-sensitive English teaching in Georgian context. Furthermore, this is the first study conducted at the International Black Sea University where classrooms are becoming more and more diverse every year, which makes my study innovative. My study is innovatively focused on identifying how English teachers in Georgia are applying culture-sensitive English language teaching.

Theoretical value

The theoretical bases of my research study are:

- concept of culture presented by different researchers and anthropologists (Risager, 2006; Hoijer, 1953; Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Khler, 2003)
- linguistic relativity (Whorf, 1956)
- introduction of the concept of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and consideration of it as the important goal for English language teaching

- the important models in discussing culture and linguistic success approach: Gardner and Lambert's model of motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1972) and Schumann's eight dimensional model of social distance (Schumann, 1978)
- ideas and theories in the field of intercultural communication by outstanding theorist Edward Hall (1966; 1976)
- culturally-responsive theory (Ladson-Billings, 1994) and its characteristics (Gay, 2010)
- transformative approach to multicultural curriculum (Banks & Banks, 1995)
- different criteria for textbook evaluation (Byram, 1993; Risager, 1991; Cortazzi and Jin, 2011)
- approaches to teaching English, different methods discussed (Westwood, 2008; Harmer, 2006)
- Assessing culture in language learning (Valett, 2001)

Practical importance of the study

It is becoming clear that culture-sensitive English language teaching is vital for students of diverse cultures to achieve academic success. The research discusses many possible ways, strategies and techniques to insert culture into language teaching. The English language syllabus prepared by me integrates cultural elements and could be used and modified by English language teachers. Culture awareness test developed by me will be of practical value for English language teachers in evaluating students' success. It should be noted that the bulk of culture-sensitive activities designed by me will be applicable for classroom practices. The recommendations of the dissertation, hopefully, will enable language teachers to more effectively incorporate culture in language teaching.

Structure of dissertation

The dissertation includes the following parts: Introduction, 3 chapters, conclusion, recommendations and 6 appendices. It involves 13 tables and 35 figures.

A Brief content of the dissertation

The first chapter of my research is the literature review which discusses the cultural issues in the English language teaching methodologies. It suggests different definitions of the concept of culture proposed by various authors and researchers. The chapter focuses on the relationship

between language and culture and asserts that language and culture are inseparable and should be analyzed together. The study discusses the commencement and development of consideration of cultural elements in ELT. In the current understanding language teaching implies teaching about culture because language refers to speakers' knowledge and perception of the world (Byram, 1989). In the first chapter there is the consideration of the origin and introduction of different theories about culture-sensitive teaching, summed up in table 1.

Table 1. Culture components to be taught in the process of English language teaching

| Theories including culture components | Classroom applicability |
|---|--|
| Kinesics (non-verbal communication) | Interpreting gestures. |
| Hidden dimensions (beliefs, attitudes, values, assumptions). | Interpreting the behavior in the target culture. Interpreting the behavior in the native culture. Anticipating reactions. |
| Set theory: 1. External part of culture (food, historical buildings, historical personalities). 2. Illusive part of culture (worldview, pitch, tone, topics for discussion at different occasions). | Broadening awareness in all aspects of target culture. Presenting geographical parameters of target culture. Presenting contributions of target culture. Listing outward cultural differences. Focusing on the topics for discussion in target and native culture. Levels of language (greeting, to a friend and to a friend's family). |
| Chronemics (the use and understanding of time) | Presenting different etiquette patterns. Interpreting codes of behavior. |
| Proxemics (the use of place) | Presenting different etiquette patterns. Interpreting codes of behavior. |

The chapter also presents the introduction of intercultural communication, the hidden dimension of culture and culturally responsive teaching and its characteristics.

