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**COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES: INTERCULTURAL
COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT IN FOOD AND BEVERAGES
SECTOR IN BEYOGLU ISTANBUL**

MASTER THESIS

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JANUARY 2016

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. MICHEL BOURSE for the continuous support of my study and related research, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.

Besides my advisor, I would like to thank the rest of my thesis committee: Prof. Dr. YASEMİN İNCEOĞLU and Asst. Prof. Dr. ÇİĞDEM BOZDAĞ, for their insightful comments and encouragement, but also for the hard question which incited me to widen my research from various perspectives.

I would also like to acknowledge with much appreciation the crucial role of all my lecturers and professors from Galatasaray University Faculty of Communication, who provided me an incredible perspective before and during the research.

Furthermore, my sincere thanks go to the interviewees. They opened their hearts, stories and insights to me. Without their precious input, it would not be possible to conduct this research.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family: my parents, NURHAYAT and FARUK and to my brother, NURİ and my sister, NİHAN and of course my AFS family, staff members and volunteers, a community of passionate interculturalists, for supporting me spiritually throughout writing this thesis and believing in my ambitions in life.

At the end I would like to express appreciation to the most special person in my life, CİHAN, who trusted me fully, supported me with questions, ideas and critics and reminded me of my passion towards the subject whenever I was about to lose my motivation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFS: American Field Service
BEYIM: Beyoğlu Employment Center
DMIS: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
UN: United Nations
USA: United States of America



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RESUME

Le développement de la compétence interculturelle est essentielle et inévitable dans l'élaboration des affaires dans le monde globalisé d'aujourd'hui. Les échanges culturels, des interactions et des engagements sociaux sont en hausse de jour en jour grâce à la facilité de la communication, à l'avancement technologique et à l'augmentation du transport et des moyens de voyage. C'est le temps où les cultures influencent et sont influencés par d'autres visions du monde et d'autres formes d'expression plus que jamais. Les générations d'aujourd'hui sont nées dans un ère "d'échange, de communication et de transport". Nous, constamment, recherchons et créons des opportunités pour avoir des expériences de l'échange culturelles et mondiales. Les Nations Unies estiment¹ que 20% de tous les touristes internationaux, soit près de 200 millions de voyageurs, sont des jeunes, et que ce groupe démographique génère plus de 180 milliards \$ de revenue touristique annuelle, soit une augmentation de près de 30% depuis 2007. Par rapport au BCG (Boston Consulting Group), les «Millennials» (qu'on appelle la génération Y - la Génération du Millénaire) sont un groupe plus diversifiés que les «non-Millennials» (qu'on appelle de temps en temps la génération X), et ils se sont plus intéressés aux voyages internationaux et aux expériences culturelles mondiales². De l'autre côté, en Turquie, le trafic aérien international a triplé juste douze dernières³ années alors que le trafic aérien intérieur a augmenté de six fois et que la Turquie a reçu 36 millions de touristes seulement en 2014⁴, en plus, il est attendant à augmenter ce nombre jusqu'à 63 millions d'ici 2023.⁵ Ces évolutions offrent des possibilités et des défis interculturels inévitables pour chaque individu. Chaque jour, des individus, des organisations, des institutions et des dirigeants sont poussés de plus en plus vers le développement de certaines aptitudes et compétences afin de faire face à l'augmentation des interactions culturelles.

¹ <http://media.unwto.org/en/press-release/2012-09-25/unwto-and-wyse-travel-confederation-launch-global-declaration-promote-youth>

²

https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/transportation_travel_tourism_consumer_insight_traveling_with_millennials/?chapter=4#chapter4

³ http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1051

⁴ <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,36568/number-of-arriving-departing-visitors-foreigners-and-ci-.html>

⁵ <http://kariyer.turizmgazetesi.com/articles/article.aspx?id=56040>

L'engagement avec les autres cultures fournit la diversité des expériences, à la fois culturellement et émotionnellement, qui mène l'un dans différentes visions du monde et des ensembles de valeurs. Ces expériences et ces interactions devraient être facilitées à certains égards interne et externe par les processus de développement des compétences.⁶ Développement des compétences interculturelles soutient les individus et les organisations avec le processus de l'engagement culturel, du contact et d'interaction. Les compétences interculturelles sont un ensemble des compétences et caractéristiques cognitifs, affectifs comportementales qui soutiennent l'interaction efficace et appropriée dans une variété de contextes culturels. Ces développements honorent des différentes valeurs, des différentes systèmes de croyances et des différentes comportements, soit les différences culturelles sont nationale ou internationale. Nous pouvons - et devons - construire, avec soin, un cadre complexe, multicouche avec un contexte assez vaste, qui ne se fonde pas sur <<l'un ou l'autre / ou>> mais qui se fonde sur <<les deux / et>>. Développement des compétences interculturelles facilite le processus de devenir plus sensible au niveau culturel, surtout quand il vient aux relations sociaux avec des gens de toutes les cultures. Sensibilité interculturelle développée est très essentiel dans le monde globalisé d'aujourd'hui à tous les secteurs tels que l'éducation, la santé, le tourisme, le service et de nombreux autres domaines de production et de communication.

Avec tous les autres secteurs, le secteur des aliments et des boissons nécessite du personnel ayant une compétence de communication interculturelle beaucoup plus développée. La cuisine est un élément d'interaction et d'identification culturelle depuis longtemps. La nourriture est promue comme un produit culturel, perçue comme un besoin fondamental de l'être humain et consommée largement. Une fonction symbolique essentielle de nourriture est l'identité culturelle. Ce qu'on mange définit qui on est, et en parlant culturellement, inversement, qui l'on n'est pas.⁷ Les habitudes alimentaires, le choix du menu, la manière de servir, d'accueillir et rituels associés aux repas sont des aspects très importants des éléments culturels visibles. Nous sommes tellement conscient de la nourriture à chaque rencontre interculturelle, donc, la nourriture elle-même offre une opportunité pour la sensibilité interculturelle.

⁶ Janet Bennett, **Developing Intercultural Competence For International Education Faculty and Staff**, 2011 AIEA CONFERENCE, USA,

http://www.intercultural.org/documents/competence_handouts.pdf, 21 Novembre 2015.

⁷ Pamela Goyan Kittler and Kathryn P. Sucher, **Food and Culture**, Thomson Higher Education, USA, 2008, p. 4.

Le but de ce mémoire est d'acquérir une compréhension approfondie des processus de communication interculturelle dans le secteur des aliments et des boissons dans le quartier de Beyoğlu d'Istanbul en Turquie et de réfléchir au niveau des sensibilités interculturelles du personnel dans le secteur. Le quartier est célèbre pour être le foyer de plusieurs attractions touristiques, accueillir des millions de visiteurs chaque jour et fournir un espace pour des engagements internationaux et interculturels parmi les visiteurs de diverses cultures. Selon Business Reader 2014, l'avenue Istiklal à Taksim qui se trouve au quartier de Beyoğlu à Istanbul est l'une des nombreuses raisons pour lesquelles la ville est classée au sommet de la liste de préférence des utilisateurs de TripAdvisor.⁸ Récemment, en tant que centre d'attention et d'attraction, elle est devenue la zone la plus touristique et diversifiée à Istanbul. Le quartier accueille 5000 cafés et restaurants et la circulation des piétons par jour dans la semaine est à environ 1,5 millions, tandis que ce nombre monte à 3 millions de visiteurs quotidiens le week-end où 28% de la répartition⁹ sectorielle est la nourriture et des boissons.¹⁰ Non seulement aujourd'hui, mais aussi historiquement, les quartiers Beyoglu et Pera ont été le centre pour les tendances alimentaires et boissons. Des restaurants, des tavernes, des maisons de kebab, des cafés, des brasseries, des bars, des vignobles, des pâtisseries etc. offrent diverses cuisines de divers groupes ethniques, religieux et culturels d'Istanbul et cela naturellement a affiché un élément interculturel très forte dans le secteur alimentaire et des boissons dans le quartier Beyoglu.

Au début du texte, il y avait une définition de la notion de culture et une réflexion sur la raison pour laquelle le développement des compétences interculturelles est essentiel aujourd'hui et qui, comment et pourquoi peut bénéficier du développement de la sensibilité et des compétences interculturelles. Ce travail de mémoire vise à aller au-delà de la définition des cultures et la reconnaissance des différences culturelles. Nous espérons avoir un regard plus profond dans la gestion de la diversité et le développement des compétences interculturelles sur le lieu de travail pour la création

⁸ Jennifer Poland, "Here's Why Istanbul Is The Most Popular Travel Destination In The World", *Business Insider*, 08.04.2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/istanbul-is-the-most-popular-travel-destination-2014-4?op=1>, 25 May 2015

⁹ BEYIM, http://www.beyogluistihdam.com/kariyer_merkezi/detayNew.aspx?SectionID=Vlg8%2FvgPJasuTOo0tTPQTW%3D%3D&ContentId=JIxh%2BIai9S4UzKR%2BpL%2Bf2g%3D%3D, 09 August 2015.

¹⁰ Menekşe Ataselim, "Devler Beyoğlu'na çıktı!", *Habertürk*, 26 Juin 2012, <http://www.haberturk.com/yasam/haber/753968-devler-beyogluna-cikti>, 25 Mai 2015

d'un environnement efficace, productive et respectueuse dans la vie quotidienne du secteur alimentaire et des boissons.

Après la partie théorique, les lecteurs trouveront les résultats de la recherche de la thèse. Notre recherche de base est reposé sur des entrevues avec 12 personnels qui travaillent aux 9 lieux différents de Beyoğlu et qui sont mis dans un environnement répondant à chacun des niveaux de Modèle Développementale de la Sensibilité Interculturelle (DMIS), offert par Dr Milton J. Bennett, qui seraient pertinente avec son / ses réponses et réactions lors de l'entrevue. Bennett suggère que la meilleure méthodologie pour déterminer le niveau de la sensibilité interculturelle est l'analyse du contenu d'une enquête avec des questions ouvertes écrites ou orales.¹¹ Nous avons donc préparé une enquête pour des entrevues orales avec les personnes interrogées. Les entrevues ont été réalisées avec la technique d'entrevue en profondeur. Entrevues en profondeur est une technique de recherche qualitative qui consiste à mener des entretiens individuels intensifs.¹²

Selon nos constatations, nous pouvons affirmer que;

1. S'il n'y a pas un fort appui des politiques de gestion et de l'espace prévu pour la reconnaissance de l'exigence, serveurs et serveuses dans le quartier de Beyoğlu ont des moments difficiles étant interculturellement assez sensible dans des situations transculturelles et stressantes.
2. La nourriture est l'un des éléments les plus forts dans la sensibilisation et la reconnaissance de la diversité culturelle. Propriétaires des restaurants et cafés ne voient pas la nourriture qu'ils servent seulement comme ses produits ou ses services mais ils l'associent fortement avec ceux qu'ils sont aujourd'hui.
3. Les personnes ayant des identités non dominantes qui sont membres de groupes moins puissants et moins visibles dans la société ont plus de tendance à développer la sensibilité interculturelle. Cela est dû au fait que leurs histoires et expériences personnelles et liés au groupe portent des contradictions de valeur avec la société en général et la société dominantes. Ainsi, ils embrassent

¹¹ Milton Bennet était contacté par e-mail en Mars 16, 2015. Il a suggéré que la meilleure méthodologie afin de déterminer le niveau de sensibilité interculturelle est l'analyse de contenu des réponses ouvertes (verbales ou écrites) des questions des enquêtes.

¹² Carolyn Boyce & Palena Neale, "Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input", *Pathfinder International*, http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_indepth_interviews.pdf, 2006, 13 Septembre 2015.

des perspectives ethnorelatives plus que les membres des groupes dominants et ils lient leurs situations personnelles lors qu'ils comprennent leurs interactions interculturelles avec les autres.

4. Les personnes ayant une plus grande sensibilisation de la conscience développent empathie et compréhension envers «l'autre» depuis une perspective plus en profondeur et interne.
5. La tension contradictoire des interactions interculturelles en Turquie ont été très important dans notre recherche parce que les personnes interrogées ne disposaient pas des expériences précédente de penser, réfléchir ou parler librement sur ces différences et sur leurs expériences interculturelles au travail.
6. Les Nationalités sont généralement une barrière pour une communication interculturelle réussie et plus efficace. Lier certaines actions, tendances et concepts de la pensée directement à la nationalité limite le procédé de communication. Par conséquent, la reconnaissance de la diversité interne, l'inclusion de divers biens culturels et l'influence des réseaux fournit la sensibilité interculturelle plus forte et plus développée.
7. Les personnes ayant plus de curiosité et d'intérêt envers les autres ont la perspective ethnorelative plus visible et alors, une sensibilité interculturelle beaucoup plus développé. Dans ce monde des divers cultures, des divers façons de vivre, des différentes manieres du discours, l'un a besoin d'avoir une attitude positive envers l'interaction avec d'autres individus et groupes à fin de comprendre les rituels pour établir le processus de communication, ou à fin de comprendre les rituels pour terminer le processus et les rituels réparateurs pour gérer les problèmes. Si des attitudes positives, de la curiosité et de l'intérêt envers les autres cultures, les individus et les communautés ne sont pas présents, les compétences interculturelles peuvent jamais se développer tandis que l'interaction et la communication efficace et appropriée ne peuvent pas être assurées.

Ce texte a été principalement important concernant l'élaboration des études interculturelles dans la scène universitaire en Turquie. Nos espoirs sont pour prendre de nouvelles mesures et pour étendre les études sur le terrain, y compris les autres régions et les autres secteurs, et enfin, commencer à offrir des formations holistiques et efficaces, des espaces éducatifs et des opportunités ainsi que la consultation et

l'évaluation d'une qualité supérieure pour les personnels qui rencontrent des confrontations interculturelles dans leur vie quotidienne au travail.

Mot-clé: compétences interculturelles, diversité, beyoglu, nourriture et boissons, Modèle Développementale de la Sensibilité Interculturelle, communication interculturelle, interculturel, transculturel



ABSTRACT

Intercultural competence development is essential and inevitable in business making in today's globalized world. Cultural exchanges, interactions and social engagements are rising day by day through easiness of communication, advancement in technologies and increase of transportation and the means of travel. These are the times in which cultures are influencing and being influenced by other world-views and expressive forms more than ever. Today's generations are born into an "exchange, communication and transportation" era. We constantly seek and create opportunities for cultural and global exchange experiences. The United Nations estimates¹³ that 20 percent of all international tourists, or nearly 200 million travelers, are young people, and that this demographic generates more than \$180 billion in annual tourism revenue, an increase of nearly 30 percent since 2007. Boston Consulting Group reports that millennials are more diverse as a group than non-Millennials and more interested in international travel and global cultural experiences.¹⁴ On the other side, for Turkey, international air traffic has tripled just in last twelve years in Turkey while domestic air traffic has risen by six times¹⁵ and Turkey received 36 million tourists only in year 2014¹⁶ yet it is expecting to increase that number up to 63 million by 2023.¹⁷ These developments provide inevitable intercultural opportunities and challenges for each and every individual. Every day, individuals, organizations, institutions and leaders are pushed more towards developing certain skills and competences in order to deal with increasing cultural interactions.

Engaging with other cultures provides diversity of experiences both culturally and emotionally, that leads one into different world-views and sets of values. These experiences and interactions should be facilitated in certain ways internally and externally through competence development processes. Intercultural competence development supports individuals and organizations with the process of cultural engagement, contact and interaction. Intercultural competences are a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and

¹³ <http://media.unwto.org/en/press-release/2012-09-25/unwto-and-wyse-travel-confederation-launch-global-declaration-promote-youth>

¹⁴

https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/transportation_travel_tourism_consumer_insight_traveling_with_millennials/?chapter=4#chapter4

¹⁵ http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1051

¹⁶ <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,36568/number-of-arriving-departing-visitors-foreigners-and-ci-.html>

¹⁷ <http://kariyer.turizmgazetesi.com/articles/article.aspx?id=56040>

appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts.¹⁸ Such developments honor different values, belief systems, and behaviors, whether the cultural differences are global or domestic. We can—and must—carefully construct a complex, multilayered, widely contexted framework, that is grounded on *both/and*, not *either/or*. Development of intercultural competences eases the process of becoming more culturally sensitive especially when it comes to deal with people of all cultures. Developed intercultural sensitivity is highly essential in today's globalized world at all sectors such as education, health, tourism, service and many other production and communication fields.

Together with all other sectors, food and beverages sector requires personnel with further developed intercultural communication skills. Food has long been an element of cultural interaction and identification. Food is promoted as a cultural product, perceived as a basic need of human being and consumed widely. An essential symbolic function of food is cultural identity. What one eats defines who one is, and culturally speaking, conversely, who one is not.¹⁹ Eating habits, choice of the menu, the way of serving and meal rituals are highly important aspects of visible cultural elements. We are primarily aware of food in every intercultural encounter therefore food itself offers an opportunity for intercultural sensitivity.

The purpose of this thesis is to gain an in depth understanding of cross cultural communication processes in food and beverages sector in Beyoğlu district of the city of İstanbul in Turkey and reflect on the level of intercultural sensitivities of the personnel in the sector. The district is famous for being home to several tourist attractions, hosting millions of visitors each day and providing a space for international and intercultural engagements among visitors of diverse cultures. According to Business Reader 2014, İstiklal Street in Taksim, Beyoğlu district in Istanbul is one of the many reasons why the city is ranked at the top of the TripAdvisor's user preferences list among the visitors.²⁰ Recently, the street has become the most touristic and diverse area in Istanbul as the center of attention and

¹⁸ Janet Bennett, **Developing Intercultural Competence For International Education Faculty and Staff**, 2011 AIEA CONFERENCE, USA, http://www.intercultural.org/documents/competence_handouts.pdf, 21 November 2015.

¹⁹ Pamela Goyan Kittler and Kathryn P. Sucher, **Food and Culture**, Thomson Higher Education, USA, 2008, p. 4.

²⁰ Jennifer Poland, "Here's Why Istanbul Is The Most Popular Travel Destination In The World", *Business Insider*, 08.04.2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/istanbul-is-the-most-popular-travel-destination-2014-4?op=1>, 25 May 2015

attraction. Beyoğlu district hosts 5000 cafes and restaurants²¹ and the daily pedestrian traffic on weekdays is around 1.5 million while this number rises up to 3 million daily visitors at weekends. 28% of the sectorial distribution is food and beverage.²² Not only today, Beyoğlu and Pera districts have been historically the center for food and beverages trends. *Alafranga lokantas*, *meyhanes*, kebab houses, restaurants, cafes, beer houses, wineries, pastry shops and cafe chantants (cafes with live music) have offered diverse cuisines from various ethnic, religious and cultural groups from Istanbul and this naturally displayed a very strong intercultural element in the food and beverage sector in Beyoğlu district.

The text starts with defining the notion of culture and reflecting on why developing intercultural competences are essential today and who, how and why one can benefit from developing intercultural sensitivity and competences. This thesis work aims to go beyond the definition of cultures and the acknowledgment of cultural differences. We hope to have a deeper look into diversity management and intercultural competence development in the workplace for creating effective, productive and respectful working environment in everyday life in food and beverages sector.

Following the theoretical part, readers will find the research results of the thesis. Our core research is based on interviewing with 12 personnel of the 9 different venues in Beyoğlu and placing respondents to each of the level of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), offered by Dr. Milton J. Bennett, that would be relevant with his/her responses and reactions during the interview. Bennett suggests the best methodology for determining level of intercultural sensitivity is content analysis of open-ended written or oral survey questions.²³ Therefore we have prepared a survey for oral interviews with the interviewees. Interviews were conducted with depth interview technique. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews²⁴

²¹ BEYİM,

http://www.beyogluistihdam.com/kariyer_merkezi/detayNew.aspx?SectionID=Vlg8%2FvgPJasuTOo0tTPQTW%3D%3D&ContentId=JIxh%2BlaI9S4UzKR%2BpL%2Bf2g%3D%3D, 09 August 2015.

²² Menekşe Ataselim, “Devler Beyoğlu'na çıktı!”, *Habertürk*, 26 June 2012,

<http://www.haberturk.com/yasam/haber/753968-devler-beyogluna-cikti>, 25 May 2015

²³ Milton Bennett was contacted over email on March 16th, 2015 and he suggested that the best methodology for determining level of intercultural sensitivity is content analysis of open-ended written or oral survey questions.

²⁴ Carolyn Boyce & Palena Neale, “Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input”, *Pathfinder International*,

According to our findings we can state that;

1. Unless there is a strong support of management policies and provided space for recognition of the requirement, waiters and waitresses in Beyoğlu district have hard times being interculturally sensitive enough in cross cultural and stressful situations.
2. Food is one of the strongest elements in cultural awareness and recognition of diversity. Restaurant and café owners do not see food only as products or services but they strongly associate those with who they are today.
3. Individuals with non-dominant identities that are members of less powerful and visible groups in the society tend to develop further intercultural sensitivity. This is due to the fact that their personal and group related histories and experiences bear value contradictions with the mainstream and powerful ones. Thus, they embrace ethnorelative perspectives more than the members of dominant groups and connect their personal situations when understanding their cross cultural interactions with others.
4. People with more conscience awareness develop empathy and understanding towards the “other” from a more internal and in depth perspective.
5. Contradictory tension of cross cultural interactions in Turkey have been very important in our research because interviewees did not have a previous experience thinking, reflecting or speaking freely about those differences and their cross cultural experiences at work.
6. Nationalities are usually a barrier for more successful and efficient intercultural communication. Linking certain actions, tendencies and thought concepts directly to nationality limits the communication processes. Hence, recognition of inner diversity, inclusion of various cultural belongings and the influence of networks provides stronger and more developed intercultural sensitivity.
7. Individuals with more curiosity and interest toward others have more visible ethnorelative perspective and therefore much more developed intercultural sensitivity. In this world of diverse cultures, ways of living and doing things and discourses, one need to have a positive attitude towards interacting with other individuals and groups to understand the rituals for opening the communication process, ending rituals of how to finish the process and repair

rituals of how a mistake is handled. Unless, positive attitudes, curiosity and interest towards other cultures, individuals and communities are present, the intercultural competences can never develop while the effective and appropriate interaction and communication cannot be ensured.

This text has been primarily important towards developing intercultural studies in the academic scene in Turkey. Our hopes are for taking further steps extending the field studies, including other regions and sectors and finally starting to offer holistic and effective trainings, educational spaces and opportunities as well as higher quality consultancy and assessment to the personnel in the sectors that are experiences intercultural encounters in their everyday work.

KEYWORDS: intercultural competence, diversity, beyoglu, food and beverages, Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, intercultural communication, cross cultural.

ÖZET

Günümüzün küresel dünyasında iş yapmak için kültürlerarası yetkinlik gelişiminin sağlanması kaçınılmaz ve gereklidir. İletişimin kolaylaşması, teknolojik gelişmeler ve ulaşım araçlarının sayısı ve çeşitlerinin artmasıyla birlikte kültürel değiş tokuşlar, karşılaşmalar ve sosyal etkileşimler çoğalmaktadır. Farklı kültürler, ifade biçimleri ve dünya görüşleri birbirlerini daha önce hiç olmadığı kadar fazla etkilemektedir. Günümüzün nesli “değişim, iletişim ve ulaşım” çağına doğmaktadır. Bizler, sürekli olarak kültürel ve küresel değişim deneyimleri için fırsatlar arıyoruz ve yaratıyoruz. Birleşmiş Milletler, uluslararası turistlerin %20’sine tekabül eden yaklaşık 200 milyon gezginin gençlerden oluştuğunu ve bu gençlerin yıllık turizm gelirinde \$180 milyar dolarlık bir paya sahip olduklarını tahmin etmektedir.¹ Bu rakam 2007 yılından bu yana %30 artış göstermiştir. Boston Consulting Group’un raporuna göre millennial olarak adlandırılan Y kuşağı, millennial olmayan diğer kuşaklara göre daha çeşitli, uluslararası ve küresel kültürel deneyimlere karşı çok daha ilgilidir.² Öte yandan, son 12 yılda Türkiye’deki uluslararası hava trafiği üçe ve yurtiçi hava trafiği ise altıya katlanmıştır³ ve Türkiye sadece 2014⁴ yılında 36 milyon turisti ağırlamıştır. Bu rakamın 2023 yılında ise 63 milyona çıkması hedefleniyor.⁵

Bu gelişmeler her bir birey için kaçınılmaz kültürlerarası fırsatlar ve zorluklar ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bireyler, örgütler, kurumlar ve liderlerden bu kültürel etkileşimlerle başa çıkmaları adına belirli yetenek ve yetkinlikleri geliştirmeleri her geçen gün daha çok beklenmektedir.

Farklı kültürlerle temas etmek kültürel ve duygusal deneyim çeşitliliği sunmaktadır ve bu çeşitlilik kişilerin farklı dünya görüşleri ve değerlerle karşılaşmalarını sağlamaktadır. Bu deneyimler ve etkileşimler içeride ve dışarıda yetkinlik gelişimi sağlanması adına farklı şekillerde desteklenerek kolaylaştırılmalıdır. Kültürlerarası yetkinlik gelişimi bireyleri ve örgütleri kültürel karşılaşma, etkileşim ve temas

¹ <http://media.unwto.org/en/press-release/2012-09-25/unwto-and-wyse-travel-confederation-launch-global-declaration-promote-youth>

²

https://www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/transportation_travel_tourism_consumer_insight_traveling_with_millennials/?chapter=4#chapter4

³ http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1051

⁴ <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,36568/number-of-arriving-departing-visitors-foreigners-and-ci-.html>

⁵ <http://kariyer.turizmgazetesi.com/articles/article.aspx?id=56040>

süreçleri ile desteklemektedir. Kültürlerarası yetkinlikler çeşitli kültürel bağlamlarda etkili ve uygun etkileşime destek olacak bilişsel, duyuşsal ve davranışsal karakteristik ve yetenek dizileridir.⁶ Böylece birey, kültürel farklar ister küresel ister yerel olsun, farklı değerlere, inanç sistemlerine ve davranışlara saygı duyar. “O ya da bu” değil “hem o hem bu” yaklaşımını temel alan çok katmanlı, karmaşık ve geniş bağlamli bir çerçeve geliştirebiliriz ve geliştirmeliyiz. Kültürlerarası yetkinlik gelişimi, özellikle de farklı kültürlerden kişilerle çalışırken kültürel açıdan duyarlı hale gelme sürecini kolaylaştırır.

Gelişkin kültürlerarası duyarlılık, bugünün küresel dünyasındaki eğitim, sağlık, turizm, iletişim gibi üretim ve hizmet alanlarında oldukça gereklidir. Diğer tüm sektörler gibi yiyecek-içecek sektörü de kültürlerarası iletişim yetkinlikleri gelişkin personele ihtiyaç duyar. Yiyecek, uzun süredir kültürel etkileşim ve aidiyetin temel noktalarından biridir. Yiyecek, kültürel bir ürün olarak sunulur, temel bir insan ihtiyacı olarak görülür ve yaygın bir şekilde tüketilir. Yiyeceğin asli sembolik işlevi kültürel kimliktir. Bir kişinin ne yediği kim olduğunu ve ayrıca kim olmadığını tarif eder.⁷ Beslenme alışkanlıkları, menü seçimi, sunum biçimleri ve öğün ritüelleri görünür olan kültürel unsurların oldukça önemli özellikleri arasındadır. Her tür kültürlerarası karşılaşmada öncelikle yiyeceğin bilincinde oluruz ve bu sebepten yiyeceğin kendisi kültürel duyarlılık açısından bir fırsat sunmaktadır.

Bu tezin amacı, İstanbul’un Beyoğlu muhitindeki yiyecek içecek sektöründe yaşanan kültürlerarası iletişim süreçlerini derinlemesine anlamak ve sektördeki personelin kültürlerarası duyarlılık seviyelerini göstermektir. Muhit, birçok turistik cazibe merkezine ev sahipliği yapar ve her gün çeşitli kültürlerden milyonlarca ziyaretçiye kültürlerarası etkileşim alanı sunar. *Business Reader 2014*’e göre, şehrin *TripAdvisor* kullanıcı tercihleri listesinde birinci olmasının birçok sebebi arasında Beyoğlu Taksim’deki İstiklal Caddesi ilk sıradadır.⁸ Cadde, son zamanlarda ilgi ve çekim merkezi olarak İstanbul’un en fazla çeşitliliğe sahip turistik bölgesi olmuştur. Beyoğlu

⁶ Janet Bennett, **Developing Intercultural Competence For International Education Faculty and Staff**, 2011 AIEA CONFERENCE, USA, http://www.intercultural.org/documents/competence_handouts.pdf, 21 Kasım 2015.

⁷ Pamela Goyan Kittler and Kathryn P. Sucher, **Food and Culture**, Thomson Higher Education, USA, 2008, p. 4.

