

“THINGS TAKE TIME HERE”: A PHENOMENOLOGY BASED
ETHNOGRAPHY ON THE SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ADJUSTMENT
CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF TWO AMERICAN FULBRIGHT
TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

“THINGS TAKE TIME HERE”: A PHENOMENOLOGY BASED ETHNOGRAPHY ON THE SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF TWO AMERICAN FULBRIGHT TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN TURKEY

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This ethnographic study investigated the social and professional challenges that two American Fulbright teaching assistants faced and the strategies they employed for navigating these challenges during ten-month sojourn in Turkey. The purpose of the study was to understand the cross-cultural adjustment process that the two American Fulbright teaching assistants went through based on the three dimensions of Black et al.'s (1991) Framework for International Adjustment: general, interaction and work. The study uncovered that highly strong cultural components were embedded in the behaviors and perspectives of the participant teachers. The emerging challenges and dissonances which were mostly inflicted by cultural differences were of the central focus when exploring the social and professional adjustment patterns of the two teachers. By integrating phenomenological elements into an ethnographic approach, the data were collected through observations, unstructured interviews, journals, class videotapes and blog.

The findings were primarily related to two areas: culture shock and cross-cultural competency development. The data confirmed that cross-cultural adjustment is a multi-faceted and complex phenomenon. Over the course of ten months, teachers

were overridden by culture shocks. Transitions in cultural understanding, language barrier and cross-cultural differences were the main obstacles behind the challenges emerged. In order to overcome these challenges and successfully operate in new settings, the teachers developed some adaptation strategies such as seeking advice from cultural informants, drawing on prior cultural experiences, observation and trial-error.

The study provided some implications both for the prospective sojourner teachers and administrators who are involved in cross-cultural exchange programs. The importance of mentorship in cross-cultural adjustment and cross-cultural training is emphasized to enable teachers make the best of these cultural exchange programs so that they can grow as culturally responsive teachers.

Keywords: culture shock, cross-cultural adjustment, language barrier, Fulbright scholars in Turkey, short-term teacher exchange programs.

ÖZ

“BURADA HER ŞEY ZAMAN ALIYOR”: İKİ FULBRIGHT ÖĞRETİM ASİSTANININ TÜRKİYE’DEKİ SOSYAL VE MESLEKİ UYUM SÜRECİNDE YAŞADIĞI ZORLUKLAR VE GELİŞTİRDİKLERİ STRATEJİLER ÜZERİNE FENOMENOLOJİK BİR ETNOGRAFYA

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Bu fenomenolojiye dayalı etnografik çalışma iki Fulbright İngilizce öğretim asistanının Türkiye’de geçirdikleri on ay boyunca karşılaştıkları sosyal ve mesleki zorlukları ve adaptasyon süresince geliştirdikleri stratejileri incelemiştir. Çalışmanın temel amacı, iki öğretmenin geçirdikleri kültürlerarası uyum sürecini Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)’nin öne sürdüğü üç boyutlu kültürler arası adaptasyon modeline dayanarak incelemektir. Çalışmanın bulguları, katılımcı öğretmenlerin davranış ve bakış açılarında oldukça güçlü kültürel öğeler yer aldığını göstermiştir. Kültürel farklılıklardan dolayı ortaya çıkan zorluk ve uyumsuzlukların öğretmenlerin sosyal ve mesleki uyum sürecinin incelenmesinde çalışmanın temel taşlarını oluşturmuştur. Fenomenoloji ve etnografyayı bütünleştiren bu çalışmada veri on ay boyunca gözlem, görüşme, günlük, sınıf video kaydı ve blog aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin sosyal ve mesleki yaşantıları kültürel öğeler temel alınarak analiz edilmiştir.

Temel olarak kültür şoku ve kültürler arası yeterlik gelişimi alanlarına yönelik bulgular ortaya çıkmıştır. Veriler, kültürlerarası düzenlemenin çok yönlü ve karmaşık bir olgu olduğunu teyit etmiştir. On ay boyunca, öğretmenlerin yaşadığı

kltr Őokları ve kltrel anlayıŐtaki geçiŐler, dil engeli ve kltrler arası farklılıklar ortaya çıkan baŐlıca zorluklar olarak bulunmuŐtur. Bu zorlukların stesinden gelmek ve yeni ortamlarda baŐarılı bir Őekilde alıŐmak iin, Đretmenler kltrel bilgilendiricilerden tavsiye istemek, nceki kltrel deneyimleri ekmek, gzlem ve deneme yanılma gibi bazı uyum stratejileri geliŐtirdi.

AraŐtırma hem kltrlerarası deĐiŐim programlarına katılacak yeni Đretmenler hem de bu programların yneticileri iin bazı ıkarımlar saĐlıyor. Kltrlerarası uyum saĐlamada danıŐmanlık hizmetinin nemi, Đretmenlerin bu kltrel deĐiŐim programlarından en iyi Őekilde yararlanarak kltrel aıdan duyarlı Đretmen olarak yetiŐebilmelerinin nemini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kltr Őoku, kltrlerarası uyum, Fulbright burs programı, geici sreli Đretmen deĐiŐim programları, dil engeli.

I believe that everything in life happens for a reason.

To every person that has made a difference in my life,

My mother, Saliha Erman, being in the first place.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DMIS	Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English language teachers
ETA	English Teaching Assistant
UCT	U Curve Theory
YÖK	Turkish Council of Higher Education

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Presentation

This chapter starts with some background to the study in order to make clear connections with the aims of the study. After the presentation of the conceptualization of the study, problem statement, the motives behind the study and its potential significance are briefly shared. At the end of the chapter, a number of key terms are also operationalized so as to clarify the main concepts that will emerge throughout the study.

1.1 Background to the study

Living and working in other cultures is not a new phenomenon. However, particularly after the turn of the millennium, enormous advances on the economic, financial, ecological, and societal levels have occurred. The fact that information and communication technologies rapidly progressed has made the effects of globalization become more visible (Kramsch, 2014). When globalization gained momentum on different layers of economy, technology and society, it also led to the internationalization of education (Altbach, 2004; Kondakci, 2011). According to Knight (1999), internationalization and globalization are related terms, but not the same. While globalization can be described as the movement in technology, economy, ideas and knowledge across societies, internationalization refers to the ways of responding to the effects of globalization (Kondakci & Van den Broeck & Devos, 2006).

As a result of this growing knowledge based society, new opportunities for scholars and all educational stakeholders worldwide emerged as a result of growing mobility and international cooperation. Student exchange and teaching fellowship programs are both products and catalysts of this changing landscape of the internationalization of education with the ultimate aim of mutual understanding, experiencing different cultures, providing help to other countries and attaining academic excellence. Now in the 21st century, the probability and potential to study or teach in an environment different from the one we were born, raised and educated is the greatest. Thus, thousands of students, teachers and researchers travel abroad for mainly academic or professional purposes and with the intention of learning another culture and developing mutual understanding within a certain period of time.

Bochner (2006) calls these people as “sojourners” and defines the term as “Sojourners go abroad to achieve a particular purpose and then return to their country of origin. The physical and socio-cultural characteristics of the destination influence how the sojourners adapt, giving rise to the terms visited group and host nation or culture” (p.182). As pointed out Bodycott and Walker (2000), the focus of research has been predominantly on the experiences of sojourning students. However, there is a great need for exploration of sojourning teachers’ regarding the challenges and rewards of the cultural exchange programs.

One of the opportunities for short term teacher sojourners is the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) Program. It is one of the most popular and well regarded teacher exchange program through which thousands of newly graduate American students or researchers are granted. Grantees are instilled with the aim of teaching English and representing American culture at education institutions for maximum two years in more than 65 countries, most of which English has a foreign language status. The popularity and impact of the program has been increasing in terms of the number of grantees and the receiving universities recently. The Fulbright grantees are funded annually by appropriations from the US Congress. Over five hundred teachers and researchers are selected every year to receive the grants and to embark on their Fulbright experience with the aim of being “cultural ambassadors”.