Table 2. Critical theory

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Theory | Culturally-responsive pedagogy (learning may differ across cultures. Teachers can enhance students' success by acquiring knowledge of their cultural backgrounds and |
|---------------|--|

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | translating this knowledge into instructional practices. It critically and intentionally deconstructs mainstream status quo). | | |
| Supports | Culturally-responsive caring | Predominant teacher attitudes and expectations | Moving towards culturally-responsive caring |
| Classroom application | After the process of self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-renewal, deconstruction and reconstruction teachers will acquire knowledge, skills, expectations and ethics inevitable for culturally-responsive teaching and will exhibit the power of caring. All students of these teachers will be held accountable for high academic success. Caring together with pedagogical competence will result in high academic achievement of diverse students. | | |
| Outcome | Success for students from diverse background | | |

All these theories have a great implication on language teachers. They have to acknowledge their crucial role in the process of teaching and learning culturally diverse students. They have to pay attention to power issues and position themselves as equal to students, and be available for consultation and guidance; they should set clear expectation for participation, assignments, learning activities, team work, grading, submission dates, and assessment; they have to take into consideration how students' different cultural backgrounds effect their learning achievements. in demonstrating culturally-responsive teaching, the core features are teachers' ability to care for students, alter students' attitudes, assumptions, feelings of efficacy, and expectations, together with teachers' strong awareness of cultural diversity and knowledge of pedagogical skills. Culturally-responsive pedagogy entails teachers who have a thorough command and appreciation of the cultural and historical heritages and contributions of different ethnic groups. It requires teachers who are brave enough to confess the fallacy of blaming learners in not achieving the educational goals. It demands to reflect on the educational system itself and make an effort to change it. Culturally-responsive pedagogy needs teachers who hold intransigent faith in their students and put endless efforts in helping them achieve academic excellence. Culturally-responsive teachers acknowledge that pedagogical knowledge together with teachers' ability to care is foundation for success for ethnically diverse students.

The literature review emphasizes the importance of culture-sensitive English language teaching in the acquisition of communicative competence in English language.

Conclusion to chapter 1

The chapter 1 has demonstrated many theories that prove the connection between language and culture. It has offered many definition of this complex concept and has shown how important it is to take into consideration the target culture while teaching English language to achieve understanding into communication. The chapter proposes different theories to help teachers provide culture-sensitive English language teaching. Teachers' awareness and knowledge of aspects of culture-sensitive language teaching will benefit their students to communicate in the target language and smoothly overcome negative cross-cultural experiences. The chapter illustrates how the lack of the knowledge of non-verbal communication impedes understanding the bearers of the target culture. Understanding others kinetic system will simultaneously raise the understanding of students' own kinetic systems and will help them to interpret different codes of behavior. In 21st century diverse classrooms teachers no longer can keep distance in student teacher relationships, just contrary they should care for their students by devoting them extra time and involving into students' out-of-class life and they have to promote positive classroom climate where all students are valued and supported to succeed. The process of self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-renewal will help teachers acquire knowledge, skills, expectations and ethics inevitable for culture-sensitive teaching and will exhibit the power of caring. Caring, together with pedagogical competence, will result in high academic achievement of all students.

The second chapter presents the discussion of different components of culture-sensitive English language teaching. It explores the development of multicultural curriculum and its content, such as: textbooks, standards, literary and trade books and mass media. The chapter introduces textbook evaluation criteria proposed by different authors and it depicts the ESL methodologies. The chapter illustrates culture-specific topics for classroom discussions and techniques and activities for culture-sensitive instructional practices. This chapter also shares the existing experience of assessing culture-sensitive English language teaching.

The second chapter also describes **two studies**: 1. The evaluation of multiculturalism of the curriculum in Education Faculty English language philology, bachelor level at IBSU and its effects on students' attitudes. 2. Evaluation of two very popular textbooks in Georgia.

The study The evaluation of multiculturalism of the curriculum in Education Faculty English language philology, bachelor level at IBSU and its effects on students' attitudes, has been conducted by me to reveal how a multicultural curriculum affects students' diversity awareness, engagement in learning, and feelings towards intergroup relationships. Also, how students assess the multiculturalism of the curriculum in Faculty of Education and Humanities, English Philology program (bachelor level) at IBSU (International Black Sea University).

The focus of this study became the Faculty of Education and Humanities, English Philology bachelor program at IBSU. It is a relatively new faculty at the university, but all three levels of tertiary education (Bachelor, Master, and PhD) are represented successfully. An outstandingly, to my mind, multicultural curriculum of the program includes the following courses dealing with various cultures: British Culture and Multicultural Studies; Introduction to World Literatures; British Landmarks; British Pop Culture; Methods of Teaching English; Culture of Georgian Oral and Written Communication; Elective language 1, 2, 3, 4 (Spanish, Turkish, or Russian).

