



Exploring Learners' Media Preferences to Develop Intercultural Competence

Kültürlerarası Yetkinliğin Geliştirilmesi İçin Dil Öğrenenlerin Medya Tercihlerinin Araştırılması

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Abstract

Learning English in an English-speaking country, in a multilingual or monolingual teaching setting would significantly change design, content and type of teaching materials. Considering that EFL learners in Turkey would hardly improve their intercultural competence compared to learners in a multilingual setting, teaching materials used in the classroom should be oriented to develop EFL learners' intercultural competence and awareness. Therefore, this study aims to investigate which authentic tools are more frequently preferred by learners and which authentic tools are considered to develop learners' intercultural competence. Finally, it aims to suggest practitioners' and course book writers' reconsideration of material selection and design in accordance with learners' preferences as well as the progress in technology. This study focuses on ten authentic tools among auditory, visual and written types of media. Freshmen and seniors studying ELT at a state university in Turkey stated their attitudes towards the aforementioned authentic tools and how frequently they use these three types of media tools. The results suggest that visual and written types of media should be more integrated into teaching materials, and also more experienced learners' familiarity with written type of media might influence their attitudes.

Keywords: Intercultural competence, authentic tools, types of media.

Öz

İngilizceyi çok dilli ya da tek dilli öğrenme ortamlarında öğrenmek kullanılan materyallerin dizayn, içerik ve türünü önemli derecede değiştirmektedir. Türkiye'de yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin, çok dilli öğrenme ortamında dil öğrenen öğrencilere kıyasla kültürlerarası yetkinlik ve farkındalıklarını oldukça zor geliştirebilecekleri düşünüldüğünde sınıflarda kullanılan materyallerin öğrencilerin özellikle kültürlerarası yetkinlik ve farkındalıklarının geliştirmek için yönlendirici olması gerekmektedir. Bu yüzden bu çalışma öğrencilerin hangi otantik araçları daha sık kullandığını ve hangi araçların öğrencilerin kültürlerarası yetkinlik ve farkındalığını arttırdığını düşündürdüğünü araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Son olarak öğretmenlerin ve kitap yazarlarının teknolojideki ilerlemelerle birlikte öğrencilerin tercihlerine uygun bir şekilde materyal seçimi ve dizayn konusunu yeniden gözden geçirmelerini önermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, işitsel, görsel ve yazılı medya türlerinden on farklı otantik araç kullanımını araştırmaktadır. Türkiye'de bulunan bir devlet üniversitesinde İngilizce Öğretmenliği okuyan 1. ve 4. sınıf öğrencileri bu üç medya türü arasında olan otantik araçlara olan tutumlarını ve bu araçları ne kadar sık kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Sonuçlar, görsel ve yazılı medya türlerinin materyallere daha çok entegre edilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürlerarası yetkinlik, otantik araçlar, medya türleri.

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1. Introduction

Learning a language is not only to have knowledge of the language but also of the culture in which language is used. There are some expressions in the target language which are culturally bound. Only when learners gain the cultural components of the language and becomes familiar with ways of thinking in the foreign culture, can these expressions be understood. It means exchanging knowledge of your culture with the knowledge of a foreign culture. This would contribute to the development of intercultural awareness among language learners. As understanding of what interlocutors mean to say would facilitate interaction between learners with different cultural backgrounds, it is of importance to increase intercultural competence among language users.

Starting from the influence of communicative approach on language teaching, being able to use language in different contexts in an appropriate way has gained an importance in language learning. In reaction to Chomsky's notion of 'linguistic competence', Hymes (1966) proposed the term 'communicative competence'. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) developed the concept of communicative competence. This concept was defined as "the underlying systems of knowledge and skills required for communication" (Canale 1983, p. 5) and was composed of grammar, discourse, strategic and sociolinguistic competence.

Among these types of competence, sociolinguistic competence is mostly related to the interests of intercultural approach because the sociocultural rules of use are necessary for intercultural communication. These sociocultural rules can be listed as relationships among language users, cultural concepts of politeness and taboos in the culture which a learner has an interaction, etc. A language learner should have knowledge of these culture codes embedded in a language and skills of how to use appropriate communicative functions in a social context. It should be noted that Canale and Swain (1983) later made a distinction between the concept of communicative competence and performance, and competence is considered as the underlying knowledge while performance is considered as the actual use of that knowledge in a social context.