The process of moving to a new culture with short term exchange programs, albeit its ultimate purposes and promises for personal and intercultural growth, can bring complex and problematic situations. As put forth by Bennett (1986) and Kohls (2001) living and working in another culture differs from a short visit as tourist as it requires to navigate a different cultural framework from one's one. Hence, the opportunities of exploring a new culture and teaching experience are generally accompanied by a number of daunting challenges and cultural dissonances. These challenges and problems mostly arise from dealing not only with contradicting cultural values, perspectives, beliefs and practices, but also with the communicating in a new language (Lyon, 2002; Leki, 2001). If the sojourners desire to adjust to the new realities and codes of culture, these cultural clashes are unavoidable. Studies investigating sojourners highlight the complexity of the adjustment process within a new culture as well as the challenges and strategies embedded in the process (Palthe, 2004; Romig, 2009; Nameth, 2014).

Moran (2001) describes the encounter between a sojourner and his or her host culture for a certain amount of time as "cultural experience" (Moran, 2001, p. 13). The cultural stock of knowledge and values that teachers bring with them have undoubtedly an impact on their expectations, practices and pedagogies. Orientation programs or pre-departure preparations may help them make quick adaptations, but do not guarantee that the sojourner will not face unexpected things as in most cases the knowledge obtained from these quick and superficial orientations does not apply to all encounters (Lyon, 2002). No matter how much preparation they make before their arrival or information they get about the new cultural norms, these sojourners often face situations that challenge their core assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs from the first moment they get to live and work in a different and new system of cultures. These emerging conflicts lead sojourners to question the ways of "knowing, doing, and being" of their own (Mezirow, 1978). Hence, they are required to cope with the radical cultural change coupled with uncertainty and unfamiliarity (Kim & Gudykunst, 1988).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Looking at the situation from this globalization perspective, Turkey gets its piece of the pie with a consistently growing number of foreign language teachers that either work for a certain period of time as expatriates or choose to work permanently in a variety of educational contexts under immigrant status. There are several programs that offer teaching abroad opportunities and Fulbright scholarship is deemed as one of the most prestigious one in the world as well as in Turkey.

The English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) program was first administered in Turkey in order to improve the quality of English language instruction at universities in 2010 jointly by the Higher Education Council of Turkey and Fulbright Commission. It is one of the options that appeals recent American college graduates and young professionals to work universities overseas with the intention of improving learners' English language abilities and knowledge of the United States while increasing the U.S. grantee's own language skills and knowledge of the host country. ETAs assisted the English language instructors in teaching English for one year at the participating universities they are assigned.

Turkey, as a country placed in the expanding circle according to Kachru (1990)'s model, received one hundred and four English language teaching assistants as part of the ETA program in 2015-2016 academic years with relatively higher amounts of grants and no Turkish language requirements. This makes Turkey a more appealing country on the list of the host countries. Figure 1 displays the total number of ETA grantees in Turkey for the last six years. There is an increasing trend to teach in Turkey through Fulbright program, and obviously the number of host universities, cities and grantees peaked in 2015-2016 academic year, when the study was conducted.

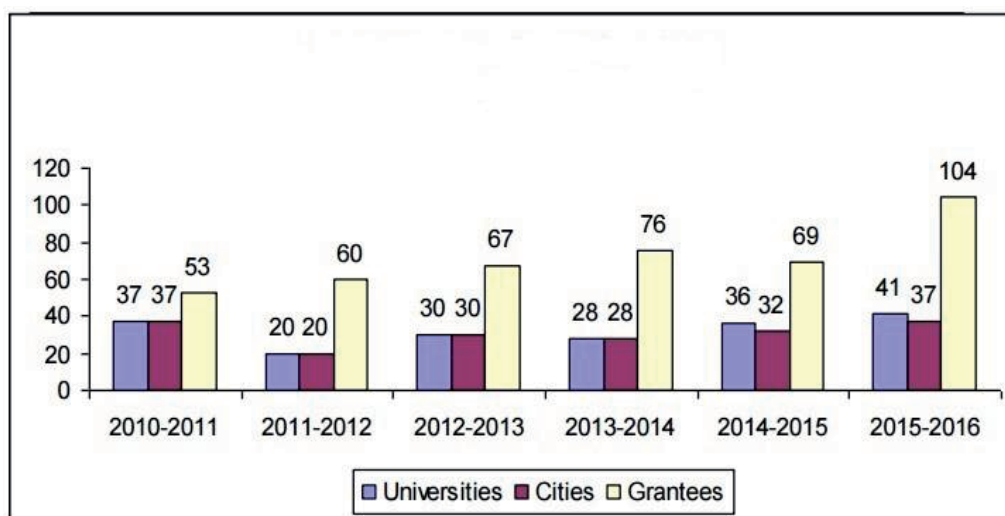


Figure 1. Total Number of ETA Grantees between 2010-2016 Academic Years

Upon finalization of the rigorous selection process, the prospective Fulbright scholars move to their respective countries a few weeks before the school officially starts in order to join the two-week orientation program required by the Fulbright commission. After two weeks of transition period, the grantees are informed about their new city of residence and required to start their tenure in a few days. There is not much information about whether there is a selection criterion for the assignment of the grantees to these cities or it is randomly performed.

This orientation program, condensed in two weeks is by no means sufficient to provide the teaching assistants with a detailed site-specific cultural training. Thus, many of these teachers are expected to live and teach in a new environment that is foreign to them. They undisputedly face and navigate challenges that they have no immediate answers unless they manage to adjust themselves to the new cultural norms to actively participate in their living and teaching environments. In this cultural transition period, the teachers are more likely to encounter problems with adaptation and developing competency to the cultural norms of the inherent setting (Romig, 2009).

In brief, the quality of the eligible grantees does not necessarily guarantee success and there are some cases that cannot complete the whole-year process. According to Ting-Toomey (1996) as cited in Slagoski (2014), there are four categories of sojourners in this sense: “early returnees” who leaves the assignment at an early

stage-most likely due to a failure to adjust, “time servers” those who choose not to integrate or even interact with the host culture-instead just waiting out their time abroad, “adjustors and participators “who moderately perform their required tasks abroad, interacting with the host culture behaviorally but not affectively and “participators, who perform their tasks well as well as emotionally interact with the host cultural at a deeper level (p.59).

On the basis of aforementioned assumptions, this ethnographic study aims to specifically explore the cross-cultural adjustment processes of two novice American teachers within a Turkish setting which have presumably different elements than the American educational and socio-cultural context in terms of language, practices and cultural expectations. The central focus of the study is the challenges as the teachers adjust to both the culture of the specific socio-cultural setting they live in and also the particular micro cultures and how these cultural clashes lead to or hinder their cross cultural adjustment process, as well as the strategies they developed in order to navigate this challenges.

1.3 The motive and significance of the study

My interest in cultural adaptation processes of individuals comes from my prior experience as an exchange student in the U.S. during my junior year at university. It was a great eye-opening experience for me since I managed to survive as a student in a country where my own language was not spoken at all. I was out of my comfort zone and had to change or restructure my perspectives that I had about American people and their culture as well as the education system. Soon after my arrival in Sacramento, I had to get to know a new world in which people had different lifestyles and cultural values than I had owned. Experiencing a substantial number of culture shocks, I eventually got better to act and think in accordance with the cultural expectations of my friends and instructors towards the end of the fifth month of my stay. It was a long but a very invaluable process for me to learn how culture affects and shapes the way people live, think and behave. After my return to home, it was also difficult to answer the common questions that people posed about

how my sojourn was and what I did during six months. I personally believe that those questions cannot be responded with a simple “I lived there and it was great!” statement. In brief, my own sojourning experience and the courses I took within my graduate studies has led me to investigate the fields of acculturation and socio-cultural adaptation and also formed the basis of this study.