The mission of the faculty is to enhance cross-cultural awareness and support the communication between cultures.

The goal of the program is to provide students with contemporary knowledge and adequate skills in the field of English philology using a range of student-centered, inquiry-based methods: problem-based learning, project-based learning, computer-assisted learning, and discovery learning.

Method

The research was conducted based on the data obtained from the Faculty of Education and Humanities, English Philology bachelor students at IBSU. The justifications for the choice of this program are listed below:

- It is a relatively new faculty in the university

- Mixed-nationality groups that are presented on the faculty have more potential to reveal interesting data
- The center-point in the study was language curriculum development and effects

The Faculty of Education and Humanities English philology program at bachelor level at the moment when the study was conducted encompassed totally 65 students. So, 65 questionnaires were distributed using the online survey software package www.surveymonkey.com out of which 50 were completed and returned. The following link will allow you to see the questionnaire:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2ZQNF3F>

Some responses were added manually.

The study of curriculum has found out that:

- The majority of the respondents (64%) rated the curriculum high, which means that a culture-oriented philology programs meet the students' needs.
- More than half (60%) of the students think that varied courses in their curriculum strongly improved their cultural understanding, which will favor them in their cross-cultural communication.
- It is significant that in discussing who benefits from multicultural curriculum 60% of students think that majority and minority students benefit equally, though 10 % still think that minority groups benefit more. A frequent exposure to multicultural topics is expected to make it evident for students that all groups have equal benefits.
- It is also important to mention that again more than half of participants (68% and 66% respectively) think that their motivation has improved and their attitudes and feelings toward students with a diverse background have changed positively. This change will definitely benefit them in their cross-cultural relationships.

For the purposes of the study evaluation of very popular textbooks in Georgia I followed Byram's checklist for textbook evaluation to examine the cultural content of *New Snapshot* (Abbs,

Freebairn and Barker, 2010) and *Total English* (Foley and Hall, 2010). The choice of textbooks is according to the popularity in adult and adolescence learning.

The study of textbooks concludes:

- Two popular in Georgia textbooks *Total English* and *New Snapshot* are both aimed at international target culture, in the way they include a wide variety of cultural issues in English-speaking countries as well as in other countries where English is not the first or second language, but is used as an international language. To add, while textbooks show different levels of inclusion of target and international culture, the learning of culture and development of intercultural skills, the promotion of reflective use of textbooks depends largely on how they are used in the classroom, the quality of interaction between students, texts and teachers and methodology of cultural learning.
- As we can see, the above-discussed textbooks contain rich cultural information, but they, unfortunately, do not contain sufficient culture-specific vocabulary, explanations or activities. The book gives the floor to teachers to use their creativity and alter the materials to express culture-bound ideas, which is not easy and sometimes time-consuming for teachers. Leaving such activities only on teachers' good will is not the right way to look at the issue.

Conclusion to chapter 2

The chapter 2 proved the significance of every circle in the chain of successful enactment of culture-sensitive English language teaching and learning process. Integrating more realistic, contextualized content about culture of different ethnic groups, enrichment of textbooks with culture-sensitive vocabulary, readings, speaking topics and activities will make textbooks valuable source for multicultural curriculum. Teachers' awareness of the proper application of literature in ELT which entails transmitting culture of the people who speak the language, in which it is written, will raise students' understanding of different cultural values. Integrating the contributions of diverse cultures in the language curricula will make it meaningful for diverse students and will benefit them in attaining educational goals. The importance of assessment in educational practice is well- documented. Assessing linguistic and cultural goals as equally important will ensure that the

culture-sensitive teaching is given the seriousness and status. Multiple techniques and methods for practical realization of culture-sensitive English language teaching which is presented in the above chapter will help teachers dispel the vagueness of how to apply acquired knowledge into daily practices.