In a similar vein, the difference between intercultural communication competence and intercultural communication should be clearly identified in order to provide learners appropriate learning tools in the context of teaching. Intercultural competence is defined as "the ability to understand and relate to people from other countries" (Byram, 1997, p. 5). Its main interests are drawn on "language awareness, the discussion of cross-cultural experiences, and the discussion of stereotypes and negotiation of meaning" (Neuener, 2003, cited in Vogt, 2006, p. 154). It can also be acquired by means of learning tools in the classroom. However, intercultural communication means "the symbolic exchange process whereby individuals from two (or more) different cultural communities negotiate shared meanings in an interactive situation" (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005, p. 39). It occurs as a result of real experiences and requires learners to have an interaction with interlocutors with different backgrounds. Byram accepts that providing real experience might be difficult in a class; nevertheless, his model of ICC recommends the integration of intercultural communication into language learning classes by means of increasing "knowledge, critical cultural awareness" and developing "interpreting/relating skills, discovery/interaction skills and attitudes" (1997, p. 33). Considering that language expresses and symbolizes cultural reality (Kramsch, 1998) and language learning embodies the knowledge of our own culture and the target culture to be able to communicate with language users appropriately, one of the aims in language teaching is to gain intercultural competence.

As the use of English language has increased because of educational, commercial and social demands in various contexts all over the world, the need for developing learners' intercultural communication competence has also gained importance. However, learning a language in an English-speaking country, in a multilingual or a monolingual teaching setting would significantly change design, content and type of teaching materials. For example, a learner studying abroad has more chance to use intercultural skills in language classes with learners from different nationalities, while a learner in an EFL class in Turkey has a limited exposure to intercultural diversity and s/he is restricted to classroom activities. In an EFL class where learners share the same linguistic background, it is difficult to provide a basis for a teaching setting in which intercultural communication is included as there would be no real (inter) communication. However, learners can be oriented to gain intercultural communication competence in the classroom. As classroom setting has lots of facilities to put communication skills into practice through activities, it is considered as an appropriate setting in shaping intercultural communication competence (Lee et. al., 2012, p. 26).

Among the classroom activities, Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) introduce tasks such as: "class discussions, research and role-plays using materials drawn from English-speaking countries that promote discussions; comparisons and reflections on English culture from various countries and the learners' own culture" (cited in Young Lee, 2012, p. 198). However, sharing cultural components in the classroom might not be as effective as being involved in an authentic intercultural communication. Jaidev (2014, p. 133) argues that "real communication in any situation involves much more than giving and receiving information", and also Byram (1997, p. 3) says "it is focused on establishing and maintaining relationships". Considering that it is difficult to establish an intercultural communication even in an interactive classroom, it is probable to claim that classroom tasks, course books and supplementary materials of these course books

might fail to meet the needs of intercultural competence training. "Textbooks do not always constitute an accurate and adequate source of pragmatic information and argued for the need to provide realistic pragmatic models that are necessarily accompanied by adequate explanation of rules of use in order to facilitate learners' development of pragmatic competence in the TL" (Nguyen, 2011, p. 26). This leads language learners to discover new techniques to learn about the foreign culture. Along with the developing technology, they are found to engage in written and spoken authentic materials in their daily life in order to get to know the characteristics of other culture. Some practitioners are aware of this shift in the development of interlanguage learning, so they adjust their teaching programs in accordance with the needs and demands of learners. For example, Marcoccia's study (2012, p. 356) argues that computer-mediated communication (CMC) and the internet-mediated communication can be used "to foster intercultural exchanges in foreign language learning situations" as they help learners establish a network to make contacts with other cultures.

In another study, Jaidev (2014) creates a pedagogical blogging in a professional communication website by including participants all over the world so that learners can share their perceptions of people with different backgrounds both on intercultural communication and their own perspectives. Similar to the use of blogs for pedagogical purposes, on-site group discussions are done among native, nonnative teachers and students from China, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia, Netherlands, Thailand, and Vietnam to form a basis for intercultural communication, and at the same time to enhance their world view by sharing their experiences (Yang, 2013, p. 328). These practices have been commonly used by practitioners recently and their aim is to make contacts with real individuals.

