ELF AWARENESS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract
Reform is not an easy process. It is by and large slow and painful. As English proves to be an efficient tool in the international arena, it is essential that the significance of ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) awareness be reconsidered with particular reference to language policy development, syllabus design, and teacher development. It is essentially the skill that L2 learners should acquire to adapt into diverse situations. When the students who learn English as a foreign language in Turkey are considered, it could be seen that the real problem is not the different pronunciations and the different usages of the words but the different varieties of English that they are not aware of. Mostly, L2 learners have a strong desire to speak like a native speaker thus neglect the different usages, dialects and cultural norms of other Englishes. In addition to all these, a strong initiative for an extensive ELF curriculum including the application methods and techniques has yet to be introduced. Language teaching activities are carried out by using either American or British based course books that contain few local elements such as pictures and dialogues sprinkled throughout the chapters for marketing purposes. Sociocultural, local, historical and international aspects of English are mainly neglected. Taking all these into consideration, this study focused on ELF awareness in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context in terms of language policy development, syllabus design, and teacher development. For this purpose, the study aimed to investigate what Turkish EFL teachers understand about ELF and how ELF-aware they are by means of a cross-sectional survey conducted with 19 participants. Semi-structured follow-up interviews were carried out with four instructors for the purpose of obtaining content analysis and thus bolstering the quantitative results to reach more precise conclusions pertaining to ELF awareness. Keywords: English Language Education, English as a Lingua Franca, ELF awareness, English as a Foreign Language.

1.1 Introduction
Globalization in the extending circle (Kachru, 1992), is by and large the major decisive force which triggers the favourable transformation of the social and economic lives of people in the local community. Traditional notion of English depended mainly on native speaker practices and put on a higher status is already out of date and should be revised in order to keep up with the shifting sands (Seidhofer, 2011). In that respect, English, stripping of its ‘native’ ownership (Widdowson, 1994), has already started to emerge as an indispensable means of communication as a global language.
It is the language of ‘others’ as Jenkins (2003) indicated, and therefore native speakers have no right to interfere with the innovations of different ethno-cultural societies. In addition, there is now a consensus regarding the contributions of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) research in providing the trouble-free communication among non-native speakers of English (Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005; Rogerson-Revell, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2007). Moreover, there has been much research indicating the beneficial effects of ELF awareness in teaching pedagogy which highlights the importance of teaching flexible forms of English in language classrooms (Bowles, 2015; Cogo & Dewey, 2012; Kato, 2016; Seidlhofer, 2011; Sifakis, 2014).

The definition of ELF

Before commenting on the arguments concerning the significance of ELF awareness for English language education, it is necessary to define what is meant by the term “English as a Lingua Franca” within the limits of this study for there are numerous interpretations of this term in the literature. In using this term, Jenkins (2009) mainly refers to English being used by non-native speakers of English from the expanding circle (Kachru, 2006) where English has acquired the status as an international language in the national education policies of these countries. While proposing that definition, it is obvious that she was influenced by Seidlhofer (2001), who posits that ELF is an ‘emergent’ variety or varieties. On the other hand, Kirkpatrick (2007), and Rubdy and Saraceni (2006) highlight the notion of ‘diversity’ and use the term interchangeably with English as an International Language (EIL). Besides these, more modern views, adopted also for the purposes of this study, define ELF as a discourse which does not have standard but dynamic forms (its own rules), and which is used among non-native speakers of English (Sifakis & Bayyurt, 2015).

Seeing that English proves to be an efficient tool in the international arena, it is essential that the significance of ELF awareness be reconsidered with particular reference to language policy development, syllabus design, and teacher development. There is a large ELF literature (Björkman, 2010; Jenkins, 2011; Kohn, 2015) demonstrating the ways of developing beneficial techniques to implement in the non-native classroom settings in order to cope with the growing needs of L2 learners who want to achieve both accuracy and fluency. Further to that, there are a significant number of studies suggesting techniques to become a successful language learner. However, there has yet been little research specifically reporting the implications of the integration of ELF concept in English language teaching.

Taking all these into consideration, the present study first gives information about the EFL context in Turkey in terms of language policy and the professional development of teachers and then suggests possible ways of promoting awareness of English as a Lingua Franca.

1.2 Literature Review

There are many valuable studies (Bowles, 2015; Flowerdew, 2015; Sifakis & Fay, 2011; Wang, 2015) that primarily focus on implementing a language policy which underscores the merits of designing syllabuses in line with the needs of ELF pedagogy as well as raising teachers’ awareness so as to enhance their professional development (Holliday, 2005; Jenkins, 2012; Llurda, 2009; McKay, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2011; Sifakis, Vally & Fay, 2012).