Seeing culture as a powerful element shaping one’s behaviors and thinking, this particular study seeks to uncover which processes the two English teachers who have been molded by mainly American culture will go through their journey of adjusting to living and teaching in a new cultural context. Considering that each and every unit of any formal and informal institution has its own cultural values, norms and expectations, these sojourner-teachers are anticipated to face challenges pertaining to cultural values and norms within working and living contexts and these context-related challenges are integral to making sense of their sojourner experience thoroughly. To this end, the ultimate aim is to increase the understanding of the phenomena by investigating the factors that relate to acculturation, the development of socio-cultural competency and the adjustment strategies developed by the teachers both in their social and professional lives in a Turkish city.

While much research has been done to enrich our understanding of the cross-cultural adaptation experiences of sojourner students in the academic and social contexts (Lesjak, Juvan, Ineson, Yap, & Axelsson, 2015; Li, Olson, & Frieze, 2013; Matusitz, 2015; Pitts, 2009; Smith & Khawaja, 2011), cultural adaptation experiences in the socio-cultural domain have not been studied systematically, particularly the role that culture plays in the adaptation process of sojourner teachers.

Besides this, though the number of teachers who participate in teacher exchange or fellowship programs in Turkey is substantially increasing, there is a lack of published research pertaining to this type of expatriate experience. It is an area essentially undeveloped and lacks a body of literature for educational and informational purposes for current as well as future Fulbright scholars who wish to go to Turkey.

In the absence of specific research in Turkish educational contexts, there is a danger of overlooking the importance of cross-cultural adjustment within social and educational settings. Hence, I believe the study will be significant as it will contribute to the gap in the literature as well as providing insights to prospective foreign language teachers who intend to come to that particular region of Turkey and the ones that will live and work at similar contexts into the ways that help them adapt and refine their professional and cultural growth. Taking into consideration that ethnography is a data-driven type of qualitative research, the main research questions that initially guide this study are as presented below:

1- What are the challenges faced and navigated by American Fulbright teaching assistants during cross-cultural adjustment process in Turkey?

- What are the general-environment related challenges that the teachers encountered?
- What are the interactional challenges that the teachers faced?
- What are the work-related challenges that the teachers encountered?

2- Which strategies were employed by the American expatriate teachers in order to adjust themselves to these challenges?

- What strategies do the teachers use in their communal lives?
- What strategies do the teachers use in their institutional lives?

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

Sojourner: People who go abroad to achieve a particular purpose and then return to their country of origin (Bochner, 2006).

Cross Cultural Adjustment: A dynamic process by which individuals upon relocating to new, unfamiliar, or changed cultural environments, establish and maintain relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationships with those environments (Kim, 2001).

Home culture: the culture in which the sojourner was socialized and which provided the initial cultural adaptation.

Host culture: the culture that the sojourner has entered for a variety of reasons such as educational or occupational for a finite period of time.

Host Country Nationals: People who are citizens of the country where the sojourner lives and works.

Culture Shock: a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences. It may encompass feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fears of being cheated, contaminated, injured or disregarded. (Adler, 1975)

Interculturally competent speaker : someone who is determined to understand, to gain an inside view of the other person's culture while also contributing to the other person's understanding of his/her own culture from an insider's point of view (Byram, 1997).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Presentation

This chapter presents an extensive review of literature on acculturation and cross cultural adjustment in different contexts. First, definitions of culture and the operationalization of this term within this study are proposed. Then, prominent studies on acculturation and cross-cultural adjustment are also reviewed within the light of related theories and models which are most relevant to the purpose and research questions of this study.

2.1 Revisiting the definition of culture

Before commencing a review of the research on cross-cultural adjustment, it is important to discuss the concept of culture and its operationalization as it constitutes the cornerstone of this ethnographic study.

The dynamic and relative nature of culture inevitably has led researchers not only to define it in different ways but also come up with divergent connotations and different point of views. For instance, Hofstede (1984) sees culture as a “collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another” (p.21). Moran defines culture (2001) as “the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts” (p.24). Additionally, he asserts that it is possible to talk about common beliefs and values and about how they can differ from culture to

culture, as well as the behaviors associated with them despite the risk of over-generalizing.

Holliday (1994) critiques that this risk of overgeneralization stemming from the wrong usage of the notion of culture as “national culture” commonly gave rise to the danger of misleading generalizations, notions and prejudices about nations. As a reaction to this danger, Holliday (2005) suggests to focus on subcultures to minimize the danger of “essentializing people from a culture” (p.17).

The most common essentialist view of culture is that “cultures” are coincidental with countries, regions, and continents, implying that one can “visit” them while traveling and that they contain “mutually exclusive types of behavior” so that people “from” or ‘in” French culture are essentially different from those “from” or “in” Chinese culture. This psycho-geographical picture also presents a hierarchical onion skin relationship between a national culture and elements within it, so that “Egyptian school culture” is a subset or subculture of “Egyptian education culture,” and so on (p. 17).

When the common characteristics of culture reviewed, Jiang (2010) points out that culture is a ‘holistic’ and “pervasive” system which is made up of several connected subsystems in each aspect of life such as kinship system, education system, religious system, association system, and political system, which play significant roles in influencing the way we live and behave. Secondly, despite the earlier researchers’ view of culture as a “static and invariant” entity which was assumed to be easily observed, classified and taught, recent studies revealed that culture is indeed a “dynamic concept” which is perpetually developing and changing. Lastly, culture is also seen as a “learned” mechanism through the process of socialization and acculturation (p.735-736).

Summing up all the definitions and descriptions, culture has been broadly defined as the understandings and practices that are shared within groups of people. Brown (2000), Kramsch (1998) and Kumaravadivelu (2008) see these shared understandings and practices also as ‘heterogeneous, inextricably intertwined, loosely bounded, dynamic, and subjectively experienced’. For the purpose of this study, culture is viewed more as the “knowledge people have acquired that shape their worldview and behavior” (Merriam, 2002, p. 236). Moreover, my

understanding of culture in this research as the researcher is quite parallel to the definition of culture made by Spencer-Oatey (2008) cited in Spencer-Oatey & Franklin (2009).

Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behavior and his/her interpretation of the 'meaning' of other people's behavior (p.15).

2.2 Historical Overview of Studies on Cross-Cultural Studies

Adapting to a new culture for living and working purposes is not a new phenomenon that has drawn the attention of scholars. People's interest in this concept even goes back to the accounts of Marco Polo, who wrote about his travelling and living experiences over the course of the years spent in China. Though it was not possible for people to regard these narrations as cases of acculturation at that time, all the stories of Marco Polo, Captain Cook or Columbus that we can have access today can be deemed as the first successful attempts of cross-cultural visits and interactions recorded.

As of systematic and empirical investigation of cross-cultural research, acculturation is one of the most complex areas of research that anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists have been studying and conducting their research for more than eight decades now. One of the earliest definitions of the term comes from Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits (1936) as "the cultural and psychological changes that individuals and groups undergo when in prolonged first-hand contact with people of another culture" (p.230).

The major concern of the first definitions of acculturation is the fact that it is interchangeably used as the term 'assimilation'. Most of the early research views the process as "monistic" meaning that only immigrants go through some certain changes. Early studies dating back to 1930s, basically focus on the socio-anthropological aspect of the issue as parallel with the definition above. In those studies, researchers are mainly concerned with the nature of the adaptation

processes of a particular ethnic community such as immigrants or members of a primitive tribe contacting with a different culture or the accounts of European colonizers of “other” people (e.g. Malinowski, 1922; Mead, 1928; Spradley, 1969; Goldlust & Richmond, 1977).

However, this monistic view has substantially lost its significance within the last decades of acculturation research. More recent literature on acculturation have argued for an understanding of acculturation as the processes of adjustment that individuals and groups from one culture undergo when they move to another culture. Contrary to the first studies investigating remote tribes, immigrants and refugees, it has been revealed that assimilation is not the only strategy or the outcome of acculturation. Hence, the common association of acculturation with assimilation is put aside and studies on different contacting groups increased in number. The desired end result is not assimilation in which individuals abandon their home culture in favor of the host culture. Acculturation is instead understood as intercultural contact which results in reciprocal cultural changes between the two parties (Berry; 1997; Kim, 1996; De Araujo, 2011).

