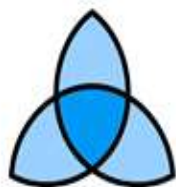


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ФАКУЛТЕТ ЗА ЈАЗИЦИ, КУЛТУРИ И  
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THESIS:

**Intercultural Communication Cognition of English Language Teachers:  
A Comparative Case Study of high school students in Strumica and Ruse**

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**Intercultural Communication Cognition of English Language Teachers:**

**A Comparative Case Study of high school students in Strumica and Ruse**

**Познавање на интеркултурна комуникација кај наставниците по англиски јазик:  
Споредбена студија на случај кај учениците од средното образование во Струмица и  
Русе**

**Njohja e komunikimit ndërkulturor të mësuesve të gjuhës angleze: Një studim rasti  
krahasues i nxënësve të shkollave të mesme në Strumicë dhe Ruse**

### **Statement of originality**

This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes. I certify that the content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation focuses on intercultural communication competence (ICC) of English language teachers in the Republic of Macedonia. Recently, English language teaching has been brought into relation with intercultural communication competence especially in countries where English language is not a native language. The globalization of the world, the immigration of people to Europe and overseas, and the diverse nature of many societies have caused the ICC to become a trend not only in the field of ELT, but also in other disciplines such as: business and economy, communication, art, marketing etc.

Chapter One will focus on the importance of intercultural communication and intercultural communication cognition of teachers worldwide. First, the main terms connected to intercultural communication are to be explained. Then, some of the main issues of ICC such as barriers of communication, stereotypes and conflicts will be discussed in details. The following chapter will go through the literature review and the concepts of ICC. The literature review will conclude with a discussion of the concept of multiculturalism and the approaches towards crafting a multicultural curriculum for students from different ethnic communities in the English language classroom. The culture and conduct of the students from different ethnic communities will be investigated and finally a suggestion will be proposed about how to deal with these students.

The next chapter will raise the question of whether the ICC cognition of language teachers in Strumica is at a low level or not, and is this something that English language teachers should consider. In addition the research of the current status of cultural competence will be exposed. Twenty teachers of English language will participate in a research on intercultural communication competence together with ninety-five students through their formal high-school education process relevant to teaching and communicating with students from different ethnic backgrounds. The final chapter will give the conclusions, summaries and recommendations for further research in this field.

**Key words:** ICC, teaching, methodology, stereotypes, ICC cognition, research.

## **Апстракт**

Оваа дисертација се фокусира на интеркултурните компетенции на наставниците по англиски јазик во Република Македонија. Во последно време, методиката на англискиот јазик се развива кон интеркултурните компетенции особено во држави каде англискиот јазик не е мајчин јазик. Глобализацијата во светот, имиграцијата на луѓето во Европа и преку океанот и различностите во повеќето општества се причина за интеркултуролошките компетенции да бидат тренд не само во методиката по англиски јазик туку и во бизнисот и економијата, уметноста, маркетингот итн.

Глава еден ќе се фокусира на познавањето на интеркултурната комуникација на наставниците во светот. Најпрво ќе бидат објаснети главните термини поврзани со интеркултурна комуникација. Потоа ќе се дискутираат главните проблеми поврзани со интеркултурната комуникација како на пример пречки во комуникацијата, стереотипи, избегнување и решавање конфликти. Глава два ќе биде во врска со мултикултурализам т.е. методи за мултикултурна програма за учениците од различни етнички припадности во училищата по англиски јазик. Ќе се истражува културата и однесувањето на учениците од различни етнички припадности и на крајот ќе се предложи начин како да се справиме со овие ученици.

Глава три ќе биде насочена кон прашањето дали познавањето на интеркултурните компетенции на наставниците по англиски јазик во Струмица е на ниско ниво или не и дали е тоа нешто на кое треба да поработат самите наставници по англиски јазик. Глава четири ќе даде осврт на моменталната ситуација на интеркултурните компетенции. Дваесет наставници по англиски јазик ќе учествуваат во истражување за интеркултурни компетенции заедно со 95 ученици преку процесот на формалното средно образование во насока на предавањето и комуницирањето на ученици од различни етнички припадности. Последната глава ќе даде заклучоци, сумирања и препораки за понатамошно истражување во оваа област.

**Клучни зборови:** интеркултурна комуникација, предавање, методика, стереотипи, познавање, истражување.

## **Abstrakti**

Ky disertacion fokusohet në kompetencat gjuhësore ndërkulturore të mësuesve të gjuhës angleze në Republikën e Maqedonisë. Kohët e fundit, metodika në gjuhën angleze zhvillohet në drejtim të kompetencave ndërkulturore, veçanërisht në shtete ku anglishtja nuk është gjuhë amtare. Globalizimi i botës, emigracioni i njerëzve në Evropë përmes oqeanit dhe diversitetet etnike në shumicën e shoqërive, shkaktajnë kompetencat ndërkulturore të qenë një trend jo vetëm në gjuhën angleze, por edhe në biznesin dhe ekonominë, arti, marketingu dhe kështu me radhë.

Kapitulli i parë do të fokusohet në njohjen e komunikimit ndërkulturor të mësuesve në botë. Së pari, do të shpjegohen terma kryesore e komunikimit ndërkulturor dhe intracultural. Pastaj do të diskutohet çështjet kryesore që lidhen me komunikimin ndërkulturor, siç janë çrregullimet e komunikimit, stereotipet, shmangia dhe zgjidhja e konflikteve. Kapitulli i dytë do të jetë në lidhje me multikulturalizmin, dmth. metodat për një program multikulturor për studentët me përkatësi të ndryshme etnike në klasën angleze. Do të hulumtohet kultura dhe sjellja e nxënësve nga prejardhje të ndryshme etnike dhe në fund do të propozohet një mënyrë se si të punojmë me këta nxënës.

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**Fjalëtkyçe:** komunikim ndërkulturor, mësimdhënie, metodologji, stereotip, njohuri, hulumtim.

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## Table of contents:

Abstract .....	6
Acknowledgements .....	7
Table of contents .....	8
List of abbreviations .....	11
CHAPTER 1: 1.1. Introduction and background of the study .....	12
1.2. Importance of Intercultural Communication .....	18
1.3 Intercultural communication cognition of teachers worldwide .....	24
1.4.1. Implementation of Intercultural Communication in Education in R.M. ....	27
1.4.1. Language and culture .....	28
1.4.2. Analysis of the prescribed students' books for teaching English.... as a Foreign Language by the Ministry of Education in R.M. ....	29
1.5. Issues of IC .....	31
1.5.1. Barriers in Communication .....	32
1.5.2. Stereotypes .....	33
1.5.3. Ethnocentrism .....	36
1. 5. 4. Culture shock .....	39
1.5.4. Dealing with conflicts in the English language classroom .....	41
1.2. Statement of the problem: The situation in Macedonia .....	45
1.2.2. Analysis of the English language curricula of the state secondary vocational and gymnasium schools .....	46
1.2.3. Justification and significance of the study .....	48
1.2.3. Aim of the study .....	50
1.2.3. Research hypotheses .....	51
CHAPTER 2 :Literature review	
2.1. Intercultural communication .....	53
2.2. Intercultural Communication in ELT .....	55
2.3. Intercultural Communication and Identity in ELT .....	58
2.4. Intercultural Communication Competence .....	61



2.4.1 Models of ICC .....	64
2.4.2. Conclusion .....	73
3. Multiculturalism in Education .....	74
3.1. The Dimensions of Multicultural Education .....	76
3.2. Approaches to multicultural curriculum .....	79
3.3. Strategies for developing multicultural lessons .....	82
3.4. Conclusion .....	86
CHAPTER 3 - Research Methodology: Introduction .....	87
3.1.1. Overview of the study design .....	87
3.2. Participants and settings .....	88
3.3. Research instruments .....	89
3.3.1 A questionnaire for the teachers .....	90
3.3.2 A questionnaire for the students .....	91
3.3.3. Lesson observations .....	91
3.3.4. Conclusion .....	106
3.3.5. Students' cultural interviews .....	107
CHAPTER 4: Findings .....	111
4.2. Empirical part of the research .....	112
4.2.1. The students .....	113
4.2.2. The teachers .....	132
4.3. All respondents .....	148
5. Discussion of the results .....	152
6. Conclusions.....	154
7. Recommendation for activities and further research .....	157
8. Implications for professional development .....	158
9. Limitations of the research .....	159
10. Future goals .....	161
11. How to improve the situation .....	161
Used bibliography .....	165

List of Appendixes .....	177
A survey for English language teachers assessing ICC .....	178
A survey for secondary school students aimed at assessing ICC .....	183
Cultural Interview Questions for my students .....	188
Classroom Observation Protocol .....	190
Tables .....	194
GENE (Generalized Ethnocentrism) Scale .....	197
Personal Report of Intercultural Communication Apprehension (PRICA) .....	199

### **List of abbreviations:**

IC	- Intercultural Communication
ICC	- Intercultural communication competence
ELT	- English language teaching
ECML	- Centre for Modern Languages
USAID	- U.S. Agency for International Development
SPSS	- A software package used for statistical analysis
R. Macedonia	- Republic of Macedonia
R. Bulgaria	- Republic of Bulgaria
SMS	- State municipal school

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1. Introduction and background of the study

Recently, English language teaching has been brought into relation with intercultural communication competence especially in countries where English language is not a native language. The purpose of this thesis is to see the level of intercultural communication competence among teachers and students. It is believed that ICC is a crucial component in education in general. For the purposes of this study the focus will be on English language teachers because it is believed that learning a foreign language is no longer about knowing how to use language for the purpose of speaking and reading, but about knowing how to communicate with people who have different cultural identities. Hence, the English language classes can be a great platform for developing ICC among students but they must be tailored by the teachers themselves.

English language teaching has inevitably oriented towards intercultural communication because it has become a language for international communication due to globalization, immigration and the diverse societies. The *UNESCO World Report* in the field of cultural diversity, defines this notion as a mere fact: there exists a wide range of distinct cultures, which can be readily distinguished on the basis of ethnographic observation, even if the contours delimiting a particular culture prove more difficult to establish than might at first sight appear (2009). Thus, the increased contacts of different cultures give another dimension of the cultural diversity along with the linguistic practices because of the technological developments. Nowadays, people live in a digital era and contact more and more as a result of the emergence of the Internet. The Internet enabled people to communicate with other people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Communication is achieved because of different reasons: business, cooperation, science, education, mass media, entertainment, tourism but also because immigration brought about by labor shortage or political conflicts. Hence, the idea of

intercultural communication is to break down the barriers among people of different cultures by learning and appreciating each culture, avoid stereotypes and accept every culture as it is.

The school is a specific place for meeting and learning about different cultures and this happens on different levels whereas two particularly important aspects can be distinguished - content and functional. The educational content, along with the cognitive components consists of certain values, norms and rules which are decisive for the culture of the ethnic group that has a dominant role in the social structure and therefore can define the educational goals and tasks facing the growing generations of the nation. The main normative documents defining the content of the education are the state educational requirements, the curricula and the textbooks. Within the dissertation, analysis of the English language curricula for state secondary schools in Republic of Macedonia will be done along with a review of the textbooks used in the English language lessons. More precisely, this dissertation will deal with intercultural communication competence of English language teachers in the Republic of Macedonia which will be measured through qualitative and quantitative research methods. The prime aim of this dissertation would be to increase teachers' awareness in terms of intercultural communication in order to achieve better results in teaching English as a foreign language. The research questions of this study are based upon the assumption that teachers in English language lack the needed prerequisites for developing intercultural awareness i.e. intercultural communication awareness and intercultural communication sensitivity. In order to prove that, the following research questions are to be answered:

1. What is the level of intercultural communication awareness of English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds?
2. To what extent is intercultural communication sensitivity developed by English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds?
3. Which factors limit or increase the cultural awareness of teachers?

Developing the intercultural dimension of students in teaching in general, and in language teaching more specifically, revolves around the following aims: to give learners intercultural competence as well as linguistic competence; to prepare them for interaction with people of other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviors; and to help them to see that such interaction is an enriching experience (Byram, 2002). Thus, English language teaching should focus on improving intercultural communication competence as a needed component. Many studies and projects conducted in the Republic of Macedonia are mainly oriented towards improving the intercultural communication competence of students and this dissertation will include a research focused on assessing the intercultural communication competence of English language teachers in the country. Within this study, English language teachers were chosen as a focus of a research due to the opportunities of discussing cultural topics during the English language lessons. However, integrating culture in other lessons is also very important. The reason for that are the multicultural classrooms and today's overseas exchange opportunities in different fields (not only in English language as a subjects at school) and European projects which require intercultural competence in order to be able to participate and knowledge in English language too. My prediction is that the teachers in our country lack training in intercultural communication competence and this competence is crucial especially when teaching students from different ethnic backgrounds and can help them achieve better results in English language and other schools subjects as well. Another prediction is that teachers are not aware of the notion Ethnocentrism and the presence of it among students and teachers. For that purpose, in this the dissertation explanation of the main terms connected to intercultural communication, ethnocentrism and multicultural education will be found in the theoretical part of the dissertation. Furthermore, the empirical part of the research will be based on one of the models of intercultural communication competence i.e. a platform of how to move from ethnocentrism towards ethnorelativism.

A very famous proverb in English says "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". Some English teachers use this proverb to explain why students have to be aware of other people's culture. According to the Cambridge Advanced Dictionary this proverb means "something that

you say that means that when you are visiting another country, you should behave like the people in that country". In this case the Roman behavior is the intercultural communication gap. The origin of this proverb goes back in history when St. Augustine arrived in Milan to assume his role as a Professor of Rhetoric for the Imperial Court where he noticed that the Church did not fast on Saturdays as it did in Rome. He became very confused and consulted another wiser man Ambrose who was the Bishop of Milan. He exclaimed: "When I am at Rome, I fast on Saturday; when I am at Milan I do not. Follow the custom of the Church where you are." So, in 1621, the British author Robert Burton, in his classic writing *Anatomy of Melancholy*, edited St. Ambrose's remark to read: "When they are at Rome, they do there as they see done." When people travel in different surroundings, they can face some challenges as it was the case with St. Augustine. If one is not aware of the culture, traditions, art in the country they travel, they can either face the culture shock or have problems with the locals. That is the reason why learning about other cultures is important. Not only for travelling or entertainment, but for other reasons such as education or business.

Culture is something that cannot simply be observed. It is something that consists of many levels. If you visit a community for a short time, you only see the surface i.e. the social etiquette but its deepest layers are not visible to the eye. In order to understand culture one needs to realize that cultures have different conducts, values, beliefs specific of that particular community. Many of the aspects that constitute a person are often shaped by his/her culture. According to Kohler's study (2015):

"Culture is a human phenomenon; it is the way we are, both physically and mentally. It is both a state in which each of us exists and a process which changes constantly according to the individual, the time, and the place. This combined state and process called culture affects us all as we respond to others, to events, and to the environment." (p. 14)

This means that individuals are able to see and observe the conduct of others through their own perception which is very often shaped by culture. It actually influences how individuals interpret things. If an individual accepts and values different cultures without having certain

prejudice about them it does not mean that they are happy with that. Nobody is obliged to share their habits and norms. What is needed is appreciation and showing respect to other people's languages and cultures (Bennett, 1993). If an individual is aware only about their own culture this gives them certain limitations of accepting different cultures. Edward Hall points out that:

“We should never denigrate any other culture but rather help people understand the relationship between their own culture and the dominant culture. When you understand another culture or language, it does not mean that you have to lose your own culture.” (Sorrells, 1998, p. 70)

In connection to this, the intercultural element of teaching English as a foreign language should require teachers to pay attention and respect the home culture and language. The learning materials should implement aspects of the home culture and non-native teachers should possess the ability to move between the home culture and the target culture.

Another thing that should be taken into account during the foreign language lessons is the cultural awareness. Quappe and Canatore (2005) claim that cultural awareness becomes central when interacting with people from other cultures (p.1). As mentioned before, people see and observe the behavior of others in different ways and this is very often shaped by their own culture. Misinterpretations of people's behaviors take place when people lack cultural awareness. Instead of finding out what is the reason for a certain activity which can be awkward to some people, these activities are criticized instead of taking the chance to learn about the certain culture. Some examples of that are when an Americans speak loud on the phone in a bus, or when they do business during lunch which very often people pertaining to other cultures find it inappropriate. There are four different levels of cultural awareness according to Quappe and Canatore (2005):

1. My way is the only way - At the first level, people are aware of their way of doing things, and their way is the only way. At this stage, they ignore the impact of cultural differences. (Parochial stage). During this stage the teachers who lack knowledge in intercultural communication will



act like that, not accepting some new methods of increasing cultural awareness since they consider that their methodology is the best.

2. I know their way, but my way is better - At the second level, people are aware of other ways of doing things, but still consider their way as the best one. In this stage, cultural differences are perceived as source of problems and people tend to ignore them or reduce their significance. (Ethnocentric stage). During this stage, it is predicted that teachers have heard about cultural awareness but they are still not ready to apply what they have heard or read considering cultural awareness.

3. My Way and Their Way - At this level people are aware of their own way of doing things and others' ways of doing things, and they chose the best way according to the situation. At this stage people realize that cultural differences can lead both to problems and benefits and are willing to use cultural diversity to create new solutions and alternatives. (Synergistic stage)

4. Our Way - This fourth and final stage brings people from different cultural background together for the creation of a culture of shared meanings. People dialogue repeatedly with others, create new meanings, new rules to meet the needs of a particular situation and this is the participatory stage. (p.2). This stage can happen after a successful intercultural training when teachers have experienced and applied some knowledge and are ready to share and discuss it with their colleagues.

In order to increase intercultural awareness these levels should be taken into account to realize that instead of taking the cultural differences as something threatening the differences can also be a positive experience. Differences cause barriers in communication, create negative stereotypes and conflicts but they also mean that a lot can be learned from another culture such as different approaches of working, new skills and possibly a new language. It can be concluded that there is no right way of increasing intercultural awareness but changing the view towards differences as something positive can be a big step. If teachers are aware that there is something they do not know, they do not have certain prejudice towards students from different ethnic backgrounds, they empathize with them and find a way to celebrate diversity they will establish a motivating atmosphere and every student will feel comfortable to learn

more about other cultures and the target culture of the foreign language as well (Quappe and Canatore, 2005, p.3). If teachers want to increase their awareness in terms of intercultural communication and achieve better results in teaching English as a foreign language, they have to realize that students from different backgrounds can achieve very good results in English if they are appreciated, not discriminated or stereotyped. When doing training in this field the following areas should be taken into account:

- ❖ Correcting ethnocentrism
- ❖ Dealing and avoiding stereotyping
- ❖ Increasing empathy
- ❖ Increasing tolerance for anxiety and uncertainty when meeting "strangers"

## **1.2. Importance of Intercultural Communication**

The role of language in human life has been of great importance since ancient times to this day. In a rapidly developing multicultural world, it occupies an increasingly important place, and research in this area leads to awareness and emphasis on the important position that language has in human beings. Within language learning, language is perceived as a system of different rules and rarely draws attention to its particular link to intercultural communication. If we look at the language from a traditional point of view, we will find some well-known and widely discussed functions that it exercises: communication, creative interpretation, communication, expressing opinions, etc. However, it often appears as a mediator or bridge between different cultures. Research on language functions also reveals the diversity that exists in different languages and cultures. In language learning, diversity often exists on the one hand between learners themselves and on the other hand between learners and the teacher. There is always a great deal of creativity in this process, as each of them is studying the language and culture of the other, often interprets them, understands and uses them in their own individual way.

There are different approaches to intercultural learning. In some, language is represented as an essential part, and in others it is neglected. Linguistic and intercultural competences do not exist in parallel and are not interchangeable. In some cases there is a high level of foreign language communicative competence, but not very well developed intercultural competence. However, in order to achieve successful intercultural communication and to use intercultural competence, it is very important that linguistic competence exists. This is especially true when there are problematic situations in intercultural interaction. It is then that linguistic competence becomes essential. Knowledge about foreign culture is not negligible, though it will hardly be sufficient without the necessary linguistic knowledge. Of course, it can be argued that the linguistic competence is good to overtake the intercultural competence in a way or acquire it in parallel with it.

Cultural awareness is very important when it comes to communication with people from different cultures. The reason is that people observe, assess and interpret things in another manner. Sometimes, cultural misunderstandings make the business harder to expand, develop or even make it impossible. It is by every mean essential to increase cultural awareness and knowledge of intercultural communication because of the different aspects of people's lives and this can help people further increase the awareness of their own culture. However, other important aspects of life are important when dealing with intercultural communication. According to Martin and Nakayama (2010), there are six imperatives for studying intercultural communication. The self-awareness imperative is about increasing understanding of one's own location in terms of political, social and historical context. The demographic imperative focuses on the changing migration whereas diversity raises questions about class and religion. The economic imperative is about the issue of globalization and the need for intercultural understanding in order to reach the global market. Technology gives more and more information and increased contact with different people from all around the world. The peace imperative is about colonialism, economic disparities, racial, ethnic and religious differences. This issue asks the question "Can individuals of different genders, ages, ethnicities, races, languages, and religions peacefully coexist on the planet?". According to McLean "the peace imperative, or the consideration of conflict and how we resolve it, is an important aspect of

intercultural communication"(McLean,2015). The conflict as an element of communication is not absent in communication but it is actually a state in which conflicts are resolved through negotiation and understanding. Finally the ethical imperative strives to increase the understanding of the universalist, relativist and dialogic approach to ethical issues. When all these imperatives are taken into account, one develops self-reflexivity, a sense of social justice and responsibility and a greater curiosity and need to learn more about others and their cultures.

Intercultural communication has been an important issue since 1959, when Edward T. Hall introduced this term in his book *The Silent Language*. This book is sometimes called "the field's founding document". He was one of the first researchers to differentiate cultures on the basis of how communications are sent and received and managed to define intercultural communication as communication between persons of different cultures. Within the books of this field, intercultural communication competence is almost synonymous with communicative competence but gives emphasis of the cultural context (Chen & Starosta, 1996). Today's immigration around the world, and the challenges that it brings in terms of multicultural and intercultural policies, is another reason to study and implement intercultural communication in everyday teaching and learning. According to Friske, communication involves interaction and it can be defined as "social interaction through messages" (Friske, 1990). So, communication as a dynamic and systematic process always occurs in a certain context and depends on contextual rules of a certain culture. "Communication is defined as the exchange of meaning" (Gibson, 9). It involves sending and receiving information between a sender and receiver. Intercultural communication takes place when the sender and the receiver are from different cultures. Hall states that if we are freed from ignorance and negative attributions, we will be able to build better relationships with a wide variety of people (p.26).

The biggest benefit of studying intercultural communication is to help people appreciate cultural differences by seeing the value in the different worldviews and the way other people live. Intercultural competence is a powerful tool in the fight against intolerance, xenophobia and ethnocentrism (Mrnjaj, 2013,p.11). When people from different cultural backgrounds

start a conversation and see themselves as representatives of their own country, cultural barriers to communication are likely to happen due to the differences in their patterns of life, social style, customs, world view, religion, and philosophy. From one hand this accent of national identity leaves a possibility for them to rely on stereotypes and thus decrease the person to be taken as a representative stereotypical example of their country and culture. On the other hand, there are arguments that very often when students are taught a foreign language they are not introduced with the cultural dimension. Bennett (2004) claims that people often tend to overestimate their intercultural sensitivity and people do this “more than others, which means that they rate themselves relatively high in ethnorelativism while still having a high profile in ethnocentrism” (p.7). Finally, learning the language without the cultural dimension takes certain risks such as relying on stereotypes. It has been widely recognized in the language teaching profession that learners need not just knowledge and skill in the grammar of a language but also the ability to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways. (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002).

A distinction between "learning" and "acquisition" is being made in recent studies of learning a foreign language and the final outcome. The evidence of success in foreign language learning is in favor of linguistic learning, which gives a better final result, language learners should be in a natural linguistic environment. This puts aside the artificially controlled learning process in the classroom. To achieve this ultimate positive outcome in teaching and learning in intercultural competence, methods such as: role-playing games, research and description of participants in intercultural interaction, problem solving situations should be used. In order to carry out this competence, it is also necessary to have at least one of the conditions listed in the learning environment:

- Presence of native speaker
- The trainer to be familiar with the foreign culture
- To have teaching materials that represent culture in a high and low context;
- To participate in active intercultural interaction: meetings, exchanges, excursions, summer institutes, etc.

In foreign language learning, the relationship between language and culture emerges most clearly in the foreground when the teacher and trainees are of a different culture and identity. Interaction with the foreign language is much more than an exchange of information or a communicative act. "Speaking a foreign language, but not understanding the social and philosophical content of it, could lead to trouble, even negative opinions. Therefore, one should understand the cultural dimension of language to be able to become fluent in it. Language directs the experience reality. Learning a language does not only lead to the exchange of ideas. It should lead to action, involvement in international civic society" (Smrekar, 2015:9). It is actually an interaction between social groups and a connecting bridge between different cultural identities. Only in this way the use of language and cultural norms and dimensions are related to it. In this process, the individual is not expected to occupy a static position, but rather it is expected to choose the positive attitude and behavior to avoid any negative consequences. It is this choice that benefits both parties. And this requires high awareness of the representatives of foreign culture. Therefore, besides the fact that the foreign culture is expected to be taught to the foreign language learners, it should first be taught in the training of the language teachers. And trainees should not perceive foreign language merely as a grammatical structure in order to develop the intercultural understanding, but they must look in the foreign language in the context of the other culture and be aware of the relationship between language and culture.

Achieving unproblematic communication of a foreign language with a foreign culture is so far essential, whether communication is personal or professional. Studying the foreign culture is important because language remains the most important communication tool, although there are others. Scarino & Liddicoat (2009) assert that "understanding the nature of the relationship between language and culture is central to the process of learning another language. In actual language use, it is not the case that it is only the forms of language that convey meaning. It is language in its cultural context that creates meaning: creating and interpreting meaning is done within a cultural framework" (p.18). The prerequisites for successful intercultural communication are not only associated with the accumulation of

certain grammatically correct expressions and phrases, as well as accumulation of vocabulary of words, but with real knowledge of the culture and society of that language. Internationally, foreign language learning is the most successful through a communicative approach, according to which foreign language learning is primarily considered as a means of communication. The knowledge of cultural differences and overcoming them by the learner of a foreign language can also be accomplished by moving from the context of textbooks and traditional stereotypes in the schools. This can also be done by introducing materials and didactic approaches that open minds to cultures in the world as a whole under a careful guidance of the teacher. But in order to do this, wider strategies for such training should be developed and implemented.

One of the most important guidelines in contemporary foreign language learning is to create the necessary conditions in the classroom for students to systematically prepare for a normal and free communication. Other important aspects of this training are the knowledge, understanding and acceptance of the foreign culture. The development of globally competent people with a comprehensive education that tomorrow will be productive citizens of the world and will be able to work in groups of different people and in different regions should start from early school age. Respect and tolerance to otherness is lifelong learning in which one develops a better understanding and respect for his/herself and others. In the context of his/her own cultural identity, including his/her own racial, ethnic and religious traits, he/she learns about empathy, sympathy, cooperation with others, and evaluates both his/her own point of view and the different worldview. In the context of increasing multicultural exchange in the modern world and the dynamic globalization processes, the issue of intercultural competence and multiculturalism is particularly relevant both in terms of the importance of personal realization and in terms of ensuring social cohesion in a democratic society. That is why according to the *Common European framework of reference for languages* "the ability to effectively tackle cultural differences inherent in communication becomes more than a competitive advantage in the modern world." This understanding defines the priority of intercultural competence in the concept of key competences for lifelong learning. And this is quite natural in view of the desire to unite the member states - "to achieve greater unity among member states", and this objective is being achieved "by adopting a common approach in the field of culture" (2004: 11).

In order to incorporate intercultural communication in the English language classroom these three things should be considered:

1. If students enter an intercultural classroom, the teachers must guide them and describe the environment and when this happens then the learning is learner-centered, engaging, interactive, participatory and cooperative.
2. A language course concerned with culture broadens its scope from a focus of improving the four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking in order to acquire *cultural skills* – the intercultural learner serves as a mediator b/n different social groups that use different languages and varieties (Corbett, 2003, p 11).
3. If teachers become aware that language skills and knowledge need to be connected to the intercultural competence, students will feel that energy also and will show much better results. That is the reason why the intercultural competence is essential in achieving goals on an international level.

### **1.3. Intercultural Communication Cognition of Teachers Worldwide**

Teacher cognition focuses on the unobservable dimension of teaching i.e. "understanding what teachers think, know and believe" (Borg, 2009, p.1) i.e. the teacher's mental life. During the 1960s and 1970s, research on teacher cognition was focused on effective teaching behaviors i.e. behaviors that would result in greater learning. Afterwards this view of teaching was being questioned because the developments of cognitive psychology found other relationships between what people do and what they know and believe. Finally it was concluded that teachers were those who made decisions and these decisions became a new focus for educational researchers (Han & Song, 2011, p.176). The intercultural communication competence is crucial for accomplishing the main goal of the foreign language learning. Research on intercultural competence underlines the need for students to prepare for the global society by finding appropriate ways to interact with people from other cultures (Sinecrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2012). If teachers want to prepare their students, they should



have developed intercultural communication competence. When intercultural communication competence is an integral part of the language classroom, learners experience how to appropriately use language in order to build understandings and relationships with members from other cultures (Moeller, Nugent, 2014,p.14).

A research project was conducted in 2001 by the Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) on the usage of culture-related activities in the English language classroom in four European countries. "English teachers from Estonia, Hungary, Iceland and Poland participated in this project and the results revealed that activities that may lead to a better knowledge of the target cultures' civilization were only 'sometimes' or 'rarely' done by the great majority of the participants" (Lazar, 2011, p.116). According to this study (2011),only 15.6% and 17.9% of the teachers said they always discussed differences in nonverbal communication and personal space with their groups. The same lack of attention was found for discussing negative stereotypes and culture shock, basic obstacles in the process of communication across cultures. This research project suggests that there is a need for more intercultural communication training courses, more helpful teaching materials and perhaps some more guided practice to implement the cultural content in language lessons without having the feeling that it is artificially imposed in the curricula. "The benefit of this would be to train the trainers so they do not work against these changes in teacher education but instead could help overcome the obstacles in the way of intercultural competence development" (Lazar, 2011, p.125).

Chinese scholars concluded that intercultural communication is needed in the system of foreign language teaching (Li,2006;Zhang,2007). However, the concept of ICC in the Chinese education is present but one study of university teachers confirms that the conceptualization of ICC and ELT is still vague even though that teachers have strong desire to develop students' ICC (Xiaohui & Li, 2011). The study investigated teacher's perceptions of ICC, their understanding of its connection with ELT through a questionnaire which contained different sections involving the intercultural aspect of teaching and learning. Most of the teachers who were part of this study stated that the intercultural approach and the communicative approach have no differences. This shows a clear lack of understanding the relationship between the two

concepts. Among other things, this study also revealed that there is still a long way for the Chinese university English teachers to become well informed about what exactly is ICC. The teachers are looking forward to more opportunities and teaching material resources in this field and it is hoped that more research in the field will help in successful interculturalization of ELT in China.