It is obvious that classroom activities, course books and supplementary materials might not be sufficient for learners to gain intercultural competence. That's why, Nguyen (2011, p. 27) suggests that teachers and course book writers should underline the design of teaching materials in order to lead learners to develop learners' intercultural competence and awareness. However, learners' preferences of and attitudes towards the types of media in this respect has been rarely investigated. Considering the significance of the issue and lack of research, the present study is believed to shed light on which authentic tools and types of media are more promoted by learners, thereby increasing practitioners' and course book writers understanding of learners' perceptions, and then suggesting them to reconsider their material selection and design.

The aim of the current study is to investigate which authentic tools among the auditory, visual and written types of media are more frequently preferred by learners and which authentic tools are considered to develop learners' intercultural competence and awareness. To this end, following research questions have been formulated:

- 1- Which authentic tools among auditory, visual and written types of media are frequently preferred by freshmen and seniors studying ELT?
- 2- Which authentic tools among auditory, visual and written types of media are considered to be useful by freshmen and seniors studying ELT?

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Model

This study aimed to identify the frequency use of and attitudes towards authentic tools among the audial, visual and written types of media of freshmen and seniors studying ELT at a state university in Turkey, and investigate the relationship between their frequency of use and attitudes. Therefore, the study used correlational survey model to examine the presence and extent of variation among the variables (Karasar, 2009).

2.2. Participants

The study was composed of 100 learners who studying ELT in the 1st and 4th year at Gazi University. According to Dörnyei (2002, p. 98), "members of the target population are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria." Therefore, the respondents were determined by convenience sampling out of non-probability sampling.

2.3. Data Collection Instrument

Descriptive survey model was used to collect the data (See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). The scale was developed with close-ended questions. The scale included two parts in which Part A measures the frequency use of the authentic tools among auditory media (radio and language learning podcasts), visual media (TV, series, movies, professional talks and videos and social media) and written media (newspapers, books and magazines) while Part B measures students' attitudes towards these authentic tools.

2.4. Data Analysis Procedure

After conducting the study, exploratory factor analysis was done to ensure construct validity of the scale. The reliability co-efficient of the scale was calculated by Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient. Item total correlations were calculated to elicit the relationship of the items to the sum total of the scale. The means and standard deviation values of item distribution were calculated. The distribution of these values was indicated in figures. The mean differences of learners in the 1st and 4th year with regard to Part A and Part B in the scale were analyzed by paired-sample T-test, and Pearson correlation coefficient was analyzed to investigate whether there was a correlation between learners' frequency use of and their attitudes toward authentic tools.

3. Results

3.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis of Part A

The construct validity of Part A in the scale was tested by factor analysis. Therefore, it was first questioned whether the obtained data from the study was appropriate for factor analysis. The results of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests, which show whether the data is appropriate for factor analysis, are as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1

The Results of KMO and Bartlett Tests

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sample Consistency Measures		,77
	X ²	225,15
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Sd	36
	p	,000

As it is seen in Table 1, calculated KMO consistency measurement value 0,77. According to Leech, Barrett and Morgan (2005); Şencan (2005); Tavşancıl (2010), the factor analysis cannot be below 0,50 which is a critical value (Büyüköztürk, Şekercioğlu & Çokluk, 2010, p. 207; Tavşancıl, 2010). When the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of Part A in the scale was compared with the critical values, it was found that it is between "0,70-0,80", which is an acceptable level (Büyüköztürk, Şekercioğlu & Çokluk, 2010, p. 207). The calculated Bartlett Sphericity Test for the same data is 225,15 and significant at 0,01 level ($X^2_{36}=225,15$). These values show that the data obtained from the study could be used for the factor analysis. In addition, it was concluded that the number of samples in the experiment was enough to do a factor analysis. The results of the factor analysis by means of principal component analysis are indicated below in Table 2.

Table 2

Factor Eigen Values and Explanatory Variances

Factor	Initial Value		
	Total	Vary %	Cum %
Part A	3,36	37,30	37,30

As it is seen in Table 2, there is one factor whose eigen value is higher than 1,0. The variance of the one factor is 37,39 % of the total variance. Considering the initial eigen values, one factor was stated as the eigen value of the first factor (3,36) is higher than 1,0. Then, the results of the load factor value of the items and item total correlation in Part A is shown in Table 3.