When we look at the groups who have been investigated under the scope of acculturation studies, majority of research typically concentrate on individuals who are involved in long-term contact with another culture. However, these groups are better to be distinguished from each other in terms of their distinctive characteristics and thereby the strategies they use while adjusting to a new culture. Berry (1997) defines these characteristics as voluntariness, mobility, and permanence that need to be clarified here. Some groups like immigrants enter into the acculturation process voluntarily, while others like refugees and indigenous people get exposed to target culture under pressure. Other groups, such as immigrants and refugees, desire to be in contact because they have migrated to a new location, while others have had the new culture brought to them such as indigenous people and national minorities. And third, among those who have migrated, immigrants are relatively permanently settled into the process, while for others the situation is a temporary one as in the case of sojourning international students and guest workers, who will eventually depart after a certain period of time.

Considering the aforementioned groups in terms of their voluntariness, mobility and permanence, Berry (1997) argues that one's cross-cultural adaptation level may vary from others placed in the same new cultural context. Then, he propounds two basic dimensions of acculturation. Individuals either maintain their original cultural identity or they develop relations with other groups in the host culture. With reference to these dimensions, Berry (1997) puts forth four acculturation strategies including integration, separation, assimilation and marginalization. Integration refers to a high degree of integrity into new culture and active participation in the new cultural context. Assimilation refers to the rejection of original cultural identity and adoption of the host culture. Separation means one holds the original culture and avoids interacting with others. Marginalization is described as the value given neither to cultural maintenance nor interacting with others. Based on these strategies, studies show that the ones who opt for integration strategy are expected to experience less problems in cross-cultural adaptation (Berry, 1997; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999; Kopic, 2002).

Berry's theory explained above is one of the most cited and widely accepted works in the field of acculturation psychology. However, his theory and most of the previous research focus on mainly the acculturation of immigrants. Considering that there are also other groups such as sojourners and expatriates, Berry's theory and other acculturation theories may not totally apply to the groups apart from immigrants (Lian & Tsang, 2010). Furthermore, acculturation is usually referred as an adjustment and adaptation process of cultural change as the final outcome (Adler & Gielen, 2003). For this reason, the extensive body of research in the expatriation literature has focused on cross-cultural adjustment process of individuals during contact with the dominant host culture and it constitutes the central conceptual framework of this study.

2.3 Culture Shock and Cross-Cultural Adjustment

Cross-cultural adjustment is a concept which describes the possible reactions given by individuals to a new cultural framework. These reactions may vary from

completely adopting to completely rejecting the social norms of the host culture (Sigad & Eisikovits, 2009).

According to some scholars such as Searle and Ward (1990), Berry and Sam (1997) and Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001), cross-cultural adaptation has two dimensions, namely psychological adjustment and socio-cultural adjustment. Psychological adjustment refers to expatriate's emotional and physical well-being at the individual level and the strategies they develop to cope with acculturative stress in the new environment. On the other hand, socio-cultural adjustment focuses on expatriate's capability of interpreting the environment and functioning successfully based on the social norms of the new cultural context on the group level.

In some previous cross-cultural studies, the terms adjustment and adaptation have been used interchangeably to describe the process of change in sojourner's behaviors with the aim of functioning in a new environment. However, Matsumoto LeRoux & Robles & Campos (2007) made a distinction between these two terms. They view adaptation as "the process of altering one's behavior to fit in with a changed environment or circumstances, or as a response to social pressure", whereas adjustment is described as "the subjective experiences that are associated with and result from attempts at adaptation" (p.77). I have used the term adjustment as the overwhelming body of research in cross-cultural studies have preferred this term in their models and frameworks including Kim (1988), Black et al., (1991), Aycan (1997), Parker and McEvoy (1993).

The concept of cross-cultural adjustment began with earlier work on culture shock. Oberg (1960), an anthropologist by whom the term culture shock was coined, defined it as an "occupational disease...the anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" before an individual starts to operate effectively in a new culture (p. 177). Weaver (1994) associates culture shock with loss of familiar cues, breakdown of interpersonal communications, and identity crisis. Oberg's culture shock hypothesis still maintains its importance and relevance but over the past decades researchers have argued that all sojourners do not have the same anxiety level, or experience anxiety for varying time intervals (Church, 1982; Stening, 1979). This has led the cross-cultural adjustment cases to

be investigated by taking individual differences into account. Thus, culture shocks may potentially be predicted during the cultural adjustment process but it does not mean that a certain and fixed period of anxiety will be experienced by all individuals (Black, 1990).

Mitchell (2000) believes that culture shock is a reality of living and working in a different cultural environment and it is “inevitable like death” (p.30). Despite the wide range of definitions in the literature, all the definitions share the aspect that culture shock is a set of reactions given as a result of struggling with the rules of an unfamiliar culture systems. These reactions may show differences among individuals; however, there are still some certain stages that are characterized by some common behaviors or signs.

Oberg’s theory of culture shock is believed to have its ground from the study that conducted by Lysgaard (1955). In his research, he studies the Norwegian Fulbright scholars in the U.S. and argues that there are three stages that every expatriate goes through during their cultural adjustment process. During the first phase where expatriates usually engage in observing the new cultural context and enjoying the new environment focusing on the good aspects. After this first phase, expatriates focus on their basic and social needs and this might lead to frustration and isolation due to the efforts to function in the new cultural framework. As the third phase, if they fail to overcome their frustration and isolation, they may start even to blame the host society.

Inspired by the Lysgaard’s discussion and findings, Oberg (1960) developed the U-Curve theory (UCT), on which most of the early scholars on sojourner adjustment have drawn. The theory consists of four stages of adjustment process: honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment (Table 1). The honeymoon stage is described as the excitement to explore a new culture for the sojourner. During the first weeks following arrival at the host country, individuals are usually fascinated by the new environment. This is the highest point in the chart. As soon as the newcomers start to deal with cultural clashes and real problems affecting their social life, the second stage starts. This stage is also known as culture shock phase as it is mainly marked by frustration and confusion. This stage is generally referred as the lowest point

since sojourners start to feel the acculturative stress. If the sojourners gradually learn how to cope with the cultural norms and patterns of new environment by interpreting the cues, the adjustment stage occurs. As for the final stage of a successful cross-cultural adjustment, the individuals are expected to be able to fully and effectively function taking the new cultural norms as reference.

Table 1. Oberg's (1960) four phases of emotional reactions associated with sojourners

Phases Description	
The honeymoon stage	Initial reactions of euphoria, enchantment, fascination, and enthusiasm
The crisis stage	Feelings of inadequacy, frustration, unpreparedness and anxiety
Adjustment stage	Crisis resolution and cultural learning
Mastery stage	Reflecting enjoyment of and functional competence in the new environment

Despite having been cited and accepted widely, the UCT received criticism for various reasons from a number of academics. Pedersen (1995) and Berry (1997) criticized that the U curve model does not explain take complexity of adjustment and the individual variability of patterns into account. Adjustment was not a seen as a simple phenomenon that can be explained through one pattern. Thus, the model is also critiqued as it is quite limited in application to all sojourners especially short term residents (Onwumehili, Nwosu, Jackson & James-Hughes, 2003).

Ward, Okura, Kennedy& Kojima (1998) investigated the psychological and sociological challenges encountered by individuals in their longitudinal study. The findings revealed a more linear progress of adjustment, instead of a U shaped pattern. The adjustment related problems were initially found to be the highest in number and decrease over time. In a similar vein, Ward & Kennedy (1996) and

Ward et al. (1998) found that the initial period of euphoria was not existent in their studies with expatriates.

Another limitation of the theory is noted by Ward et al. (2001) as it covers psychological adjustment and focuses only the emotional states and satisfaction of the expatriates over time, but it does not highlight any socio-cultural adjustment or the shifts in behavior or identity following the cultural contact. Along the same line, there was no mention of skills and strategies gained during the process of adjustment. Forman and Zachar also (2001) examined the UCT hypothesis and came to the conclusion that the results were not in a supportive vein. However, they found out a stronger connection between acculturation and personality traits such as being flexible, confident, perfectionist or rigid.