For example, with reference to language education, Seidlhofer (2011) asserts that it is of prime importance to train students as users instead of learners of English. In order to put this into practice, he argues that there needs to be a shift in the mentality of EFL
teachers. Within the context of syllabus design, McKay (2003) disputes the overall tendency to use communicative language teaching methods in L2 contexts. She contends that cultural and ethnic backgrounds of L2 learners should also be taken into consideration while designing the curricula. In the same vein, Holliday (2005) and Honna (2012) voiced their concerns regarding the harmful effects of native speakerism and disputed the classroom techniques performed for ELF awareness respectively. In this sense, it is also worth mentioning Timmis’ (2002) study conducted with more than 300 participants demonstrating that it was not the teachers but the learners themselves who got highly motivated in attaining a native speaker proficiency. Similar to the findings of this study, Swiss non-native teachers fervently argued against the European ELF model on the grounds that it would make them become secondary in importance (Murray, 2003).

In relation to classroom practices, Yano (2009) proposes that it would be better to prioritize the teaching of universal concepts and then move on to the culture-specific notions. Likewise, Blommaert (2010) suggests that the syllabuses need to be improved in terms of the areas that they focus on. He specifically recommends that there should be more emphasis on meaning-making (lived experiences) in place of form and meaning. These opinions are not new. As a matter of fact, the need for preparing L2 learners for the necessities of global English (as a lingua franca) has already been put forward in many research studies by Sifakis (2004), Canagarajah (2005), and Pennycook (2006).

ELF isn’t thought to be a constant concept that can be taught in all circumstances. As Jenkins (2011) correspondingly indicated, it is essentially the skill that L2 learners should acquire to adapt themselves into diverse situations. Of course, acquiring this talent is not an easy task considering the current materials and infrastructure. Realizing this, Bjorge (2012) conducted a study in which he examined English coursebooks in terms of the ELF-related topics that they comprise. He concluded that there is little resemblance between the real life usages and the cases that are covered within the textbooks. Along the same line, Sifakis (2012) replicated the same research and found similar results. It might not be wrong to claim that despite clear advantages of familiarizing both teachers and learners as regards to the principles of ELF, many policy makers (House, 2003; Phillipson, 2008; Tardy, 2004) are still not enthusiastic to welcome change and innovation.

There have also been various attempts in Turkish context towards raising ELF awareness. After analyzing EFL teachers’ beliefs about English as a Lingua Franca, Bayyurt (2006) found out that Turkish teachers are mostly of the opinion that EFL curricula should involve international cultural components of ELF as well as local ones such as non-native speaker models from the students’ local culture. In tandem with this, İnceçay and Akyel (2014) underscored the importance of revised curricula in enabling L2 instructors to teach ELF issues easily. They strongly argued for a complete reform in ELF-related issues and teacher education rather than a face-lift to save the day. Even though all these results seem specific to a set of EFL teachers, it is reasonable to believe that the results may be very well applicable to the contexts where teachers are in search of the ways to integrate cultural and local elements with the intent of establishing appropriate ELF curricula.

Another prominent point regarding the significance of ELF awareness is teacher development. In light of the results of the research studies mentioned above, teachers need to reconsider their roles and improve themselves before designing and performing certain tasks. In conjunction with this, Dewey (2012) argues that teachers need to reflect on their practices and seek to adapt themselves to the dynamic ELF situations. Within this framework, Kirkpatrick (2012) asserts that ELF helps language learners understand
other cultures and build tolerance towards “others”. Nevertheless, while he highlights the importance of a qualified teacher for adopting a lingua franca approach, he is somewhat lacking in defining the specifics. Relevant to this issue, Jenkins (2012) also reiterates that it is particularly the responsibility of the teacher to decide how to make good use of ELF materials in their classroom settings.

For the same purpose, describing ELF learners as multitaskers, Alptekin (2010) laid emphasis on the role of bilingualism, biculturalism and multicompetence as key features in ELF education. In addition, he elaborately expressed his views in his comprehensive article in which he reviewed Seidlhofer’s (2012) well-known book. Yet, neither in his article nor in his book review, he made references to teacher education.

In case of ELF, there is no clear-cut boundaries. On the contrary, teacher’s conception of ELF could be well considered as an opposition to the established system. In connection with this, Widdowson (2012) signifies that the quality of English learners’ knowledge is more important than the quantity of English. Therefore, it is of capital importance that teachers bracket or suspend all their biases before starting out to integrate ELF into their syllabuses (Park & Wee, 2011).

Change is hard to embrace, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress. For that reason, it would not be surprising to expect some kind of resistance to the new terms such as World Englishes or English as a Lingua Franca. In relation to that, Sifakis and Sougari (2005) conducted a study to determine how relevant English language teachers in Greece perceived the ELF model in their teaching context. With respect to the research results, though most of the teachers were of the opinion that ELF was an essential component in today’s world, they were not in favor of the idea to use it within all their practices. This seems like a contradiction when most of the teachers appear to be welcoming the ideas of globalization, ELF or diverse nature of English.

In reality, the key component in terms of understanding ELF is to internalize it first. The attitudes of EFL teachers towards this new concept is certainly important but, after all, it would not be correct to claim that this is the only reason. There are also other peripheral factors such as governmental policies, language policies of the institutions and so on. There is no best and agreed way of raising ELF awareness for English language education. Each and every teacher needs to find his or her own way of making good use of ELF components in their classroom settings. By this way, they might reflect upon their own practices, share their experiences and develop new frameworks for utilizing ELF.