Table 3
The Results of Load Factor of Items and Item Total Correlation

	Load Factor Values of Part A	r	Cronbach Alpha (r)
Item 1	,54	,46	,79
Item 2	,67	,58	
Item 3	,51	,45	
Item 4	,49	,44	
Item 6	,44	,38	
Item 7	,50	,45	
Item 8	,53	,47	
Item 9	,55	,47	
Item 10	,64	,56	

*p<,05

In Table 3, Item 1, Item 2, Item 3, Item 4, Item 6, Item 7, Item 8, Item 9 and Item 10 have the highest load value in the first factor. When the load factor of the items was considered in the first factor, it ranges between ,44 and ,67. In accordance with these load factors, Part A is one factored and these items have load value to be involved in the scale. However, Item 5 was eliminated from the scale because its load value is below ,30 load factor which is determined as the boundary value for the load values. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the item whose load factor is below ,30 critical value is determined as “average” (Cited in Büyüköztürk, Şekercioğlu & Çokluk, 2010). To increase the explanatory variance of the determined factor, ,30 load factor was determined as a boundary value.

As shown in Table 3, based on the item total correlation, correlation values ranges between r=,38 (Item 6) and r=,58 (Item 2) and is significant at 0,05 level. In accordance with the results of the item total correlations of the 9 items, what the scale would measure as a whole is the same with what each item would measure. Therefore, it can be said that these 9 items have the quality to remain in the scale.

Also, the scale reliability is shown in Table 3 as a result of the analysis of Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the items specified for one factor of Part A. This coefficient is the best coefficient that represents the general reliability construct of the scale when all the items are considered (Özdamar, 2004). According to Table 3, it is seen that Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients have ,79 reliability coefficient with 9 items. The reliability coefficient of this part was found to be reliable at a high level. It means that Part A in the scale has an internal consistency at a reasonable level. That the items have a high level of reliability among themselves can be seen in the above reliability coefficients. Tezbaşaran (1997, p. 47) states that the reliability coefficient should be as close as to 1 to be considered reasonable in a Likert type of scales.

3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Part B

The construct validity of Part B in the scale was tested by factor analysis. The results of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests, which show whether the data is appropriate for factor analysis, are as indicated in Table 4.

Table 4
The Results of KMO and Bartlett Tests

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sample Consistency Measures		,89
	X ²	1035,10
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Sd	153
	p	,000

In Table 4, the calculated KMO consistency measurement value is 0,89. When the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of the scale was compared with the critical values, it was found that “0,80-0,90” is at high levels (Büyüköztürk, Şekercioğlu & Çokluk, 2010, p. 207). The calculated Bartlett Sphericity Test for the same data is 1035,10 and significant at 0,01 level (X²₁₅₃=1035,10). These values show that the data obtained from the study can be subjected to factor analysis. It was concluded that the number of samples in the experiment is enough to conduct the factor analysis. The results of the factor analysis by means of principal component analysis are indicated below in Table 5.

Table 5

Factor Eigen values and Explanatory Variances

Factor	Initial Eigen values		Cum %
	Total	Vary %	
Part B	8,28	45,98	45,98

As it is seen in Table 5, there is one factor whose eigen value is higher than 1,5. The variance of the one factor is 45,98 % of the total variance. Considering the initial eigen values, one factor was stated as the eigen value of the first factor (8,28) is higher than 1,0. The load factor value of the items in the study is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

The Results of Load Factor of Items and Item Total Correlation

	Load Factor Values of Part B	r	Cronbach Alpha (r)
Item 11	0,60	0,59	,93
Item 12	0,57	0,56	
Item 13	0,69	0,67	
Item 14	0,63	0,61	
Item 16	0,54	0,51	
Item 17	0,62	0,59	
Item 18	0,59	0,58	
Item 19	0,67	0,64	
Item 20	0,73	0,71	
Item 21	0,70	0,69	
Item 22	0,67	0,65	
Item 23	0,67	0,65	
Item 24	0,63	0,60	
Item 26	0,53	0,50	
Item 27	0,67	0,64	
Item 28	0,75	0,73	
Item 29	0,72	0,69	
Item 30	0,74	0,71	

*p<,05

In Table 6, Item 11, Item 12, Item 13, Item 14, Item 16, Item 17, Item 18, Item 19, Item 20, Item 21, Item 22, Item 23, Item 24, Item 26, Item 27, Item 28, Item 29 and Item 30 have the highest load value in the first factor. When the load factor of the items was considered in the first factor, it ranges between ,53 and ,75. In accordance with these load factors, Part B is one factored and these items have load value to be involved in the scale. However, Item 15 and Item 25 were eliminated from the scale because its load value is below ,30 load factor which is determined as the boundary value for the load values.