⁸ Jennifer Poland, “Here's Why Istanbul Is The Most Popular Travel Destination In The World”, *Business Insider*, 08.04.2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/istanbul-is-the-most-popular-travel-destination-2014-4?op=1>, 25 Mayıs 2015

muhihi, 5000 kafe ve restorana⁹ ev sahipliği yaparken, günlük yaya trafiği hafta içi 1.5, hafta sonu ise 3 milyona ulaşmaktadır. Sektörel dağılımın %28'ini ise yiyecek ve içecek oluşturmaktadır.¹⁰ Sadece günümüzde değil, Beyoğlu ve Pera bölgeleri tarihsel olarak da yiyecek ve içecek akımlarının merkezi konumundaydı. Alafranga lokantalar, meyhaneler, kebabçılar, restoranlar, kafeler, birahaneler, şarap evleri, pastaneler ve cafe *chantant*lar (canlı müzikli kafeler) İstanbul'daki birçok etnik, dini ve kültürel topluluğa ait yiyecek ve içecekleri içeren menüler sunuyor ve dolayısıyla bu durum, Beyoğlu bölgesindeki yiyecek ve içecek sektöründe çok kuvvetli kültürlerarası bir unsur olarak karşımıza çıkıyordu.

Bu metin kültür kavramını tanımlayarak başlıyor, kültürlerarası yetkinlik gelişiminin günümüzde neden gerekli olduğuna değiniyor ve kültürlerarası duyarlılık ve yetkinlik gelişiminden kimin, nasıl ve neden fayda sağlayacağını açıklıyor. Bu tez çalışması, kültürlerin tanımlanmasından ve kültürel farkların kabullenilmesinden öteye gitmeyi hedefliyor. Yiyecek ve içecek sektöründeki gündelik hayatta daha etkin, üretken ve saygılı bir çalışma ortamı kurmak için çeşitlilik yönetimine ve kültürlerarası yetkinlik gelişimine daha derinlemesine bakmamız gerekmektedir.

Okurlar, kuramsal bölümü takiben, tezin araştırma sonuçlarını bulacaklardır. Ana araştırmamız Beyoğlu'ndaki 9 farklı mekânda çalışan 12 personel ile yüz yüze yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler ve görüşmecilerin cevaplarının Dr. Milton J. Bennett tarafından önerilen Kültürlerarası Duyarlılık Gelişim Model'inde tekabül ettiği seviyeye yerleştirilmesidir. Bennett, kültürlerarası duyarlılığı en uygun şekilde belirlemek için açık uçlu yazılı ve sözlü anket soruları sorulmasını önermektedir.¹¹ Bu nedenle, görüşmecilerle sözlü görüşme gerçekleştirmeye uygun sorular hazırlanmıştır. Derinlemesine görüşme, yoğunlaştırılmış bireysel görüşmelerin uygulanmasını içeren niteleyici bir araştırma tekniğidir.¹²

Bulgularımıza göre;

⁹ BEYİM,

http://www.beyogluistihdam.com/kariyer_merkezi/detayNew.aspx?SectionID=Vlg8%2FvgPJasuTOo0tTPQTw%3D%3D&ContentId=Jlxh%2Blai9S4UzKR%2BpL%2Bf2g%3D%3D, 09 Ağustos 2015.

¹⁰ Menekşe Ataselim, "Devler Beyoğlu'na çıktı!", *Habertürk*, 26 Haziran 2012,

<http://www.haberturk.com/yasam/haber/753968-devler-beyogluna-cikti>, 25 Mayıs 2015

¹¹ Milton Bennett ile 16 Mart 2015 tarihinde görüşülmüş ve kendisi kültürlerarası duyarlılığı en uygun şekilde belirlemek için açık uçlu yazılı ve sözlü anket soruları sorulmasını önermiştir.

¹² Carolyn Boyce & Palena Neale, "Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input", *Pathfinder International*, http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_indepth_interviews.pdf, 2006, 13 Eylül 2015.

1. Eđer yönetim kanadında g     bir destek yoksa ve gereklilięin kabul edildięi uygun ortam saęlanamazsa, Beyoęlu b lgesindeki servis elemanları farklı k    lerle karşılaştıkları stresli durumlarla başa  ıkabilmek adına k    lerarası duyarlılık geliştirmekte zorlanmaktadır.
2. Yiyecek, k    el farkındalık ve  eřitlilięin tanınmasında en kuvvetli unsurlardan biridir. Restoran ve kafe iřletmecileri yiyeeęi sadece bir      veya hizmet olarak g    mekte ve bug  n kim olduklarıyla doęrudan iliřkilendirmektedir.
3. Toplumda daha az g      r ve g     olan, baskın olmayan kimlięe sahip bireyler, k    lerarası duyarlılık geliřimine daha  ok eęilimlidir. Bu, onların kiřisel ve toplumsal tarihlerinin ve deneyimlerinin ana akım ve iktidar olan kimliklerle yařadıęı deęer  atıřmalarıyla alakalıdır. B ylece, etnog receli bakıř a ıllarını, baskın topluluklardan daha fazla sahiplenmektedirler ve bařkalarıyla yařadıkları k    lerarası karşılařmaları kendi kořulları ile iliřkilendirerek anlamaktadırlar.
4. Vicdan sahibi olduęunun bilincinde olan kiřiler “ teki”ye y nelik daha i sel ve derin bir bakıř a ısıyla daha fazla anlayıř ve empati geliřtirmektedir.
5. T rkiye’de yařanmakta olan ve k    el karřıtlıklardan kaynaklı gerilimler, arařtırmamıza  nemli bir y  n vermiřtir        bu sebepten       , g  r ř len kiřilerin k    lerarası deneyim ve farklılıklarla ilgili serbest e konuřma, d ř  nme ve a ıklama deneyimleri mevcut deęildi.
6. Milliyetler, genellikle bařarılı ve etkin k    lerarası iletiřime d    k bir engel teřkil etmektedir. Belirli eylem, eęilim ve d ř  nme kalıplarını doęrudan milliyetle iliřkilendirmek iletiřim s  re lerini kısıtlıyor.   te yandan,     e i i  eřitlilięin tanınması, farklı k      el aidiyetlerin ve par ası olunan aęların etkisinin s  re lere d  hil edilmesi  ok daha bařarılı k    lerarası duyarlılık geliřimi saęlamaktadır.
7. Bařkalarına y nelik daha meraklı ve ilgili bireyler daha g      r etnog receli bakıř a ısı ve dolayısıyla daha geliřkin k    lerarası duyarlılıęa sahiplerdir.  eřitli k      lerin, yařama ve etme bi imlerinin ve s  ylemlerin d  nyasında, kiřinin, iletiřim s  re lerini bařlatma ve bitirme rit  ellerini ve bir hata olursa bunun nasıl telafi edebileceęini bilmesi i in bařka bireylerle iliřkilenirken pozitif bir tutuma sahip olması gerekmektedir. Ortamda bulunan dięer kiřilerde, topluluklar ve k      lere y nelik pozitif bir tutum, merak ve ilgi

mevcut deęilse, kltrlerarası yetkinlikler asla geliřemez ve etkin ve uygun bir etkileřim ve iletiřim saęlanamaz.

Bu metin, Trkiye’deki akademik ortamda kltrlerarası alıřmaların geliřimi adına zellikle nemlidir. Bizlerin umudu, dięer sektr ve blgeleri de dhil ederek saha alıřmaları geniřletmek ve sonunda gndelik hayatlarında kltrlerarası karřılařmaları deneyimleyen personele ynelik daha btncl ve etkin eęitimler, eęitsel ortamlar, fırsatlar ve daha yksek kalitede danıřmanlık ve deęerlendirmeler sunmaktır.

ANAHTAR KELİMELEER: kltrlerarası yetkinlik, eřitlilik, beyoglu, yiyecek ve iecek, Kltrlerarası Duyarlılık Geliřim Modeli, kltrlerarası iletiřim, kltrlerarası.



INTRODUCTION

“You need an opposite thumb if you intend to be an interculturalist. Anytime you make a suggestion, think about the total opposition. “

Thiagi

“Human reality is found through exchanges”

Marcel Mauss

Is it ever possible to avoid cultural lenses when communicating and interacting with others? We, as social beings, communicate at all levels of our daily interactions as cultural beings. It is not possible to avoid values, habits and tendencies that are influenced by our cultural background and/or social surroundings. How do we understand each other then? Can we ever successfully communicate in intercultural settings in today’s globalized world? When communicating among family, friends and or colleagues, we have an urge to feel as “global citizens” of a rapidly growing and connecting world of cultures more than ever today. Global citizenship requires mindset, attitude and education which are completely different from the conventional approaches.

UN Secretary General’s Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) grabs attention to the global citizenship by explaining that everyone needs to receive and promote *“...education that promotes not only cognitive skills but also those values, attitudes and skills that are necessary for forging a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable world. With these skills, citizens of today and tomorrow are better equipped to address global contemporary challenges – in all their political, social, cultural, economic and environmental dimensions.”*¹ As global citizens, we will need to develop certain skills, competences and attitudes to be able to interact successfully, not only for educational purposes but at all sorts of communicative actions.

Intercultural learning and communication may serve as bases towards realizing, reflecting upon and understanding the complexity of today’s world through acknowledging others and critically reflecting on ourselves. Moreover, it can be a door

¹ <https://academicimpact.un.org/content/2nd-unesco-forum-global-citizenship-education>, 22 May 2015.

to a new world where we are more prepared and ready to face the challenges of current sociopolitical and cross cultural realities. Not just taken as a personal acquisition or a luxury for a few people working in an international environment, intercultural learning and communication are relevant for how we dare to live together in our societies. Whether one is a global executive, expat, student, participant of an international exchange program, a school teacher, a lawyer, the owner of the corner delicatessen, a waiter or waitress, a doctor or a foreign government official, we all are intercultural communicators. Intercultural communication is not only about the interaction and exchange of messages at the national and group level, but it is about us, every human social and cultural being. This text is an attempt towards understanding today's intercultural world, how one constructs, communicates and perceives messages and why it is essential to develop intercultural sensitivity in the workplace.

Personally, my passion and enthusiasm towards studying intercultural learning and communication came into existence at early ages when I first heard a non-Turkish song on a record in a small town in Black Sea Region of Anatolia, where I grew up. It was a language spoken in the same nation I was citizen of and I had ever heard of it before. I had limited interactions other than my own family and friends circle and hearing "a voice" that were not necessarily associated with my common sense of the world triggered the interest and passion towards learning about other cultures. Cultures within nations, cultures among persons, cultures of the globe, cultures that exist and strongly influence how people see the world, eat, speak, interact with one another. Later, I studied abroad in United States in 2003-2004 with AFS Intercultural Learning Programs and today I still continue to volunteer, train, travel and learn within enriching intercultural environments. I do engage with individuals and groups of people in various occasions daily and in each one of those interactions, I, myself, consciously and unconsciously act as a cultural being with my own values, preconceptions, tendencies and habits. Therefore, understanding intercultural interactions among individuals is part of my own self-reflection and intercultural discovery to make sense of the world I am part of.

At the interpersonal level, what one refers to as "misunderstanding" or "lack of communication" could easily be the result of a process with various cross cultural factors. Meyer believes that humans are virtually quite similar. Biologically, psychologically and physiologically we have very similar needs and motivations. Yet,

we are evenly unique. Every individual is different from each other with unique personalities, styles, preferences, dislikes and values.² Therefore our communications consist of cultural and personal elements in everyday interactions.

Today we are much closer to each other at all terms. “Globalization” has been widely used and experienced to address both the processes that contribute to and the conditions of living in a world where advances in technology have brought the world’s people spatially and temporarily closer together; where economic and political forces of advanced capitalism and neoliberalism have increased the flow of products, services and labor across national boundaries and where cultural, economic and political ideologies “travel” not only through overt public campaigns but through mass media, consumer products and through global institutions such as WB, IMF, and the WTO.³ On the other side, mobility between cultures due to education, business, tourism, health or other personal and group wise reasons increase hybrid spaces and encounters among cultural beings. Such mobility brings diversity and cross cultural communication as the core dimensions in everyday businesses and this requires development of powerful tools for dealing with ambiguity in communications that might occur for cultural purposes. Individuals and organizations are feeling an urge to know more about tools and methods to deal with diversity, increasing cross cultural communication and dealing with the “other” and the “unknown”. It is not possible to try to understand “other” just through my own personal cultural experience and knowledge. We ought to develop necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge towards recognition, respect and realization of cultures other than our own. Intercultural competence development approaches, policies and programs allow individuals and organizations to move from etic knowledge to emic knowledge in intercultural encounters. Emic view is the knowledge of the culture learned inside. It is what we learn from our families, friends and the general society we are part of. We are acculturated as we grow up. Etic view is when a culture is learned by an outsider, the stranger tends to acquire theoretical and normative information.⁴ We develop attitudes empathically towards others. Enabling intercultural competence development

² Erin Meyer, **The Culture Map**, Optimist Publishing Group, 2015, p.249.

³ Kathryn Sorrells, **Intercultural Communication: Globalization and Social Justice**, Sage Publications, 2013, p.33.

⁴ Fred E. Jandt, **An Introduction to Intercultural Communication Identities in a Global Community**, SAGE Publications, 6th edition, 2010, p.187.

empowers individuals towards sensitivity building interculturally therefore developing intercultural sensitivity is one of the key focuses we should have today.

In this research, we focus on assessing intercultural sensitivity of individuals. Our research is based on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) by Dr. Milton Bennett. Dr. Bennett is a US American, author of *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication: Paradigms, Principles, & Practices* (Intercultural Press USA, 2013; Peking University Press China, 2012; Franco Angeli Press Italy, 2014), co-editor and contributor to the third edition of *The Handbook of Intercultural Training* (Sage, 2004), co-author (with Edward Stewart) of the revised edition of *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Intercultural Press, 1991), a reviewer for the professional journals *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* and *Journal of Intercultural Education*, and the author of many articles on intercultural competence and global leadership for American and European publications. He is well-known for his Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity which is used internationally to guide intercultural training design and to assess intercultural competence.

Firstly, we introduce the definition of culture and analyze the metaphors used in understanding the notion of culture. Secondly, we discuss communicating across culture by defining intercultural and offering comparative analysis of cross cultural communication elements. Thirdly, intercultural competences which are proposed as the necessary skill sets for intercultural understanding are introduced and explained in details. Then, we aim to relate diversity management in the workplace with creating effective, productive and respectful working environment in everyday life. Lastly, we explain DMIS stages and give examples to support the model.

As mentioned above, the research findings are based on DMIS and the assessment of intercultural sensitivity among the interviewees. There are strong and clear ties between intercultural sensitivity, cultural values and everyday behaviors and the tendencies of reactions thus it is important to focus on value systems that differentiate the groups of people.⁵ Therefore, we have chosen to analyze behaviors, statements and descriptions of the actions of the respondents to reflect on the values and intercultural sensitivity level of the subjects.

⁵ Georgia T. Chao & Henry Moon, "The Cultural Mosaic: A Metatheory for Understanding the Complexity of Culture", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol 90, No:6, 2005, pp. 1128-1140.

While we continue to conclude our research and the text, Turkey is still going through armed violence and war. Hundreds of civilians are murdered or injured by the effects of bombs and guns by armed groups still today in the year 2015. We believe that creating an interculturally respectful environment is both crucial and essential for peaceful, safe and fair society. With this respect, we hope to provide another perspective towards a better, civilized and peaceful nation in Turkey.



1. DEFINITIONS AND VARIATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

First, we will briefly go through several approaches in defining culture and reach a common definition that will provide base for the rest of the text and the research approach in our work. There are dozens of definitions of culture mainly offered by cross cultural psychologists and communication scientists relatively different in anthropology, political sciences, business administration management, and communication studies throughout history.

Sir Edward B. Tylor was the first one to formulate the definition of culture in 1871. To Tylor, “*culture or civilization is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*”.⁶ It is a holistic and broad definition giving emphasis to the acquirement aspect of culture though it limits behavior acquisition to humans while ignoring the mix of genetic adaptation and natural and social environment in cultural training. For example; eating is a natural behavior though no one tells us what to consume or how to eat. That is acquired and cultural. In his approach, Tylor tends not to touch base upon the genetic and natural aspect of the acquisition of behaviors. Nature offers possibilities to individuals while societies or communities we are part of decide what possibilities to choose from.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the notion of culture became a tool for establishing hierarchy and defining the status quo. Culture was referred as a process and a specific idea of development that could be linked with civilization. To have a culture meant to be civilized. Uncivilized was the one lacking culture or without culture. At the same time, Europe was perceived as the reference which led a strong hierarchy in evaluating and comparing cultures. Differences were analyzed in terms of “lack or delay” in the level of civilizations.⁷ Later, this led into a conceptualization that modernity and progress resides only in the West which was used towards justifying certain colonial and assimilation actions towards non Westerns. Holliday calls this as ‘West as steward’ discourses as part of innocent discourses in the grammar of culture while these discourses also deny that they are discourses and not necessarily as innocent

⁶ Edward Burnett Tylor, **Primitive Culture Researches Into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom**, New York: J. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1871, p.1.

⁷ Michel Bourse, Galatasaray University, Intercultural Communication Lecture Notes, 05 March 2015.

after all.⁸ Similarly Sorrells point out those in the elite class, or ruling class, who had power, were educated at prestigious schools, and were patrons of the arts such as literature, opera and ballet, embodied high culture. Those in working class who enjoyed activities such as popular theater, folk art, and “street” activities -later movies and television- embodied low culture.⁹ Similarly, in Turkey still today *kültürlü* (having a culture) refers to civilization while *kültürsüz* (lacking a culture) would often recall the less civilized and uneducated.

Tyler and Morgan defines culture as the medium evolved by the human species, the one which characterizes the human species while at the same time differentiating and not necessarily separating one social group from another.¹⁰ It is a social process whereby people communicate meanings, make sense of their world, construct identities and define beliefs and values¹¹. Just like Tylor’s approach above, this approach also limits culture to human species.

Kartarı sees culture as a heritage from past to present that lives through traditions, generates customs and procures social continuity. Each tradition is interpreted and “updated” continuously. Yet, culture becomes a way of organizing ourselves, collective thinking and living together.¹² This approach gives emphasis to the aspect of a more collectivist group spirit and dynamism in the concept of culture. Similar to Kartarı’s approach, Collier and Thomas define culture as “a historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings, and norms”¹³ In these relatively more traditional approaches, the core is these shared meanings that are passed from generation to generation through symbols that allow human beings to communicate, maintain, and develop approaches in understanding of life.¹⁴

⁸ Adrian Holliday, “Innocent and Ideological Discourses of Culture”, <http://adrianholliday.com/articles/>, 21 May 2015.

⁹ Sorrells, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁰ Milton J. Bennett, *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*, USA Intercultural Press: 2013, p. 172.

¹¹ <http://www.drstevebest.org/TheCulturalTurnInMarxist.htm>, 21 May 2015.

¹² Asker Kartarı, *Kültür, Farklılık ve İletişim: Kültürlerarası İletişimin Kavramsal Dayanakları*, İletişim Yay., İstanbul, 2014. p. 29.

¹³ Jane M. Collier & Milt Thomas, “Cultural Identity: An Interpretive Perspective” in Y. Y. Kim & W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Theories in Intercultural Communication*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1998, pp. 99-120.

¹⁴ Sorrells, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

To Hall, culture is “learned and shared behavior”.¹⁵ It is acquired set of values and institutions of the group of humans in a dynamic and flexible process. Whoever helped individuals socialize taught them how to do it. It was *their way*. One’s culture at the same time offers a perspective, usually a single reality which tends to define how the world is seen. Perspective effects the perception while perception is the process by which an individual selects, evaluates and organizes stimuli from the external environment.¹⁶ How do people form their perceptions of external world and how do those perceptions affect their behavior? An individual’s cultural and social milieu conditions his or her personality, values and actions; yet the same person is able, within limits, to choose the milieus whose conditioning will affect him or her. Therefore a cultural identity is a reference to the collective self-awareness that a given group embodies and reflects as well as an identity of the individual in relation to his/her culture.¹⁷ There is no natural connection between self and the other and self and the environment. Each time the interaction is based on the set of values and institutions in the society and in the self’s culture through symbolic and learned system. It is the objective elements with subjective interpretation. The norms and value judgments differ in each culture and they influence the behaviors of the individuals. The individual tend to evaluate internal and external stimulus more if occurring in the limits drawn by his/her culture. Sweating and having higher blood pressure in certain situations when one is nervous may be involuntary or natural messages she sends, but the stimuli that make one nervous are learned. Therefore although perceiving messages and responding to them is universal, the form of those responses is cultural.¹⁸ Culture is a result of interaction between the extrapersonal world of objects, events, and structures, and intrapersonal world of mental structures. Thus the intrapersonal world of mental structures helps us to interpret, analyze and provide meaning to the extrapersonal world of objects, and the extrapersonal world of objects stores and transmits cultural meaning across generations and also serves as stimuli for cultural internalization.¹⁹ Culture is a common system of meaningful signs

¹⁵ Edward T Hall, **The Silent Language**, USA: Doubleway & Company, 1959, p.48.

¹⁶ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 185.

¹⁷ **Ibid.**, p. 311.

¹⁸ Kartarı, **Kültür, Farklılık ve İletişim...**, p. 48.

¹⁹ Claudia Strauss and Naomi Quinn, **A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. p. 47.

which enables us to perceive, interpret and treat each other in a certain manner-and this manner is based on what is accepted and understood by society in which we live.²⁰

Similarly to Singer, culture is a pattern of learned and group related perceptions including both verbal and nonverbal language, values, attitudes, belief and disbelief systems and behaviors that are accepted and expected by an identity group.²¹ Perception is a process by which an individual selects, evaluates and organizes stimuli from the external environment. By providing the example of his experiments with students all around the world through symbols, illusions, certain drawings and relationship of stimulus to surroundings, Singer states that *if for physical and experiential reasons it is not possible for any two individuals to perceive the universe in exactly the same way, neither is it possible for them to have absolutely no similarities of perception.*²² Yet, as Hall indicates, one must learn to understand the “out of awareness” aspects of communication and never assume that he/she is fully aware of what he/she communicates to someone else. Intention and perceptions of both sides in the interaction processes are directly influenced by culture.

To Geert Hofstede, culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group of people from other groups.”²³ There is a default programming in our minds. We tend to assume, normalize and interpret what we sense and feel in our default programmed perspective. Assumptions provide a person with a sense of reality-which is only one of several possible realities- and values provide a basis for choice and evaluation. What is an assumption for one individual or for one culture may be a value for another culture or individual.²⁴ To Barnlund, this is a symbolic world, an assumptive world of individuals. Despite the fact that collective programming of the mind might offer possibilities to make certain assumptions in cultural studies, Hofstede’s approach could easily be criticized for creating certain expectations and boxes when members of those cultures interact. This approach towards already permanently ‘mentally programmed individual’ is especially sensitive at intercultural interactions because we are in a universe of discourses that every culture creates. Culture is both the explanation and the essence of our lived social

²⁰ Anita Jones Thomas, “Understanding Culture and Worldview in Family Systems”, *Readings in Family Therapy: From Theory to Practice*, Sage: 2010, pp. 41-58.

²¹ Marshall R Singer, **Perception& Identity in Intercultural Communication**, 1998, p.6

²² **Ibid.**, p. 20.

²³ <http://www.geerthofstede.nl/culture> , 25 May 2015.

²⁴ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, pp. 260-261.

experience and how we define culture is a product of culture.²⁵ We are products and producers of culture.

Up until now, we have mostly introduced traditional approaches and started moving into more modern understanding of the notion of culture. Traditional concept of culture focuses on social homogenization, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation. According to Welsch, this concept is unificatory, folk bound and separatory.²⁶ The traditional concept of culture is a concept of inner homogenization and outer separation at the same time. It dominates a certain understanding of “normal” and “acceptable” while offering “us vs them” intentionally and unintentionally.

Creating and giving meaning to the external world happens through variety of performances thus according to Butler culture is invented through performances while meaning are invented in performances and only temporarily stored in practices and for that reason it is not and cannot be fixed.²⁷ Thus to her culture is an unstable, evolving un-reality. Bearing Butler’s approach in mind, it can be stated that there are no cultural absolutes and all are constructed in a quite dynamic, reciprocal and interactive framework.

Individuals outside of cultural studies or intercultural communication discipline often tend to think of national cultures when the word *culture* is mentioned.²⁸ Within every national culture, there are dominant cultural patterns, as well as countless sub- or co-cultures with values, attitudes and behaviors that are not necessarily the same as those of the dominant culture. There are also cultural patterns for religions, age generations, and social classes and among many more that are not necessarily related to national borders. This can be extended to the description of patterns of interaction within the boundary condition of a geographical nation state grouping such as Italian culture and/or description of interaction within the boundary of a geopolitical ethnic grouping such as Valle d'Aosta culture in Italy with certain differentiations from the national dominant tendencies in terms of the language spoken, cultural products circulated and

²⁵ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 43.

²⁶ Wolfgang Welsch, “Transculturality-The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today”, *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*. ed. by Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, London: Sage 1999, pp. 194-213.

²⁷ Judith Butler, **Gender Trouble Feminism and Subversion of Identity**, Routledge, NYC, USA, 1990, p.28.

²⁸ Yet still today many associate culture directly with nationality.

certain types of rituals reproduced. Often times geography and ethnicity interlocks however culture is not limited to geography, ethnicity or religion only.

Holliday states that what many of us refer to as ‘our culture’, which is commonly the national culture, is part of education, language, traditions and religions which are the cultural resources under particular social and political structures.²⁹ The way we were educated, our national institutions, the manner of our government, our media, our economy, and so on are different from nation to nation and will undoubtedly impact in the way we are as people. These are resources in the sense that we draw on them, but they do not confine everything we do and think. Yet, we cannot minimize ourselves into particular social and political structures. Personal trajectories and underlying universal cultural processes are strong influencers in our definition of the culture. Based on the table below, Holliday talks about small culture formation as the basic cultural entities from which all other cultural realities grow. To him, small cultures are cultural environments which are located in proximity to the people concerned. In these small groupings or activities there is cohesive behavior where people form rules for how to behave which will bind them together. Families, leisure and work groups are examples for small cultures. Holliday states that these small cultures are the basic cultural entities from which all other cultural realities grow;

²⁹ Adrian Holliday, “A grammar of culture: a brief description”, <http://adrianholliday.com/articles/>, 20 May 2015.

“Wherever we go we automatically either take part in or begin to build small cultures. In this sense, small culture formation happens all the time and is a basic essence of being human. We might even think of small culture formation on the go – every day, everywhere, whoever we meet or even think about we are always in the process of constructing and dealing with cultural realities.”³⁰

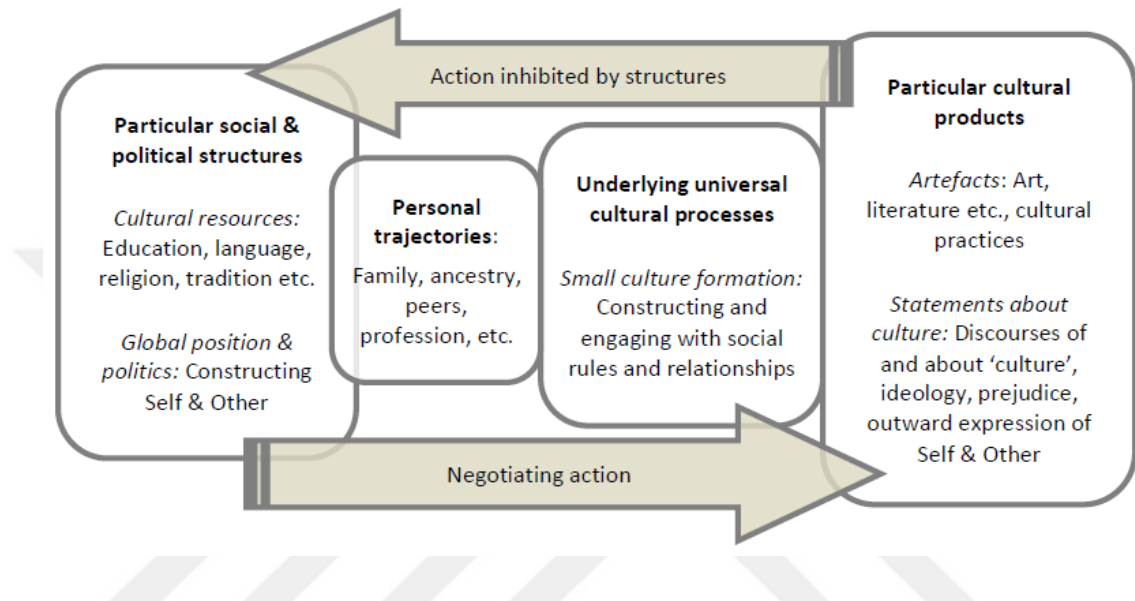


Figure 1. 1 Adopted from “A grammar of culture: a brief description” by Adrian Holliday

After all, culture offers set of models to the individuals while individuals chose how they want to make sense out of them. All these models constitute a mode of flexibility. Since culture is a way of describing the society and pluralities one belongs to, there exists different realities and therefore plurality of cultures. If there is no single pure state mode one experiences, there is no pure state of culture. Therefore culture will define whole process of interactions between people, values and realities. It is this network of values that individuals carry on in collectivities.