The multicultural education aims at education equality and was a triggered trend in the USA with the increased ethnic diversity. Along with this, teachers in U.S. universities face greater need in maintaining appropriate classroom atmosphere. A lot of programs of multicultural teacher education were developed in order to prepare teachers for the diverse student classrooms. A study conducted by Rachel Kim (2004) aims at assessing instructors' communication with diverse student populations as means of identifying successful teaching practice. According to this study the instructors who have had some type of formal training relevant to multicultural teaching and those who have not is quite different. The students' perceptions of their instructor's intercultural competence show that those who have had formal training achieve more effective communication. Hence, intercultural communication competence may be the key to successful classroom practice taking into account the level of ICC among instructors who have had formal training in that field. This study concludes that the assessment of instructors' communications with diverse students will allow researchers to identify the current classroom practices which are successful.

The intercultural communicative competence applies to both EFL and ESL contexts in Canada. In such a multicultural society, the learners in Canada will likely interact with people from different ethnic backgrounds and the findings of a study conducted there reveal that even though it is a well-developed concept, more needs to be done in the sense of materials development, instructor education, and classroom-based research in order to promote the incorporation of intercultural communicative competence into ESL learning and teaching (C. Bickley, 2014).

#### **1.4. Implementation of Intercultural Communication in Education in the Republic of Macedonia**

The intense nature of intercultural processes in today's society alters communication at a fundamental level - both in practice and in behavior. Modern socio and psycholinguistic theories and studies call for intercultural discourse to be the key in interpreting social interactions among people in global society. At the same time, it is normal to change the requirements of individual competence, understood as a complex of knowledge, skills and attitudes, allowing the individual to deal effectively with situations that are increasingly determined by cultural differences. In this sense, linguistic competence is interpreted as part of general communicative competence, which defines the close link between the issues of linguistic diversity and the social adaptability of the individual, as well as their importance for social stability, the discovery of a path not only to others but also to oneself. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to examine the educational aspects of these issues, interpreted in the context of intercultural communicative competence as one of the key objectives of modern education. Intercultural competence is the ability to integrate the competence of teaching in the secondary school which is actually the competence that influences the modern global economy and the multicultural society, while our state educational requirements and programs do not differentiate it clearly. The learning process should extend from the teaching of individual grammatical structures and theoretical knowledge to the promotion of communication skills and the acquisition of intercultural dialogue skills. This is the challenge of the modern world to us and the challenge of the future to our education.

#### **1.4.1. Language and culture**

The relationship between culture and language was known many years ago but it has only been practiced and researched in recent years. The newest researches show that the interest for learning a language is bigger if the culture component is included in the curricula. Culture is dynamic and is not an isolated, mechanical aspect of life that can be used to directly explain phenomena in the classroom or that can be learned as a series of facts, physical elements, or exotic characteristics (Ovando, Collier, & Combs, 2003). People live in different cultural communities and share values and beliefs that are transmitted through stories, songs, beliefs, relationships and cultural events. There are many definitions of culture and it is really hard to find one over encompassing but an essential one in this context will be that culture is the deeply learned confluence of language, values, beliefs, and behaviors that pervade every aspect of a person's life, and it is continually undergoing changes (Geertz, 1973). No matter which strategies the teachers are going to use teachers are by no doubt mediated by different cultural influences. According to Trubon "every teacher has his or her own style of teaching, there are different national and cultural academic traditions, and there are often national and cultural academic traditions, and there are often cultural differences in pedagogy regardless of styles, traditions and cultures, all good teaching in the world consists of one important goal, making connections with the students" (2011, p.11). Very often English language teachers have students from a culture different than theirs. The communication with these students can be difficult because teachers sometimes lack understanding of the student's culture and their lifestyles. Usually the lack of cultural understanding leads to negative stereotyping, low self-esteem, frustration and finally a teacher's failure. The condition for successful intercultural communication is "the ability to recognize and analyze the communicants intercultural differences, which requires a certain personality traits such as tolerance to different views on life, to another personal experience, to other norms and cultural beliefs as well as empathy, respect for cultural traditions and behavioral differences, the ability to communicate adequately in a foreign language and so on" (Soboleva & Obdalova, 2013, p.56). When possessing the images of their own and the culture of the students, the teacher should be able

to reflect on the differences of those images and finally incorporate them into intercultural communication. That is why the methodology of foreign language teaching should aim towards developing students' abilities and qualities which are essential for accomplishing mutual understanding and effective communication with the representatives of the culture different than their own.

#### **1.4.2. Analysis of the prescribed students' books for teaching English as a Foreign Language by the Ministry of Education in Republic of Macedonia**

Culture is a reason plus for students to become more interested to study the foreign language they have chosen. By learning foreign languages students acquire knowledge and understanding of the culture of the language. They cannot learn the language for real until they learn the culture contexts used in that language. To realize that, the teachers have to make the cultural aspect more explicit altogether with the linguistic forms. A simple example worth mentioning is the formal and informal greeting in English language whereas if translated into Macedonian language it is totally different. The students will realize the meaning only if they become acquainted with the cultural and not only the linguistic norms. According to Thanasoulas "Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one...challenging (learners') ability to make sense of the world around them"(2001, p.1). This means the concepts of linguistic and cultural competence must be introduced into the classroom together. It is a mere fact that some teachers and students seem to forget that the knowledge of the grammar system of a foreign language needs to be complemented by the cultural competence. However, the implementation of the intercultural aspect in the lessons in foreign languages is not a simple thing. The textbooks primarily give access to the culture of the language along with literature texts, history and art of the language which is taught, and not so much an approach of teaching culture profoundly.

The prescribed books for state vocational and gymnasium education are the same for every school in our country. In the first year of secondary education, students use the book "Close-up" by Angela Healen and Katrina Gormley under the edition of National Geographic Learning. The book is rich in photography, texts and facts carefully selected to fulfill the needs of the students. There are plenty of additional resources for teachers as well following the new trends of informational technology. The level is B1 and using this books students can read and learn about different cultures from the videos, texts and discussion points given at the end of every reading lesson. In the first unit named "Family ties" students can discuss about their family trees by using certain proverbs for discussion. The following unit named as "Food, food, food" teach them about types of food in different countries. A very interesting picture of a big sandwich gives the students the story of the hamburger and where it comes from. Since this is one of the new books prescribed couple of years ago, it can be stated that this book gives deeper cultural information and knowledge through different resources such as texts, facts, proverbs and video at the end of every unit. The book for the second year of high-school education is called "Think" and the authors are Herbert Puchta, Jeff Stranks and Peter Lewis-Jones and the level of English is the same as in the first year. What is problematic about this book is that it is totally different than the book in the previous year. The organization and the approach of the units are different and of course teachers and students need to follow different lesson planning and organization. The book consists of 12 units and the content of the grammar and vocabulary is very simple and shifts a lot if compared to the program of the previous year. A good thing about this book when speaking about culture is that after every second unit there is one lesson oriented towards culture through which students mainly through reading learn about different cultures around the world. The reading task is usually followed by a speaking and writing task where students can express their thoughts and feelings and usually make comparisons with their own culture. The book prescribed for the third year of studies follows the same book of the series of Think but on a higher level B1+. The same organization is used as in the previous year of studies, but in Think 3 the topics about culture are more profound and open discussions about stereotypes whereas students can think about certain intercultural issues through reading and writing. The prescribed book for the fourth year of studies is still the

old one and awaits to be replaced with a new followed edition of Think4. For now New Opportunities Upper-Intermediate is used and in this book the contents about culture are not only organized in culture corners but are found around the whole book in parts named "comparing cultures" through which students are expected to discuss on different topics and they have to compare their own culture with another culture.

Taking the four books into account it can be stated that the cultural component included in these books needs to be upgraded with deeper knowledge and topics that will attract the students to become more interested in cultural matters. My impression is that there is an attempt to include the cultural component but in an artificial way. The reason for that is the fact that the intercultural pedagogical method develops cultural awareness and attitude of students which enable them to acquire greater responsibility for oneself, but also for others, with a transition from ethnocentric to the ethno-relative vision. As Byram emphasizes: "the significance of students learning about a certain culture within foreign language learning and changing the focus in foreign language from merely transferring messages into the cultural meaning behind even the simplest of messages will help contribute to the general education of all learners within an international community" (1990, p.5). Byram also suggests that teachers implement authentic materials such as documents, field work, audio and video recordings (1990); all of which can be found through the Internet which contains thousands of authentic websites, videos, and materials which educators can bring into the classroom to give students a more authentic experience regarding the culture of the target language.

### **1.5. Issues of Intercultural Communication**

The increased globalization of the economy and the interaction of different cultures, was a reason for the concept of world culture to emerge. This is an idea that traditional barriers among people of different cultures will break down the traditional barriers among people. Intercultural communication takes place between nations and governments rather than individual to individual and it is quite formal and ritualized. "Since all international business activities involve communication, knowledge of intercultural communication and intercultural

business communication is needed" (Chaney & Martin, 2014, p.14). If communication is the process by which people exchange information or express their thoughts and feelings or ways of sending and receiving information, the process can become very difficult if there is a big difference between the two cultures. As Gibson points out "if there is too much cultural noise the communication can break down completely" (Gibson, 2002, p.9). Thus successful communication depends on shared cultural norms. According to Anggraini (2015), the cultural and language knowledge are essential for highly effective communication. This concept emphasizes communication as the primary goal of language learning, sees culture and language as closely linked; recognizes that culture is always present when language is used, sees cultural skills as important as language skills in language learning (Anggraini, 2015, p. 2). When the communication takes place between people of different cultures and they share a common language, things can certainly go wrong. Moreover speaking the language does not mean that you have the background knowledge that native speakers assume you have. The issues of IC such as barriers in communication, stereotypes, ethnocentrism, culture shock and conflicts will be discussed in the following sub-chapters.

#### **1.5.1. Barriers in Communication**

Communication barriers are obstacles to effective communication and a very common example of such barrier is the head nod (in the U.S.A. means understanding, in Japan means only listening, in Bulgaria means a negative answer). Some of the barriers to communication are the following (Smith and Bell, 1999, p.40):

- a) physical - connected to time zones, the environment and the comfort needs
- b) cultural - ethnic, religious, social differences in the surrounding
- c) perceptual - viewing what is said from your own mind set
- d) motivational - the listener's mental inertia
- e) experiential - lack of experiencing similar happenings



- f) emotional - personal feelings of the listener
- g) linguistic - different languages used by the speaker or listener or the use of a vocabulary beyond understanding
- h) non - verbal - non-verbal messages
- i) competition - the listener's ability to do other things rather than hear the communication

All these barriers can lead to different problems in communication according to the situation. The Internet and the current innovations have opened up new commercial centers that enable to elevate the organizations and institutions to new geographic areas and societies. If the correspondence is electronic, it is as simple to work with somebody in another nation as it is to work with somebody in the following town. Lunenburg (2010) concludes that "communication is the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another. The elements of the communication process are the sender, encoding the message, transmitting the message through a medium, receiving the message, decoding the message, feedback, and noise" (p.10). Understanding cultural diversity is another thing that can help towards effective communication. In diverse social settings, this conveys new correspondence difficulties to the working environment. Without getting into societies and sub-societies, the most important thing for individuals to understand is that an essential comprehension of social assorted variety is the way to viable culturally diverse correspondences.

### **1.5.2. Stereotypes**

In the nature of humankind there is an inclination to characterize and classify and after that to make speculations regarding new individuals and things because of absence of likeness. Generalizations mirror the dread of the "obscure" and by diminishing vulnerability they make individuals feel more confident. In each culture there are various jokes and drama characters in light of generalizations. According to Gibson "a stereotype is a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular person or thing which is not true in reality" (p.12).

Generalizations and categorizations are needed but if they are too strict they can also be a barrier in communication. Bad intercultural training will confirm stereotypes. Good training avoids stereotyping and encourages trainees to change their view in the light of what they observe. Allport (1954) defines the stereotype as an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to rationalize our conduct in relation to that category. In intercultural communication it is very important to differentiate what is part of the person's own character, what is part of the cultural background and human nature. Lippman (1922) indicated that stereotypes were means of organizing your images into fixed ideas and simple categories that use to stand for an entire collection of people.

Hofstede (1991) uses a pyramid to illustrate the levels of uniqueness of humankind and according to him, every person is some way like all other people, some, or none (Gibson, 12). People as a whole have certain things in common. We need to rest, eat, and survive. These are widespread acquired qualities. We additionally do a few things on account of our way of life: when we eat and rest, how we attempt to survive. These are particular qualities to specific groups of individuals and are learnt. What is more, we additionally do a few things due to our individual identity. Those characteristics are both inherent and learnt. If we want to understand the behavior of a person, it is essential to consider all the levels of uniqueness. Stereotypes, perceptions about certain groups of people or nationalities, exist within every culture.

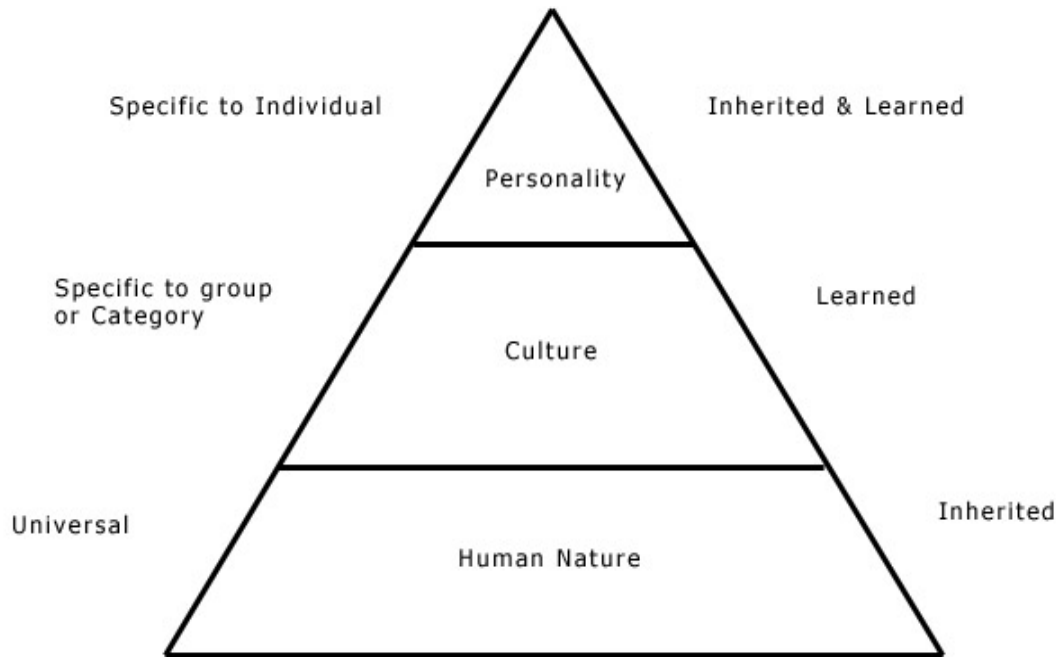


Figure 1 – Hofstede's three levels of uniqueness

Inside a culture there will be a scope of states of mind, convictions, qualities and practices. It is conceivable to make speculations regarding society. However care ought to be taken in applying those speculations to people. When we meet an individual we cannot tell where he/she is on the range depending on the number of people and how certain norms are accepted by this group of people.

Stereotyping can be positive as long as it encourages you to see some ordinary qualities of the individuals' conduct. Then again it can cause issues if you have previously established inclinations about all individuals for a particular group without considering their individual contrasts. Being misrepresented, overstated and summed up, generalizations do not have the feeling of variety from the assumed example. They are a sort of channel which permits the flow of the information which is reliable with the same information already held. stereotypes are predominantly negative but they can be positive as well. Even when they are positive, they can narrow your perception. Stereotypes are learned at home from parents and later children learn them at school from their peers in the process of the socialization.

Teaching English as a foreign language requires teaching certain elements of foreign cultures and presenting relevant and objective information should be an important aim in the teaching process. However, times change and also stereotypes. Thus, the English language teacher should help their students understand and accept cultural diversity, teach them how to avoid criticizing and idealizing other cultures and finally teach them how to appreciate their own culture. Because no culture is better or worse but it is just different. As the famous Levi Strauss pointed out in 1991:

Cultural relativism affirms that one culture has no absolute criteria for judging the activities of another culture as 'low' or 'noble.' However, every culture can and should apply such judgment to its own activities, because its members are actors as well as observers. (p.7)

### **1.5.3. Ethnocentrism**

Stereotypes are merely connected to ethnocentrism. The reason for that is the explanation of ethnocentrism as a belief that one's own culture is superior to others. A very good example of it is the stereotype tourist in the host country complaining about how much better is everything back home (Verderber, Verderber & Sellnow, 2012). Ethnocentrism assumes that our own culture is superior to others, and it is considered to be the only one right, while others are underestimated. Everything that deviates from the norms, customs, the value system, the habits of behavior in one's own culture is considered to be of low quality and qualifies as incomplete with respect to it. The latter is placed in the center of the world and used as a benchmark in assessing the manifestations of other cultures, as foreign values are viewed and valued from the standpoint of their own culture.

According to Levinson (1950), the term is used to mean cultural limitation, the tendency of the individual to be "ethnically centered", to strictly follow the idea of "cultural equivalence" and to reject the idea of "uniqueness". Reynolds (1987) states that ethnocentrism

is a belief that its own culture (ethnicity, race, gender, class, country) truly outperforms all others, and the tendency not to recognize that understanding is a prejudice. LeVine and Campbell (1972) define ethnocentrism as an "attitude or perspective in which values derived from their own cultural background (preparation) and are applied in other cultural contexts in which different values take place."

Ethnocentric overestimation of one's own culture and underestimation of strangers is found in many cultures in different regions of the world and is known to scientists as a fact with a long history. The majority of the cultural anthropologists say that ethnocentrism to one degree or another present in each culture. They believe that looking at the world through the prism of its own culture is natural and that it has positive and negative consequences. The first is that ethnocentrism allows unconsciously to recognize the bearers of foreign culture, and the second is in the conscious attempt to isolate people from one another and to form a negative attitude towards others. In the process of intercultural communication, representatives of different cultures are forced to perceive and interpret foreign culture with its peculiarities. This process implies a new way of thinking because the use of the values of one's own culture to evaluate others is most often a mistake. The interpretation of the foreigner occurs in the process of comparison with our own.

Ethnocentrism is a phenomenon which is encountered on a daily basis when comparing ourselves with people of the opposite gender, different age, members of different communities when there are differences in the cultural patterns of the representatives of the social groups. The alternative to ethnocentrism is cultural relativism, which allows us to find a way to cooperate and mutually enrich the cultures of different groups. According to Bennett (2004), as people became more interculturally competent it seemed that there was a major change in the quality of their experience, which was called the move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Bennett has used the term "ethnocentrism" to refer to the experience of one's own culture as "central to reality." By this he assumed that the beliefs and behaviors which people receive in their primary socialization are unquestioned; they are experienced as "just the way things are and the term "ethnorelativism" actually means the opposite of ethnocentrism – the experience of one's own beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of

reality among many viable possibilities (Bennett, 2004). There are six stages through which people should go through in order to become ethnorelativists. The most ethnocentric phase is the denial of cultural differences, followed by the defense against cultural difference. The third phase which is in the middle of the model is the minimization of cultural differences which looks like a changing point of the "isolated" behavior towards other cultures and continues with acceptance and adaptation of cultural differences. Finally, integration is the last stage of becoming ethnorelative and the whole sequence has formed the DMIS model which will be discussed in details in the literature review.

The school is a social-pedagogical institution that obliges us to abide by certain rules of conduct and communication that are based on the imperatives of society. By going to school, children from different ethnic and social groups form a new community that has its own rules, values and norms that often go hand in hand with the norms and rules of the family community from which they originate and who have mastered at an earlier age. If the teacher shares the ideas of cultural relativism, he or she could ease the transition from the norms, values and rules of one culture (family, ethnic) to the other - the school, which is multicultural. The new multicultural environment also involves different approaches to interaction between individuals and groups in school. Among them, as the most productive and prosperous is the intercultural approach, through which conditions for mutual acquaintance and enrichment of cultures are created. The main "antidote to ethnocentrism" is the respect for diversity, which must become an educational goal (Maude, 117). It requires observing the basic principle - one who respects diversity does not determine what values should prevail when the values of different cultures are in contradiction. In the multicultural classroom, the teacher should be a model for such an attitude and the relationships in the classroom should be based on mutual respect. Finally, the learning content should not be ethnocentric, and must give enough opportunities for other cultures to appear and do not give them opportunities to be minimized.

#### 1.5.4. Culture shock

Culture shock is something that should be looked into details because as mentioned above, when you visit another country you can have problems with the locals or experience culture shock. Oberg (1960) defined culture shock as “a malady, an occupational disease of people who have been suddenly transplanted abroad”. Even though globalization has come to the world, most of the world's people are still not globalized. The reason for that are the issues discussed in this chapter and one of them is culture shock. Everyone is excited when visiting a foreign country no matter what the purpose is: studying, travelling, business, etc. When going abroad people encounter unfamiliar things such as different language, food, everyday life, verbal and non- verbal communication, expressing feelings and so on. These activities can lead to frustration, stress and anxiety which are actually the symptoms of experiencing culture shock.

If one decides to move to a different country then he or she will meet people from another culture with different religion, traditions and habits practiced by that group of people. In that case the person will probably have problems in adjusting to the new culture and this leads to feelings of confusion, insecurity, trauma and strangeness. The term "cultural shock" was first used in 1951 by anthropologist Döbata in connection with the experiences of anthropologists in their encounter with unknown cultures, and in 1960 Oberg extended the use of this concept, assuming that it is applicable to all individuals who are confronted with new onestravel cultures. According to him, the process can be described as follows : "honeymoon - crisis - recovery - adaptation". However in studies affecting academic education, these terms are known as U-Curve and are usually presented as below:

1. Honeymoon stage
2. Grief (confusion/disintegration) stage
3. Re-integration stage;
4. Self-government/ adjustment stage
5. Independence stage

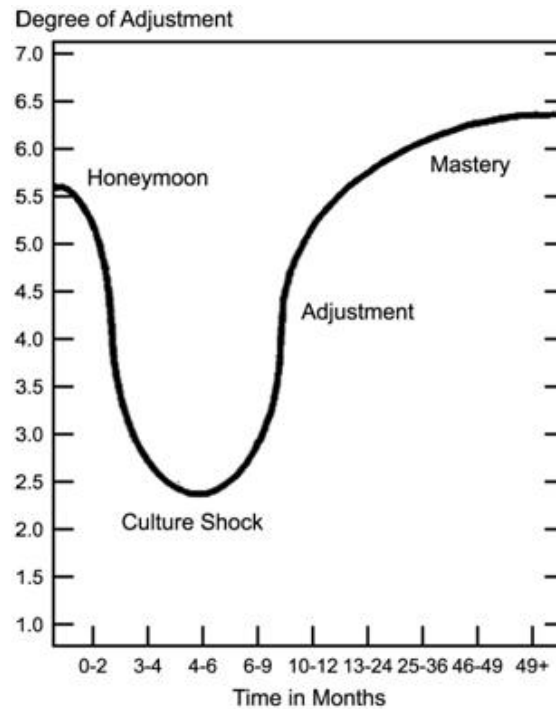


Figure 2 - Stages of culture shock

The concept of "cultural shock" for Kim (2001) is limited in a relatively short period of time disorientation and a sense of discomfort from the unfamiliar environment and the lack of acquaintances elements that give a sense of tranquility (p.18). In 1977 Bennett described cultural shock as "variation and the sum of reactions caused by significant changes in the whole spectrum of circumstances (p.46) . Church in 1982 gave the following definition of cultural shock: "the physical, psychological and behavioral reaction that often occurs when individuals are trying to live, work or study in a strange cultural context" (p.555). The term "cultural shock" is now understood to be a stress caused by contact with the unknown culture, accompanied by a lack of skills to overcome the situation and other terms are also used in this sense such as "adaptation," and "acculturation".

Oberg states that culture shock is the feeling of anxiety that results from losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. Those signs include the ways we orient ourselves in everyday life (1960, p.167). It is actually a communication problem that involves lack of understanding of the verbal and non-verbal communication of the host culture, its



traditions and values. People who experience culture shock can become home-sick, eat or drink compulsively and show unexplained anger and aggression towards the local people.

Understanding the different aspects of cultural adaptation and methods for an easier transition during the period of acculturation are crucial for achieving success in learning a foreign language. In the era of globalization, the clash with some of the elements of cultural shock cannot be avoided in business communication, social life and cultural exchange. Culture shock happens due to intercultural communication and the cultural diversity of today's world. It can happen in the English classroom due to having students from different ethnic backgrounds who sometimes move in a different city or country and students can experience the mentioned feelings. What should be done about it is to acquire some knowledge beforehand in order to acquire skills for intercultural communication which are of particular importance at the moment when in all spheres of life we encounter the necessity of intercultural competences - in academia, globalized business, daily communication.

#### **1.5.5. Dealing with conflicts in the English language classroom**

Conflicts exist in every culture. Societies are like underground waterways that have gone through our lives giving us messages that shape our observations, attributions, judgments, and thoughts of self and the other. In spite of the fact that societies are powerful, they are frequently oblivious, influencing in the process to determine ways to solve conflicts in subtle ways. Anne Campbell (2000) points out that "the development of the individual cultural identity is a process of acceptance of the cultural norms, beliefs, attitudes and values of one cultural group and the concepts of the cultural identity fails to allow that individuals may identify with more than one cultural group, may change their cultural identity in a new cultural context, or may have developed the ability to move between different cultural contexts without losing their sense of individual identity" (p.31). This confirms that societies are more than one dialect or one dress code, and nourishment traditions. Social groups may share race, ethnicity, or

nationality, yet they additionally emerge from cleavages of era, financial class, political and religious alliance, dialect, gender etc. However, two things are fundamental about societies: they are continually changing, and they are identified with the symbolic measurement of life.

Conflict situations may happen in the foreign language classroom due to different reasons such as cultural misunderstandings, personal clashes, different goals in life, prejudice etc. If the teacher does not deal with conflicts and allows the conflict to escalate, students may act aggressively or frustrated. According to Morrisette (2001), instructors sometimes feel that whenever conflict occurs in the classroom that it is a reflection of their shortcomings as teachers (p.5). Furthermore, this can result in hostile learning environment where students do not feel confident to study, participate or have friends in that surrounding. Conflict situations can be solved effectively through a variety of activities and strategies such as mutual understanding, giving opinions, debates. However, in order to achieve that numerous skills are needed: listening skills, assertiveness, intercultural knowledge which includes respect, empathy and sensitivity towards the other. The nature of teaching a foreign language includes dealing with different ethnicities and nationalities and many qualified English teachers usually experience difficulties adjusting to the culture of their students. These feelings of anxiety and a lack of understanding of the students' culture can lead to conflicts in the classroom that interfere with learning (Kramsch, 1993; Al-Issa, 2005). Moreover, when teachers face cultures much different than their own sometimes they are not aware that the conflicts happen because they teach students from different cultural backgrounds. The reason for that is the lack of knowledge of intercultural communication and of course intercultural communication competence. Teachers who have developed the intercultural competence whether from trainings or going on mobility abroad are able to adapt to the students' culture and will allow them to be effectively engaged and connected with students from different ethnicities than their own.

Conflicts may arise because of different reasons. Speaking about the Roma students in Strumica, the case is that they are not usually accepted by the rest of the students because of the different cultural values, and religion. What is appropriate for the Macedonian students may not be appropriate for the Roma students. Sometimes, the language can be a barrier -

either the English or the Macedonian language in this case. Unfortunately, it is very common that Roma students go to school and do not know the Macedonian language and cannot communicate with everybody in the classroom. Very often in such cases cultural clashes are common and if the teacher remains calm and is not interested to address the situation, everything will go out of control. It is essential to overcome the cultural and language barriers and to solve the situation in a sensitive and careful manner. It is very important to find a way to communicate with all of the students. The teacher should have open communication with the students, finding a way to help them understand each other remaining calm, cool and honest. In addition, it is important to teach them how to respect themselves finding particular activities to make them speak freely about their culture, compare it to another, discuss the norms and traditions and from all these experiences they will finally learn how to appreciate and respect everybody in the classroom. Because of immigration and globalization the classrooms have become increasingly diverse so the differences between students are of huge importance. "As long as students remain in their own culture, they take their culture for granted. When surrounded by those who are different, they become more consciously aware of their own culture" (Weaver, 1995, p.24). Very often the awareness gives feelings of anxiety or even haltered leading to students' comments that may be disturbing or offensive.

Observing delicate situations such as clashing cultural conclusions because of the course material is a decent approach to start. Some course themes will stress contrasts between cultures in ways that will create unsurprising differences in behavior. In any circumstances, when an exasperating comment leaves unpleasant feeling for example furious, or outraged, it can rapidly energize the classroom in profound and alarming ways. At such cases it is evident how individuals' dissimilarities can make a climate that disrupts the learning process. These situations of profound contradiction will definitely happen in the intercultural classroom, regardless being unequivocally or not. Recognizing contrasts and the clashing perspectives they bring enables teachers to be more successful similarly as the tendency to our students' uneasiness to empower the difficulties and make them end up as more compelling students. When differences in cultural norms and values between home and school automatically have the effect of alienating students there are different possibilities. Some of

the students are able to switch cultural identities with ease and achieve better results at school (Campbell, 2000).

My personal experience has taught me that it is very important to establish some rules for acceptable behavior in the classroom early in the term. Those rules can be written on a wallpaper and all the students should be able to see them whenever they enter the classroom. Another important thing is to follow the communication and interaction of the students. If the teacher feels some kind of a tension this should be discussed aloud in front of everybody and all the students should express their opinions and reactions. The most important rule is that students should treat each other with respect. They should listen actively and be aware of other students' perspectives. Very good examples to do this are the following activities:

1. To ask students to talk about their beliefs by taking others' views into account.
2. To ask each student to reformulate the other student's point in a manner satisfactory to that person before responding to it. This will help prevent careless arguing.
3. Challenging students' unwarranted assumptions (such as, "That's an example of how all Xs act like Y.")
4. Make argumentative debates with affirmative and negative teams whereas a thesis would be given and the teams should provide either positive or negative arguments, defend and justify them and accept the winner without having the feeling of a loser.
5. Encouraging students to use a perception check if they fear they have inadvertently offended another student (or modeling such behavior yourself). To do so, describe what you think another person is feeling/thinking and request that the person confirm or correct this. "You seem offended. Are you?" or "Did I paraphrase your last comment incorrectly?"

This will help improve intercultural communication by making sure every student feels heard and understood, even when there is a difference of opinion (Brookfield 143).

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

### **1.2.1. The situation in the Republic of Macedonia**

As stated above, English language teaching has inevitably developed towards intercultural communication. However, this is not the case in Strumica, the town which is the primary case study of this dissertation. Not many studies have been done regarding the intercultural communication cognition and cultural competence of teachers and students involved in the learning-teaching process of English as a foreign language in the Republic of Macedonia. My perception is that the teachers in the Republic of Macedonia are not sufficiently interculturaly trained and they have not developed the two prerequisites of intercultural communication competence: intercultural communication awareness and intercultural communication sensitivity.

