Levels of Ethnocentricism Among Teachers of Turkish as a Foreign Language

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Abstract: In this study, in which the levels of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language were examined in line with various variables, the general survey model within the scope of descriptive research was implemented. The research was carried out with 185 instructors who teach Turkish as a foreign language in various state or private institutions in the 2020-2021 academic year. In order to assess the ethnocentrism level of teachers, a 5-item Likert-type Ethnocentrism Scale, comprised of 20 questions, developed by Neuliep and McCroskey (1997) and which was later adapted to Turkish by Üstün (2011) was used. In the study, it was found that the levels of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language differ significantly according to such variables as gender, age, their holding a Turkish teaching certificate for foreigners and to the MA program they graduated from, yet it was also concluded that there was no significant difference according to the other variables as the institution they work for, the department they studied in, whether they know a foreign language, where they teach Turkish, and their intercultural communication competence.

Keywords: *Etnocentricism; Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language; Intercultural Communication Competence*.

Introduction

Foreign language teaching is a process in which at least two cultures interact. In this interactive process, individuals are expected not to have negative attitudes and behaviors towards other culture or cultures. Negative attitudes and behaviors towards other cultures directly affect foreign language learning. Before the 20th century, individuals were very unlikely to live in multicultural environments and coexist with people from other cultural groups, but with the technological developments in today's world, the possibility of encountering different cultures and getting aware of different lifestyles increased to a great extent. However, being together with people from different cultural groups has not always produced a positive result, but it has also led to adverse consequences such as xenophobia and racism. It is one of the most undesirable situations to observe these negative attitudes and behaviors in teachers, learners and teaching course book sets in foreign language teaching processes.

In foreign language teaching/learning environments, learners with very different personality traits from many different environments might study in the same atmosphere together. It is not expected that all students have the same sensitivity towards the target culture and the cultures of other students in the classroom environment. The perspectives of the learners towards other cultures may vary depending on their environment, personality traits and educational status. Some learners may even be hostile towards the target culture and other cultures of students in the classroom setting.

This might disrupt the teaching process individually or in a way that it may affect the rapport in the class. In order to eliminate or minimize such negative impacts, teachers and course book sets are expected to have developed competencies that can increase the intercultural sensitivity of learners.

Whether the target language is the mother tongue of the teacher or not, when the instructor enters a new cultural context, he may encounter some changes and difficulties not only through his professional identity, but also via his identity and emotions (Özkan, 2018, p.213). However, the teacher who performs his job professionally is expected to have a high level of intercultural sensitivity and to be able to approach all cultures with some respect.

Intercultural sensitivity is defined as "sensitivity to the importance of cultural differences and the perspectives of people in other cultures" (Bhawuk & Richards, 1992, p. 414). Although intercultural sensitivity has cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects, intercultural sensitivity mainly comes to the fore with its affective aspect. Intercultural awareness (cognitive) is the basis of intercultural sensitivity (affective), and this leads to intercultural competence (behavioral) (Chen, 1997, p.5). "Intercultural Sensitivity Development Model" was created by Bennett (1986, p. 182) and the development of people's intercultural sensitivity was specified in six stages.

Figure 1

Intercultural Sensitivity Development Model

Ethnic relativism according to the intercultural sensitivity development model, consists of acceptance, adaptation and integration stages. People in the acceptance stage want to recognize and explore cultural differences. Even if they do not like it, they accept different ways of thinking and living. Their own actions and values are not the only way to exist in the world. People in the adaptation stage can empathize and view things from another person's perspective in order to understand and be understood. Most of the people at this stage are interculturally-sensitive. One can adapt his/her behavior to any cultural context. People in the integration stage tend to interpret and evaluate behavior from various frameworks of cultural reference, thus there is never a single right or wrong answer. In the transition to this

stage, some people become overwhelmed by the cultures they know and become uncomfortable in the sense that they can no longer identify themselves with any of the cultural components (Bennett, 1998, p. 16-17). The integration phase does not have to be better than the adaptation stage. In the integration stage, many members of non-dominant cultures are descriptors of many people, such as long-term immigrants and "global nomads" (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003, p. 425). Cultural relativism means trying to understand the target culture without making value judgments within the structure of that culture (İçli, 2015, p.113).