1.3 Significance of the Study

When EFL learners who learn English as a foreign language in Turkey are considered, it could be seen that the real problem is not the different pronunciations and the different usages of the words but the different varieties of English that they are not aware of (Canagarajah, 2006; Crystal, 2012; Crystal & Davy, 2016; Jenkins, 2009). Generally, L2 learners are enthusiastic about speaking like a native speaker; therefore, they neglect phonological, morphological, syntactic, pragmatic and sociocultural aspects of other Englishes (Jenkins, 1998). And most of the time, if they are not familiar with the concept of ELF, they have difficulty in learning and enlarging their knowledge on the target language (Jenkins, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2013). In addition, with particular reference to teacher education, a strong initiative for an extensive ELF curriculum including the application methods and techniques has yet to be introduced. Language teaching activities are mostly carried out by pre-planned curricula based on a course book written by a group of writers who are speaking target language as their native language. Furthermore, a large repertoire of concepts related to historical and international aspects of English are usually overlooked (Andrade, 2006). Above all, as Jenkins (2007)
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1.4 Justification

Being ELF-aware is not enough but action needs to be taken to implement the recognition of the phenomenon of ELF in ELT practice. A transformative approach (Sifakis, 2014) in promoting teacher awareness of ELF is also needed as an essential component for the conceptualization of the phenomenon of ELF. That is to say, teachers who are willing to influence their future students and develop their students' acceptance of ELF should engage themselves first with the notion of ELF. Although knowledge of ELF in current ELT profession is considered as an important part to promote the diversity in the discourse of English education (Dewey, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2011; Sifakis, 2014) and to influence real life practices in English medium communication (Wang, 2015), there has been little research on how to raise student/teacher awareness of ELF in educational settings and whether it works well to suit its users' purposes in current sociolinguistic contexts. In this sense, it is assumed that this study may give an insight to foreign language teachers in exploring how much the teacher participants are aware of the notion of ELF and offer implications for developing and integrating the concept of ELF in English language teaching.

1.5 Research Question

A considerable body of research accept that the knowledge about ELF is a crucial part of ELF awareness and further report what its scope is. With the ever-expanding frontier of ELF research, this concept certainly grows. Nonetheless, ELF awareness involves, but is not limited to the recognition of ELF. Despite various depths and different focuses, the research studies which particularly touch upon the manifestation of the need to understand how ELF works today and its application to ELT profession are scarce. Therefore, this study undertakes the investigation of how Turkish EFL teachers understand ELF and ELF awareness within the context of social, educational, political, cultural and ideological issues in English Language Education. Accordingly, the research question driving the study is:

How do Turkish EFL teachers understand ELF and ELF awareness within the context of English Language Teaching?

2. Methodology

2.1 Setting

The place where the study conducted is an EFL department of a vocational school in Yalova, Turkey and the data were collected from the EFL instructors during the academic year of 2015–2016. A total of 19 EFL instructors participated in the study. As it is analyzed via observation, the English instruction in the institution is offered according to Common European Framework (CEF) levels and carried out as follows:
Students are exposed to 5 hours of English every week. They study their main course books for 3 hours. They are taught grammar rules, and do grammar activities in these hours. In addition to that, two hours of laboratory classes provide students with the opportunity for self-study. Students can listen to the reading passages in a native speaker’s voice, or check their own answers to grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation exercises on the computer. It is compulsory for the students to attend these classes. At the end of each semester, they must get minimum 60 in the final exam in order to be successful. Students who fail in the final exams must take and be successful in the make-up exams otherwise they repeat the whole year. Apart from these, distinct linguistic and cultural norms of other Englishes are not much highlighted. There are hardly ever any activities which are intended to familiarize the students with different varieties of English and thereby raise their ELF awareness. Teacher education context is no different than the school curricula in that sense.

2.2 Participants

19 English language instructors, currently working in a range of high schools in Yalova and responded positively to the invitation emails volunteered to take part in the study. Accordingly, the participants were chosen randomly. The teaching career of the teachers varies from 4 to 16 years. As Cogo and Dewey, (2012) and Jenkins (2007) assert novice and experienced teachers differ in their understanding of ELF and World Englishes; this variance in experience among teachers makes an additional contribution to the study in detecting the ELF awareness degrees of multi-generational EFL instructors.

Four out of 19 teachers offered to take part in the interview section of the study. The first interviewee (ME, hereafter) has been teaching for 16 years. He has a B.A. degree in English language teaching from a university in Ankara. Second interviewee (AŞ) holds an M.A. degree in Educational Administration and has been teaching for 11 years. The third interviewee (DF) has been teaching for 4 years with an M.A. degree in English literature program from a university in Istanbul. The last interviewee (GY) has been teaching with a B.A. degree for 8 years and wishes to pursue advanced studies in English language education.