This research is important because in Strumica there are a lot of students from different ethnic backgrounds (representing the smaller communities in the country) and very often these students do not achieve very good results in most of the subjects. I believe that the students are not the only reason for the low results. Sometimes they do not get the right treatment in their surroundings. Researches show that Roma students in the Republic of Macedonia are more inclined to music and languages but are often discriminated by their surrounding and this makes them feel alienated and excluded and finally unable to achieve better results at school (Mladenovski, 2013, p. 111). But there are other reasons too. Up to now, the intercultural competence aspect has not been adequately implemented in the curricula for teaching English as a foreign language.

### 1.2.2. Analysis of the English language curricula of the state secondary vocational and gymnasium schools

Since this case study is oriented towards measuring the intercultural communication competence among teachers and students from the state secondary schools in Strumica, analysis of the curriculum of the state secondary and vocational schools is needed in order to justify the situation in Republic of Macedonia i.e. in Strumica. If one takes a glance at the prescribed curriculum for state vocational schools and gymnasium for the first and second year it can be seen that there is one component which is present in the curriculum named as culture and the primary aims for I and II grade are the following:

- to get to know the socio-cultural characteristics of other countries for developing positive attitude towards their own cultural identity and respect for other cultures
- to develop curiosity and interest for other cultures and to understand the complexity of the significance of culture and studying culture as well as the challenges that arise from the multi-ethnic surrounding
- to develop skills for perceiving culture similarities and differences, critical thinking of cultural stereotypes as basis for developing cultural understanding and tolerance.<sup>1</sup>

More precisely in the curriculum for third year vocational school the culture component is understood within the following context: "the student should acquire knowledge and understanding of socio-cultural, economic and political characteristics of other countries through the vocabulary and communicative models in order to develop positive attitude towards their own and other's cultures for better mutual understanding and cooperation as well as respecting the differences between them. "

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<sup>1</sup> "Official gazette of Republic of Macedonia" No 44/1995; 24/1996; 34/1996; 35/1997; 82/1999; 29/2002; 40/2003; 42/2003; 67/2004; 55/2005; 113/2005; 35/2006; 30/2007; 49/2007; 81/2008; 92/2008; 33/2010; 116/2010; 156/2010; 18/2011; 42/2011; 51/2011; 6/2012; 100/2012, 24/2013, 41/2014, 116/2014 и 135/2014) the Minister for education has approved the curricula for the subject English as a first foreign language for the secondary (gymnasium, vocational, art, sports academy) education.

Speaking about the fourth grade of vocational education, in the process of studying English language, the cultural component has the following aim: "the student should acquire knowledge and understanding of some cultural characteristics between personal, social and economic attitudes in other countries for building positive attitude towards our personal and other cultures for better mutual understanding and cooperation as well as respecting the differences between them."

It can be stated that the prescribed aim is very similar with the aims mentioned above for the I, II, and III year whereas from year to year there is a little change of the given aim i.e. that in the final two years the students should develop the cultural awareness and respect the differences between cultures which means that they should become aware that there are other cultures which exist beside their own.

The curriculum for the gymnasium education states that the culture component for first and second year is the same as the one in the state vocational education and the only change are some added topics. In the second year of studying English in the gymnasium education, it is explained that the culture component says will be upgraded in the third year. Finally, in the fourth year of gymnasium education, the cultural component is enriched with the following topics: Social History, Music, Film, Fashion, important persons and events from science, technique, literature, arts and media.

Based on the above given information taken from the officially prescribed curriculum from the Ministry of Education in Republic of Macedonia it can be concluded that all the listed aims in the component named culture are almost the same for the I,II,III and IV<sup>th</sup> grade where English language as a first foreign language is obligatory in the curriculum. The content and examples for implementation of these components are not the same throughout the four years and the teacher is expected to fulfill the aims in any way he or she considers possible. According to Dervin and Gross (2016) "the concept of IC can be polysemic and empty in education: it either means too much or too little. Researchers, practitioners but also decision makers use it almost automatically without always worrying about the meanings, the impact it has on those who are embedded in its discussions and the injustices it can lead to (p.19)." In

times where the other is usually stereotyped, rejected and even abused, it is urgent to find the right approaches to deal with the issue of interculturality. In the area which is the subject of this research, there is an attempt to start implementing lessons with multi-ethnic integration because the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), have ran a project but not all schools had the chance to participate in it. The intention of this research is to point out to the necessity of introducing a multicultural curricula and developing the intercultural competences among both students and teachers in the Republic of Macedonia. Working on these segments would not only be beneficial in the treatment of students belonging to the smaller ethnic groups in the country, but would potentially influence the mind set and world view of all the students regardless of their ethnic background. Taylor (1997) points out that the prime aim of intercultural education is to raise awareness of certain key issues: belonging to a culture and the existence of different cultures and all of this geared toward learning to respect and appreciate diversity. If students and teachers are acquainted with the intercultural competence they will learn that a foreign language means also learning about the certain culture which is essential for successful intercultural communication. Hence, developing intercultural competence among teachers is essential in achieving goals on an international level and more precisely by implementing intercultural competence in education a bigger cultural awareness can be attained.

According to Deardorff (2006) the assessment of intercultural competence is an outcome of internationalization efforts. She defines internationalization as "a process of integrating an international perspective into teaching, research, and service aspects of higher education that incorporates an ongoing, future-oriented, interdisciplinary, leadership-driven vision" (p.5). It must be understood that not only knowledge of other cultures is enough to develop intercultural competence. Other skills and attitudes are needed for successful interaction with people from different backgrounds. Chen and Starosta (1996) identified that the intercultural person is one who respects other cultures and has tolerance for differences and identified four skill areas: personality strength, communication skills, psychological adjustment and cultural awareness. In order to achieve successful communication, the interlocutors should know themselves first. Their self-awareness should express friendly



personality if they want to be competent in the intercultural communication. Furthermore, individuals should possess skills for effective communication such as message skills, behavioral flexibility and interaction management. Social skills such as empathy and identity are essential as well. The ability to put yourself in the shoes of the other i.e. to experience the same emotions as the other and being able to deal with diverse people in different situations makes a competent intercultural communicator (Chodzkienė, 2014).

Deardorff (2006) points out that a variety of methods can be used to assess intercultural competence, such as observation, portfolio, and interviews(p.73). The most cited model of Bennett (1993) known as Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) will be used in this study along with interviews and observation of lessons and is to be discussed in details in the literature review.

Up to now, the foreign language methodology in the Republic of Macedonia is still traditional and very often oriented towards the teacher-centered, book-centered, grammar-translation method and puts emphasis only on language knowledge and not towards the trend of intercultural communication competence. According to Boumová (2008), one of the aims of any methodology in foreign language teaching is to improve the foreign language ability of the student and this can be achieved by the intercultural communication competence. This means that the aim of the modern way of teaching and learning a foreign language is the ability to communicate with people from the foreign countries in order to get the opportunity to perceive the world from another point of view i.e. to learn and discover new cultures and their ways of life.

### **1.2.3. Justification and significance of the study**

Intercultural communication is becoming an essential part of the education system nowadays because of globalization, immigration and the multicultural work environments. The need for training, knowledge and research in this field is increasing because of the recent trends in education.

The hypothesis are to be proved through questionnaires and interviews with students, and teachers. By answering the research questions, one can examine the perceptions of the practices of the English language teachers in Strumica. This research is important because in Strumica there are a lot of students from different ethnic backgrounds and very often these students do not achieve very good results in most of the subject.

My prediction is that teachers need support and professional development related to intercultural communication especially training connected to ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. There was a recent attempt through the project called multi-ethnic integrated education to do something about this issue but my perception is that everything that was done was probably successful but not so thorough. With this dissertation, I will try to raise the awareness of the people involved in the education process that Intercultural communication competence is needed, but should be learned and implemented in the teaching-learning process and of course applied previously in the curriculum.

#### **1.2.4. Aim of the study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate what is the level of intercultural communication cognition of the English language teachers in the high-schools in Strumica (compared to one language high-school in Bulgaria – “Geo Milev” from Ruse). The sample for this study are students and teachers from state municipal high schools in Strumica municipality. The three municipal high-schools ("Nikola Karev", "Jane Sandanski" and "Dimitar Vlahov") have students from different ethnic backgrounds and very often these students show lower results at school. As stated above, my prediction is that sometimes teachers have not developed intercultural communication competence because of different reasons which are to be explained afterwards. The state high-school "Geo Milev" from Bulgaria was chosen for a comparison with the schools in Strumica because it is a secondary school with special emphasis on English studies. This school is a typical example of having students from different ethnic

backgrounds. All of the English teachers will take part in the research together with their students from different ethnic backgrounds.

Both towns have been chosen as samples for this research because they are similar in diversity. More precisely, they deal with different diversity groups and follow similar curricula but achieve different results in English language. One of the aims of this research is to find the differences and similarities of the Intercultural Communication Cognition and the reasons for them. At this stage in the research, the intercultural communication competence as central phenomenon being studied will be generally defined as a competence essential for language teachers in order to fulfill the aims of teaching English as a foreign language in diverse classrooms. As mentioned before, the prime aim of this dissertation would be to increase teacher's awareness in terms of intercultural communication in order to achieve better results in teaching English as a foreign language. In addition, I believe that increasing intercultural competencies among English language teachers is crucial in terms of educating interculturally competent students and citizens of the world. Another purpose of this research would be to prove that students from different backgrounds can achieve very good results in English as a foreign language if they are appreciated, not discriminated or stereotyped.

### **1.2.3. Research hypotheses**

Not many studies have been done regarding the intercultural communication cognition and cultural competence of teachers and students involved in the learning-teaching process of English as a foreign language in the Republic of Macedonia. This research starts from the following premises:

1. The teachers in Republic of Macedonia do not have sufficient intercultural training;

2. they have not developed the two prerequisites of intercultural communication competence: intercultural communication awareness and intercultural communication sensitivity.

In order to prove that, I will try to answer the following research questions taking into account Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS):

- What is the level of intercultural communication awareness of English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds?

H: The low level of intercultural communication awareness among teachers of English language in Strumica is problematic in schools with students of different ethnic backgrounds, thus students achieve low results.

- To what extent is intercultural communication sensitivity developed by English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds?

H: Those who have a higher level of intercultural communication sensitivity tend to have a lower level of ethnocentrism and appreciate the student's different cultures.

- Which factors limit or increase the cultural awareness of teachers in classrooms with students from different ethnic backgrounds?

H: The lack of knowledge in Intercultural Communication limits the English language teachers' awareness of other cultures.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication as a complex term should be explored from different perspectives in order to define it. First, it is important to explore the terms culture and communication which are in relation to intercultural communication. There are numerous definitions of culture amongst which a very interesting one is by Tylor who wrote it in 1871 stating that culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a human as a member of society (p.2)". It is difficult to define culture and it is not strange that this word has also been described as one of the two or three most complicated words in English language. A very famous scholar in this field Hofstede (2001) defined it as "the collective mental programming or the software of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (p.9). However in his book *Culture's Consequences* (1980) he introduces the use of the concept of dimensions of culture: basic problems to which different national societies have over time developed different answers. National culture is what distinguishes one country from another. It is what every individual belonging to that culture is indoctrinated with. In one of his interviews, Hofstede makes the claim that the acquisition of one's national culture is an unconscious process, because we are born into a certain culture and by the age of 9 or 10 we have already acquired all of the elements, language, behaviors, values, history and organizations of that culture (October 10, 2011). This is done subconsciously, simply because that particular culture is the only culture we know and are exposed to. Consequently, one is so thoroughly imbued with all of the elements typical of their own culture that while growing up it becomes almost impossible to comprehend how anyone else's culture could be any different from theirs. The second level of culture defined by Hofstede is the culture we encounter as part of the working world i.e. organizational culture. The definition of this cultural subtype can be

embedded in Hofstede's definition of national culture by simply replacing the terms group or category of people with organization, i.e. "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one ... [organization] from others" (Hofstede, p. 9).

The reason why culture is something that one should be aware of is that people need something to rely on. Everyone needs some moral and legal rules to follow and obey in order to know whether what is being done is right or wrong. Culture is what makes people feel as being part of something, and this is an inevitable desire of every human being. People want to know that they are a part of something and that there are other people who share their views, opinions and experiences. Culture and intercultural communication are inevitably connected. Culture gives essential information to communication. This brings understanding through a common background of mutual experiences, histories and geographical location. Shared experiences over the years and centuries create culture which is essential for understanding and communication. As Helen Spencer Oatey points out "the shared assumptions of a group of people help to interpret the behavior and words of those in and outside the group" (2012, p.2). She explores the interactive aspects of cross-cultural communication. Cross-cultural communication is not the same as intercultural communication. On the one hand, cross-cultural communication is not about the communication of people from different cultures but the comparison of their differences across culture. This means that cross-cultural communication is comparative in nature and deals with the communication patterns of different cultures. On the other hand intercultural communication examines how the specific cultural differences affect the interactions of the people involved in that communication. (Gudykunst, 2002).

Intercultural communication is interdisciplinary and integrates disciplines such as: anthropology, sociology, linguistics, psychology, history, geography, arts, music etc. Intercultural communication is defined as interactions with members of other cultures in which an individual strives to understand the cultural values, beliefs and norms of other parties and to use that understanding to adapt his/her communication style to achieve a meaningful exchange and win-win result (Sadri & Flammia, 2013, p.26). When people have mutual experiences this leads to deeper understandings of the group. It is not surprising that the idioms, proverbs and

non-verbal gestures are very often misunderstood by people who are outside the group i.e. from a different culture. In order to communicate, if people are from a different culture, they do not just need a mutual language, but they should also make an effort to understand the culture. No matter the fact that English language has become a global language, its use as a means of communication cannot remove the need for cultural understanding between people from different cultures. Communication, as an element of culture is a symbolic process by which people pass the information to each other and create shared meanings. (Gydikunst, 27).

## **2.2. Intercultural communication in ELT**

Foreign language teaching and learning has gone through major changes over the past years. Replacing the old grammar-translation approach with the communicative and audio-lingual method and the practices of real-life situations, most of the educators have moved from pedagogy to language acquisition and learning. According to the theory of Stephen Crashen (1985), the unconscious development of the target language system happens because of the usage of the language for real communication (p.1). From here, learning would be related to the conscious representation of grammatical knowledge and non-spontaneous processes. Thus, students who read literature books can acquire better communicative and linguistic competence. Speaking about English language teaching, students become aware of certain culture very often through literature texts. Using literature texts are not so useful if only taken as tools to improve students' knowledge in the language. As Corbett (2003) posits, the primary aim of the foreign language teacher is to help students understand texts in a foreign language and to cope with, mediate between or even enter into 'cultural texts' (if seen as social practices).

In the *Multidimensional Model of Intercultural Competence*, Byram (1997) puts an emphasis on the attitude and uses words such as openness and curiosity to explain his conviction that an individual must remain open to learning about new beliefs, values and worldviews in order to participate in relationships of equality (Moeller and Nugent, 2014). Because culture is who we are and how we live and this process is changeable, those changes

bring new challenges in the society. Globalization, migration and the mingling of cultures in one place or community has made this world highly multicultural. Globalization brings the need to interact and have different kinds of relationships with people from different cultures. It creates a new challenge for people who are to cross the borders of the countries altogether with their cultural boundaries. English language is studied in primary schools starting from the first grade today. This was not the case ten or twenty years ago. Students had studied from their fifth, then from their fourth grade of primary school, some classes were experimental and now, even children who do not go to school start learning it. According to Byram there are different viewpoints of studying languages: "Employers see language learning as one of the essential skills in international trade – and almost all trade is now international – and parents see the acquisition of languages, particularly English, as an important way of investing in their children and giving them the social and cultural capital they will carry forward into future generations" (Byram, p.77). The ultimate goal of an intercultural approach is not so much 'native speaker competence' but rather intercultural communicative competence and this includes the ability to understand the language and behavior of the target community and explain it to members of the 'home' community. It trains learners to be diplomats i.e. able to view different cultures from a perspective of informed understanding and this aim displaces the long-standing objective of ELT – to attain 'native speaker proficiency'.

According to Livermore (1998, p.10), the intercultural competence of the teacher is the ability to facilitate the learning in cognitive, emotional and behavioral settings among students from different cultures than their own. This scholar points out the main competencies that the teacher should develop in order to achieve effective learning atmosphere when teaching students from different cultures than his/her own.

a) knowledge - even though it is widely denied the meaning of theory and practice, the effectiveness of the teacher depends on his/her theoretical knowledge in the following areas: interculturalism: meaning, importance, cultural misunderstandings, conflicts, factors for effective intercultural communication, symbiosis of learning and culture; models of assessment, the needs of the students and ways of learning; even though every teacher knows his/her field



very well, the broadness and profoundness in that field is very important because of the needed cultural adaptation and it must be clear what is included in the curriculum speaking about culture and interculturalism in education.

b) skills - the skills of the teacher will transform his/her knowledge in effective results which will be justified in a successful project:

- planning and design: the key word is the grade of the students as a group (behavior, history, context) of the cultural behavior they can attain during the lessons

- accomplishment: what is being planned it must be done. There should be a variety of the content especially in the methods and instruments of learning. The progress should be monitored and summative and formative assessment should be used

c) Attitude - this is a very subjective competence but it has an important meaning:

- tolerance for ambiguity: each educational element has some level of ambiguity which is raised especially in multicultural settings. If the teacher is not so open-minded and follows the lesson planning and does not allow unexpected changes and is frustrated by the students than this teacher is not effective

- maintain personal cultural identity - the biggest mistake of the teacher when having contacts with students from another culture is to become as them without staying as he/she is and rely on his/her own cultural identity.

- patience is very important about teachers. By having contacts with students from different ethnic backgrounds there are always barriers in communication and some answers on the behalf of the teacher can isolate the students or motivate them or in the worst case turn it into a barrier of communication.

- enthusiasm which turns into a powerful factor in intercultural education

- interpersonal communication: though more important among some cultures than others, strong interpersonal skills are absolutely necessary for effective intercultural education

- being interested for the students - the openness considering their problems, life, perspectives which should be real and not only symbolic

- empathy - understanding the feelings of the students considering learning and their own cultural orientations

- sense of humor - is precious when solving problems and lowering the pressure as a whole.

d) Behavior. A sign of intercultural competence is the high standard the teacher sets - career and professional development, understanding the needs of the students, sharing knowledge and experience with the colleagues, self-reflexivity and self-criticism, improving knowledge in their field and acquiring stimulus learning environment.

Intercultural competence is essential when learning a foreign language and it cannot be denied that by learning a language one can only become interculturally competent. Moreover, learning a foreign language is the most effective way to understand and learn more about how the language shapes the worldview of the other and this comes to be the central aim of intercultural competence. Finally, it can be concluded that teaching a foreign language is much more than improving the knowledge without learning the culture explicitly. As Byram (1989) points out, culture has become a necessary tool in teaching a foreign language having in mind the following elements: raising awareness of one's identity and of the existence of difference, enhancing understanding of self and others and fostering appreciation of otherness (p.25).

### **2.3. Intercultural communication and Identity in ELT**

When communicating interculturally, it is very important to recognize people's identity and how identity affects the communication in a multicultural setting. When entering a conversation in such settings, the members of the particular cultural group share the same values, traditions, signs and meanings. Hortobágyi (2009) states that in communication and daily interactions people define who they are and negotiate their identities with people who are similar to them or different from them(p. 259). Within intercultural communication, the

participants are part of different communication system and very often the differences may lead to conflicts in a verbal or non-verbal manner. Whether we speak about undesired discrimination or making improper gestures, frustrating situations easily occur. There are many definitions about identity within literature and it is still difficult to find the proper definition. Fearon (1999) gives the following one:

"Identity" is presently used in two linked senses, which may be termed "social" and "personal." In the former sense, an "identity" refers simply to a social category, a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes. In the second sense of personal identity, an identity is some distinguishing characteristic (or characteristics) that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable (p.2).

Thus, it can be seen that identity has a double meaning in this definition. It refers to social categories and the individual's dignity or national pride. Identity can refer to personal features in terms of social category and the idea of the social category which is bound up with the individual self-respect. According to Luoma (2005) "individuals undergo self- and cultural identity transformation in order to achieve understanding, harmony and balance within themselves and their environment, and in their connection with others. Cultures also change in this process, because social, political, economic and historical influences affect cultural and intercultural interactions. Cultural groups reflect, re-create, unify, and maintain their ethnic and cultural identities". A famous scholar in this field Bonny Norton (2013) defined identity as "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how the relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 4). Negotiating identities can be very important in the English language classrooms where students state their beliefs, values, traditions from their particular cultural point of view. "Knowledge about other groups is not isolated factual knowledge, but rather "relational", i.e., it is knowledge acquired within socialization in one's own social groups and

often presented in contrast to the significant characteristics of one's national group and identity" (Byram, 1997).

With the recent methodology of ELT, teachers are now the facilitators in learning the foreign language and students are more autonomous and are involved in the process of learning by setting their own goals, do their tasks and self-check their progress and at the same time acquiring the cultural awareness by interacting with students from different ethnic backgrounds. Galante (2015) confirms that the recent pedagogy entails the use of foreign language in order to criticize worldviews and to construct and reconstruct knowledge through social relations of cultures, race, ethnicity, gender, and identities. In connection to this, Foncha (2014) concludes that during social interaction, students work collaborate between each other and develop critical thinking skills by observing, analyzing and evaluating information.

When the students are engaged and involved in the lesson all the time, then the classroom activities are the best way of learning the new language along with the intercultural communication competence. Task-based activities which are engaging for students and keep them active throughout the whole lesson appear to be the best way of fostering language and achieving the intercultural competence aim. Corbett (2010) points out that "typical intercultural activities combine language tasks with ethnography and critical thinking. For many language learners today, intercultural exploration blends internet research and chat room discussion with a fresh, systematic, reflective investigation into familiar aspects of one's own culture". By doing this, students appear to create awareness towards their own language and culture and to the others. Consequently, commitment, cooperation and support can be seen as an important aim in language learning and intercultural communication competence.

In the today's so called global village of the digitalized world, the differences should be negotiated and the identities would be set free from prejudice and communication without boundaries should be accomplished. So, "identity is perceived as being a multiple, dynamic, contextually situated and socially constructed phenomenon which requires for language, and thus interaction in various communities, for its formation to take place. Furthermore, identities

are considered ongoing narrative projects which consist of people's self-told stories of themselves reflecting to their past, present and future" (Romo, 2015, p.9). The development of multiethnic identities has been dynamic in the course of recent decades. However, teachers everywhere in the world need to create radical pedagogical ways of teaching and learning through which they will give students the chance to use their own identities and in order to accomplish successful oral and written intercultural communication. Further, in the English language classroom, students should be able to express and reflect on their own identity, their views of culture and learn to respect the others' linguistic and cultural diversity.

#### **2.4. Intercultural communication competence**

Communicative competence's concept was introduced by Hymes who argued that "linguists wishing to understand the first language acquisition need to pay attention to the way in which not only grammatical competence but also the ability to use language appropriately is acquired" (Byram, p.7). However, he puts emphasis on the sociolinguistic competence and this was essential for the development of communicative language teaching. Sociolinguistic competence is the awareness of ways in which the choice of language forms is determined by such conditions as setting, relationship between communication partners, communicative intention, etc. and covers the relation between linguistic signals and their contextual situation meaning (Van Ek, p.41). Intercultural communication competence (ICC) has also been conceptualized in different ways depending on the scholars' theoretical orientations and perceptions of what counts as competence Byram's (1997) model of ICC, which is designed for the language classroom defined ICC in terms of linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, and discourse competence.

Nowadays, intercultural communication competence is expected to end disputes, enhance people's lives and change the existence of millions of people in many ways through the increased cultural awareness. Therefore, successful intercultural communication does not happen if the two speakers speak the same language. "An intercultural competent speaker of

a foreign language possesses both communicative competence in that language as well as particular skills, attitudes, values and knowledge about a culture" (Moeller and Nugent, 2014). The type of intercultural competence that we need today includes the ability to understand and use cultural differences as a resource for learning and structuring effective actions in specific contexts. According to Barnlund "the more people differ, the more they have to learn from each other. To do this, there must be mutual respect and curiosity enough to each other" (1997, p. 120). The essential elements of intercultural competence are the active awareness of ourselves as a complex cultural being and the effect that our culture has on the way of thinking and acting; awareness of our ability to communicate with others, and to explore the invisible opinions and beliefs that define someone's behavior and goals; the development of readiness to try different ways of thinking and doing things. Intercultural competence gives people the ability to find different perspectives on reality, which makes it more likely to develop a common understanding and collaborative action. There is no separate discipline that alone is sufficient to grasp and explore the cognitive and behavioral dimensions of the influence of culture on interactions, nor is there a separate theory that provides guidance and approaches to address the challenges and dynamics of intercultural interactions. In order to be interculturally competent one needs to have a deeper intercultural relationship with the interlocutor i.e. he or she needs to be persistent and determined to understand to gain an inner view of the other person's culture (Byram, 1997). The development of intercultural competences includes aspects such as:

- be aware of your own cultural identity;
- to know the dominant cultural models;
- to be able to define your own independent position, knowing that it is culturally influenced;
- to strengthen confidence in yourself and from such a position to seek a variety of interaction with others;
- to create interest and active curiosity about otherness, as well as a sense of personal enrichment;
- to maintain tolerance and equality in your interactions;

- the ability to develop and maintain relationships;
- the ability to communicate effectively and adequately with minimal loss and distortion of understanding;
- the ability to reach agreement and cooperation with others.

These qualities are necessary not only for intercultural interactions but also for interpersonal relationships. But at the intercultural level the requirements are much higher, because when the different cultures meet, common things are reduced and the differences are rising dramatically. Although the term intercultural competence is now widely used in the field of intercultural communication, there is still no common definition. There is only a consensus that the development of competencies with regard to another culture enables a powerful reflection on their own views of the world. Or, as scientists in this field express "look out is looking into". This idea is spread in the field of intercultural education and is repeated in the history of education, reflected in disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, anthropology, linguistics, arts. Moreover, the fact that each society is dynamic because of the advancement of technology, science, technology and the current immigration and finally the globalization are reasons plus to find it harder to define precisely what intercultural communication is. Someone who is interculturally competent has knowledge of one or more cultures and social identities as well as the capacity to relate to new people from other contexts for which they have not been prepared directly (Byram & Fleming, 1998, p.9). The benefits of intercultural competences and internationalization are many. But the most important in the long run is the acquired new understanding and view of the world. The social and cultural interactions between teachers and students, the multicultural aspects of teaching and learning, the introduction of a specific style of work at all organizational levels of the institution prepare a new type of people open to diversity. Opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding are taken into account as benefits from all parties involved in the process, from specific actors to national institutions. It is known, although it is difficult to quantify that once created relationships generate new collaborations, they reflect career and future development in personal and professional terms. When students return after training abroad, they bring their "personal capital", which is

expressed not only received formal education, but with the experienced cultural, intellectual, personal experience.

#### **2.4.1. Intercultural communication competence concepts**

Intercultural communication competence means the ability to communicate in an effective and appropriate way with people from different cultures. In order to achieve appropriate and effective communication, one must value rules, norms of the other culture which can be fulfilled by having a more developed sense for intercultural communication. Intercultural communication cognition of English language teachers would mean the ability of teachers to incorporate intercultural communication knowledge, attitudes and awareness towards other cultures. Chen and Starosta (1999) define intercultural communication competence as “the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors that negotiate each other's cultural identity or identities in a culturally diverse environment” (p. 28). They outline three key components of intercultural communication competence: intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness and intercultural adroitness defined as verbal and nonverbal skills needed to act effectively in intercultural interactions. In order to go into details of ICC, four models are to be explained in details below:

##### *a) Process Model (D. Deardorff)*

D. Deardorff's model of ICC is named Process Model of ICC. This model explains the process of how to become interculturally competent. This scholar has made a national study in the USA and concluded that ICC can be defined as effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations. The main elements needed to achieve ICC are attitudes, knowledge, skills, internal or external outcomes. If attitude means the way you feel or think about someone and one of the key attitudes are respect, openness, curiosity and discovery these are needed to move further for successful intercultural communication. Knowledge of culture and sociolinguistic awareness is also needed to achieve successful intercultural interaction. In connection to this are the skills to process the knowledge such as



observation, listening, analyzing and interpreting. All these lead to the internal outcome which includes flexibility, adaptability and empathy. Finally, empathy plays an important role for achieving the wanted external outcomes i.e. do not do to others what you do not want to be done and vice versa. From here the definition of ICC is the effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations. Furthermore, Deardorff(2006) suggests that this model is open and allows individuals to enter at any point and they can move freely between categories, sometimes moving ahead, and at other times returning to delve deeper into a concept previously encountered:

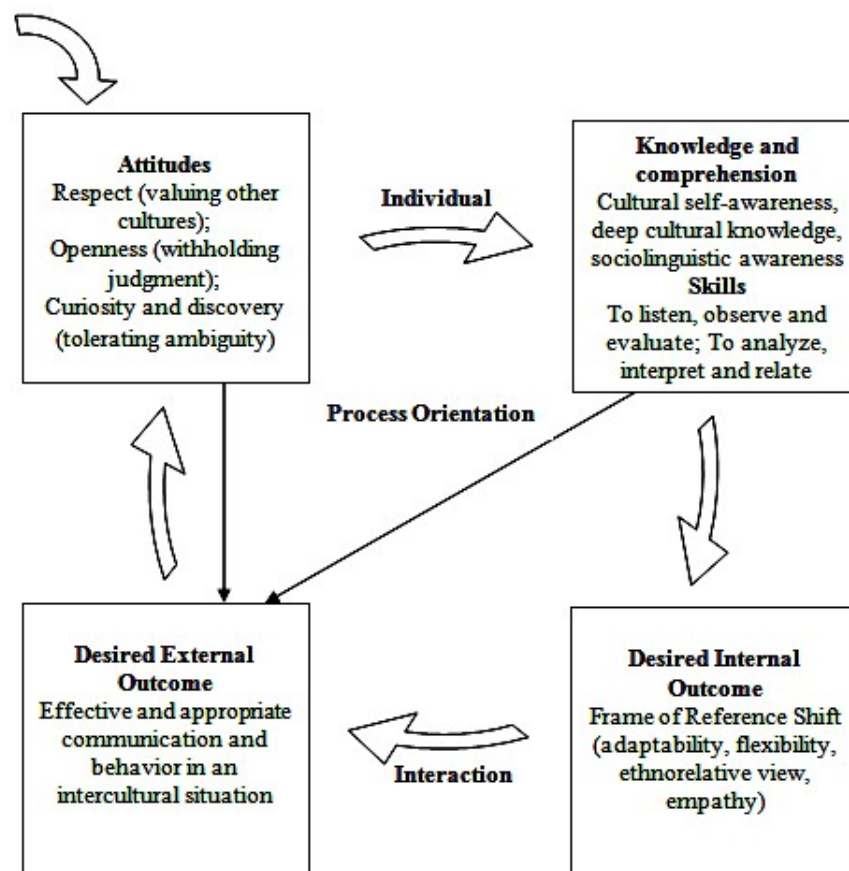


Figure 3 – D. C. Deardorff Process Model of ICC

This model proves that if an individual has the needed attitudes and the minimal appropriate behavior and communication it is possible to achieve the desired outcome. If the person possesses the knowledge and skills he/she will be more effective in the intercultural interaction. This model shows that ICC is not a finalized process. One cannot become

completely interculturally competent because this is a lifelong process. However, language is not the only needed skill for ICC but it is only a bridge to move on and develop more and more skills and understand the others.