Culture, like many other terms used in everyday conversations, could only be defined and understood in the context and by whom it is used. Social, economic conditions and class as well as power interrelations are determinants of the description of culture once the culture is attempted to be described. How Anatolian Armenian culture is described and perceived in North American middle class family will be completely different than how it is perceived from a middle class Turk from Istanbul or how this social

³⁰ Ibid.

experience is self-defined by an Anatolian Armenian herself. The geography, power relations, class, shared history, social and political conditions of the describer and the identified will dominantly influence the process of the description itself. Therefore study of communication that ignores the power dimension together with the previously dimensions mentioned of any relationship is missing a critical element. Furthermore, Bourdieu tackles with the concept of culture as a social and geographical orientation. Cultural identity is developed through social education. In his work of *Outline of Theory of Practice*, he proposes the concept of “Habitus”. Habitus is the identical principles that social actors may define and create in social interactions. Culture is internalized at the most basic level in form of Habitus, which is formed by extrapersonal world of everyday practices. It is nested in contexts, not hardwired into human DNA.³¹ Cultural identity is formed through social education. Cultural norms and value judgments are learned from childhood through cultural transmission. Our identities are plural. For example, during the day, one “becomes” a son, student, male, LGBTI, sportsman etc. depending on the contexts he interacts within while each of them offers certain value sets. He is the combination of all these values and therefore various discourses. Every time one tries to integrate these different levels of value sets and every social actor faces the multiplicity of the Habitus. Social education and communication processes start inside the nuclear family and continues with school and many other groups and institutions. Context is one of the most influential elements in communication action yet communication process is also a learning process. Individual “learns” from all sorts of communication processes he or she goes through.³² Knowledge about the world does not exist out there in the external world waiting to be discovered or found. Rather, knowledge about ourselves and the world around us is created or constructed through social interaction and communication with others.³³ That is why it is essential not to assume learning and communication are two independent separate terms in understanding culture. Accepted and expected tendencies towards external stimuluses’ are learned through interactivity and communication. Hereby, communication is culture and culture is communication.

George Kelly states that the major guide for constructions of reality is culture. Cultural similarity between persons is essentially a similarity in what they perceive is expected

³¹ Margaret D. Pusch, “The Interculturally Competent Global Leader”, *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, USA: SAGE Publications, 2009, p. 73.

³² Kartarı, **Kültür, Farklılık ve İletişim**..., p. 49.

³³ Sorrells, **op. cit.**, p. 55.

of them. Each group no matter how small has its unique set of expectations (values) which maintains the group identity. And even within groups, each individual differs from every other individual in precise expectations about how events will be constructed.³⁴ Groups collectively assign goodness and badness to ways of being. They value through these constructed patterns.

“The more we explore another individual’s value structure, the more we are likely to find that we share. From these explorations we can learn how to learn about those other values we do not share. This is exactly what it takes to communicate effectively across cultural barriers.”³⁵

In a study by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck in 1961 titled “Harvard Values Project”, they aimed understanding the common value patterns through dimensions of time, activity, relations, person-nature and human nature. They also proposed that, although a society may have a general preference that is dominant, there is a great deal of diversity within cultures and all cultures will express all possible dimensions at some time or through some individuals.³⁶ As Bolten reminds us *“The closer one zooms upon such a field (cultural fields of agency), the more differentiated and multifaceted the relationship networks (local culture, group culture, couple culture etc.) will be deemed to be, the further one zooms away the more undifferentiated and homogenous such a field will appear (organizational culture, ethnic culture, national culture etc.)”³⁷* An integrated method of continuous zooming in and out when describing cultures is helpful; in order to do justice to a culture as a structure, and as a process.

In this study we will define culture as the network of discourses. Providing this definition, during the entire research process the author of this text will keep in mind that undoubtedly, the logic of understanding culture as a contested site or zone where meanings are negotiated appeals to and makes sense for people who experience themselves as marginalized from or marginalized within the centers of power, whether it is based on race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or nationality. Similarly, the logic of understanding culture as system of shared meanings appeals to and makes sense for people at the center of power or in a dominant role, whether this position is based on

³⁴ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 221.

³⁵ Singer, **Perception...**, p. 34.

³⁶ Florence R. Kluckhohn, & Fred L. Strodtbeck, **Variations in Value Orientations**, Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson, 1961.

³⁷ Jürgen Bolten, “The Dune Model or: How To Describe Cultures”, *Intercultural Link*, Volume 5 Issue 2, 2014, p.4.

race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or nationality. This itself illustrates the struggle over the meaning of the notion of culture.³⁸ Cultural identity helps us understand the opportunities and challenges that each individual in that culture had to deal with.³⁹ Therefore, definition and understanding of the notion of culture itself is also cultural.

Overall, culture is a dynamic and open game which is always work in progress. In every time and space of the history, there will be specific definition of culture which will be changing due to the context.

1.1. Metaphors of the Concept of Culture

Metaphors have been widely used explaining the notion of culture. Metaphors enable people to use concrete, tangible and familiar phenomena in order to talk about more abstract concepts. In this part, metaphors of culture will be analyzed.

1.1.1. The Iceberg Concept of Culture

Iceberg metaphor was introduced by Hall and it highlights that many aspects of culture are not immediately and primarily visible. The majority of the culture is hidden from view and is represented by deeper elements of culture such as concepts of beauty, definition of good and bad and other fundamental beliefs. When interacting with “other” cultures, individuals tend to experience more of the visible and exploring the depths requires closer look, time and understanding the drivers behind the top of the iceberg.

³⁸ Sorrells, **op. cit.**, p. 8.

³⁹ Jandt, **op.cit**, p. 16.



Figure 1. 2 The Iceberg Concept of Culture

As Hall explains one of the most significant theories of culture existed on two levels: overt culture, which is visible and easily described and covert culture, which is not visible and presents difficulties. The iceberg analogy was commonly used when teaching this theory to students and laymen alike.⁴⁰ Analogizing culture to an iceberg floating in the sea implies that culture is an actual thing. The 10% above the water is really visible to everyone who looks in that direction, and the 90% below the water is both real and dangerous, since it can sink the unwary individual. The metaphor does not in any way imply that culture is a process of coordinating meaning and action – rather, it implies that culture is an entity with mysterious unknown qualities.⁴¹ This situation is a great example of paradigmatic confusion. If culture is referred to be engaged in a dynamic way, enabling individuals to understand complex cultural identity formation and generate mindful intercultural communication, this static metaphor is absolutely confusing and misleading and it should only be taken as a starting point not an end result to acknowledge cultural differences.

1.1.2. Tree: Roots as Values

⁴⁰ Hall, *op.cit*, p.62.

⁴¹ <http://www.afs.org/blog/icl/?p=3385>

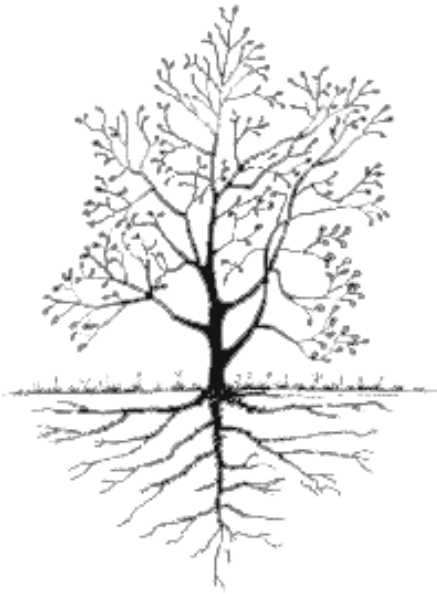


Figure 1. 3 Tree Metaphor of Culture

Tree or *tree of life* serves as a metaphor for common descent in the evolutionary sense. The idea of using a tree as a metaphor for social systems came from R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr. Esther L. Danielson. Taking roots as the unseen and invisible core beliefs, commonly held assumptions and values of a group, community or society, the leaves provide a visible indicator of an organization's or community's culture. The trunk and branches indicate the unwritten expectations, values and norms. Tree metaphor put great emphasis on the “values”,

assuming that individuals at early ages acquire certain values and norms while the visible diversified actions, settings and structures may still strongly be linked back to the roots. The metaphor may be perceived as an essentialist and authentic approach and limit individuals and groups to the predefined set of attributes which are necessary to their identity and function.

1.1.3. Onion: Layers as Cultural Dimensions



Figure 1. 4 Onion Metaphor of Culture

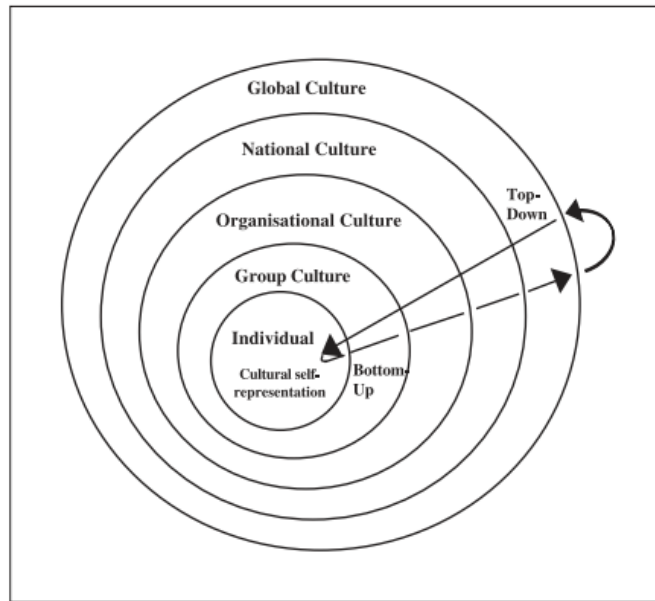


Figure 1. 5 The Dynamic of top-down-bottom-up Processes Across Levels of Culture

Dutch scholar Hofstede gives great emphasis on the group and organization aspects when defining culture. To Hofstede, what many members of a group have in common and by which they distinguish themselves from other groups is called culture. This metaphor indicates that culture, like an onion, can be peeled layer-by-layer to reveal the content. Symbols – words, pictures, or objects that carry a special meaning – are the most superficial layer. The core part of a culture is formed by the tangible symbols, heroes, story, and rituals. However, the real culture meaning of the practice is intangible. It is revealed only when the practices are interpreted. Berardo explains culture and individual relation in Hofstede’s onion metaphor that like an onion, people are shaped by many layers of culture: national culture, regional culture, organizational culture and many other types of culture (gender, religion, family etc.). Often times, we may fall into the assumption that an individual behaves according to one single layer only. When we think of or see only one layer of an individual, we are not seeing that person for the complex individual he or she is and what he or she brings to a situation. We want to be recognized as complex individuals shaped by a number of layers, and we need to do the same for others.⁴²

Yet still, onion metaphor tends to create hierarchy between specific identities. National culture encloses individual and group cultures which might not necessarily be

⁴² Kate Berardo & Darla K. Deardorff, **Four Analogies, Building Cultural Competence**, Stylus Publishing, 2012, p.62.

relevant with the reality. As we had explained before, national and group cultures might be overlapping or in some other cases they might be separate. Nation state corresponds largely with one religious group, one language and one economic system, but in most cases they will not and then national culture layer cannot be enclosing the inner layers of collectivities one might associate himself or herself with.

1.1.4. Kaleidoscope



Figure 1. 6 Kaleidoscope as a Metaphor for Culture

The kaleidoscope was invented in 1816 by Scottish scientist, Sir David Brewster (1781-1868), a mathematician and physicist noted for his various contributions to the field of optics. A kaleidoscope is a cylinder with mirrors containing loose, colored objects such as beads or pebbles and bits of glass. As the viewer

looks into one end, light entering the other creates a colorful pattern, due to the reflection off the mirrors.

Kaleidoscope indicates the richness, diversity and mixture of values, behaviors, attitudes and beliefs when speaking of the notion of culture. Patterns do change and shift. Today no single culture is possible to stay “pure”. Every society bears variety of cultural differences and patterns. Kaleidoscope is an indicative of “switching perspectives is at our hands” since by changing the angle of the mirrors one can obtain several images.

1.1.5. Ebru

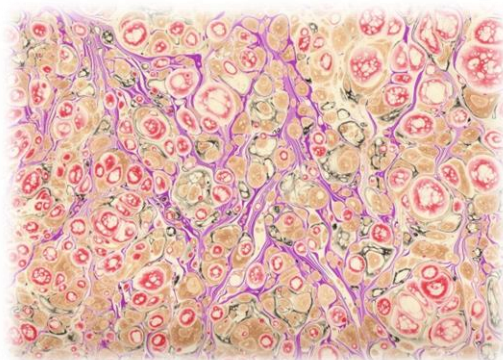


Figure 1. 7 Ebru as a Metaphor for Culture

Ebru is a traditional Islamic and Turkish painting art, and can be defined as painting on water and transferring this painting onto paper. It is also referred as paper marbling. The patterns created on the paper are result of the mixture, artistic touch and flow of the oil, water and paints. This variegated art works are used as metaphors for describing

the harmony in diversity and richness of the cultures with a relatively strong influence of Asian and Middle Eastern Islamic elements. An ebru artist creates his or her

drawing on water and then transfers this “floating” artwork onto paper. Being water-based, an ebru connotes fluidity, movement, connectedness, permeability, and contingency. As such, it is a metaphor that offers a promising alternative to others, such as “iceberg” or “onion” when thinking through the new and old dilemmas of cultural politics at the turn of the century. The idea of applying this concept of ‘ebru’ to the nature of cultural identity and diversity emerged from Ayşe Gül Altınay and Atilla Durak’s co project “Ebru: Reflections of Cultural Diversity in Turkey”. As Altınay explains *“Ebru of our own is a colorful flow of photographs and texts, of different languages and styles, of widely diverse life stories and worldviews that converge at the desire to ask, to learn, and to change.”*⁴³

Table 1. 1 Comparative Analysis of Metaphors

Metaphor & By Whom	Explanation
<i>Iceberg</i> by <i>Hall</i>	Many aspects of culture are not immediately and primarily visible. The majority of the culture is hidden from view and is represented by deeper elements of culture. Iceberg tends to see culture as a constant “thing” ignoring the complexity and dynamism of the culture. It gives little room and recognition for intercultural interaction.
<i>Tree</i> by <i>Thomas and Danielson</i>	Taking roots as the unseen and invisible core beliefs, commonly held assumptions and values of a group, community or society, the leaves provide a visible indicator of an organization’s or community’s culture and they make possible the life of the tree and draw their form and life from it.
<i>Onion</i> by <i>Hofstede</i>	This metaphor indicates that culture, like an onion, can be peeled layer-by-layer to reveal the content. People are shaped by many layers of culture: national culture, regional culture, organizational culture and many other types of culture (gender, religion, family etc.).

⁴³ Ayşe Gül Altınay, “Ebru: Reflections on Water”, http://ebruproject.org/EN/Writers/ayse_gul_altinay.asp, 2007, 27 June 2015.

<i>Kaleidoscope</i> by <i>Brewster</i>	Kaleidoscope indicates the richness, diversity and mixture of values, behaviors, attitudes and beliefs when speaking of the notion of culture. Patterns do change and shift. Today no single culture is possible to stay “pure”. Every society bears variety of cultural differences and patterns.
<i>Ebru</i> by <i>Altınay</i>	This variegated art works are used as metaphors for describing the harmony in diversity and richness of the cultures with a relatively strong influence of Asian and Middle Eastern Islamic elements. It offers a promising alternative to others, such as “iceberg” or “onion” when thinking through the new and old dilemmas of cultural politics at the turn of the century.

1.2. We Contain Multitudes: Cultural Mosaic Tiles

Chao and Moon conceptualize culture as a pattern of cultural identities within individuals that has implications for the conceptualization and assessment of culture at multiple levels of analysis. They break from past research taking a bottom-up orientation of culture rather than the traditional focus that begins at higher levels of analysis such as country or nationality. The term cultural mosaic is introduced as metaphoric conceptualization of multiple indicators of cultures used to describe an individual.⁴⁴ Historic conceptualization of culture has often been at higher levels of analysis (most frequently at the national level), psychological understanding of culture is advanced when it is also conceptualized at lower levels of analysis such as group or individual level. Mosaic is a composite picture made up of distinct colored tiles or miniature photographs. That is both the overall picture and the multitude of colored tiles are simultaneously distinguishable. Viewing an individual's culture as a cultural mosaic allows for simultaneous observation of global individual culture and localized cultural influences.

⁴⁴ Chao& Moon, **the Cultural Mosaic...**

Table 1. 2 Taxonomy of Cultural Mosaic

Taxonomy of Cultural Mosaic		
Primary Category	Definition	Sample Tiles
Demographic	Physical characteristics and social identities inherited from parents and ancestors	Age Ethnicity Gender Race
Geographic	Natural or man-made physical features of a region that can shape group identities	Climate Temperature Coastal/Inland Urban/Rural Regional/Country
Associative	Formal and informal groups that an individual chooses to associate and identify with	Family Religion Employer Profession Politics Avocations

Rather than choosing a particular “tile” such as ethnicity *or* gender, Chao&Moon posit that individuals draw on combinations or patterns of tiles such as ethnicity *and* gender.⁴⁵ In this context, an individual of Kurdish (ethnicity) and female (gender) is not only Kurdish or female but Kurdish and female. The complexity increases while both “tiles” in individual’s cultural identity have various influences and realities separately and combined. The cultural mosaic illustrates how all individuals have the capacity to access multiple cultural identities in different patterns.⁴⁶ As an example; students studying at an international university could have their “student identity” more present than cultural identity. In their communication context, student identity differences could play a vital role while cultural differences might not be as powerful

⁴⁵ **Ibid.**

⁴⁶ **Ibid.**

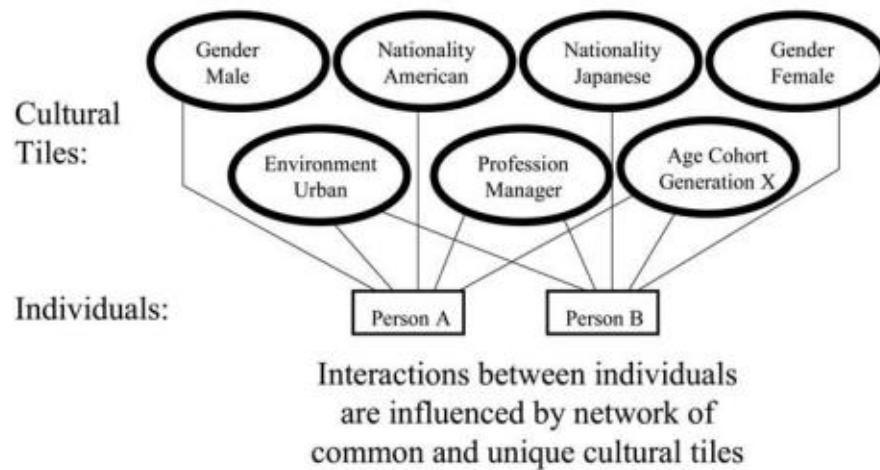


Figure 1.8 Bipartite Representation of a Cultural Mosaic

As seen above, Person A and Person B shares in urban, age-based and profession identities while they are different from each other in terms of gender and nationality. Interpersonal similarity could ease mutual understanding, communication and interaction among persons. As Chao&Moon suggests, interpersonal interactions are facilitated by shared cultural identities. Shared cultural identities are localized structures in an interpersonal network, providing common frames of reference, values and behavioral expectations between people.⁴⁷ Cultural mosaic particularly addresses how multiple cultural identities are organized which offers a new perspective on the complexity of culture and identity formation. Furthermore, no person is a part of all and only the same groups as anyone else and because each person ranks the attitudes, values and beliefs of the groups to which he or she belong differently, which is what culture is all about, each individual must be considered to be culturally unique although not every person is a culture unto herself or himself since culture is a group related phenomenon.

One limitation of all these cultural categorization studies is that they categorize culture on only on basis of dominant cultural value orientations. In fact, culture can be studied not only at the level of cultural values but also at the level of cultural forms, propositions, recipes routines, customs and systems of customs. To understand and analyze culture in its totality we need to take into account both the intrapersonal world of cultural values and the extrapersonal world of cultural symbols and artifacts.⁴⁸ Singh suggests a three level framework for cultural analysis; perceptual, behavioral

⁴⁷ **Ibid.**

⁴⁸ Nitish Singh, "From Cultural Models to Cultural Categories: a Framework for Cultural Analysis", *The Journal of American Academy of Business*, Cambridge, 2004, p 95.

and symbolic level.⁴⁹ According to him, cultural values dimensions and orientations could be studied only under the behavioral analysis level that leads into motivation of actions through cultural values. Perceptual level should include the influence of language into thinking and conceptualizing, language structures, color perceptions and categories, ecological perceptual styles such as perception of geometric shapes, open spaces, depth etc., cross cultural differences in visual input processing and cross cultural spatial illusion. Thus at the perceptual level, one tries to understand how the culturally shared propositional and image schemas facilitate cultural understanding and communication within the group. At the symbolic level, the question is “how does culture take a public form?”⁵⁰ Symbols are the most subtle and powerful representations of cultural thought. Barthes states that an object becomes symbol when it acquires by convention and practice a meaning which makes it stand for something else that it represents in the mind of people. Thus, socio-culturally determined symbols, taboos, rules, rituals, myths, aesthetic codes, codes of conduct and non-verbal codes are part of symbolic level of cultural analysis. Singh believes that this three dimensional framework above provides a more holistic approach for cultural analysis so that the analysis of culture is not restricted into few cultural value orientations but also take account the perceptual, behavioral and symbolic dimensions.

To conclude, it shall be stated that to be able to understand how intercultural encounters might result while aiming to become successful intercultural communicator, one needs to consciously come to understand what culture is and how it affects oneself. In the next part, we will continue with discussing how culture might be a strong influential element in communication and the possibilities for cross cultural communication.

⁴⁹ **Ibid**, p. 97.

⁵⁰ **Ibid**, p. 98.

2. COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES

Communication occurs for cooking, learning, sending and receiving messages, promoting ideology, interpreting the world and much more. A society does not exist if individuals do not exchange words, behaviors, sounds, goods and/or services. Humans are social beings with a continuous need to communicate. This is indeed not an easy process when diverse perception, interpretation and evaluation of realities are present. Bennett suggests that in the process of communication, perception of the reality is far more important than the reality itself thus the reality we experience is a variable matter of perception and communication⁵¹ and if the way in which one perceives a stimulus is completely outside of the “other’s” perception ken, how can two possibly communicate with each other? The answer is to *constantly remind ourselves that everyone has different perceptions, and I just cannot take anything for granted.*⁵² This realization and state of mind are especially important when communicating across cultures. Singer claims that no two humans can communicate 100% accurately because no two humans have learned to perceive identically therefore one should keep in mind that different perceptions and realities of the communicators are present at the process and assuming successful and effective communication just by being in the communication process is not relevant⁵³. Commonalities, shared values and tendencies, common language ease the process of communication. Language connotation as referred by Stuart Hall is implicitly influenced by groups, ideologies, education, regions and usually it is easier when there exists common age, common history and experience. Once experiencing outside the common world, the problem starts.⁵⁴ Since communication has to occur to understand and share these diverse realities, differences increase the importance of intercultural communication. It is a source of cultural change; communication and culture are inseparable.

In a communication process there are two basic parts; Information register and communication register. Information register is where communicators register certain information to the messages that are transferred and it is slightly easier but when coming to the communication register that is where the problem starts because that is

⁵¹ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 223.

⁵² Singer, **Perception...**, p. 23.

⁵³ **Ibid.**

⁵⁴ Bourse, **op. cit.**

where it is ambiguous if the message is clearly interpreted by the receiver. How does one find a common definition? As mentioned previously, individuals are influenced by internal motives, value systems and external surroundings in all their interactions which also make each individual culturally unique. Therefore an individual is in fact functioning somewhat “interculturally” whenever he/she communicates with another individual. It is a necessity to understand and adjust our perceptions as observers to more or less match that of the objects of our perception to make intercultural analysis effective in specific situations.⁵⁵ Because no two groups value exactly the same things or rank their values in the same order, it is inevitable that there will be basic value conflict between individuals from different groups. Yet somehow if communication among individuals from different groups is ever to be effective, we must not only recognize which values we rank most highly, we must also recognize that they may rank totally different value sets. To Singer, recognizing those value differences is the first step in communicating across cultures.⁵⁶ Many times the similarities in perceptions, beliefs and attitudes that make communication within a group so easy can make communication between different groups that much harder. As individuals face those differences in perceptions and value systems, often times they tend to communicate *less*. The more communication becomes difficult, the less individuals and groups tend to communicate and this spiraling in the opposite direction in intercultural communication is a paradoxical challenging aspect. However, it is also an important challenge to bear with in today’s world of communications across cultures where it is almost impossible not to interact in anyways with one another. One of the preconditions of effective interpersonal communication is the acceptance of the differences from both sides in the communication process and perceiving each other as “subject-individuals” eager to learn.⁵⁷ It is just more difficult with those with whom we share the fewest group identities. The more we get to know them, however the easier communication becomes, and the better we come to understand their attitudes, values and beliefs. We may not accept those perceptions as our own, but at least we will understand what they believe, and eventually we will learn how to communicate with them more effectively.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 53.

⁵⁶ Singer, **Perception...**, p. 37.

⁵⁷ Kartarı, **Kültür, Farklılık ve İletişim...**, p. 22.

⁵⁸ Singer, **Perception...**, p. 76.

Whether on personal, group or national level, communication across cultures is not only influenced by values and styles. Recognition of other while understanding certain tendencies of one is critical yet not easy. Those in the dominant group see the difference of those who are in non-dominant groups and label it “culture” and identify their own seeming lack of “difference” as not having culture. While dominant culture is also infused with “difference” it is not as evident because patterns of the dominant group are the norm.⁵⁹ People from the dominant cultural group in a society are often unaware that the way things are- the norms, values, practices, and institutions of the society-are in fact deeply shaped by and infused with a particular cultural orientations and that these patterns of shared meaning have been normalized as “just the way things are” or “the way things should be”.⁶⁰ Culture hides much more than it reveals and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. If one is in a dominant position in the society, he/she may feel as if it doesn’t matter whether he/she needs the other person’s perspective. He/she may easily fall into ethnocentrism⁶¹ while gaining a myopic, single perspective with a combination of power. Usually people from non-dominant groups learn to “commute” between cultures, switching verbal and nonverbal cultural codes, as well as values and ways of viewing the world as they move between two cultures.⁶² In order to understand intercultural dynamics occurring in cultural spaces around us, we need to dig beneath the surface to examine the histories of interaction that literally and figuratively shape and construct meanings about the ground upon which we stand today.⁶³

Tall explains that communication across cultures shows how one’s own system works, generates a sense of vitality and awareness-an interest in life which can come only when one lives through the shock contrast and difference.⁶⁴ Communicating with the “other”, with the “different” also enlightens about oneself since one tends to

⁵⁹ Sorrells, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.12.

⁶¹ Ethnocentrism refers to the experience of one’s own culture as “central to reality.”

⁶² *Ibid*.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p.81.

Here I would also like to give an example I have recently experienced; A young Kurdish student from Hakkari (located in the south east of Turkey with strong Kurdish and Ezidi population) visits İzmir (west coastal city of Turkey). He meets with a middle/high class Turkish male lawyer and shows his enthusiasm towards having a career in law. The lawyer recommends him to know more than one language if he wants to be successful while the young Kurdish student responds that residents in Hakkari is already born as bilingual, Kurdish as mother tongue and Turkish as the official state language. The lawyer realizes this reality for the first time in his life. He feels confused and asks himself why he had never recognized Kurdish and Turkish likewise powerful?

⁶⁴ Hall, *op.cit*, p.30.

assume that his/her values and behaviors are universal. Whereas significant proportion of one's personal behaviors are cultural.

Communication across cultures is more than just describing the communication with outside of nation-foreigners because some people rank certain of their group identities (and group cultural values) more highly than they do their national identity in certain situations, sometimes international communications are less intercultural than are some communications within nations. For example; supporters of a global independent campaigning organization, which uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems might share and embrace certain discourses and practices that procure shared culture among them which is not limited to the supporters' national borders and the same individuals might absolutely disagree with and feel marginalized in their national cultural realities if the majority prefers not to value environmental issues.

As a matter of fact, communications across cultures tend to be harder and require further effort due to the possible barriers. Communication barriers including lack of fluency in the language, cultural differences, interpersonal skills, and lack of social networks are identified as significant work place challenges.⁶⁵ Noise, as described in traditional communication models, may involve a range of filters, such as mental models; prejudices and stereotypes, language and dialect differences; embellishment of information; level of animation; pacing and use of silence; directness of the message; formality of speech, as well as vocal tone and physical proximity.⁶⁶ In order to have successful and effective interaction across cultures, individuals ought to be eager to learn about the other, relate to the global issues, otherness and be interested in diversity. We will now speak more about the effectiveness and appropriateness of the intercultural communication with a focus of workplace for the framework of the research.

⁶⁵ Sorrells, **op. cit.**, p. 183.

⁶⁶ Teresa Moore Griffin, "Effective Intercultural Communication", *Effective Multicultural Teams: Theory and Practice*, Springer Scienc+Business Media, 2008, p.177.

