



EFL Instructors' Perceptions and Practices on English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

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ABSTRACT

English has reached lingua franca status due to globalization, and the lingua franca role of English has already started to influence teacher education and the field ELT. Although there have been plenty of studies about ELF and related issues, the classroom practices in such studies need more exploration to describe the position of English in the ELT context. Therefore, this mixed-methods study, the abridged version of the MA thesis conducted in 2017-2018 Academic Year, investigated the perceptions of EFL instructors working in a school of foreign languages in a foundation university in Turkey. Their perceptions of ELF and ELF-related issues concerning cultural aspects, Standard English and World Englishes, as well as the native and non-native dichotomy were gathered. The study also aimed to shed light on the actual classroom practices of the EFL instructors. The data were collected through a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The findings revealed that a good number of the participants were familiar with ELF and ELF-related issues. Moreover, it was found out that the classroom practices of the participants were in line with their perceptions. This study has several implications for language learners, teachers/instructors, materials developers and curriculum designers. Further research could be conducted in different contexts to evaluate the findings of the study.

INTRODUCTION

A language gains a global status if it is known by every country worldwide as an official or second language (Crystal, 2003). English has this special role as it is used as an official language in over 70 countries in addition to being the most widely taught foreign language in more than 100 countries around the world (Crystal, 2003). While the world is changing and globalising day by day, the English language is also evolving and has already become a world language. Crystal (2014) emphasizes that the number of non-native speakers is five times more than native speakers of English. Since there are many learners in the world with different mother tongues, the concepts of English Language Teaching (ELT) are changing to fulfil needs of learners and keep up with the time. Therefore, one of the crucial notions to be investigated thoroughly is the place of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in the field of ELT.

Globalization has had the greatest impact on the English language functioning as a lingua franca, and the lingua franca status has affected language teaching pedagogy. As McKay (2002) explains, “the teaching and learning of an international language must be based on an entirely different set of assumptions than the teaching and learning of any other second or foreign language.” (p.2). Thus, the teaching of native norm-based English and the ideal of being like a native speaker have been questioned. To correspond to various uses of English and needs of multilingual and multicultural language learners, the lingua franca use of English needs to be considered in language teaching and learning approaches. ELF differs from English as a foreign language (EFL) because ELF embraces non-native speakers and their various uses of English instead of native-norm based English.

There are different approaches and accordingly, different definitions of the concept of ELF. Firth (1996) defines ELF as the contact language of people not sharing a common language or culture, and for whom English is the communication language while Kachru (1997) describes ELF as a language with its full linguistic and functional features. According to Jenkins (2006), although EFL aims to prepare language users to communicate with native users, the ELF perspective focuses on enabling the language users to communicate with multilinguals. Seidlhofer (2009), however, argues ELF communication is not based on only *Expanding Circle* countries, but it covers all three circles. Mauranen (2018) states that ELF is not a communication language based on a specific community, but it is used to communicate by people from various parts of the world.

Seidlhofer (2000) explains that ELF should be understood not only as a global form of English as a mother language but also as a form that spreads and improves independently with a lot of variations proper enough to communicate. It may be highlighted that ELF suggests encouraging language learners with multilingual ideas to communicate with each other. ELF can also be conceived as a paradigm based on the idea that non-native speakers are more than the native speakers of English and all varieties of English used by both natives and non-natives are embraced (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011). Although ELF does not ignore standard English, it emphasises on the importance of being able to communicate in various situations (Kirkpatrick, 2012).

ELF is a concept which deals with important topics not only in sociolinguistics (Seidlhofer, 2011) but also in cultural studies (Seidlhofer, 2001; Bayyurt, 2006). One of the important issues in language teaching is cultural integration. Tseng (2002) asserts that culture is a key element in language teaching. According to McKay (2002), source, target and international cultures should be integrated into language classes to meet various needs of language learners. Canagarajah (2005) claims that culture is a common and blended element, so it does not belong to a particular territory in a global world. Pennycook (2007) expresses that globalization in language and culture helps language learners get different interaction forms and cultural identities. Baker (2009) points out that ELF is based on multilingual and multicultural interactions, so the culture in a language class should contain not only local and target cultures but also various cultures of the world.