*b) Byram's model*

Byram's model in ICC whose concept is in accordance with linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence and adds detailed intercultural dimension in order to move away from the native speaker model of communication. (Han & Song, 176). It also combines knowledge, skills and discovery and interaction, intercultural attitudes and critical cultural awareness into a system of intercultural competence. Thus, the role of the language is to develop skills, attitudes and awareness of values just as much as it is to develop a knowledge of a particular culture or country (Byram, 2008).

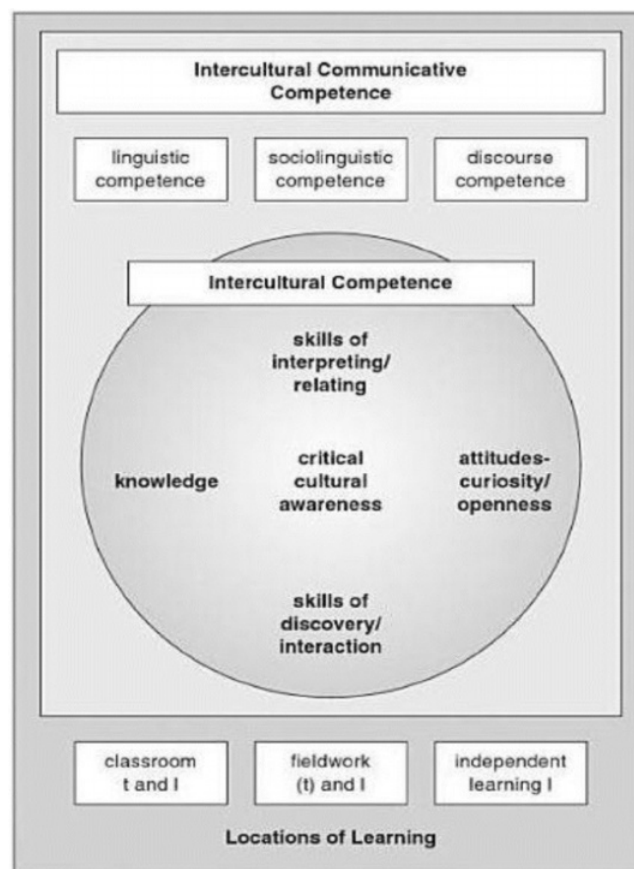


Figure 4 – Byram's Model of ICC

According to Byram's model as shown in Figure 3 above, intercultural competence is made of knowledge, skills and attitudes and all these are supplemented by five values: intercultural attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, critical cultural awareness (Byram, 2002). Byram gives explanation of ICC consisting of interaction with the "other" using the one's native language or interpretation of documents that have been translated into one's native language. Hence ICC is about combining the ideas of self-awareness in the process of communication in a foreign language as a needed component to the intercultural case.

*c) Bennet's model*

A very important approach connected to this issue is Bennet's model of cultural competence. According to Bennet (1993), "Cultural competence is the process by which people learn to value and respond respectfully to people off all cultures." (p. 245). It is crucial for teachers to develop intercultural communication competence which has two prerequisites:

- intercultural communication awareness
- intercultural communication sensitivity

According to Bennett's model (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity) individuals with intercultural sensitivity tend to transform themselves from the ethnocentric stage to the ethno-relative stage. Bennett's model known as the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) consists of a continuum of six stages moving from "ethnocentrism" to "ethnorelativism." The ethnocentric stages are denial, defense, and minimization. The ethnorelative stages are acceptance, adaptation, and integration. This model is organized in six levels identifying the cognitive orientations of individuals in understanding cultural difference. Each level describes the perception of the cultural difference which is connected to the experiences of other cultures. By identifying the certain cultural difference, predictions about behavior and attitudes can be easily made and education can be organized to facilitate development along the model.

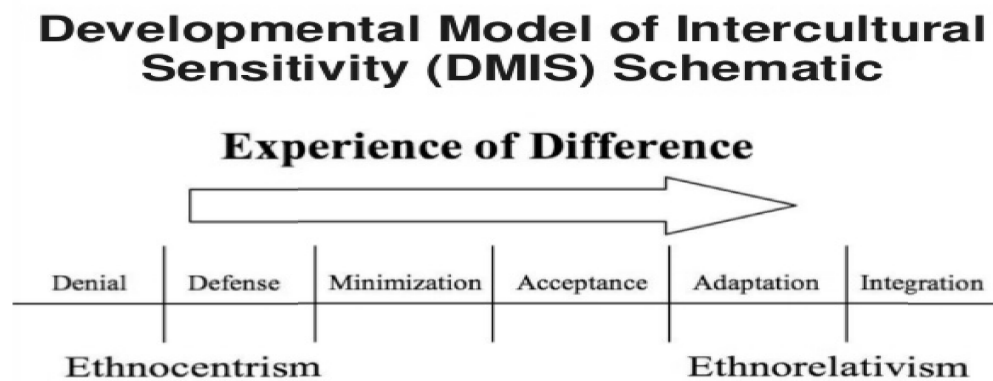


Figure 5 – Bennet's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

The figure shows how moving from "ethnocentrism" i.e. the feeling that your individual culture is central in reality, towards "ethnorelativism" which means that the individual's culture has experienced the context of other cultures by acceptance, adaptation and integration. The six stages will be explained in details below:

i. Denial

This stage represents the lowest rate of openness for other cultures. In this stage the individual is not aware of the existence of the other culture and it is as a result of physical and social isolation from such differences. This kind of a person is the ultimate ethnocentric one and as such the state of mind of this person has a limited degree of contact with different cultures (Bennet, 1986). At some point they are even not aware that the other cultures exist and their own vision of the world is not challenged to see other cultures as they are.

ii. Defense

In this stage the person perceives the different cultures as threatening by forming negative stereotypes and different types of discrimination such as race, gender as a form of denigration of a particular group of people. According to Jenkins and Morgan (2002) this phase which strengthens the relationships between the members of a certain group and establish a

'boundary' between the two seemingly opposing categories. Sometimes it can be about cultural superiority assuming that one's own culture is better than any other according to some evolutionary projections. Or in the ultimate stage of defense it is about feeling that "the other cultures are quite simply inferior to ours, on a continuum of which we are the apogee" (Chodzkiene, 2014 p.218).

### iii. Minimalization

The final stage of ethnocentrism is the last attempt to bury the differences and it is presumed that humans are governed by common principles that guide values and conducts in their surroundings. Minimalization suggests that individuals disregard and/or trivialize differences by burying them under the 'weight of cultural similarities' (Bennett, 1986: 183). If people are in an intercultural situation at this stage they will deem that a simple awareness for interaction will be needed for successful communication. Somehow this is still an ethnocentric view because for these individuals differences are just some variations of different cultures. Between the stages of minimalization and acceptance there is a transition which is characterized by a new way of perceiving the different cultures as dynamic and fluid and not as static and rigid.

### iv. Acceptance

At this stage people do not have the expected behavior for acceptance but they start to behave as such. More precisely, they begin to give values to other cultures and begin to be co-creators of their own reality (Berger & Luckman, 1967). People in this phase start to find a way to explore differences of other cultures and do not feel that they are threatening to them. They begin to accept that people can have their own cultural norms and rules different from theirs and they feel some kind of an amusement in that. This stage can be taken as the stage of marking openness in the way they perceive the differences.

### v. Adaptation

This stage is essential for the development of intercultural communication. The process of acceptance of different cultures is a process of changes in behavior and perception of the world

and it is the heart of intercultural communication. The basic form of adaptation is empathy. Bennet defines it as a temporary change of the frame of reference where we perceive situations as if we were the other person. Adaptation comes after acceptance and it is a change of behavior in terms of empathizing with people from another cultures.

#### vi. Integration

This is the last stage of openness to other cultures. In this stage the multicultural person is a one who is constantly in the process of becoming an integral part of a culture. This is being developed only after certain periods of living in different locations whereas the person contacts with different cultures. According to Bennet (1986)"Integration indicates that individuals are able to become 'a part of and apart from a given cultural context" (p.186). In the last stage of Bennett's model, integration sees ethnorelativism exposed by the ability of the person to consciously consider different cultures and frames of reference at once, and sees individuals becoming truly multicultural: they are not bound to or identify with only one cultural identity.

Another approach for developing intercultural competence connected to Bennet's model is present in recent literature and that is the extended learning model with implications from cultural neuroscience. This model suggests that the intercultural training programs among workers from different ethnic backgrounds are often taken as unsuccessful or very often cause even more cultural issues within the institution. Faced with such results, the emerging field of cultural neuroscience has provided a biological perspective to explain the contradictions between training goals and outcomes (Chang, 2017). According to this model, only the regular intercultural theoretical training is not enough to accomplish the desired outcome. The Bennett's model of the developmental process for intercultural competence moving from ethnocentrism toward ethnorelativism gives another dimension for intercultural trainings. Recently, the field of cultural neuroscience has emerged and exposed new ways of combining theories and methods of cultural psychology with neuroscience (Ames & Fiske, 2010; Fiske, 2009). A lot of research has been done about people's backgrounds, practices, and beliefs which have shaped the psychological and neurobiological processes underlying their different behaviors (Chiao & Ambady, 2007; Kitayama & Cohen, 2007; Park & Gutchess, 2006). These

studies from neuroscience provide a biological foundation for individuals' behaviors and may suggest implications when intercultural researchers and educational facilitators endeavor to improve on methodological design and outcomes. Based on the extended learning model, three suggestions are provided. These include activating change, mitigating egocentric biases, and integrating organizational interventions and are open for further research.

*d) Gudykunst's Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Theory*

This theory is based on the assumption that effective intercultural communication is essential for developing intercultural communication competence. Gudykunst's theory introduced the terms anxiety and uncertainty when encountering strangers. Spitzberg (2010) defines ICC "as an impression that behaviour is appropriate and effective in a given context." Along with this is mentioned the effective communication in intercultural context which is central to this theory. AUM was constructed in the shift from the emergence of ICC studies (Yoshitake, 2002, p.178). Gudykunst's theory is named Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Theory (AUM) whereas the desired result is not the reduced anxiety and uncertainty but effective communication. This theory focuses on encounters between cultural in-groups and strangers (Griffin, p.426). This theory applies in any situation where one person in an intercultural situation feels as a stranger. However, it is not necessary to travel to a foreign land in order to feel or be a stranger.

AUM theory points out that when interacting with strangers, there will always be a sense of uncertainty and anxiety. In intercultural cases, uncertainty and anxiety are present due to cultural differences and a lack of understanding of cultural rules. From one hand, uncertainty is a cognitive phenomenon and means the inability to predict what strangers feel, believe, what are their values, attitudes and behaviour. On the other hand, anxiety is the affective equivalent of uncertainty. In the AUM theory there are 94 axioms (Gudykunst, 1995) and one of the main axiom of the theory is Axiom 39, which states:

An increase in our ability to manage our anxiety about interacting with strangers and an increase in the accuracy of our predictions and explanations

regarding their behaviour will produce an increase in the effectiveness of our communication (Gudykunst, 1995).

According to this axiom, in order to communicate effectively we need to manage appropriately our uncertainty and anxiety. This axiom may be appropriate only if we are mindful of the process of communication and we are not overly vigilant, and our anxiety and uncertainty are between our minimum and maximum thresholds. In spite of saying that uncertainty and anxiety will not necessarily move towards effective communication. What he says is that in these conditions one can mindfully try to understand strangers and how strangers are interpreting the messages. In that case one can reply in such manner that will lead to effective communication. Hence, the management of uncertainty and anxiety is actually the desired effective communication which depends on what is being done and in what circumstances. However, there are a lot of critiques of the AUM theory and one of it is the critique by Griffin and Ting-Toomey. In connection with the above mentioned axiom Griffin and Ting-Toomey point out that effective communication and the closest meaning to incoming messages will not minimize misunderstanding and the problems of this thesis are the definition of effective communication and effective communication as the goal of ICC (Yoshitake, 2002: 182). In conclusion, the meaning of effective communication as the closest meaning of the intended meaning reduces communication to a linear and mechanical activity i.e. this theory only explains the mechanical aspect of communication.

#### *e) Chen and Starosta Concept*

These were the critics of intercultural communication studies considering the intercultural competence and stated that the previous studies have conceptual ambiguity . That is the reason why Chen and Starosta (1996) developed a model of intercultural communication competence that integrates features of both cross-cultural attitude and behavioral skills models. The model is comprised of three conceptual dimensions of intercultural communication competence, including intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and



intercultural adroitness. Based on this conceptual model, Chen and Starosta (2000) further explicated the nature and components of intercultural sensitivity and developed an instrument to measure the concept. They developed a questionnaire which measures intercultural sensitivity includes the following factors:

1. Intercultural Engagement: the degree of participation in the intercultural communication;
2. Respect for Cultural Differences: to realize, accept and respect for others' cultural diversities in the communication;
3. Interaction Confidence: how confident the interlocutors perform during intercultural communication;
4. Interaction Enjoyment: the level of delight interlocutors feel in the intercultural communication;
5. Interaction Attentiveness: the ability of receiving and responding to the messages properly during the intercultural communication.

This instrument of assessment of intercultural sensitivity consists of 24-items comprising the above mentioned factors developed by Chen and Starosta (2000). Studies which have used this instrument suggested that the usage of the concepts in the instrument can be further improved, but the instrument as a whole is a valid one through which a culture-free scale for measuring intercultural sensitivity can be developed (Pourakbari and Chalak, 2015).

#### **2.4.2. Conclusion**

The following chapter will sum up what are the most important areas to focus on considering the intercultural communication competence. In addition to the final theory of Gudykunst who points out that effective communication is essential for successful ICC implementation when doing training for ICC the following areas should be taken into account:

1. Developing self-concepts for self-identities and social identities
2. Correcting ethnocentrism
3. Dealing and avoiding stereotyping
4. Increasing tolerance for anxiety and uncertainty when meeting "strangers"
5. Increasing empathy
6. Maintaining dignity and respect for strangers
7. Developing mindfulness

Thus, it can be concluded that for developing intercultural competence not only having and acquiring knowledge of intercultural communication is enough, but also a transformation of attitude and views of the world. In this case the transfer of knowledge is needed but it is not the most essential goal. If one does not feel the burden on their own skin experience is difficult to transfer. As the AUM theory points out "if uncertainty and anxiety are managed, successful and effective communication takes place. They are the basic cause of intercultural misunderstanding (Griffin, p.428). Finally, the field of neuroscience exposes findings that are connected to people's behavior and should be taken into account in further research.

### **3. Multiculturalism in Education**

Multicultural education as an idea has a major goal to reform the educational institutions in order to find a way for all the students no matter their gender, race, ethnicity, language or cultural group to have an equal opportunity to learn and study at school. According to Bennett (2003), "Multicultural Education is an approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs and that affirms cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies in an interdependent world" (p.14). Individuals are able to see and observe the conduct of others through their own perception and perception is very often shaped by culture. Gorski (2001) defines multicultural education as a transformative movement in education that

produces critical thinking, socially active members of society. It is not simply a change of curriculum or the addition of an activity. It is a movement that calls for new attitudes, new approaches, and a new dedication to laying the foundation for the transformation of society (p.1). Multiculturalism actually influences how individuals interpret things. If an individual accepts and values different cultures without having certain prejudice about them it does not mean that they are happy with that. Banks (1999) defines multicultural education as an idea and educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse, racial, ethnic and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. Banks (1993) points out that one of the misconceptions about multicultural education is that it is only for people of color and for the disenfranchised (p.23). Unfortunately, this idea is still present and very often causes problems in multicultural societies even though a lot has been written and said by researchers. Teachers who are involved in the educational process without being in contact with students from different ethnic backgrounds or with only a small number of them or finally they are not well informed about this framework claim that they do not have a plan or do not want to waste time because of small number of students from different ethnic backgrounds.

Along with the different definitions the conclusion will be that multicultural education is a whole process which should be infused into the school programs in order to achieve equal rights for every student. In order to accomplish that, students should be educated in terms of intercultural communication i.e. they should learn how to respond to different cultures and ethnicities and intercultural communication will teach them how to respect and understand the diverse cultures.

### **3.1. The Dimensions of Multicultural Education**

Teachers who are oriented towards culturally responsive teaching believe that culture is central to their students' learning. On the other hand those teachers who cannot easily perceive the phenomenon of culture as essential will easily dismiss multicultural education with the excuse that it is not relevant to their subject of teaching. Multicultural education should be more thoroughly defined and understood by the teachers of different disciplines in order to reduce the resistance to it. The classroom involves several cultures: the students' and teachers multiple cultures, the culture of science, and the culture of school. All these cultures are ways of thinking which are essential for learning both in and outside of the school. According to Sonia Nieto (2000), teachers involved in the educational system should aim at explaining mainstream culture while recognizing, respecting, and using students' identities and backgrounds as meaningful sources for creating optimal learning environments.

Multicultural education aims to avoid prejudice, racism and all forms of discrimination. In Sleeter's words, the most important things about multicultural educators is to speak and fights against oppression and develop the vision and the power of our future citizens to forge a more just society (1991). Multicultural education addresses issues of white privilege, challenges the status quo, and compels students and teachers to identify their own biases. It increases awareness and understanding of racism, how it has shaped our society in the past and the manifestations of racism, classism and oppression in the contemporary world. Banks (1995) identified five dimensions of multicultural education. They are: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an equity pedagogy, and an empowering school culture and social structure. These dimensions should be used as a guide to school reforms if trying to implement multicultural education. Although the five dimensions of multicultural education are connected as shown in figure 5, each requires precise definition and explanation.

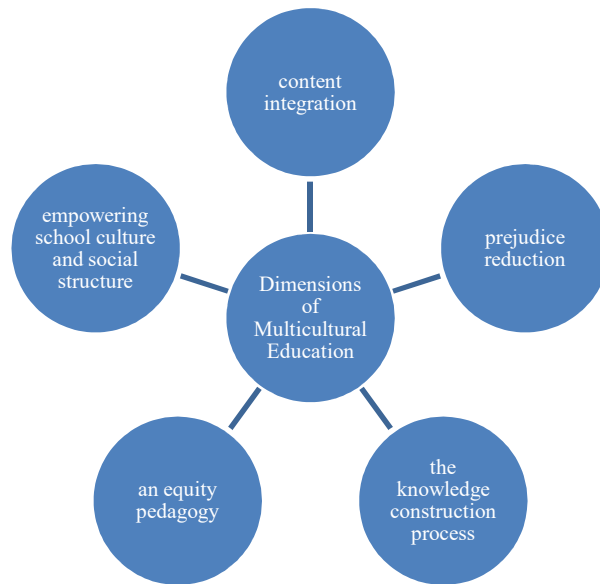


Figure 6 – Banks' dimensions of multicultural education

- **Content integration** is about the number of examples used by the teachers from different cultures and groups which aim to show generalizations, issues and important concepts within their subject of teaching. However, this should be done in a very logical way, arising naturally and spontaneously. In the English language lessons this can be done through reading comprehension texts, watching videos and making students think critically and emotionally about certain characters.

- **The knowledge construction process** describes how teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the biases, frames of reference, and perspectives within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it (Banks, 1996). Students also learn different strategies of how to build knowledge by studying about different cultural phenomena through reading books, watching movies and documentaries and comment on them critically and logically.

- **Prejudice reduction** describes lessons and activities used by teachers to help students to develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Research indicates that children come to school with many negative attitudes toward and misconceptions about different racial and ethnic groups (Phinney & Rotheram, 1987).

According to Banks (1995), lessons, units, and teaching materials that include content about different racial and ethnic groups can help students to develop more positive intergroup attitudes if certain conditions exist in the teaching situation. These conditions include positive images of the ethnic groups in the materials and the use of multiethnic materials in a consistent and sequential way. A very good activity with students from different backgrounds is to develop lesson plans with reading and speaking about students' different traditions and holidays and learn about their cultures by avoiding prejudice but accepting their traditions and way of thinking of certain spheres in everyday's life.

- **An equity pedagogy** exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, and social-class groups (Banks, 1995). As Allport (1954) suggests, cooperative learning activities can help all students from different classes and races develop positive attitudes but only if they feel that they have equal status in the group and they should work together in order to achieve better results at school.

- **An empowering school culture and social structure** is another essential dimension whereas the culture and organization of the school are systematized in such way that students from different racial, ethnic, and gender groups experience equality and equal status. In order to implement this dimension the whole environment of the school should be reformed, such as the behaviors, beliefs of teachers and administrators, the curriculum, assessment and testing procedures, and the styles and strategies used by teachers.

The effective implementation of multicultural education requires following the five dimensions mentioned above. The teachers and other persons involved in the educational system should use content adopted for diverse groups and at the same time help students develop positive attitudes in the group while having the same educational opportunities. The students need positive atmosphere and feeling that they belong there, enjoy their studies and achieve success.

### 3.2. Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum

One of the most prominent scholars in the area of curriculum adjustments in accordance with the multicultural requirements is James A. Banks. He is regarded as one of the founders of the discipline of multicultural education. Banks states that, “a major goal of multicultural education is to change teaching and learning approaches so that students of both genders and from diverse cultural, ethnic, and language groups will have equal opportunities to learn in educational institutions” (2013, p. 10). He points out that citizens need multicultural education in order to enter into a dialogue with fellow citizens and future citizens.

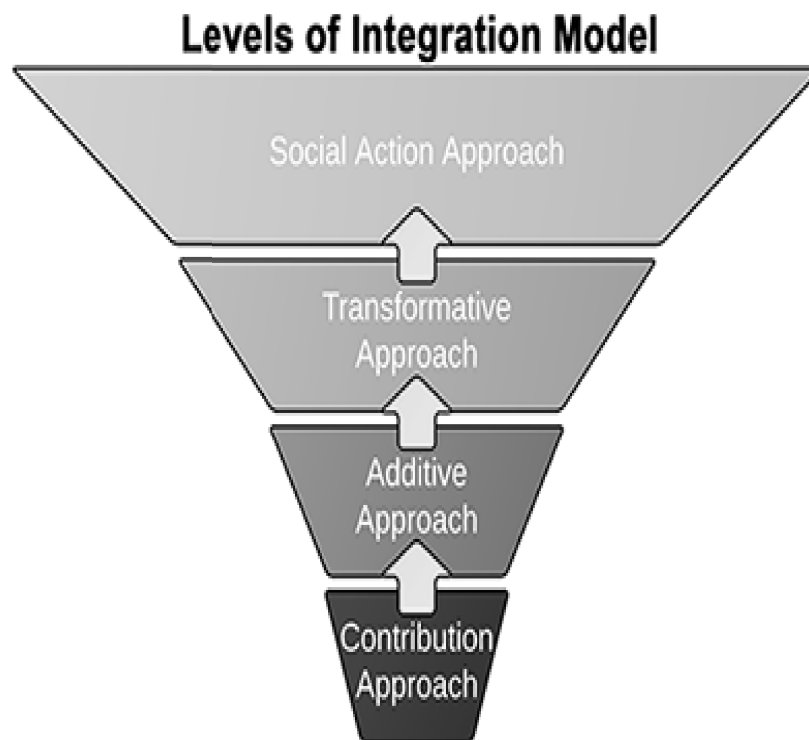


Figure 7 – Banks' model of multicultural education

As shown in Figure 6, he has established four approaches to the integration of ethnic content in order to break the barriers of stereotypes and any kind of discrimination of the students and teachers. The approaches are: the contributions approach, the ethnic additive approach, the transformative approach and decision-making approach(Banks, 1988):

- the contributions approach

This is one of the most popular way to implement multiculturalism in education. This approach marks the addition of ethnic heroes in the study program whereas the curriculum is unchanged in terms of objectives and goals. It is usually connected to famous ethnic days, weeks or events and are usually celebrated in schools. As Banks (2010) points out "an important characteristic of the contributions approach is that the mainstream curriculum remains unchanged in its basic structure, goals and salient characteristics" (p. 246). During these events students are usually involved in the lessons, sharing their experiences and stories. Unfortunately, from these lessons the class students usually learn little or nothing about the ethnic groups before or after the special event or occasion.

- the ethnic additive approach

This is an approach with integration of ethnic content to the curriculum and is characterized by the addition of a book, a unit, or a course to the curriculum without making any serious change. This method gives freedom to the teacher to insert ethnic content into the curriculum without restructuring it, which takes substantial time, effort, training, and rethinking of the curriculum. According to Banks (2010), the disadvantage of this approach is that it usually results in the viewing of ethnic content from the perspective of some mainstream historians, writers, artists, and does not involve a restructuring of the curriculum but the teacher chooses the materials they consider appropriate.

- the transformative approach

This approach is a lot different than the previous ones. Here the basic goal of the curriculum is changed and students are able to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from different points of views. In this approach the various perspectives, frames of reference, and content from various groups are infused in the curriculum and in that way students will understand the nature, development, and complexity of other cultures' societies. This means that for example "when studying U.S. history language, music, arts, science, and mathematics, the emphasis



should not be on the ways in which various ethnic and cultural groups have contributed to mainstream U.S. society and culture but it should be focused on how the common U.S. culture and society emerged from a complex synthesis and interaction of the diverse cultural elements that originated within the various cultural, racial, religious groups that make up the U.S. society" (Banks, 2010:252).

- decision-making and social action approach

If the traditional goal of schooling had been to socialize students so they would accept unquestioningly the existing ideologies, institutions, and practices within society (Banks, 2004; Arthur, Davies, & Hahn, 2008), today's new approaches such as the social action approach has an aim to educate students for social criticism and social change in order to teach them how to make decisions. This approach combines all the elements of previous approach and adds components that ask students to make decisions and take actions related to issue they have previously learned in the lecture. Students in this approach can address some social problems such as racial discrimination and they can think about the question "What actions should we take to reduce prejudice and discrimination in our school?" The most important aims of this approach is to teach students to think, analyze, collect materials and help them get a sense of decision making and political efficiency.

In my surrounding the contributors approach is present the most in the English language lessons. These types of lessons usually do not ask for a change in the curricula and very often students learn how some holidays are celebrated in the UK or the USA as most popular cultures present in the high-schools students' books. As mentioned above, the cultural content is present in the curricula but it is almost the same for the four years of studies. One research in the field of education and culture in Macedonia conducted in 2015 (Kunovska) states that the books approved for usage at that period offer a great opportunity for teachers to implement the culture content and get students acquainted with the target culture in order to advance the foreign language. Of course, it is pointed out that the students' books have some limits in terms of acquiring more knowledge for the target culture. However, there is always a possibility to

seek for new materials on the Internet and use them in order to enrich the student's knowledge with more interesting information about the target culture.

Other scholars who are leaders in this field besides Banks are Sleeter, Grant and Gay. Sleeter and Grant (1988) came up with the following ways of introducing multiculturalism:

- teaching students from different cultures to fit into the society;
- human relations that focus on diverse people living together in harmony;
- studies for single groups that will focus on showing respect, awareness and acceptance of that particular group;
- finding ways to reduce prejudice, equality for all groups in the society;
- multicultural way of teaching whereas students will be analyzers, critical thinkers and also some kind of reformers who will redistribute all resources among every group.

In spite of combining already set up approaches Gay(1988) generalized three main approaches: teaching content about cultural pluralism, teaching culturally different students, and using cultural pluralism to teach other academic subjects and intellectual skills. Teaching content about cultural pluralism is content-centered, with an emphasis on developing units of instruction (lessons, modules, courses) about the history, heritage, contributions, and social issues of ethnic groups (Gay, 1988).

### **3.3. Strategies for developing multicultural lessons**

A multicultural classroom consists of students from different cultures which are supposed to form a diverse learning environment. In order to accomplish a relaxing environment the teacher should possess skills, creativity and knowledge. However, teachers should not be blamed if they lack knowledge in this field because it is not known whether they have access to training programs of intercultural communication and multiculturalism. recently, in our country multi-ethnic integration was introduced as optional and there are teachers who

have just started implementing these lessons and some of them find it very difficult because they do not have the knowledge, the needed resources and clear directives of how to implement multicultural content.

The above mentioned approaches to multicultural education are proved to be effective and should be studied and implemented. Below, I will provide some tips for implementing multicultural content during the English language lessons:

- Role-play of interesting situations

This can be an interesting activity where students can express their own opinion about a real-life situation. For example if they are told to make up a role-play that shows how they perceive English people this will allow students to invent their own scenario and show their feelings and perceptions about British people. Thus, by organizing a role play activity in the class the teacher can raise some questions related to British and American culture, ask them to compare it to their own culture or explain some history topics that are probably difficult to explain them in regular lessons.

- Forum theatre (another type of role-play)

This technique can be used for solving problems from everyday life in a very interesting ways. The participants receive a task and develop a scene. The difference from the regular role-play is that those who are not the actors are the listeners and sit in a forum and think of a possible solution for the problem. This is called the "intervention" when a spec-actor (from the listeners) seeks a way to resolve the problem in a better way. This serves as a platform for the students to propose and test different solutions and in this way they are able to practice democratic values - to express their opinion and respect the opinion of the other, make decisions and taking actions for positive social changes.

- Team work for expressing feelings and thoughts

A very good activity for introvert students can be to ask them to draw something unique about the place where they come from including a cultural content. This can be done by asking the

question what they like and what they dislike about the surrounding they live in and then share their stories and feelings orally or on a piece of paper. With such activity students can learn about the life of their co-students and their deeper layers of culture. Another way of doing this is by giving them family pictures and asking from them to make up a story about what happened before the picture was taken and afterwards.

- Access to literatures from different cultures

Because the main aim of multicultural education is to help students recognize the differences and similarities among themselves this means that if students are exposed to literatures from French authors for example, they can make a research about the author's life and his culture. When students learn about different customs, languages and traditions they also share some common traits. Learning about cultures makes them realize that people can be different and unique, yet still share a lot of common things and will help students to develop cultural awareness i.e. acceptance of differences. These realizations assist students to accept and respect people from all cultures and backgrounds.

- Sharing knowledge about the students' cultures and origins

For a successful multicultural classroom setting the most fundamental thing is gathering information of various cultures. The educators should use the lessons as an opportunity to learn about the origin of the students. Information of the conventions, convictions, values, traditions, food habits, financial status and so forth helps in understanding the students more profoundly. This information should then be shared with the classmates during the learning process. Students ought to be urged to make inquiries that will help them learn more about other people who have an origin different from their own. The teachers may find out about different societies and afterward deliberately consolidate them in the learning experience. Finally, students from different ethnicities might be offered chances to talk about and share the experience they have from their culture.

- Learning in groups with cooperation

Subsequent to making the kids acknowledge contrasts and similarities among classmates the following stage for the educator ought to be to support helpful learning of different cultures. The atmosphere of the classroom should help students from other ethnicities in creating collaboration and social attitudes. The general thought behind the agreeable learning atmosphere is that making little heterogeneous groups of students have the goal to learn the different patterns of social communication. By doing this, the students become more motivated to study and produce stronger connections than they would do by working alone. Group work helps students concentrate on different styles and strategies of learning. It is known that cooperative groups have solid beneficial outcomes especially when speaking about the classmates' relationships between students from different backgrounds.