2.3 Research design and Instruments

In order to explain and build upon the initial quantitative results, mixed methods sequential explanatory design (Creswell, Plano Clark et al., 2003) was preferred as a research design for the study. In tandem with the principles of this design, initially, quantitative (questionnaires) data were collected (Appendix A). Next, qualitative (semi-structured interviews, Appendix B) data were analyzed to elaborate on the quantitative results. By the help of this design, it was inferred that subsequent analyses (quantitative→qualitative) would provide a clear delineation of the research problem (Creswell, 2003; Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

2.3.1 Questionnaire

A teacher questionnaire developed by Sifakis and Fay (2011) was adopted in the study. There were two reasons for particularly using this questionnaire. First of all, it was successfully applied in exploring the perceptions of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) practitioners as regards to ELF concept and cultural diversity in Greek context. In view of the fact that Greece is generally thought to be located in Kachru’s Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1985) where English has no official function and is used primarily as a foreign language like Turkey, it was assumed that the same questionnaire might also be utilized to investigate the EFL teachers’ understanding of global English language phenomenon in general and English as a Lingua Franca concept.
in particular in Turkish context. Even so, the questionnaire was pretested with five teachers from the target group before it was distributed. They completed the questionnaire one at a time and the questions that might lead to biased answers were identified and improved. In addition, Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient of the each section of the questionnaire was measured at most 0.91 which indicated a satisfactory level of internal consistency and reliability.

Second of all, the questionnaire includes four unique descriptions of ELF teaching situations which teachers are expected to choose one that best suits their current teaching practice. As it was noticed that not many of the EFL teachers are informed about the concept of ELF during the pilot interviewing, it was concluded that it might be practical to give them ready-made definitions by way of questionnaires and elicit their views to develop a preliminary portrait of how Turkish EFL teachers perceive ELF. The characteristics of each teaching situation as to integrating ELF pedagogy are specified as follows:

1. International-Intercultural teaching: This option describes the communication between non-native speakers and Turkish learners of English. While it is in a way associated with the aspect of teaching English as an international language and thereby preparing Turkish students for native speaker context, it additionally involves the usage of English (e.g. internet, skype, etc.) by Turkish L2 learners in their home country without residing in inner circle countries.

2. Intranational-multicultural teaching: This option underscores the use of English between non-native speakers of English in general and Turkish L2 learners in particular. By presenting this teaching situation as an option, the researchers principally wanted to know the value and the extent of English usage in L2 classroom settings.

3. Teaching as a foreign language: This teaching situation describes the most widely taught form of English in Turkey. As one of the expanding circle countries affirmed by Kachru (1985), a specific native speaker variety of English is extensively taught as a foreign language in Turkey.

4. Test-oriented teaching: This last option represents the teaching of the target language just for the sole purpose of preparing students for high-stakes tests such as TOEFL or IELTS. Since having been certified as a proficient user of English is extremely important for certain job positions in Turkey, by including this option, the researchers particularly wanted to learn perceptions of EFL teachers regarding this issue.

2.3.2 Interviews

As Patton (2002) suggests, information-rich cases form a basis for detailed analysis in qualitative research. In accordance with this, four EFL teachers, who were willing to contribute to the study by expressing their ideas and knowledge, were intentionally selected for the interviews. Despite the fact that interviews are considered somewhat subjective in nature, they provide an in-depth analysis of a case and encourage participants to be more involved (Esterberg, 2002). Besides, they serve a unique purpose of uncovering and discovering participants’ personal attitudes on events (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In that respect, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants for the purpose of investigating the extent to which teachers’ awareness with regard to ELF is developed in Turkish context. It was assumed that the interviews would prove to be very efficient in encouraging the participants to get more involved in the study and thereby provide a room to voice their opinions freely.

Since all the participants were EFL teachers, the language was not considered to be a barrier in expressing their ideas; hence all the interviews were conducted in English. Prompts
Appendix B) were used instead of interview questions in that they helped the researchers to keep the participants talking and thus ensured the flow of the conversation. Every prompt was specifically utilized to get a deeper understanding of the situations that incited teachers to be more aware of the international-intercultural aspects of ELF, cultural diversity of various social contexts and the use of English within these. In addition to interview probes, the researchers also made good use of alternative questions or follow-ups to facilitate the intercommunication and gather supplementary data.

As a whole, in each interview, the researchers intentionally guided the flow of the conversation to create an ambiance where the interviewees felt themselves comfortable and eager to voice their opinions and experiences. Each of the four interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes and was audio recorded and transcribed.

2.4 Procedure

Mixed methods sequential explanatory design (Creswell, Plano Clark et al., 2003) of the study was prepared and drafted in early March 2016. It was concluded prior to the study that this type of design would have been the most suitable one as to demonstrate what should be covered in terms of the knowledge about ELF for the purpose of raising ELF awareness in the discourse of English education.