Another significant issue in language teaching is Standard English or World Englishes. World Englishes refers to all local English varieties and it is an umbrella term (Jenkins, 2009). The debates based on Standard English and World Englishes were mooted by Kachru (1985) and Quirk (1990). Kachru (1985) mentions that native norms are not appropriate for all uses of English in various contexts. Therefore, he points out that there is a need for new pedagogies, perspectives and paradigms to correspond to linguistic and cultural varieties in the world. In response to him, Quirk (1990) asserts that there should be a common standard for English in every situation. He also suggests that language teachers need to base their teaching on native norms and native-like

performance. However, Cook (1999) argues that there is a need for language teaching pedagogy, which goes beyond the idea of being like a native speaker and focuses on more modern education.

The number of non-native speakers has become more than native speakers of English (Graddol, 1997), which has given rise to a debate on the native and non-native speakers. Medgyes (2001) highlights that this debate should not be underestimated or denied; instead, it should be investigated. Canagarajah (2005) remarks that 80% of English language teachers around the world are non-native speakers. Since this is the reality, the field of ELT has changed the research scope from native speaker ideal to both native English speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) populations (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2001). In parallel with them, Tajeddin and Adeh (2016) state that discrimination between NESTs and NNESTs cannot be appreciated.

The number of studies on ELF and related issues has increased to investigate and meet the needs of both language learners and teachers. İnceçay and Akyel (2014) investigated Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions of ELF and found out that most of the participants were resistant to ELF use in their classes. In his study, Soruç (2015) discussed the beliefs of non-native English speakers on ELF and revealed that the majority of the participants tended to use native-speaker norms. In their study, Deniz, Özkan and Bayyurt (2016) explored pre-service English teachers' views of ELF related issues and uncovered that the majority of the pre-service English teachers refused to integrate ELF into their teaching. However, the studies based on ELF are generally about the perceptions of language learners and/or teachers rather than classroom practices. Moreover, the studies conducted on ELF integration in the Turkish context are rather small in number. Therefore, the study presents real classroom practices of volunteer instructors as well as their own perceptions about ELF, which reveals consistency or inconsistency between their views and practices. Thus, this study could be an initiative to fill the gaps in the field in terms of combining and comparing instructors' perceptions with their classroom practices.

The main aim of this study is to find out how EFL instructors perceive ELF and ELF-related issues. Moreover, it aims to elicit how these issues are practised in English language classrooms. This study was conducted in order to seek answers to the following research questions:

- 1) What are the ELF perceptions of the EFL instructors?
- 2) What are the ELF perceptions of the EFL instructors on the issues concerning:
 - a) Cultural aspects in English language teaching
 - b) Standard English and World Englishes
 - c) The dichotomy of native and non-native speakers
- 3) How are these ELF issues practised in the non-native EFL instructors' classrooms?
- 4) Is there any consistency between ELF perceptions of the EFL instructors and their classroom practices?

METHODOLOGY

This mixed-methods sequential explanatory study contains both quantitative and qualitative data collected through a questionnaire, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, respectively. The first phase aimed to investigate the views of the language instructors about ELF and ELF-related issues through a questionnaire including both quantitative and qualitative data. In the second phase, the qualitative data were obtained through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data

were significant, and neither set of data was given precedence over the other. The quantitative data were analysed via SPSS, and qualitative data were analysed through thematic analysis.

Participants

The quantitative phase of the study was conducted with 36 EFL instructors and the qualitative phase was carried out with six participants who had already taken part in the quantitative phase. They were all EFL instructors working in a school of foreign languages in a foundation university in Turkey. They taught at least two different classes for two terms during the Academic Year of 2017-2018. Their ages range from 20 to over 50. The native language of most of the participants is Turkish, although some of them have English, Arabic, Slovak or Russian as their mother tongue. Convenient sampling was employed to select the participants since convenience sampling is based on “involving the selection of the most accessible subjects” (Marshall, 1996, p.523). Participation in the study was totally on a voluntary basis and the participants were informed at the beginning of the study that they had a right to quit the study any time they desired.

Data Collection

The data of the study were obtained from three sources: a) a questionnaire that aims to explore the perceptions of EFL instructors on ELF and ELF-related issues via mainly Likert-scale type of questions, b) classroom observations of six volunteer participants to observe their classroom practices on these issues, c) semi-structured interviews with six participants involved in classroom observations to obtain more detailed information about their perceptions about ELF and related issues.

