



Talk About Your Culture in Your English: The Organized Meetings with the International Students

Kültürünüzü Kendi İngilizcenizle Paylaşın:
Uluslararası Öğrencilerle Düzenlenen Toplantılar

Zuhal KARDEŞLER¹, İsmail YAMAN²

¹Foreign Languages Department, Samsun University, Samsun, Türkiye
· zuhal.kardesler@samsun.edu.tr · ORCID > 0000-0003-2101-9213

²Faculty of Education, English Language Teaching Department, Ondokuz Mayıs University, Samsun, Türkiye
· ismail.yaman@omu.edu.tr · ORCID > 0000-0003-1323-4909

Makale Bilgisi/Article Information

Makale Türü/Article Types: Araştırma Makalesi/Research Article

Geliş Tarihi/Received: 30 Kasım/November 2024

Kabul Tarihi/Accepted: 30 Aralık/December 2024

Yıl/Year: 2024 | **Cilt – Volume:** 5 | **Sayı – Issue:** 2 | **Sayfa/Pages:** 83-104

Atıf/Cite as: Kardeşler, Z., Yaman, İ. "Talk About Your Culture in Your English: The Organized Meetings with the International Students" Ondokuz Mayıs University Journal of Humanities, 5(2), December 2024: 83-104.

Sorumlu Yazar/Corresponding Author: Zuhal KARDEŞLER

TALK ABOUT YOUR CULTURE IN YOUR ENGLISH: THE ORGANIZED MEETINGS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to introduce 4th grade students in the Aviation Management Department to English varieties other than American and British English through scheduled meetings with students from other countries. The study involved 42 students, and data were gathered via an online form that was distributed following each meeting. Using manual and inductive coding as the preferred methods, the data were examined using content analysis. The findings show that by interacting with international learners, participants gained knowledge about various cultures and English language usage styles. Some participants thought the international students spoke English more fluently than average, while others found it difficult to pronounce the language or depended too heavily on their PowerPoints. Nevertheless, the study benefited Turkish and foreign students equally since it gave them worthwhile opportunities and experiences to widen their linguistic and cultural horizons.

Keywords: World Englishes, Aviation, Intercultural Competence.



KÜLTÜRÜNÜZÜ KENDİ İNGİLİZCENİZLE PAYLAŞIN: ULUSLARARASI ÖĞRENCİLERLE DÜZENLENEN TOPLANTILAR

ÖZ

Bu nitel araştırmanın amacı, Havacılık Yönetimi Bölümü 4. sınıf öğrencilerinin Amerikan ve Britanya İngilizcesi dışındaki İngilizce çeşitleri hakkında farkındalıklarını artırmaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, farklı ülkelerden öğrencilerle planlı toplantılar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmaya 42 öğrenci katılmış ve her toplantı sonrası çevrimiçi bir form aracılığıyla veriler toplanmıştır. Veriler, manuel kodlama ve tümevarımsal kodlama yöntemleriyle içerik analizi yapılarak incelenmiştir. Bulgular, uluslararası öğrencilerle yapılan etkileşimlerin, katılımcıların farklı kültürler ve İngilizcenin çeşitli kullanım biçimleri hakkında farkındalık kazanmalarını sağladığını göstermektedir. Bazı katılımcılar, uluslararası öğrencilerin İngilizceyi ortalamadan daha akıcı bir şekilde konuştuğunu ifade ederken, diğerleri telaffuzda zorluk çektiklerini ya da sunumlarında PowerPoint'e aşırı bağımlı olduklarını belirtmiştir. Çalışma, hem Türk hem de uluslararası öğrencilere, dilsel ve kültürel perspektiflerini genişletmeleri için değerli fırsatlar ve deneyimler sunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dünya İngilizceleri, Havacılık, Kültürlerarası Yetkinlik.



1. INTRODUCTION

It is essential to communicate successfully across cultures and languages in today's globally interconnected world. This is particularly true in industries with significant levels of globalization and multiculturalism, such as aviation. Due to the international nature of the aviation industry, workers must possess a high degree of intercultural competency, as they interact with individuals from many linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This involves having the ability to comprehend and communicate efficiently with speakers of various English dialects, or "World Englishes".

1.1 The Notion of World Englishes

According to Mufwene (2022), a lingua franca refers to a language that serves as a medium of communication between populations who do not share a common language that they can understand. The term originated in the Middle Ages to describe a French- and Italian-based jargon used by Crusaders and traders in the eastern Mediterranean. Lingua francas have been employed by numerous empires and trade centers throughout history to promote interlinguistic contact. For instance, throughout the Roman Empire and beyond, classical Latin ruled Europe (Adams, Janse, & Swain, 2002). During the age of exploration, Portuguese emerged as a major lingua franca in both Africa and Asia (Lodge, 1997). In Southeast Asia, Malay served as the common language for trade (Reid, 1988). Languages like English and French are now recognized as the official lingua francas in both national and international settings (Mufwene, 2022).