2.1. Defining Interculturalism

Interculturalism refers to the interaction and engagement of multiple cultures. It is a particular kind of interaction or communication among discourses, one in which differences in cultures play a role in creation of meaning. Interculturalism is the process of delivery of meaning among cultures.⁶⁷ There are variations of the terminology used. We will try to define some of them to clarify our approach in the field. From a more general perspective in society, the condition of cultures being together is referred as multiculturalism. Referring to a particular kind of situation, one in which there are two or more cultures represented, multiculturalism is used primarily in educational context where concerns with multicultural classrooms and, to a lesser extent, multicultural identity, have been institutionalized with particular policies, procedures and curricula.⁶⁸ Cross-cultural refers to a particular kind of contact among people, one in which the people are from two or more different cultures. For example; “on a multicultural campus or in a global corporation, cross-cultural contact is inevitable.”⁶⁹ Throughout this text, “cross cultural” and “intercultural” is used simultaneously for the same meaning.

⁶⁷ Kartarı, **Kültür, Farklılık ve İletişim...**, p. 39.

⁶⁸ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 10.

⁶⁹ **Ibid**, p.11.

2.2. Intercultural Competences: From the Initial Contact to the Continued Learning

“Experience isn't what happens to you; it's what you do with what happens to you.”

Aldous Huxley

Well known American communications theorist Paul Watzlawick once said the following statement in early 70s: *“One cannot not communicate.”* Furthermore, today one cannot not communicate without having necessary intercultural competences.

As mentioned above, in the era of globalization, it is nearly impossible to avoid intercultural contact when making business, educating at schools, doing politics, shopping, going out with family or friends and or traveling for leisure or other purposes. To be able to survive, compete and work effectively and globally, persons must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to behave in a manner becoming to a specific culture. In conjunction with this, the ability to manage the interconnectedness of the diversity is a major skill companies, organizations and educational institutions are looking for. Interculturally component leaders recognize that competent global organizations must be able to intentionally generate and manage diverse cultural orientations of the teams and realize the particular culture of the effective working environment within the organization.

It is more than ever now that contact and communication among cultures are at issue and often times, intercultural contact cannot be constructive if not accompanied by certain conditions. It does require awareness and respect of cultural differences, communication styles, decision making processes, and diverse perceptions. Misunderstandings, miscommunication and disputes might arise if cultural differences are not acknowledged and necessary competences are not developed. Often the required adjustment goes beyond simply offering the current politically correct platitudes. It may require a redefinition of approach and process.⁷⁰ We claim that intercultural contact should consciously be reflected upon, analyzed and evaluated towards a learning and action taking in order to be successful when communicating cross culturally. Intercultural contact transforms into experience, learning and effective and appropriate communication through a process of recognition, respect,

⁷⁰ Griffin, **op.cit**, p.174.

reconciliation and realization providing base for intercultural competences to be embedded.



Figure 2. 1 Intercultural Competence Transformation

Trompenaars suggest the following phases in the transformation process schemed above;⁷¹

- ✓ *Recognition:* How competent is a person to recognize cultural differences around him or her?

Awareness on how cultures form and the nature of perspective-switching and culture change occur by recognition. Individuals and organizations recognize the possibilities of differences and diverse representations in their working and living environments.

- ✓ *Respect:* How respectful is a person about those differences?

Individuals and organizations understand, articulate and negotiate their cultural identities that help them respect cultural differences. Respect serves as the basis for the attitudinal, cognitive and behavioral orientation toward people who have diverse values. Staying on the level of recognition might end up with negative stereotyping thus respect is an essential step towards mutual dialogue.

- ✓ *Reconciliation:* How competent is a person to reconcile cultural differences?

In this phase, individuals and organizations learn to move across cultures to plan for and manage their transitions effectively and go beyond understanding and respecting cultural differences. Creative problem solving in various cultural situations is key to reconciliation phase.

- ✓ *Realization:* How competent is a person to realize the necessary actions to implement in reconciliation of cultural differences?

⁷¹ Fons Trompenaars, "Foreword", *Building Cultural Competence Innovative Activities and Models*, 2012, Stylus Publishing, p. Xi.

Individuals now translate their knowledge and awareness into actions. Building global and diverse teams is one of the most important ways to create realization. In global teams, individuals realize and acknowledge the possible diverse action takings.

Intercultural learning processes ease and facilitate the intercultural competence development. Intercultural competence is a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts⁷². It is the willingness and ability to engage effectively and appropriately with cultural differences. Fantini defines intercultural competence “*as the complex abilities that are required to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself; while **effective** reflects the view of one’s own performance in the target language-culture; **appropriate** reflects how natives perceive such performance*”⁷³ With this respect, we recall emic and etic view from the introduction part of this text.⁷⁴

Table 2. 1 Fantini's Intercultural Competence Aspects

Effective	Outsider’s or etic view
Appropriate	Insider’s or emic view

The challenge is to help learners “*recognize their etic stance while attempting to uncover the emic viewpoint of their hosts, assuming adequate motivation, interest, willingness, and contact*”.⁷⁵ For developing intercultural competence, Fantini proposes a holistic framework that involves multiple and interrelated components including;

1. Attributes
 - a. Flexibility
 - b. Humor
 - c. Patience
 - d. Openness
 - e. Interest

⁷²Janet M. Bennett “Cultivating Intercultural Competence: A Process Perspective”, *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, USA: SAGE Publications, 2009, p. 122.

⁷³ Alvino E Fantini, “Assessing Intercultural Competence”, *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, USA: SAGE Publications, 2009, p 458.

⁷⁴ To recall the definitions, emic view is the knowledge of the culture learned inside. Etic view is when a culture is learned by an outsider, the stranger tends to acquire theoretical and normative information.

⁷⁵ **Ibid.**

- f. Curiosity
 - g. Empathy
 - h. Tolerance for ambiguity
 - i. Suspending judgments
2. Ability to;
- a. establish and maintain relationships
 - b. communicate with minimal loss or distortion
 - c. cooperate to accomplish tasks of mutual interest or need
3. Dimensions of;
- a. Knowledge
 - b. Skills
 - c. (Positive) Attitudes
 - d. Awareness

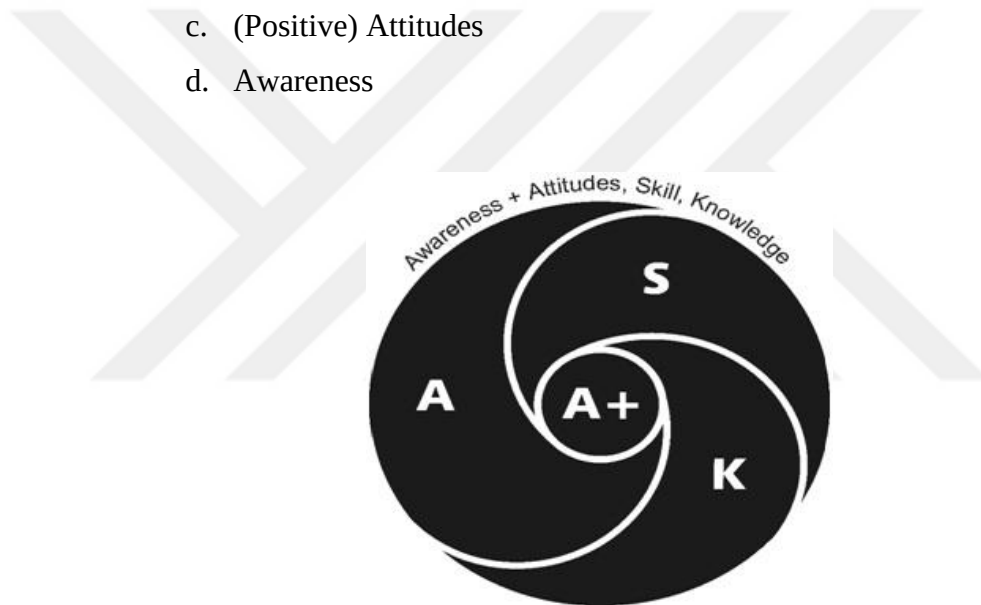


Figure 2. 2 Intercultural Competency Dimensions by Fantini

First of all, *knowledge* refers to the theoretical aspects of how different cultural groups behave, work, communicate and interact, as well as the values and assumptions. Second dimension, *skills* is related to one's ability to interpret, relate and act based on one's knowledge. And thirdly, *attitude* is understood as a mindset, or the way individuals think and feel about cultural differences. Thus, cultural knowledge cannot be equal to competence. Knowledge of cultural groups and identities are helpful and necessary in developing intercultural competence but is not sufficient. As it can be seen above in sort of a pinwheel illustration, *awareness* is central and critical to intercultural competence development and it stimulates development of the other three dimensions.

According to Ashwill and Oanh, intercultural competence is a skill set that enables someone to function effectively in a cross cultural setting.⁷⁶ The person recognizes the cultural differences, knows what they are and understands how to apply the knowledge he or she has which leads to becoming a global citizen. Global citizenship is the intellectual landscape and sense of connectedness and belonging extend to all of humanity rather than a certain national pride. Leaders must therefore strive to create a fusion approach that unites both global citizenship and intercultural competence.

Intercultural competence is defined in many different ways: some think of it as cultural sensitivity while others speak of anti-bias and still others consider it a cross-system, comprehensive approach which embeds culture into care. Most descriptions contain common threads, including the ideas that developing intercultural competence is a process; culture is learned; and self-awareness is critical. Terms such as cultural competence, intercultural competence, intercultural effectiveness and intercultural adaptation largely trace back to the 1970s. In 1977, Harris summarized number of variables for effective and successful volunteering for Peace Corp volunteers of United States. These included intercultural competence variables such as “*facility with the language, adaptability, responsibility, cultural sensitivity, interest in nationals, realism of goals, agreement and compromise, inner strength, self-reliance, patience/tolerance, perseverance, initiative, reliability, argumentativeness, courteousness, cooperativeness, friendliness and general maturity.*”⁷⁷

Rosen et al. identified four general behavioral capabilities or abilities that are critical to being effective and appropriate in an intercultural situation;

- ✓ The ability to manage psychological stress
- ✓ The ability to communicate effectively
- ✓ The ability to take advantage of the interface between different cultures and the knowledge that comes from different cultural orientations

⁷⁶ Mark A. Ashwill & Du’o’ng Thi Hoang Oanh “Developing Globally Competent Citizens: The Constraining Cases of the United States and Vietnam”, *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, USA: SAGE Publications, 2009, p. 141.

⁷⁷ Brian H. Spitzberg & Gabrielle Changnon, “Conceptualizing Intercultural Competence”, *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, USA: SAGE Publications, 2009, p.8-9.

- ✓ The ability to manage change in a borderless environment where cultures asserted even more, as the national borders dissolve, and where cultures encounter each other immediately through technology⁷⁸

Cross considers cultural competence⁷⁹ from an organizational perspective and believes that cultural competence offers ways towards managing intergroup dynamics in the organization. Encompassing workplace diversity, his definition of cultural competence is as the following:

“A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency and those professionals to work effectively in cross cultural situations”.... “the word competence is used because it implies having to capacity to function effectively.”⁸⁰

The definition above involves personnel and leaders of the organizations to develop strategies, take actions, and create evaluation procedures to ensure intercultural competences development among the members of the organization. Individuals are essential dimension of the intercultural competences development. Development is possible only if self is interested, enthusiastic and motivated for the need of such competences.

Similarly Jandt suggests that intercultural competences are personality strength, communication skills, cultural awareness, and psychological adjustment. Intercultural communication competence requires understanding dominant cultural values and understanding how our own cultural values affect the way we perceive ourselves and others.⁸¹ As it is clear by now, interaction is key to the competence development. The longer one interacts with those “other” groups, the less conscious one is likely to become of the difference between oneself and the others. That is because the way they talk, the way they think and the way they act will eventually become less strange and

⁷⁸ Robert Rosen, Marshall Singer and Carl Philips, **Global Literacies: Lessons on Business Leadership and National Cultures**, 2000, p. 32-33.

⁷⁹ Cultural competence and intercultural competence are used interchangeably in similar meanings by various theorists and authors.

⁸⁰ Terry L. Cross, Barbara J. Bazmn, Karl W. Dennis and Mareasa R. Isaacs. “Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care: A Monograph on Effective Services for Minority Children Who Are Severely Emotionally Disturbed”, Georgetown University Child Development Center, 1989, http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/meetings/docs/Meetings/2010/June/CLCC_Tab_4_Towards_Culturally_Compentent_System.pdf, 01 April 2015.

⁸¹ Jandt, **op.cit.**, p. 187.

more predictable.⁸² Thus, it is not possible to have culture-specific information regarding all the cultures or identities we might expose to in the working environments. Here comes a challenge; how can one have general intercultural competence without specific cultural expertise? Bennett suggests that “culture general frames” are key tools to overcome this. Supporting Bennett’s statement, Margaret Mead offers sensitizing people to cross-cultural variables instead of developing behavior and attitude stereotypes.⁸³ Unless, culture general frames and approaches are used, individuals tend to have strong, artificial, arbitrary and concrete conceptions which easily turn into stereotypes. Yet, culture general frameworks are based on certain generalizations. *Generalizations* are the statements about the predominant tendency in a group to produce and support a particular kind of behavior. e.g.: Germans tend to be punctual and on time. North Americans are usually individualistic. Sicilians may speak louder. For the global leaders, using cultural generalizations is a great way to understand his/her team, the diversity within the team yet combining cultural knowledge with openness to individual differences is essential. Although generalizations are useful at the initial contact with the “other”, it is highly important to understand that there are “deviants” and outliers in any cultural groups.⁸⁴ A group might have a tendency towards collectivism but that can never mean every single member of the group will behave with a collectivist orientation at all times. When cultural generalizations are applied to every style individual in a group, they become *stereotypes* which are rigid categories that are used to label people. Barna defines stereotypes as the overgeneralized second hand beliefs. They are usually created through interactions with one of few members of a cultural group therefore they provide inaccurate assumption about the “other”. In her TED speech titled “the Danger of a Single Story”, Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie speaks about her stay in USA as an exchange student at college and her interaction with a North American roommate;

“...what struck me was that she had felt sorry for me even before she saw me. Her default position toward me, as an African, was a kind of patronizing, well-meaning pity. My roommate had a single story of Africa: a single story of catastrophe. In this single story, there was no possibility of Africans being

⁸² Singer, **Perception...**, p. 72.

⁸³ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 242.

⁸⁴ **Ibid**, p. 54.

*similar to her in any way, no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals...*⁸⁵

Stereotypes are rigid classifications and they provide single stories of individuals and groups. Through these single stories, people tend to interpret and evaluate the actions and behaviors of others when interacting even if they may not have interacted with him/her before. According to Ernest Becker stereotypes reduce the threat of unknown by making the world predictable. They protect people in a simple way from not knowing the others. An image is put towards the other while creating communication barriers.

Many times, individuals develop strong group identities in order to feel secure and be part of a group. Inclusive and secure identity is a necessity for anyone striving to develop meaningful and fruitful intercultural relationships.⁸⁶ On the other side, Y.Y. Kim states that developing a very strong belonging to a certain group affects interaction with another culture and developing multicultural identity negatively. i.e. There is strong in-group identification ethnic maintenance among Turkish community in Holland but not to adaptation in Dutch society. In the world of increasing communication, networking, interconnecting and belonging to diverse groups, strong group identities are expected while they tend to create communication barriers in intercultural communication. This creates a paradoxical situation.

Often the assumptions, stereotypes and attitudes we hold about people from different cultures or distant countries come solely or primarily through media and popular culture forms such as movies, TV programs and celebrities.⁸⁷ By 2011, five to seven major media monopolies dominated the distribution of mediated images and messages around the globe.⁸⁸ Media bring together technologies, institutions and cultural forms to create and convey meaning-making products that reflect, construct and reinforce cultural ideologies.⁸⁹ Holders of media decide who is visible, who speaks, what message is given when, where and how. According to a research conducted by Hrant

⁸⁵ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The danger of a single story", http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=en, 29 March 2015.

⁸⁶ Young Yun Kim, "The Identity Factor in Intercultural Competence", *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, USA: SAGE Publications, 2009, p. 62.

⁸⁷ Sorrells, **op. cit.**, p. 11.

⁸⁸ **Ibid**, p.125

⁸⁹ **Ibid**, p.127.

Dink Foundation in Turkey, hate speech on Turkish media has risen by %30 in 2014.⁹⁰ In conjunction with the increase of hate speech on media, attacks and hostility towards certain groups targeted have risen in the same year. Turkey Human Rights Foundation issued a press release regarding the attacks and hostility towards Syrian refugees in Turkey which were also referred too stereotypical on media.⁹¹ Adichie believes that literature also provides images of good, bad, evil, powerful and fearful through stories, images and fiction.⁹²

Marshall Singer approaches stereotyping and biases from a broader perspective;

*“Because America was a racist, sexist, homophobic and anti-Semitic society, particularly while I was growing up, it is likely that I am somewhat racist, sexist, homophobic and anti-Semitic myself. Knowing that enables me to fight those feelings, but in order to fight them I have to consciously recognize that they exist, probably in the inner corner of my belief system. We may not be able to erase some of those biases entirely, but making them conscious can help us to examine them more rationally and ask ourselves on what they are based...”*⁹³

Furthermore, social learnings within nuclear family, social reference groups such as friends and families, ideological battles, mobility of groups for variety of reasons such as wars and social and economic conditions may result with stereotypical images and false dichotomies.

When interacting with a member from a different culture or group, generalizations are usually the starting points for analysis. With no such points or references, one can easily and inordinately rely on common sense and further we may fall prey to naive individualism. Everyone is unique and different though there is a common group tendency on actions, behaviors, perceptions and expressions. Human being is a communicative rational. With all the interactions and exchanges we have within the groups we are part of, we define ourselves. That is the main reason generalizations are useful tools for understanding the other. We will now look into culture general

⁹⁰ Bianet, “Medyada Nefret Söylemi Yüzde 30 Arttı” <http://bianet.org/bianet/insan-haklari/161176-medyada-nefret-soylemi-yuzde-30-artti>. Date Reached: 29.03.2015.

⁹¹ “Suriyelilere Saldırıları Kaygı Verici”, <http://tihv.org.tr/suriyelilere-saldirilar-kaygi-verici/>, 29 March 2015.

⁹² Adichie, **op.cit.**

⁹³ Singer, **Perception...**, p. 176.

frameworks which we believe will support the application and practice phases in intercultural competence development.



2.3. Culture General Frameworks

Culture-general frameworks focus and help us analyze the areas of difference when first encountering at cross cultural settings. They provide lenses and glasses for transforming knowledge to the usage for effective and appropriate cross cultural communication. Culture-general frameworks consist of communication styles, cognitive styles and perceptual styles.

2.3.1. Communication Style

Communication styles are the patterns of expression and rules for interaction that reflect the values and norms of a culture. They are generally described as a continuum, with an understanding that individuals do not stick to the one style only. Although they may rely heavily on one style, they can adopt their styles depending on the situation. When interacting with people of different communication styles, individuals might feel stress, frustration or emotional vulnerability. Developing mindful interpretation of those different communication styles could contribute to the quality of the intercultural interaction and intergroup relations. Intercultural conversation bumps can easily spiral upward to become intercultural conflicts if one lacks the attitude, knowledge and skills of code switching between communication styles when he/she constructs his own messages and interpret other's messages. Communication styles have tremendous impact upon the dynamics of face-to-face encounters.

Erickson explains that shared or divergent communication styles influence a gatekeeping encounter by affecting its behavioral organization, that is, whether a conversation proceeds smoothly or by fits and starts, whether both parties continually interrupt each other or are able to talk simultaneously without interpreting and whether their styles of listening match.⁹⁴ In this study, communication styles are subdivided as language use, verbal communication styles and nonverbal communication styles for a deeper analysis.

2.3.1.1 Language Use

Speaking different languages do not make people culturally distinct though language and tongue are primarily important in cultural identity. Language use dimension in

⁹⁴ Sheila J. Ramsey "Interactions between North American and Japanese: Considerations of Communication Styles", *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*, ed. Milton J. Bennett, USA Intercultural Press: 1998, p.112.

culture general frameworks include greeting, leave taking, negotiating, apologizing, arguing, complementing, criticizing or feedbacking rituals. Each of these rituals could be analyzed through length, emphasis and general content.

2.3.1.1.1 Greeting and Leave Taking

Greetings and leave taking rituals may be short or long depending on the culture or the atmosphere within the organization. In Turkey, greetings are generally long. When individuals are asked “How are you?” they can further be asked how their family and kids are like. The content might be around health, weather, physical appearance of the persons and/or economy or politics. General common response will be “good”. Unwell experiences and details of unfavorable mood conditions in the family are not shared with outsiders (outside of the nuclear family). Members of the family tend to prefer to keep these details within the family circle not to give a picture of disgracefulness to the outsiders. At the same time, when having an informal visit to a friend or in the bargaining process, leaving early without accepting an offer may be perceived as unfriendly or even dishonor. When individuals prefer to be shorter in terms of time in leave taking that is referred as; *Zengin kalkışı* (hasty departure) and it is generally not preferred. For example in North America, men are more likely to verbalize short greetings in passing, emphasizing impersonal common experience such as sports viewing and sometimes using a teasing style while North American women tend to engage in longer greetings, emphasizing personal relational experience and perhaps including compliments on each other’s appearance.⁹⁵

2.3.1.1.2 Compliments and Apologies

In Turkey apology is generally not seen as virtuous act but a self-depreciating act. Unlike, Japan, politicians in Turkey do not prefer to apologize not to give an image of possible error-prone. In traffic accidents or some of the legal cases, the parties involved might feel satisfied just by verbal apologies rather in USA insurance cards warn that parties to an accident should never apologize, no matter whose fault they think it is.⁹⁶

Complimenting verbally to the strangers is not common in Turkey. Individuals might prefer to show their respect, admiration, appreciation and recognition for success through several nonverbal ways. There might be several reasons for the lack of verbal

⁹⁵ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 63.

⁹⁶ **Ibid**, p.64.

compliments but mostly because of *ayıp* (shame), inappropriateness of showing too much self-esteem and the fear that it might be understood different than intended. That is also why Turkish employees might not feel so comfortable and honest when confronted in direct serious reflection, performance evaluation and feedback.

2.3.1.2 Verbal Communication Styles

Individuals in all cultures use these verbal styles to a certain degree, depending on assumed identities, intentions, interaction goals, relationship types, and the situation.⁹⁷ It is not only the content but the way in which we debate, converse, ask questions, and organize verbal communication is important to understand. Verbal communication styles are high-low context, direct-indirect, formal-informal, circular-linear and relationship-task oriented styles.

2.3.1.2.1 High Context and Low Context Verbal Styles

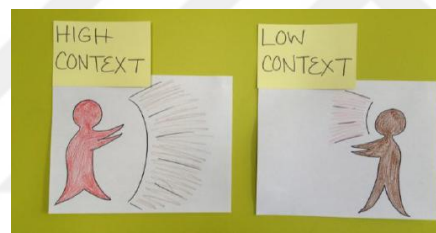


Figure 2. 3 High Context and Low Context Verbal Styles

In High Context (HC) cultures, individuals might be more comfortable “reading between lines”, communicating in a more complex, multi-level and subtle way and meanings are not openly expressed while Low Context (LC) cultures might heavily rely on what is actually said, directed and instructed. Repetition is appreciated to clarify the meaning and understanding. In HC cultures, verbal message is implicit and context (situation, people, nonverbal elements) is more important than words while in LC cultures, context is less important than words, verbal message is direct; one spells things out exactly. For example, when asked “How Are You?” in North America, people are expected to respond providing information on how they actually are while in Guinea in West Africa, it's the act of greeting that counts more than what you are actually saying therefore greetings take longer than usual for an ordinary American in Guinea. Hall was the first one to conceptualize high and low contexts while working

⁹⁷ Stella Ting-Toomey & Leeva C. Chung, **Understanding Intercultural Communication**, New York, Oxford University Press. 2005, p. 176.

in early 1930s. Meyer explains that “better” communicators in HC cultures are those who are able to exchange multilayered and latent messages while at LC cultures it is the other way around.⁹⁸ German Swiss is known to be the most LC national culture and Japanese the most HC national culture in the world.

2.3.1.2.2 Direct and Indirect Verbal Styles

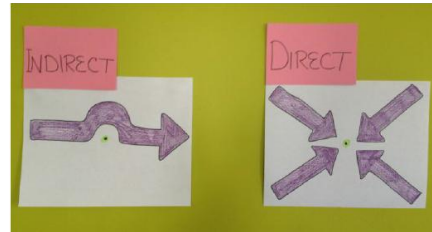


Figure 2. 4 Direct and Indirect Verbal Styles

The direct and indirect styles differ in how the tone of voice and the straightforwardness of the content are organized in the speeches. In direct style, message is communicated using explicit statements made directly to the people involved. Little reliance is placed on contextual factors such as the atmosphere and timing. For example, US American verbal style often calls for clean and direct communication.⁹⁹ People are usually mean what they say verbally. It is important for individuals to know “the point”. With indirect style, suggestion, implication and nonverbal behaviors are generally involved in conveying messages. People may prefer to speak to someone else but mean to communicate with the person who hears the conversation. People of Turkey tend to be more indirect with roundabout and implicit ways of speaking. Popular Turkish proverb “*Kızım sana söylüyorum gelinim sen anla*” is translated as “This I am telling you, my dear Daughter, so that you, my dear Daughter-In-Law, might take heed.” According to Ting-Toomey and Chung, indirect requests can help both parties to save face and uphold smooth harmonious interaction.¹⁰⁰

People with direct styles tend to find people with indirect styles unconfident, hesitant, not clear enough and even twister. On the other side, individuals with indirect styles may find individuals with direct styles unpolished, disrespectful, rude, rough, harsh and insensitive.

⁹⁸ Meyer, **op.cit**, p.50

⁹⁹ Ting-Toomey & Chung, **Understanding...**, p. 176.

¹⁰⁰ **Ibid**, p.177

2.3.1.2.3 Formal and Informal Verbal Styles



Figure 2. 5 Formal and Informal Verbal Styles

Informal verbal style emphasizes the importance of casualness; informality and ignorance of status and hierarchy in verbal communication while formal communication style is much more thought-out and prepared from learned experiences or organized training that present rules and conventions authorized by business and formal etiquette and it gives importance to upholding status-based and role-based interaction that reflect formality and large power distance. Informal verbal styles are less rigidly structured, uses more casual language, places less emphasis on correct grammar and spelling is more rigidly structured. In an informal setting, the quality of communication may be affected by the more relaxed or careless attitude or behavior. Informal communication is what takes place without the formal addition of conventions and ceremonies. Formal verbal style uses more standard language and places higher importance on correct grammar and spelling. Toomey and Chung look at parent-child interaction, superior-subordinate relations and male-female interaction in Latin American cultures from the informal-formal style perspective and state that those who engage in status oriented verbal orientation use specific vocabularies and paralinguistic features to accentuate the status distance of the role relationships.¹⁰¹

Individuals with informal styles tend to see people with formal styles as boring, too serious, narrow minded and bossy. Formal styled communicators might find informal styled individuals

¹⁰¹ **Ibid**, p.180.

2.3.1.2.4 Circular and Linear Verbal Styles

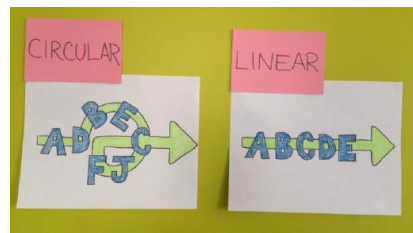


Figure 2. 6 Circular and Linear Verbal Styles

This style focuses on the straight line discussion versus a more circular approach. In circular style, communication is organized with a high reliance on context. Discussion is conducted in a circular movement, developing content around the main topic, which is often left unstated. Since there is a high reliance on context, individuals tend to assume that “once you have the relevant information, you’ll know what I mean”. They value the elegant and flowing speech with storytelling, real life examples, proverbs and other verbal supporting elements. In linear style, discussion is conducted in a straight line, almost like an outline, with the connections among the points stated as one moves towards an end point, which is stated explicitly. There is a low reliance on context and a strong reliance on words.

People with circular styles tend to see people with linear styles, too much focused on the point, insulting, dull while people with linear styles see circular styled individuals long winded, digressing and wasting time.

2.3.1.2.5 Relationship Oriented and Task Oriented Verbal Styles



Figure 2. 7 Relationship Oriented and Task Oriented Verbal Styles

Relationship oriented individuals communicate messages with attention to feelings and emotions. The speakers might share their personal opinions and feeling towards the subject. For example, when working in a project group, they prefer to place a tremendous amount of time and focus on meeting the needs of everyone involved in the assignment in a group projects. Disagreements are usually not stated explicitly

since this might affect the relationships in a negative way. Task oriented style tends to put emotions and feelings aside when the message is conveyed. For example, a leader with task oriented style might ask "What steps can we take to meet our quarterly financial goals?" as opposed to asking "How can we build the kind of employee productivity that brings about success within the company?"

Individuals with relationship oriented style may fall into evaluating task oriented individuals too strict, harsh on its team members, lacking empathy and sympathy, inconsiderate and "workaholic" while task oriented people might have prejudices towards relationship oriented individuals for caring too much about others, being too implicit, nonanalytic and time consuming.