The third chapter is concerned with the research of the effects of culture-sensitive teaching in ESL classes on the students' academic achievement in the English language. One of the aims of the research is also to present the results of culture-sensitive teaching in terms of students' understanding of target culture, their awareness of differences in cultures, command of etiquette and comprehending different cultural values. This chapter also deals with the issue of teaching English language with the great focus on target culture and students' own cultures and on the main force for conducting culture-sensitive teaching – English language teachers. The research presents the results for **three studies**:

1. Study 1- The quasi-experiment - the study displays the effects of culture-sensitive English language teaching on students' acquisition of the English language.
2. Study 2 - Culture test - the study shows the process of acquisition of the target culture in language classroom and how it progressed throughout the course.
3. Study 3 - Teacher attitude survey - the study illustrates how Georgian teachers view the main goal of English language teaching and learning process, how they evaluate the importance of culture-sensitive language teaching in sharpening communicative skills; whether they practice culture-sensitive English language teaching and what are the techniques they use for reaching the goals.

Study 1- the quasi-experiment held with freshmen of Business Management Faculty at the International Black Sea University proves the usefulness of culture-sensitive English language teaching and shows the difference between the results of culture-focused and traditional instruction. The importance of culture-sensitive teaching is most vivid when interaction is between Non-Native Speakers (NNS) of English and Native Speakers (NS) of the English language.

The **goal** of the experiment was to see if culture-focused English language teaching was the effective way for acquiring communicative competence in English.

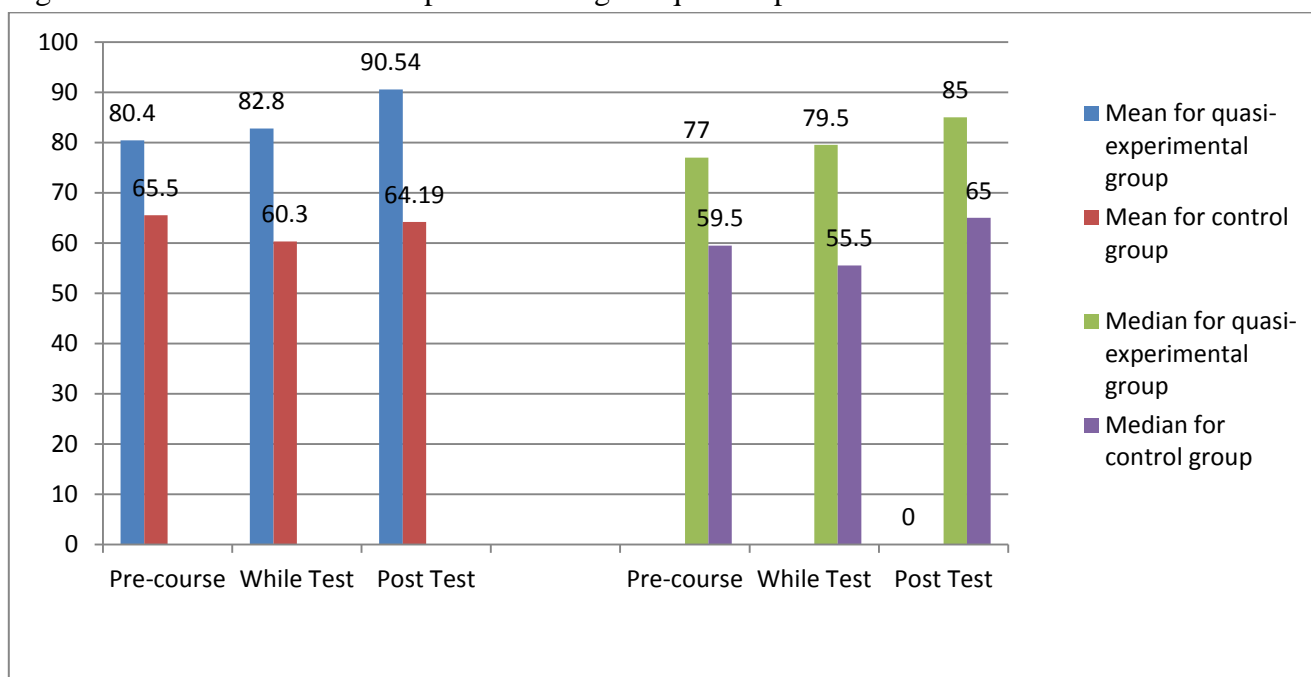
The syllabus for the control group was based on the same course-book, the same number of hours were delivered to both the control and the experimental group. For the purposes of the experiment a syllabus was designed, which was applied in the experimental group. The difference between the syllabi in the two groups was that in the syllabus of experimental group linguistic and cultural goals were given the same importance. Reflection questions, non-verbal communication elements with variety of specially designed activities were incorporated for the enhancement of intercultural communication. Time for that was tailored by omitting some less useful materials in the course-book. The syllabus can be seen in appendix 3 of the dissertation. Video observation was also held to reveal students' motivation during the experiment. It is significant to mention that students participated in discussions and activities with great pleasure and enthusiasm.