Kirkpatrick (2014) highlights the emergence of World Englishes in recent years. Braj Kachru, a significant figure in this field, has provided a fundamental framework for understanding the diversity and use of English worldwide. Kachru's three-circle model is frequently used to explain the role of English in different geographical contexts. In this model, the group referred to as the "Expanding Circle" includes countries where English does not hold an official role and is typically spoken as a second language. In this context, countries such as China and Japan are examples where English is widely used in education and daily life but does not have official status (Kachru, 1985). Kachru's model is a critical tool for understanding how English has been shaped in social and cultural contexts globally. Kachru (1992) examined the functionality of English in "Expanding Circle" countries, where English is not spoken as a native language. In this regard, Kachru's studies reveal that English serves not only as a means of communication but also plays a significant role in the construction of cultural identities. On the other hand, Randolph Quirk presents a contrasting perspective to Kachru's views, arguing for the preservation of English standards. Quirk (1990) emphasizes that the English

language, especially in education, must be taught according to a particular standard. This is particularly important for individuals learning English as a second language, as they often aim to achieve a certain level of linguistic proficiency when communicating with native speakers. Quirk's approach makes a contribution to discussions on language standardization and language education.

Kirkpatrick (2014) also addresses the role of English in "Expanding Circle" countries and examines language education practices in these regions. In particular, he focuses on the place of English in education and the attitudes of teachers and students toward different variants of the language. Furthermore, it is noted that Kachru's "Expanding Circle" model offers an important framework for understanding the role of English not only as a tool of communication but also in the construction of social and cultural identities. Kachru's theoretical framework is a critical tool for understanding how English forms an identity globally and how this identity evolves. In conclusion, the works of Kirkpatrick (2014) and Kachru provide an essential foundation for understanding the development of World Englishes and the role of English in "Expanding Circle" countries. These studies demonstrate that English is not merely a tool for communication but also plays a significant role in the construction of cultural identities and social interactions.

Widdowson (1994) explores the idea of "Standard English" and its function. The idea that Standard English is the "correct" version of the language is called into question by his claim that Standard English is only one of many varieties of English, each with its own characteristics and rules. Standard English, according to Widdowson, evolves through self-regulation and is affected by the social and communication needs of various communities. He contends that "authentic" language and pedagogically produced language that links to students' experiences and viewpoints should be given equal weight in language instruction.

Jenkins (2006) also examined English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and other world Englishes. Instead of supporting a single "native speaker" standard, she makes the case for tolerating and identifying various English dialects. She underlined both the benefits of utilizing English as a common language and the necessity of preparing students to communicate successfully in this setting. To increase students' proficiency and self-assurance in speaking the language in a range of contexts, she supports an inclusive and flexible approach to teaching English. Jenkins also provides other interpretations of the term "World Englishes," which refers to various methods of studying and examining regional variations of the English language.

1.2 World Englishes in English Language Teaching (ELT) and Aviation

World English is a crucial subject in English Language Teaching (ELT). Numerous studies (Seidlhofer, 2004; Kohn, 2022; Bayyurt & Sifakis, 2015; Leyi, 2020) have examined this issue and emphasized how it affects ELT. English is utilized in many different contexts, as Seidlhofer (2004) notes in her evaluation of English's influence as a Lingua Franca (ELF). It is proposed that ELF should be regarded as a separate kind of English, and that the gap between native and non-native teachers should be addressed. Kohn (2022) introduced the concept of "MY English" as a social constructivist interpretation of ELF, emphasizing how crucial it is for teachers to comprehend ELF and providing numerous of suggestions for target language orientation. Kohn (2022) proposed instructional strategies that facilitate non-native speakers' production, engagement, comprehension, and emancipation while highlighting the significance of the speaker's enjoyment of ELF communication. Kohn (2022) focuses on telecollaboration initiatives to enhance ELF communication in ELT classrooms. He investigated a wide range of techniques and materials for telecollaborative multicultural language learning and communication improvement. Bayyurt and Sifakis (2015) offered a revolutionary framework for ESOL teacher education that attempts to alter instructors' ideas on English language teaching, learning, and communication with the help of teachers and students. Leyi (2020) re-examined accepted ideas in the field of English language instruction and offered three recommendations for action: obtaining interlingual comprehension, modifying instructional techniques to meet the needs of students, and taking into account native bilingual educators who are more qualified to teach English. In conclusion, these findings highlight the significance of appreciating the various contexts in which English is used as well as the unique expression of ELF.

Because it acknowledges the variety of English dialects spoken worldwide and the importance of effective communication in the international sector, the phrase 'World Englishes' is significant to the aviation industry. The use of English as the official language of flight in international aviation was examined by Campbell-Laird (2004), who emphasized the significance of English proficiency for pilots and air traffic controllers as well as the possible safety hazards connected to incompetence. To prevent misconceptions, Campbell-Laird (2004) further highlighted the necessity for improved language competency and cross-cultural communication abilities. Douglas (2014) highlighted the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) standards for the English language proficiency of pilots and air traffic controllers, pointing out that these standards vary from country to country. In his recommendations for changes to the assessment and teaching of English language proficiency, he also emphasized the significance of interpersonal skills and intercultural communication methods. Havran (2019) noted the ICAO's implementation of minimal standards for language proficiency and discussed the status of aviation English as a global language. To avoid language-related misconceptions,

the author highlights the cooperative and consensual nature of English as a lingua franca as well as the need for consistent testing and training for both native and non-native English speakers. This study emphasizes how important proficiency in the English language, cultural sensitivity, and effective communication are to maintaining safety during international travel.