Afterwards, permission for carrying out the interviews at the institution was granted by the head of the department. Upon receiving the permission, the time frame of the study was finalized. ELF questionnaires were reformulated in accordance with the Turkish context and sent via emails to 19 EFL instructors working in various high schools in Yalova. Owing to the fact that the notion of ELF, albeit has been acknowledged as a valuable concept since early 80s, is rarely known except academic circles in Turkey, an information note (Appendix C) defining ELF was attached and sent with the emails by the researchers.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four instructors for the purpose of obtaining content to be analyzed (Holsti, 1968) and thus bolstering the quantitative results so as to reach fair and precise results pertaining to ELF awareness. The draft forms of the transcriptions were shared with the participants to improve the validity of the study and it was indicated clearly that the names would remain anonymous when the results were reported. Lastly, the script was coded and the coding was framed so as to fit the data as regards to ELF awareness in English language teaching.

2.5 Data Analysis

As descriptive analysis is regarded as one of the best methods in experimental research for illustrating the data in an operable pattern (Frankael & Wallen, 2008), it was specifically used in the study to describe the questionnaire results. Additionally, the percentages for each teaching situation were calculated in order to make decisions about the data. Creswell (2013) contends that convenience samples are used when researcher is limited to available groups. Apropos of that, the small sample size (n=19) in the study was presumed to be representative of the larger population.

Coding is regarded as a crucial aspect of qualitative analysis (Basit, 2003). In connection with that argument, the interview transcripts were analyzed by means of descriptive coding and content analysis (Schreier, 2012; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). There were two main reasons why descriptive coding was used during the analysis. First of all, since description is the foundation for qualitative inquiry (Wolcott, 1994), it was assumed that the descriptive codes in that respect might prove valuable in getting a general understanding of the phenomenon rather than focusing on the details of the communication of participants in their social lives. Secondly, as Saldaña (2003) suggests,
descriptive codes collected from data in different time periods are one of the best precursors in detecting participant change. In that respect, descriptive codes assisted the researchers to further analyze the basic topics (Turner, 1994) and thereby provided them to understand the organizational grasp of the study.

Coding is not a stable but a cyclical act (Saldaña, 2013). For this reason, as proposed by Creswell and Poth (2017), the whole portion of data was read first to have a general idea and to start developing codes during the first cycle coding processes. In the second cycle coding processes, the salient features of the data were identified, grouped and then regrouped and relinked (Grbich, 2012), in order to consolidate meaning and reach themes. In the third cycle, all the units were reconfigured and arranged in a systematic order upon revising.

Since there were two different raters and three different themes, intercoder reliability was looked at to ensure the reliability of the emerging themes. To that end, Kappa coefficient criteria of 0.66 was calculated in SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) which indicated a substantial level of reliability for an index known to be more conservative.

As the final step, the codes were categorized to reach themes. (1) ELF awareness of EFL teachers, (2) ELF in syllabus design, and (3) Reflections of teachers about language policy development were emerged as prominent themes influencing how Turkish EFL teachers understand ELF and ELF awareness within the context of English Language Teaching.

3. Findings
3.1 Questionnaires
The results indicating the responses of the EFL teachers for the following sections of the questionnaire were displayed in percentages.

3.1.1 Usage of English
The seventh question of the questionnaire particularly asks how often EFL teachers use English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Questionnaire</th>
<th>Teachers rarely use English outside the classroom</th>
<th>Teachers frequently use English outside the classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 7</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading newspapers/novels/articles/internet</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching tv/listen to songs on MP3/online</td>
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<td>29%</td>
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With respect to the results, 20% of the teachers stated that they hardly use English outside their classroom settings. Nonetheless, 80% indicated that they frequently use English outside the classroom. Of these 80%, 48% argued that they mainly use English while reading newspapers, novels, articles or browsing the internet. 29% of them asserted that they watch TV or listen to songs on their MP3 player/online in English. And 23% of EFL teachers pointed out that they use English while reading and writing their posts on Facebook.

3.1.2 EFL teachers’ viewpoint about teaching situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Situations</th>
<th>TEFL (3)</th>
<th>Test-Oriented (4)</th>
<th>International (2)</th>
<th>Multicultural (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of the four options for the eighth question of the survey comprises four unique teaching situations as to integrating ELF pedagogy. According to the results, 60% of the participants (12 out of 20) concurred teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) situation is the best option demonstrating their current teaching practice. The dominance of this option (3) indeed turned out to be as expected because taking into consideration that most of the EFL teachers have little knowledge about ELF and ELF pedagogy, they most probably opted for the teaching situation (option 3) which they had already been familiar with. Apart from that, 20% (4 out of 20) of the participants identified their teaching situation as test-oriented. On the grounds that this option (4) is closely related to option 3 in terms of familiarity, this result was foreseen as well. As one of the expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1985), it is surely beyond doubt that test-oriented teaching is very popular in both state and private schools in Turkey, and most EFL teachers are of the opinion that it is prestigious to work in that particular teaching context. Nevertheless, 10% of the teachers deemed international and multicultural notions appropriate to their teaching perspectives respectively.