2.3.1.3 Nonverbal Communication Styles

Nonverbal communication is both conscious and unconscious aspect of our everyday life. Nonverbal messages are often the primary means of signaling one's attitudes, emotions and the nature of relationships with the others. It is estimated that in every encounter around 65% is inferred through nonverbal channels.¹⁰² Nonverbal channels signify who the communicators are, based on what they wear, how they speak, how they use the space and time and how they present themselves. As Toomey and Chung puts it;

*"Nonverbal communication is a powerful communication system. It is, in a nutshell, the heartbeat of a culture. Language may be key to the heart of a culture, but it is nonverbal communication that embodies the rich meaning of culture."*¹⁰³

For example, in the USA, when listening, shaking your head from side to side generally signals disagreement. Nodding your head in an up and down motion usually indicates agreement. In parts of India, head movement simply means that the person is engaged in listening. It is not the expression of an opinion, in favor of, nor in disagreement with the message. Thus, specific meaning assigned to a particular behavior can vary within and across cultures in nonverbal communication.

Dimensions of nonverbal communication are explained below;

¹⁰² **Ibid**, p. 200.

¹⁰³ **Ibid**, p. 201.

2.3.1.3.1 Eye Contact

Eye contact in the communication process is vital. Maintaining eye contact, staring at the communicator or looking away might show attentiveness, interest, attention, disinterest, harassment, anger, credibility and dominance or challenge of authority depending on the culture and the context the communicators are in. Eye contact is usually similar to a conversation; it goes back and forth between those individuals who are engaged in a discussion, dialogue, or chat. It can be easy to get caught up in a story that is being told, waiting for the next joke to be said, or listening so intently for the next word that may be spoken one forgets what their eye contact might be saying. Staring can create a feeling of uneasiness for both the person talking and the person listening. It's hard to find that balance of having enough eye contact.

If North Americans have direct eye contacts with a person, it generally signifies that they are interested in the person they are looking at and in what that person is saying. If they look down or away from a person rather than meeting his or her gaze, they are considered to be distracted or uninterested in him or her. Although all Middle Eastern cultures cannot be grouped into one class, they do have similarities in their rules for the appropriateness of eye culture. Eye contact is much less common and considered less appropriate in many of these cultures than it is considered in the United States. Middle Eastern cultures with higher Muslim populations generally have strict rules regarding eye contact between the sexes; these rules are connected to religious laws about appropriateness.¹⁰⁴ In Turkey, direct eye contact might aim to prove the other party the trust and sincerity of oneself while looking away might decrease the level of sincerity in the communication. In Asia and parts of Latin America, extended eye contact can be taken as an affront or a challenge of authority. It is often considered more polite to have only sporadic or brief eye contact, especially between people of different social registers such as teacher-student relation or interactions with the elderly relatives within the family.

2.3.1.3.2 Use of Space

As one travels abroad or interacts with individuals in diverse cultural settings and examines the ways in which space is handled, startling variations are discovered-differences which we react to rigorously. Each culture handles space in several ways.

¹⁰⁴ Rebecca Scudder, "Eye Contact: What Does It Communicate in Various Cultures?", <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/social-studies-help/9626-learning-about-eye-contact-in-other-cultures/>, 03 April 2015.

Some might prefer to call it personal space and focus on the distance between individuals, while some might give meaning to the territoriality. Yet, thousands of experiences teach us unconsciously that space communicates. The associations and feelings that are released in a member of one culture almost invariably mean something else in the next. When someone is called “pushy” all this means that their handling of space releases this association in our mind.¹⁰⁵

The flow and shift of distance between people as they interact with each other is part and parcel of the communication process. According to Edward T. Hall, who has spent quite a number of years focusing on how space communicates, In Latin America the interaction distance is much less than it is in United States. Cultures with smaller distance in communication might associate large interpersonal distances as distantly, vulgar and formal. On the other side, members of culture with smaller personal spaces may evaluate individuals from cultures of larger personal spaces as fawning, disrespectful and even harassing.

2.3.1.3.3 Arrangement of Time

Hall was one of the first communication theorists to study the concept of time in intercultural communication. To him, there are three kinds of time: formal time, which everyone knows about and takes for granted and which is well worked into daily life; informal time, which has to do with situational or imprecise references like “awhile”, “later”, “in a minute” and so on; technical time, an entirely different system used by scientists and technicians, in which even the terminology may be unfamiliar to the nonspecialist.¹⁰⁶ On the other side, in some cultures individuals prefer to do one thing at a time (monochronism) while others might prefer to do more than one big at one time (polychronism). According to Hall, North Americans might be surprised to discover that when they are invited for a business meeting, the inviter is taking care of some files, phone calls or other activities aside. The ideal of the invitee is to center the attention first on one thing and then move on to something else. Cultures with a monochronic time orientation will look at time as more of a displacement of one thing after another; time is linear and can be calculated right down to the second. They tend to focus on the value of time, and therefore may have a very rigid interpretation of how to organize their schedules. However, in a number of cultures, including Middle

¹⁰⁵ Hall, *op.cit.*, p.165.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

East, Far East and Mediterranean cultures, view on time is flexible part of life and it might rely heavily on context and people involved. Chia provides an example of Malaysian polychronic behavior tendency through urgency and family relations. For example, a Malaysian may have a tendency to think “Should I rush out for a work event when my relatives are in town?”, because doing so would be considered rude.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, polychronic people regularly have numerous interactions and/or activities occurring at the same time, focusing more on what they are doing than the timeframe in which it is happening.

2.3.1.3.4 Touch

A handshake, hug, pat on the back, kissing might all be perceived differently depending on the context, identities and relations of the interactants. Touch is strongly linked with gender roles within the society. In some cultures, females might respond more negatively to opposite-sex touch, and males respond more negatively to same-sex touch. In Turkey, interactants of same sexes tend to have more of intentional touch when communicating while for example in United States interpersonal touch is limited due to the increasing risk and fear of abuse within the society.¹⁰⁸

Individuals with higher collectivist values may prefer to touch more during communication and feel comfortable when touched, while others with larger personal space and individualistic tendencies might be more towards evaluating touching as abusive, risky and unnecessary.

2.3.1.3.5 Turn Taking

Turn taking refers to who and when someone speaks in a conversation. It does not directly relate to verbal communication since turn taking is more about who speaks rather than the content and the language.

Using a worldwide sample of 10 languages drawn from traditional indigenous communities to major world languages, Stivers and her friends claim that all of the languages tested provide clear evidence for a general avoidance of overlapping talk and a minimization of silence between conversational turns.¹⁰⁹ Nakane states that what

¹⁰⁷ Suyin Chia, “Malaysian Timing”, *ICL Blog*, <http://www.afs.org/blog/icl/?tag=polychronic>, 03 April 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Heather Piper, John Powell, and Hannah Smith, “Parents, Professionals, and Paranoia The Touching of Children in a Culture of Fear”, *Journal of Social Work*, 2006, vol 6, no 2, p 151.

¹⁰⁹ Tanya Stivers, N. J. Enfield, Penelope Brown, Christina Englert, Makoto Hayashi, Trine Heinemann, Gertie Hoymann, Federico Rossano, Jan Peter de Ruiter, Kyung-Eun Yoon, & Stephen C. Levinson,

seemed to be argued often, instead of the empirically-measured length of silence, are different levels of tolerance for silence found through ethnographic observation¹¹⁰. Since tolerance is quite contextual and cultural, lengths of inter-turn silence, stancetaking and conversational turn taking depends heavily on personal and cultural orientations. According to Berry, Finnish silence is often misinterpreted when compared to cultures where people speak profusely¹¹¹. In Finland, a positive but quietly active person may not seem talkative just like in USA. In Turkey, age differences could define who speaks and who listens. Usually, young people tend to speak less and listen more when interacting with elders. Cultures marked by active discussion may not always appreciate the active silence while cultures with more tendencies towards silence between words could find others over talkative.

2.3.2. Cognitive Style

In cognitive style, individuals ask themselves the following question: “What information is important?” Speaking from the leadership perspective, cognitive style framework predicts how the very concept of *leadership* differs among cultures. For instance, many individuals from countries in Asia tend to define good leader as one who is skilled in the direct experience and “vision management” of a wide network of consensual leadership while many Northern Europeans are more likely to see a good leader as one who is deeply-educated and capable of informed strategic analysis. Southern Europeans may think a leader is one who can create and maintain strategic collaborations with other leaders and institutions, while many of the North Americans may believe that a good leader is one who can take effective action on the basis of limited information.¹¹² The perception of “good leader” definitely affects how the team progress. The credibility of the leader is determined not only through his/her personality, intellectual capacity, skills or communication style but also how he/she is perceived by the team members. It is important to understand how complex and complicated this can be in diverse and multicultural teams due to the cognitive styles of the team members.

“Universals and cultural variation in turn-taking in conversation”, 2009,
<http://www.pnas.org/content/106/26/10587.full>, 21 May 2015.

¹¹⁰ Ikuko Nakane, **Silence in Intercultural Communication: Perceptions and Performance**, John Benjamins Publishing, 2007, USA, p.14.

¹¹¹ Yle Turku, UUTISET “Finnish silence can be golden, says American expert,”
http://yle.fi/uutiset/finnish_silence_can_be_golden_says_american_expert/6454371, 21 May 2015.

¹¹² Milton J Bennett, “Intercultural Competence for Global Leadership”,
http://www.idrinstitute.org/allegati/IDRI_t_Pubblicazioni/4/FILE_Documento.pdf, 26 March 2015.

2.3.3. Perceptual Style

Perceptual is *of, relating to, or involving perception especially in relation to immediate sensory experience*.¹¹³ Perceptual styles are linked with the patterns of thinking. In a culture are the patterns of thinking concrete with more description and physical metaphor or abstract with theories and explanations?¹¹⁴ Learned responses become part of the culture of a group. Since each group teaches its own culture, two people from entirely different groups observing the same stimuli could respond so differently in some cases that one might wonder whether, in fact, they were responding to the same stimuli. Individuals have different "pathways" that are specific to them. When information enters that "pathway" the information is retained in short term memory. Repeated exposure and use promote retention in long term memory. Perception styles could be grouped according to the dimensions of listening, verbalization, body movement, smell, taste and visual depictions.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perceptual>, 21 May 2015.

¹¹⁴ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, pp.73-74.

¹¹⁵ Please see <http://learningstyles.org/styles/index.html> for further information.

2.4. Diversity Management in Workplace through Intercultural Competence Development

Porter defines cultural diversity as “*the variety in the values that are shared in a group of people assimilated into a relationship*”. The degree and effectiveness of assimilation defines the breadth of character of the group just as values define the breadth of character of the individual.¹¹⁶ On the broader picture, successful diverse and immigrant societies create new forms of social solidarity and deepen the negative effects of diversity by constructing new and more encompassing identities. The new form of “we” is larger and more inclusive sense of identity. Visible and stronger representations of diverse discourses and cultural differences are shaping the public sphere through online campaigns, regional and national uprisings, global NGOs, global alliances and movements. The mass reaction to the police’s disproportionate use of force against peaceful activists in 2013 in the Gezi Park in Istanbul evolved into one of the most interesting political experiments in the Republic of Turkey’s 90-year history, as people from all various convictions camped out at Gezi Park and (perhaps for the first time ever) talked to each other about the country’s future and their expectations. To Eskinat, Gezi Park became home to an amorphous group of people including LGBT activists, Kemalist hardliners, revolutionary Left parties, Kurdish nationalists and others who felt their voices had been unheard¹¹⁷ and it proposed a new way of order in the general society, an order of integrated and internalized diversity. Juris analyzes the example of global justice activists in Barcelona in 2001 and he quotes the following words from one of the activists: “*We have come from different sectors to organize in a different way: Assembly-based, plural, and diverse.*”¹¹⁸ While the global alliances and global movements towards in global community are rising and becoming more and more visible with a great focus on the representation of diverse individual and group identities, individuals and organizations start understanding that attempts to ignore and avoid cultural differences, limiting and prohibiting the comprehension and interpretations of these differences prevents the progress and development of humanity.

¹¹⁶ James C Porter, “Facilitating Cultural Discovery”, *Journal of Management in Engineering*, Vol 11., No. 6, November/December, 1995. p. 42.

¹¹⁷ Doğan Eşkinat, “Gezi Park: Negotiating a New Left Identity”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol 15 No:3, 2013. http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight_turkey_volume_15_no_3_2013_eskinat_w.pdf, Date Reached: 02.04.2015.

¹¹⁸ Jeffrey Juris, “A New Way of Doing Politics ? Global Justice Movements and the Cultural Logic of Networking”, *Recherches sociologiques et anthropologiques* [En ligne], 38-1 | 2007, 2015. <http://rsa.revues.org/521>, 02 April 2015.

On the other side, intercultural families are growing and number of third culture kids referred to as children of parents with diverse cultures are rising. Third culture kids are children who usually grow up overseas, whose parents' careers keep them abroad for most, or all of their formative years. Bi-cultural or bi-racial kids, children of immigrants, children of refugees, children who grow up abroad due to their parents' career choice, international adoptees are considered to be third culture kids. Online dating is becoming a popular phenomenon domestically and globally. Today 33% of couples have met online. By 2040 this number will rise to 70%.¹¹⁹ Online interactions increasingly connect individuals with different cultures and nationalities. Thus, cultural sensitive intercultural communication and development of intercultural competences from early childhood can increase relational and family closeness and deepen cultural self-awareness.¹²⁰

Scooping the diversity concept into the organizational and national level, let us have a look at the statics in today's world. World Investment Report 2009, published by the UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), states there is a total of 889,416 multinational companies (MNCs) around the world: 82,053 parent corporations and 807,363 affiliates. From a mere three thousand in 1990 the number of multinationals has grown to over 82,000 today. Along with their 807,000 subsidiaries spread all over the world, these multinational corporations directly employ over 90 million people. The United Nations (2013)¹²¹ estimates 232 million people or 3.2 per cent of the world's population lives outside of their country of birth compared with 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990. In developed regions, migrants make up about 10.8% of the population and the average annual rate of change of the migrant population in the developing regions is 2.3% between 2000 and 2013. A more open society should be more receptive and sensitive to facilitating the changes that adapt the member and organization to the best of their worlds.¹²² Sooner or later, diversity will be a social asset. It already has been considered as an important dimension in organizational development and productivity mainly in the organizations of the West.

¹¹⁹ "Online Dating Statistics & Facts",
<http://www.datingsitesreviews.com/staticpages/index.php?page=Online-Dating-Industry-Facts-Statistics#ref-GODI-2015-6>, 02 April 2015.

¹²⁰ Ting-Toomey & Chung, *Understanding...*, p. 11.

¹²¹ "International Migration 2013 Report by United Nations",
<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/wallchart/docs/wallchart2013.pdf>, 24 December 2014.

¹²² Porter, *op.cit.*, p.40.

As Sorrells points out it is important to recognize that cultural differences in values, norms and behaviors play a significant role in team building, decision making, job satisfaction, marketing and advertising, as well as many other aspects of doing business in the context of economic globalization.¹²³

As global and domestic workforce diversity increases, it brings out employee morale, attention to creating inclusive climate in the workplace and sparking creative innovation.¹²⁴ Trade, healthcare and educational services, human resources management, strategic planning, investments (especially Foreign Direct Investments) and international and national mergers and acquisitions necessitate having diverse, customized and targeted approaches. Increasing visibility, inclusion and benefiting of the diverse teams require respectful intercultural attitudes as well as adaptive communication styles in organizations. Leaders who leverage employees' intellectual capital, collaborative relationships and cultures will thrive in the new millennium¹²⁵ According to Pusch, a mind-set, heart-set and skill-set are required for managing to survive in the world of diversity.¹²⁶ Many organizations do not mind bearing the costs associated with having diverse employees if they perceive that the output and productivity of those employees and the organization's ability to retain them outweighs those costs. Ghosh illustrates certain examples from various sectors in India how diversity policies are usually directly linked with the "balance sheet" of the organizations as the business units.¹²⁷ Organizations are willing to accommodate requirements of their diverse employees to enhance its public image as a diversity friendly organization even if the costs of the technology purchase and trainings might be relatively high.¹²⁸ Though, diversity management has been an increasing trend among organizations, there still seems no direct policies of system of diversity management which is agreed upon. As an example, the corporate laws on diversity in Turkey are very weak and there are few organizations that are prepared to deal with the phenomenon. Therefore it is important to go beyond the legal mandate laid down by the state to be able to face the reality.

¹²³ Sorrells, **op. cit.**, p. 34.

¹²⁴ Ting-Toomey & Chung, **Understanding...**, p. 3.

¹²⁵ Pusch, **op. cit.**, p. 73.

¹²⁶ **Ibid.**, p. 67.

¹²⁷ Apoorva Ghosh, "Culturally Competent Behaviors at Workplace: An Intergroup Perspective for Workplace Diversity", *South Asian Journal of Management*, 2014, Vol 21 No:3, p. 82.

¹²⁸ **Ibid.**, p. 83.

Productive and effective team work, perceived employee loyalty, creativity problem solving, coping with change, satisfaction and the output in productivity are primary drivers for organizations to consider and apply diversity management approaches. A significant part of teambuilding is done by assimilating the members with disparate values found in a culturally diverse team. They must be assimilated in a way to form an effective team by encouraging the best qualities in each member that enable team members to independently and integrally work more productively. The ultimate goal, increased productivity, is founded in the spirit of the effective team inspired by a definitive, healthy culture that reflects the growth of shared values.¹²⁹ Ghosh recommends involving team members in activities that require reciprocal interdependence induces cohesion between culturally diverse employees.¹³⁰ Members who fail to perceive the need to adjust their behavior and possibly their values to be consistent with the organization's culture often find themselves in isolation and minimally performing stated job requirements. This leaves the organization striving to improve its quality based competitiveness at an impasse due to failure to develop its members to become more effective team members.¹³¹ Consequently, diversity gives opportunity not only to learn from each other but also to make team competent with diverse skills.

We believe that diversity management is strongly linked with intercultural competence development. Intercultural competent teams have broader perspective in managing uncertainties and ambiguities and they tend to engage more in creative problem solving. If the uncertainty or chaos is managed with an open-minded attitude, team members can come up with a synergistic perspective that involves the best of all viewpoints. Ting-Toomey defines synergistic perspective as the “*combination of the best of all cultural approaches in solving workplace problems*”.¹³² Interculturally competent leaders can understand the diverse needs of their employees and demonstrate “out of box” ways of offering solutions and doing things. As the individual ways of behaving, tasks divisions and job roles are understood better by the leaders, the expectations may be set better while increasing the satisfaction and loyalty of the team.

¹²⁹ Porter, **op.cit.**, p. 39.

¹³⁰ Ghosh, **op.cit.**, p. 86.

¹³¹ Porter, **op.cit.**, p.40.

¹³² Ting-Toomey & Chung, **Understanding...**, p. 9.

Intercultural encounters offer possibilities of experiences of new careers and new ways in the professional life of the individuals. When the situation encountered is first in its kind, which is usually so in intercultural encounters, individuals are ready to be open to exploring new ways and trying them out if the necessary competences are developed beforehand. If the organization has the intent to value diverse backgrounds and to enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty as a result, it may find innovative practices to do so.¹³³ There are people who do not mind treading new and uncharted paths which can bring more compatibility with the environment.



¹³³ Ghosh, **op.cit.**, p. 89.

2.5. Assessing the Level of Intercultural Sensitivity: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

DMIS is a constructivist attempt to describe how people become more interculturally adaptive. The recognition of cultural differences and the maintenance of a positive attitude toward others are key to developing sustainable, appropriate and effective communication. To Bennett, the conditions for constructive cross cultural learning are the *intercultural mindset*, *intercultural skillset* and *intercultural sensitivity*.¹³⁴ Bennett refers to intercultural sensitivity as the ability to experience cultural differences in sophisticated ways and he proposes that the potential for intercultural competence is related to various developmental stages of sensitivity.

Developmental models recognize that competence evolves over time, either individually or relationally or both. Spitzberg and Changnon explain that;

*“..just as adults are generally considered more interactionally competent than infants, due largely to the learning process that provides stages of growth to build sequentially upon one another, developmental models often attempt to identify stages of progression that would mark the achievement of more competent levels of interaction.”*¹³⁵

Low levels of awareness and sensitivity represent less competent modes of intercultural interaction, and greater levels of awareness and sensitivity represent more competent modes of intercultural interaction. Developmental models pay attention to integrating time element of relationships. The underlying assumption of the DMIS is that as one's experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, one's potential competence in intercultural relations increases.¹³⁶ Interactants move from a single reality, monocultural and singular worldview to a more sophisticated, complex and multicultural worldview as they move from ethnocentric stages to the ethnorelative stages.

The six stages of Bennett's developmental continuum are organized into two clusters; *Ethnocentrism* and *Ethnorelativism*. In *Ethnocentrism*, people unconsciously experience their own cultures as “central to reality”. They therefore avoid the idea of cultural differences as an implicit or explicit threat to the reality of their own cultural

¹³⁴ Bennett, “**Intercultural...**

¹³⁵ Spitzberg & Changnon, **op.cit.**, p.21.

¹³⁶ **Ibid.**

experience. In Ethnorelativism, people consciously recognize all behavior exists in cultural context, including their own. They recognize the restriction this places on their experiences and they therefore seek out cultural differences as a way of enriching their own experience of reality and as a means to understand others.¹³⁷ In DMIS, over time, interactants progress from relatively ethnocentric understandings of other cultures to a more ethnorelative comprehension and appreciation.

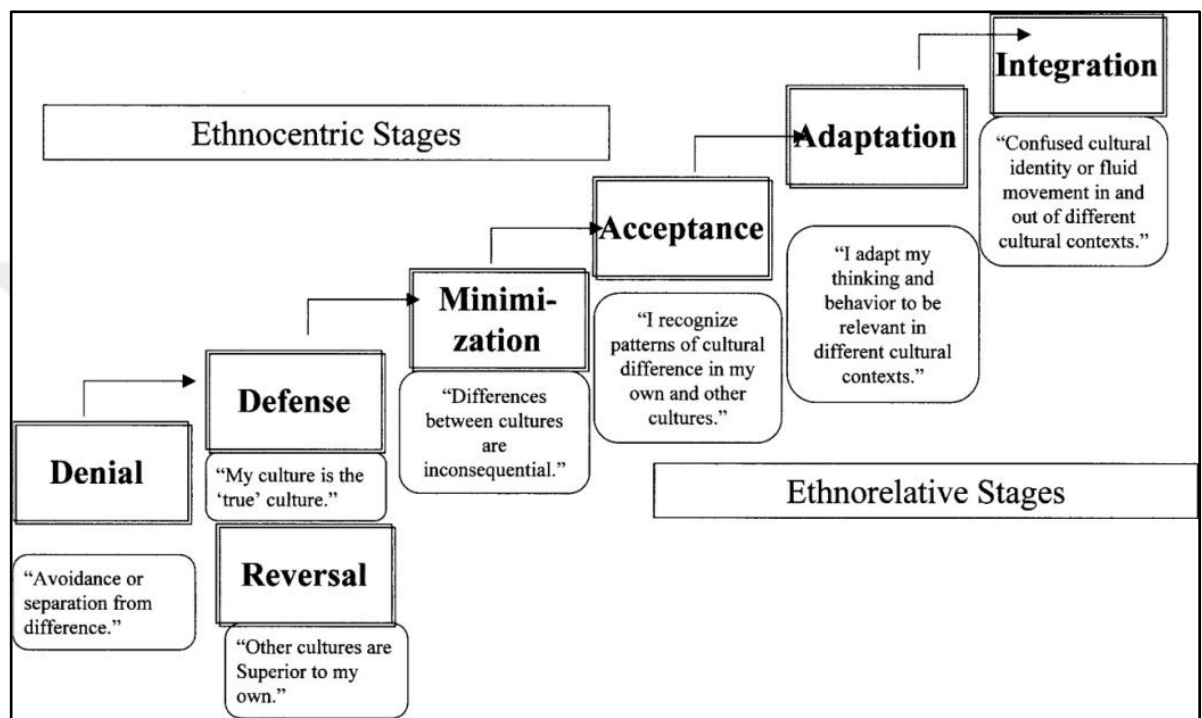


Figure 2. 8 Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Denial, Defense/Reversal and Minimization are the Ethnocentric stages while Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration are organized under Ethnorelative. However the idea of a "stage" ought never to be used as a label, as in "He is in Defense." As Bennett suggests, "...the terms "stages" and "positions" are used synonymously to indicate that we are constructing a description, not using a classification system."¹³⁸

2.5.1. Denial

Denial is a stage of limited understanding of cultural difference that other cultures than one's own do not really matter or is not recognized as existing. One tends to put his/her own culture as the only authentic one and deny the existence of cultural differences. Even in the face of seemingly obvious differences in human behavior associated with world affairs or domestic multicultural issues, a person at this stage of

¹³⁷ Bennett, "Intercultural..."

¹³⁸ Bennett, *Basic Concepts...*, p. 87.

development believes that cultural diversity only occurs elsewhere. Cultural differences are experienced with a kind of undifferentiated other such as “foreigner” or “immigrant”.¹³⁹ Andrew Martin states that Australian governments’ response to the first proposed to deport 800 asylum seekers from Australia in “exchange” for 4000 “legitimate” refugees from Malaysia was not about the legality of the people.

*“Yet the debate is not really about people being here illegally. It’s very much about defining national identity based on race. If it’s not about race, then where is the outcry over the much larger number of “illegals” who fly here? On June 30, 2009 (the latest figures available) 48,700 people were here illegally after overstaying holiday or student visas. Most were from the US, England and other wealthy countries.”*¹⁴⁰

Placing white supremacy and white Australian culture as the central to reality, the positioning here is denial with sort of hidden racism through extreme justification of whiteness. In denial stage, there is a process or fact of isolating or being isolated when cultural differences are not faced or separation when cultural differences are not preferred to be faced in denial stage.

2.5.2. Defense/Reversal

At Defense and Reversal, cultural differences are recognized but some cultural values, either one’s own or an adopted culture, are experienced as the only viable one as the most developed and evolved form of civilization and as the “good” one. The term “defense” refers to a posture intended to counter the impact of specific cultural differences perceived as threatening. Cultural differences experienced by people with a predominant experience of Defense are stereotypical. Individuals at this position may make such statements as “I am glad I am born in Europe”, “What a pride to be a Turk!”, “I wish I was an American. America is the best place to live ever!”, “Africans smell”, “Muslims are close minded.”

Defense might be based on negative stereotypes creating “us vs them” perceptions and could even undergird violence towards the certain groups such as in the actions of Ku Klux Klan in USA or Bodu Bala Sena - the Buddhist Brigade – in Sri Lanka. It might also be expressed innocently by “helping” nondominant group members to succeed by

¹³⁹ **Ibid**, p.88

¹⁴⁰ Andrew Martin, “Refugees and Racism”, *Direct Action*, http://directaction.org.au/issue34/refugees_and_racism, 2011, 26 May 2015.

bringing them into the assumedly superior dominant culture.¹⁴¹ This attitude has been commonly seen in the motivations behind bringing Western values to the so called underdeveloped regions of the world throughout the history such as in France's intervention to Algeria.

2.5.3. Minimization

Minimization occurs when the elements of one's cultural worldview are experienced as universal. At minimization cultural difference is overtly acknowledged and is not negatively evaluated, rather, cultural difference is trivialized. There is an understanding that "It's not good, it's not bad, and it's just different."¹⁴² At minimization, our similarities are the essential and important aspects of our interaction and relations yet differences may not be welcomed.

Cultural differences may be subordinated to the overwhelming similarity of people's biological nature, human similarity¹⁴³ as Bennett names it. At this stage, individuals might believe that "after all it is a small world", "we all are humans", "we all believe in one God." "We live under one sky." This experience of similarity also underlies in the assumed cross cultural applicability of certain religious, economic, political or philosophical concepts as universal values. In this stage, since people expect higher similarities, they may become insistent about correcting others' behavior to match their expectations. For example, in Turkey, citizens, as nation builders, will accept and respect regional and cultural differences as long as everyone embraces the Turkishness since Turkishness is believed to be the core identity all cultures of the nation and they will correct behaviors of one if he/she goes out of the limits of this assumedly shared similarity.

Minimization takes one's own cultural patterns as central to an assumed universality and therefore it is ethnocentric and a transition phase for ethnorelativism.¹⁴⁴

2.5.4. Acceptance

Acceptance is the transition phase towards a more ethnorelativistic standpoint. Acceptance of cultural differences is the state in which one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex and viable worldviews. At

¹⁴¹ Bennett, **Basic Concepts...**, p. 90.

¹⁴² This famous motto of AFS Intercultural Programs could be placed at the minimization stage.

¹⁴³ **Ibid**, p.91

¹⁴⁴ **Ibid**, p. 93.

this position, there is now an understanding of what constitutes culture, a positive attitude towards cultural difference and a growing curiosity about different cultural groups and communities. Rather than being evaluated negatively or positively as part of a defensive strategy, the existence of difference is accepted as a necessary and preferable human condition. Yet, according to Bennett, being knowledgeable about a specific culture may not be associated with the ethnorelative experience of Acceptance:

*For instance, a Finnish person could be quite knowledgeable about Japanese hospitality rituals or German status relationships and still not have the ability to experience those differences.*¹⁴⁵

Culture specific information may not directly be associated with Acceptance because one might not have understood the context and worldviews of those specific cultures and he/she might still be for instance on Defense. On the other side, people might also have specific skills that could be useful for their adaptation to a specific culture yet unless they are aware of those skills or how to use those in culturally appropriate ways; they are not useful at Acceptance if not accompanied by the ability to have ethnorelative experiences.