1.3 Rationale and Research Questions

The aviation industry may suffer from a lack of effective communication and cultural understanding, because people in this industry may not have adequate exposure to different English accents. To solve this problem, the teacher-researcher in this study carried out a brief survey among 4th-grade students in the Aviation Management Department at a public university. The need for conducting this survey arose from the observation that senior students in the Aviation Management program encountered challenges when exposed to different English accents during their third-year summer internships and while working at airports. Through discussions with students, the course coordinator, who was also the researcher, identified that students needed support in understanding World Englishes and cultural diversity. To address this, the researcher proposed organizing meetings with international students to explore aviation students' awareness of different English accents. Additionally, it was suggested that creating opportunities for international students to introduce their cultures could help aviation students develop sensitivity to both linguistic and cultural diversity. To validate these ideas and assess students' needs and demands, the researcher conducted a brief survey, which also explored whether students felt the need to be exposed to English varieties beyond American and British English and their expectations regarding cultural and linguistic exchanges with international peers. The results were then used to inform the research design.

The survey results presented in Appendix A showed that most students understood the value of being aware of several different varieties of English for people working in the aviation sector. They emphasized the advantages of enhanced intercultural awareness, better communication, and avoidance of misunderstandings when dealing with people from various linguistic origins. However, some participants expressed reservations about the necessity of learning multiple dialects, citing potential confusion and misunderstanding in high-stress situations. They argued for the adoption of a universal and standard version of the language, as American and British English are widely understood and accepted in the aviation industry.

The purpose of this study is to explore awareness of World Englishes among 4th-grade students in the Aviation Management Department. Through organized meetings with international students, the study seeks to foster intercultural competence, improve the language and presentation skills of both local and international

students, and create spaces for cultural identity expression. The study also aimed to gather feedback from international students regarding the way local students use the English language, facilitating better communication and understanding of different cultures.

The significance of this study lies in its relevance to the aviation sector, which requires effective communication and intercultural competency. Previous research (e.g, Campbell-Laird, 2004; Hayran, 2019) in related fields has explored the communication strategies used by customs officers at international airports and examined the foreign language proficiency of cabin crew candidates. However, limited research has specifically addressed the importance of raising awareness of World Englishes for students studying in the aviation sector and their employability prospects. This study fills this research gap and provides valuable insights into the significance of raising awareness of World Englishes in enhancing students' employability in the aviation industry. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

Q1. How does exposure to various Englishes through presentations and shared time influence students' awareness of World Englishes?

Q2. In what ways do students perceive that these interactions contribute to their intercultural competence?

Q3. What effects can participate in these organized meetings have on international students?

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This research employed action research to investigate the needs and challenges faced by Aviation Management Department students, utilizing qualitative data. In the initial phase, a thorough analysis of the internship experience recordings, interviews, and feedback was conducted. A literature review was conducted to establish the framework. The study involved an intervention plan comprising of eight meetings with international students over a 5-week period. An online form served as a data collection tool and was administered after each meeting. The collected data underwent content analysis using manual coding, with a preference for inductive coding because of the small participant pool. Two intercoders were employed to ensure the reliability. Additionally, the teacher researcher took field notes from a first-person perspective. The research design involved a timeline of organized meetings and an online form for participant feedback. Meetings were open to all interested university employees, contributing to the study's inclusivity and broad perspective.

Action research is characterized by its cyclical nature, a feature that distinguishes it from other research methodologies. It begins with a research question and concludes with the application of learned information, which generates new research questions and cycles (Johnson, 2011; Mertler, 2012; Mills, 2011; Sagor, 2011; Stringer, 2008). The teacher researcher created the study model using six cyclical processes of action research as a guide for this study. The procedure of the action research is presented in Appendix B.

2.2 Subjects

The research was conducted at a state university in Türkiye's Black Sea Region during the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. Convenience sampling was used to select the study group, which consisted of 35 Turkish Aviation Management students (21 females and 14 males), aged between 21 and 23, as well as 7 international students (3 females and 4 males) who participated as presenters. The Turkish participants were native speakers of Turkish, and they had undergone an intensive English language program tailored to the aviation sector. Most Turkish students came from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds, and their first two years of education were conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, limiting their face-to-face English practice.

In collaboration with the university's Erasmus office, the international student presenters, primarily engineering students with varying English proficiency levels, were selected. English was a foreign language for most of them, except for one student from Pakistan who identified English as a co-official language alongside Urdu. The researcher, who also served as the instructor for the Advanced English 1 course, had 17 years of experience in ELT and was pursuing a Ph.D. degree.

International students presented interactive presentations about their cultures and experiences at planned meetings as part of the study. Both Turkish and foreign students actively participated in these sessions, which also offered chances for reciprocal question and answers sessions to promote involvement. After the presentations, both groups shared how these meetings affected their understanding of World Englishes and intercultural competency. Online questionnaires were used to gather data. The international students also reflected on how these meetings influenced their own perspectives, highlighting the mutual benefits of the initiative.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Approval from the Board of Research and Publication Ethics (report no: 2022/95) at Samsun University was obtained before data collection.

The research process began by identifying the needs and challenges of Aviation Management Department students through the analysis of internship experience recordings, interviews, and input from colleagues. Background information was gathered through literature review and relevant studies. The study was designed using an intervention plan that included eight interactive meetings with international students.

The data collection tool used was an online form administered after each meeting. Content analysis was applied to the collected data, where manual coding was preferred because of the small number of participants. Inductive coding was the preferred method, and two intercoders were employed to ensure reliability. To ensure the robustness of our study, intercoder reliability was assessed, which revealed an agreement rate of 87% among coders. Intercoder agreement served as a validation method. It aims to evaluate the coding accuracy (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Within qualitative research, this process involves two or more researchers independently coding the same data and subsequently checking the consistency of coding across different coders. In addition, the teacher researcher kept field notes to document her observations and reflections from a first-person perspective.