As shown in Table 6, based on the item total correlation, correlation values ranges between r=,50 (Item 26) and r=,73 (Item 28) and is significant at 0,05 level. In accordance with the item total correlations of the 18 items, what the scale would measure as a whole is the same with what each item would measure. Therefore, it can be said that these 18 items have the quality to remain in the scale.

Also, the scale reliability is shown in Table 6 as a result of the analysis of Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the items specified for one factor of Part B. According to Table 6, it is seen that Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients have ,93 reliability coefficient with 18 items. The reliability coefficient of this scale was found to be reliable at a very high level. It can be said that the scale has an internal consistency at a very high level.

3.3. The Results of Paired Sample T-Test of Mean Differences and Pearson Correlation Analysis

The means and standard deviation values of Part A and Part B were given below. In Table 7, it is seen that the mean of Part A is 3,13 (,63) and the mean of Part B is 4,00 (,66) which is higher than the mean of Part A.

Table 7

The Means and Standard Deviation Values of Part A and B

	N	Mean	S
Part A	100	3,13	,63
Part B	100	4,00	,66

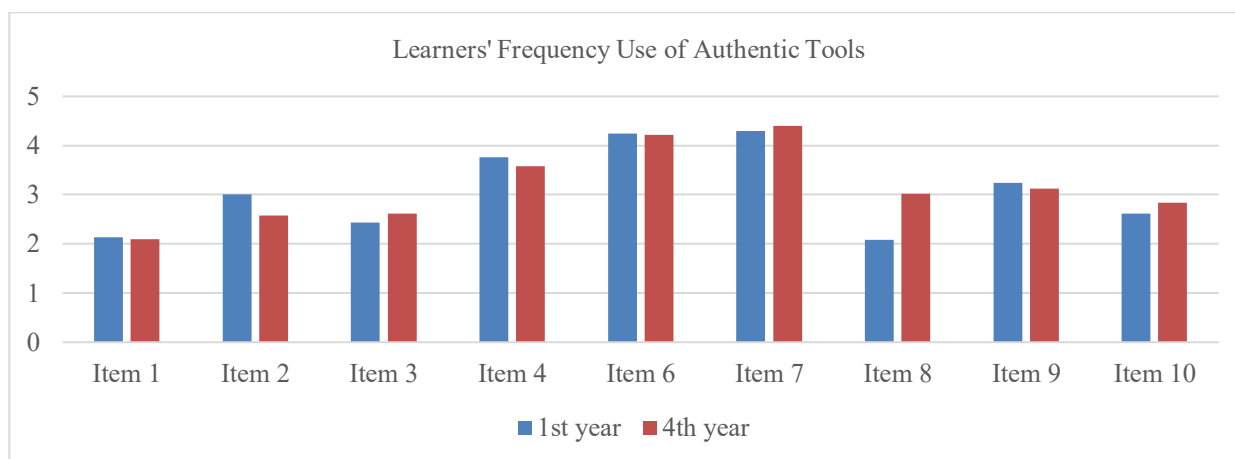
The paired-sample t-test results of Part A and Part B in terms of mean differences were given below. In Table 8, there is a significant difference in accordance with $t_{(95)}=12,12$, $p=,000<,05$ between the means of Part A is (3,13) and Part B (4,00) among learners. This significant difference is derived from that the mean score of Part B is higher than the mean score of Part A.

Table 8.

Paired-Sample T-Test Results of Mean Differences of Part A and B

	Mean	N	S	t	sd	p
Part A	3,13	100	,63	12,12	99	,000
Part B	4,00	100	,66			

With regard to Part A, the distribution of mean differences of learners' frequency use of authentic tools between the freshmen and seniors is shown in Figure 1. It is seen that Item 7, Item 6 and Item 4 are higher at a significant level, respectively ($M=4,4$) and ($M=4,3$), ($M=4,24$) and ($M=4,22$), ($M=3,76$) and ($M=3,58$). There is a significant difference in Item 8 between these groups ($M=2,08$) and ($M=3,02$).