Ethnocentrism, according to the intercultural sensitivity development model, consists of denial, defense, and minimization stages. People in the denial stage live by chance or consciously in relative isolation from other cultures. They either do not perceive cultural differences at all or make generalizations based on being familiar with the other people. While defensive people defame others with negative generalizations, they add positive generalizations to themselves and try to reinforce the immutability of their worldview. As a result, they consider their own culture as the most developed culture, while presuming that other cultures are underdeveloped. People at the minimization stage recognize and accept some superficial cultural differences, but in depth they assume that all people are the same, only human (Bennett, 1998, p. 15-16). When ethnocentrism prevents human qualities from being observed in foreigners, it reaches a harmful point that at this stage it feeds "xenophobia" and racism (Özyurt, 2020, p. 182).

Ethnocentrism is an obstacle to intercultural communication competence. However, it is not correct to state that ethnocentrism has its negative aspects in every case. When faced with threat or attack, the stage that one learner belongs to can serve a very valuable purpose in ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism forms the basis of patriotism and the desire to make sacrifices for the group to which one belongs. Nevertheless, ethnocentrism presents many challenges and creates a barrier to intercultural communication competence (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997, p. 389).

It is very difficult for individuals, who judge other cultures to turn themselves off against them, and think that everyone is in their own world view, to be successful in foreign language learning. It should be taken into account that learners may be at the ethnocentric stage in foreign language teaching. The transition of language learners at the ethnocentric stage to the ethnic relative stage should be reinforced through the teaching material and the teacher alike (İltar, 2020, p.58). In this sense, the course books and teaching sets should include such activities so as to increase the intercultural sensitivity of the learners and at this stage, the ethnocentrism levels of the teachers should be low. Teachers are also expected to be involved in the syllabi and lesson planning process aimed at reducing the level of ethnocentrism of learners.

The characteristics of a teacher with a low level of ethnocentrism who teaches Turkish as a foreign language are as follows:

- ➢ Is aware that all cultures are unique.
- ➢ Does not make negative judgments against students' culture.
- ➢ Can be critical of his own culture.

> ➢ Does not conduct the lessons by only giving place to his own culture.

> ➢ Allows students to give information about their own culture in the lessons.

> ➢ Allows students to see that there are similarities and differences between cultures

> ➢ Approaches students' cultures with a sense of exploration and curiosity.

> ➢ Allows students from different cultures to work together in group or team works.

> ➢ Makes students feel that he/she values their culture.

> ➢ Creates awareness in students that all cultures are unique and valuable.

> ➢ Can make arranges related to classroom management and status of teacher according to the country of origin of the students.

> ➢ Knows some basic words and expressions from the students' mother tongue.

> ➢ Prevents any hot discussion likely to take place about students' cultural values and beliefs.

> ➢ Approaches patiently against attitudes and behaviors that are not encountered in his/her own culture and conveys subjects politely to the students in order not to cause any misunderstanding.

Teaching Turkish as a foreign language is getting gradually more widespread in the world. This causes a need for trainers. Specific criteria are sought for the trainers who will work in this field. The instructor's level of ethnocentrism and intercultural sensitivity is one of them. In this study, we ask what the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language should be in order to benefit from both the training process of teachers and the preparation of course materials, the gender, age, institution, educational status of this level, etc., upon which we try to examine the relationship between variables.

Methods

This research, in which the levels of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language are compared according to various variables, is in the general survey model within the scope of descriptive research. In scanning models, the incident, individual or the theme subject to research is tried to be described as it exists (Karasar, 2007, p.77).