2.4 Action

This study involved volunteer international students from the same university over a course of five weeks. For ethical reasons, the presenters' real names were anonymized; instead, they were referred to as "Presenter from Albania," "Presenter from Africa," etc. Table 1 lists the presenters' names, dates of their presentations, and nations they represented.

The study's objectives were to give the participants an opportunity to learn about various cultures and World Englishes while also giving them a chance to present themselves, their cultures, their nations, and any relevant issues to a group of participants. In the first meeting, participants were advised to avoid discussing sensitive subjects, including personal matters, religion, politics, and hate speeches. They were also encouraged to show tolerance and respect for all cultures. The presenters were expected to share their presentations with the researcher in advance of each meeting to obtain feedback. Through a variety of social media channels, participants were made aware of the planned activities and advised to familiarize themselves with their assigned nations beforehand. The meetings were held in a U-shaped classroom for the civil aviation management department, which was decorated with the imagery of the host nation. Each presentation ended with a round of applause, and the presenter received a tiny souvenir to remember the occasion.

Table 1. *Timeline of the Organized Meetings*

Date of the Event	Presenter
First Meeting ONLINE 20.11.2022 Time: 12.30 p.m.(Sunday)	Greetings, providing details about the project and offering ideas about the content, a discussion of the planned dates
23.11.2022 On Wednesday, 3.00 p.m.	Presenter from Belarus
24.11.2022 On Thursday, 10.30 a.m.	Presenter from Pakistan
30.11.2022 On Wednesday, 3.00 p.m.	Presenter from Palestine
07.12.2022 On Wednesday, 3.00 p.m.	Presenter from İran
08.12.2022 On Thursday, 10.30 a.m.	Presenter from Afghanistan
14.12.2022 On Wednesday, 3.00 p.m.	Presenter from Chad
21.12.2022 On Wednesday, 3.00 p.m.	Presenter from Albania
Project Closure Meeting	Reminder: All participants are expected to fill out the online form about their experience during the project. -Closing remarks.

The meetings went as planned and were open to any university employees who were interested.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To address the research questions, participants' views on the organized meetings were collected and subjected to content analysis by categorizing them into positive and negative perceptions. The purpose of this approach was to systematically evaluate the participants' experiences and perspectives, thereby gaining insights into how exposure to various Englishes through these meetings influenced their awareness of World Englishes (Q1) and how they perceived these interactions as contributing to their intercultural competence (Q2). By analysing both favourable and critical feedback, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the meetings' impact on students' linguistic and intercultural development, as well as to identify areas for improvement in future initiatives.

Manual coding was used to identify themes and categories from the data collected via online surveys. Positive thoughts about the meetings and problems that the participants had to face fell into two primary categories. The positive comments, as shown in Table 2, were divided into themes such as the meetings' good, fascinating, fun, educational, and useful qualities.

Table 2. *Positive Ideas about the organized meetings*

Themes	Categories	Codes
The meetings with international students were considered valuable, being good, interesting, fun, informative, and useful.	Adjectives to describe the meetings	Good (Student 28,31,2,15,11,5,6,13,3) Interesting (S-15) Fun/enjoyable (S-8,2,7,19,26) Informative (S-14,28,2,6,19) Useful (S-5,13,27,12,1)
The participants learned about various countries and cultures, including cultural similarities and differences, as well as serious issues such as wars and political conflicts.	The things that the participants learn	-learn about countries and culture from the first source (S-2,5,7) -new countries (S-3,15,8,10,11,14,31,34,24,27) -new cultures (S-15,5,13,34,24,27,21,2,6,25,28,34,1) -different religions (S-9,14,5,19) -different languages (S-27,9,6) -new music (S-14,31) -traditional clothes (S-6.19) -traditional dances (S-34,18,15,13) -famous people from their nations (S-5) -natural beauties and historical facts (S-34) -traditional foods (S-24,6,13) -having different lifestyles from them (S-21) -having common things in cultural -issues with Türkiye (S-6,9,5,25) -having similarities between some countries like Pakistani and Afghanistan (S-18) -some countries have serious problems like wars or political issues (S-15,8)

<p>The meetings with international students improved participants' listening and speaking skills, taught new vocabulary, and highlighted the challenges of speaking another language and the importance of cross-cultural communication.</p>	<p>The language related realizations or gains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -different use of Englishes (using intonations like in Pakistani presentation or speaking fast in Albanian presentation) (S-9,16) -strong accent like American one (for Albanian presentation) (S-6) -improve my listening abilities (S-19,15) -improve my speaking skills (S-15) -learn something about polyglot (S-19) -learn new words (S-7) -realize that speaking another language is difficult for many people (S-10) -Wrong pronunciation and forgetting the words are normal (S-10) -make research about the upcoming presentations in English (S-27) -understand that people from different countries can communicate with a common language (S-9)
<p>The participants will have an advantage in understanding and communicating with people from diverse backgrounds and will likely be more interested in visiting different countries to experience cultures firsthand.</p>	<p>Benefits for their future career</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -get used to different accents and it will be helpful for us at the airport (S-9-26,27) -realize that I can understand English (S-15,23,19) -eager to attend meetings like that (S-16,13) -want to visit the countries (S-24,8)
<p>The participants admired the international presenters' diverse styles, public speaking skills, clear English, and preparation. They also appreciated their friendliness, energy, and confident, expressive delivery.</p>	<p>Positive comments about the presenters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - different presentation styles because of different personalities (S-21) -cute (S-10) -talking about family is sincere (S-21) -making effective public speech (S-10,31,27) -intelligible English (S-9,27) -prepared well for the presentation (S-13) -kind and friendly (S-27,13) -excited and energetic (S-15) -be good at using mimics and self-confidence (S-19)