Based on Oberg's model, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) extended the U-curve model into a W-curve by making a double U-curve. By doing so, they drew attention to both sojourners' adaptation to a foreign culture and also his readjustment to home culture after return. It suggests that the sojourner tends to undergo the u shaped adjustment twice, once there is a decline in adjustment shortly after entering a foreign culture, followed by a recovery stage that paves the way to adjustment; then, upon returning home, the sojourner undergoes the same progress of adjustment to readjust his home culture.

Adler (1975) also put forward an approach to describe the stages that sojourners go through in terms of cross-cultural adjustment. The first stage is called 'contact' stage in which sojourners are overwhelmed with the feeling of 'euphoria'. Differing from Oberg (1960) and Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963), sojourners in this stage are claimed to be more aware and focused on the cross cultural similarities than the differences. The second phase is named as 'disintegration' where sojourners become more aware of the cross-cultural differences. Sojourners become more moody or depressed at this stage as they have to cope with a number of challenges and differences on daily basis. The third phase of the adjustment process is regarded as 'reintegration'. This phase is characterized by stereotypes and generalizations made towards the host culture. These judgmental attitudes may result in aggressive behavior. This is more like a transitional phase where sojourners make their own

decision to remain and be a part of the host culture or return home. The following stage is called ‘autonomy’ where sojourners develop their ability to communicate and follow the cultural cues of the host country, as well as some coping strategies. They become more flexible and relaxed. The last stage of adjustment is ‘independence’, which is marked by cultural sensitivity. Sojourners are aware of the differences and similarities and respect for diversity. They start to enjoy cultural differences and show empathy for the host country nationals and other members of the society.

Though the approaches suggested by Oberg, the Gullahorns and Adler have much in common, one important difference lies in Adler’s conceptualization of a third culture. According to this approach, when sojourners go over the last stage ‘independence’, they are assumed to be more prepared and ready to live in a hybrid culture called the third culture.

There are other researchers in the field who have attempted to describe stage theories pertaining to sojourner adjustment (Garza-Guerrero, 1974, Jacobsen, 1963; Smalley, 1963). Their stages and descriptions are quite similar to the ones reviewed above. By looking at the existing models and theories, Torbiorn (1982) and Black & Mendenhall (1990) emphasized that the stage theories focus more on conformity to the rules of the host culture. However, they argue that this can by no means be the only variable to measure the degree of adjustment. There are also other variables that should be examined such as comfort or satisfaction with the new environment, attitudes, contact with host nationals, or difficulties with aspects of the new environment.

2.4 Models Developed for Cross-Cultural Adjustment

2.4.1 Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)’s Framework for International Adjustment Model

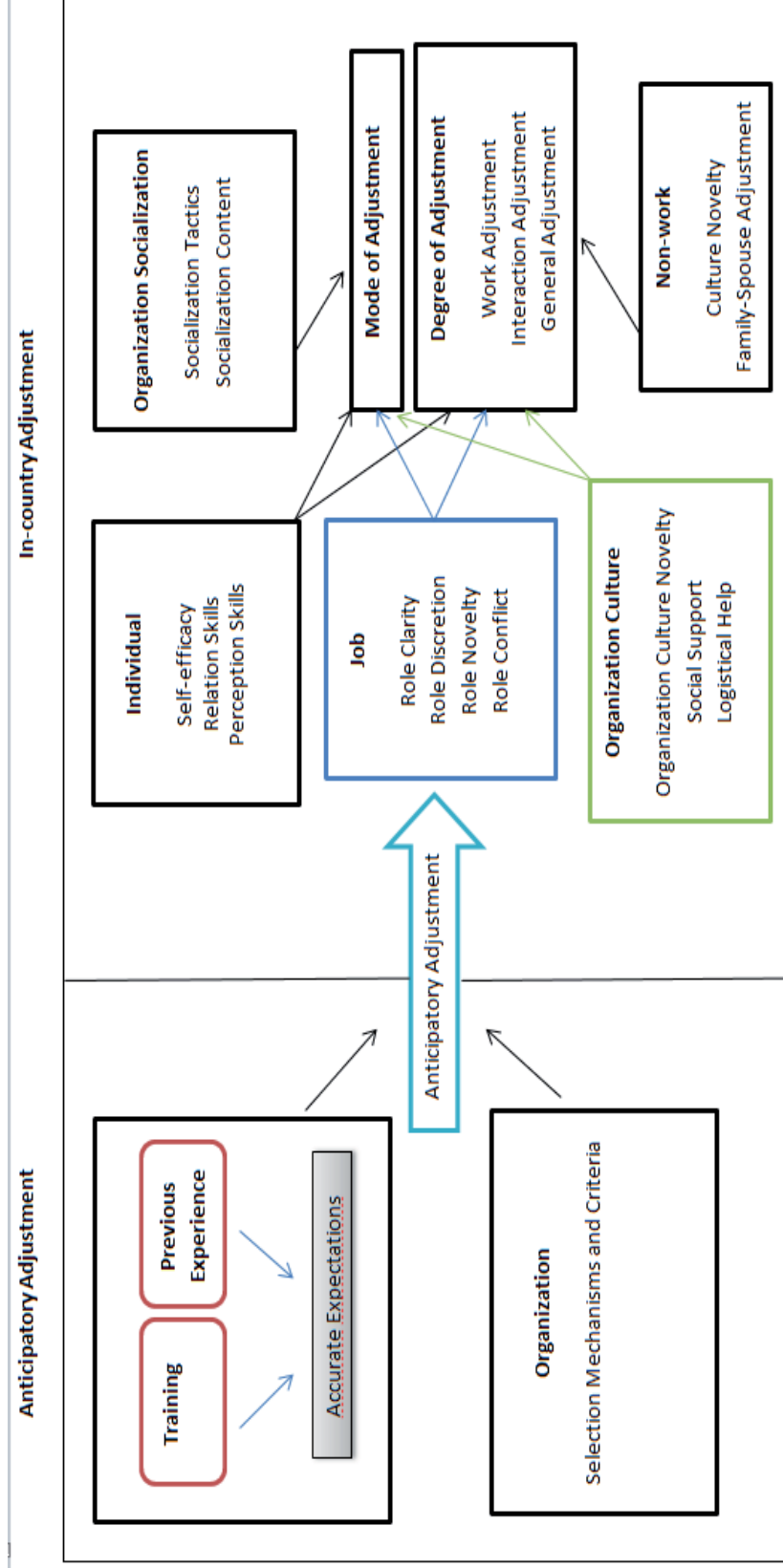
Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) proposed a cross-cultural adjustment framework after reviewing all the cross-cultural studies published between the years

1956 and 1990. Their framework, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of the construct instead of a linear and static model such as UCT, has been widely used for years and empirically supported by Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley (1999), Palthe (2004), Waxin and Panaccio (2005) and many others. Their framework has its grounds both from domestic and international adjustment literature.

The model consists of two main phases of adjustment: anticipatory and in-country (see Figure 2). Black et al. (1991) suggested that anticipatory adjustment is affected by particular individual and organizational factors, which also play a significant contributing role in the in-country adjustment of the expatriate. The individual factors involve cross-cultural training before departure and prior cross-cultural experience. These components are credited for enabling the expatriates to set more accurate expectations for their sojourn. Organizational factors, on the other hand, refer to selection mechanisms and selection criteria. Black et al. (1991) claim that if sojourners go through a rational selection process which includes a wide range of relevant criteria and they are chosen among a pool of candidates, they are more likely to adjust with ease in a relatively shorter period.