Figure 1. *Distribution of Mean Differences of Part A between Learners in the 1st and 4th Year*

With regard to Part B, the distribution of mean differences of learners' attitudes towards authentic tools between learners in the first and fourth year is shown in Figure 2. It is seen that Item 16 and Item 26, Item 17 and Item 27, and Item 12 and Item 22 are higher at a significant level, respectively ($M=4,54$) and ($M=4,54$), ($M=4,46$) and ($M=4,42$), ($M=4,5$) and ($M=4,4$), ($M=4,42$) and ($M=4,26$), ($M=4,24$) and ($M=4,04$), ($M=4,18$) and ($M=4,06$). There is a significant difference in Item 18 and Item 28, and Item 20 and Item 30 between these groups, respectively ($M=4,24$) and ($M=3,54$), ($M=4,14$) and ($M=3,84$), ($M=4,04$) and ($M=3,56$), ($M=3,98$) and ($M=3,64$).

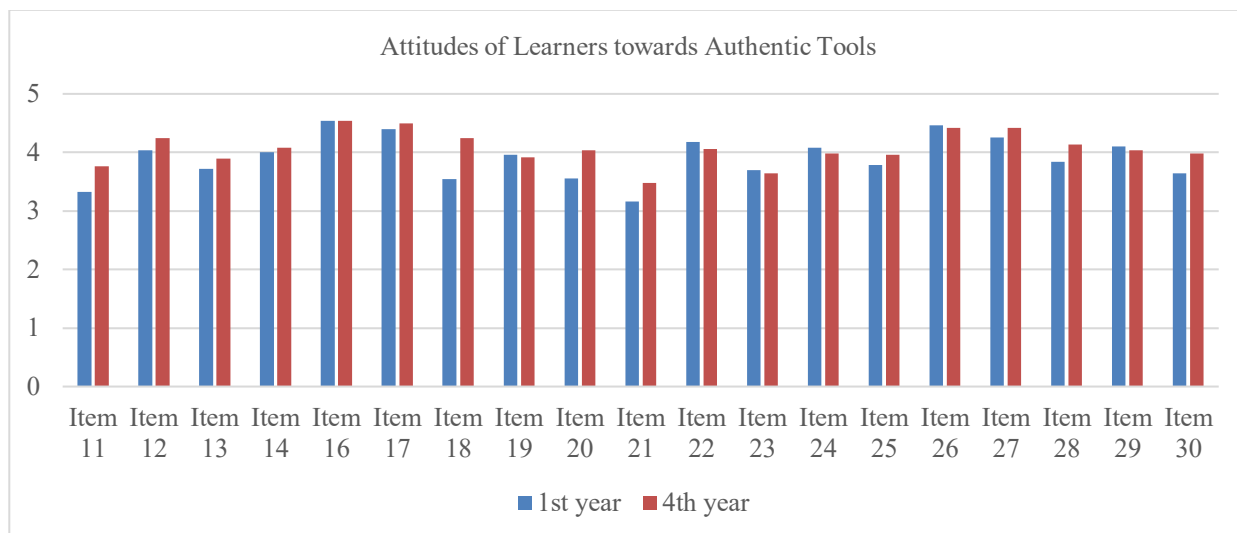


Figure 2. Distribution of Mean Differences of Part B between Learners in the 1st and 4th Year

In order to investigate whether there is a correlation between learners' frequency of use and their attitudes towards authentic tools, Pearson correlation analysis was done, and the results are shown in Table 9. That the correlation coefficient is 1,00 means that there is a positive correlation, while that the correlation coefficient is -1,00 means that there is a negative correlation. That the correlation coefficient is 0.00 means that there is no correlation. When r is between 0.30-0.70, it is interpreted that there is a correlation between the two variables at a moderate level. When it is higher than 0.70, it is at a high level, and when it is lower than 0.30, it is at a low level (Roscoe, 1975, cited in Köklü, Büyüköztürk & Bökeoğlu, 2007, p. 92).