The questionnaire in the study was adapted from Choi’s (2007), Moussu’s (2006), Tajeddin and Adeh’s (2016) and Yılmaz’s (2016) studies. The Cronbach’s Alpha score of the final version of the questionnaire is 0.75 after the piloting and necessary editing of the questionnaire. The rationale to utilize a questionnaire in the study, as mentioned by Aldridge and Levine (2001), was the feasibility of collecting a great quantity of data in a quick, accurate and effective way. The questionnaire has an introduction presenting information about the researcher, institution and the aim of the study shortly and clearly. The questionnaire consists of several Likert-scale and some close and open-ended types of questions on five main parts: a) background information of the participants, b) ELF part including one close-ended and three open-ended items about the definition of ELF, learning about it and integrating it into courses, c) cultural aspects in ELT consisting of 16 statements, d) Standard English and World Englishes including 19 statements, and e) the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers of English comprising 12 statements. The questionnaire was distributed to 42 EFL instructors, 36 of whom voluntarily filled out the questionnaire after they had been informed about the aim, voluntary basis and the procedure of the study.

Classroom observations were carried out with six instructors chosen from the participants of the questionnaire based on volunteerism. The aim of the observations was to examine how the participants dealt with ELF and related issues in their classes. The researcher carried out a single classroom observation with each of the six participants after collecting and analysing the questionnaire. The participants were all from *Expanding Circle countries* whose nationalities are Turkish, Algerian, Slovak and Russian. Each participant was observed only once in their current

classes by the researcher due to the time limitation and schedules of the participants. The researcher introduced herself and gave a rundown on her study to the students each time she observed a class so that the students could feel more secure. During each observation, the researcher kept observation journals to get more detailed information about classroom practices. In this study, classroom observations were used in combination with other tools since observations are not preferred as the only instrument to collect the data (Crocker, 2009).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the six participants who were observed in their classes. The questions for the interview were piloted with two voluntary participants, and during the piloting, the interview questions were redesigned to get more detailed information. The purpose of the interviews was to be able to get a deeper understanding of the instructors' perceptions of ELF and ELF-related issues. The interviews had the same topics as in the questionnaire. The interviews were carried out in a suitable place and time for both the researcher and participants to eliminate the problems based on time limitation, noise and anxiety. In addition to this, the interviews were audio-recorded to analyse the data more carefully by receiving permission from the participants.

Data Analysis

To analyse the quantitative data in the study, SPSS edition 23 was used. While analysing the quantitative data obtained through the questionnaire, frequencies were utilized so that the study could present the responses of the participants in an appropriate and informative way. The analysis was based on the categorization in the questionnaire. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data collected via the questionnaire, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The thematic analysis helps researchers to present data in detail and reflect interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998). While transcribing the data, member checking and colleague support were also utilized to eliminate any potential bias.

FINDINGS

Based on the findings of the study, a good number of the participants were reported to be aware of ELF reality. The findings also revealed that most of the participants integrated cultural issues into their language classes. The majority of the participants also believed the idea that students need to be informed about different uses of English around the world. Moreover, a great number of the participants agreed on the idea that both NESTs and NNESTs have advantages in teaching and they should collaborate to help their students in their learning process.

ELF

The findings of ELF revealed that the majority of the participants (88.6%) preferred to teach English to motivate their students to communicate with people from various cultures. It was found out that the majority of the participants (74.3%) were familiar with the ELF concept. The findings also suggested that more than half of the instructors (76%) were willing to learn about ELF more. Additionally, ELF definitions of the participants were collected through the questionnaire and the interview. The definitions were unfolded four dimensions: a) *a common language between people having different first languages and cultures*, b) *a global lingua franca*,

c) *an international language*, and d) *a language used to communicate by non-native speakers*. (See table 1) Their elicited definitions were in line with various scholars defining ELF with its different aspects (Firth, 1996; Mauranen, 2018; Seidlhofer, 2009).