All in all, the questionnaire results manifested that even though Turkish teachers are open to new pedagogies regarding the principles of ELF; they still are far from adopting and integrating them into their classroom practices.

3.2 Interviews

3.2.1 ELF awareness of EFL teachers

Firstly, since it is not a well-known concept, the researchers decided to learn how EFL teachers in Turkey defined ELF and what they thought about it. By the help of the information note attached to the e-mailed questionnaire, two of the participants were able to define ELF more or less in correct statements;

ME indicated: it [ELF] is the use of English as a means of communication between native speakers of different languages.

About the same topic, GY interestingly maintained a different attitude and described ELF as a means for intercultural communication and further pointed out that the term ‘lingua franca’ is etymologically a French word which displays a total contradiction with the very essence of its sole purpose;

GY: Well, etymologically the term lingua franca comes from French. I am positive about that. Isn’t it interesting that ELF concept which promotes the usage of English is itself not English [laughter].

On the other hand, neither AS nor DF managed to elaborate on the notion of ELF thoroughly. They simply highlighted the fact that it is a medium of communication.

3.2.2 ELF in syllabus design

With respect to the integration of ELF in syllabus design, the participants were rather enthusiastic to voice their opinions;

Researcher: How would you evaluate the function of ELF for Turkish L2 learners?

DF: In my personal opinion, we, especially as English language teachers, should be more open to new teaching pedagogies than other teachers [geography, mathematics, etc.]. I think we should introduce this very concept [ELF] to our students and inform them that there is not only one variety of English used in the world.

In a similar vein, ME underlined the integration of ELF in annual plans and syllabuses.
ME: After I received your e-mail, I wondered what it was and made a small research on the internet. By the way, I read some articles, just out of curiosity. It is a pity that I haven’t come across that term before. I think we should embrace it and integrate it into our syllabuses. That should create awareness on the part of learners also. I am sure once they get to know and understand that concept; they would give up appreciating their instructors by only looking at their pronunciations.

AS similarly stated that she regrets not having heard of that concept earlier by reflecting her thoughts as follows:

AS: How on earth I have not come across this concept previously though I frequently attend ELT seminars and workshops. I am sure that not many ELT department coordinators are aware of the importance of that notion. It is also a relief on the part of English instructors. Most of them are stressed out in vain for the perfect pronunciation of words. If only we could teach them that there are different kinds of Englishes and all are good to use, it would also be a kind of enlightenment for them [L2 learners].

3.2.3 Reflections of teachers about language policy development

As regards to ELF-aware teaching, participants narrated some eye-opening experiences. For instance, ME, as the most experienced teacher, laid emphasis on the importance of ELF-aware teaching by criticizing the EFL education in Turkey;

ME: My perspective about the methodology that we applied in our classrooms completely changed after I made this quick search about ELF on the internet. I can say that I kind of refreshed myself. I used to idolize the native speakers as I thought of them as the perfect users of the target language. Now, I am more confident of myself and I feel certain that non-native speakers are more appropriate for non-native environments.

In tandem with this, GY agreed that there is no planned foreign language policy in Turkey by verbalizing her opinions:

GY: Every year, they distribute new books and they call us for in-service trainings. Not long, 3 years ago, they were talking about employing 10 thousand something native teachers in state schools [laughter]. God forbid. [laughter]. Now, fortunately, they are too busy replacing the faulty fatih project tablets with the new ones, they have not come up with any bright new ideas yet [laughter]. Two years ago, we were using different course books, now that we use prime time series based on American English. I am not sure about next year. There is no consistent foreign language policy in our own institution let alone Ministry of Education.

Clearly, the interviews demonstrated that there is no determined and on-going foreign language policy in Turkish context and English language teachers are usually unaware of the fact that there exists an ELF concept which would be definitely beneficial if it were to be put into use in classrooms by EFL instructors.

4. Discussion

This small study focused on ELF awareness in EFL context in terms of language policy development, syllabus design, and teacher development. At the same time, it explored ways of promoting ELF awareness specifically in Turkish foreign language education.

With regard to the questionnaire results, 80% of Turkish EFL teachers expressed that they frequently use English outside their classrooms. This result is in line with the study of Sifakis and Fay (2011) in that they too reported 75% of EFL teachers also do so in Greece. In that respect, it could be argued that in expanding circle contexts (like Turkey and Greece), non-native teachers, even if devoid of broader opportunities, attach importance to using target language for their own development.
In terms of the opinions about teaching situations, 60% of the participants associated their teaching with EFL context. Bearing in mind that their engagement with ELF concept is limited, it is reasonable that they were inclined to endorse the most widely-taught form of English in Turkey as their teaching practice. What is noteworthy here is, even though insistence on a native English-oriented language education (EFL) is regarded as an anachronism by some scholars (Hülmbauer, Böhringer, Seidlhofer, 2008), it is still largely praised in Turkey. Focusing on pre-service English language teachers’ perceptions towards teaching pronunciation within ELF framework, the same result has also been clearly echoed in the study of Coşkun (2011) where he found native-speaker English as the sole correct model acknowledged in ELT. Besides, among these participants, there was a common tendency to favour a native speaker-oriented perspective when teaching the language as previously pointed out by Kuo, (2006); Sifakis, (2008) and Timmis, (2002). It is also interesting that while most of the EFL teachers seem to embrace and celebrate the concepts such as multilingualism, multiculturalism and different varieties and language change, what was found out in the end is very much that of a particular native speaker variety of English.