2.5.5. Adaptation

At this stage, adaptation, skills for relating to and communicating with people of other cultures are enhanced. In this sense, Adaptation represents the embodiment of Acceptance. People at this stage tend to engage more in empathy in which they are able to take perspective or shift frame of reference vis-à-vis other cultures. Third culture kids or people constantly experiencing multiple realities are easier to be on Adaptation phase because, if the process of frame shifting is deepened and habitualized, it becomes the basis of biculturality or multiculturality.¹⁴⁶

It is important to note that Adaptation involves the extension of one's repertoire of beliefs, value systems and behaviors, not a substitution of one set for another so this reminds us that people do not necessarily have to leave away their primary cultural identities to operate effectively in cross cultural settings. Adaptation requires that the person know enough about his or her own culture and a second culture to allow a

¹⁴⁵ **Ibid**, p. 94.

¹⁴⁶ **Ibid**, p. 96.

mental shift into the value scheme of the other culture, and an evaluation of behavior based on its norms, not the norms of the first individual's culture of origin. This is referred to as "cognitive adaptation." The more advanced form of adaptation is "behavioral adaptation," in which the person can produce behaviors appropriate to the norms of the second culture. For example, persons serving as liaisons between a mainstream agency and an ethnic minority group might be required to operate at this level of intercultural sensitivity in order to "translate" both cultural codes.

2.5.6. Integration

At this phase, the person can shift perspectives and frames of reference from one culture to another in a quite natural way. They become adept at evaluating any situation from multiple frames of reference. Bennett believes that learning to shift familial context is part of our primary socialization, while intercultural shifting is usually consciously acquired later in life- perhaps through programs, experiential learning activities or study abroad.¹⁴⁷ Once integrated, people can effortlessly and even unconsciously shift between worldviews and cultural frames of reference. Though they maintain their own cultural identity, they naturally integrate aspects of other cultures into it. At Integration, individuals might feel that they are in "a process", not a set identity. This doesn't mean that they do not have any cultural worldviews but they are quite aware and able to shift between multiple views while not necessarily feeling very strong ties to any.

¹⁴⁷ **Ibid**, p. 98.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1. The Framework of the Research and the Problem Statement

Globalizations of businesses, increasing mobility in communication and transportation and advancement in technologies have created a demand for employees who understand their multicultural customers while dealing with a diverse workforce. Today's workforce and customer profile neither look or act like of the past, nor do they hold the same values, have the same experiences or pursue the same needs and wants. This is relevant and pertinent across all sectors and not only at the large companies but also at smaller scope organizations.

Drastic and extensile transformations in businesses affect each and every country as well as individuals. Turkey has been adapting to the international contexts with its' growing economy and increasing workforce. At the international level, according to Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat), in 2014 Turkey accounted for \$157.642 million in exports and \$242.183 in imports both ten times more than the values in 1994. Turkey's top 4 export partners are Germany, Iraq, England and Italy while Near and Middle East hold 22,5% of the total export Turkey makes. These data indicates that Turkey's international trade grows extensively while diversifying among cultures, nations and regions. There is an ever increasing international and intercultural interaction between Turkey and the rest of the world. In the meantime, number of Turkish citizens traveling outside of the country has risen enormously in 2013. People are traveling abroad in mass quantities. Compare to the numbers in 2012, number of Turkish citizens traveling outside of Turkey have risen by 27,7% in the following year¹⁴⁸. Of those traveling, 37% cited traveling for leisure and 20% traveling for business. These expatriates become an extension of Turkey, leaving impressions of Turkey upon other cultures. Whether for business or pleasure, it is critical to understand the importance of becoming interculturally competent communicators at the national and international levels.

Spotting the 20th country in 2000, and 6th in 2013 with 35 million tourists, number of tourists in Turkey are increasing rapidly. Turkey is expecting to host 60 million tourists by 2023.¹⁴⁹ As one of the largest agglomerations in Europe and the fifth-

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>

¹⁴⁹ "The Big Gathering of Restaurant, Hotel Management and Food and Beverages Sector in Turkey", <http://sirha-istanbul.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/sirha-brochure.pdf>, 09 August 2015.

largest city in the world in terms of population within city limits, İstanbul continues to grow and become a popular destination for tourism, trade and travels. According to World Population Review, the city is growing at a rate of 3.45%, making it the fastest growing of the 78 largest metropolitans in the world.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, only 28% of the population originates from Istanbul. Istanbul is home to most of the ethnic and religious minorities in Turkey and around the world. International tourists perceive Istanbul as a destination on their itinerary for shopping. As a global sourcing hub for both Asia and Europe, Istanbul attracts a number of international buying offices, trading houses, major retailers and department stores. In 2014, millions of TripAdvisor users voted on their favorite destinations around the world and Istanbul took the top spot. This was actually quite interesting since Istanbul had jumped eleven spots from the previous year. According to Business Reader 2014, İstiklal Street in Taksim, Beyoğlu district of Istanbul is one of the many reasons why the city is ranked as the first among the visitors.¹⁵¹ Recently, the street has become the most touristic and diverse area in Istanbul as the center of attention and attraction. There are 93,000 restaurants in Turkey and 39,000 of them can provide full service. According to BEYİM (Beyoğlu Employment Center), there are approximately 5000 cafes and restaurants in Beyoglu district¹⁵² and the daily pedestrian traffic on weekdays is around 1, 5 million while this number rises up to 3 million daily visitors at weekends. 28% of the sectorial distribution is food and beverage.¹⁵³ Not only today, Beyoglu and Pera districts of Istanbul have been historically the center for food and beverages trends. Biçer explains that as of 19th century, Beyoglu was home for *alafranga lokantas*, restaurants, cafes, beer houses, wineries, pastry shops and cafe chantants (cafes with live music) which attracted international guests as well as Greek, Armenian, Muslim Turk and Jewish residents of Ottoman Empire.¹⁵⁴ All these spaces offered diverse cuisines from various ethnic, religious and cultural groups from

¹⁵⁰ <http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/istanbul-population/>

¹⁵¹ Jennifer Poland, "Here's Why Istanbul Is The Most Popular Travel Destination In The World", *Business Insider*, 08.04.2014, <http://www.businessinsider.com/istanbul-is-the-most-popular-travel-destination-2014-4?op=1>, 25 May 2015

¹⁵² BEYİM, http://www.beyogluistihdam.com/kariyer_merkezi/detayNew.aspx?SectionID=Vlg8%2FvgPJasuTOo0tTPQTw%3D%3D&ContentId=JIxh%2BIai9S4UzKR%2BpL%2Bf2g%3D%3D, 09 August 2015.

¹⁵³ Menekşe Ataselim, "Devler Beyoğlu'na çıktı!", *Habertürk*, 26 June 2012, <http://www.haberturk.com/yasam/haber/753968-devler-beyogluna-cikti>, 25 May 2015

¹⁵⁴ Zeynep Biçer, "19. Yüzyılda Beyoğlu ve Yeme-İçme Mekânları", 17.08.2013, <http://www.sosyalbilim.com/2013/08/19-yuzyilda-beyoglu-ve-yeme-icme-mekanlari/>, 09 August 2015.

Istanbul and this naturally displayed a very strong intercultural element in the food and beverage sector in Beyoglu district.

3.1.1. Linking Food and Culture

The link with food and culture has been there since the first times humans have started preparing and consuming food. Food has its own meaning. Everywhere, food is associated with concepts such as family, home, security, solidarity, group identification, ethnicity, class or locality. Anderson identifies food as social markers. In certain cultures, food is *solidarity*. Eating together means sharing and participating while in other cultures food might mark social class, ethnicity and so on defining families, networks, friendships groups, and religions therefore it gives a message of *separation*.¹⁵⁵ Regions are defined by preferred stable like rice, sea foods, potatoes and/or bread. Religions are defined by food taboos, say Islam prohibiting pork consumption while some belief systems have entire food culture of its own such as Kosher foods that conform to the regulations of kashrut, Jewish dietary law.

Identity is often constructed and communicated with regard to foods: “I am a dry martini person, myself” extracts Anderson.¹⁵⁶ Food preparation and service are influenced by cultural elements. In collectivistic societies, food is often consumed at larger tables with families and friends while individualistic groups tend to consume less in socializing spaces. Seating arrangement at the table, order of the dishes served and eating and drinking habits have enormous effect on everyday communication and interaction. It varies from culture to culture just like the other cultural elements we had spoken about above.

On the other side, foods considered acceptable are highly subject to cultural manipulation. Paxson states that there are strong connections between what we eat and who we are. Personal identities and social groups are formed via food production, preparation, and consumption. What makes "good" food good (e.g., tasty, healthy, authentic, ethical, etc.) depends heavily on one's perspective and cultural base. Paxson

¹⁵⁵ Eugene N. Anderson, **Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture**, New York, NY, USA: NYU Press, 2005, p. 125.

¹⁵⁶ **Ibid.**, p:129.

identifies the elements below for the definition of “good” food which is quite relative and culturally contextual¹⁵⁷;

- Good food is culturally authentic
- Good food tastes good
- Good food reminds you of your mother (or homeland or childhood... or somewhere you've never been)
- Good food is clean and pure
- Good food produces and maintains relationships
- Good food is good for you
- Good food is handmade
- Good food is sustainably produced
- Any food is good food if you're hungry

As seen above, the relative definition of good food influences the way it is prepared, served, perceived and therefore the whole communication process with the customer. Demonstration of the orientation of “good” service lies in design, arrangement, location and delivery of the café and restaurants. One cannot avoid intercultural aspects when serving to the culturally diverse customers with diverse orientations and perspectives of food and beverages. Intercultural sensitivity is particularly important in cafes and restaurants with diverse workforce and customer base. For an effective and appropriate diversity management, one needs to have a positive attitude with strong awareness of the intercultural environment. As the researchers, we have the responsibility to provide tools, theoretical base and knowledge to the hospitality and tourism industry practitioners, for them to seriously consider how the sensitivity could be built and developed.

Food and beverages provide a unique intercultural opportunity for customers and the personnel to interact and communicate. This research focuses on the food and beverages sector in Beyoglu, Istanbul, Turkey. By critically analyzing the food and beverages sector in this specific district, we aim to assess and evaluate the intercultural sensitivity level of the personnel, demonstrate the link with hospitality management, quality of the service and intercultural sensitivity and offer solutions for the

¹⁵⁷ Heather Paxson, “Food and Culture”, *MIT Open Course Ware*, <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/anthropology/21a-265-food-and-culture-spring-2011/index.htm>, 17 October 2015.

development of intercultural communication competences among cafes and restaurants in order to create a more sensitive, diverse, respectful, aware and productive working environment.

Field research, observations and interviews have targeted assessing the level of intercultural sensitivity of the owners and staff of the cafes and restaurants in Beyoğlu. By having a critical and deep look into the personnel of the food and beverages sector in Beyoğlu, we aim understanding the experience of intercultural aspects in the communication and interactions with the customers and among the staff. Our goal is to discuss the components of intercultural sensitivity and awareness of the personnel of restaurants and cafes in Beyoğlu towards creating a more decent service experience for diverse customers.

Our focus is on the following key questions;

1. *With increasing opportunities and pressures for culturally diverse people to work together, how would multiple cultural differences help or hinder communications with the customer?*

We looked into the communication styles of the personnel and how they perceive the communication styles of the customers they interact with. Our aim was to focus on the reflections of the interviewee in order to analyze the “clashing” or “adapting” communication styles and cultural approaches in the communication process.

2. *How do the food and beverages sector personnel see diversity in their everyday lives and works?*

Diversity is inevitable in today’s working spaces yet one needs to recognize the diversity within workforce and among customers before benefiting from that. We aimed at researching how the personnel defines and sees diversity, what sort of perception they have and how their personal standpoints, stories, experiences and cultural backgrounds influence their understanding of diversity.

3. *What strategies do the food and beverages sector personnel develop in order to overcome cultural barriers when communicating with customers and other staff?*

As explained in previous sections in this text, professional coaching, consultancy, mentoring and intercultural trainings can be essential tools in managing intercultural experiences. We have tried to analyze how personnel in the food and beverages sector in Beyoğlu deals with cross cultural interactions. Our focus was to understand how personnel defines and reflects on “cultural barriers”, if there is a structured approach in intercultural competence development and/or if each individual has delivered their own tools and strategies for overcoming cultural barriers.



3.2. Methodology of the Research

Our core research is based on placing respondents to each of the level of DMIS that would be relevant with his/her responses and reactions during the interview. Bennett suggests the best methodology for determining level of intercultural sensitivity is content analysis of open-ended written or oral survey questions.¹⁵⁸ Therefore we have prepared a survey for oral interviews with the interviewees. Interviews were conducted with depth interview technique. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews¹⁵⁹

The interviews took place between August 7th 2015 and September 12th 2015 in each of the restaurants and cafes. Interviews were sound recorded with the permission of the interviewee and written interview form¹⁶⁰ was filled out during and/or after each interview by us. The list of the restaurants and cafes researched are listed below;

- Klemuri
- Zencefil
- Parsifal
- We
- Fıccın
- Falafel Zone
- Karadeniz Lokantası
- Marko Paşa Şark Sofrası
- Mekan Restoran

Each of the restaurants includes diversity in terms of personnel's background, profile of the customers, menu choices, concept, location and the sizes. They are located on the small side streets of the Beyoglu district and each of them is run by the owners, meaning they are not part of any chains. This made the research possible to focus on the specific and unique experience of each restaurant.

¹⁵⁸ Milton Bennett was contacted over email on March 16th, 2015 and he suggested that the best methodology for determining level of intercultural sensitivity is content analysis of open-ended written or oral survey questions.

¹⁵⁹ Boyce& Neale, **op.cit.**

¹⁶⁰ Written evaluation form could be found in Appendix.

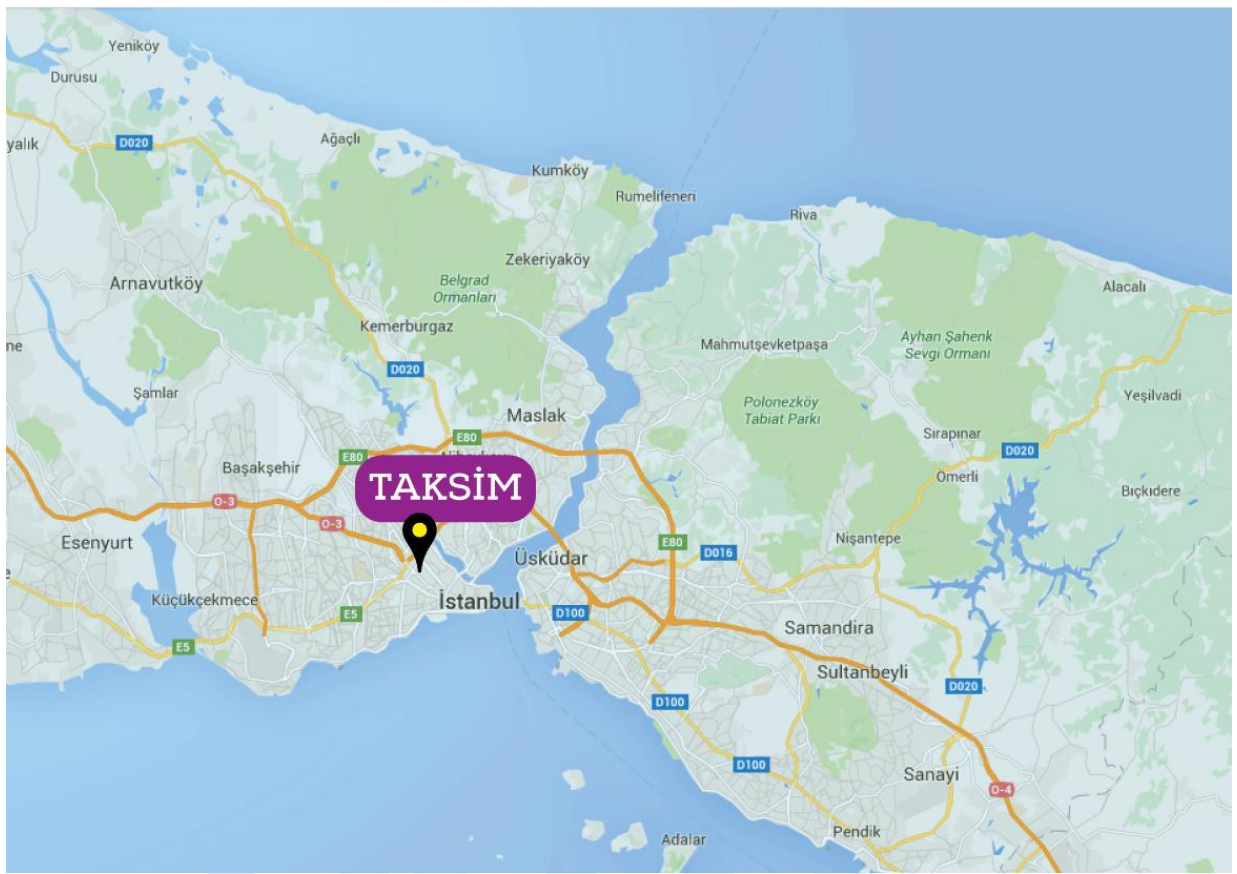


Figure 3. 1 Istanbul and Taksim District

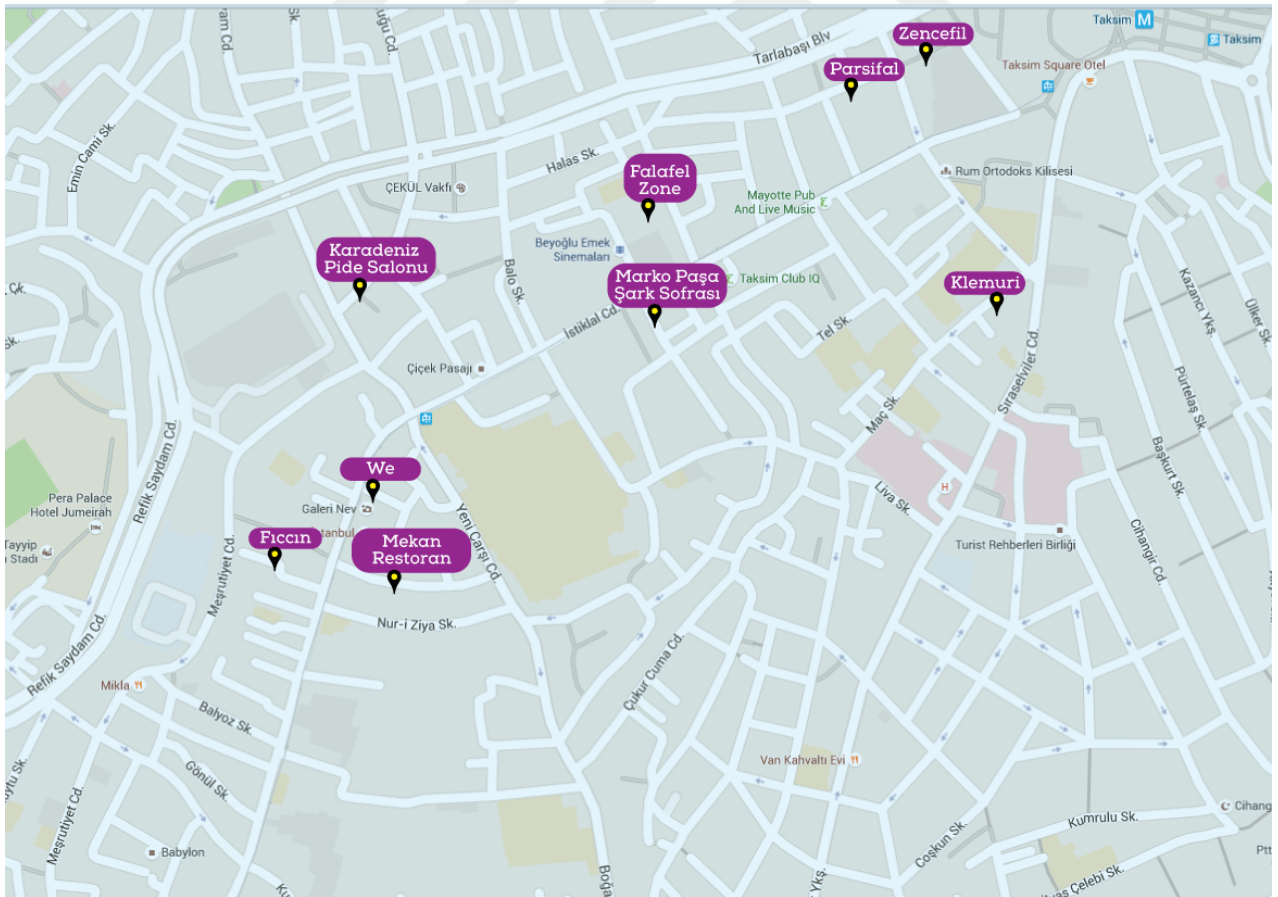


Figure 3. 2 Locations of the Restaurants and Cafes Interviewed

Table 3. 1 Interviewee Demographic Info

Name of the Interviewee	Yasemin	Emine	Sinan	Uğur	Nahit	Ersin	Süleyha	Meltem	Beyler	Ozan	Mariyg
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male	Female
Age	32	25	36	30	38	29	49	42	32	35	40
Education	Undergraduate	Undergraduate	High School	Undergraduate	Undergraduate	Undergraduate	Undergraduate	PhD	Primary School	High School	High School
Current role	Manager	Waiter	Manager	Waiter and Barmen	Owner and Manager	Waiter	Owner and Manager	Owner and Manager	Waiter	Manager	Owner and Manager
Term of employment	1 year	2 year	1 year	1 year	19 years	5 months	10 years	4 months	6 years	3 years	8 years
Name of the Restaurant/Cafe	Klemuri	Klemuri	Zencefil	Zencefil	Parsifal	We	Ficcın	Falafel Zone	Karadeniz Pide Salonu	Marko Paşa Şark Sofraları	Mekan Restoran

Restaurant and Cafe Info

	Klemuri	Zencefil	Parsifal	We	Ficcın	Falafel Zone	Karadeniz Pide Salonu	Marko Paşa Şark Sofraları	Mekan Restoran
# of Staff	9	11	5	6	60	2	25	9	11
# of Customers per day	100	50-70	100	60-70	700	200-300	700-1000	150-200	50-100
Countries of Foreign Customers	Europe, USA	France, India	Europe (mostly Northern Europe and Italy), UK, India	Europe, USA	Europe (mostly Greece, Germany, France), USA, Australia, Tunisia	All Around the World	Arap Speaking Countries , Europe	Arap Speaking Countries, Asia	Europe(mostly Holland&France), USA
Languages Spoken by the Staff	ARA, ENG, KUR, LAZ, TUR	ENG, FRE, TUR	ENG, TUR	ARA, ENG, KUR, TUR	ENG, CIR, FRE, KUR, TUR	ENG, TUR	ENG, KUR, RUS, TUR	ARA, ENG, GER, ITA, TUR	ENG, TUR, ITA, FRA, HEB, LAD, RUS, ARM, KUR, ARA
Languages Spoken by the Interviewee	ENG, LAZ, TUR	ENG, FRE, TUR	ENG, TUR	ENG, TUR	ENG, CIR, TUR	ENG, TUR	ENG, KUR, RUS, TUR	ENG, GER, ITA, TUR	ENG, TUR, FRA, ARM,

ARA:	Arabic
ARM:	Armenian
CIR:	Circassian
ENG:	English
FRE:	French
GER:	German
HEB:	Hebrew
ITA:	Italian
KUR:	Kurdish
LAD:	Ladino
LAZ:	Lazuri
RUS:	Russian
TUR:	Turkish

3.3. Limitations and Possibilities within the Method

Depth interviewee technique allowed us to observe and focus deeper on the people's behaviors, attitudes and perceptions during the interviews. We were able to ask for examples, clarify points and encourage a free rein.

As the interviews took place at the restaurants and the cafes, there was a risk of interruption, customers going in and out and external noise. This would also bear a potential risk creating lack of focus to the questions and conversations by the interviewee. Another important limitation was that the interviewees would "act as expected" when responding the questions. They would act as culturally sensitive or create an image that is different that they would usually be. In order to minimize the risks and overcome limitations, we have introduced ourselves beforehand, briefly explained the research and set an appointment before or after their work. We had already revisited their spaces couple times and created personal, sincere and comfortable connections with them before the interview. This has minimized the formal interviewee setting and created much more *muhabbet* (friendly conversation) environment with minimum external intervention. Palmer suggests that interviewers should always be in control of a conversation which they guide and bend to the service of their research interest¹⁹⁷. On the other hand, *muhabbet* environment was harder to maintain the control while taking longer time to complete the interview.

The interviews were conducted in Turkish and often we had to describe the concept and terms from English literature into Turkish since there are challenges in finding Turkish provisions for addressing English terms in the intercultural communication field. For all the interviewees, this was their first time speaking of these concepts in Turkish. We have also included a section in conclusion of this thesis for explaining the development and current situation of intercultural communication studies in Turkey for the readers to get a clearer picture.

Interviewees were not only diverse in terms of age and educational background but each of them represented cultural diversity within Turkey. They identified themselves at various levels such as Armenian, Kurd, Lazuri, from Aegean region, young, male, women and so on. This has not only enriched the research analysis but also provided a

¹⁹⁷ Vivien Mari Palmer, **Field Studies in Sociology: A Students' Manual**, Chicago. Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1928, p. 171.

perspective of the phenomenon of culture that is much closer to our definition above in this text.

Klemuri

Klemuri is owned and run by Taşkın family who has been long residing in Istanbul with strong connections to the city of Rize in North Eastern Region of Anatolia. Yasemin is one of the three daughters of Taşkın family and currently she is the owner and manager of *Klemuri*. *Klemuri*, refers to the chain that holds the cauldron over the fire in Lazuri¹⁹⁸. As she describes Yasemin was “obliged to take over the management“ when other members of the family had other life and profession related plans so she sees herself as relatively new in restaurant management. Emine is from the city of Mersin in the Mediterranean Region of Turkey and she works as a waitress in *Klemuri*. Emine and Yasemin are working together for more than a year but Emine was already working at *Klemuri* when Yasemin took over. They have no previous intercultural experiences at international level or none of them have ever attended a training, project or program on developing intercultural competences yet they both enjoy interacting with individuals from other cultures.

Klemuri has been widely popular and recommended on social media and listed on several web pages by its’ menu, taste of decoration and location among new generation travelers who look for less popular touristic and more local-like experience. It is one of the few restaurants offering a menu with choices of Turkey’s Northeast Black Sea region including traditional Laz dishes. Turkish stereotypes like to portray the Laz – an ethnic group from Turkey’s Northeast Black Sea region – as amusing, ignorant mountain folk, who talk with an odd accent and dance a wild jig; they are also the beloved butt of many a one-liner.¹⁹⁹ Both Yasemin and Taşkın family embrace their Laz identity and would like to showcase that there is more to the Laz than the caricatures of Dursun and Temel and their redneck adventures. As Yasemin describes;

“People come to Klemuri for different reasons. They come to see Karadenizli (people from Black Sea Region), feel like Karadenizli, eat black sea cuisine,

¹⁹⁸ Lazuri is spoken the Laz. It is a member of the Kartvelian (South Caucasian) language family along with Georgian, Svan and Mingrelian. The Laz language is classified as endangered by UNESCO, with an estimated 130,000 speakers in 2013.

¹⁹⁹ <http://www.culinarybackstreets.com/istanbul/2012/klemuri/> , 12 September 2015

they come for authenticity, they come to feel at home and enjoy our company and hospitality.”

At Klemuri, personnel speak Kurdish, English and Arabic in addition to Turkish and Lazuri. Yasemin mentions that they actively use these languages among themselves and with the customers. Customer profile is very diverse. Locals as well as international guests enjoy *Klemuri*’s menu. Yet, Yasemin feels more nervous when Laz, Circassian or Georgians come as customers since these customers tend to test how “real” the ethnic dishes are.

“We are more deliberate when serving to Karadenizli customers because they are generally more critical and they have higher expectations. It doesn’t matter if you speak the same language or if you are from the same region or country, locals criticize more, expect more and appreciate less. They are harder to communicate.”

This is particularly interesting because growing up in similar regions, with similar cultural values and tastes and speaking the same language might not necessarily ease the communication. Later Yasemin explains that intention and attitude are key to intercultural communication:

“Foreign tourists already come here with a more positive attitude and they know that they are the guests. Europeans and Americans are more understanding, sympathizer and much easier to communicate”

Having a positive attitude is the first step towards intercultural communication. Recognition of the “other” is not enough for appropriate and effective dialogue. As we know, at the Defense stage individuals still recognize the cultural differences but with quite negative attitudes, therefore as Yasemin explains above positive intention and attitude are key to the communication process.

Yasemin and Emine both believe that their cultural backgrounds strongly influence their actions and behaviors today. Later, we will see that this mindset has been commonly shared by all the interviewees. They are aware of the influence their cultural backgrounds, identities, families and the way they were raised have in their everyday behaviors and actions yet they do not necessarily think deep about how much and in what ways these influence them.

“Time and experience are critical in this sector. By time passes and you gain more experiences, you start understanding how to communicate with customers from other cultures. Once you get there, you fell less surprised.”