Table 1. ELF definitions of the participants

a) <i>a common language between people having different first languages and cultures</i>	“That is the language through which people communicate. In particular, it is not your mother tongue, but it’s common among some groups of people in the world.” (P32)
b) <i>a global lingua franca</i>	“In my opinion, English functions as a global language.” (P2)
c) <i>an international language</i>	“International language which brings cultures together” (P13)
d) <i>a language used to communicate by non-native speakers</i>	“It is a language used to communicate by non-native speakers.” (P7)

Cultural Aspects in Language Teaching

Approximately all of the instructors (97.2%) believed that culture associated with its language has paramount importance, as it was stated by one of the interviewees “*Of course because language is also culture*”. Most of the participants (91.7%) agreed to the idea that being exposed to various cultures could enable students to be more tolerant towards cultural differences. A great number of the instructors (80.5%) stated that all students should acquire intercultural competence. Additionally, the majority of the participants preferred to share their cultural knowledge and experience with their language learners, and many of them (75%) also encouraged their students to compare their local culture with other cultures. An interviewee shared “*I mean, if you have been to an English speaking county, it can be beneficial or if a student has been there, it can also be advantageous to talk about culture in class*” (I-6). Table 2 shows the perceptions of the instructors based on the culture in language classes.

Table 2. The Instructors’ Perceptions about Dealing with Culture in Classes

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Unable to discuss		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Integrating culture is important in language classes.	18	50.0	17	47.2	1	2.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Culture should be integrated into ELT.	20	55.6	14	38.9	2	5.5	0	0.0	0	0.0

If students know about other cultures apart from their local culture, they will be more tolerant.	22	61.1	11	30.6	3	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
All students should acquire intercultural competence.	13	36.1	16	44.4	7	19.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
I share with my students what I know about English speaking countries and/or their cultures.	23	63.9	13	36.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I ask my students to compare one aspect of their culture with that aspect in English speaking countries.	6	16.7	21	58.3	7	19.4	2	5.6	0	0.0

Standard English and World Englishes

Most of the participants (66.7%) pointed out they preferred to use Standard English and indicated Standard English could be more prestigious in communication. The EFL instructors may tend to integrate Standard English in their teaching context as the following expression depicts “*Well, as English isn’t my native language, so when I learnt it, I learnt Standard English as well, so I try to teach Standard English like British English*” (I-2) However, more than half of the participants (57.2%) were not bothered by their students’ pronunciation mistakes and errors, and they expressed their content with their idiolects (See Table 3).

Table 3. The instructors’ perceptions of Standard English and World Englishes

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Unable to discuss		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
I prefer to use British and/or American English.	6	16.7	18	50.0	4	11.1	5	13.9	3	8.3
Standard English is more prestigious in communication.	4	11.8	20	58.8	6	17.6	2	5.9	2	5.9
It bothers me when my students make pronunciation errors while speaking English.	2	5.7	11	31.4	2	5.7	12	34.3	8	22.9
I am ashamed of my own accent and try to get rid of it while speaking English.	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.6	18	50.0	16	44.4
I know what World Englishes means.	6	17.1	23	65.8	6	17.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
I prefer to use my local variety of English.	3	8.6	7	20.0	11	31.4	11	31.4	3	8.6

I am proud of my accent while speaking English.	10	27.8	19	52.7	5	13.9	1	2.8	1	2.8
Different uses of English based on different geographical regions should be introduced to English language learners.	8	22.2	16	44.4	8	22.2	4	11.2	0	0.0
People can use different varieties of English as long as they follow the principles of comprehensibility and intelligibility.	12	33.3	20	55.6	3	8.3	1	2.8	0	0.0
I know and can define what World Englishes mean.	6	17.1	23	65.8	6	17.1	0	0.0	0	0.0

As shown in Table 3, a great number of the instructors (82.9%) were familiar with World Englishes although several participants did not prefer to use local varieties of English. However, a great number of the participants (96.6%) felt satisfied with their accent in English and also expressed that English language learners should be familiar with different uses of English in various regions of the world. To exemplify, one of the interviewees stated *“It is a global language, so students should know everybody doesn’t speak perfectly, they speak English as a common language. I mean, books contain different accents so students know every person should not speak like an American, but I don’t like the idea that different accents are the focus”* (I-5). Additionally, the majority of the participants (88.9%) believed the idea that different varieties of English can be used as long as they align with comprehensibility and intelligibility principles, which was also highlighted by the interviewee *“We were stressed while learning English, because our teachers did not support us to speak, they did not mention to communicate is important, so we had to try hard to speak English”* (I-5).