- Positive and negative team debate on different topics

Group discussions stimulate thinking. It is an excellent strategy for enhancing student motivation, fostering intellectual ability and encouraging democratic habits. By creating the positive and negative teams, students still work in groups and look for positive or negative arguments from books or the internet and thus provide opportunities for students to practice numerous skills including the ability to search, organize and defend positions and consider different point of views. In such debate students deal with different ideas and should find a way to consolidate and choose the best ideas and come up with original conclusions and this becomes a challenging task in the end. Hence, the teachers are supposed to make use of discussions on even sensitive cultural topics which can initiate a discussion and help develop students questioning power, in depth analysis of situation and provoke them to express their opinions and thoughts of the topic.

- Doing projects for multi-ethnic integration with the teachers and the students

This is the final suggestion for improving multicultural education. It is essential to work with the students but as suggested above the teachers are the ones who need more knowledge and training in the field of intercultural communication and thus multicultural education. A lot of

organizations make an effort to train the teachers but not all of them are enthusiastic to do that. USAID run a project which lasts many years but not a lot of teachers and students are involved because they lack motivation due to different reasons. Being involved in interethnic projects make the students be aware that they are all the same and that by respecting students from different ethnic backgrounds they acknowledge that communication breaks the barriers existing between people and different communities.

### **3.4. Conclusion**

Multicultural education aims at having students experience educational equality at schools no matter which group they belong at in terms of gender, ethnicity, language, social class, religion. However, in order to transform the school being as multicultural, all the mentioned strategies and dimensions should be implemented. If only the curricula is being changed without enough trainings for the teachers and excluding the rest of the dimensions suggested by Banks, multicultural education cannot be possible. This is a process that still continues even though it was born in the 1960s and 1970s (Banks, 2010), and its major goal is to help students develop the needed knowledge, skills and behaviors in order to function in their surroundings and be prepared for the global community.

All educators involved in the teaching process face different challenging when implementing multicultural education and one of it is the prescribed curricula which is supposed to be followed by the teachers. A mere fact is that teachers and even their principals do not have a complete authority in their classrooms and schools because of the educational policies which are responsible for the teacher's requirements such as every day lesson plans, standard curricula and testing, class duration etc. These are some of the factors that provide certain limitations considering the multicultural education. A research paper on this topic (Prell, 2012), reveals that teachers' whose internal conception of coursework or classrooms as multicultural are likely to pursue multicultural educational opportunities during their continuing professional development and identified four barriers to their success with multicultural curriculum: unachievable curriculum standards, incompatible mandated texts, shortage of time and lack of personal knowledge.

Another research (Waight, 2008), suggests that it is crucial to find transformative methods to help educators teach their students about tolerance for different religious beliefs and customs. However, it is pointed out that teachers are very often uncomfortable dealing with teaching their students about tolerance towards different social groups. Finally, multicultural education is a process and cannot be successful if it is not done in collaboration with all the stakeholders of the educational system.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Research methodology**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In this chapter the methods and procedures used during the data collection processes will be discussed. First the rationale behind the methodology is to be explained, the research questions, the setting, the participants and the instruments used for the research. Finally, the data collection process used for conducting the research will be explained.

##### **3.1.1. Overview of the study design**

This research aims to analyze intercultural communication cognition among English language teachers and students in the area of the city of Strumica compared to a school in Ruse, Bulgaria. Up to now, not many studies have been done in terms of intercultural communication cognition and cultural competence of English language teachers. Most of the projects for interethnic integration are oriented towards the students only and that is the reason why the central phenomenon in this case study is the intercultural communication cognition of English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds. The cognition of English language teachers is going to be measured altogether with the culture and conduct of the students from different ethnic communities in the state municipal schools in

Strumica and finally a suggestion will be proposed about how to deal with the students from different ethnic communities.

Furthermore, observations of the conducts of the students during the English language lessons are to be made and cultural interviews in order to give a profound insight of the current situation. This research starts from the following research questions:

- What is the level of intercultural communication awareness of English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds?
- To what extent is intercultural communication sensitivity developed by English language teachers towards students from different ethnic backgrounds?
- Which factors limit or increase the cultural awareness of teachers in classrooms with students from different ethnic backgrounds?

The dependent variable in this study is the intercultural communication awareness and the independent variable is the level of ethnocentrism of English language teachers. The variables will be helpful in measuring and comparing the results in order to prove the null hypothesis mentioned before. For the methodology of this research, a mixed method research framework of a structured questionnaire with the teachers and students along with interviews and lesson observations with intercultural content. This framework was chosen because questionnaires and interviews are often used together for investigating different types of educational assessment (e.g., Brookhart & Durkin, 2003; Lai & Waltman, 2008). While questionnaires can provide evidence of patterns amongst large populations, qualitative interview data often gather more in-depth insights on participant attitudes, thoughts, and actions (Kendall, 2008).

### **3.2. Participants and settings**

This research was done in the period between May and June, 2018 during the second term of the high school year. The number of surveys intended for the teachers is 19 altogether with 5 random students for each teacher which gives a number of 95 students participants. The



students and teachers were assured that their answers in the surveys will stay anonymous. As participants of this study, the researcher has chosen students who are part of the formal state secondary education in Strumica because students from different ethnic background can be found in this area and very often these students show very low results. Students in Republic of Macedonia have English lessons three times a week or totally 108 lessons in one year and 99 lessons in the students' final year. This number is very low if compared to the number of lessons in Republic of Bulgaria which is double than in Macedonia i.e. it changes in the two terms and varies from 7-11 lessons per week. The level of teaching English as a foreign language is provided by the age of the students and the obligatory books proposed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Macedonia. The situation in R.Bulgaria is also different when speaking about the level of teaching and learning whereas students at their first year of secondary school study English on a higher level. They begin from upper-intermediate and proceed with the advanced level in the final two years of their secondary education.

The students who are part of this study are at the age of 15-18 years old. Most of the students from Macedonia were of the pre-intermediate (B1) level and intermediate level (B2) while the participants from Bulgaria were from the upper-intermediate and advanced level of English language proficiency.

The study was conducted under formal settings during the English language lessons and of course during breaks or the informal settings when teachers were supposed to fill in the surveys.

### **3.3. Research instruments**

Taking the purpose of the research into account, the study gathered quantitative and qualitative data or a mixed method research framework. The main instruments used in this study were the questionnaire for the teachers, the questionnaire for the students, lesson observations and students' interviews.

### **3.3.1. A questionnaire for the teachers**

This study aims to measure the intercultural competence among English language teachers using a questionnaire, which is to be distributed to the teachers from the state municipal high-schools in Strumica. The variables that this research is going to investigate are intercultural communication awareness and ethnocentrism. The questionnaire is divided into three sections including demographic information, investigating teacher's perception of ICC and investigating intercultural communication awareness.

This first section of the questionnaire includes demographic information about the teachers involved in this study. It consists of questions about gender, age, the name of the institution they work at and concludes with questions connected to intercultural communication - the central phenomena of this case study. The aim of these final questions is to give prelude to the investigation of the teacher's perceptions of intercultural communication competence which is the next section of the survey. The first section aims to identify the first impression teachers have when they hear the term intercultural communication asking the question "Are you familiar with the term intercultural communication?". Another interesting question in this part of the survey is the question "Do you have students from different ethnic backgrounds?". This question is deliberately chosen because the answers by the teachers will vary because of one important reason and that is that most of the schools are in favor of one culture.

The second section of the survey gives a brief definition of intercultural communication and intercultural communication competence because there is an even small chance that some of the teachers hear this term for the first time. Then proceeds with more thorough questions about teaching students from different cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds and how they treat these students. The questions are multiple-choice and there is one open question where teachers should give longer answers considering their experiences about getting new information about different cultures. This section ends with the question of whether teachers need more training in the field of intercultural communication which will give a clear view of whether intercultural communication is of the teacher's interest or not.

The final section of the survey aims at investigating the intercultural communication awareness of English language teachers. More precisely, the questions are oriented toward ethnocentrism and aim to justify the second hypothesis of this research. The survey concludes with two open questions about how to improve the situation and what are the limitations of having the chance to improve it.

### **3.3.2. A questionnaire for the students**

The questionnaire aimed for the students aims to measure the intercultural communication competence among the students, their perceptions and attitudes towards the students from different ethnic backgrounds.

The first section includes demographic information about the students such as what is their gender, their age, what is their level of English and whether they have ever heard about the term intercultural communication. In a similar manner as in the survey for the teachers, students are asked whether they need knowledge in intercultural communication and how do they think they might treat the students from different ethnic backgrounds. The final section of the students' survey aims at investigating the intercultural communication competence again with questions exposing their view on ethnocentrism.

### **3.3.3. Lesson observations**

In the following sub-chapters, lesson observations will be discussed and commented in terms of intercultural communication. According to (Shing, 2007), lesson observations based on action research is a systematic inquiry with the goal of informing practice in a particular situation. It is a way for teachers to discover what works best in their own classroom situation, occupying a midpoint on a continuum from teacher reflection on one end to traditional appraisal lesson observation on the other. Observations are chosen as a research instrument in this study in order to explain in details the cultural component of teaching English as a foreign language for which official observation protocol will be used and provided in the annex further

in the dissertation. A classroom observation protocol was used during the observations. All the lessons had a duration of 45 minutes and were observed in the state municipal schools in Strumica (SMS "Nikola Karev", SMS "Dimitar Vlahov" and SMS "Jane Sandanski"). The protocol can be found in the annex bellow and the following comments are based on the protocol itself.

### **3.3.3.1. Lesson observation(September, 2017) - Family ties: reading comprehension (Close-up, student's book for I year)**

The aim of this lesson is to read a text and explore the vocabulary connected to family, recognizing information in paragraphs and finally to draw a family tree and encourage the students to talk about family and family ties through given statements. The intended outcomes are to provoke discussions among students and to acquire new vocabulary.

During this observation at the state municipal school "Nikola Karev" in Strumica which consisted of 30 students at their first year of their secondary school, I had the chance to observe and learn about the student's culture through the topic of family ties. This lesson was at the beginning of the year and at this period of time students are still shy, not so eager to speak because they are in a new surroundings. The lesson was a good chance to provoke the students to speak, discuss and show their knowledge using this simple topic of family ties. As a usual reading comprehension lesson, in the pre-reading phase the teacher provoked the students to predict what the text is going to be about by discussing the pictures and giving them a task to write as many words as they can for family members. The students were divided into groups of six and the duration of this task was around 5 minutes interacting within the group. Finally, each group had to present their final thoughts and here the students showed a competitive attitude and this was a great task to engage them and make them feel relaxed and eager to speak and this lasted for 15 minutes. What followed was silence reading and multiple-choice questions in about 10 minutes. While the students were reading the text, the teacher was writing the possible unknown words. For the lesson, materials from the student's book were used and for homework students were about to design their own family tree whereas the teacher will use formative and summative way of assessment.

Finally in the third phase of the lesson, the cultural aims were discussed i.e. the relationships between the people and the members of the family. These aims were successfully achieved with the final task where students were supposed to comment on the following statements with a partner and this task had a duration of 10 minutes:

- Families are like chocolates - mostly sweet, with a few nuts.
- You can choose your friends but you can't choose your family.
- There's no place like home.

These proverbs provoked some very interesting stories through which students have shown their real family ties. Some students openly spoke about members from the family that are not so lovable and are "nuts" having in mind the double meaning of this word which made them laugh a little bit. The second proverb made them think about who is part of their family and that they should cherish the moments with their families because that's the place where they can feel loved. The final sentence provoked interesting stories about travelling, the fact that most of them enjoy travelling but at the end of the journey they still feel happy when they get home. Finally, the teacher set the task for the homework and the ringing of the bell was heard.

The students during the lesson were dedicated to the tasks, and they interacted with each other especially in the final exercise. The communicative method was used hence communication was achieved successfully. The students were interested in speaking and discussing family ties and proverbs connected to the topic. As Yellin (2012) states, using proverbs in English lessons is a door opener for students from different ethnic backgrounds to interact with their classmates from a prior knowledge-based heritage rich with generational discourse. In addition, proverbs serve for edification, teaching, warnings, admonishments, as well as maintenance for the survival of the family, community and culture. In this lesson, the proverbs were used as a tool to promote culture whereas students shared their stories about their families. Students coming from different ethnic communities shared interesting stories in relation to some popular proverbs typical for their culture which made the lesson very interesting.

### **3.3.3.2. Lesson observation (October, 2017) - What's so funny - skills focus<sup>20,21</sup> (New Opportunities, student's book for IV year)**

This lesson was observed in the state municipal school "Dimitar Vlahov" in a small classroom made up of 20 students. The topic of the lesson itself tells that it will be focused on humor and will evoke a lot of smiles with the students. The intended outcome of the lesson is to prepare the students to write and tell a joke in English by using the new vocabulary or "play with words" in the target language or translating jokes from the mother-tongue language into English. Charlie Chaplin's picture in the book makes the students feel relaxed and eager to learn some phrasal verbs through a comedy quiz as a task-based activity. In the quiz the phrasal verbs are used and they are supposed to find their meaning in the dictionary in the back of their book. After that followed a listening program about British humor which proceeded with some questions connected to it. Here the students compared their answers in pairs where they had the chance to communicate between themselves and compare the answers with another pair.

What followed was a very interesting task to discuss pictures and decide what is the joke about. After that followed a joke which students have listened and through it they could hear and learn how to tell jokes in English. With the task-based activity students learned the needed phrases and the task prepared them for the final outcome - telling a joke. Finally for homework they were about to prepare a joke in English language and write them on a piece of paper. The teacher told them that she will collect the jokes and they will prepare a wall-paper together next time. The used materials were the student's book and the students were assessed in a formative way during the lesson and will receive a grade for the written joke in English. As Askildson (2005) points out, "humor is not only an idyllic and engaging manner by which the language educator can teach specific elements of the language and culture at all levels of proficiency, but it is rather, given its ubiquity, an entirely authentic medium for the presentation of the language, and one which the learners may put to real communicative use in a variety of language contexts."

### **3.3.3.3. Lesson observation (March, 2018) - That's entertainment: reading comprehension (Close-up, student's book for 1 year)**

The aim of the next lesson I had observed in March at the state municipal school "Jane Sandanski" in Strumica was to read the text, search information into paragraphs and short texts and answering questions from the text. The class consisted of 27 students who were really interested about the topic of the text since there were interesting pictures in the textbook which provoked them to ask questions and give predictions. The topic of the lesson was connected to music and types of music written by different composers from different countries. The first task was to match some instruments to the countries they come from which lasted about 10 minutes altogether with the teacher's introduction. What followed was a discussion about the instruments which they have seen for the first time and each instrument was from a different culture and country in about 5 minutes. In the while-reading phase, the texts were read aloud and afterwards translated into Macedonian language and grammar-translation method was used. After each text was read and translated the teacher played couple of seconds of music connected to each text found on the Internet which brought a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. This phase had a duration of about 15 minutes. The text intended for reading was divided into four parts and each part represented a different country discussing a certain band promoting the culture of their country. The texts involved cultural terms such as social awareness, discrimination, civil servants, hardship and perfectionist. These words served as a tool to discuss the different cultures and their struggles. The first country mentioned in the text was Greece and this provoked certain comments about Greeks and our sensitive political situation. The next country was the Czech Republic and in the text the Roma people who used hip-hop music to teach tolerance in their schools were mentioned. When some of the Roma heard this they started discussing about folk music and how they make a living of playing that type of music. While searching for information in order to answer the questions, the teacher set 15 minutes for this task and during the task students were engaged in reading and discussing with their partners speaking about different cultural matters such as the hardships mentioned in the third text which was about Senegal. Here one author who formed a rap group was speaking about the struggles of Senegal people. The final text mentioned a Dutch rapper who

has a very good reputation as a perfectionist and has won several awards and represents the Netherlands' culture. For homework students received very interesting task - to prepare a short paragraph of a Macedonian composer or singer and present it in the following lessons. The materials used for this lessons were the student's book, the music from the Internet and the students were assessed in a formative way.

According to a study about teaching English using songs "learning through songs may be a good method of vocabulary memorization because lyrics are sung repeatedly and catchy tunes help to remember them. It needs to be noticed that because of the easy access to music, everyone may benefit from it "(Kuśnierek, 2016). Another pedagogical implication besides vocabulary is of course culture. According to Alberto and Arevalo (2010), songs in ELT facilitate the learning of a language in interesting and effective ways by having access to this form of culture. Songs that touch upon social issues and cultural aspects are appropriate choices because music is close to the students, they listen to it every day and the lyrics of each song is available on the Internet. Students can even find explanations of foreign music which is written in different slangs and this can help them understand the insight of a culture.

#### **3.3.3.4. Lesson observation (April, 2018) - Lessons to learn: listening and speaking (Close-up, student's book for I year)**

The aim of this lesson is to listen and understand short and long dialogues, recognize, summarize, match information connected to the listening task and finally to present opinion, discuss and give suggestions on topics connected to school improvement and school trips. During this lesson observed at the state municipal school "Dimitar Vlahov", the teacher had difficulties to establish a working atmosphere because it was a period of the Easter holidays and students were not so interested to learn. After some interesting task students were finally ready to do the listening task which involved matching information in tables and lasted 10 minutes. Students were supposed to use synonyms of what they hear in order to fill in the missing parts in the table. What followed were longer dialogues about a school trip which involved experiences during trips, the topic of friendships and relationships and of course



inspiration for new jobs. This task had a duration of 10 minutes and what followed were some speaking tasks with given questions connected about school such as: which is their favorite subject, which subject is the most difficult one, what will they like to learn in future. Here the students interacted within the groups of 4 students and gave some really honest answers about certain subjects and the difficulties they face. However, some of them were so honest about certain teachers and why they do not like their subjects. Some of the answers were we do not like the subject so as the teacher. In the final task students were supposed to give suggestions of improvement of the school facilities whereas the library was mentioned and some of the students said that they really need a better library and this opened a discussion by the end of the lesson. The materials used for this lesson were taken out from the student's book and the teacher's book where a lot of pictures could be found. At the end, the teacher had chosen to finish the lesson by playing a video on YouTube using the Internet from which the students could see how are the schools organized in the USA. Their task for homework was to make a comparison of the Macedonian and American educational system in their notebooks for which they will receive a grade i.e. a summative assessment will be used.

Discussion: Comparing cultures is one of the ways of developing intercultural capabilities. When doing comparisons, the learner focuses on his/her own beliefs, traditions, values and knowledge and based on that does a successful communication with members from their own culture and other cultures and as Byram (1994) states that a learner cannot rid of their own culture and simply step into another. Using the task of comparing what students have noticed from the video about the difference in education makes the students think about diversity, the existence of other cultures and how they feel about other cultures by sharing their own experiences during their school time comparing them to the American people. Finally, this task serves as a tool of interaction on the basis of one's learning and experiences of diversity in order to create personal meanings about one's experiences, communicate those meanings, explore those meanings and reshape them in response to others.

### **3.3.3.5. Lesson observation (April, 2018) - Stereotypes: speaking and writing p.71 (Think 3, student's book for III year)**

This lesson was observed at the state municipal school "Nikola Karev" in a classroom of 28 students. The title of the lesson is "Stereotypes". The teacher raised the question if the students have ever heard of this term. Most of them were silent and were told to read the definition in their book which said "stereotype: a fixed idea about what groups of people are like". The teacher after that started presenting in details using a power point presentation with pictures and examples. This was a very helpful tool for students to get acquainted with the term. The presentation was a teacher-made material while the rest of the materials used were the student's book, the teacher's book and the method used for this lesson is the direct method.

After the presentation 10 minutes passed from the lesson and the students were divided into small groups in order to brainstorm stereotypes about their own country. One group is nominated to read the list to the rest of the students, while the others cross off the items on their list and were given 10 minutes for this task. During this phase of the lesson, the students interacted between each other and the teacher monitored their work. After this warm up, students were asked to think about stereotypes about other types of stereotypes - not only about nationalities. What mainly come from all of the groups were the groups of people who live in villages usually have certain prejudice compared to those who live in the city. Another group which was mentioned were teenagers, old people, teachers etc. Students who were eager to speak showed their views about the certain prejudices and a great discussion was raised. At the end of the lesson, the students were asked to write an article about a national stereotype with some given examples. As Kenneth Beare (2017) points out "in a perfect world national stereotypes would be used less often". But, it is also true that national stereotypes are often used during English language lessons when discussing other countries which can be taken as a positive thing which help students reconsider their own stereotypes which are not always connected to the nationality.

### **3.3.3.6. Lesson observation (September, 2018) - National Identity - skills focus<sup>10</sup> (New Opportunities, student's book for VI year)**

This lesson was observed at the State Municipal School "Dimitar Vlahov". The objectives of the lessons are to revise listening strategies by listening to a radio program about Great Britain and learn colloquial expressions. Similarly as some of the lessons above, this is a task-based cultural lesson in which the intended outcomes were to compare the country they come from with Great Britain. This lesson began by describing the pictures in the student's book with given key words about national identity and then to comment their view of Britain and the British people. The words were translated into Macedonian language because the teacher considered them as unfamiliar and needed for the tasks that follow. After that followed the while-listening task which gave some details about Great Britain. The next task was actually an interview with a girl who was speaking about what she likes and dislikes about Britain. In the task, the students were about to answer if the statements are true or false in pairs. Here the students communicated with their co-student and checked the answers with the teacher. From this exercise, students could hear what young people in Britain usually do and learn some colloquial expressions of expressing preference. Finally, the discussion part was to make a list of good and bad things about living in their country and share it with everybody. For homework, students needed to describe their country and the people who live in their country in a short essay. For the essay students will receive a grade and they will be assessed in a summative way.

The lesson can be placed in the group of topic-based approach of teaching culture and concentrates on more general and cross-sectional topics which involve various cultural issues. Wiśniewska- Brogowska (2004) confirms that topic-based approach can provide an oblique yet original encounter with British life and culture. She also states that knowing about the people who use the language, understanding their behaviors, beliefs and customs increases cultural awareness and promotes greater personal interest both in the language and the culture. This lesson deals with key elements of current British life, such as class, education, health and the

topic-based approach to teaching culture brings life to class and develops an integrated view of the target culture.

**3.3.3.7. Lesson observation (October, 2018) - Culture: reading, listening and speaking p.26 (Think 2, student's book for II year)**

This lesson was also observed at the state municipal school "Nikola Karev" in a classroom which consisted of 33 students. The title of the lesson is "Culture". The objectives of the lesson were to read and listen to a text about a typical day at school for students from different countries which is a task-based lesson. The intended outcomes were to introduce the students with different educational systems and compare their home-country education system with the ones given in the student's book. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher asked what is a typical school day for each of them having in mind the pictures in the book. One of the students explained how does the day start for him explaining in details every activity. After the pre-reading activity which lasted about 10 minutes, they started reading and listening to the text in order to do the tasks that follow. They had vocabulary tasks and reading comprehension questions. After they have finished reading and listening they started doing the activities.

The final phase of the lesson was a discussion in groups where students were about to compare their typical school day with the students from different countries mentioned in the text. They were set to do a research for other cultures for homework and again to compare it with their own typical school day for this students will receive a grade i.e. the summative assessment will be used. From all the activities mentioned above, students could learn more about the education systems in other countries from simple short texts and further from the research set for their homework. In the Task-based approach the activities within the lesson are from real communication and the languages used enhances the language simply because performing different tasks enriches the usage of the foreign language. According to Lin (2009) within this method teachers are both instructors and guides and learners are both receivers and

main agents. This method presents a chance for the students to learn cooperatively and use their abilities to use the target language in a professional way for real communication.

### **3.3.3.8. Lesson observation (November, 2017) - Culture corner 1 - The History of Englishp.28 (New Opportunities, student's book for VI year)**

This lesson aims at listening to the history of English through which students will have the chance to listen, learn and discuss the details about the History of English language using the audio-lingual method. The intended outcomes are to learn new vocabulary, improve the pronunciation and answer questions connected to language. Again a task-based oriented lesson where the students will be ordering events in order, answer multiple choice questions and identify different accents were the tasks that the students were supposed to do. The lesson was observed at the state municipal school "Nikola Karev" in a classroom of 28 students.

The materials used for the lesson are the student's book and audio material from the book which is actually authentic material used for the lesson. One research in teaching culture in the English classroom confirmed that the authentic materials presented with their original context and with thorough explanations of the historical contexts, helps the students understand the perspectives and express their opinions and thoughts. But always, the approach to the material is essential and the students need to use these materials for analysis better than remembering facts (Listuen, 2017). In this case, students worked in small groups of four during the first task and then in pairs answered the multiple choice questions. However, since it was the last lesson, students were not so eager to cooperate and the teacher had difficulties in achieving good working atmosphere. Half of the students participated and listened to the program and the other half were hesitant to participate into the activity. The pronunciation part interested the students more since the task was connected to different accents. Finally, the last task was to answer questions about the mother-tongue language and for this students might need a little research. So, this task-based activity was set as a homework project which

was to be assessed when done. Hutchinson (1992) considers project work as personal where students can write about themselves, their friends, experience and is an engaging and active process. By doing projects and research, students learn by doing and very often they achieve success.

### **3.3.3.9. Lesson observation (December, 2017) - Culture - Ireland, a nation of storytellers p.54 (Think 3, student's book for III year)**

The objectives of the lesson observed at the SMS "Nikola Karev" are to read an article and tell a story at the end of the lesson. The aims are to be achieved by reading and listening some interesting materials. The lesson begins with a pre-reading task of answering questions connected to the given pictures. What follows is reading and listening which proceeds with answering questions and learning a new vocabulary i.e. task-based activities. In the while-reading phase of the lesson, students answer questions which were previously predicted. Then in pair do the next true or false exercise which is followed by a speaking activity. The next task involves learning a new vocabulary which is highlighted in the text and students need to match the words with the definitions.

In the next phase of the lesson, students put pictures in order and then should tell a story. Most of the students found this activity boring and were hesitant to do it. Only a small group of the students were active and enthusiastically participated in telling the story from the pictures. At the end of the lesson, students had the chance to hear a story which will further help them write their own story. This task is set for homework and will be assessed in a summative way afterwards. As experienced in the observation of the lesson very often telling stories to teenagers can be problematic because the students consider it childish. According to Malderez (2010) "what matters here is the choice of story, and the task that is set following the story. Useful stories for this age group are ones that promote thinking, and appropriate tasks ones which relate in some way to the learners' concerns".

### **3.3.3.10. Lesson observation (September, 2018) - UK vs. USA (Focus 4, student's book for IV year) p.10**

The objectives of the lesson are to revise comparative structures and the passive voice through texts about UK and the USA. The aims are to be achieved by listening some interesting materials that compare the life in the USA with the life in the UK. The lesson begins with a pre-listening task of finding pairs of American and British words. What follows is a listening task which proceeds with discussion of the differences of Britain and the USA. The next task involves revising the comparative and superlative forms through some examples taken from the listening program. This phase of the lesson finishes with doing an exercise of writing sentences again in context of the culture of UK and USA.

In the next phase of the lesson, students compare a table of words and phrases connected to the USA, the UK and their country. After the table is filled in students discuss the differences between the three countries. What follows is a very interesting quiz which they fill in in pairs and then listen and check their answers. For homework students have to find out more trivia facts about the UK and the USA and should write active sentences and transform them into passive sentences. As Corbett states:

" The language classroom is a privileged site for intercultural exploration because it affords the time and the space for sustained and reflective encounters with 'otherness'. In turn, intercultural education offers language teaching a new set of contexts, purposes and motivations, namely, to explore other cultures and to mediate when intercultural miscommunication does occur" (p.15)

This lesson which was observed at SMS "Nikola Karev" was a very good example of intercultural exploration where students can encounter and find out more about a person who has lived in

the UK and the USA and through that context to learn some very important grammatical structures such as passive and comparison of adjectives.

**3.3.3.11. Lesson observation (September, 2018) - Lighting the spark of learning (Focus 4, student's book for IV year) p. 16**

A very interesting lesson that caught my attention was this lesson because of the text which was to be read by the students was about an educational experiment in India and was the inspiration for the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*. The teacher gave some additional information about the experiment and mentioned the movie which was familiar to the students and this created a relaxed working atmosphere. The aims of the lesson were to read and understand the structure of the text which was actually a gapped text. The pre-reading activity was a discussion of technology and how technology helps the students at school and out of school. Here the students discussed that they use computers mainly for entertainment and rarely for school. The while-reading activity was to find some basic information in the text in order to familiarize with the content. What followed was a gap filling exercise with sentences in the text, This was a longer and a more difficult activity for the students and lasted 15 minutes.

What followed was a word formation exercise with sentences taken from the text. For homework, students had to do some research about the education in India with a purpose to compare it with the education of Macedonia. Most of the students were active and understood the tasks given by the teacher. For the gap filling exercise the students used evidence from the text to support their answers. The materials used were the student's book and the Internet. According to Gomez (2011), if real intercultural communicative competence is the main goal to be achieved in second language learning, it is essential to consider the inclusion of well-selected texts, if possible. students at any age are exposed to read or listen to different literary pieces such as folk tales, fairy tales, legends, fables, and other selections from children's literature, reflecting the important heritage of every own culture". But it is very important to select



appropriate texts that will be interesting for the students and will learn them how to become aware of diverse cultural expressions.

**3.3.3.12. Lesson observation (September, 2018) - One Woman's Choice (Close-up, student's book for I year) p.16**

The aim of this lesson is to watch a video, learn a new vocabulary and use the vocabulary in context. The lesson was observed at the state municipal school "Jane Sandanski" at the beginning of the school year. Before the teacher played the video students had a discussion about family ties. Here the students answered the questions with their partners and the teacher monitored their work. The lesson was mainly a communicative one.

In the next phase the students watched the video with an aim to fill in a task with true or false after they have seen the video. When the video stopped the teacher asked some questions about their behavior and expressions while watching the video. Students could see some details of the life of Flora Salonik who studied to become a teacher but that did not happen because she got married to a person who lived in a faraway village with difficult life conditions. After checking the exercise students had to fill in gaps with words in a summary of the video. Here they could read and recall some information from the video and learn a new vocabulary. After they filled in the exercise, the teacher asked if someone wants to translate the text where the grammar-translation approach was used. The text contained phrases mainly in past tenses which was a good opportunity for revision of the rules.

The ending of the lesson consisted of a discussion about living in a village or a city. The teacher made a table on the board and students were writing their opinions in the table. From all of this, stereotypes of village and city people came out with the second question about where it is better to live, the village or the city whereas the teacher had the chance to give them some definitions of stereotypes and explained the students that stereotypes should be avoided and every family has to make their own choice whether to live in the city or in the

village because as written on the board there are advantages in living both in the city or in the village. In a paper on the topic of stereotypes and prejudice (Nisa, Kholil, & Zulkarnain) state that "differences in the values, norms and perceptions of each ethnicity in the form of stereotypes and prejudices often lead to misunderstandings in communicating. Factors associated with the emergence of prejudice are personality, the level of intelligence and environmental factors. The higher the level of one's intelligence, the more critical and therefore more difficult to prejudice. While the lower the level of one's intelligence, it has an easier tendency to prejudice. Environmental factors that are not well established are likely to prejudice" (2017). Finally, it must be noted that knowledge in intercultural communication is essential if we want to achieve good communication and good relationship in the classroom. In order to achieve that students and teachers need more knowledge in these social issues in order to overcome the barriers of communication which are very often caused by stereotypes and prejudice.