As it was previously explained in this text, it is essential to expose to and interact with cultures that are different than one's own in order to be aware of and recognize the differences and later act accordingly when communicating. Yasemin and Emine are aware of, understand and recognize cultural differences. They often serve, speak with and interact with guests from diverse cultures. They have a positive attitude towards cultural differences and a growing curiosity about different cultural groups and communities. When asked, they describe how each group of customers would prefer their food served, what they would order and expect from the service.

“Americans enjoy meat, while Indians prefer vegetarian dishes. Europeans are more open to new tastes while Japanese are quite close and careful when selecting. Mediterranean customers prefer fish or plates with Mediterranean or Black Sea dishes. Each customer wants to act differently from their national tendencies but once they go outside of their country and come to the places like Klemuri, they actually behave very much like their fellow citizens. They are not unique.”

Yasemin continues to explain how she became very experienced in understanding what each customer would order depending where they come from. She mainly focuses on national identities and cultures. At the above quote, Yasemin offers stereotypical references to support her awareness of intercultural experiences. There is a certain risk of limiting individuals to national boxes and this can easily affect intercultural communication processes.

Later, we discussed about the intercultural encounters they had in Klemuri;

“Sometimes we are surprised by how much foreigners eat. We had a customer from Poland who ate so many dishes and saw our surprised faces, later he explained that this is considered to be enough in his culture. Another story could be that a Russian family came one day and they started shouting, talking very harsh and acting impolite towards us. At least that is what we had thought, but they said they were communicating just as normal.”

Each culture considers certain levels, numbers, and amounts of elements as normal. Amount of food consumed can be too much or too little depending on the culture we are in or as in the example above, Emine considers the Russian verbal communication style as impolite when comparing with her own verbal communication style. Russia is considered to be more hierarchical and direct in verbal communication and Turkey is more towards indirect, circular and high context therefore it is not surprising to see Emine's reaction as such towards Russian customer.

Although both Yasemin and Emine have positive attitudes towards other cultures, they do have positive stereotyping tendencies which are somehow part of Acceptance stage in DMIS. They understand the differences and accept the people and other cultures, as they are. They talk to the customers, ask questions, show their interests towards others, and look for opportunities and tools to get information about their customers.

Zencefil

Zencefil is one of the most established vegetarian restaurants in Istanbul. It became a trendsetter among vegetarians and vegans for over two decades. Today, it offers meat and chicken dishes while keeping its' vegetarian options. *Zencefil* is housed in an airy venue, with exposed brick, skylights, and a leafy courtyard. Sinan and Uğur work together at *Zencefil*. Sinan works as the chief manager and Uğur is part of the personnel mainly at the bar or at the service to the customers. Sinan has been working in this sector for more than twenty years. He has no previous international experience but he has gained quite many experiences in different positions and organizations. He worked at several levels in food and beverage sector, from bar tending to the managing. He believes that one needs to know every single detail in the kitchen, be curious about new tastes and be open to innovation in the sector. He describes *Zencefil* as a relaxed and loose space with calm stillness.

"Our customer base is mainly internationals. British and French customers prefer Zencefil often but we do have quite many Indian customers. Indians are unbelievable. You can understand what they experience in Istanbul. It is such a chaotic city. Inside the cafes, it is amazingly calm and they go out to the streets which are complicated and crazy. When they first come here, they behave very hesitant, but later they see the spirit here: It is calm, relaxed with good food. Then they start coming here more often during their stay."

Sinan emphasizes that Zencefil aims to be a free, relaxed and comfortable space for all.

“This is a restaurant with 22 years of experience. Customer profile is very specific. How our customers would feel here depends on many aspects. According to us, they feel very comfortable. Some customers come here, use this space as an office, and have their lunches, coffees and teas here. They wouldn’t come here if they were not comfortable.”

In Zencefil, they translate the menu into English daily and all the personnel speak English while some do speak French with the customers. This makes it easier for non-Turkish speakers to communicate. For Sinan, a *mekan* (venue) should be humanistic, friendly and calm. At the same time, he admires the foreigners;

“Foreigners are disciplined, kind and elegant. They will not take their seats unless they are seated by our personnel. They appreciate our services much more. When Turks come here, they immediately sit, occupy more chairs than they actually need. They are so hard to serve and communicate.”

Just like Yasemin and Emine from *Klemuri* mentioned, Sinan agrees that Turkish speaking customers are much harder to communicate due to their attitude and tendencies in the restaurants. In addition to this, Sinan demonstrates an attitude of admiration and adoration towards Europeans. He continues;

“Turks are extremely hard to communicate. From the first second they walk into this restaurant, they expect a different attitude. They might be expecting to see a kebab house culture. If you expect more conversations and interactions from us, we do not necessarily offer that. It is up to the customers to speak with us. Turks expect more of these and they judge quickly. They have an attitude of ‘I paid so you have to serve!’”

Turks are generally characterized by extensive hospitality and Turkish hospitality is defined that it is not just about meeting needs, but about making people feel welcome and content -- no matter the situation²⁰⁰. Sinan approaches this from a different viewpoint;

²⁰⁰ http://www.todayszaman.com/expat-zone_turkish-hospitality_264939.html. 13 September 2015.

“We are hospitable to the foreigners but among ourselves we are hostile. This is in our genes. Why is it like that? Our perception towards each other are very limited, we have so much prejudices towards each other. Think of all the negative adjectives, denotations and callings we have in Turkish towards each other’s ethnic identities.”

This has commonly been a shared statement among many interviewees. According to Trust research, Turkey is one of the leading countries in “lack of interpersonal trust”.²⁰¹ Turkey seems to have one of the lowest percentages of people expressing high level of trust in others around 23.5%. Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development- How’s Life? 2013: Measuring Well-Being survey measures the perceived social network support: percentage of people who have relatives or friends they can count on and Turkey has the lowest number among all of the OECD countries.²⁰² Turks do not generally trust or count on each other including their families and relatives compare to the rest of the world. Akyol believes that because of the lack of trust and wellbeing among individuals in Turkey, the society has been subdivided into “safer”, unequal, distant and discrete fellowship communities (*cemaatler*).²⁰³ Furthermore, every day, individuals are exposed to increasing hate speech, violence, and prejudices, stereotypes towards groups and communities based throughout Turkey. The resistance towards accepting others as they are, leads into polarization and hostility among citizens. We can state that one of the contradictions about strong and wild national single Turkish culture approach in Turkey is that Turks can and do live relatively uninformed about perspectives and insulated from the conditions of other ethnical and cultural groups in and around Anatolia due to the inequitable and uneven flows of media and popular culture as well as lack of visibility of cultural products in other languages than Turkish.

Developing intercultural sensitivity in Turkey is quite limited at the structured societal level. On the other side, individuals like Sinan associate freedom, equality and respect in public with Western cultural values and they tend to admire and adore Western cultures more, showcasing indications towards Reverse Defense Stage in DMIS.

²⁰¹ <http://ourworldindata.org/data/culture-values-and-society/trust/> , 18 October 2015.

²⁰² OECD, “How's Life? 2013: Measuring Well-being” http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/how-s-life-2013_9789264201392-en , 18 October 2015.

²⁰³ Mustafa Akyol, “Türkler niçin hiç kimseden hoşlanmıyor - kendileri dahil?”, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/tr/originals/2014/11/turkey-polls-turks-dislike-everybody.html#>, 18 October 2015.

Sinan is careful when it comes to expanding on the choices of customers from other cultures;

“This can change. Whatever I say would be very generalizing. They are all different. I can only speak of Indians whom usually prefer vegan and vegetarian options due to their belief systems.”

Sinan explains that biggest challenges they have in terms of intercultural communication in *Zencefil* is that the menu can never be explained. Even if they translate the words into other languages, words are not enough. So many times, customers want to visit the kitchen or they also want further explanation of each dish. As a national culture Turkey is towards high context and in HC cultures individuals prefer to read between lines and rely less on the words while many of the visitors *Zencefil* has are from Western world where low context is more common. Sinan’s frustration for not being able to explain menu is not only because that the dishes are not known by the visitors but also Sinan’s preference towards high context interaction.

Uğur is a university graduate working in *Zencefil*. He describes *Zencefil* as a well-organized, humanistic, ethical, principled and popular restaurant.

“First of all, you need to be relaxed with customers. Don’t be swanky. Let the customers ask whatever he or she might be interested in. When I go to the table, I leave the menu first and then I give advices. I also try to communicate sincerely.”

He has a girlfriend from France. They met through Erasmus Exchange Program and Uğur believes that he is aware of the cultural differences in communication. Every day, he goes through cross cultural communication processes.

“Overcoming the barrier of prejudices is key to communication. The person you talk to is a human being. Cultural differences are there but we are all human beings. I am aware of my prejudices and I try to act consciously when interacting with other cultures.”

Unlike Sinan, Uğur believes that being Turkish or European doesn’t necessarily ease the communication;

“Some foreigners are harder to communicate while some Turks are very easy to interact. It is up to the personality. If one knows what he/she wants and makes it clear, then we can communicate.”

Uğur says that he has grown up in a more democratic and open minded family and this has strongly influenced who he is today;

“...we grow up in a Muslim society and I have a French girlfriend. There are so many rules and restrictions in the society but I try to be open minded and accept all the differences.”

As Uğur explains society's level of intercultural sensitivity has a direct effect on the attitudes of individuals but at the same time everyday an individual makes choices. These choices demonstrate the level of sensitivity towards others around us. In his experience, Uğur realizes the cultural conflict at societal level towards his practices and preferences.

When asked about a specific experience he had with customers, Uğur indicates that language use and eye contact are key at his work;

“With an eye contact, I try to understand how I should act. Not everyone prefers that. Turks prefer to call by my name. We are more impatient. Foreigners use their body language and eyes often. They act slower and less dominant. They trust us more.”

Uğur associates eye contact and body language with trust and calmness but he doesn't necessarily attribute good or bad values to these concepts. Eye contact is part of the nonverbal communication elements and Uğur is used to “reading the meanings of eye contacts” because of his high context preferences.

Uğur's discourse is more towards Acceptance with a tendency for Minimization. Although he tries to understand and accept cultural differences, there is a certain conclusion he comes after all: We are all humans. This could be considered to be a typical response at the Minimization stage. Uğur is in between the Minimization and Acceptance Stage in DMIS.

Parsifal

“It was necessary to have a space for vegetarians and vegans in Istanbul. We, as the vegetarians, needed our own space.” says Nahit Tütüncüoğlu, the owner and manager of *Parsifal*. *Parsifal* is one of the first full vegetarian and vegan restaurants in Istanbul since 1996. The name of the restaurant derives from the famous Opera of Wagner and the tale of *Parsifal*. *Parsifal*, which was awarded Spanish International Leaders Club Award in 2000, has appeared on visual and written press many times. Through cook magazines, *Parsifal* has delivered numerous recipes to the kitchens. It has specifically developed a menu for visually impaired customers. The restaurant has a capacity for up to 40 people. Greenpeace and Animal Rights Organizations arrange special day bookings at the venue.

With the prevailing trend of healthy life, the interest in vegetarianism, which is healthier compared to other fast food products, is increasing each day. Nahit and his friends had imagined to offer space for following this trend and developing vegan culture. Their customer based is quite international;

“We receive many Nordic, Northern European and Indian customers. These days, number of Italian customers has raised enormously. One New Year’s Eve, there was a group of Italians in the restaurant and when it was midnight I offered them wine from the house and they proposed a toast for Parsifal. I later found out that they were the leaders from the most common vegan movement in Italy.”

Parsifal seems to receive great attention internationally and Nahit and the staff speak English. Their customer base is %65 foreign tourists.

“Our staff needs to know the vegan culture. There is equality and freedom here with no hierarchy. We pay attention to these. You can never see your customers as commodity.”

Nahit believes that there is a vegan culture so culture is not only limited to nationality. People who visit *Parsifal* are aware of the menu and they define themselves as culturally vegan or vegetarian. This is a unique and specific customer base. In this case, there is a diversity within a certain cultural group.

Nahit is from Aegean Region of Anatolia and he believes that how he grew up culturally has affected his values and behaviours today;

“As a man from Aegean, our cuisine has been based on vegetables, plant and herb. We love to play with vegetables. I grew up out in the nature. This is how I grew up and this makes who I am today in the kitchen.”

On the other side, Nahit associates solidarity, spirit of sharing and hospitality with Aegean cultural values.

“We are careful not to hurt anyone. We are natural. We are close to our customers. They are our guests. Whatever they demand, we try to understand and see those as our points of improvement.”

For him, these are important elements in communication with customers from other cultures. He seems to be proud of his cultural identity both as Aegean and vegetarian but doesn't let this limit his intercultural interactions. Nahit states that he is competent at intercultural communication thus he believes that he has become an expert at understanding what the customers from each nation would order. This has been a commonly discussed point with the interviewees. Restaurant owners and staff seemed to be proud of becoming expert at cultural specific attitudes yet this could easily make anyone fall into national boxing and stereotyping. Although Nahit believes to have cultural specific information for better service, there are times when he experiences cultural misunderstandings and surprises.

“Once, there came a group of Indians with a Turkish speaking guy. They do not often eat meat. They ordered food and asked for plastic cups and plates. I asked why? and they said that there is a possibility that someone ate meat on those plates before. I confirmed otherwise and was surprised to see such a demand. Later I understood that this was based on their religious belief.”

Nahit thinks overcoming cultural barriers require interest and information seeking;

“We talk to our customers, get information and insights from them about their cultures. We read books, watch videos, interview with foreign media because we are open to new information. We still do not know enough so there should always be information seeking and hunger for new perspectives.”

In order to minimize cultural misunderstandings and appearing more culturally aware, *Parsifal* offers menus in five languages and their website is in two languages. Nahit and *Parsifal* are open to differences, accept the cultural varieties and put efforts towards understanding them deeper. They do not only accept the differences but try to apply their information into practice through menu design, visuals, images, languages and attitudes towards customers but they use nationality as the strongest element in defining and filtering their communication styles and evaluation for interactions. For these reasons, at the intercultural sensitivity level, they could be placed between Acceptance and Adaptation.

We

Located at a decent corner in one of the popular side streets in Beyoğlu, *We* is an international bar with café-cuisine concept and groovy music styles such as soul, jazz, funk, disco, acid jazz, trip hop. It becomes a hype space on weekends. Ersin was working at *We* for four months when we met him. He is actually an actor and he needed financial support to continue his art so he started working as a bar tender at *We*. Ersin enjoys feeling like a member of a team in a venue. He finds internal team communication key when working at this sector.

“You need to be interactive and open to communication with other staff here even before the customers. We need to be a team. Once, there is a relax dialogue among us, customers will feel that.”

Ersin is aware that all six waiters and waitresses at *We* are in different in one or the other way and it is essential to create a dialogue that includes respect and understanding one another.

“In terms of openness to the differences, We is like how Turkey should be. No discrimination here. This feels like another country. For example; we have gender neutral restrooms and many times, customers come and ask me which one to use and why there are gender neutral restrooms. I say there is no discrimination or separation based on gender at We. Use any of them. Feel relaxed.”

For Ersin, discrimination and disrespect towards others are learned. They do not appear by birth. Family, cultural background and previous intercultural experiences are important in developing intercultural sensitivity but key is personal development.

“One’s concept of thinking starts with the family but continues with self. It is up to you.”

At We, there are many cultures interacting, not only at the international level but they also recognize diversity within the nation especially through the use of language.

“We speak English, Turkish, Kurdish and Arabic. We use all of them actively here with the customers.”

When asked about the general feeling towards cultural differences at We, Ersin explains that;

“It is not important what group one is from but the energy they give and their sincerity are essential in communication. If we take everyone as human beings, then it is all about the energy in between”

Ersin recognizes the differences but he doesn’t find it as influential in intercultural communication. For him, humanity and energy are the key differentiators in communication rather than focusing on cultural differences.

“One day a British customer came to me and asked why we speak English so often and I explained him English is key at our communication with tourists.”

To a certain extend this is true yet assuming English as a common language in communication with all tourists or accepting it to be the prerequisite for a healthier communication are part of Minimization discourse in DMIS. Ersin doesn’t deny the differences or doesn’t necessarily defend his own cultural standpoint however he tends to ignore those differences in communication. He prefers not to find ways to accept or adjust the deeper dimensions of cultural diversities and values into his everyday work.

Ficcın

Ficcın is mainly a Circassian Restaurant with tastes and offers from all around Anatolia. Circassia is the traditional term for the Caucasus region of Russia, which is located between the Black and Caspian Seas. As the Russian Empire expanded, many Circassians were forced to leave and in turn migrated to Anatolia. Inside the main room of *Ficcın*, there are photographs showing stoic scenes of Circassian village life, with striking colors and distinctive circular buildings dotting the streets. For over twenty years, *Ficcın* has been a center of attraction for local and authentic Turco-Circassian cuisine. Süheyla is the owner and manager of *Ficcın* for six years.

“...we are not here to earn money and make profit only. Offering good food is essential to us. We represent something different here as Circassians. There is a cultural representation side in our work. It is not only food but real tasty Circassian food...”

Jennifer Berg²⁰⁴ notes that food is particularly important when you become part of a diaspora, separated from your mother culture;

*“There’s some aspects of maternal culture that you’ll lose right away. First is how you dress, because if you want to blend in or be part of a larger mainstream culture the things that are the most visible are the ones that you let go. With food, it’s something you’re engaging in hopefully three times a day, and so there are more opportunities to connect to memory and family and place. It’s the hardest to give up.”*²⁰⁵

Süheyla strongly associates herself with Circassian heritage and she feels great responsibility towards behaving, acting and cooking good to set an example as a Circassian.

“We would like to introduce, promote and advertise Circassian cuisine. We are here. We are one of the founding groups of this country. We would like to tell the world that we exist in this nation.”

²⁰⁴ Director of graduate food studies at New York University.

²⁰⁵ Amy S. Choi, “What Americans Can Learn from Other Food Cultures”, *Ideas Ted*, <http://ideas.ted.com/what-americans-can-learn-from-other-food-cultures/> , 24 September 2015.

On the other side, Süheyla doesn't only think of monolithic terms in food so she mixes Circassian dishes with other food choices in Anatolia. She recognizes the cross cultural blend within the kitchen. Not only kitchen, she also accepts varieties in cultural self-representations at all sorts of relations;

"We are not conservative. We are open to all sorts of identities. Turks, Kurds, everyone can feel comfortable in Ficcın. For example there is an LGBTI association next to us, they come and eat here as well. We are open to all."

Süheyla doesn't believe in exerting herself towards acceptance. She believes it comes naturally from the family and oneself.

"Sometimes, I feel that it is so natural so I do not even talk about it. We have 60 staff here and some of them speak Kurdish, others speak Circassian so we live our identities comfortably."

She has strong standpoint when it comes to customers. She believes in the importance of hospitality in service;

"Always smile. Customers are like roses, a very kind flower. You need to be very careful. They enjoy care and interest. If a customer choses us for any reason, she is a precious guest to us. This comes from our Anatolian heritage."

Moving from here, Süheyla continues with stories, proverbs and anecdotes to speak about hospitality in Anatolia and specifically Circassian culture. She indicates that;

"Circassian culture is far beyond the other Anatolian cultures when it comes to hospitality. We would never ask a guest when he/she would leave. Guests come from the God."

With this statement, Süheyla actually starts to separate her ethnicity from the Anatolian culture she has been referring to. We can feel different levels of attachment to her several cultural identities. Therefore, she believes her ethnic culture influences herself heavily but she doesn't limit it to ethnicity;

"I was part of independent left political groups and left culture has always influenced me. Those values came together with my Circassian identity."

Süheyla is aware of her self-being at various levels, personal, cultural, group and national level, however when it comes to her ethnicity she is quite defensive and she indicates that this is the strongest influential in who she is today. During the interview, she tended to bring conversations back to the history and cultural values of Circassians. She strongly associates herself with the representation of Circassians in Turkey; this is partly because Circassians are still not a recognized group by state and the society in Turkey. She feels that there are huge differences that separate them from the rest of the society and these need to be recognized.

“Circassians were forced to depart from their long time beloved lands from Circassia and migrate into Anatolia hundreds of years ago. This history is very influential in who we are today. We are both part of the society but also very different from the rest. This brings strong attachment to who we are as Circassians but weaker ties with other belongings we have.”

Based on our interview and observations, we can explicitly state that unrecognized cultural identities with strong in-group history, solidarity and sharings such as Circassians bring awareness about the self and others around one, yet although this can be a door for acceptance and adaptation to the other belongings around one, this might as well create barriers for further engagement. In Süheyla's and Fıccin's case, they were able to transform and blend their ethnic identities with other cultural groups and representations around them. This has helped them develop stronger intercultural sensitivity while keeping their core values and principles. She associates her everyday work both with representation of her identity, blending cultures and creating an independent, free and safe space for all representations.

Falafel Zone

Falafel is a deep-fried ball or patty made from ground chickpeas or fava beans. It is accepted and served as a Middle Eastern dish. Meltem and her husband started *Falafel Zone* three months ago. She had no intention of offering Middle East cuisine or serving “Arab” food, as many people around her thinks that is what she is doing today.

“We didn't feel like we were eating healthy food when we traveled around the world. We had always enjoyed Falafel. It was our grandmother's recipe. She was born and grew up in Istanbul, maybe she learned it from Armenians but I do not consider Falafel as an Arab food only. Have you seen any Arab here?”

She seemed bothered by the critics, questions and stereotyping she faces towards falafel, her husband and their venue for being Middle Eastern or North African. Meltem's husband is a black Turkish citizen whose family has settled here many years ago.

"Everyone asks me where my husband is from. He is a black Turkish man. He is not from Syria or Africa. He is local but people are very surprised."

When interacting with people from other cultures, one might fall into artifacts where people are expected to act, look, talk and eat in certain ways. In this case, Meltem's husband is located at what Bennett would describe as "outlier". In a recent post by Zalewski, it is explained that in a country that is almost entirely white, matching the Turkish founding fathers' image of a model citizen is often as difficult as it is traumatic.²⁰⁶ Although our interview didn't research deeper on Meltem's husband situations, it was clear that the "surprising" faces were not what he would experience only as a black man in Turkey.

Meltem and her husband started *Falafel Zone* for offering cheap, organic, homemade, healthy and vegetarian options for their customers. She gave up her PhD and settled in Beyoğlu, spending time preparing food for, serving to and interacting with the customers.

"I was asking myself, who would eat here? After all in less than three months, we had customers from all around the world. There was no country that we haven't had guests from."

Meltem believes that her recipe for success so far is sincerity, cleanness, expertise in kitchen and closeness with customers.

"You cannot see low cost, low quality service here. Customer needs personal care and interaction. I would always be on the table with them, talk to them listen to them and share the food with them."

As mentioned in the language use under communication styles in previous parts, greetings and leave takings generally take longer in Turkey. We were able to observe

²⁰⁶ <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/turkish-descendants-of-african-slaves-begin-to-discover-their-identity#full> , 25 September 2015.

that Meltem enjoys following this pattern. She spends time with her customers asking how they feel and what they thought of the food.

Their customer base is from all around the world but also from all ages, appearances and professions.

“I would never look at what a person would look, but I would pay attention to how they communicate, talk to us and order their food to me. One can have latest-brand bag with them but does it guarantee the good characteristics of that person?”

For Meltem, diversity is not valid for Turkey only but it applies to all around the world. In every part of the world there is diversity. For her, diversity is already here but we should focus on the styles. She states that;

“The respect you have for my food starts with the respect you talk to me. If they talk to me in a modest, decent and good addressing, I will communicate the same way to them. That is what I believe in communication with others.”

Meltem criticizes how certain venues only accept certain groups or appearances as their customer;

“Some restaurants would prefer certain customers and refuse the others. For us this is not acceptable, we accept everyone. One day there was a family with burqa and hijab from Iraq. They looked shy and uncomfortable because of their previous experiences in other venues. I welcomed them and treated them very well and found out great stuff about their culture. They looked quite happy when they left.”

As it was explained before when generalizations turn into stereotypes and create prejudices, the communication barriers are created and this immediately affects the perception and engagement with others. Meltem’s approach here is on creating those possibilities for communication with overcoming personal barriers. She relates this with falafel;

“Whoever comes here is part of a larger energy. I don’t consume meat; I don’t consume the world so I cannot consume human relations. If you are ashamed

of them, you shall be ashamed of yourself. We all eat the same köfte. It doesn't matter. What matters is we love to prepare and serve that"

Meltem and *Falafel Zone* creates a link with falafel and the love and respect for others. She accepts falafel as a base for humanity, initial communication and how everyone is connected. Falafel represents at the lowest possible amount, value, importance and influence which refers to the Minimization discourse in DMIS.

"I have traveled all around the world; created my own exposure to the other cultures...I can speak English and Turkish fluently. I don't see a difference in everyday life"

Bekiroğlu and Balcı explain that people who have been exposed to other cultures, traveled abroad and who have been following international media have more developed intercultural sensitivity.²⁰⁷ Thereby, Meltem's statements are based on ethno relativistic motivation yet she tends to minimize the differences and connect at a shared symbol, in her case it is falafel köfte. She refuses all sorts of prejudices and stereotypes and she embraces all as humans eating the same köfte, speaking a common language and sharing the same world. In DMIS scale, Meltem is more in ethnorelative stages by Acceptance and Adaptation.

Karadeniz Pide Salonu

"Turkey's best popular pide house" is what it says on the sign at the entrance of the restaurant that was founded in 1979 in Beyoğlu. *Karadeniz Pide Salonu* is a local pide house and *esnaf lokantası* (tradesman's restaurant). Pide, referred as Turkish pizza, is a thin, oblong dough base, with filling of meat and vegetables and then it's folded over around the edges and usually accompanied by salad.

Beyler, 32, is working at the venue for more than six years. He has been working as a waiter in Beyoğlu district ever since he could remember. Beyler has not received any formal education and in early 90s his family was forced to move into Tarlabası district when their village was burned down at the war in southeastern Turkey.

²⁰⁷ Onur Bekiroğlu & Şükrü Balcı, "Looking for the Clues of Sensitivity of Intercultural Communication: A Survey on the Sample of Communication Faculty Students", *Türkiyat Research Journal*, p.450.

“Beyler is an Armenian name. I was born in Mardin and I have Armenian and Assyrian descents, but our ancestors were forced to convert into Islam at the genocide in 1913. I discovered my heritages later when I started working in Istanbul. I don’t have to tell you the whole history in this state I suppose”

Today, Beyler is Kurdish and he speaks Kurdish at home. He doesn’t identify himself as Kurdish only;

“I speak Russian, Kurdish and some English with customers. I didn’t know about my heritage so I found out here and that is why I cannot speak Assyrian and Armenian. We lost all those cultures”

As seen above, Beyler complains about the lack of recognition of diversity within Turkey. He himself has suffered from this approach and he mentions about his willingness to learn more about his heritages.

Beyler prefers to work at this venue because he feels comfortable. They treat him well and he feels like he fits here so far. This is a budget friendly, neat and local venue for customers so it is quite popular among locals and tourists. He runs night shifts with other waiters. Beyler explains;

“Usually same customers come every night here. We know them. They know us. Tourists come as well. Arabs are more common these days but generally Europeans come to Istanbul.”

Beyler thinks that it doesn’t matter who the customer is but a waiter needs to be tolerant and friendly to all customers.

“There is a limit in our sincerity with the customers, we are the ones to assume a humble attitude but we need to be careful.”

As he mentions, Beyler cannot be too tolerant since he works night shifts he interacts with customers who appear less during the day. He explains that he sees all sides of the humanity especially at nights;

“Everyone comes here. Recently, there was a Pride Walk and police attacked. Together with other waiters, we helped the marchers, invited them here into our restaurant. I know so many LGBTIs in here. The only politics we have is accepting all views and not fighting over our personal politics.”

Acceptance of the others is one of the strongest values for Beyler and he believes that although he doesn't own the venue, his personal standpoint and worldviews have some impact on how the venue is run at nights.

"Sometimes people make statements that might hurt other groups or someone else, I warn them immediately. I say 'you are coming here to have food, relax and enjoy, so please do that and don't go into politics'. They listen to me"

Beyler has never travelled abroad or received training or support on intercultural issues. He states that his cultural background and history of his family have brought him larger perspective on social and political issues;

"'Geography is destiny'. Will you be a fascist, revolutionist or humanist? Your perspectives are all brought from where you are born and whom you grew up with. You might change to some extent but there is always a 'but'. Especially Middle East has always been a tragedy for its residents."

As the owner of the statement above, medieval Arab chronicler and social theorist Ibn Khaldun was one of the first thinkers to agree with Beyler. As Beyler has gone through several mobilities and discoveries at personal and cultural level in life, his destiny has strongly been associated with where he was born, he grew or worked at. Beyler is an example of the demonstration of intercultural sensitivity and relativism with no international travel or work experience. His personal history has been the biggest driver for his intercultural sensitivity;

"I love to get to know other people, I talk to customers here. When there is a tourist here, I invite them for tea. Many times, I get very sincere with them. I am curious"

Beyler is aware of the cultural differences in food preferences however he is careful in his communications especially with tourists;

"Depending on where the customer is from they have different tastes but I can never make a statement like 'I would know what a customer would order if I knew where he/she was from'. To be able to make such a statement I should live in that country and know all people there. This is not possible."