Participants also learned about a variety of features of different countries and cultures, such as cultural similarities and differences, as well as significant issues that some nations face, such as wars or political issues. The meetings exposed participants to various varieties and ways of speaking English, which improved their listening and speaking skills. They learned new words and gained a better understanding of difficulties in speaking another language. The participants also recognized the significance of international communication skills. The results emphasized these discoveries and advancements connected to language. It was also mentioned how the discussions might help the participants' future professions. They were better equipped to comprehend and communicate with individuals from various origins and nations because of their extensive linguistic and cultural education. Additionally, they showed a stronger desire to travel to other nations, which provided them with more opportunities to personally engage with various cultures. The participants also discovered that the personalities and presentation styles of overseas students varied greatly. Their ability to communicate clearly in English, preparation for presentations, and public speaking abilities all pleased them. Additionally, the presenters were seen as nice and pleasant; some were even called adorable, lively, and full of energy, and they made excellent use of mimics and self-assurance. The following are a few quotes from the participants:

S-5: *"When he was making her presentation, I thought that Albania's culture is very similar to our culture. The remains of the Ottoman Empire were still visible. She showed us the picture of the Ottoman castle where her house is located. Their food was very similar to ours. It featured famous people who were Albanian. Mehmet Akif Ersoy was the one who surprised me the most. Of course, Albania was under Ottoman protection at that time, but when she told it, it seemed to me a little different".*

S-15: *"I'm sorry about the situation their country (Palestine) is going through. I already knew, it was interesting for me to hear from someone who lives one-on-one".*

S-10: *"I have noticed that many people have difficulty speaking a second language. Different or incorrect pronunciations and forgetting words I realized that these are normal. Thank you to our friend for his participation".*

S-9: *"We will meet every citizen of every country at the airport and we have to understand them. I think that hearing different English speakers already gave us familiarity. Thanks to the presentations, we establish friendships with international students and help them adapt to our country, as well as get to know different cultures and speak English with them".*

S-27: *"Before presentation, we're prepared some pictures about Chad, so I had some ideas about there. I learned a lot information about Chad's culture. We listened different accent and I think that was a good experience. I think that the presentation was clear so we got it everything. He was kind and friendly person so he's gave me a good impression".*

Some participants expressed negative opinions about presentations at meetings, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Negative ideas about the meetings*

Themes	Categories	Codes
Participants felt the presentations didn't help their English improvement but appreciated learning about new cultures. They suggested using more visuals due to the high level of English.	About the meetings' content	-not useful for my improving English but I learned about new cultures (S-21,32) -not understand the presentations because of the level high level of English (S-7) -more visuals can be preferred to take the attention of the audience (S-3)
Participants had difficulty understanding some presenters due to their accents, fast speech, and reliance on PPT, while others spoke in a way that mirrored their native language.	About the presenter	-not understand because of the English accent but understand the Turkish language (S-21) -not understand all the sentences because of the presenters' (Pakistani) swallowing words (S-13) - not catching up with the words because of speaking fast (S-13) -stick to the PPT too much (S-13) -wasting time at the beginning for not uploading the presentations on drive beforehand (S-5) -speaking English like his mother tongue (S-5)

Participants felt that the meetings were not useful for improving their English, but they learned about new cultures. Some participants found the level of English used in the presentations to be high, and suggested the inclusion of more visuals to enhance audience engagement. Additionally, participants faced difficulties in understanding some presenters because of their accents, fast speech, or swallowing of words. Some presenters relied heavily on their PowerPoint slides, which resulted in time wastage. There were also instances in which presenters spoke English in a way that resembled their native language, causing comprehension challenges for listeners. Some of the utterances are as follows.

S-7: *"It has been a lot of fun to hear various cultures speak English for themselves. However, due to the difference in our proficiency levels, it was a little challenging for us to comprehend, particularly for our Albanian friend. If you could advise our future friends to speak more slowly about this that would be more helpful to us".*

S-5: *“Pakistani friend speaks English very fast, like in the same way in Urdu language. Sometimes I couldn’t understand what he was saying, but I would like to speak English as quickly as he does, frankly”.*

S-21: *“This meeting did not contribute to me, but it was good to get to know the cultures”.*

To address the third research question, Q3, which examines the effects of participating in these organized meetings on international students, the students who gave presentations and interacted with Turkish students were asked to complete an online form. The international students mentioned that they had the opportunity to experience various accents, which they found to be mutually beneficial, as it aided in improving their language skills. They expressed that the atmosphere during the meetings was welcoming, creating a sense of freedom to engage in conversations. Additionally, they were delighted to observe the audience’s interest in their presentations. First, the students admitted feeling a mixture of excitement, stress, and nervousness, as it was their first time delivering a public speech in English. However, as they began their presentations, their nerves and stress levels gradually diminished. These experiences played a significant role in fostering the students’ self-confidence in public speaking. Their responses were collected and presented into meaning units.