As the course-book lacked language activities oriented on target and international culture, I myself designed 11 activities for the experimental group. The nature of the activities aims to increase language learners' interaction and keep their motivation high. These activities enhance students' skills for comparative analysis of their own and target culture while maintaining their own cultural identity. I hope these activities will be useful for English Language teachers in language classrooms.

The experiment proved the positive influence of culture-sensitive English language teaching for students in acquisition of communicative competence in the English language. All 24 students in the experimental group were successful in improving their language skills.

Below is presented the graph that illustrates the mean and the median change during the experiment for both groups.

Figure 1. Mean and median comparison during the quasi-experiment



It is notable that the median (fiftieth percentile-the middle point between the top and the lowest result) for both groups is increasing, though for control group the growth is considerably slower compared to quasi-experimental group. What concerns to mean (arithmetical average), while the experimental group reveals a substantial rise, the control group displays a decrease and intermittent data (65.5 to 60.3 to 64.19). From above discussion, it is obvious that the improvement of results in the experimental group is steady from measurement to measurement.

Thus, the quasi-experiment has proved the effectiveness of culture-sensitive English language teaching in acquisition of communicative competence.

The **aims** for **Study 2** involve two concerns:

- (1) To reveal how teaching is focused on culture-embedded activities, collaborative and cooperative methods raise students' cultural awareness, and change their attitudes towards people from the target culture.
- (2) To hold a test on culture-linked knowledge in order to exhibit the procedure of students' achievement of cultural goals.

This study has proved that culture-sensitive English language teaching is effective for the acquisition of target culture.

Conclusion to study 1 and 2

The mean for the experimental group has increased regularly, a little slow in the beginning and faster in the further process of experiment, and significantly (80.4 → 82.8 → 90.54), while the mean for the control group was fluctuating, anyway, the final result is insignificantly worse than the initial one (65.5 → 60.3 → 64.19). The median for the experimental group is growing from measurement to measurement, finally growing substantially (77.0 → 79.5 → 85), while the median control group is fluctuating, as well as the mean for the group, finally growing, but not really much (59.5 → 55.5 → 65.0). From above discussion, it is obvious that the success for experimental group is steady from measurement to measurement.

Thus, the experiment has proved the effectiveness of culture-sensitive English language teaching in acquisition of communicative competence.

The second study has proved that culture-sensitive English language teaching is effective for acquisition of knowledge about the target culture. Students have reached their cultural goals, in particular I will focus on several examples that the study vividly exhibited.

1. Students' attitudes about people from the target culture changed in the direction of improvement, which is proved by their correct interpretation of behavior of people from the target culture and is illustrated in figures 3.20, 3.21 and 3.22 where an 88.9 % increase is shown. This change in attitudes will protect students from misunderstanding and developing conflicts with people from the target culture.
2. Though the students' awareness of native cultural peculiarities was quite high from the very beginning of the course, a 22.22% increase is very valuable in intercultural communication, as students will be aware what behavior can lead to cross-cultural misunderstanding.
3. The tests showed an increase in understanding of outward cultural differences, which will help students while interacting with people from countries where English is spoken. Making sense of the culture-linked terms like 'jack-O'-lantern,' 'May pole' and many

others will contribute to asking follow up questions and having many things in common to get pleasure from conversation.