The Dichotomy of Native and Non-native Speakers

Most of the participants (80.5%) believed that NESTs are better in terms of pronunciation teaching. An interviewee verbalised *“I’d say, native speakers are, how to say, better for in terms of pronunciation because they can give you, like, the proper pronunciation of certain words”* (I-3). A good number of the participants (66.6%) pointed out NESTs have a better knowledge of authentic and real-life use of English. However, less than half of the participants (28.6%) stated NESTs are more confident in class in comparison to NNESTs (See Table 4).

As indicated in Table 4, a great number of the participants (77.8%) considered NNESTs to serve as good role models for their students. More than half of the instructors (62.8) agreed that NNESTs are as competent as NESTs in language teaching. An interviewee expressed *“There are some non-native teachers more successful than natives. Being native doesn’t mean to be the best teachers”* (I-3). Additionally, plenty of participants pointed out that NNESTs could diagnose students’ errors and mistakes stemming from the students’ native language more skilfully. Additionally, a good number of the participants (75%) underlined that there should not be any discrimination between NESTs and NNESTs in employment positions and opportunities.

Table 4. The instructors' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Unable to discuss		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
NESTs are better at pronunciation teaching than NNESTs.	10	27.8	19	52.7	5	13.9	1	2.8	1	2.8
NESTs have a better knowledge of authentic and real-life use of English than NNESTs.	9	25.0	15	41.6	10	27.8	1	2.8	1	2.8
NESTs are more confident in class than NNESTs.	5	14.3	5	14.3	14	40.0	7	20.0	4	11.4
NNESTs are good role models for their language learners.	6	16.7	22	61.1	5	13.9	3	8.3	0	0.0
NNESTs are regarded as competent as NESTs in teaching English.	6	17.1	16	45.7	9	25.7	3	8.6	1	2.9
NNESTs can diagnose language learners' mistakes and errors stemming from their L1 more easily than NESTs.	12	33.3	13	36.1	10	27.8	1	2.8	0	0.0
There should not be any discrimination between NESTs and NNESTs as far as employment opportunity is concerned.	20	55.6	7	19.4	8	22.2	1	2.8	0	0.0

Classroom Practices of the Instructors

All of the participants encouraged their students to speak English in their classes, which suggests that the EFL instructors mainly focus on creating an English speaking environment. The instructors preferred to use native-speaker norms in their use of English. However, most of the participants did not correct the grammatical mistakes of their students as ELF aims to communicate rather than focusing on native norms (Alptekin, 2002). Additionally, the topics used in the classes were parallel with communicative language teaching, and the lingua franca status of English since ELF focuses on the interaction between people from various cultural and language backgrounds (Cogo & Dewey, 2012).

The observations revealed that all participants integrated cultural elements in their classes as Tseng (2002) mentions culture is one of the crucial elements in language teaching. In spite of their various ways of dealing with culture, the instructors preferred to integrate local, target and international cultures in their classes. Additionally, some participants enabled the students to compare their local culture with other cultures in-class activities. Erfani (2014) also reveals that English language teachers in Iran integrate different cultures into their classes to raise intercultural awareness of language learners.

Plenty of instructors preferred to use Standard English with grammatically correct sentences and native-like expressions though some of them chose to speak with their variety of English rather than British and/or American accent. Their classroom practices were in line with their beliefs based on Standard English and World Englishes since they mainly focused on the communication skills of their students, and introduced different uses of English to their students instead of native-norms.

The instructors' mind-sets on objectives to teach English revealed the most participants preferred to teach English to motivate their students to communicate with people from different cultures. In their practices, the instructors observed mainly encouraged their students to communicate in English and utilized real-life based topics. Additionally, their classroom practices indicated that the instructors focused on communication rather than grammar, which is also one of the concerns of ELF reality. Their views and classroom practices highlighted the importance and existence of ELF reality since ELF is much associated with intercultural communication occurring between speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds (Cogo & Dewey, 2012).