Presenter from Belarus: *“Hi, I think that this project was helpful and interesting. When I were there, it was exciting for me and I was happy when i saw how students was interested in my presentation. If you ask me I didn’t have any difficulties during my presentation but maybe some of student had, because our accents can have some differences, but not much. I think it was good idea to show them differences of accents because when my friend spoke in English even me thought what he wanted to say or which word he said? So i think it was good idea and I want offer another one, for example once of month we can do “_topic month” it means that every month we will chose one topic which we interested in and create an events which connect with this topic. For example “game month” in this month we can play in computer game or in volleyball and another and memorize word which connected with this game. Thank you a lot”.*

Presenter from Albania: *“It was such a good project because students are now faced with different accent from the world. As long as we do not speak the same language it’s too hard to understand each other when we come from different countries. It wasn’t too hard for me during the meetings because the environment was too warm and I felt free to talk. I have also another idea about a project. Why don’t we do an activity that includes about creating dialogues between a Turkish student and an international one? I mean asking questions and giving answers. Creating games in class, finding missing words or sth. like that. Turkish students can also watch a movie in*

the class with English subtitles and in the end they try to write what they understood. But the problem is that English it's not just about reading and writing, the important one is being able to speak it. So that's why they should interact more with the rest that know English".

Presenter from Chad: *"Thanks a lot for offering this opportunity for us, in fact it's a mutual benefit that we get chance to improve our language as well. I thank you indeed, you have given us self-confidence to speak out, I was nervous but it's gone at the middle of the presentation".*

The teacher-researcher maintained a record of their observations during each meeting in the form of field notes to document their perspectives and experiences. These notes were compiled into a summary and included the overarching themes that emerged from the meetings, as well as noteworthy reactions of the participants. According to these notes, the intercultural project had a significant impact on students, exceeding their expectations. The presentations made by the international students' stimulated discussions helped students develop their presentation and research skills and exposed them to different cultures. With an emphasis on current events and active participation from students, the teacher intends to implement more initiatives along these lines in the future.

In the literature, intercultural communication has been examined in terms of its significance in the modern world, with a focus on the necessity to cultivate the mindset and abilities required for multicultural interaction. Greater openness, tolerance, and acceptance of other cultures result from greater intercultural competency (Ilie, 2019). Studies have also shown that exposure to various accents affects language learning. Thus, to help students become more conscious of cultural variations, it is recommended that language instruction incorporate a range of accents (Büyükhıska & Uyar, 2019). Cross-cultural exchange programs have also been demonstrated to enhance students' language competence, cognitive abilities, and worldviews (Hasırıcı & Yanagisawa, 2019).

Studies have indicated that exposing pupils to a variety of languages can aid in language acquisition and enhance their comprehension of the spoken language (Büyükhıska & Uyar, 2019). Future ESL teachers can enhance their global awareness and gain a better understanding of the linguistic features of less often taught languages by working with international students (Vakili & Mohammed, 2022). Hasırıcı and Yanagisawa (2019) claim that cross-cultural exchange programs in design education have improved language proficiency and increased knowledge of professional organizations and architecture claims. Feedback and comments from the participants regarding the presentations indicate the need for a more inclusive and understandable approach that considers varying language proficiency and accents. The use of visual aids and authentic materials can improve comprehension

and engagement in the classroom (Büyükahıska & Uyar, 2019). Documentation of observations by the teacher researcher in the form of field notes provides valuable insights and data for further analysis and sharing with colleagues (Hasırcı & Yanagisawa, 2019).

Overall, this study stresses the importance of cross-cultural communication, accent exposure, and intercultural communication in developing tolerance, understanding, and language development among students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study aimed to increase the awareness of World English among 4th grade Aviation Management students through scheduled interactions with international students. The goal was to get feedback from participants on how interaction with international students influences their knowledge of language and culture by exposing them to English variations other than American and British ones. Data were gathered using an online form and examined qualitatively via content analysis.

The results demonstrate that the meetings were both useful and educational. They provided the participants with the opportunity to learn about other cultures and improve their language skills. International pupils also gained confidence in dealing with the public. Even though some participants struggled to communicate because of their accent or speaking style, the study had a beneficial impact on both Turkish and international students since it provided useful experiences and possibilities for cultural and linguistic development. The findings have several educational implications.

- The study underlines the necessity of exposing students to other forms of English to explore cultural understanding and inclusivity (Kaçar & Bayyurt, 2018; Sifakis & Bayyurt, 2015).
- This study highlights the cultural and linguistic awareness in the Aviation Management field as the industry becomes more globalized.
- It was discovered that organized meetings with international students improved students' listening and speaking skills, emphasizing the need for language practice with diverse speakers.
- According to the study, scheduled meetings aided the development of students' public speaking abilities, especially for international students presenting in English for the first time.
- Creating inclusive environments in which students feel valued and can freely express their cultural identities is crucial for the success of such projects.

Statements and Declarations

- (a) Funding: This study received no external funding.
- (b) Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.
- (c) Permission: For this study, the researcher obtained ethical approval from the research ethics committee and collected signed consent forms from the participants.