Study Group

This research was carried out with 185 teachers who teach Turkish as a foreign language in various state or private institutions in the 2020-2021 academic year. The demographic characteristics of the instructors participating in the research are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Qualities of Instructor

Variables	f	%	Variables	f	%
Gender			**Holding a Certificate**		
Female	81	43,8	Yes	161	87
Male	104	56,2	No	24	13
Age			**MA Degree**		
20-25	17	9,2	MA Students	30	16,2
26-30	49	26,5	MA Graduates	35	18,9
31-35	77	41,6	PhD Students	53	28,6
36-40	22	11,9	PhD Graduates	27	14,6
Over 41	20	10,8	None	40	21,6
Workplace			**Duration in Teaching**		
University	87	47	Less than 1 year	50	27
Yunus Emre Institute (YEE)	43	23,2	1-5 years	65	35,1
Ministry of National Education	15	8,1	6-10 years	64	34,6
Private Institutions	40	21,6	Over 10 years	6	3,2
BA Degree			**Knowing a Foreign Language**		
Turkish Education	64	34,6	Yes	117	63,2
Turkish Language and Literature	70	37,8	No	68	36,8
Education in Turkish Language and	11	5,9	**Where Turkish taught**		
Foreign Languages	19	10,3	Within the country	133	71,9
Modern Turkish Dialects	9	4,9	Overseas	52	28,1
Linguistics	4	2,2	**Intercultural Communication Competence**		
Others	8	4,3	Yes	134	72,4
			No	51	27,6

As seen in Table 1, 81 of the instructors participating in the study are women and 104 are men; 17 of them are between 20-25, 49 26-30, 77 31-35, 22 36-40, 20 41 and over; 87 of them work in universities, 43 work in Yunus Emre Institute,

15 work in institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education, and 40 work in private organizations; 64 graduated from Turkish Language Teaching Department, 70 from Turkish Language and Literature, 11 from Turkish Language and Literature Education, 19 from Foreign Languages, 9 from Contemporary Turkish Dialects, 4 from Linguistics, and 8 from other undergraduate departments ; 161 of them stated that they have a certificate of teaching Turkish to foreigners, 24 of them stated that they do not; 30 of them are stated to be graduate students, 35 of them hold master's degrees, 53 of them are doctoral students, 27 of them are PhD holders and 40 of them do not continue their graduate education; 117 of them stated that they knew a foreign language at an acceptable level and 68 of them do not; 133 of them are teaching Turkish in Turkey, while 52 of them taught Turkish abroad; 134 of them have knowledge about intercultural communication competence, while 51 of them do not.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, Ethnocentrism Scale was used to measure teachers' levels of ethnocentrism. In order to measure the ethnocentrism level of the teachers, the 5-item Likert type Ethnocentrism Scale, comprised of 22 questions, which was developed by Neuliep and McCroskey (1997) and adapted to Turkish by Üstün (2011), respectively, language equivalence, validity and reliability were used. Items 4, 7, 9, 12, 15 and 19 in the scale are reverse questions. The scale does not have a cut-off score, but an increase in the score obtained from the scale indicates an increase in ethnic discrimination. In the reliability study of the scale conducted by Üstün (2011), the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.82. In the present study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.66. In social sciences, the reliability coefficient of a scale is interpreted as $\alpha \geq 0.9$ excellent, $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ good, $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ acceptable, $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ poor, $\alpha < 0.5$ unacceptable. In this context, the scale used for the current study is at an acceptable level.

Collecting Data

Google Form was used to collect the data. The questionnaire created via Google Form was delivered to the tutors electronically in December 2020. Each teacher participating in the study was informed about the purpose of the research, what is expected of them, their legal rights and that the information obtained will be kept strictly confidential. After making the necessary explanation about the research, the relevant forms and scales were delivered to the students by the researchers and the data were collected.