These criteria and dimensions proposed in the model received support by a notable number of researchers. Caligiuri, Philips, Lazarova, Tarique, and Bürgi's (2001) study unveiled the positive effects of pre-departure cross-cultural training with respect to setting accurate expectations on the part of the expatriates. In their empirical study, Eschbach, Parker, and Stoeberl (2001) found cross-cultural training to help the experimental expatriate group develop higher levels of intercultural skills and proficiency. Similarly, Holopainen and Björkman (2005) found prior experience to be positively related to performance abroad.

Figure 2. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)'s framework of international cross-cultural adjustment



In-country adjustment is, according to Black et al.'s (1991) cross-cultural framework, has been regarded to consist of three dimensions. The first dimension, general adjustment, refers to how comfortable the individual feels when coping with the day-to-day issues and general living conditions of a new setting, such as food, transportation, climate, housing, etc. Interactional adjustment pertains to the comfort and effectiveness level of an individual while interacting with host nationals both at work and outside of work. The third dimension is work adjustment, which revolves around the specific job responsibilities, performance standards, and supervisory responsibilities in the new environment. This three-dimensional model indicates that the adjustment process and level of a person may vary across the three dimensions. In other words, an expatriate may easily adjust to the general living conditions, but may not feel any comfort while interacting or working with host nationals.

The model also embodies the variables that influence in-country adjustment referring to the individual, the job, the organizational culture, culture novelty and family-spouse relations. The individual factors are listed as self-maintenance skills, relational skills, and perception skills. These skills are all claimed to be at play for all three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment. As for job factors, role clarity and role discretion are expected to enhance work adjustment. The role conflicts or novelty are seen as potential factors to snowball obscurity and impedes adjustment. Cultural proximity between the home and host organizational culture(s) is also regarded to influence the adjustment process since the greater the distance, the more challenging adjustment becomes. Also, the support from colleagues in the host organization can play a facilitating role in adjustment (Black et al., 1991).

In-country adjustment proposed in Black et al.'s (1991) model has been supported by a number of empirical studies in the field (Liao, 2010; Palthe, 2004; Shaffer, et al., 1999; Waxin & Panaccio, 2005). Palthe's (2004) study revealed that organizational socialization is an important factor in determining both general and interactional adjustment. Furthermore, the study provided empirical evidence that cultural proximity and general adjustment are highly related.

Shaffer et al. (1999) and Palthe (2004) supported the impact of work related variables like role clarity, novelty and discretion on cross-cultural adjustment.

Palthe (2004) further demonstrated a significant relationship between family adjustment and both general and interaction adjustment. Earlier research by Black and Stephens (1989) has also demonstrated the role of family adjustment as a strong predictor of expatriate interaction and general adjustment. Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi and Bross (1998), on the other hand, demonstrated a relationship between family adjustment and the expatriate's work adjustment.

2.4.2 Other Cross-Cultural Adjustment Models

Kim (1988) developed a communication-centered model to explain sojourner adjustment. She based this model on two factors affecting the adjustment: One is the receptivity of the culture perceived by the sojourner and the other one is the degree of communication between the sojourner and the host country nationals. If the sojourner can establish successful interactions and assume that the host culture is receptive, then he or she shows an adaptive pattern.

Another model generated for cross cultural adjustment was Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. According to this model, the more one encounter and negotiate with intercultural challenges, the more competent he or she becomes in navigating cultural differences (Endicott, Bock & Narvaez, 2003). The model proposes that there are six stages that people go through during intercultural development. These are *denial*- denying the differences between the two cultures, *defense*- seeing the cultures as a dichotomy of good and bad, *minimization*- minimizing differences by using a universalist perspective. These three stages are called ethnocentric stages. On the contrary, the other set of stages imply an ethno relativistic perspective. In this phase, individuals accept and explore differences- known as *acceptance*, *adaptation* occurs when sojourner apply his or her knowledge about cultural differences while interacting with host country nationals. And the last stage integration happens when the sojourner can mediate between the two cultures. Bennett's model expects individual to go through these stages in progress from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism in order to be qualify as interculturally sensitive.

Parker and McEvoy (1993) are other scholars who put forward a cross-cultural adjustment model after reviewing the related literature. Their three-faceted model based on Black et al.'s model, showed a number of similarities except for the work performance component. This was the first empirical study to investigate the relationship between job performance and cross-cultural adjustment. The three categories of adjustment were visualized in the model as individual, organizational and contextual. Individual variables are prior international experience, work experience and preparation, and demographic characteristics. Organizational variables include compensation policies, repatriation practices, and organization size. Contextual variables include family or spouse adjustment, and cultural novelty. Although this model was inspired by Black et al. (1991)'s study, it mainly focused on expatriates who were sent overseas at the wishes of their employer or company, rather than their own personal choice. In these cases, personality and individual factors play a more central role in determining job performance of the expatriates.

Aycan (1997) proposed his conceptual model of cross cultural adjustment by integrating the concepts of “expatriate, acculturation, coping strategies, performance management, socialization, and international human resource management” into it (Aycan, 1997, p. 435). The model, as an extension to Black et al.'s, is based on two facets: pre-departure and post arrival with a more emphasize on organizational support received from family, company or local units especially in the pre-departure phase. This kind of support is argued to have a major impact on adjustment in addition to personal competencies. Unlike Black et al.'s model, pre-departure period involves “multinational company structure, value orientation and life cycle, strategic planning, organizational support, cultural diversity training in the local unit, and planning for succession in the local unit” (Aycan, 1997). As for general adjustment, Aycan (1997) looks at both psychological and socio-cultural adjustment, however; the model lays more emphasis on the psychological well-being of the expatriates.

2.5 Factors affecting cross-cultural adaptation

The factors that delays or facilitates cross-cultural adjustment process of sojourners are one of the most extensively investigated area of research in the field. Some key factors that were found relevant are age, gender, cultural distance, character traits,

time spent in the host country, host language fluency, prior cultural experience, mentorship and social support (Budworth & DeGama, 2012; Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2000; Kim & Slocum, 2008; Littrell & Salas, 2005; Moon, Choi & Jung, 2012; Pedersen, 2010; Seo & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005; Wang, 2009; Ward & Searle, 1991; Ward, et al., 1998).

There have been some studies that interested in whether age is a factor affecting sojourner adjustment. Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1966) and Hull (1978) have investigated age as a factor and found out that younger sojourners are found to have more contact with the host nationals and better adapt themselves into the host culture. Tomich, McWhirter and King (2000) also argued that the younger the sojourner, the quicker and easier the adjustment will be.

In his work Kohls (2001) identified some personality traits of sojourners that facilitate cross-cultural adjustment, such as the ability to tolerate failure, having sense of humor, and being experience-driven rather than task-driven. In a similar vein, Deardorff (2006) found that successful sojourners showed attitudes of respect, openness, and curiosity. Nameth (2014), also reported certain attitudes of sojourners such as being open to intercultural learning and having a sense of humor- that help sojourners adjust to living and working in a foreign country. This study also revealed that when sojourners encountered different cultural perspectives about teaching and learning, cultural informants helped them overcome the cultural challenges. And also the teacher sojourners engaged in reciprocal intercultural exchange by informing others about American culture. Flexibility, extraversion and resourcefulness were regarded as salient characteristics of well-adjusted sojourners (Cui & Awa, 1992; Ramalu, et al., 2010).

Fisher and Hartel (2003) further points to three personal factors as precursors of intercultural effectiveness: ability to communicate effectively, to establish relationships, and to cope with psychological stress. Another study, Tan, Hartel, Panipucci and Strybosch (2005) proposed that emotions, especially in collectivistic cultures, play a major role in cross-cultural adjustment. They argue that emotional demands may vary in different cultures, and sojourns might be negatively influenced by it. Therefore, if the cultural differences big in number, emotional

maturity may determine the adjustment process. They defined emotional maturity as “an array of capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one’s ability to cope with environmental demands” (Tan, et. al 2005, p. 9).