### **3.3.4 Conclusion**

From all the observed lessons, it can be concluded that student's books offer a wide variety of cultural lessons and most of the teachers are eager to pursue them and implement the needed intercultural communication competence. However, sometimes students are not so eager to cooperate and speak openly about social issues within the activities containing a cultural content. There are many challenges that teachers face with when teaching students from different ethnic backgrounds. If the teacher is not familiar with the student's cultural backgrounds they will be faced with difficulties in giving instruction or meeting their learning needs.

Usually students belonging to the smaller ethnic groups in the country are less integrated in the educational process. They still go through a process of integration, but unfortunately there is a need of something more than doing projects of inter-ethnic education which include activities which are extra-curricular. There is still a need for training in intercultural communication and multiculturalism in order to fulfill the aims of learning and

teaching to both the teachers and the students. What can be suggested to the teachers who teach students from different ethnic backgrounds is to find materials which are easier and contain the social dimension of integration of the students and also information about different cultures, and use specific methods and techniques which are practical and not theoretical. These materials need to be assessed because very often the materials in the students' books can include stereotypes instead of teaching the students understand the different cultures. It is essential for the students to be to be further challenged and guided in order to develop critical communicative skills. Moreover, as Byram (1997) suggests, the focus should not be solely on preparing students to communicate without mistakes, but to communicate openly, forging relationships that will allow them to thrive in the foreign cultural context. What is needed is to try to facilitate students to develop intercultural awareness and provide activities where different cultures, values, and behaviors are considered (Byram, 1997).

### **3.3.5. Student's cultural interviews**

*"The right to a quality education is, I believe, the perfect path to bridge the gap between different cultures and to reconcile various civilizations. Without such a right, the values of liberty, justice and equality will have no meaning. Ignorance is by far the biggest danger and threat to humankind."*

Moza bint Nasser

Interviews in this research served as a tool for acquiring in-depth information around the topic of intercultural communication competence. The interviews were a follow-up to the respondents to the questionnaires i.e. further investigation to the students' responses. Structured interviews were used whereas the answers are to be compared and contrasted taking into account the different ethnic backgrounds of the interviewees. Taking the above stated quote into consideration, I would comment on the ignorance as the biggest danger and threat to human kind which will be the main reason for doing these cultural interviews with my students as part of an inter-ethnic integration project. Different cultures mean different

traditions, values and norms. Students at the state municipal schools have classmates from Turkish ethnicity but most of them are not aware of their culture and have certain prejudice towards them. That is why I decided to make the interviews with couple of students from Macedonian and Turkish ethnicity and find out more about their traditions, ways of living, eating, achieving success and to hear what are their opinions of racism, prejudice and finally what can be done with these issues. The analysis of the interview as part of this research study will be divided into five components:

- discussing answers connected to culture and family
- defining success and punctuality
- food and religion and roles of gender
- discussion about racism and prejudice.

The interview starts with the question "What is your definition of culture?" All of the Turkish students answered that it is a way of clothing, speaking i.e. a way of living. The Macedonian students seemed to have more knowledge about culture and gave different definitions such as that culture is something you learn within the family, a way of living within a group: the behaviors, beliefs, values and symbols; culture is something that a group of people follows.

Teacher: We often mention culture during our lessons, so what is your definition of culture and family?

Melisa: For me the definition of family is pride. I am have to respect everyone who is older than me in the family and my father is the head of the family and loves me very much.

Mile: family is a group of people i.e. a place you call home and you feel comfortable; a group of people who love and care for each other and finally that family is everything. Speaking about the highest status in the family, most of the Macedonian students answered that everyone is equal, they respect everyone's needs and help each other no matter of age or gender.

The next stage of the interview involves questions about success and punctuality. In the United States, it is important to be on time, or punctual, for an appointment, a class, a meeting, etc. However, this may not be true in all countries (Griffin & Bone, 2017). When it comes to defining success, the Macedonian students answered that it is a feeling of achieving something that brings you pride, knowing that you have done something good for yourself; to reach your goals and work hard to achieve them; the result of hard-work, patience and believing in your dreams; a hobby that proves everyone that doubted you wrong. On the other hand, the Turkish students answered that the biggest success is to become a singer or a famous instrument player. The answers that caught my attention considering punctuality was the following:

Teacher: Is punctuality important for you, why or why not?

Serdar: Dear teacher, to be honest, punctuality is very important, but we are always late.

Aleksandar: Yes teacher it is important to be on time. If you are always on time it means that you build your habits and when punctual you leave a good impression.

The next part of the interview raised questions about food and the most important meal of the day. The Turkish students answered that lunch is the most important meal and that the food they eat is connected to their religion. Most of the Macedonian students stated dinner is the most important meal for them because all the family members sit to eat together. They also stated that they eat a typical Macedonian food which includes "ajvar" especially in the autumn days when it is usually prepared, but they are allowed from time to time to eat fast food too.

The interview proceeds with a very sensitive question about religion, why is religion important for them and whether they plan to pass the religion to their children. Five Turkish students said that religion is very important, that they have rituals of praying daily and it will be passed to their children for sure. The answers within the Macedonian students were divided. One group stated that religion is important because God's plan is always the best. The rest of

the students stated that religion is not important to them, some of them even declared themselves as atheists and they do not plan to pass it further.

The gender roles within the families are touched with the next question. The Turkish students claimed that they are all equal within the family when it comes to gender but still they have to respect and listen to their father's role. Macedonians stated that the roles of men and women are not strictly defined but still men are the stronger ones but still very often their mothers do some physical things too. All Macedonians agreed that Christmas is the most important and celebrated holiday because they sit together and eat dinner and are eager to get the coin which means that they will be lucky throughout the year. Turkish students stated that Kurban Bayram - the Feast of the Sacrifice is their most celebrated holiday when they read verses from the Quran. Also sheep are slit a certain amount of the meat is allocated to the poor. This holiday is known as the Sacrifice holiday and is a major event in the Islamic calendar.

The interview continues with the questions about what is most respectful and disrespectful in your culture whereas students from the Turkish ethnicity answered that fighting is least respectful in their culture and what is appreciated is hanging out with everybody no matter of race, culture or religion. On the other hand Macedonian students stated that the least respectful thing in their culture is to hate those who are different than them, bully and disrespect them. Finally the interview concludes with the question about racism, prejudice and what should be done about these issues. Some of the most interesting answers were the following:

Teacher: What can be done about racism and prejudice in your opinion?

Sevda: We have experienced racism and prejudice but we are not so eager to speak about that I don't know what should be done about it. But yes, we have problems.

Mile: Children should be taught from young age that everyone is equal no matter the race or religion. We are all people but should not stay silent and let everything fall into one place and racism is the

worst thing and this can be changed by learning and helping each other.

As most of the students stated, culture is the way of life or how different groups of people organize their live and what they believe in. Culture affects the way we perceive the world and of course the way we communicate. That is the reason why culture influences the learning and teaching styles too. The aim of these interviews were to address the cultural differences as an important factor in the learning process. Very often the teaching activity is full of controversy and students from different ethnic backgrounds have a wide achievement gap. What happens very often when teachers and students are not interculturally trained are the stereotypes and prejudice which occur in terms of justifying students' results. When cultures are compared one should not look for the differences in order to define which culture is better or worse and all students should be treated equally in the classroom. This can happen with deeper knowledge about culture and intercultural communication which will teach students to respect everyone in the classroom and of course to avoid stereotypes.

#### **CHAPTER 4: Findings**

This chapter will be about the data collection process which was done by doing different sessions visiting the three schools, providing questionnaires to the teachers and students in a classroom setting. After finishing the questionnaires with the teachers, observations of English language lessons were made in order to observe the conduct of the students from different ethnic backgrounds and the teacher's intercultural communication competence.

Cultural interviews were also conducted with students from different ethnic backgrounds where Macedonian and Turkish students participated and the results were presented above. The aim of the interview was to find out more about the students' perception of their own culture and compare the answers.

#### **4.1. Introduction to findings: empirical part of the research**

In order to give a more precise presentation and interpretation of the data within the research the results from the questionnaires will be analyzed using SPSS. The aim of this research is to find out what is the level of intercultural awareness of English language teachers in the state secondary schools in Strumica and Bulgaria. The participants of this study are students and teachers from the state municipal schools in the municipality of Strumica. The three high-schools in Strumica ("Nikola Karev", "Jane Sandanski" and "Dimitar Vlahov" have students from different ethnic backgrounds and very often these students show lower results at school. In this research, surveys were conducted among the students and teachers in the above mentioned schools. The empirical part of the research consists of descriptive statistics for the demographic information of the sample and the distribution of the variables in the research (intercultural awareness of teachers and students altogether).

The second part of the conclusive statistics will interpret the hypothesis of the research and t-test of the differences of the main differences (Independent Samples Test and Anova) in order to underline the potential statistical difference between the level of intercultural awareness according to the demographic information of the participants. In order to analyze the data profoundly, the empirical part of the research will be divided into three analytical segments i.e. results from the students, results from the teachers and results for the total number of participants in the surveys.



#### 4.2.1. Students

##### 4.2.1.1. Demographic information of the participants

In table 1 below are shown the statistical frequencies of the participants - students divided into groups according to their home country and taking the methodological part of the research into account, the participants in this research are 96 students or 69.1% students from Macedonia i.e. Strumica and 43 students or 30.9% are from Bulgaria i.e. Ruse which means the total number of students who were surveyed in this research is 139:

**Table 1.** Responses by country

		Frequ ency	Percent	Valid Percent <sup>2</sup>	Cumulative Percent
	Macedonia	96	69.1	69.1	69.1
Valid	Bulgaria	43	30.9	30.9	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Also, in table 2 below the frequencies in terms of gender are represented. According to a random sample after being analyzed with SPSS 20.0 it can be seen that the participants are male students 46% (64) and 51.8% (72) female students and three participants did not assert their gender in the survey because of subjective reasons.

**Table 2.** Responses by Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

<sup>2</sup> Shows the percentage of the analyzed data

	Male	64	46.0	47.1	47.1
Valid	Female	72	51.8	52.9	100.0
	Total	136	97.8	100.0	
Missing	System	3	2.2		
Total		139	100.0		

As mentioned before, the prime aim of the research are students from state secondary schools, so it is obvious that the age of the target group varies from 15 - 18 years (from I<sup>st</sup> to IV<sup>th</sup> grade) and according to the frequencies of the surveyed, in the table 3 below can be seen that 64% of the students are 15-16 years old (I<sup>st</sup> and II<sup>nd</sup> grade) and 36% of the students are 17-18 years old (III<sup>rd</sup> and IV<sup>th</sup> grade).

**Table 3.** Responses by Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	15-16	89	64.0	64.0	64.0
Valid	17-18	50	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Having in mind that the research is focused mainly on the intercultural awareness in the subject English as a foreign language, this subject is being studied and taught in Macedonia and Bulgaria on three levels and according to that in table 4 below are shown the frequencies of the participants - students. As seen in the table 44.6 % study English on the intermediate level and

32.4% of the students study English on an advanced level and 23% of the students are pre-intermediate level learners.

**Table 4.** Responses by the Level of English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pre-intermediate	32	23.0	23.0	23.0
	Intermediate	62	44.6	44.6	67.6
	Advanced	45	32.4	32.4	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Because of research correctness in table 5 are shown the frequencies of students according to the school they study in:

**Table 5.** Responses by School name

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	"Dimitar Vlahov"	20	14.4	14.4	14.4
	"Geo Milev" - Ruse	43	30.9	30.9	45.3
	"Jane Sandanski"	35	25.2	25.2	70.5
	"Nikola Karev"	41	29.5	29.5	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

In the table 6 below the results of the students combined in the two countries and two cities are shown:

**Table 6.** Cross tabulation of respondents

		Place	
		Macedonia	Bulgaria
		Count	Count
Gender	Male	50	14
	Female	46	26
Age	15-16	63	26
	17-18	33	17
Level English	Pre-intermediate	6	26
	Intermediate	57	5
	Advanced	33	12

From the above asserted frequencies for the demographic information of the participants - students, it can be concluded that with these demographic parameters, this research will definitely have objective and relevant quality.

In addition, the questionnaire was organized in relation to the main aim of this research i.e. two questions (items) were asked about whether the participants have students from other ethnic backgrounds in their surrounding and if they are familiar with the concept of intercultural communication and according to these two items the frequencies of the surveyed students are shown in table 7 and 8. The question "Do you have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds?" as mentioned previously, speaks about the policy of the school i.e. it emphasizes the fact that most of the schools lead a mono-cultural policy which can be confirmed by the negative responses seen in the table:

**Table 7.** Do you have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	65	46.8	46.8	46.8
	Yes	74	53.2	53.2	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Around 47% from the students say that they do not have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds and 53% of the students confirm that they have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds.

**Table 8.** Are you familiar with the term Intercultural Communication?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
				Percent	Percent

	First time				
	listen	38	27.3	27.3	27.3
Valid	No	21	15.1	15.1	42.4
	Yes	80	57.6	57.6	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

It is very surprising that around 58% of the students are acquainted with the concept of intercultural communication and only 15% are not familiar with this concept and in this group 27% of the students hear about this concept for the first time which means that 42% of the students are not familiar with the concept of intercultural communication even though the concept of intercultural communication is being described in a lot of school subjects and this concept is part of the obligatory curriculum prescribed by the ministry of education.

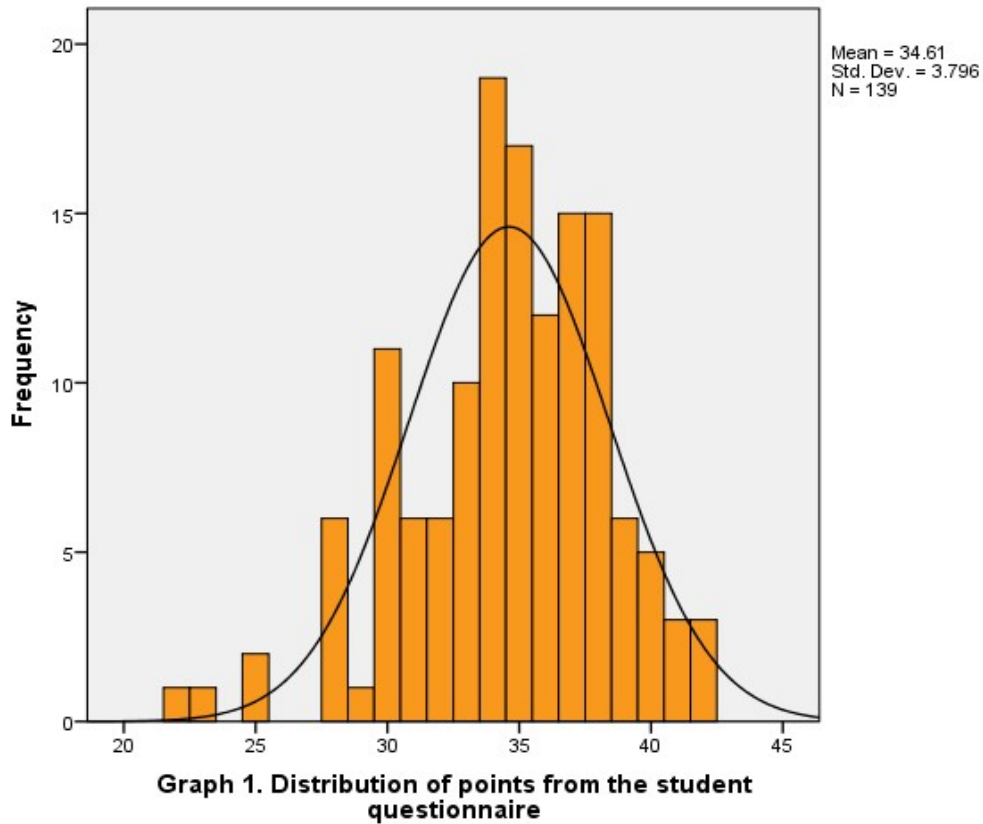
#### 4.2.2. Distribution of variables - students

Table 9 below shows the descriptive parameters of the variable - intercultural awareness of the students. According to these parameters i.e. according to the distribution of the mean, median and mode it can be concluded that the intercultural awareness of the students has a smaller asymmetric positive distribution or in other words this psycho-social notion (the interculturalism among students) is well known by the students but an essential part from the group still needs more knowledge in this concept. The table below shows the distribution of variables i.e. whether there is a symmetric distribution as pointed in the table:

**Table 9.** Descriptive Statistics of points  
from the student questionnaire

Mean	34.61
Median	35.00
Mode	34
Std. Deviation	3.796
Skewness	-.627
Kurtosis	.658
Minimum	22
Maximum	42

Also, in order to be better understood this notion one can look at the graph 1 below:



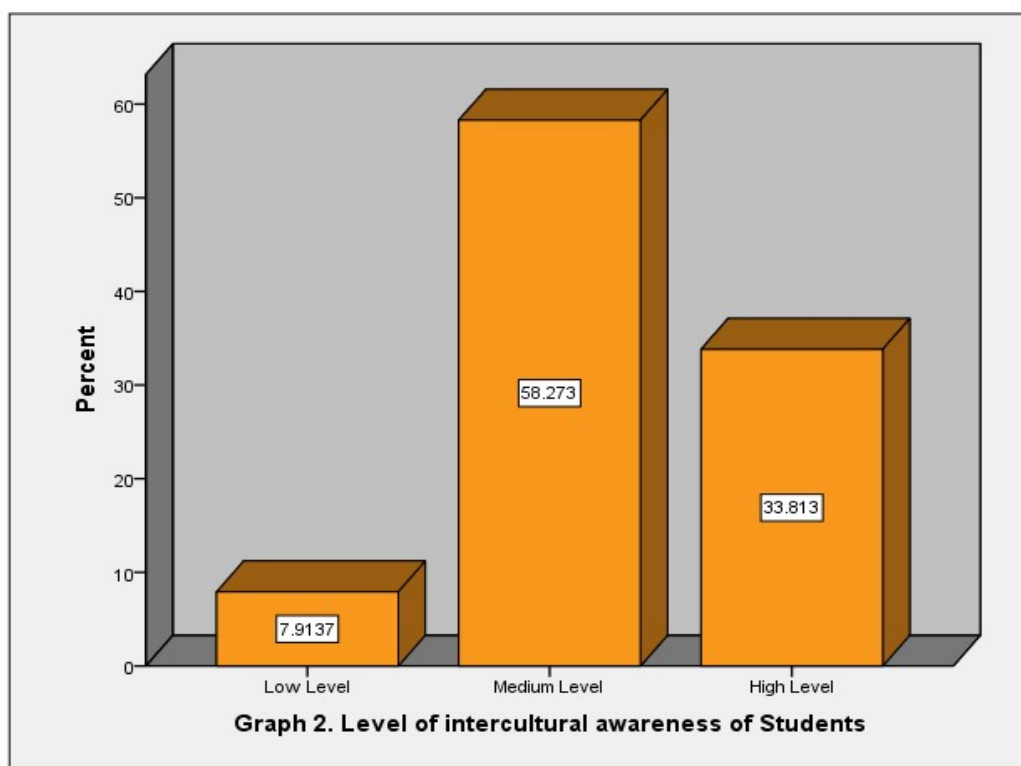
After the data was summarized and analyzed, the students' results from the questionnaire show and point out the level of intercultural awareness in general. According to the statistical parameters when divided into three needed levels, the intercultural awareness of the students results into general frequencies of the level of intercultural awareness of the students as shown in the table 10:



**Table 10.** Level of intercultural awareness of students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low Level	11	7.9	7.9	7.9
	Medium Level	81	58.3	58.3	66.2
	High Level	47	33.8	33.8	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

The table 10 above points out that 58.3% (81) of the surveyed students have a medium level of intercultural awareness and 33.8% (47) are on the higher level of intercultural awareness and finally 7.9% (11) result in lower level of intercultural awareness in this research. The three levels of intercultural awareness are shown in the graph 2 below:



#### 4.2.3. Interpretation of hypotheses - conclusive statistics of students

The level of intercultural competence and communication is being assessed through the intercultural awareness (in this case the total number of points from the questionnaire) and according to the demographic information which was collected through the survey in order to fulfill the aim and justify the main hypothesis of this research whether there are differences in the intercultural awareness between the students from the two cities, whether there is a significant difference between the intercultural awareness in terms of gender, age, language and whether there is a difference of the results taking into account the fact that they have or do not have classmates from other ethnic backgrounds different than their own for the analysis of the results t-test (independent and ANOVA) is going to be used in this research.

In table 11 below, in the fourth column is shown the median for the intercultural awareness according to the country of living and studying. The results from Macedonia is 33.83

and for Bulgaria 36.35. In order to point out the statistical importance for this difference, in table 12 below, the fourth column shows the coefficient of significance:

**Table 11.** Difference between mean according to country

	Place	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Points	Macedonia	96	33.83	3.460	.353
Students	Bulgaria	43	36.35	3.975	.606

**Table 12.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means							
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Total Points	-3.781	137	.000	-2.516	.665	-3.831	-1.200
Students	-3.585	71.688	.001	-2.516	.702	-3.914	-1.117

As stated in the interviews and the questionnaires (taking into account the open questions), the students from Macedonia stated that they are open to students coming from different ethnic backgrounds and are eager to cooperate. Also, according to the coefficient of significance in the research which is smaller from the first and second possible limit ( $0.01 > 0.000 < 0.05$ ) it can be concluded that there is significant statistical difference in the intercultural awareness level of

the students according to the country of living and studying i.e. **in Republic of Macedonia the students have a higher intercultural level if compared to the students from Bulgaria in this research.** This statement can be confirmed by the students' attitude as part of a project for inter-ethnic integration which was ran in the State Municipal School "Nikola Karev" in which 25 students from Macedonian and Turkish ethnic background took part. The project consisted of creative workshops throughout six months as extracurricular activities at school which culminated with a multimedia presentation in cooperation with teachers and mentors who were actual Macedonian actors. Students worked together and expressed their feelings and thoughts considering social problems and practiced forum theatre to solve those problems.

In addition, in the following analysis in table 13 and 14 below are shown the differences between the mean of the intercultural awareness according to gender and having in mind the fact that in table 14 column 4, the coefficient of significance is bigger than the second limit of possibility( $0.191 > 0.05$ ) **it can be concluded that there is no difference of the intercultural awareness level in terms of gender.**

**Table 13.** Difference between mean according to gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Points	Male	64	34.14	3.633	.454
Students	Female	72	35.00	3.958	.466

**Table 14.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means							
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Total Points	-1.313	134	.191	-.859	.654	-2.153	.435
Students	-1.320	133.852	.189	-.859	.651	-2.147	.428

Moreover, the analysis proceeds with potential difference of the level of intercultural awareness in terms of age in the two countries i.e. in table 15 in the fourth column are shown the mean numbers and in table 16 below is shown the coefficient of significance.

**Table 15.** Difference between mean according to age

Place		Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Macedonia	Total Points	15-16	63	34.24	3.145	.396
	Students	17-18	33	33.06	3.929	.684
Bulgaria	Total Points	15-16	26	38.38	2.451	.481
	Students	17-18	17	33.24	3.882	.941

**Table 16.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

Place		t-test for Equality of Means						
		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Macedonia	Total Points	1.597	94	.114	1.177	.738	-.287	2.642
	Students	1.490	53.959	.142	1.177	.790	-.407	2.762
Bulgaria	Total Points	5.345	41	.000	5.149	.963	3.204	7.095
	Students	4.872	24.368	.000	5.149	1.057	2.970	7.329

Speaking about the results in the Republic of Macedonia, according to the coefficient of significance which is bigger than the second limit of the validities ( $0.114 > 0.05$ ), the difference of the level of intercultural awareness is not significant in terms of age but the results in the Republic of Bulgaria show that the coefficient of significance is smaller in the two limits of possibility ( $0.01 > 0.000 < 0.05$ ) whereas it can be concluded that **there is significant statistical difference between the students in terms of age i.e. the students aged 15-16 show higher intercultural awareness compared to students aged 17-18 in Bulgaria whereas in Macedonia there is not a significant statistical difference according to age.**

As it was pointed out above, the students study English as a foreign language from the I<sup>st</sup> to the IV<sup>th</sup> grade on three levels in the two countries, these parameters will be taken into account in the analysis that follow again in terms of the intercultural awareness level according

to the level of studying English as a foreign language. Using t-test ANOVA, in table 17 are shown the two means of the level of intercultural awareness according to the level of studying English language, and then in table 18 the final column shows the two significant coefficients:

**Table 17.** Difference between mean according to level of English

Place		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Macedonia	Pre-intermediate	6	34.83	2.317	.946	32.40	37.26
	Intermediate	57	33.91	3.118	.413	33.08	34.74
	Advanced	33	33.52	4.169	.726	32.04	34.99
	Total	96	33.83	3.460	.353	33.13	34.53
Bulgaria	Pre-intermediate	26	38.38	2.451	.481	37.39	39.37
	Intermediate	5	33.80	2.490	1.114	30.71	36.89
	Advanced	12	33.00	4.411	1.273	30.20	35.80
	Total	43	36.35	3.975	.606	35.13	37.57

**Table 18.** Significance for mean difference - ANOVA

Place		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Macedonia	Between Groups	9.696	2	4.848	.400	.672
	Within Groups	1127.637	93	12.125		
	Total	1137.333	95			
Bulgaria	Between Groups	274.814	2	137.407	14.131	.000
	Within Groups	388.954	40	9.724		
	Total	663.767	42			

In Macedonia, according to the coefficient of significance the second limit of the validities is bigger ( $0.672 > 0.05$ ) whereas the level of intercultural awareness is not significant according to the level of studying English language but in Bulgaria the two limits of the coefficient of significance is smaller ( $0.01 > 0.000 < 0.05$ ) whereas **it can be concluded that there is a significant statistical difference of the level of intercultural awareness according to the level of studying English. More precisely, the students who study English on a pre-intermediate level show higher intercultural awareness if compared to the students who study English on a higher level in this research.** Also, the differences between the groups and their levels of English are to be shown in the table 19 below because of research correctness:

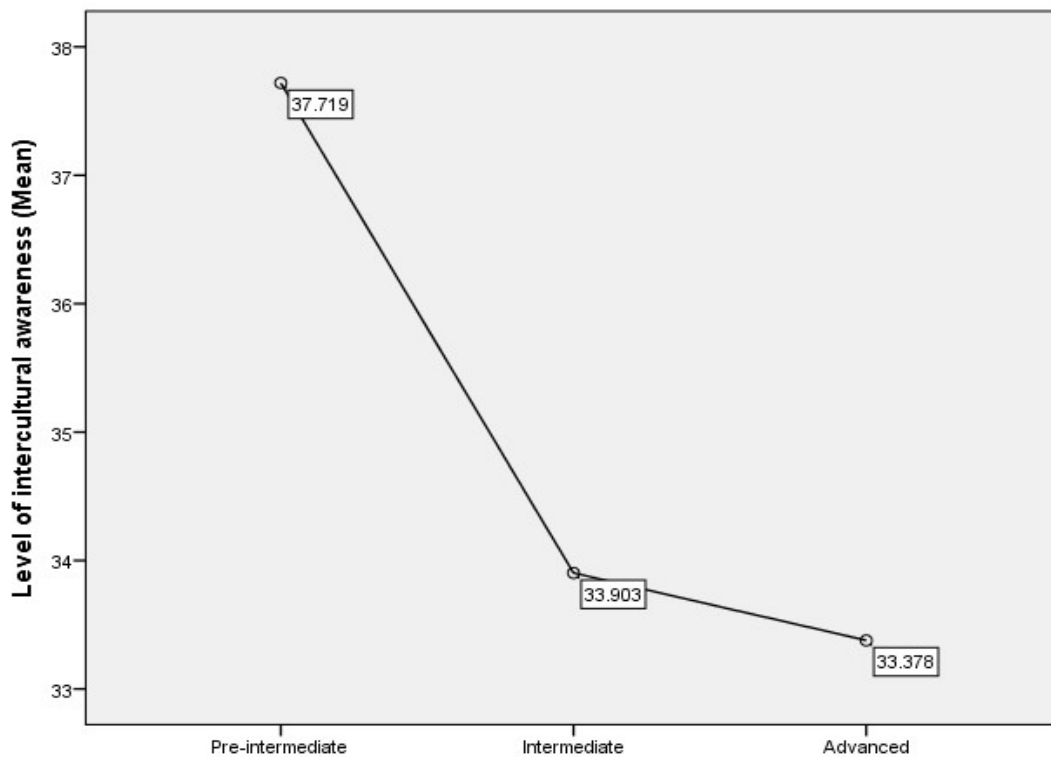


**Table 19.** Multiple Comparisons between groups

Place	(I) Level of English	(J) Level of English	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Macedonia	Pre-intermediate	Intermediate	.921	1.495	.812	-2.64	4.48
		Advanced	1.318	1.545	.671	-2.36	5.00
	Intermediate	Pre-intermediate	-.921	1.495	.812	-4.48	2.64
		Advanced	.397	.762	.861	-1.42	2.21
	Advanced	Pre-intermediate	-1.318	1.545	.671	-5.00	2.36
		Intermediate	-.397	.762	.861	-2.21	1.42
Bulgaria	Pre-intermediate	Intermediate	4.585 <sup>*</sup>	1.523	.012	.88	8.29
		Advanced	5.385 <sup>*</sup>	1.088	.000	2.74	8.03
	Intermediate	Pre-intermediate	-4.585 <sup>*</sup>	1.523	.012	-8.29	-.88
		Advanced	.800	1.660	.880	-3.24	4.84
	Advanced	Pre-intermediate	-5.385 <sup>*</sup>	1.088	.000	-8.03	-2.74
		Intermediate	-.800	1.660	.880	-4.84	3.24

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The graph 3 below shows the differences of intercultural awareness in terms of the level of studying English:



**Graph 3. Level of intercultural awareness according to Level of English**

Having in mind the main aim of the research i.e. whether there is a difference of the intercultural awareness of the students in terms of having classmates from different ethnic backgrounds different than their own is seen in table 20 below are shown the mean coefficients and the coefficient of significance can be seen in table 21:

**Table 20.** Difference between mean according to :

Place		Do have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Macedonia	Total Points	No	52	34.00	3.413	.473
	Students	Yes	44	33.64	3.544	.534
Bulgaria	Total Points	No	13	33.54	4.235	1.175
	Students	Yes	30	37.57	3.224	.589

**Table 21.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

Place		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differenc e	Std. Error Differenc e	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Macedonia	Total Points	.511	94	.610	.364	.712	-1.049	1.776
	Students	.509	90.151	.612	.364	.714	-1.054	1.782
Bulgaria	Total Points	-3.418	41	.001	-4.028	1.179	-6.409	-1.648
	Students	-3.066	18.305	.007	-4.028	1.314	-6.785	-1.271

Speaking about Macedonia, according to the coefficient of significance ( $0.610 > 0.05$ ) the difference of the level of intercultural awareness is not significant according to the question „Do you have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds", but in Bulgaria the coefficient of significance is smaller ( $0.01 > 0.001 < 0.05$ ) whereas it can be concluded **that there is significant statistical difference according to the question „Do you have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds" where students who have answered this question with "yes" show higher intercultural awareness where as in Macedonia this question does not make a significant statistical difference in this research.** This can be confirmed by the fact that students in Macedonia are very often part of inter-ethnic projects and learn a lot about different cultures and know how to behave with students from different ethnic background than their own. The students' behavior in Strumica in the three high-schools where I had the chance to observe lessons was exemplary and students were open to speak about culture and cultural issues and even in the questionnaires they stated that they have co-students who are from different ethnic backgrounds and they do not see that as a problem. Where as in Bulgaria, most of the students even answered that they do not have classmates from other ethnicities which proves that they even deny the fact that other cultures exist which is one of the phases of ethnocentrism in Bennet's model of cultural competence for overcoming ethnocentrism and moving towards ethnorelativism.