Data Analysis

In the statistical analysis of the research data, descriptive tests (number, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation) and comparative statistical methods (T-Test, ANOVA) were used through the computerized SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) package program. As a result of the test conducted to determine whether the collected data showed normal distribution, it was decided that the data showed a normal distribution because the skewness and kurtosis values were between +1.5 and -1.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). The significance level in the study was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

Findings

Findings on the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language

Table 2

Average and Standard Deviation Values of the Scores Obtained by Those Who Teach Turkish as a Foreign Language from the Ethnocentrism Scale

	n	Lowest	Highest	x̄	Standard Deviation
Ethnocentrism	185	1,70	3,55	2,47	,327

In Table 2, the average ethnocentrism level of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language (n = 185) is x̄ = 2.47; it is seen that the lowest score obtained from the scale among the teachers is 1.70 and the highest score is 3.55. As it is known that the level of ethnic centrism decreases as the average value obtained from the scale approaches 1 and increases as it approaches 5, it is understood that the ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language is at a "medium" level.

Findings on the relationship between the ethnic centrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the gender variable

Table 3

T-Test Results Regarding the Ethnocentrism Levels of Teachers According to Gender Variable

	Groups	n	x̄	ss	sd	T Test t	T Test Sd	T Test p
Ethnocentrism	Female	81	2,41	,2552				
	Male	104	2,53	,3663	183	-2,516	,0478	,002*

*p<.05

The findings on the relationship between the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the gender variable are given in Table 3. According to these data, the ethnocentrism levels of male teachers (x̄ = 2.53) are higher than that of female teachers (x̄ = 2.41). It was concluded that the significant difference (p =, 002) observed between female and male teachers was in favour of female teachers as a result of the Levene's test. As the reason for this situation, it can be claimed that female teachers are more open to knowing and interacting with other cultures than male teachers.

Findings on the relationship between the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the age variable

Table 4

Anova Results on the Ethnocentrism Levels of Teachers by Age Variable

Score	*f, x̄ and ss* Values				ANOVA Results					
	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	ss	Var. K.	*Sum of Squares*	*Sd*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
	20-25 ages	17	2,70	,3701	Between Groups	1,305	4	,326	3,194	,015*
	26-30 ages	49	2,47	,2845	Within Groups	18,393	180	,102		
Ethnocentrism	31-35 ages	77	2,42	,2830	Total	19,699	184			
	36-40 ages	22	2,42	,3663						
	41 and upper ages	20	2,56	,4236						

*p<.05

The findings on the relationship between the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the age variable are given in Table 4. According to the data, the group with the highest level of ethnocentrism is the youngest group (x̄ = 2.70). It is possible to call this group as a newcomer to the profession. This group is followed by those who are highly experienced in the profession (x̄ = 2.56). The group with the lowest level of ethnic centrism is the 30-40 age group. It was concluded that this difference between the groups was significant (p =, 015). In order to determine which group is in favor of significance, Levene's test was conducted, and Scheffe multiple comparison technique was used, since it was seen that the groups were homogeneously distributed as a result of the test. As a result, a statistically significant difference was found between the 20-25 age group and the 31-35 age group in favor of the 31-35 age group. This situation reveals that students in the 20-25 age group are more ethnocentric than those in the 31-35 age group.

Findings on the relationship between the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the institution variable they work for

The findings on the relationship between the ethnic centrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the institution they work with are given in Table 5. According to these data, the group with the lowest level of

ethnocentrism is private sector employees ($\bar{x}$ = 2.43). It is seen that the employees of Yunus Emre Institute and the Ministry of National Education have the same average of ethnocentrism ($\bar{x}$ = 2.51). The difference in points between the groups is not statistically significant.

Table 5

Anova Results on the Ethnocentrism Levels of Teachers According to the Institution Variable

Score	*f, $\bar{x}$* and *ss* **Values**				ANOVA Results					
	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	ss	Var. K.	*Sum of Squares*	*Sd*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
	University	87	2,47	,3442	Between Groups	,188	3	,063	,580	,629
Ethnocentrism	YEE	43	2,51	,0527	Within Groups	19,511	181	,108		
	MNE	15	2,51	,3260	Total	19,699	184			
	Private	40	2,43	,2685						

Findings regarding the relationship between the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the department they graduated from

Table 6

Anova Results Regarding the Ethnocentrism Levels of Teachers According to the Variable of the Department of Graduation