An important variable to consider in cross-cultural adjustment research is the length of the time spent in in the new country (Church, 1982; Kim & Slocum, 2008; Ryder & Aldeh & Paulhus, 2000). These studies claim that adjustment becomes easier if the sojourner spend longer time in the host culture. Ji’nan (2014), examined the relationship between socio-cultural adaptation and length of stay in U.S., and the findings show that the socio-cultural adaptation and psychological adjustment of Chinese guest teachers is positively correlated with the duration of their stay in U.S.

There are also a number of studies looking at the role of communication skills of the sojourner in cross cultural adjustment. Hannigan (1990) and Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman (1979) support that three major abilities namely communication ability, the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, and the ability to deal with psychological stress are the key variables in cross-cultural adaptation.

Several studies focused on the depth and quality of relationships between the sojourner and host country nationals (Ward and Searle, 1991; Berry & Sam, 1997; Lin, 2001). Torbiorn (1982) found that when sojourners experienced a high level of contact with the members of the host culture, the adjustment process is easier due to the social connections established. Similarly, Kealey (1989) studied Canadian expatriates and found that participation in the local culture facilitated the effectiveness of work adjustment. In his literature review Church (1982) asserted that deep and positive social interaction is "a necessary condition for effective sojourner adjustment" (p. 551).

Cross-cultural adaptation is also found to be influenced by social support as well as acculturation strategies (Berry, 1997). Social support means the extent to which sojourners receive social, emotional and psychological needs such as affection and belonging from friends, family, the colleagues and other people (Winefield, Winefield & Tiggemann, 1992). Lin (2002) puts forth that social support as a social capital can be considered as a kind of social resource available in social interactions.

Therefore, greater social support means more resources for sojourners to adapt to a new cultural context. For this reason, social support is an important factor in cross-cultural adaptation (Bourdieu, 1986).

Both Shaffer and Harrison (1998) and Liu and Lee (2008) found that job satisfaction contributes to intercultural adjustment. It is seen as the combination and reflection of fair treatment and respect, organizational functioning, rewards, interactions with colleagues and superiors, and the work itself. Job satisfaction is believed to bring motivation and cooperation. Thus, low job satisfaction is more likely to result in an unsuccessful assignment. In fact, Black, et al., (1991) found that job satisfaction is both a precursor and the predicted outcome of cross cultural adjustment.

2.6 Recent Studies on Cross-Cultural Adjustment in ELT

Recent studies on cross-cultural adjustment are more qualitative based studies which focus on unique experiences of sojourners and their progress of learning cultures during their stay in a foreign country. The majority of the studies have investigated sojourner teachers or expatriates (Slogoski, 2014; Nameth, 2014; Liao, 2010; Romig, 2009; Chen & Cheng, 2010; Garson, 2005).

Slogoski (2014) conducted a multiple case study to explore the adjustment process of sojourning English language teachers in their academic settings in Japan and South Korea. Based on the host culture complex model of Holliday (1994), the study revealed important findings regarding cultural informants. It points out that the relationship between sojourning ELTs and their co-teachers facilitated the sojourners' cultural learning the most. It is also reported that relationship of the participants with their spouses in their adjustment patterns play central roles in some parts of the host culture complex.

Romig (2009), by using an ethnographic approach, examined the acculturation and professional adjustment process of four Chinese teachers in a teacher exchange project. The findings were mainly related to behavior management and teaching pedagogy. Within both areas, the teachers were found to display novice teacher

characteristics with Chinese approaches of teaching. As for other aspects of culture such as customs, beliefs, actions, thoughts, values and interactions, the Chinese teachers also show Chinese teaching practices.

Nameth (2014) investigated six American teachers' reflections on their cross-cultural experiences upon returning home countries. By using a narrative methodology, the study suggests that the teachers who were more open to intercultural learning and who have sense of humor adjusted better to their social and professional environments in their host countries. The finding also revealed that sojourners faced a number of challenges and different cultural perspectives about teaching and learning, and they resorted to cultural informants to receive help for culturally-based challenges.

Coates (2005) negotiated what challenges and rough times Filipino teachers who migrated to work in the US face during their adaptation period due to the differences between cultural norms, education systems and student profile of the Philippines and the US.

Wang (2002)'s multiple case studies investigated eight Chinese immigrant teachers and their experiences of cultural clashes and adaptation process in Toronto schools. The findings have stressed the complexity of the cultural experiences and their causes. The teachers also employed various coping strategies to respond to the cultural challenges they experienced. However, findings also revealed that Chinese teachers consciously preferred to maintain their culture in the Toronto school context and personality plays a key role in the adaptation choices of the teachers.

Liao (2010) examined fourteen expatriate English teachers' cross cultural adjustment process in Taiwan in his mixed method study. The process was examined based on the framework by Black, et al. (1991). The findings revealed that teachers' job satisfaction, age, previous cross cultural experience and their motivations and aims for coming to Taiwan are the key factors which affect their intention to stay in Taiwan. Host language ability was found to have significant impact on sojourners' daily activities and social life outside work in terms of general adjustment.

Chen and Cheng (2010)'s qualitative case study focused on the challenges that three African teachers of English in Taiwan encountered in elementary schools. During their expat, the teachers faced some challenges about their accent, and teaching-related problems such as large number of students and culturally different teaching practices.

Li and Hall (2016) investigated the experiences of non-Chinese academic staff in a Chinese university with the aim of revealing the expectations and motivations of working abroad and to what extent these motivations were fulfilled. The findings showed that the teachers were not prepared for the cultural and professional differences in a Chinese university, and a cultural training program was needed.

Alban (2013) conducted a phenomenological study focusing on the cultural adjustment of American teachers in international schools in the Asian Pacific region. The findings of the study indicated that while teachers were adjusting to the new cultural settings, they started to act as teachers and learners of the particular culture. After gaining decent knowledge of the expectations and norms of the students and parents, they started to teach these roles that parents and students play in an American based educational system. They also became learners of their community culture, and this ultimately increased their understanding of other cultures and built connections with communities.

Most of the cross-cultural adjustment studies focused on the teachers in the USA or the expatriate teachers in the Far East countries. However, there is a dearth of research on cross cultural studies in Turkish contexts. There are only a few studies that investigated the Fulbright teaching assistants in Turkey, but none of them were related to cross-cultural adjustment.

Yılmaz (2014) conducted a survey on 25 Fulbright English teaching assistants working at different universities in Turkey and asked them to evaluate the educational standards and the quality of education. ETAs reported that the Turkish instructors do not use contemporary teaching methods, not dedicated and not motivating students. As for the learners, ETAs reflected that Turkish college students do not like Turkish and are not willing to learn English. They also agree

that students are not provided with sufficient support to learn English despite their aptitude. In addition, they reported their problems related to physical conditions, heavy workload, books and administrations.

Şahan, Şahan and Razi (2014) investigated whether language proficiency has an impact on cultural adaptation. 31 American teachers who had varying levels of Turkish proficiency were surveyed in this study and the results indicated no significant differences between their language proficiency and socio-cultural adaptation. However, they found a significant negative correlation between prior abroad experience and successful socio-cultural adaptation in Turkey.

Özüdoğru and Adıgüzel (2013) investigated the profiles of Fulbright English Teaching Assistants employed in Turkey. It has been found that there is no standardization in the implementation of the program across Turkish universities and the majority of English teaching assistants do not have a degree in teaching. Furthermore, all the English teaching assistants were reported to know varying levels of Turkish although it is not a prerequisite for the program.

Demir, Aksu and Paykoç (2000) examined the social, professional impacts and its effectiveness through mailing 277 Fulbright scholars in different parts of Turkey. The data showed that the majority of the scholars agreed that the program offered social, professional and personal opportunities and positive effects on their lives. Fulbright experience was described as broadening their worldview. On the other hand, the program was found to contribute to the development of the country.

The most recent and only qualitative studies related to cross-cultural issues in Turkish context were conducted by Kibar (2016) and Çiftçi (2016). Kibar (2016) by employing a narrative case study investigated the acculturation process of three Turkish graduate students in the USA in relation to the nine-week pre departure cross-cultural orientation module. She found out that the module implemented helped students overcome cultural shocks and ease their acculturative stress in the host country. Çiftçi (2016) conducted a phenomenology on the decision making processes and preparation period of three students before embarking on a short term international exchange program. His study revealed that the preparation and

decision making process is complex and there are several individual factors and chaotic thinking patterns are at play for making cross- cultural decisions.