Closely related to EFL option, exam oriented instruction was the second teaching situation. This outcome once more confirms that high stakes exams (TOEFL, IELTS) as asserted by Mansfield and Poppi (2011), still maintain their prominence in expanding circle countries. As a consequence, the questionnaire data reveals that the transition from EFL teacher to ELF practitioner is not an easy task and it clearly necessitates time and encouragement particularly for Turkish context.

Contrary to the questionnaire results, interviews showed us some promise regarding ELF awareness in language policy and syllabus design. In relation to the issue of ELF, half of the interviewees managed to describe ELF which should be applauded when it is considered that traditional teacher education in Turkey has little to offer for ELF awareness. This finding partially diverges from the results of the study by İnceçay and Akyel (2014) which documented high rates of resistance in participant teachers towards accepting ELF and using it in their teaching contexts. Of course, the annotations (information notes) attached to e-mails might be suspected to have an effect on the recognition of the ELF concept by two interviewees. However, as Creswell and Miller (2000) contend, when used for illustrative purposes, information notes do not create any significance on qualitative outcomes.

Adopting an ELF perspective is usually seen as a risky business in view of the dominant teacher education and its imposed influence upon L2 learners (Pennycook, 2001). Due to this fact, to date, there have been fewer attempts at looking into the implications of ELF for English language teaching pedagogy (Sifakis & Bayyurt, 2015). While the traditional approach dictates the treatment of languages as linguistic systems comprised of discrete forms (Baker, 2015; Mauraen, 2012), ELF research leads to the view of English as practice-based, evolving, fluid and multilingual (Cogo & Dewey 2012; Jenkins 2015; Seidlhofer 2011). Nonetheless, what is certain is that English language realities are not reflected in today’s English language education. Of course, the total replacement of EFL with ELF for Turkish ELT is not suggested in this paper. However, while the dream of reaching native speaker proficiency still attracts masses in Turkey, it should be our responsibility to enlighten first our ELT teachers and then students that there are vast opportunities which they can obtain by learning more about ELF and engaging in multilingual contexts. It is obvious that this, in turn will provide EFL teachers more opportunities to reflect upon their own practices and thereby make their students’ learning experiences more appropriate to real life situations.
Pertaining to ELF and syllabus design, the teachers observe the integration of ELF pedagogy as a window to empower themselves with the concept and concurrently introduce pluricentrism, globalization and cultural studies to their learners. To illustrate, they acknowledge the importance of integrating ELF in teacher education programs either as a separate course or a part of an already existing course in order to ensure its applicability in their teaching practices. Nonetheless, in order for this initiative to be successful, first and foremost, the teacher education as Seidlhofer (1997) confirms, should be redesigned and re-evaluated in terms of the necessities of the developing world.

Within the context of language policy development, EFL teachers were able to work up a connection between ELF-aware teaching and the traditional TEFL context in Turkey. As Jenkins (2006) attests about the significance of language awareness, this link perhaps made them to reflect more about the issues for their own development. It is, after all obvious that even their short-term involvement with ELF related literature incited them to call into question the effectiveness of their teaching practices and to reconsider allocating more time to multilingual and cultural aspects of the target language. In light of this, what should be included with the intention of raising ELF awareness in EFL context in Turkey needs to be further examined and investigated.

5. Conclusion

This study has been designed with the main objective of enlightening EFL teachers with the new pedagogy by raising their awareness of the existence of different varieties of Englishes. For this purpose, a teacher questionnaire was applied first to explore the perceptions of Turkish EFL teachers as regards to ELF and ELF awareness. Afterwards, qualitative data were coded and as a result of the categorization of codes, (1) ELF awareness of EFL teachers, (2) ELF in syllabus design, and (3) Reflections of teachers about language policy development were identified as the main factors influencing how Turkish EFL teachers understand ELF within the context of English Language Teaching.

On the whole, in light of the results of the study, it could be argued that making teachers aware of the ‘plurality of Englishes’ (Hamid & Balladur, 2013) and the importance of multiculturalism proved to be valuable in encouraging them to revise their teaching practices within the widespread use of English as the lingua franca of this century. It is no doubt that innovation in educational system requires dedication and constant effort. Even though there are some well-planned efforts from the scholars (Kural & Bayyurt, 2014; Kural, 2015; Sifakis & Bayyurt, 2015) to train English language teachers to create a certain kind of ELF awareness, there is yet much progress to be made.