4. Students' understanding of contributions of famous people from the target culture has increased by 61.1%, which is also beneficial for them in their lives. The idea of awareness of their personalities is valued by people from every culture. This awareness will promote friendship and good relationship with people from the target culture. Besides, these names are often used by native speakers in conversation without comments, so not knowing their importance will bring to too many interruptions in communication.
5. In the end, the test showed a striking growth in grasping the differences in cultural values, life patterns, etiquettes, attitudes of students' own culture and the target culture. Most importantly, this growth proves the effectiveness of culture-sensitive language teaching.
6. What refers to the second concern of the study, to exhibit the procedure of the students' achievement of cultural goals, it has also been fulfilled as teachers can freely use the above culture test in measuring the accomplishment of cultural goals.

Study 3 reveals to what extent English language teachers in Georgia value and practice culture-sensitive English language teaching and learning process. 100 paper-based questionnaires (constructed-response and selected-response items) were distributed. Besides, the same questionnaire was offered online. Totally 82 responses were obtained. You can see the questionnaire using the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B997S8S>

This study showed that culture-sensitive English language teaching in Georgia is not yet embedded in teachers' everyday instructional practices. By many different reasons many teachers (about a half of the respondents) avoid teaching English with cultural orientation. As for the reasons for not practicing culture-sensitive English language teaching, it is apparent that many teachers have not thought about it. So if the culture awareness and understanding of its importance while teaching language is kept at a high level for teachers they will find time and energy in their excessively busy schedules to practice culture-sensitive language teaching.

It is significant that all those teachers (17 teachers wrote comments out of 31 teachers who had practiced culture-oriented English language teaching) who shared with us their experience of practicing culture-sensitive English language teaching, enjoyed the experience and mentioned that such focus is motivating and helpful for students. It is also notable that more than half (62.2%) of respondents think that culture-sensitive teaching is important which may lead to putting more effort into practicing it in everyday instructional practices and will be inspiring for colleagues.

Limitations of the research

The following are the several limitations to the research that should be mentioned:

- The duration of the experiment was limited to one semester. The results will be more reliable and valid if the experiment is held for a longer period of time.
- The experiment was a small-scale study, limited to one university, two groups only.
- Skipping possibility for open-ended questions in teachers' questionnaire has resulted in gathering fewer ideas about the reasons for not practicing culture-sensitive English language teaching or sharing experiences of those teachers who practiced it.

These factors may have limiting effects on my findings to come to really generalized results. Limitations suggest the need for further studies. My recommendations will be to further develop the research of the effects of culture-sensitive English language teaching on the successful acquisition of English language competence in Georgia and on a wider scale.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following outcomes of the research have been demonstrated:

1. Acquisition of English language communicative competence has been considered the widespread aim for English language teaching courses. **Communicative competence** which is defined as the linguistic proficiency in the target language plus behavioral expertise of the people speaking English **stresses the importance of culture-sensitive English language teaching**. The knowledge of sounds, vocabulary and grammar, reading and speaking skills in English do not make sure that understanding between interlocutors will take place. **The**

crucial factor in understanding is connected with cultural aspects of the language that exists beyond lexical elements. The diverse 21st century classrooms focus on the necessity of intercultural communication to foster the understanding across cultures.

2. It must be admitted that **the results of culture-sensitive teaching are more reflective in communication pattern between Non-Native Speakers (NNS) and Native Speakers (NS), as the knowledge of the target culture plays a vital role in understanding.** To that extent, the language and culture seem more linked to each other. Speaker's awareness of the target culture facilitates the process of integration into the English speaking world and at the same time maintains his/her cultural identity. It should be noted that the importance of the communicative competence in the English language in the communication pattern which takes place between Non-Native and Non-Native Speakers (e.g., Georgians and Turkish) is not as much obvious as in the interaction between Non-Native and Native Speakers. The communication pattern between NNS and NNS does not necessarily require the awareness of the target culture as it does not hinder the understanding process. This can be treated as the direct outcome of the inseparability of language and culture which is more embedded in NNS-NS communication pattern and interferes into cross-cultural understanding.
3. The literature review discussed in the study made the link between language and culture clear. Factual cultural reality is not only reflected in the language, but also language is a unified part of that reality. In the process of communication, utterances and behavior are interpreted and moulded with the assistance of other language components of objective cultural reality. Speaking a language means that speakers are performing a socio-cultural phenomenon. **Teaching language without culture equals ignoring socio-cultural occurrence and limiting students to acquire communicative competence of the language.**
4. Inclusion of culture in a language curriculum requires a high-level commitment among proponents at different levels in universities. At the university level, the role of the faculty is essential to decide the curriculum trends. The Curriculum Development Committee has to determine what knowledge or values are planned to convey to students and which methods to adapt while doing so. Infusion of various perspectives into the educational system will extend students' understandings of the complexity of the society today, and to make unity in diversity, transformation of standard-based curriculum is vital. Based on my study it can be