Table 9

The Results of Pearson Correlation Analysis between Learners' Frequency Use of and Attitudes towards Authentic Tools

Group		Frequency of Use (Part A)	
1 st year	Attitude (Part B)	r	,40(*)
		p	,002
		N	50
4 th year	Attitude (Part B)	r	,44(*)
		p	,001
		N	50

* $p < .05$

In Table 9, it is seen that there was a positive correlation between the two variables among the freshmen at a moderate level, $r = .40$, $p = .002 < .05$. Similarly, there was a positive correlation between the two variables among the seniors at a moderate level, $r = .44$, $p = .001 < .05$. It is seen that the correlation level between the two variables among the seniors is higher than the correlation level between the two variables among the freshmen.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study investigated freshmen and seniors' frequency use and perceptions of authentic tools among the auditory, visual and written types of media to develop intercultural competence which are radio, TV, language learning podcasts, professional talks and videos, social media, series, movies, newspapers, books and magazines. It aimed to increase practitioners' understanding of which authentic tools should be used to develop intercultural communication competence and how to design syllabus and implement teaching materials in classes in accordance with learners' interests and needs.

With regard to research question 1 identifying learners' frequency use of authentic tools among the auditory, visual and written types of media, the results of the study indicate that both group of learners often consult to *series*, *movies*, and *professional talks and videos* in their daily life more than the other authentic tools at a significant level. This suggests that learners tend to engage in more visual type of media in which real-like life is illustrated and the target culture could be reflected in a clearer way. Moreover, they prefer the authentic tools which are composed of both audial and visual components rather than the ones addressing to either audial or visual stimuli.

When the results of freshmen and seniors are compared, it is seen that seniors read *newspapers* more often than freshmen at a significant level. This demonstrates that more experienced learners of English also tend to allocate more time to written type of authentic tools. This might be related to learners' familiarity with written type of materials in time. Therefore, the integration of daily newspapers into syllabus might be suggested to teachers and course book writers in order to develop intercultural competence among final year learners by means of addressing to their interests. It is seen that the results of Sarıgöz's (2014) study parallels with the results of this study. Learners tend to listen to and speak on topics including intercultural themes at most. Then, they read at a moderate level while they rarely write about intercultural topics.

In accordance with the results of the study, the most frequently used authentic tool is *social networking*; however, it has been eliminated from the scale as it is used by both groups of learners at high levels and its load value is relatively low. Nevertheless, it is necessary to remind that this result is consistent with the previous studies which indicate that learners tend to establish and maintain relationships with real individuals in order to develop their active intercultural learning (Marcoccia, 2012; Yang, 2013; Jaidev, 2014). On the other hand, it has been observed that social networking is more used with the intention of "impression management, 'friending' behavior, networks and network structure, the relationship between online and offline connections, and questions around privacy" than for educational purposes (Boyd & Ellison 2007, cited in Lang, 2010, p. 120).

Regarding research question 2 investigating learners' attitudes towards authentic tools among the auditory, visual and written types of media, the results of the study indicate that both groups of learners consider *series*, *movies* and *watching TV* more useful in order to gain intercultural competence at a significant level. This suggests that learners consider visual type of media more useful to increase their knowledge about the target culture. Moreover, learners tend to incorporate authentic tools which include both audial and visual components into their learning process. It is a fact that it would be much easier for them through these types of media both to learn a language and social codes which are intertwined with ways of thinking and lifestyles of the target culture. In this way, learners would have a chance to consider themselves as an observer in a social interaction based on real or real-like experiences. Moreover, learners' preference of visual type of media suggests that they tend to resort to technology in language learning. In a similar vein, in Harmandaoğlu Baz's (2016) study student teachers tend to consider technology useful in language learning and teaching contexts in the 21st century. In this respect, the integration of technology including both audial and visual components into language learning materials should be taken into consideration.

When the results of freshmen and seniors were compared, it is seen that seniors consider *newspapers* and *magazines* would be more helpful to gain intercultural competence than freshmen at a significant level. The perceptions of seniors with regard to these authentic tools are consistent with their practice in their life. As can be seen from the levels of their frequency use, more experienced learners of English would tend to think that written type of media, which includes merely visual components into their learning process, would also be beneficial for them as well as the both visual and audial ones.