After all, as Pennycook (2001) reiterates, what is dictated should not be taken for granted. It is obvious that there is a mismatch between English in the context of ELT and the understanding of English in a changing world. Though ELF is becoming increasingly a prominent communicative phenomenon, the current system in Turkey offers little to develop a good awareness of ELF. For that reason, it is high time that Turkish ELF teachers should reconsider creating space for different language choices and alternative paradigms in their teaching contexts. To that end, several studies (Bowles & Cogo, 2015; Galloway & Rose, 2014) already provide a good amount of ELF-aware integrated teaching materials, syllabus and language awareness activities. Given the low awareness of ELF among Turkish L2 learners, helping them to realize the myth of native English and recognize their linguistic rights would also prove useful. Ultimately, it is for ELT teachers to decide whether/to what extent ELF is relevant to their learners in their context. It would likewise be reasonable to focus on the sociolinguistic aspects to reposition the language education system in view of the economic and political developments revolving around the rise of ELF. It is hoped that research be continually undertaken to shed further light on enquiries related to ELF.
awareness in English language education, because, as Wang (2015) emphasizes English is no longer ‘the’ English but Englishes in plural.

References


Kural, F. (2015). Significance of intercultural competence development for study-abroad students: preparing Turkish international sojourners to undertake graduate programs in English L1 countries. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Yeditepe University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Istanbul.


Appendix A
Teacher Questionnaire

1. Please tick the box that describes your current (or most recent) teaching situation:
   - primary school
   - higher-secondary school
   - tertiary level (AEI, TEI, etc.)
   - lower-secondary school
   - post-secondary school (e.g., IEK, etc.)
   - private institution/private lessons only

2. I work in the state private sector.

3. Total years of EFL teaching experience: ________

4. If you have had experience from other teaching situations, please briefly say where:
   - state domain
   - private domain: language institution
   Please give us some more details of your past teaching experience:
   ____________________________________________________________

5. Are you a native speaker of English? □ YES □ NO

6. Tick the box that best describes your current use of English (don’t think too much about it, just tick the option that best applies to you):
   - I frequently use English outside the classroom.
   - I rarely use English outside the classroom.

7. If you use English frequently, where would you say you do so? Tick the ONE box that best describes what you do:
   - I mainly read (anything, from newspapers, novels, applied linguistics books, articles, browsing the Internet, etc).
   - I mainly watch TV, listen to songs on my MP3 player and/or online, and the like.
   - Other: please specify: ____________________________

8. Which of the following descriptions best suits your current (or most recent) teaching situation? Please read carefully and tick only ONE box:

   □ Description 1: The teaching of English, with characteristics based on native-speaker (such as British or American English) and non-native speaker varieties, which also draws heavily on locally-emerging characteristics, to students in Greece whose school and societal experiences can be characterised as increasingly multicultural.

   □ Description 2: The teaching of English varieties with characteristics mainly drawn from its usage in communications between non-native speakers to students in Turkey for whom English-medium international interactions are seen as valued possibilities.

   □ Description 3: The teaching of a particular native-speaker variety of English (e.g. British or American English) to be used as a foreign language by Turkish speakers for whom English has no immediate function within Turkish society. There is NO direct link in my teaching with students’ preparation for the participation in a specific examination (such as Cambridge ESOL exams, etc).
Description 4: The teaching of a particular native-speaker variety of English (e.g. British or American English) with an express orientation toward preparing students for participation in a particular examination (such as Cambridge ESOL exams, etc).

9. Look at the other three options (those you did NOT select in question 8). How close do you consider them to be in presenting a true picture of your teaching situation?
   - The closest description after the one I gave in question 8 is Description No._ .
   - The second closest description is Description No. .
   - The third closest description is Description No. .

10. Now consider ALL FOUR descriptions of question 8. Notwithstanding your previous answers, which ONE of them do you think is the MOST APPROPRIATE for your context?
   - It’s Description No. .

Many sincere thanks for your time and cooperation!

Appendix B: Interview design

1. Opening topics:
   - The feeling about the questionnaire survey
   - The feeling about the research topic as described in the information sheet
   - Any question about the research

2. Issues to be explored:
   - Experience of using English
   - Social context of English for Turkish speakers
   - Social context of their attitudes
   - The function of English for Turkish speakers
   - Attitudes towards English, towards their own English, and towards native speaker English
   - Awareness of ELF, awareness of different Englishes
   - Attitudes towards Turkish speakers’ English in intercultural communication
   - Native-like or Turkish-like?
   - Would you like to be recognized as a Turkish speaker of English or be misrecognized as a native speaker of English?
   - Do you consider yourself as a user or a learner?

3. Closing question:
   - Any free comments stimulated by the project
Appendix C

Information note sent with the electronic mails

- A lingua franca is a language or mixture of languages used as a medium of communication by people whose native languages are different. Also known as a trade language, contact language, international language, and global language.
- The term English as a lingua franca (ELF) refers to the teaching, learning, and use of the English language as a common means of communication for speakers of different native languages.