Author Contribution Rates

Design of Study: ZK(%50), İY(%50)

Data Acquisition: ZK(%50), İY(%50)

Data Analysis: ZK(%50), İY(%50)

Writing Up: ZK(%50), İY(%50)

Submission and Revision: ZK(%50), İY(%50)

REFERENCES

- Adams, J. N., Janse, M., & Swain, S. (Eds.). (2002). *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Word*. Oxford University Press.
- Bayyurt, Y., & Sifakis, N. (2015a). Developing an ELF-aware pedagogy: Insights from a self-education programme. In P. Vettorel (Ed.), *New Frontiers in teaching and learning English* (pp. 55-76). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Bayyurt, Y., & Sifakis, N. (2015b). ELF-aware in-service teacher education: A transformative perspective. In H. Bowles & A. Cogo (Eds.), *International perspectives on Teaching English as a lingua franca* (pp. 117-135). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Büyükahiska, D., & Uyar, A. C. (2019). The effects of different accents on listening comprehension in efl classes. *OPUS International Journal of Society Researches*, 14(20), 1369-1394.
- Campbell-Laird, K. (2004). Aviation English: a review of the language of International Civil Aviation. 253 - 261. 10.1109/IPCC.2004.1375306.
- Douglas, D. (2014). Nobody seems to speak English here today: Enhancing assessment and training in aviation English. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*. 2. 1-12.
- Hasirci, D., Yanagisawa, K. (2019). Cross-cultural exchange in design education between Japan and Türkiye, *edulearn19 Proceedings*, pp. 324-330.
- Havran, L. (2019). *Aviation English as a global lingua franca. Aviation English as a global lingua franca*. Retrieved from <https://ljljanahavran.wordpress.com/2019/01/10/aviation-english-as-a-global-lingua-franca/>
- Holubnycha, L., Kostikova, I. I., Leiba, O., Lobzova, S., & Chornovol-Tkachenko, R. (2019). Developing Students' Intercultural Competence at the Tertiary Level. *Revista Romaneasca Pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*, 11(3), 245-262. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/149>
- Ilie, O. A. (2019). The intercultural competence. Developing effective intercultural communication skills. In *International conference Knowledge-based organization* (Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 264-268).
- Jenkins, J. (2006). Current Perspectives on Teaching World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40, 157-181.
- Johnson, A. P. (2008). *A short guide to action research*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Kaçar, I. G., & Bayyurt, Y. (2018). ELF-aware pre-service teacher education to promote glocal interactions: A case study in Turkey. *Conceptual Shifts and Contextualized Practices in Education for Glocal Interaction: Issues and Implications*, 77-103.

- Kachru, B. (1985). *Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: English language in the outer circle*. In R. Quirk and H. Widowsan (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (p. 11-36). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kachru, B. B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures* (2nd ed.). University of Illinois Press.
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2014). *World Englishes*. In *The Routledge companion to English studies* (pp. 33-45). Routledge.
- Kohn, K. (2018). MY English: A social constructivist perspective on ELF. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 7, 1-24. 10.1515/jelf-2018-0001.
- Leyi, W. (2020). World englishes (WE) and English as lingua franca (ELF): implications for English teaching and learning. *Int. J. Inf. Educ. Technol*, 10(5), 389-393.
- Lodge, R. A. (1997). *French: From Dialect to Standard*. Routledge.
- Mertler, C. A. (2012). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mufwene, S. S. (2022). *Lingua franca*. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/lingua-franca>
- Quirk R. Language varieties and standard language. *English Today*, 1990;6(1):3-10. doi:10.1017/S0266078400004454
- Reid, A. (1988). *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: The Lands Below the Winds*. Yale University Press.
- Sagor, R. (2011). *The action research guidebook: A four-stage process for educators and school teams*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2004). *Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca*. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 209 - 239.
- Seymour, R., & Messinger, S. (1995). *Inviting International Students into the Communication Classroom: The Wayne State University Global Communication Course*.
- Stringer, E. T. (2008). *Action research in education* (2nd Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Vakili, Pouya and Mohammed, Reda, Invitation Accepted: International Students as a Pedagogical Source to increase American Students' WE awareness (December 15, 2021). *Journal of applied languages and linguistics*, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4143927>
- Widdowson, H.G. (1994). The Ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 377-389.

APPENDICES

Appendix A.

Needs for the target group before the intervention

QUESTION 1. English is used as a common language (Lingua Franca) by people whose mother tongue is different. Do you think that students who plan to work in the aviation sector need to be exposed to other English varieties besides American and British English? Could you briefly describe the causes?

Students' answers:

- *If it useful to us in the industry, our exposure is important.*
- *Yeah, I think. Because there are so many countries in the world. The language used by everyone may not be the same language. Even in Türkiye, there are many different varieties, so I think it is useful and necessary for us to see different languages.*
- *I think so. Especially during my internship period, I had difficulties. English is now a language spoken by almost all countries in the world. So, there are various accent differences. The English spoken by an Arab passenger and the English spoken by a French passenger do not sound the same. For this reason, I think that we, who will work in the field of aviation, should hear the difference in accent and be familiar with the decision that we can hear.*
- *As we know English is a universal language. This is inevitable, especially in the aviation industry. We are faced with every passenger profile in the aviation industry, and we see that the accents of every (international) passenger who come to us are different, and we hear different varieties of English throughout the day. For this reason, it is very important for us as candidates to enter the aviation industry that we are exposed to different varieties of the English language.*
- *I think it is necessary because my English, which I was subjected to compulsory English during my internship this summer, has improved a lot from its normal level.*
- *Yes, I think it is necessary. There is a difference in pronunciation originating from the mother tongue of people whose mother tongue is different and who prefer English for communication. Sometimes we have difficulty understanding the words they pronounce.*
- *If we are to make a comment considering the sector in which we are educated, aviation is an international sector and an area with job opportunities in every country, so we need to be prepared for the varieties of English used in every country.*
- *I don't think so because the meaning and pronunciations may change*
- *I don't think it's an already common language, I think it would be silly to turn to other dialects, American and British English that everyone can understand and understand is enough for us.*
- *Having a common language facilitates communication, so diversity is a disadvantage.*
- *It may be necessary. Because in Turkish, the dialect of each region is different and even though we are Turkish, sometimes we do not understand it. I think it will be the same in English, but we Turks have difficulty understanding even normal English.*
- *Yes, I think because I want to go to America*
- *I think it is necessary. The reason is because you are an international profession, so that you can understand English more easily with colleagues from different nations.*
- *Learning the common accent can be more useful in practice*
- *Yes, I think so. Being exposed to a lot of English in my department increases the need for learning and wants to be spoken properly and beautifully like our mother tongue, so we need to understand the English-speaking people in front of us, after all, people should be able to understand and speak their mother tongue wherever they hear it.*
- *Yes, because in the aviation industry, different people encounter each other. I think it is necessary to avoid conflicts*
- *Frankly, I don't think it's necessary. Because I think that it will cause problems universally in real life situations due to the British and American accent or some terminological differences used in these two languages, so I believe that an English with a single rule will be more robust and powerful.*
- *Yeah, I think. Because while doing my internship this summer, I was exposed to English with many different accents. Sometimes I had a hard time getting along. There is a lot of diversity in our own language, we even call it dialect. In English, in this way, it varies from person to person, from region to region.*