In accordance with the results of a comparative study by Sample (2012, p. 569), the perceptions of learners who have been abroad or returned from abroad changed with regard to the target culture by making great contributions to their intercultural sensitivity and competence. When the effect of their experience on their intercultural competence was questioned, they reported that studying abroad has made a difference in increasing their intercultural ability and awareness. Nevertheless, they highlighted that explicit intercultural training should be the basic element of their curriculum to develop intercultural competence. Similar to these learners who studied abroad, learners in this study seem that they try to acquire intercultural competence and increase their intercultural awareness by preferring certain authentic tools, which are more oriented to be both visual and written type of media and help them contextualize themselves in real-like settings.

In addition, the results of the study show that the learners' frequency use of *radio* and *language learning podcasts* is rare, and also they are not regarded useful at a significant level compared to the other authentic tools in order to develop intercultural competence. Considering that learners' tendency to visual and written types of authentic tools to increase their intercultural competence, the results of these auditory types of authentic tools could be understandable. This suggests that merely auditory type of media fail to draw learners' interests and address to their needs. Therefore, teachers and course book writers are suggested to incorporate more visual and written types of media and less auditory type of media into their materials while designing their syllabus and teaching programs.

All in all, the general finding is that the authentic tools which address to both learners' visual and audial stimuli are most commonly practiced by both groups of learners, and, the authentic tools which include both visual type of media are considered more useful to develop intercultural competence in an EFL classroom setting by both groups of learners. It should be also noted that seniors might be more interested in written type of media compared to freshmen. Therefore, integrating written type of media into syllabus and teaching materials would be more compatible with experienced learners.

In this vein, the study emphasizes learners' tendency to certain authentic tools among three types of media and highlights the reconsideration of designing syllabus and implementing teaching materials by practitioners and course book writers in order to reflect cultural components of the target language in accordance with learners' interests and needs as well as the developments in technology. After investigating the content of course books in terms of intercultural communication, Çetin Köroğlu (2016, p. 629) also asserts "textbooks need to be revised in the way of intercultural communication" so that learners could develop their intercultural communicative competence. While revising textbooks and classroom activities, course book writers should aim learners "to communicate openly in order to build relationships" rather than "to communicate without error" (Moeller & Nugent, 2014, p. 8).

Further research is needed to investigate deeper understanding of attitudinal dispositions of teachers and learners. In addition, further studies might consider exploring the relationship between intercultural competence training and achievement in language learning.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Part A

How often do you consult to the below stated “ <i>authentic tools</i> ” in your daily life?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. English radio broadcasts (such as BBC Radio, Bloomberg Radio, etc.)					
2. Language learning materials through podcasts (such as BBC Language Learning Service, VOA, etc.)					
3. Professional talks and videos (such as Ted Talks, TedX, Youtube, etc.)					
4. Social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.)					
5. Series (such as How I Met Your Mother, Game of Thrones, etc.)					
6. Movies/Films (such as Forrest Gump, Ice Age, etc.)					
7. Newspapers (such as The Independent, Washington Post, etc.)					
8. Books/Novels (such as Animal Farm, the Great Gatsby, etc.)					
9. Magazines (such as Time, National Geographic, etc.)					

Appendix 2: Part B

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements of the list below.	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
10. Listening to radio broadcasts in English helps me to have an idea of the English culture.					
11. Watching English television broadcasts helps me to get to know the English culture.					
12. Learning language through podcast materials helps me get information about the English culture.					
13. Watching professional talks and videos leads me to understand the English culture.					
14. Using social media helps me to gain the cultural components of the English culture.					
15. Watching English series helps me to become familiar with the English culture.					
16. Watching English movies leads me to have knowledge of the English culture.					
17. Reading daily newspapers helps me to improve my knowledge about the English culture.					
18. Reading English books/novels leads me to become enlightened in the English culture.					
19. Reading English magazines are helpful to understand the English culture.					
20. English radios help me to learn about the characteristics of the English culture.					
21. English TV channels help me to learn a wide range of cultural aspects of the English people.					
22. Language learning materials through podcasts help me to learn the English culture.					
23. Professional talks and videos lead me to learn the cultural attributes of the English people.					
24. Social media is useful to learn the English culture.					
25. English series help me to learn the English culture.					
26. English movies help me to learn the cultural components of the English people.					
27. English newspapers help me to learn what the English culture is like.					
28. English books/novels are helpful to learn the English culture.					
29. English magazines are effective to learn the aspects of the English culture.					