concluded that a **culture-based language curriculum considerably promotes students' cultural awareness (96%), motivation and engagement (68%) and enhances feelings and relationships with diverse groups (80%).**

5. **My hypothesis was that culture-sensitive English language teaching facilitates and enhances the acquisition of communicative competence in English language.** The culture-embedded language activities designed by me and viewing cultural goals as equally important as the linguistic goals proved to be effective for university students in their achievement of academic success. **The experiment held by me showed the higher academic success of students in experimental group (mean: 80.4 to 82.8 to 90.54; median: 77 to 79.5 to 85) compared to students in the control group (mean: 65.5 to 60.3 to 64.19; median: 59.5 to 55.5 to 65.0). The experiment proved the effectiveness of culture-sensitive English language teaching.** In addition, cultural information can be seen as a pedagogic device for capturing the interests of students and thus keeping their motivation high. **From my video observations and from the experiences of teachers who have shared their impressions about culture-sensitive English language teaching it became apparent that culture-sensitive English language teaching is strongly motivating and engaging for students.**
6. The implementation of an intercultural approach to English language teaching requires not only curricula, syllabi and material changes, but also, most importantly, altering the teacher awareness and background. The contemporary ESL teacher needs an educational and cultural background to determine the methods and techniques to be used for presentation, concepts and values to be stressed, to avoid biases and chauvinism in order to deal competently with today's diverse student population. **The sophisticated ESL teacher, while introducing British and American cultural aspects should encourage students to maintain their own cultural identity.** Teachers should guide the discussion about culture in a nonjudgmental way. **It follows that culture-sensitive teachers need a more enriching and complex education. TESL/TEFL training programs should provide this background to future teachers.**
7. The study of the results of culture test in my research has revealed that, to avoid culture shock, a situation when a person expects a certain behavior and receives another totally different one, culture-sensitive language teaching is essential. The target language society

can be understood in depth only with the knowledge of its culture together with the knowledge of its language. The specially designed culture-oriented activities and culture-focused teaching instructions in class increase the understanding of attitudes (88.9%), customs, daily activities of people in target language, their values, ways of thinking, and using etiquettes, understanding of contributions of famous people from target culture (61.1%). **Culture-sensitive English language teaching helps students acquire culture awareness, tolerance towards other cultures, understanding of cultural values and understanding of outward cultural differences and similarities.**

8. **The reflection of culture in textbooks available for English language teachers is of the utmost importance.** The cultural content and direction of lectures is strongly influenced by textbooks. Modern textbooks often depict target and international culture, but this is not sufficient to solve the problem. **Cultural topics should be related to appropriate language learning activities and presenting culture-rich vocabulary and grammar. Teachers' guide books should be carefully planned with strategies and methods of teaching the language in a culture-sensitive way.** Cultural materials integrated with linguistic materials in the syllabus should not be treated as a secondary goal for English language teachers, it should be an inseparable component of language teaching.

Recommendations

- Based on the results of my experiment I would recommend ESL teachers in Georgia to become more culture-sensitive and to embed culture into their instructional practices in order to make the English language learning goals attainable for all students.
- It is desirable that those universities which do not have a cultural component in the language curricula to re-examine them and to add a cultural approach. It is referable for English language teachers to have a thorough background in comparative analysis, cultural anthropology and cultural relativism.
- It is advisable for ESL teachers to participate in periodic in-service trainings, workshops and conferences that focus on target and international culture to make English language learning possible in 21st century diverse classrooms and get acquainted with publications in the periodicals.

List of publications

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