Score	*f, $\bar{x}$* and *ss* **Values**				ANOVA Results					
	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	ss	Var. K.	*Sum of Squares*	*Sd*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
	Turkish Education	64	2,45	,3043	Between Groups	,452	6	,075	,696	,653
	Turkish Language and Literature	70	2,48	,3023	Within Groups	19,247	178	,108		
Ethnocentrism	Education in Turkish Language and Literature	11	2,40	,4673	Total	19,699	184			
	Foreign Languages	19	2,54	,3425						
	Modern Turkish Dialects	9	2,60	,3770						
	Linguistics	4	2,31	,0853						
	Others	8	2,46	,4853						

The findings regarding the relationship between the level of ethnic centrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the department they graduated from are presented in Table 6. According to these data, the group with the lowest level of ethnocentrism is the graduates of the Linguistics department ($\bar{x}$ = 2.31), while the highest group is the graduates of the Contemporary Turkish Dialects ($\bar{x}$ = 2.60). The difference in points between the groups is not statistically significant.

Findings on the relationship between the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and their BA

Table 7

Anova Results on the Ethnocentrism Levels of Teachers According to the Graduate Education Variable

Score	*f, $\bar{x}$ and ss* **Values**				**ANOVA Results**					
	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	ss	Var. K.	*Sum of Squares*	*Sd*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
	MA Student	30	2,54	,0596	Between Groups	1,310	4	,328	3,207	,014*
	MA Graduate	35	2,43	,2930	Within Groups	18,388	180	,102		
Ethnocentrism	Phd Student	53	2,39	,2533	Total	19,699	184			
	PhD Graduate	27	2,42	,3571						
	None	40	2,61	,3828						

*p<.05

The findings on the relationship between the ethnic centrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the BA education variable are given in Table 7. According to these data, the group with the highest level of ethnocentrism is the group with no postgraduate education ($\bar{x}$ = 2.61). This group is followed by newcomers to postgraduate education ($\bar{x}$ = 2.54). The group with the lowest level of ethnic centrism is the group with those who state that they are a doctoral student ($\bar{x}$ = 2.39). It was concluded that this difference between the groups was significant (p =, 014). In order to determine which group is in favor of significance, Levene's test was conducted, and Scheffe multiple comparison technique was used, since it was seen that the groups were homogeneously distributed as a result of the test. As a result, a statistically significant difference was found in favour of doctoral students between those who stated that they were a doctoral student and those who never started graduate education. This situation reveals that those who have never started postgraduate education are more ethnocentric than those who have doctoral students.

Findings on the relationship between the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the variable of having a certificate

Table 8

T-Test Results Regarding The Level of Ethnocentrism of Teachers According to the Variable of Having a Certificate

	Groups	*n*	$\bar{x}$	*ss*	*sd*	T Test		
						t	*Sd*	*p*
Ethnocentrism	Yes	161	2,47	,3120	183	-,584	,0717	,009*
	No	24	2,51	,4213				

*p<.05

The findings on the relationship between the ethnic centrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the variable of having a certificate are given in Table 8. According to these data, the level of ethnocentrism ($\bar{x}$ = 2.51) of the non-certified teachers is higher than the teachers who are ($\bar{x}$ = 2.47). It has been concluded that the significant difference (p =, 009) seen between the certified and non-certified trainers is in favor of the certificate holders after the Levene's test. Certificate programs are professional development trainings. For this reason, it can be thought that vocational development trainings reduce the level of ethnocentrism of teachers.

Findings on the relationship between the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the variable of knowing a foreign language

Table 9

T-Test Results Related to the Ethnocentrism Levels of Teachers According to the Variable of Knowing a Foreign Language

	Groups	*n*	$\bar{x}$	*ss*	*sd*	T Test		
						t	*Sd*	*p*
Ethnocentrism	Yes	117	2,49	,3297	183	-,844	,0499	,981
	No	68	2,45	,3234				

The findings on the relationship between the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the variable of knowing a foreign language are given in Table 9. According to these data, the level of ethnocentrism ($\bar{x}$ = 2.49) of teachers who know a foreign language is higher than those who do not know ($\bar{x}$ = 2.45). The difference in scores between the groups is not statistically significant.