Although he tries to avoid national barriers in intercultural communication, Beyler witnesses and experiences certain stereotypes;

“One night, a man and his wife came here. She was not feeling well and he left the restaurant telling me that he would be back. He came couple hours later and said ‘Thank you my friend. I couldn’t trust the other waiter because he was Kurdish. I didn’t say anything but when they were about to leave, I leaned and whispered to his ear ‘I am also Kurdish’.”

In this anecdote, Beyler didn’t fit into the Kurdish image the man had and they were able to communicate, continue the trust between each other. What enables the interaction here would actually be a prevention of communication if the other man knew Beyler was Kurdish. Strong prejudices and stereotypes are key into the prevention of everyday communication. Beyler has faced certain judgements at several times and his personal experiences have helped him develop empathy towards other identities around him. Based on Beyler’s story, it can be stated that individuals with nondominant and oppressed identities in the society might develop sensitivity towards other cultures than the members of dominant and powerful groups. Beyler’s actions, attitudes and behaviors towards people, identities and cultures around him display strong visibility of intercultural sensitivity. He accepts, respects and understands cultural difference while, trying to imply his learnings into actions. He acts as a culturally sensitive, ethical and responsible individual when encountering other cultures.

Marko Paşa Şark Sofrası

Marko Paşa Şark Sofrası offers traditional Anatolian cuisine. Some of the specialities are *mantı* and *gözleme*. *Mantis* are dumplings popular in most Turkish cuisines, as well as in the Caucasia and Central Asia. *Gözleme* is a savoury traditional Turkish flatbread, made of hand-rolled dough that is lightly brushed with butter and eggs, filled with various toppings, sealed, and cooked over a griddle. At Marko Paşa, there is a lady preparing *gözleme* in traditional way while sitting at the entrance behind the window. This is particularly interesting by the fact that the image of a mother preparing a traditional dish in her local outfit is used as an element for commercializing the tradition in order to attract tourists. There are tourists taking photos, waving at the lady or trying to talk to her. At the venue, there is continuous

background music of traditional songs with no lyrics. Tourists commonly stop by the venue for lunch or dinners;

“We have 150-200 customers daily. Arabs are common in summer but this year we have more slant eyes coming.”

Ozan is the manager of the venue and he refers to the customers from Asia by “slant eyes”. There are thirty six countries and forty six languages are spoken in the continent of Asia. By referring to a physical appearance for describing certain group of customers, Ozan is not only stereotyping the customers from Asia but also assuming a very strong similarity while taking no notice of the diversity in the region.

At *Marko Paşa Şark Sofrası*, English, Italian, German and Arabic are actively used at the service.

“You need to be kind to the customers. It takes time to learn how to treat foreigners. We try to avoid waiter turnover.”

When asked, Ozan has hard time describing their policies for cultural differences. He likes to come together with international people but he doesn’t necessarily think about the experience or its impact on their services;

“I enjoy coming together with people from other cultures. I worked at a bar before where Erasmus students came often. Europeans are generally funny. Spanish are fun and energetic people.”

Ozan tends to have strong conception of nationalities in intercultural situations. He uses positive and negative stereotyping not only for international guests but also for his fellow citizens. He is open to experiencing cultural differences but on the other hand; the national images in his mind might limit his interactions.

“Turks are harder to compromise, they are more capricious but if you dance to somebody’s pipe, it will be fine.”

Ozan states that he doesn’t fully trust or feel comfortable in intercultural situations but he has an attitude of not taking cultural differences into consideration at work. He neither ignores nor accepts the cultural differences other than nationalities. Ozan is between Denial and Minimization at DMIS stages. There are times he accepts nationalities a differences but he usually prefers not to take any other cultural

differences into consideration. Therefore, any miscommunication and/or disagreement at work either with customers or other staff, according to Ozan, is based on personal differences or characteristics. Ignoring cultural differences other nationalities at work place can easily prevent intercultural collaborations and effective interactions among individuals because as we had explained above, intercultural awareness and openness in communication can support individuals overcome barriers in communication.

Mekan Restoran

Mekan Restaurant is a cozy restaurant serving choices of authentic dishes fused with a contemporary spin from all around Anatolia. A reader review suggests that;

“If you are lucky, Mary, the boisterous chef, will make an appearance along with the meze tray. On a recent visit, she prepared one with pickled mezgit (silver hake fish), an ultra-fresh tomato salad with crushed walnuts and dressed with pomegranate molasses, along with and a plate of smoked red peppers in a thick, sour yogurt. We also went for the topik, an Armenian specialty that stuck out on the meze tray like a sore thumb, or, more accurately, a softball.”²⁰⁸

As suggested above, we were able to meet with the chief, owner and co-manager of *Mekan Restoran*; Mary. Her real name is Mariyg. She is an Armenian from Diyarbakir from the Southeastern Region of Turkey yet she grew up and lived in Istanbul ever since. Mariyg started *Mekan Restoran* eight years ago with a friend and co-partner. Her co-partner, Moshe, is a Sefarad Jewish man residing in Istanbul. This is one of the few venues in Turkey where so many local and international languages are actively spoken in the house. According Mariyg, *Mekan Restoran* has always been a multicultural space;

“In this venue, we speak Turkish, English, Ladino, Armenian, Hebrew, Kurdish, Arabic, French, Italian and Russian. There are 11 people working here and we are all bilingual by nature.”

By we, Mariyg refers to the personnel at *Mekan Restoran*. Mariyg and the rest of the staff at the restorant was born and grown up in Turkey but they are member of several minorities in Anatolia. She was already developing multiple identities as Armenian,

²⁰⁸ <http://www.mekanrestaurant.com/english.htm>

woman and Turkish citizen and she emphasizes the importance of bilingualism at her cultural identity.

Mariyg believes in the spirit of real and sincere interactions with each customer. She thinks running a restaurant, preparing and serving food for customers is not only about food itself but it means collecting stories;

“You come together with so many different people; you gain new ideas, new perspectives and unbelievable experiences. You collect stories. This makes you develop but also there are times you feel very overwhelmed.”

Thus, she believes her attitude has always been towards respecting and understanding others around her;

“I have never been bothered by others. People trust me from all sorts of groups and communities. Circassians come here, Armenians come here. Iranian groups come to have meetings; Member of the parliament enjoy their free times here. I live in multicultural circles and many of my friends come here for dining. They all trust me. That is the secret behind our success.”

Mariyg has always been part of multicultural groups and as she states above she has been recognizing, respecting and understanding cultural groups and identities around her. She enjoys being part of different groups and she sees *Mekan Restoran* as a space for intersecting those cultural circles she interacts with.

“One thing I tell my personnel is that one might not remember how he or she decides to enter a restaurant but they will clearly remember how they will leave the venue so it is very important to welcome and host the guests. Have a smiley face and don’t smell bad. These are two rules here. The rest you learn on the way.”

In *Mekan Restoran*, trust, hospitality and debonairness are essential in their services. Although, they are sincere and close with their customers, Mariyg believes in limits with the interaction,

“Some customers like to gossip about others that also come here and as soon as I hear that, I shut them up. Everybody can come here but no one can gossip or insult other customers.”

Before *Mekan Restoran*, Mariyg ran a coffee shop. One day she went bankrupt. There she was with no money, no assets and nobody to help and support her.

“I only had one coffee pot, some coffee from the local coffee seller. I was so ashamed of myself but I went to Taksim square at 6 am and started selling morning coffee. That was my hardest day ever, then I earned 47 lira. This continued every day.”

Mariyg continued selling coffee and cookies on street until she fulfilled her dreams by finding and opening *Mekan Restoran*. She always believed in the experience itself. For her all positive and negative experiences she had in life were the learning experiences for her. Those are what made her today. She believes her cultural background and childhood memories are as important as her recent experiences in who she is today at *Mekan Restoran*;

“There was always either one of delight, cookie, börek, pastry, sesame pekmez, roasted meat in our house when I was a child. We were not very rich but we always had enough food to share. Sharing food with guests was so important to us.”

Referred as an essential value in Anatolian cultures, hospitality has been a core cultural dimension among the restaurant owners that have higher intercultural sensitivity. As stated above, Mariyg doesn't only sees her customer as consumers but she sees them as friends and guests. This is partly related with the fusion of business and friends circles in her life. She prefers not to separate them but rather she enjoys that fusion.

Mariyg loves to interact with people from other cultures;

“Whenever I go to the local market place, I shop from and trade with conservative Muslim men who wear shalwar and turban. One summer day, one of the man offered watermelon to me and the other man warned him by reminding it is Ramadan day for feast. The other man responded ‘she is not one of us but she is a good girl.’”

As an Armenian woman in Turkey, which is not the dominant and mainstream cultural group, she is able to find connections with other cultures, build communication channels and interact with all sorts of people in Istanbul.

“They can shout and cry as much as they want on media or on streets. When you trade with so many different people, this is not important anymore. There are Jews, Kurds, Armenians, Muslim, Laz in Eminönü and they all know me, I know them all. We are friends”

She believes that interacting with so many different people turn you into someone different. For Mariyg, all these interactions and connections develop her in positive ways;

“You learn how they eat, what they laugh at, what would make them cry. You become richer and richer as a person. All these stories I collect, they make me happier.”

This is not only coming from her Armenian identity, family relations, cultural background or her work style as a restaurant owner, from a different viewpoint it is also quite personal. During this text, we have constantly looked for possibilities of understanding how the process at personal level is in developing intercultural sensitivity. Mariyg brings a different perspective there;

“It all starts with knowing how to give and take in your interactions. Don’t be scared to lose or fail. Take the road with no plans or agenda. Have a positive attitude. Maybe that is what I was able to manage.”

Although there is currently no universal definition of intercultural dialogue, Mariyg is actually providing one of the most important elements in building a dialogue; fostering equality with positive attitudes. Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups and organisations with different cultural backgrounds or world views.²⁰⁹ According to Maryg, personal exchange is not possible if one has no respect towards the others.

Mekan Restoran offers a space for its customers to experience a real cross cultural experience not only with its menu but also with the environment it offers;

“Customers are happy here. An Armenian sitting next to you and there is another table with Kurdish speakers, Jews coming and talking to you. There is

²⁰⁹ <http://www.interculturaldialogue.eu/web/intercultural-dialogue.php> , 26 September 2015.

a man named Moses, a lady Roşa and Abdullah from there. People really enjoy this diversity here.

Mariyg seems to enjoy the cultural differences, make fun of those and not always take these misunderstandings or conflicts too serious in her work. Some of the intercultural issues she faces are especially on the dishes;

“Once I made dolma (filling) here. Armenians came and enjoyed it. Turks came and thought it was lacking rice, so I added more rice and Armenian came again and found the rice was too much and I took out the rice. Turks came again and said there was too much onion and finally I said Enough! I will make my own dolma so you wouldn’t know where it belongs.”

Overall, Mariyg and *Mekan Restoran* offer unique space for various cultures to realize themselves, interact with one another and interact freely. She ensures there is respect and tolerance towards other cultures. As we have analyzed, this is not only coming from her family, past experiences, business relations, venues she has worked at or friend circle but as a person she is fostering developing her intercultural sensitivity. Mariyg understands, recognizes, respects and enjoys intercultural exposures. She adapts her experiences and learnings into her life in business and at personal relations.

She creates opportunities to interact with customers of diverse backgrounds, recognizes her personnel’s cultural differences and acknowledges those differences through everyday practices from use of language to the choices in the menu.

In this study, we have analyzed that food is one of the strongest elements in cultural awareness and recognition of diversity. Just like many other restaurant and café owners above, Mariyg does not see food only as products or services but she strongly associates those with who she is today. Food preparation and serving is also a tool to connect, communicate, engage and interact while collecting stories from all levels and sorts of lives.

CONCLUSION

It is not possible to have the same experience of someone who is from another culture yet we can develop a perceptual set of categories of cultural difference as a new lens within which to sufficiently shift our perspective and adapt behavior to a culturally different context in ways that allow us to approximate the cultural experience of the other. This was the core idea behind the research above.

The environment in which a communication occurs can be a major factor determining how effective one can be in intercultural communication.²¹⁰ If the working environment embraces diversity, the organization is inclusive, the community promotes intercultural sharing and/or a certain brand recognizes and values cross cultural interactions, then employees could benefit more from the development of intercultural competences. While it is not easy to develop sharp intercultural communication skills, it is worth the effort to do so, if what you have to do in the course of your work or your life requires you to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries.²¹¹ If restaurant owners, waiters and waitresses would like to be more effective communicators they need to teach themselves to communicate in a number of different sensory styles, learn to observe other people's preferred styles more closely, and then communicate with them in the style they prefer. After all, there is certainly a need for intercultural understanding. Personnel are looking for ways to improve their skills in developing more successful, sufficient, sustainable, effective and appropriate cross cultural communication and collaboration and we believe this is only possible if certain competences are developed.

Not only global teams but national teams, such as the personnel of a restaurant in Beyoğlu in our case, are often composed of people from various cultures. Milton Bennett reminds us that;

“Multicultural teams with routine assignments and little focus on cultural difference tend to be less productive than a similarly engaged monocultural team. Multicultural teams with more creative assignments and with an

²¹⁰ Singer, **Perception...**, p. 92.

²¹¹ **Ibid**, p. 96.

interculturally competent leader are more productive than their monocultural counterparts."²¹²

So this acknowledgement of diversity of cultures, individuals and groups are extremely important in service sector where avoiding cross cultural communication is not possible.

Firstly, we claim that despite the common and intense diversity and cross cultural interactions they engage in, unless there is a strong support of management policies and provided space for recognition of the need, waiters and waitresses in Beyoğlu district have hard times being interculturally sensitive enough in cross cultural and stressful situations. Most essential question in terms of productivity and service efficiency lies at the core of this text; could recognizing and addressing cultural differences create a peaceful and productive in service relations in food and beverages sector? It can be indicated that both customers and the personnel are happier and more satisfied when they are respected, taken care of and listened not only as customers or personnel but also as cultural beings. We have seen that recognition of cross cultural differences can be important in communication. Since working directly with customers from all around the world, it is much more crucial for the food and beverages sector's personnel in Beyoğlu, Istanbul, Turkey.

Turkey is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, hosting approximately thirty different religious and ethnic groups, some of which are Sunni Turks, Alevi Turks, Sunni Kurds, Alevi Kurds, Circassians, Lazs, Armenians, Georgians, Jews, Greeks, Arabs, Assyrians, and more that is hard to name here. However, leaving aside the certain decades of democratization attempts, the Turkish state has been far from recognizing the ethnically and culturally diverse nature of the society in Turkey since the foundation of the Republic in 1923²¹³. At the national level, Turkey is struggling to recognize and acknowledge its sociopolitical diversity, existence of cultural groups while starting to hear the voices of diverse groups and individuals at all levels. Frankly, this is not an easy process unless there is a systematic approach in developing intercultural sensitivity among members of groups, organizations, regions and across the nation.

²¹² Bennett, "**Intercultural ...**

²¹³ Ayhan Kaya, "Management of Ethno-Cultural Diversity in Turkey: Europeanization of Domestic Politics and New Challenges", *International Journal of Legal Information*, Volume 38, Issue 2, Cornell Law Library, 07.01.2010, p. 217.

Many times, talking about differences and diversity are approached as an act of separatism by the society in Turkey. As Kartarı explains, speaking of differences are heavily criticized as separatism and discrimination in Turkey²¹⁴. This is quite contradictory to the real spirit of intercultural studies because talking about differences and recognizing diversity when communicating cross culturally can have various benefits as explained before in our study. With Turkey slowly reconciling itself to its diversity and its past, and with other ethnic groups claiming a more visible place in society, many of the citizens have begun to reclaim part of their heritage and this leads into challenging the status quo and the mainstream while intercultural sensitivity promotes the recognition and respect of the diversity. This conception and contradictory tension of cross cultural interactions in Turkey have been very important in our research because interviewees did not have a previous experience thinking, reflecting or speaking freely about those differences and their cross cultural experiences at work. Growing violence, structured hate speech, antidemocratic acts and publicly visible everyday racism in Turkey have been some of the indicators of how intercultural aspects and diversity have not been recognized or taken granted in the public, thereby in the food and beverages sector.

Secondly, on the other side, individuals with non-dominant identities and who are members of less powerful and visible groups in the society tend to develop further intercultural sensitivity. This is due to the fact that their personal and group related histories and experiences bear value contradictions with the mainstream and powerful ones. Thus, they embrace ethnorelative perspectives more than the members of dominant groups and connect their personal situations when understanding their cross cultural interactions with others. We have seen this especially with Yasemin (Klemuri), Süheyla (Fıccın), Mariyg (Mekan Restoran) and Beyler (Karadeniz Pide Salonu). With the lack of tolerance, understanding and respect they faced because of their identities or group attachments, they have developed more empathy which led into stronger intercultural sensitivity. At the same time, they kept referring to the concept of *vicdan* (conscience) when speaking of respect, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. *Vicdanlı olmak* (having a conscience) offers to loving from the hearth and respecting anyone for being who they are and it has been a visible key

²¹⁴ Kartarı, *Kültür, Farklılık ve İletişim...*, p. 17.

element in intercultural sensitivity development among personnel with more developed intercultural sensitivity.

Thirdly, we state that speaking of a common language or sharing a similar passport does not guarantee a successful and effective communication among nationals. Furthermore majority of the personnel in food and beverages sector in Beyoğlu district find it easier to communicate with tourists rather than locals due to number of reasons;

- Perception of Openness of the Tourists: Interviewees believe that visitors from abroad tend to be more open to new tastes, new perspectives and new styles of communication.
- Perception of Tolerance of the Tourists: Interviewees perceived visitors from abroad as usually more tolerant since they are aware of the differences and disparate situations they are experiencing during their visits. They were believed to be more tolerant to differences in food, clothing and communication.
- Perception of Curiosity of the Tourists: Interviewees thought that visitors from abroad are more curious about cultural values, styles, tastes and ways of interactions in the host culture.
- Recognition of Difference: Interviewees openly stated that visitors from abroad are inclined to see the differences, compare their experiences with their home cultures, and understand why certain things are done the way they are. Yet, among the “locals”, they tend to avoid the differences and respect less. As Sinan had admitted: *“We are hospitable to foreigners and hostile to each other.”*

We would like to extend the last point about the inner hostility among Turkish citizens. Akyol states that lack of the visionary leaders in political structure and the culture of fear have led into the exclusion of more liberal culture of trust, self-criticism and qualification in Turkey.²¹⁵ Inferiority complexes with the frustration of self have caused a superficial western administration among Turks. “Hospitality of Turks” seems to be perceived as a touristic marketing element in global and capitalistic world. Recalling from the previous sections, according to Trust research, Turkey is one of the

²¹⁵ Akyol, **op.cit.**

leading countries in “lack of interpersonal trust”.²¹⁶ Turkey seems to have one of the lowest percentages of people expressing high level of trust in others around 23.5%. *Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development- How's Life? 2013: Measuring Well-Being* survey measures the perceived social network support: percentage of people who have relatives or friends they can count on and Turkey has the lowest number among all of the OECD countries.²¹⁷ Turks do not generally trust or count on each other including their families and relatives compare to the rest of the world. Akyol believes that because of the lack of trust and wellbeing among individuals in Turkey, the society has been subdivided into “safer”, unequal, distant and discrete fellowship communities (*cemaatler*).²¹⁸ Furthermore, every day, individuals are exposed to increasing hate speech, violence, and prejudices, stereotypes towards groups and communities based throughout Turkey. The resistance towards accepting others as they are, leads into polarization and hostility among citizens. We can state that one of the contradictions about strong and wild national single Turkish culture approach in Turkey is that Turks can and do live relatively uninformed about perspectives and insulated from the conditions of other ethnical and cultural groups in and around Anatolia due to the inequitable and uneven flows of media and popular culture as well as lack of visibility of cultural products in other languages than Turkish. Among themselves, Turks seem to be more hostile for the reasons above and this has repeatedly come across us during the research.

Fourthly, in this research, we state that nationalities are usually a barrier for more successful and efficient intercultural communication. Interviewees with more developed intercultural sensitivity are the ones who take nationality as a weaker influencer during their communications with customers. Linking certain actions, tendencies and thought concepts directly to nationality limits the communication processes. Hence, recognition of inner diversity, inclusion of various cultural belongings and the influence of networks provide stronger and more developed intercultural sensitivity.

As the fifth point, it can be stated that interviewees with more curiosity and interest toward others have more visible ethnorelative perspective and therefore much more developed intercultural sensitivity. In this world of diverse cultures, ways of living and

²¹⁶ <http://ourworldindata.org/data/culture-values-and-society/trust/> , 18 October 2015.

²¹⁷ OECD, **op.cit.**

²¹⁸ Akyol, **op.cit.**

doing things and discourses, one need to have a positive attitude towards interacting with other individuals and groups to understand the rituals for opening the communication process, ending rituals of how to finish the process and repair rituals of how a mistake is handled. Unless, positive attitudes, curiosity and interest towards other cultures, individuals and communities are present, the intercultural competences can never develop while the effective and appropriate interaction and communication cannot be ensured. To conclude with, we would like to offer a table of outcomes our thesis work demonstrates;

Intercultural Competence Development in Food and Beverages Sector	
Support of Management and Viable Environment as a Primary Condition	Unless there is a strong support of management policies and provided space for recognition of the requirement, waiters and waitresses in Beyoğlu district have hard times being interculturally sensitive enough in cross cultural and stressful situations.
Food as an Important Intercultural Communication Element	Food is one of the strongest elements in cultural awareness and recognition of diversity. Restaurant and café owners do not see food only as products or services but they strongly associate those with who they are today.
Non Dominant Identity Holders Develop Better Ethnorelative Perspectives	Individuals with non-dominant identities that are members of less powerful and visible groups in the society tend to develop further intercultural sensitivity.

	This is due to the fact that their personal and group related histories and experiences bear value contradictions with the mainstream and powerful ones. Thus, they embrace ethnorelative perspectives more than the members of dominant groups and connect their personal situations when understanding their cross cultural interactions with others.
Having a Conscience Leads into More Developed Intercultural Sensitivity	People with more conscience awareness develop empathy and understanding towards the “other” from a more internal and in depth perspective.
Lack of Intercultural Awareness and Acceptance is a Barrier Towards Competence Development	Contradictory tension of cross cultural interactions in Turkey have been very important in our research because interviewees did not have a previous experience thinking, reflecting or speaking freely about those differences and their cross cultural experiences at work.
If Perceived Too Strictly, Nationality Limits the Intercultural Competence Development	Nationalities are usually a barrier for more successful and efficient intercultural communication. Linking certain actions, tendencies and thought concepts directly to nationality limits the communication processes. Hence,

	recognition of inner diversity, inclusion of various cultural belongings and the influence of networks provides stronger and more developed intercultural sensitivity.
Curiosity and Interest as a Prerequisite for the Development of Ethnorelative Perspective	Individuals with more curiosity and interest toward others have more visible ethnorelative perspective and therefore much more developed intercultural sensitivity. In this world of diverse cultures, ways of living and doing things and discourses, one need to have a positive attitude towards interacting with other individuals and groups to understand the rituals for opening the communication process, ending rituals of how to finish the process and repair rituals of how a mistake is handled. Unless, positive attitudes, curiosity and interest towards other cultures, individuals and communities are present, the intercultural competences can never develop while the effective and appropriate interaction and communication cannot be ensured.

Lastly, we shall also mention certain concerns over conceptualizations of intercultural competence. It seems likely that conceptualizations of intercultural communication competence have depicted interactants as too rational, too conscious, too conceptual and too intentional. This approach can be criticized by offering a western oriented perspective where individuality is accepted as the core value with the expectation of

assertiveness. Is an individual always rational, conscious, conceptual and intentional when communicating? That is a question arising from this text and remaining unanswered while requiring further research and study.

On the other side, although “intercultural” is commonly used to describe to the state of the 21st century’s in communication, education and business, Welsch criticizes interculturalism as approaching from “a conception of cultures as islands or spheres” creating a separatist character of cultures.²¹⁹ In “Transculturality: The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today”, he refers to the complexity of modern societies and how traditional concept of culture cannot cope with this inner complexity. As Welsch explains, cultures today are extremely interconnected and entangled with each other. Lifestyles are no longer at the border of national cultures but go beyond these. The life for an economist, an academic or a journalist is no longer German or French but more or less European or global in tone. Local realities and cultural identities are linked globally. Ever increasing global communication technologies and tools make it more possible for all kinds of information to be available from all points in the globe. Passports are not the definition of cultural identities. Being Indian or American doesn’t necessarily show one’s cultural belonging. Today in a culture’s internal relations-among its different ways of life- there exists as much foreignness as in its external relations with other cultures.²²⁰ Therefore it is important to understand that cultural determinants today have become *transcultural*. Every concept of culture intended to pertain to today’s reality must face up to the transcultural constitution. Having a transcultural understanding of culture provides researchers multi-meshed and inclusive approach rather than an old, separatist and exclusive one. Transculturality offers interaction and exchange with the diversity of different cultures and life-forms each arising from transcultural permeations in a network mechanism;

“Transcultural webs are, in short, woven with different threads, and in different manner. Therefore, on the level of Transculturality, a high degree of cultural manifoldness results again-it is certainly no smaller than that which was found between traditional single cultures. It’s just that now differences no longer come about through a juxtaposition of clearly delineated cultures (like in a mosaic), but result between transcultural networks, which have some

²¹⁹ Welsch, *Transculturality...*, pp. 194-213.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

things in common while differing in others, showing overlaps and distinctions at the same time. The mechanics of differentiation has become more complex- but it has also become genuinely cultural for the very first time, no longer complying with geographical or national stipulations, but following pure cultural interchange processes.”²²¹

Welsch prefers to offer a new term for describing the current situation and he criticizes the traditional perceptivity of intercultural and communication across cultures. In this text we have used cross cultural and intercultural interchangeably yet it should be stated that our intention of the definition is closer to what Welsch offers but this criticism is another point to mention for further research.



²²¹ Welsch, **Transculturality...**, pp. 194-213.

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APPENDIX

Intercultural Competence Assessment Interview Questions

This survey is prepared by Omer Ongun for academic thesis research purposes at Galatasaray University in Istanbul in 2015.

Demographic Information

1. Gender/Sexual Identity
2. Age
3. Educational Background
4. How long have you been working here?
5. What is your motivation for working here?

Store Information

1. How many staff members are there in the café/restaurant?
2. How many daily customers are there?
3. What nationalities are the customers from?
4. How many languages are spoken by you and your staff?

Intercultural Competence Development Assessment

5. Is there an orientation training program for new staff members?
 - a. If Yes: are there any intercultural communication elements in the staff training?
 - b. If No: do you feel any need for support on intercultural communication?
6. How would you describe the approach of your café or restaurant towards diversity, inclusiveness and intercultural communication?

Please choose one of the options for the following statements depending on how relevant they are for you.

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree
I have had intercultural experiences before working here. (internships, exchanges, study abroad etc..)			
I believe that my cultural background influences			

the way I think and behave.			
I like some cultural groups more than others.			
I enjoy interacting with customers from other cultures.			
I feel comfortable when encountering with customers from different cultures.			
I know what he/she will order once I find out about the nationality of the customer.			
Cultural differences influence customer choices.			
Turkish customers are much easier to communicate with than international customers. Why?			
I have enough knowledge and understanding of the effect of cultural differences in our daily operations.			
I believe I am a strong intercultural communicator			

7. Did you experience any misunderstanding, disagreement or conflict when having intercultural encounters? How did you handle the situation? How did you understand if that was a misunderstanding? When having a misunderstanding, disagreement or conflict with a customer from a different culture, did you feel comfortable asking for help from other staff members?

Interviewer Fills Out: Please choose one of the options depending on how much you think they influence the interviewee's attitude towards a customer.

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Nationality				
Language(s) Spoken				
Accent or Style of Pronunciation				
Physical Appearance				
Disability Conditions				
Gender or Sexual Orientation				
Age				

CURRICULUM VITAE

Ömer Ogun was born in Kdz. Ereğli, Zonguldak in 1987. He graduated from Kdz. Ereğli Anadolu Lisesi in 2006 and studied Business Administration and Management in Bogazici University in Istanbul between years 2006-2011. In the meantime at the age of 15, he spent a full academic year in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, USA with AFS Intercultural Programs scholarship. Omer has received several awards for his academic and social works including Cemil Köksal '74 Special Award by Boğaziçi University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Triple Sports Award in 2004 by Beaver Dam High School, Volunteer Service Award by Türk Kültür Vakfı/AFS Turkey and Overall Best Intercultural Learning Event Designer Award by AFS Intercultural Programs, New York, USA. Omer works as the Training Coordinator and Intercultural Learning Responsible at Türk Kültür Vakfı/AFS Turkey while designing and offering intercultural communication courses at Özyeğin and Kültür Universities in Istanbul, Turkey.

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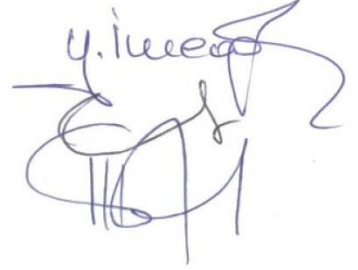
Üniversite Galatasaray Üniversitesi
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COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT IN FOOD AND BEVERAGES
SECTOR IN BEYOGLU ISTANBUL
Savunma Tarihi 19.01.2016
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