#### **4.2.2 Teachers**

##### **4.2.2.1 Demographic parameters of the sample - teachers**

In table 1 below are shown the frequencies of the sample - teachers who had taken the survey in terms of place of living i.e. Macedonia or Bulgaria. From the results it can be seen that 19 surveys are filled in by teachers in Macedonia, whereas in Bulgaria 8 teachers were surveyed and the total number of teachers who have participated in this research is 27.

**Table 1.** Responded by country

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Macedonia	19	70.4	70.4	70.4
Valid	Bulgaria	8	29.6	29.6	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

In terms of gender 25 teachers are women and 2 teachers are men which is very often a mere fact in the sphere of education in the recent years (Appendix) .

In table 3 (appendix) below are shown the frequencies of the surveyed teachers according to age whereas the most frequent group of teachers is 30-39 if compared to the other age groups.

18 teachers have gained a university level diploma (VII degree) and 9 teachers have gained the title master.

**Table 4.** Responded by Education Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	University degree	18	66.7	66.7	66.7
Valid	Master degree	9	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

In table 5 in the appendix are shown the frequencies of the surveyed sample - teachers, according to the name of the institution and from here it can be seen that there is a proportional frequency for acquiring relevant and objective results.

Also, according to the results in table 6 it can be concluded that the relevance and objectivity is on a research level whereas 82% from the surveyed teachers have experience with students from different ethnic backgrounds.

**Table 6.** Do you teach students from different ethnic backgrounds?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	5	18.5	18.5	18.5
	Yes	22	81.5	81.5	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

In addition, the higher percentage of the surveyed teachers is 93% and shows that they are familiar with the term intercultural communication.

**Table 7.** Are you familiar with the term Intercultural Communication?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	1	3.7	3.7	3.7
Other	1	3.7	3.7	7.4
Valid Yes	25	92.6	92.6	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

#### 4.2.2. Distribution of variables in the research - teachers

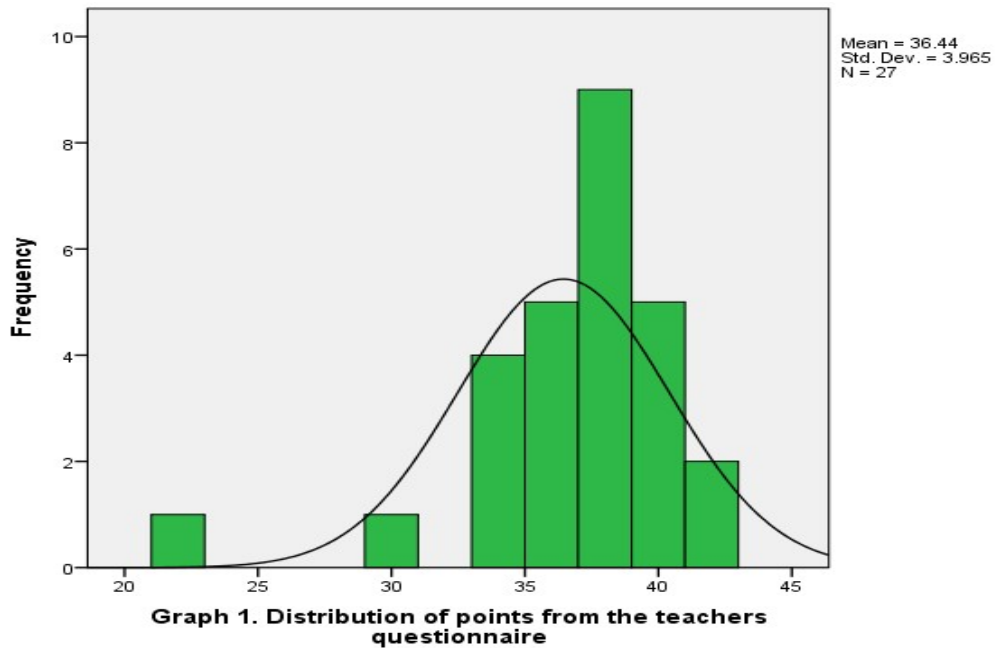
Table 8 shows the descriptive parameters of the variable - intercultural awareness of the teachers. According to these parameter i.e. the mean, median and mode (which are almost the same) it can be concluded that this distribution of intercultural awareness of the teachers has almost symmetric distribution (normal distribution), or in other words this psycho-social notion (the intercultural awareness among teachers) is known among the teachers, but a small number of the teachers still need more knowledge about this concept.

**Table 8.** Descriptive Statistics for  
points from the professors  
questionnaire

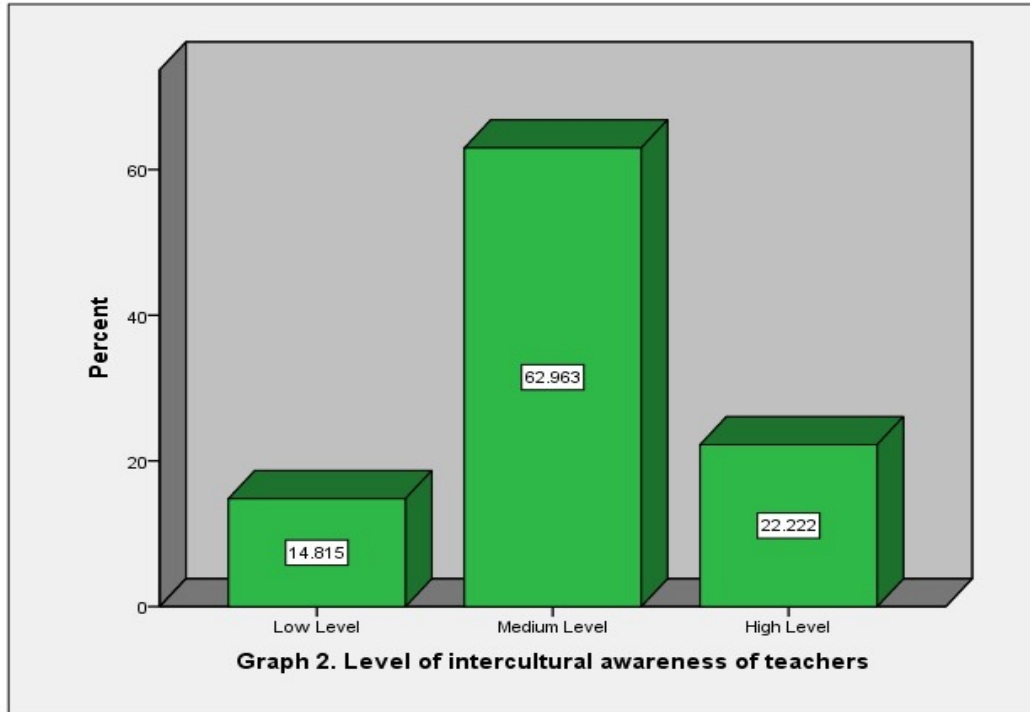
Mean	36.44
Median	37.00
Mode	37
Std. Deviation	3.965
Skewness	-1.945
Kurtosis	5.977
Minimum	22
Maximum	42

This table exposes the distribution of variables in this case considering the distribution of teacher's answers in the questionnaire. What can be seen in the table is whether the answers have normal i.e. symmetric distribution through the psycho-social notions according to the order of the median, mode and mean. According to the results, those parameters have almost the same value and this means that the teachers' answers have symmetric distribution and the standard deviation is 3.96. More precisely, it develops the results into positive and negative cases and in this case the answers are around the middle i.e. if there are positive answers there will be almost the same negative answers. The most precise answers are to be seen in the graph 1 below:





In order to summarize the answers from the teachers questionnaires, the results will be divided on three needed levels when the general frequencies occur and the level of intercultural awareness of teachers is as follows: 63% from the participants - the teachers have enough or medium level of intercultural awareness, 22% show higher level of intercultural awareness and 15% show lower level of intercultural awareness. These frequencies are shown in graph 2 below:



#### 4.2.3 Interpretation of hypotheses - conclusive statistics - teachers

In terms of the demographic information from the participants in this case the teachers, for the aim of this research the main question is raised, if there are differences in the level of intercultural awareness of the teachers from the two cities or countries. Another important question to be answered is if there is a big difference between the level of intercultural awareness among teachers in terms of gender, age and of course taking the main aim of the research if there is a difference taking into account if the teachers have experience with students from different ethnic backgrounds. For the purpose of this research and according to the main hypothesis, t-test (independent and ANOVA) is going to be use as a statistical method.

In table 10 in the fourth column are shown the mean differences of the intercultural awareness level of teachers according to the country of living and table 11 shows the coefficient of significant differences:

**Table10.** Difference between mean according to country

	Place	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Points Total Teachers	Macedoni a	19	36.26	4.318	.991
	Bulgaria	8	36.88	3.182	1.125

**Table 11.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means							
	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Points Total	-.360	25	.722	-.612	1.700	-4.112	2.889
Teachers	-.408	17.884	.688	-.612	1.499	-3.763	2.539

According to the coefficient of significance which is bigger from the second limit of possibility ( $0.722 > 0.05$ ), **it can be stated that there is no significant difference of the level of intercultural awareness in the two countries i.e. the level of intercultural awareness is not related with the country of living of the teachers in this research.** But it looks like the students of the two countries differed in their intercultural awareness. The reason for that might be the explanation that the students from Bulgaria who were part of this research were at their final stage of high-school studies i.e. mainly about 17 and 18 years old and this a time when they

prepare for university enrollment and do not pay too much attention to the school duties and consider themselves as adults. Another interesting explanation could be as mentioned before that some of them are still self-centered and ethnocentric and have to move from the phases of ethnocentrism such as: denial of existence of cultural differences, feeling superior towards other ethnicities, minimize the existence of different cultures in order to protect their culture towards the phases of ethnorelativism of acceptance, adaptation and integration i.e. to start interact comfortably with students from different cultures instead of denying that they are part of the education system.

Also, the differences of the intercultural awareness level is not related or determined in terms of gender, according to the coefficient of significance in table 13 column four ( $0.841 > 0.05$ ), or in other words **the intercultural awareness level is not determined in terms of gender of the teachers in this research.**

Moreover, the differences of interculturalism of the teachers is not related or determined by the educational level, according to the coefficient of significance in table 15 column four ( $0.265 > 0.05$ ) i.e. **the intercultural awareness level is not determined by the education level of the teachers in the two countries.**

**Table14.** Difference between mean according to gender

	Education Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Points Total Teachers	University degree	18	35.83	4.618	1.088
	Master degree	9	37.67	1.803	.601

**Table 15.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means							
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Points Total	-1.139	25	.265	-1.833	1.609	-5.148	1.481
Teachers	-1.475	24.171	.153	-1.833	1.243	-4.398	.732

On the other side, using t-test with ANOVA, in table 16 below are shown the mean frequencies of the level of intercultural awareness according to the age of the teachers in the two countries and in table 17 below in the last column are pointed out the two coefficients of significance and according to them there is a significant difference only in Macedonia ( $0.014 < 0.05$ ) significant for the second limit of possibility by 0.05 or in other words 95% of the sample shows statistical difference of the level of intercultural awareness particularly in Macedonia i.e. the group aged 60 and above and after this group follows behind the group aged 30-39 etc. In Bulgaria, the situation is different because of the different coefficient of significance which is ( $0.567 > 0.05$ ), **and this means that there is a big difference between the teachers in the two countries when speaking about the level of intercultural awareness in this research.**

**Table16.** Difference between mean according to age

Place	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Macedonia	22-29	1	34.00	.	.	.
	30-39	11	37.09	2.386	.719	35.49 38.69
	40-49	3	38.00	3.606	2.082	29.04 46.96
	50-59	2	27.50	7.778	5.500	-42.38 97.38
	60 and above	2	39.00	1.414	1.000	26.29 51.71
	Total	19	36.26	4.318	.991	34.18 38.34
Bulgaria	22-29	1	40.00	.	.	.
	30-39	2	37.50	.707	.500	31.15 43.85
	40-49	5	36.00	3.742	1.673	31.35 40.65
	Total	8	36.88	3.182	1.125	34.21 39.54

**Table 17.** Significance for mean difference - ANOVA

Place		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Macedonia	Between Groups	190.275	4	47.569	4.580	.014
	Within Groups	145.409	14	10.386		
	Total	335.684	18			
Bulgaria	Between Groups	14.375	2	7.188	.636	.567
	Within Groups	56.500	5	11.300		
	Total	70.875	7			

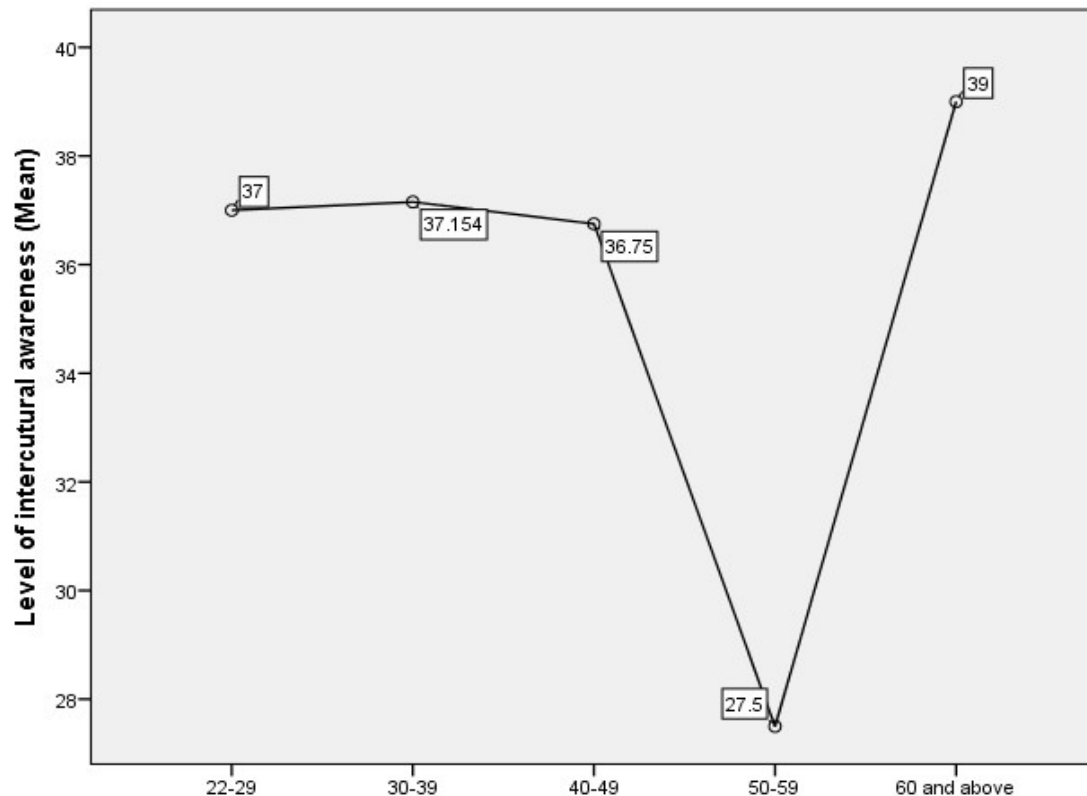
However, for the objectiveness of this research it is correct to show the post-hoc table (table 18) about the differences of the age groups for the Macedonian teachers.

<b>Table 18. Multiple Comparisons between groups</b>						
(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Differen. (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
22-29	30-39	-.154	2.444	1.000	-7.40	7.10
	40-49	.250	2.543	1.000	-7.30	7.80
	50-59	9.500	3.217	.051	-.05	19.05
	60 and above	-2.000	3.217	.970	-11.55	7.55
30-39	22-29	.154	2.444	1.000	-7.10	7.40
	40-49	.404	1.446	.999	-3.89	4.69
	50-59	9.654 <sup>*</sup>	2.444	.006	2.40	16.90
	60 and above	-1.846	2.444	.941	-9.10	5.40
40-49	22-29	-.250	2.543	1.000	-7.80	7.30
	30-39	-.404	1.446	.999	-4.69	3.89
	50-59	9.250 <sup>*</sup>	2.543	.011	1.70	16.80
	60 and above	-2.250	2.543	.900	-9.80	5.30
50-59	22-29	-9.500	3.217	.051	-19.05	.05
	30-39	-9.654 <sup>*</sup>	2.444	.006	-16.90	-2.40



	40-49	-9.250 *	2.543	.011	-16.80	-1.70
	60 and above	-11.500 *	3.217	.013	-21.05	-1.95
60 and above	22-29	2.000	3.217	.970	-7.55	11.55
	30-39	1.846	2.444	.941	-5.40	9.10
	40-49	2.250	2.543	.900	-5.30	9.80
	50-59	11.500 *	3.217	.013	1.95	21.05
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

This table serves as a proof for the statistical difference in terms of age i.e. it means that the first age category 20-29 there is no statistical difference according to the 5th column whereas in the second category 30-39 there is statistical difference if compared to the fourth category where as the 50-59 category has a statistical difference of 0.006. The most important statistical differences are shown in the graph 3 below:



**Graph 3. Level of intercultural awareness of teachers according to age**

In addition, the following t-test analysis which follows shows that there is no significant statistical difference between the teachers who have experience with students from different ethnic backgrounds and teachers who have experience with students from different ethnic backgrounds. The intercultural awareness level of teachers according to table 19 and 20 with coefficient bigger than the second limit of possibility ( $0.608 > 0.05$ ), confirms that **there is no significant statistical difference in the levels of intercultural awareness among teachers in terms of their experience with students from different ethnic backgrounds in the two countries in this research.**

**Table 19.** Difference between mean according to:

	Do you teach students from different ethnic backgrounds?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Points Total Teachers	No	5	35.60	2.074	.927
	Yes	22	36.64	4.293	.915

**Table 20.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

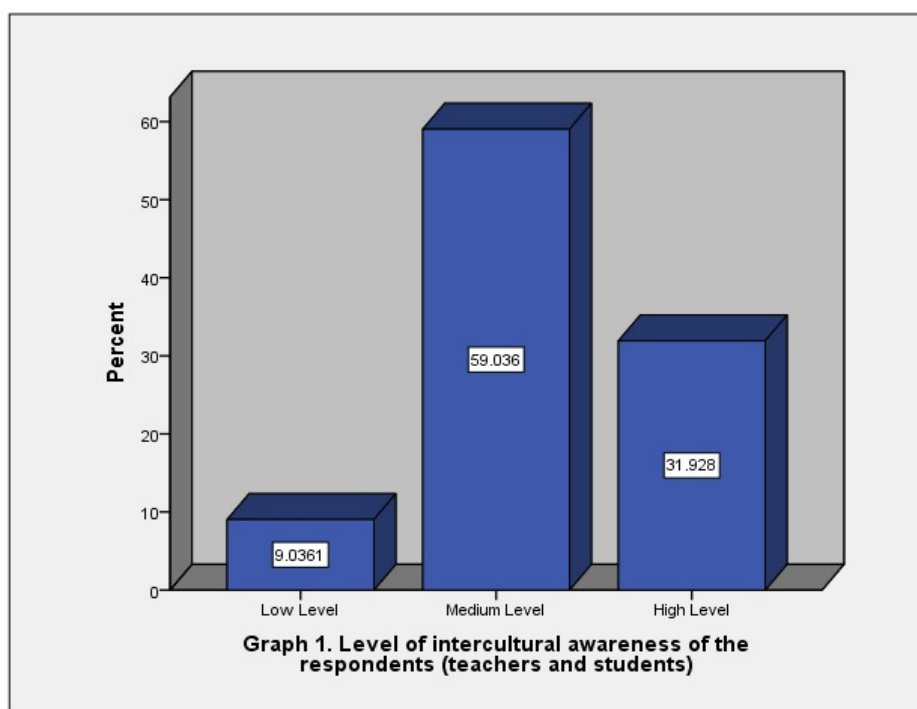
t-test for Equality of Means							
	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Points Total	-.520	25	.608	-1.036	1.992	-5.140	3.067
Teachers	-.795	13.204	.440	-1.036	1.303	-3.847	1.774

### 4.3. All Respondents

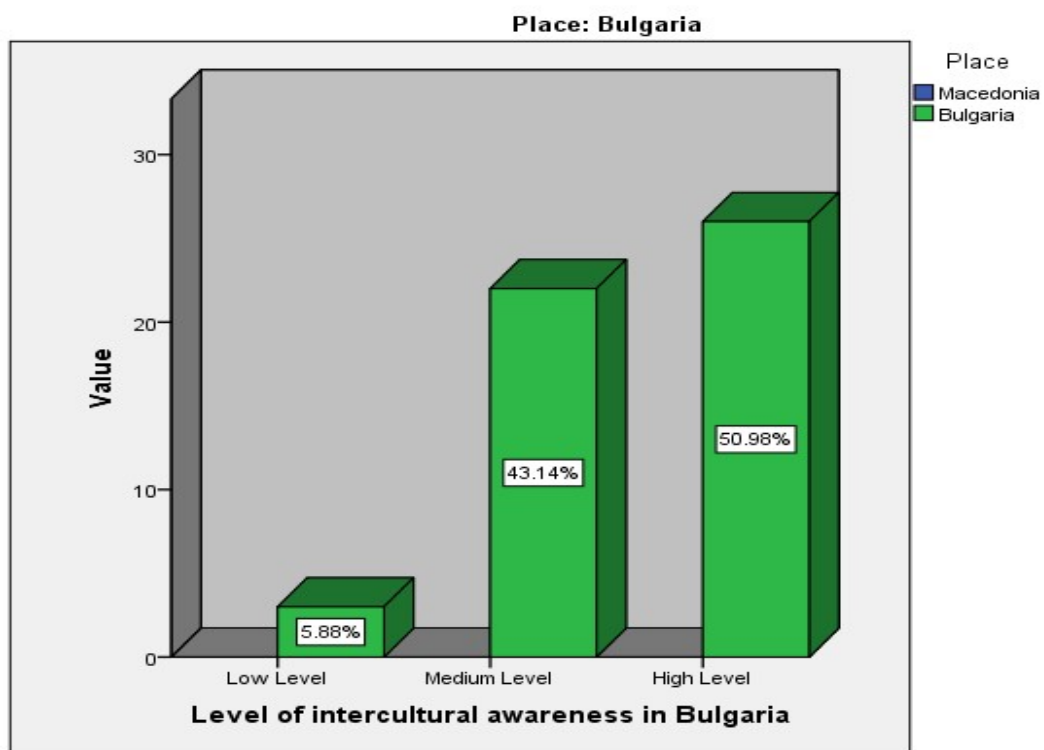
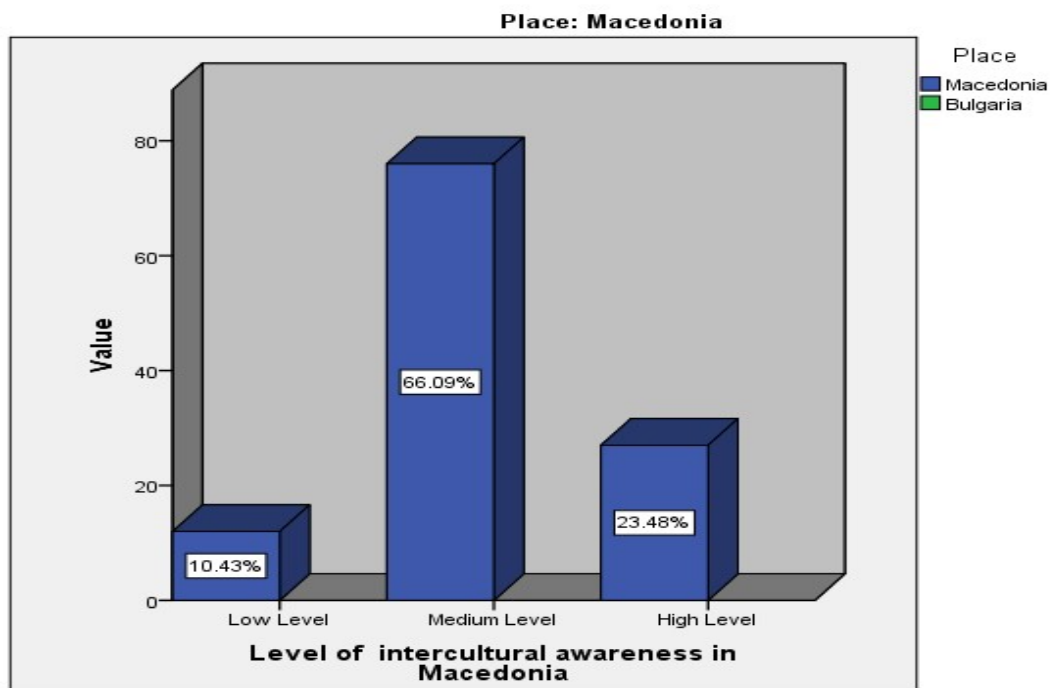
After the summarized and analyzed data, the total number of responds from the participants of this research (students and teachers), the survey shows and points out the level of intercultural communication awareness in general and according to the statistical parameters the intercultural awareness level will be divided into three needed levels thus general frequencies occur speaking about the intercultural awareness of the participants as shown in table 1 found in the appendix.

So, the research points out that 59% (98) participants show medium level of intercultural awareness, 31.9% (53) participants show high level of intercultural awareness, and 9% (15) participants show low level of intercultural awareness in the two countries.

These frequencies are shown graphically in the graph 1 below:



If the two countries are compared in terms of intercultural awareness, then in table 2 in the appendix, the differences can be seen:



If the t-test is used to provide the significance of these differences (speaking about the total number of teachers and students) than it can be underlined that there is statistical difference ( $0.001 < 0.01$ ) of the intercultural awareness level of the two countries as shown in table 3 and 4 below:

**Table 3.** Difference between mean by country

	Place	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Points Total All	Macedonia	115	34.23	3.707	.346
	Bulgaria	51	36.43	3.838	.537

**Table 4.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

t-test for Equality of Means							
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Points Total All	-3.484	164	.001	-2.197	.630	-3.441	-.952
	-3.438	92.955	.001	-2.197	.639	-3.466	-.928

Speaking in general, **the intercultural level is higher in Republic of Bulgaria if compared with Republic of Macedonia in this research in which teachers and students participated and the results show that the participants from Ruse - R. Bulgaria show a higher intercultural awareness in this research.**

The results can be confirmed by the data mentioned before considering the curricula and the number of lessons in English language per week which is much bigger than in Macedonia. Macedonian students have 3 lessons per week where as students in Bulgaria have 8 to 11 lessons per week and the number varies in accordance to the branch of high-school but still the number is much bigger then what we have in Macedonia. In the recent reforms in the curricula for construction technician in the state vocational schools in R.Macedonia, the number of lessons in English was cut to 2 lessons per week. Another change which was made was that students were not allowed to use the students' books as the rest of the branches of high-school but the teacher had to develop their own teaching materials starting with the English alphabet. This does not correspond to the level of studying English language considering the age and what had the student learned up to that point because learning English language for specific purposes requires upper-intermediate level in order to be able to follow the curricula. To sum up, I would add that our educational system in English as a foreign language must undergo reforms but they should be in accordance to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and mainly towards the needs of the students in order to be more competitive within the workforce.

## 5. Discussion of the results

- ❖ 58.3% (81) from the participants - students have medium level of intercultural awareness if compared with 33.8% (47) participants with high level of intercultural awareness and 7.9% (11) who have low level of intercultural awareness in this research.
- ❖ In Republic of Macedonia, the students have higher intercultural awareness if compared with the students from Bulgaria in this research. This can be the case because the participants from Bulgaria were at their final years of high-school and in that period they usually prepare for applying to universities or as a recent trend they seek for migrating opportunities if they do not plan to go to university.
- ❖ There is no significant difference of the level of intercultural awareness of the students in terms of gender.
- ❖ There is significant statistical difference of the intercultural awareness level of the students according to age i.e. students who are 15-16 aged show higher intercultural awareness if compared to students who are 17-18 aged in Republic of Bulgaria compared with the students from Republic of Macedonia where there is no statistical significant difference in terms of age in this research.
- ❖ There is significant statistical difference of the intercultural level of students according to the level of learning English language i.e. students who study English on a pre-intermediate level show higher intercultural awareness if compared to the students who study English on higher levels in Bulgaria whereas in Macedonia there is no statistical difference in terms of the level of learning English.
- ❖ There is significant statistical difference in terms of the level of intercultural awareness if the question „Do have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds" is taken into account whereas the students who have answered this question positively show higher intercultural awareness apart from those who have negatively answered the question in Republic of Bulgaria. As mentioned before denying the presence of other cultures is one of the Bennett's phases of ethnocentrism. Students in Bulgaria have to move from this phase by recognizing the presence of other cultures without prejudice and start communicating with them in order to



come to the final phase of ethnorelativism i.e. the integration. The case in Republic of Macedonia is different where this question makes no significant statistical difference in this research.

- ❖ 63% of the participants - teachers have medium level of intercultural awareness, 22% show high level of intercultural awareness and 15% show low level of intercultural awareness.

- ❖ There is no significant statistical difference of the level of intercultural awareness of teachers in the two countries i.e. the level of intercultural awareness is not connected to the country of living in this research when speaking about the teachers.

- ❖ The level of intercultural awareness of teachers is not determined by gender in this research speaking about the two countries.

- ❖ The level of intercultural awareness is not determined by the education level of the teachers in the two countries

- ❖ There is a significant statistical difference of the two countries when speaking about the country R. Macedonia where the teacher's age determines the level of intercultural awareness in this research.

- ❖ There is no significant statistical difference of the level of intercultural awareness according to the teachers' experience with students from different ethnic backgrounds. The intercultural level is higher in Republic of Bulgaria if compared with the teachers from Republic of Macedonia in this research where the participants are students and teachers from Republic of Bulgaria (city Ruse) and Republic of Macedonia (city Strumica) in this research. The reason for that is the fact the R.Bulgaria is part of the European Union and teachers have easier access to European projects and are willing to participate in them. Some of the project in which teachers and students from the high-school "Geo Milev" from Ruse have participated are: „YEPS – Young Europeans Propose Solutions” (2014-2016), “GROWW – Get Ready for the Opportunities of World of Work” (2016 – 2018). Those projects were oriented towards identification of local and global challenges of the young people today and how to find solutions for them. Through these projects the students had the chance to improve their social and cultural competence, their cooperative skills for solving problems in groups. One of the biggest benefits they acquired from this projects were the cooperating between the school

teams and the creation of the final innovative products. Another activity which happened abroad was the transnational YEPS meeting which happened in Lappeenranta, Finland where all six partner schools came together to work on the final activities on the project. During the project all partner schools worked on the final product of the project – a portfolio of files presenting the project's development and activities. The experiences the teachers have shared expressed the feelings of satisfaction due to the fact that they have learned a lot about the educational systems in other countries such as the fact that students in Turkey express their problems and feelings with their teachers and most of the school subjects are optional and not obligatory.