The findings based on perceptions about culture demonstrated that culture plays a fundamental role in language learning/teaching. The instructors' classroom practices confirmed that all the instructors emphasized cultural issues, and they integrated such issues in their contexts. Their classroom practices corresponded to their mind-sets on the cultural issues in ELT since they embedded various cultures in their classrooms. In parallel with their views, the instructors integrated not only target but also local and international cultures into their classes to help their students increase cultural awareness. They also stood for sharing cultural knowledge and experience with their students.

The findings of Standard English and World Englishes ascertained that most of the instructors preferred to use Standard English. They also believed Standard English has more prestige in communication. Nonetheless, they were not troubled by their students' pronunciation mistakes and errors, additionally, they did not interrupt to correct the students' pronunciation mistakes in their classes when they did not cause problems in communication. Additionally, half of the instructors used English by embracing their own identity rather than the accents of *Inner Circle* countries. Moreover, the instructors mentioned that language learners should be acquainted with different uses of English in the world. Correspondingly, they integrated different uses of English in their classes and did not prompt the students to speak like a native speaker.

DISCUSSION

When all findings are considered, it may be concluded that EFL instructors are familiar with ELF and ELF-related issues, and they deal with these issues in their classes. Their perceptions and practices may be associated with the post-normative approach of Dewey (2012) whose purpose is to enable language teachers to practice their teaching according to the environment and context in which their students communicate.

The instructors' objectives to teach English reflect the idea of Prodromou (2003) mentioning that ELF enables people to communicate from all over the world in their context. Although Inceçay and Akyel (2014) indicate EFL instructors from two universities located in Turkey do not have much knowledge of the ELF concept, the study presents the instructors are acquainted with the ELF perspective. The findings of ELF integration into language teaching are parallel to the one by Curran and Chern (2017) who conclude that language teachers have a positive

attitude towards ELF. The teacher attitudes of the instructors are related to language targets of ELF that focus on being able to communicate with an understandable accent (Jenkins, 2000). The findings of ELF beliefs of the instructors might be related to the post-normative approach of Dewey (2012), which focuses on integrating ELF-awareness in teacher education. It might be claimed that EFL instructors are willing to practice the most recent methods and techniques in their classes because they aim to prepare their students for various potential interactions.

The instructors view culture as an important element in language teaching. Bada (2000) argues culture is essential in language classes since it helps learners prevent communication problems. Bouchard (2019) also states that people with different cultures and backgrounds can communicate with each other and they carry their cultural norms over to interactions. EFL instructors' integration culture in ELT context may indicate that dealing with culture has a fundamental role in language classrooms in tertiary education in Turkey. In line with their perceptions mentioning the importance of cultural awareness, Agnes (2016) explains that language learners need to learn to be familiar with and respect other cultures in addition to understanding their own culture better. Additionally, intercultural competence enables language learners to be able to understand their own culture and compare cultural differences in societies (Yılmaz & Özkan, 2016). The instructors' views on the integration of culture may be interpreted that they aim to prepare their students for international communication, along with diverse cultural backgrounds. Their way of dealing with culture is in line with the idea of McKay (2002) that not only target but also local and international cultures should be integrated into language classes to meet different needs of language learners. It might be claimed that the culture integration of EFL instructors reflects that English is not based on only one single culture, yet it is shaped by different cultures and various speakers around the world. The perceptions and practices of the instructors may be related to ELF since ELF is intercultural in terms of being a communication means and research field. Moreover, ELF speakers have various cultural expressions during an interaction and they shuttle across local, target and global contexts in changeable situations (Baker, 2018).

The instructors' preference to use Standard English and their ideas about the prestige of Standard English in communication are in parallel with the study of Mareva, Kaburise and Klu (2016) mentioning Standard English is still the most widely used variety and has a significant role in ELT. Due to "the dominant status" of native speakers in the ELT (Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016, p.38), it is not surprising that EFL instructors mostly refer to native-norms in speaking. However, the instructors do not focus on pronunciation mistakes and errors of their students. Jenkins (2007) also states that ELF users themselves should be able to determine the pronunciation norms in interactions. It might be interpreted that EFL instructors have already been influenced by ELF reality. Classroom practices of the instructors correspond to their views in terms of Standard English and World Englishes. Their classroom practices are in line with the study of Matsumoto (2011) underlining that ELF users are the members of the ELF community in which they have their sociocultural perspectives different from native-speaker norms.