Findings on the relationship between the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the location of teaching Turkish

Table 10

T-Test Results Regarding the Ethnocentrism levels of Teachers According to the Turkish Teaching Location Variable

	Groups	*n*	$\bar{x}$	*ss*	*sd*	T Test		
						t	*Sd*	*p*
Ethnocentrism	Turkey	133	2,47	,3035	183	-,468	,0536	,101
	Overseas	52	2,49	,3838				

The findings on the relationship between the ethnic centrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the location of teaching Turkish are given in Table 10. According to these data, the level of ethnic centrism ($\bar{x}$ = 2.49) of those who teach Turkish abroad is higher than those who teach Turkish within the country ($\bar{x}$ = 2.47). The difference in scores between the groups is not statistically significant.

Findings on the relationship between the levels of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the variable of intercultural communicative competence

Table 11

T-Test Results Regarding the Ethnocentrism Levels of the Teachers According to the Intercultural Communicative Competence Knowledge Variable

	Groups	*n*	$\bar{x}$	*ss*	*sd*	T Test		
						t	*Sd*	*p*
Ethnocentrism	Yes	134	2,45	,3118	183	-1,369	,0537	,205
	No	51	2,53	,3623				

The findings on the relationship between the ethnic centrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language and the intercultural communicative competence knowledge variable are given in Table 11. According to the data, the level of ethnocentrism ($\bar{x}$ = 2.53) of the teachers who do not have the knowledge of intercultural communicative competence is higher than the ones ($\bar{x}$ = 2.45) who have it. The difference in scores between the groups is not statistically significant.

Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

Foreign language teaching is not just a process consisting of teaching target language structures and vocabulary; it is also a process in which the target culture is transferred. For teaching and learning the target language to be realized at the expected level, the intercultural sensitivity of the teachers and learners should be high and the level of ethnocentrism is expected to be low. It is not right to expect all learners to have high sensitivity towards the target culture in the foreign language teaching process. Learners may show very different characteristics individually in terms of education and culture, some learners may have negative attitudes towards the target culture, and this situation may negatively affect language learning. Since the instructors have passed the teaching processes of the field knowledge and pedagogical formation (teaching certificates), the intercultural sensitivity levels are high; levels of ethnocentrism are expected to be low. While it is possible to change the situation of learners with a low level of intercultural sensitivity and high level of ethnocentrism within the teaching process and to transform education into more efficient teaching, the low intercultural sensitivity levels of teachers and high levels of ethnocentrism may cause the teaching process to be negatively affected by all learners. In this sense, it is expected that the level of ethnocentrism of teachers in foreign language teaching processes will be low.

In this study, which aims to determine the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language, it has been concluded that the ethnocentrism levels of teachers are at a medium level. Although there is no previous study to determine the level of ethnocentrism of teachers who teach Turkish as a foreign language, there are few studies to determine the level of intercultural sensitivity. Examining the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and ethnocentrism, Chen (2010) concluded that those with higher intercultural sensitivity levels have lower levels of ethnocentrism. In the study conducted by Saygılı and Kana (2018), the intercultural sensitivity levels of teachers who teach Turkish as a foreign language were examined and it was concluded that the intercultural sensitivity levels of the teachers were high. In the study conducted by Yılmaz and Tepe (2020), it was aimed to determine the intercultural communication perceptions of the teachers who were assigned by the Ministry of National Education to teach Turkish and Turkish culture lessons abroad, and it was concluded that the teachers look positively on intercultural communication.

It was found that the levels of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language differ significantly according to gender, age, certificate of teaching Turkish to foreigners and BA education variables; it has been concluded that there is no significant difference according to the variables of the institution of study, the department of graduation, knowledge of a foreign language, place of teaching Turkish, knowledge of intercultural communication competence.