QUESTION 2. What would you like to gain from international students studying at our university in terms of culture and language? What could be the activities to be organized together, what interests you to learn from different cultures, and what cultural issues might be necessary in your future life?

Students' answers:

- *Our interaction with friends in foreign countries can affect our future life. We can do a speaking activity with them. We can play games in various ways such as hangman, taboo, and we can improve ourselves. If we go abroad in the future, it will be very beneficial for us.*
- *First, I would like to know if there are any difficulties that he/she must introduce his/her own culture and language in our country. I think that our meeting and talking can be useful.*
- *This activity can be carried out as a solution to the 1st question. Talking to international students and experiencing how they use English will be beneficial for us. In this context, it can be very useful for our general culture to talk about their own culture, to talk about a daily routine in the region where they live, and to touch on their education systems.*
- *Conducting these trainings outside rather than in the classroom environment may be more effective for the activity.*
- *I think there may be a collective speaking lesson, and everyone may not be able to attend the lesson because they will be afraid. Here, the burden falls on the teachers by making it a bit like a coaching system. In this voluntarily spoken English speech here, teachers or people who will assist them can coach us and enable us to be active in speaking.*
- *How foreign language education in their country works, the differences that their cultures have in learning and speaking the language, how often they can use the second language they learned in their country in their daily lives.*
- *International clubs can be opened, and they can promote their culture.*
- *Culturally, I would like to learn about the cultures of the country they live in, in general, in every field.*
- *Everyday conversations, respect frames, all kinds of activities where they can share their language and culture with us, speaking will be very useful for us.*
- *They can describe their national and cultural characteristics in the form of short sketches.*
- *I would love for international students studying at our university to give us something about speaking.*
- *I want to learn their language too. If they are learning my language to talk to me, why not learn their language to talk to them?*
- *I would like to speak English by speaking more*
- *A conference can be organized to explain their own cultures and cultural differences.*
- *Cultural markets or promotions in spring festivals can create a good festival. We can transfer language and cultural life with cultural clubs with international friends.*
- *It could be things like an organizing party together. Party can be arranged such as food, music and dance promoting their culture. In this way, we can make international friends and see their cultures. I think so.*

Appendix B

Procedures of the Action Research Conducted

Stages	Activities Done
Identify a Problem	<p>The teacher-researcher considered the needs and lacks the students (Aviation Management Department) after receiving audio recordings from the students regarding their internship experiences at various airports, Ranked the issues in order of importance. These issues included dealing with varieties of English, not having the opportunity to work in different departments, performing the same tasks again and again, communicative strategies for aggressive passengers, and more.</p> <p>Students were interviewed about the issues they had with various accents and English types, and a literature review was done on the subject.</p> <p>Got advice from your colleagues</p> <p>A brief survey was conducted to find out what the students thought about the importance of learning “World Englishes and Culture”.</p> <p>The ones that can be implemented were chosen from the list for solving the problem. As a result, the instructor will invite the international students who are volunteer to participate to the organized meetings. Before attending the event, the students will be expected to research the countries and cultures of the international students and in return international students will be required to give brief presentations describing their countries, cities, official languages, everyday life there, traditional food, currency, and other topics. These meetings will be as interactive as possible to encourage spontaneous speech so participants can ask questions to each other, and the meetings will be available to everyone in the department.</p> <p>Considered the scope and boundaries of this study</p> <p>Wrote the research questions</p>
Gather Background Information	<p>Reviewed the existing literature with the key words, which were “World Englishes and Intercultural Competence” in this study</p> <p>Read national and global studies to have a deeper understanding</p>
Design the Study	<p>Described the intervention (8 interactive meetings with the international students except from first and final ones)</p> <p>Developed a Timeline (5 weeks)</p> <p>Convenience sampling (47 students at Aviation Management Department)</p> <p>Ethical Considerations (Ethical permission will be obtained from the university, and participants will sign the consent form)</p>
Collect Data	<p>Decided on data collection tools (online survey at the end of the intervention, and field notes of the researcher)</p>

Analyze and Interpret Data	The data from the online survey results will be examined, and coded through process coding procedures (themes, categories, codes) Wrote field notes (consisted of reflective and descriptive information)
Implement and Share the Findings	Shared the results with the participants, the related department manager and language coordinator Make a presentation for the interested audience