Through these projects Bulgarian students and teachers have the chance to find out what are the differences and similarities between the European countries and cooperating with international groups actually develops their intercultural competence and other strategies and skills that will prepare them for their future careers and the international market.

## **6. Conclusion**

Intercultural communication is becoming essential part of the education system nowadays because of globalization, immigration and the multicultural work environments. The need for training, knowledge and research in this field is increasing because of the recent trends in education. The prime aim of this dissertation is to increase teacher's awareness in terms of intercultural communication in order to achieve better results in teaching English as a foreign language. Another purpose of this research would be to prove that students from different backgrounds can achieve very good results in English as a foreign language if they are appreciated, not discriminated or stereotyped.

The hypothesis and aims were proved through questionnaires with students and teachers, involved in the education system of students from different ethnic backgrounds. My prediction that teachers need support and professional development related to intercultural communication is confirmed with this research. The fact that the teachers from Bulgaria show

higher intercultural awareness compared to the teachers in Macedonia confirms this premise. The fact that R. Bulgaria is part of the European Union gives more opportunities to teachers to be part of European projects such as Erasmus+. These projects are also available in Republic of Macedonia, but still the institutions in the surrounding of Strumica have not participated a lot.

The reason for that is the lack of information and knowledge considering the application process of these projects. A very interesting study by Young and Sachdev (2011) investigated the intercultural communicative competence views of language teachers from the US, UK, and France in terms of [Byram's 1997] ICC [intercultural communicative competence] model" (p. 86). It was identified that there is a connection between intercultural communicative competence and the attributes of both successful language learners and language teachers. More precisely, they found a discrepancy between instructors' who expressed intercultural communicative competence beliefs and attitudes and their classroom priorities. Finally it was still obvious that they are somehow ill equipped or somewhat unwilling to implement an intercultural approach in their own classrooms. They cited a lack of learner interest, curricular support, suitable textbook material, intercultural communicative competence testing materials, and confidence in addressing difficult topics which applies for the situation in the Republic of Macedonia and the city of Strumica.

With this dissertation, I want to convince the people involved in the education process that intercultural communication competence is needed, but should be learned and implemented in the teaching-learning process and of course previously in the curriculum but in more thorough way. In some of the answers of the questionnaires mainly by teachers, some subjectivity can be noticed. This can be further proved with in-depth analysis and lesson observations but it is very difficult to achieve this due to the lack of interest and cooperation of the teachers.

One study conducted by OSCE (2010) in the Republic of Macedonia found out that nearly half of the students who were part of that research had heard insulting comments made by their teachers regarding other ethnic groups. The study confirms that teachers are the biggest school factors that affect on the attitude of the students. Teachers are the ones who need to acquire positive moral values of respect and cooperation. The results in the study

indicate that 40% of the students' attitude is affected by what the teachers say. Other factors are related with some of the notions that appear such as the school management, the influence of political parties and of course cultural differences (January, 2010). Another factor of attitude formation influence are the classmates. In that study 40% of the students stated that they feel pressure from their classmates of the same ethnic group not to socialize with other ethnic groups especially the Albanians. This experience is related to having negative feelings towards the Albanians and not the Macedonian and Turks. The students in my surrounding seem that they do not have negative feelings towards Turks. This can be concluded from all the observations made, their participation in inter-ethnic projects and of course their answers in the questionnaires. The final factor for attitude formation of the students are the textbooks. Even though only a small percentage of the respondents stated that textbooks can influence the students in their attitude 40% of the students from the Turks and the Albanians stated that the books they use do not represent their ethnic group in an adequate way. This is the case since many years ago where in the old books in Macedonian language a lot of negative notions towards the Turks are mentioned throughout poetry and prose. Compared with the research for intercultural communication cognition of teachers and students in Strumica and Ruse, this research was made with students aged between 6 and 14 years old and in this age parents tend to be the most significant factor in creating awareness. The research unfortunately confirms the negative feelings Macedonian students have towards the Albanian students especially when speaking about male students. To sum up, even though prejudice is on a high level in this research which was made in 2010, in the present days if compared to the results in this research it can be stated that the situation is a little bit better. There are still components that have to be improved such as teacher training programs, improving the school curricula in every school subject and finally the monoculture school policies which still occur in R. Macedonia. Finally, the English language teachers who want to raise their intercultural competence should consider the following tips:

- ❖ Follow the recent trends of intercultural communication of teachers all the time
- ❖ They as teachers should make the students become aware that stereotypes should disappear and the system of values will have some potential of making the students understand that this world can be a peaceful place to live in
- ❖ Improvement inter-ethnic relations but firstly with education of the parents, then the students and of course more trainings for the teachers
- ❖ Skillful teachers are crucial for the achievement of this proposed framework of intercultural competence

## **7. Recommendation for activities and further research**

Developed countries have evidence that intercultural communication competence is needed in education. English language teachers in this research were partially interested in taking part in the research mainly because this is something new to them. Even though most of the teachers stated that they have knowledge in intercultural communication, the final results showed that R. Bulgaria is a step ahead if compared to R. Macedonia. One of the reasons are the European projects in which Bulgarian teachers participate a lot while in Macedonia again this is something which is done not so often. Find some data about projects Bulgarian education is granted or can work on so it can be a potential aim for Macedonian education as well.

Accomplishing multicultural understanding in the schools in Strumica is something which is achievable but still the systematic development of intercultural communicative competence teaching objectives, lesson plans, and assessment methods is limited to some extent. Maybe, the needed lesson plans for fulfilling the intercultural communication goal is not being addressed in a profound way. What teachers need is more training and curricula in which inclusion of intercultural communication aims are found. However, if teachers want to be successful in fulfilling the intercultural aims they should have developed their own cultural

identity first before being able to facilitate the development of intercultural communicative competence in their learners (Bennett, 1998; Knutson, 2006). Bennett's (1993) DMIS model is a useful way to make teachers become aware of their own culture recognition having in mind the stages that move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. A very useful way to make students feel free to discuss cultural matters is to teach them how to avoid stereotypes, be sympathetic and be able to put themselves in the shoes of the other. Students' books are not well equipped with cultural topics but the teachers can always develop the students' intercultural communication competence by making the students share their own knowledge, views, experiences, literature about their culture. Cultural differences should not be taken as an issue in the English language classroom but totally the opposite they should create a relaxing atmosphere by letting the students address different cultures as something normal.

## **8. Implications for Professional Development**

The English language teachers in this study said that they are acquainted with intercultural communication competence. On the other hand, the research also implies that the teachers' knowledge is mainly based on what they have studied at university, do not follow the recent trends of intercultural communication and do not pay so much attention to social issues in the classroom. Teachers will probably look for chances to additionally upgrade their own intercultural communication competence. Teachers can increase their competences if they have access to training in the field of intercultural communication, European projects aimed at learning and meeting people from other cultures for making the intercultural experience close to them along with intercultural materials, coordinating intercultural exercises during lessons and being able to evaluating the intercultural skill in students as well. There are a lot of opportunities for receiving grants for doing different activities with students and teachers. This can be done through e-twinning projects which are actually about partnerships with schools and most of the activities are online but in English language. Another educational program is "Comenius" and includes initiatives in the sphere of education on all levels and are about doing

projects with different European schools and also offer mobility of teachers abroad. In this way, the level of education can be improved i.e. by learning and applying European practices in the education in our surrounding and sharing the acquired experience and knowledge with the colleagues. Erasmus+ key actions are a great opportunity for educational institutions to receive grants and do projects and partnerships with European schools but as I mentioned before there must be a bigger initiative from the teachers and of course those initiatives have to be supported by the school policy.

In addition, it can be concluded that intercultural competence could only be achieved through intercultural education. It "does not aim to give knowledge about whole cultures ... above all, it focuses on ways to discover cultural differences and the opportunities to deal with them by using our knowledge to act adequately in intercultural situations. In other words, it is about achieving intercultural competence, which is conceived as a variety of social and communicative competence "(Roth and Roth, 2007).

The intercultural approach of learning a foreign language will enable young people to go deeper into other cultures and lifestyles, expand their horizons, and help overcome personal and global constraints. In an era of globalization and internationalization, this is very more important. Today, understanding and communication gain new essence, and culture is at the center of attention. Learning languages and cultures is an enriching experience for everyone. Mastering skills for intercultural/inter-language mediation, i.e. the development of intercultural competency among students is a challenge - a challenge to Macedonian education and a perspective for every education in the world.

## **9. Limitations of the research**

There is no perfect research and every research can be improved at some point. That is why limitations are always seen after each research. Even though this research consisted of a small sample of participants, my perception is that it has shown interesting results. It is surprising that in R. Bulgaria, students who are at their final years of studies have shown lower

level of intercultural awareness. I would justify this with the fact that at the final years of high-school, students in Bulgaria show lack of interest about studying any subject simply because they feel like they are becoming adults and have other interests. Still, the educational system is different than the system in R. Macedonia when it comes to applying for university. Students need to prepare for an entrance exam connected to the field of study they want to enroll. They also have the state matura exam but this is followed with exams for entering the university. Teachers in Bulgaria on the other hand have shown higher level of intercultural awareness because of the many factors mentioned above such as European projects, etc. If this study is conducted within a larger sample, having participants from all around the country of Macedonia and Bulgaria, it may have provided more thorough results considering the students and the teachers. Panel discussions with teachers, individual interviews with people involved in education and more classroom observation would have given better justification of some peculiar situations such as answering the question "yes, I have knowledge in intercultural communication" and then insulting the students from other ethnic backgrounds. Bennett's model of intercultural competence should be seriously discussed and studied in order to overcome Ethnocentrism and move towards Ethnorelativism. This can be done through a lot of assessment using questionnaires and readymade instruments such as Chen and Starosta instrument, GENE (Generalized Ethnocentrism) Scale and Personal Report of Intercultural Communication Apprehension (PRICA) which can be found in the appendices and can be used for future research. Neuliep and McCroskey (1997) developed a generalized ethnocentrism scale (GENE) as a way of measurement of the cultural awareness i.e. they wanted to assess how individuals feel regarding their own culture. The scale was modified and adapted for examining people's ethnocentric views by a number of communication researchers. The GENE is a valid measurement of ethnocentrism that may be experienced by anyone, regardless of culture.



## **10. Future goals**

When a person has chosen a career of a teacher it means that they need to dedicate their lives and make a positive impact on their student's life. All of this can be done with adequate competences of the recent trends of intercultural communication. It is said that children are brought at home but they as students can learn a lot from the teacher's behavior. If the teacher behaves without having any prejudice and makes students become aware of the facts that stereotypes should disappear than this system of values will have some potential of making the students become aware that this world can be a peaceful place to live in. What is needed in the Macedonian system is improving inter-ethnic relations but firstly with education of the parents, then the students and of course more trainings for the teachers. Skillful teachers are crucial for the achievement of this proposed framework of intercultural competence.

Obviously, it cannot be only relied upon the teachers to exclusively beat the test of the ethnic pressures that Macedonia faces. The whole society needs to advance and to change the future of Macedonia. Nonetheless, educators are key specialists for the improvements that should be made. The manner in which teachers in the Republic of Macedonia do their duty is vital for the youngsters of today who are the hope of the future who may change the view of the society and live their lives without the bounds of the cultural prejudices and stereotypes.

## **11. How to improve the situation**

Different aspects of intercultural communication were looked into within the dissertation and with this final chapter I would like to propose some activities of how to improve the situation i.e., what activities can help the English language teachers to include the intercultural content in the English language teaching and learning:

- Organizing workshops and trainings for the teachers which will provide useful information, knowledge of how to include the intercultural competence in the English language lessons
- Share ideas with colleagues and organize meetings and open lessons for mutual learning

- Taking part into European projects such as Erasmus+ and other European projects which are accessible in our country
- Visiting some English language speaking country or meeting native speakers who can help teachers learn about their culture such as Peace Corps volunteers
- Strengthening the intercultural competence in all aspects of the teacher's professional development
- Organizing intercultural events with the students for raising the awareness of different cultures

The role of intercultural education is to prepare to students to act internationally and the teachers should be ready to implement this component in their everyday teaching by using the prescribed books and of course additional authentic and non-authentic materials from the Internet. Some of the proposed pedagogical approaches according to (Suneetha & Sundravalli, 2011) are the following:

➤ information knowledge approach

In this approach the students are acquainted with information about historical, cultural, economic, social and political issues. While reading this material, students can develop understanding about other people's beliefs, traditions and culture. By allowing them to think critically and do discussions rather than simply doing traditional lectures, students enhance their skills for communication. Some the activities that can help in implementing this approach are:

- reading biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi
- reading historical novels such *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy
- reading British and American literature novels and poetry
- reading books connected to the culture of the students

➤ area stimulation approach

This approach is mainly oriented towards doing role-plays of real-life situations from which students can find themselves in a specific environment while interacting with a foreigner, a native speaker or chat online with people from different countries. By doing this, students can get a bigger understanding of the different culture by participating in a situation or interacting with someone from another culture. This can be done with interaction with foreigners, role-play of different characters representing different cultures, online chats with people from different countries.

➤ group encounters

Meeting people from another ethnicity or country while a group activity or a discussion can develop interaction between students from different ethnicities which leads to a more flexible behavior towards the cultures different than theirs. Discussing some interesting topics of different cultures will help the students learn more about different cultures and learn how to respect and appreciate each culture building trust and interdependence.

➤ communication theory approach

This approach focuses on finding ways of interaction in a given cultural system. Using the communication models various communication situations are practiced through analysis of encoding and decoding process.

➤ programmed approach

Following a programmed learning material is the core of this approach. It represents a strategy which is individual and systematic within the classroom where emphasis on the cognitive learning is put. This is usually done with a culture assimilator: through which a specific information about a certain culture is transmitted to people from another culture.

➤ games and exercises

This is a very important way for creating empathy in intercultural situations through a game when learners are put into a real life situations. What follows after the game is a discussion. This can be done through different activities such as showing a video showing contrasting cultures and then some questions are to be answered. For example, are these items visible or hidden: facial expressions, gestures, ideas about modesty, literature. Another interesting activity may be to ask the students where does their name come from where each student will narrate a story connected to the culture of the family which also creates feelings of empathy and acceptance of the culture different than theirs.

Finally, it can be summed up that it is essential to emphasize that the improvement of the current situation in the Republic of Macedonia regarding the implementation of intercultural communication competence in the process of learning and teaching English language is vital because it is not acceptable for teachers to neglect the culture component for any reason. Teachers have an important and responsible task to influence the building of the personality of the young people they teach. Teachers should encourage awareness among their students, above all, of their own culture so that they can then understand the foreign culture and learn to appreciate both the similarities, but also the differences between their culture and the other cultures as well. Intercultural education today needs to be an integral part of general education. Its global goal is the ability to achieve tolerant communication with people on the other cultural community, in particular - the ability to intercultural communication. If we understand the upbringing in a broad sense as a preparation for life, the schools must try to deal with the emerging tasks in the numerous intercultural situations with representatives of other cultures and societies. If these meetings still occur at a young age, the schools must take advantage of them to prepare the students for future intercultural communication goals. This could best be achieved through making the connection between the different languages and cultures on educational basis.

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**List of appendixes:**

1. A survey for English language teachers assessing Intercultural Communication Competence
2. A survey for secondary school students aimed at assessing Intercultural Communication Competence
3. Cultural Interview Questions for my students:
4. Classroom Observation Protocol
5. Tables
6. GENE (Generalized Ethnocentrism) Scale
7. Personal Report of Intercultural Communication Apprehension (PRICA)

# A survey for English language teachers assessing Intercultural Communication Competence

Dear colleagues,

Within the next months, I will be conducting a research in the field of English Language Teaching and Intercultural Communication. The purpose of this study is to investigate what is the level of intercultural communication understanding of the English language teachers in the high-schools in Strumica (compared to one language high-school in Bulgaria – "Geo Milev" from Ruse). The Intercultural communication competence will be a central phenomenon in this study and the responses will stay anonymous. You will need no more that 20 minutes to fill in this survey.

Thank you in advance,  
Natka Jankova

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## Demographic information about the teachers

1. What is your gender?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

2. What age are you?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 22-29  
☐ 30-39  
☐ 40-49  
☐ 50-59  
☐ 60 and above

3. What is your education level?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ University degree  
☐ Masters degree  
☐ PhD degree

4. At which level of education do you teach? *Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Primary  
☐ Secondary  
☐ Tertiary

5. What is the name of your institution?

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6. Do you teach students from different ethnic backgrounds?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

7. Are you familiar with the term Intercultural Communication? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

## Investigating English teachers' perceptions of Intercultural Competence

8. Do you think teachers and students need to possess knowledge in IC and ICC? \* Intercultural communication (IC) is the communication among those people who belong to different cultures -IC provides people with different ways of thinking, seeing, hearing and interpreting the world; ICC - "An interculturally competent speaker of a foreign language possesses both communicative competence in that language as well as particular skills, attitudes, values and knowledge about a culture"

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

9. As an ELT, how truly open are you to the students from different cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds?

For example, Roma, Turkish, Albanian or students who are immigrants. *Check all that apply.*

- ☐ I accept them equally as the rest of the students  
☐ I feel uncertain about students from different backgrounds.  
☐ I am neutral to them.  
☐ I am open but not so much.  
☐ I do not accept them at all.

10. Do you make quick assumptions about a student? Do you prejudge students or situations, or do you withhold judgments about them? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

11. Do you measure a student's behaviour based on your own culturally conditioned expectations or do you try to understand a student's behaviour based on his or her own culturally conditioned background? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

12. Do you value students from different ethnic backgrounds? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

13. Are you eager to learn about different cultures and, specifically, are you eager to learn about your students' backgrounds and experiences? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

14. How much do you know about your students' cultural backgrounds? Are you missing any information and how can you get that information?

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15. How much do you really listen to your students?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very much  
☐ A little  
☐ Somewhat  
☐ Not so much  
☐ I do not listen to them at all

16. Do you engage in active reflection with the classmates from different cultural backgrounds? Do you seek to understand why something occurred and what lessons can be learned from the situation? \*  
*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

17. Are you able to be flexible in responding to your classmates' learning needs, seeking to understand those needs from their cultural perspectives? \*  
*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

18. Do you need more knowledge in Intercultural Communication? \* *Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

### Investigating the level of intercultural communication awareness of ELTs

19. Can you easily view knowledge, cultural artifacts or a situation or issue from multiple perspectives?  
*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

20. Are you aware that that other cultures exist in our society and do you have a limited contact with students and people from different ethnic backgrounds?  
*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

21. Do you form negative prejudice for students from different ethnic backgrounds? *Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

22. Do you think that simple awareness towards students from different cultures is enough to accept them in the society?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

23. Have you ever felt that after a certain period of time you begin to accept to some extent the students from different ethnic backgrounds?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

24. Do you feel empathy towards students from different ethnic backgrounds when they are in trouble?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

25. Do you think that students from different ethnic backgrounds are an integral part of our culture? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

### How can you improve the current situation

26. How culturally appropriate have you been in your interactions with your students? How would your students answer this question? \*

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27. What would you do differently in the future to be more appropriate and effective in your communication and behavior? \*

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## A survey for secondary school students aimed at assessing Intercultural Communication Competence

Dear students,

Within the next months, I will be conducting a research in the field of English Language Teaching and Intercultural Communication. The purpose of this study is to investigate what is the level of intercultural communication cognition of the English language teachers in the high-schools in Strumica (compared to one language high-school in Bulgaria – "Geo Milev" from Ruse). The Intercultural communication competence will be a central phenomenon in this study and the responses will stay anonymous. You will need no more that 20 minutes to fill in this survey.

Thank you in advance,  
Natka Jankova

---

### Demographic information about the students

1. What is your gender?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

2. What age are you?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 15-16  
☐ 17-18  
☐ Other

3. What year do you study in?

4. What is your level in  
English language?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Pre-intermediate  
☐ Intermediate  
☐ Advanced

5. What is the name of the school you study in?

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6. Do have classmates from different ethnic backgrounds?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

7. Are you familiar with the term Intercultural Communication? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

## Investigating English teachers' perceptions of Intercultural Competence

8. Do you think teachers and students need to possess knowledge in IC and ICC? \*

*Intercultural communication (IC) is the communication among those people who have so different cultural references that they perceive themselves as pertaining to different cultures - IC provides people with different ways of thinking, seeing, hearing and interpreting the world; ICC - "An interculturally competent speaker of a foreign language possesses both communicative competence in that language as well as particular skills, attitudes, values and knowledge about a culture"*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

9. Are you open towards classmates from different cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds? For example, Roma, Turkish, or students who are immigrants.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ I accept them equally as the rest of the students  
☐ I feel uncertain about students from different backgrounds.  
☐ I am neutral to them.  
☐ I am open but not so much.  
☐ I do not accept them at all.



10. Do you make quick assumptions about a student from different ethnic backgrounds? Do you prejudge students or situations, or do you withhold judgments about them? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

11. Do you measure a classmates' behaviour based on your own culturally conditioned expectations or do you try to understand a student's behaviour based on his or her own culturally conditioned background? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

12. Do you value students from different ethnic backgrounds? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

13. Are you eager to learn about different cultures and, specifically, are you eager to learn about your students' backgrounds and experiences? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

14. How much do you know about your classmates' cultural backgrounds? Are you missing any information and how can you get that information?

15. How much do you really listen to your classmates from different ethnic backgrounds?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Very much  
☐ A little  
☐ Somehow  
☐ Not so much  
☐ I do not listen to them at all

16. Do you engage in active reflection on your teaching practice and on your interactions with those from different cultural backgrounds? Do you seek to understand why something occurred and what lessons can be learned from the situation? \*
- Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

17. Are you able to be flexible in responding to students' learning needs, seeking to understand those needs from their cultural perspectives? \*
- Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

18. Do you need training in the field of Intercultural Communication? \*
- Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

### Investigating the level of intercultural communication awareness of ELTs

19. Can you easily view knowledge, cultural artifacts or a situation or issue from multiple perspectives?
- Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

20. Are you aware that that other cultures exist in our society and do you have a limited contact with students and people from different ethnic backgrounds?
- Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

21. Do you tend to form negative stereotypes for students from different ethnic backgrounds?
- Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Other

### **Appendix No 3. Cultural Interview Questions for my students:**

1. What is your definition of “culture?”
2. How do you define “family?”
3. Who holds the most “status” in your family? Why?
4. How do you define success?
5. Do you consider your parents to be successful?
6. How important is education in your family?
7. Is punctuality important to you? Why or why not?
8. What is the most important meal of the day?
9. Do you eat foods that are indigenous to your culture? Why or why not? If you answered yes, name some of the foods that you eat. If you answered no, what types of foods do you eat?
10. Did you ever live with your grandparents or extended family?
11. How important is religion in your family? Why ?
12. If religion is important in your family, do you plan to pass this on to your children? Why or why not?
13. Are the roles of men and women specifically defined in your family? If so, what are they?
14. Do you have any eating habits/rituals that are specific to your culture?

15. Define and describe the most important (or most celebrated) holiday of your culture.
16. How is physical contact viewed in your culture?
17. What is considered most disrespectful in your culture?
18. What is considered most respectful in your culture?
19. Have you ever experienced racism? In what form?
20. What can be done about racism and prejudice, in your opinion?

**Faculty of Foreign Languages**  
**The English Teaching Practicum and Practice**

**1. PRE OBSERVATION DATA**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Level \_\_\_\_\_

Observer \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Time Observed: \_\_\_\_\_

**(Fill this out prior to observing classes.)**

Class period or time of class: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic or topics: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement of class or lesson within the unit of study:

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Purpose (objectives):

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Intended outcomes:

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Materials Used (teacher-made, manufactured, district or department-developed;  
characterization of materials):

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How students will be assessed (for this lesson):

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## 2. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

**(Fill this out as you are observing classes.)**

Introduction to Lesson: provides introduction/motivation/"invitation"; explains activity and how it relates to previous lessons; assesses students' prior knowledge

Student Grouping \_\_\_\_\_ Duration \_\_\_\_\_

**First Activity/Task:** Content; nature of activity, what students doing, what teacher doing; interactions.

Student Grouping \_\_\_\_\_ Duration \_\_\_\_\_

**Second Activity/Task:** Content; nature of activity, what students doing, what teacher doing; interactions.

Student Grouping \_\_\_\_\_ Duration \_\_\_\_\_

**Third Activity/Task:** Content; nature of activity, what students doing, what teacher doing; interactions.

Student Grouping \_\_\_\_\_ Duration \_\_\_\_\_

State whether activities are sequential or are different activities/tasks done at the same time:

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### **3. OTHER OBSERVATIONAL DATA**

**(Fill this out as you are observing classes.)**

1 -Description of the classroom:

2 -Teaching aids/materials (per activity/task if appropriate):

3 -Assessment strategies used (per activity/task if appropriate):

4 - Time not devoted to teaching and nature of non-academic or procedural activity (e.g., management, announcements, discipline); description of non-instructional event :

### **4. REFLECTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

(Fill this out as soon as possible after the classroom visit and use more space/ pages for interpretation)

**1** - Overall, what happened during the classroom observation (e.g., which method was the teacher using and how effective was its implementation)?

**2** - What didn't happen (e.g., students didn't grasp the idea of the lesson)?

**3** - Alternative ways instructor might have handled the lesson/question/ situation:

**4** - Characterize students and their attitudes toward the subject matter and the teacher:

**5** - Notable non-verbal behavior:

**6** - Surprises/ concerns, especially related to the program goals (e.g., the teacher didn't appear to be using a particular method):



## Appendix No 5. Tables

Table 2. Responses by Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Male	2	7.4	7.4	7.4
Valid	Female	25	92.6	92.6	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table 3.** Responses by country and age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	22-29	2	7.4	7.4	7.4
	30-39	13	48.1	48.1	55.6
	40-49	8	29.6	29.6	85.2
Valid	50-59	2	7.4	7.4	92.6
	60 and above	2	7.4	7.4	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table 5.** Respondents according to Name Institution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dimitar Vlahov	4	14.8	14.8	14.8
	Geo Milev - Ruse	8	29.6	29.6	44.4
	Jane Sandanski	7	25.9	25.9	70.4
	Nikola Karev	8	29.6	29.6	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table 9.** Level of intercultural awareness of teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low Level	4	14.8	14.8	14.8
	Medium Level	17	63.0	63.0	77.8
	High Level	6	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table12.** Difference between mean according to gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Points Total Teachers	Male	2	37.00	1.414	1.000
	Female	25	36.40	4.113	.823

**Table 13.** Significance for mean difference - Independent Samples Test

	t-test for Equality of Means						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Points	.202	25	.841	.600	2.969	-5.514	6.714
Total Teachers	.463	2.759	.677	.600	1.295	-3.733	4.933

**Table 1.** Level of intercultural awareness for all respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low Level	15	9.0	9.0	9.0
	Medium Level	98	59.0	59.0	68.1
	High Level	53	31.9	31.9	100.0
	Total	166	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2.** Level of intercultural awareness for all respondents according to country

Place		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Macedonia	Valid	Low Level	12	10.4	10.4
		Medium Level	76	66.1	76.5
		High Level	27	23.5	100.0
		Total	115	100.0	
Bulgaria	Valid	Low Level	3	5.9	5.9
		Medium Level	22	43.1	49.0
		High Level	26	51.0	100.0
		Total	51	100.0	

## 6. GENE (Generalized Ethnocentrism) Scale

**Directions :** The GENE Scale is composed of 22 statements, concerning your feelings about your culture and other cultures. In the space provided to the left of each item, indicate the degree to which the statement applies to you by marking whether you (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) are neutral, (2) disagree, or (1) strongly disagree with the statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Some of the statements are similar. Remember, everyone experiences some degree of ethnocentrism. Work quickly and record your first response.

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Most other cultures are backward compared to my culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. My culture should be the role model for other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. People from other cultures act strange when they come into my culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Lifestyles in other cultures are just as valid as those in my culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Other cultures should try to be more like my culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. I'm not interested in the values and customs of other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. People in my culture could learn a lot from people of other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. Most people from other cultures just don't know what's good for them.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. I respect the values and customs of other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. Other cultures are smart to look up to our culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 11. Most people would be happier if they lived like people in my culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 12. I have many friends from other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 13. People in my culture have just about the best lifestyles of anywhere.
- \_\_\_\_ 14. Lifestyles in other cultures are not as valid as those in my culture.
- \_\_\_\_ 15. I'm very interested in the values and customs of other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 16. I apply my values when judging people who are different.
- \_\_\_\_ 17. I see people who are similar to me as virtuous.
- \_\_\_\_ 18. I do not cooperate with people who are different.
- \_\_\_\_ 19. Most people in my culture just don't know what is good for them.
- \_\_\_\_ 20. I do not trust people who are different.
- \_\_\_\_ 21. I dislike interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_ 22. I have little respect for the value and customs of other cultures.

(more on next page)

\_\_\_\_ 23. Bonus question from Mr. B: See below. Which chicken are you?



**Scoring:** To determine your ethnocentrism score, complete the following steps:

Step 1: Add your responses to Items 4, 7, and 9.

Step 2: Add your responses to Items 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, and 22.

Step 3: Subtract the sum from Step 1 from 18.

Step 4: Add the results of Step 2 and Step 3. This sum is your generalized ethnocentrism score (note that not all items are used in scoring). Higher scores indicate higher ethnocentrism. Scores above 55 are considered high ethnocentrism.

## 7. Personal Report of Intercultural Communication Apprehension (PRICA)

This measure was developed to address communication apprehension in the intercultural context. This instrument is presumed to be better than the PRCA24 for this particular communication context. However, it is substantially correlated with the PRCA24. This suggests that intercultural communication apprehension is a sub-category of general communication apprehension. Alpha reliability estimates should be expected to be above .90 when completed by native English speakers, although they may be lower when this instrument is translated into another language because translations usually are less than perfect.

**Directions:** The 14 statements below are comments frequently made by people with regard to communication with people from other cultures. Please indicate how much you agree with these statements by marking a number representing your response to each statement using the following choices: **Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; are Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Generally, I am comfortable interacting with a group of people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I am tense and nervous while interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I like to get involved in group discussion with others who are from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Engaging in a group discussion with people from different cultures makes me nervous.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am calm and relaxed with interacting with a group of people who are from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. While participating in a conversation with a person from a different culture, I get nervous.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have no fear of speaking up in a conversation with a person from a different culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Ordinarily I am very tense and nervous in a conversation with person from a different culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Ordinarily I am very calm and relaxed in conversations with a person from a different culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. While conversing with a person from a different culture, I feel very relaxed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I am afraid to speak up in conversations with a person from a different culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I face the prospect of interacting with people from different cultures with confidence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Communicating with people from different cultures makes me feel uncomfortable.

**Scoring:** To compute the PRICA score, complete the following steps:

Step 1. Add the scores for the following items: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 12

Step 2. Add the scores for the following items: 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, and 14

Step 3. Complete the following formula:  $\text{PRICA score} = 42 - \text{Total from Step 1} + \text{Total from Step 2}$ .

Scores can range from 14 to 70. Scores below 32 indicate low intercultural CA. Scores above 52 indicate high intercultural CA. Scores ranging between 32 and 52 indicate a moderate level of intercultural CA.