Gender emerges as a significant variable affecting the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language. It is seen that a result in favor of women has emerged in terms of the level of ethnocentrism. Similarly, different studies on the level of ethnocentrism have shown favorable results for women. In the study by Üstün (2011)

in which teacher candidates' levels of ethnocentrism and intercultural sensitivity were examined, it was concluded that there was a significant difference in favor of women in terms of the level of ethnocentrism. In the study conducted by Neuliep, Chaudoir, and McCroskey (2001) on American and Japanese university students, it was concluded that the ethnocentrism levels of males were higher than females in both groups. Similarly, in the study conducted by Goldstein and Kim (2006), it was concluded that the ethnic centrism levels of women were significantly lower than men and that women were more interested in foreign languages. The relationship between gender and ethnocentrism is an issue that needs further investigation. Because it may be necessary to use gender-based socialization strategies to reduce the level of ethnocentrism (Neuliep, Chaudoir & Mccroskey, 2001, p.144).

Age emerges as another significant variable affecting the level of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language. Considering the results of the relationship between the levels of ethnocentrism and age variable of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language, it is seen that the group with the highest level of ethnocentrism is the youngest group, followed by the oldest group. A statistically significant difference was found between the 20-25 age group and the 31-35 age group in favor of the 20-25 age group. This situation reveals that students in the 20-25 age group are more ethnocentric than those in the 31-35 age group. The reason why the group with the highest levels of ethnocentrism consists of the youngest members can be thought to be due to the lesser teaching experience of this group members than the other group members. The reason why the oldest group constitutes the second highest group in terms of ethnocentrism may be due to the change in teachers' vocational education processes and whether global changes are experienced around the world. Similarly, in the study conducted by Neuliep, Chaudoir, and McCroskey (2001), it was concluded that the level of ethnocentrism of the elderly was higher.

Postgraduate education status and having a certificate of teaching Turkish as a foreign language appear as a significant variable affecting the ethnocentrism levels of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language. Those who have a certificate for teaching Turkish as a foreign language have a lower level of ethnocentrism than those who do not have the relevant certificate. When the levels of ethnocentrism of those who teach Turkish as a foreign language are analyzed according to the graduate education variable, it is seen that the teachers who have not received postgraduate education have the highest level. The lowest level is observed to be in the form of doctorate students, doctorate graduates, master graduates and graduate students, respectively. Eğinli (2011, pp. 215-216) emphasizes that individuals with developed intercultural competence should be away from ethnocentrism and emphasize that the most effective way to improve intercultural competence is cultural difference education. Douglas and Rosvold (2018, p.38) state that a continuous professional development is needed regarding the teaching and learning of intercultural communicative competence and these trainings can alleviate the levels of ethnocentrism. In terms of teachers who teach Turkish as a foreign language, the level of vocational education and postgraduate education decreases the level of ethnocentrism. In this sense, it is possible to say that teachers with high professional competence have lower levels of ethnocentrism. However, when the ethnocentrism levels of doctoral graduates and doctoral students are compared, although there is no significant difference, it is seen that the level of ethnocentrism of doctoral students is lower. It is thought that this may be due to the fact that doctoral graduates do not graduate from the field of teaching Turkish as

a foreign language. Because the doctorate program for teaching Turkish as a foreign language was first opened in 2013 at the Institute of Turkic Studies at Hacettepe University. For this reason, it can be thought that the doctoral graduates participating in the research have received their doctorate education in different disciplines.

Although the development of intercultural communicative competencies of individuals is very important in all areas of life, it becomes more important in education and training environments where individuals from different cultures come together and can directly affect the education and training process. Those who teach Turkish as a foreign language come together with people from many different cultures. For this reason, the intercultural competencies of the teachers should be developed, in other words, their level of ethnocentrism should be low and they should show positive attitudes towards learners from different cultures in classroom environments. In order to improve the sensitivities of learners belonging to different cultures, teachers should be able to minimize the negativities that may occur in the teaching process by including different application examples.

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