The findings of the study indicate the EFL instructors are acquainted with World Englishes, and they point out that English language learners should be familiar with different uses of English in various regions in the world. Matsuda (2003) highlights that language learners might have problems due to their limited knowledge of different varieties of English. The instructors also tend to integrate various uses of English into their teaching, which is parallel with their mind-sets. Additionally, Biricik-Deniz (2017) explains that World Englishes enhance diversity, creativity and flexibility.

The instructors' views on NESTs reveal that NESTs are better at pronunciation teaching, which is also mentioned by Wahyudi (2012) that NESTs are good at teaching pronunciation. The participants also mention that NESTs have a better knowledge of authentic and real-life use of English. The perceptions of the instructors may suggest NESTs are still regarded as a source to receive information about daily use of English. Additionally, Kramersch (2013) explains several schools across the globe prefer NESTs due to their knowledge of authentic language. However, the instructors disagree that NESTs are more confident in class in comparison to NNESTs.

It is worth noting that many participants consider NNESTs to be good role models for their students just as Bayyurt (2006) suggests that language learners may be more motivated to learn a language if they see a good role model of NNESTs. Their disagreement about NNESTs being as competent as NESTs in language teaching is congruent with the study of Rajagopalan (2004), which points out that the privileged status of native speakers does not continue any more if the focus is on performing routine tasks in interlingual or multilingual settings. When EFL instructors are non-native speakers, they might guide their students by sharing what they have faced during their learning process. Additionally, a good number of the participants mention that there should not be any discrimination between NESTs and NNESTs in employment positions and opportunities, which is in line with Cook (2007) who argues NESTs and NNESTs should be in the same positions.

The classroom practices of the instructors correspond to their mind-sets on ELF and ELF-related issues since they focus on communication rather than grammar, which is also one of the concerns of ELF reality. Their views and classroom practices, in general, reflect ELF because ELF is associated with intercultural communication occurring between speakers of different linguacultural backgrounds (Cogo & Dewey, 2012). The instructors' classroom practices confirm that all the instructors integrate cultural issues into their contexts to some extent. Pavlenko (2005) states that cultural experience influences perception, cognition and language skills of individuals. Additionally, the instructors' integration of different uses of English into the classroom reflects their perceptions of Standard English and World Englishes. Moreover, Genç and Bada (2005) explain that the world in which language learners live does not focus only on one single culture and language.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to investigate views of EFL instructors on ELF and ELF-related issues concerning cultural issues in ELT, Standard English and World Englishes, and the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers. Additionally, it aimed to find out how these issues were dealt with in the ELT context in Turkey and whether there was consistency between the perceptions and classroom practices of the instructors.

It could be concluded that EFL instructors are familiar with ELF reality, and they integrate it into their classes on purpose or unintentionally to be able to meet the needs of their students for communication. Additionally, it may be claimed that EFL instructors are aware of how significant culture is for language classes, and they deal with cultural issues in classroom activities to raise intercultural awareness. Moreover, it might be interpreted that both NESTs and NNESTs have their advantages in language teaching, but neither of them is regarded as superior to the other one.

ELF has started to be more widespread in the ELT field thanks to the studies and research conducted. This study implies that being aware of ELF reality is important for EFL instructors/

teachers to be well-equipped and innovative in their fields. This research also indicates that being aware of ELF reality may help EFL instructors/teachers to correspond to various needs of language learners in a globalised world. Since ELF deals not only with the target culture but also with local and international cultures, EFL instructors/teachers may choose various cultures based on their students' interests and inform their students about these cultures to increase their understanding of and respect for different cultures. Additionally, EFL instructors/teachers may utilize audio and/or visual materials, including different uses of English to provide choices for their students. Moreover, both NESTs and NNESTs could collaborate to improve their teaching practices and create a more authentic and encouraging environment for language learning.

LIMITATIONS

This study was conducted with 36 EFL instructors working in a school of foreign languages in a foundation university. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all EFL instructors in Turkey. Additionally, it was not feasible to observe all participants in their classes because of the time limitation and weekly schedule of the instructors, thus the classroom practices of the instructors may not reflect the classroom practices of all instructors. Moreover, NESTs could not be observed and interviewed due to their unwillingness to participate in the study. Therefore, it was not possible to compare classroom practices of NESTs to NNESTs.

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