These studies are of great importance as they were attempts to explore the cases or phenomenon through qualitative methods and techniques. However, both studies focused on students. Studies on teachers' cross-cultural adaptation processes in Turkish contexts are still overlooked and this study aims to address and bridge this gap of qualitative studies on sojourning teachers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Presentation

Based on the introduction and overview presented in Chapter 1, and the review of the related literature provided in Chapter 2, this chapter will introduce the research design and methodology containing the choice of specific research methods, site and participants as well as researcher's role and ethical considerations.

3.1 The Study

This study aims to investigate the challenges that two American Fulbright teachers encountered during their social and professional adjustment processes in a city and university located in the Central Anatolian part of Turkey. Three main research questions seek to understand how and in what ways the teachers have adjusted to social and daily life as well as their new teaching environment and how they made sense of their new lives and experiences in a foreign country. Under the light of these guiding questions, the study unfolds the cultural shocks and dissonances that the teachers went through during their stay.

While addressing the three central research questions probing the socio-cultural and academic adjustment of the teachers, the ultimate purpose of the study is to provide a holistic, detailed account of the unique experiences of the two American teachers instead of reaching generalizations through numeric data and statistics. This underlying assumption is supported concordantly by the definition Strauss and Corbin (1990) provided as follows:

Qualitative research is any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons' lives, stories, behavior, but also about organizational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships (p. 17).

In order to truly delve into the experiences of the participant teachers reflecting their acculturation processes to different norms and practices in their new home as Fulbright scholars, qualitative method is found to be valuable since understanding a complex phenomenon or unexplored areas from the perspective of the people involved is the central focus of any qualitative study. As Moustakas (1994) highlights, in qualitative inquiry, rich and detailed data comes only from exploration of the "wholeness of experience" provided by individual's accounts. Another distinguishing feature of qualitative method is that research is carried out in naturalistic settings. Rather than investigating controlled variables in an experiment or a test, data is collected through a number of tools such as interviews, observations and collection of documents and artifacts (Creswell, 2002).

Even if qualitative studies vary to a large extent in terms of their aim, design, length, and philosophical underpinnings, each qualitative approach embraces a paradigm. As put forth by Creswell (1994) and Mason (2002), paradigm is as important as selection of the topic, problem or interest in order to undertake a solid research. The constructivist paradigm, one of the most accepted paradigms in qualitative research, goes parallel with the philosophical foundations of this research. According to Merriam (1998), "Reality is not an objective entity; rather, there are multiple interpretations of reality" (p. 22). Hence, she argues that reality is co-constructed by individuals through their interaction with their social worlds. Espousing this philosophical assumption, the core interest of any researcher conducting qualitative research is to understand the meaning or knowledge reconstructed by individuals. In other words, the researcher aims to interpret the way people ascribe meaning to their interactions and experiences in their daily lives.

The tradition of interpretive studies suggests that human realities constructed human realities constantly evolve as the interpretations change. Thus, contextualization and interpretation of these realities is the main objective of investigating culture of individuals or societies (Glesne, 2011). The interpretivist approach is unique in the way that it provides the researcher with the opportunity to gain access to individuals and societies who are rich with ideas of cultures (Glesne, 2011; Nader, 2011). The interpreted realities that emerged after a rigorous process of investigation inform give us insights about the nature of human culture.

3. 2 Research Design

Contemporary qualitative studies are informed by multiple methods and follows postmodern and experimental movements (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It is also a commonly used inquiry particularly in the fields of education, psychology, history, sociology, medical research, and anthropology, holding multiple meanings and purposes depending on the field of study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

This study is an ethnography which incorporates ethnographic approach with phenomenological study research methodology for a variety of reasons. It is an ethnographic study as the researcher aims to gain knowledge and understanding of a particular culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2007) and regards the process of teacher's adjustment to new contexts as a socio-cultural process (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). In other words, the researcher seeks to uncover and describe the experiences, challenges and coping strategies that shape the behaviors of a sojourning group, Fulbright scholars as in this case.

As the goal of the study is to gain in-depth understanding of the cultural adaptations and challenges of American teachers while living and working in a Turkish city and to unfold the influence of their own and the host culture on their day-to-day and teaching practices, the initial research questions that guide the study necessitate insights that are congruent with the definition of an ethnographic case study put forth by Watson-Gegeo (1988) as "the study of people's behavior in groups and on

cultural patterns of that behavior” (p.576). Merriam & Simpson (2000) also state that the intent of ethnography is to make interpretations of “symbolic meanings” that participants generate and “patterns of social interactions” they manifest.

The term “ethnography” is used to refer to both the process of studying or describing a culture and the end product. Fetterman (1998) describes ethnography as “the art and science of describing a group or culture” (p. 1). According to Wolcott (1999), “The purpose of ethnographic research is to describe and interpret cultural behavior” (cited in Spindler & Spindler, 1987, p. 43). All the definitions focus on studying “culture” and Merriam (1988) argues that this is what makes an ethnography unique by suggesting that “concern with the cultural context is what sets this type of study apart from other qualitative research” (p. 230).

Gregory (2005) argues that the aim of ethnographic research is to “speak up for those who are ordinary, and to make visible the lives of people whose stories are not often told” (p.9). The core elements of an ethnography were put forth by Agar (1996) as follows:

Ethnography is “an arrogant enterprise and impossible task” in which an ethnographer moves in among a group of strangers to study and describe their beliefs, documents their social life, write about their “subsistence strategies”... Ethnography is a much more complicated process than collecting data (p. 91).

The researcher conducts an ethnographic study when he or she is interested in studying a cultural group. In other words, the ethnographer “describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture sharing group” (Creswell, 2007, p. 68). The ethnographer investigates the cultural group by conducting fieldwork and totally immersing herself in that culture for a prolonged time (Fetterman, 2010). The data are collected primarily through participant observation and interviews (Creswell, 2007; Fetterman, 2010).

Although participant observation is always emphasized in ethnographies, this does not mean that ethnographic research is limited to one method. On the contrary, according to Honer and Hitzler (2015) ethnography is not a pure form neither with regard to data collection nor data analysis procedures. Creswell (2007) regards five main qualitative methodologies as case study, ethnography, phenomenology, narrative or grounded theory. Although he acknowledges these as “pure” approaches, he points out that many researchers will combine several elements from them in one study (p. 10). Hence, ethnographers are not united by one specific method but rather by a specific common understanding of scientific practice, and this eclectic method has become prominent in recent years (Breuer & Reichertz 2002).

As Fetterman (2008) put it the “typical model for ethnographic research is based on a phenomenologically oriented paradigm” that “embraces a multicultural perspective because it accepts multiple realities” (p. 5). This ethnographic study has a phenomenological orientation, as “the phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of people involved” (Welman & Kruger, 1999, p. 189). Inspired by Husserl’s philosophical phenomenology, Schutz focused on the ways in which “ordinary members of society attend to their everyday lives” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000, p. 488-489). Thus, the main reason to apply phenomenology into this study is my concern with the lived experiences of the teachers (Greene, 1997; Maypole & Davies, 2001), in addition to my observations as the ethnographer.

According to Maggs-Rapport (2000), ethnography and interpretive phenomenology have more aspects in common rather than differences. Both are explanatory, use open structured interviews, both focus on meaning derived from the narratives and observations. While ethnography concentrates on the shared views and values of a particular culture group or individuals; interpretive phenomenology is an effort to uncover concealed meaning in the phenomenon, embedded in the words of participants (Sorrell & Redmond, 1995).

Honer and Hitzler (2015), in a supportive vein, argue that the most salient characteristic of phenomenology-based ethnography is ethnographer's participation in the everyday life of the participants. They argue that this form of ethnography is different not only from other methods of qualitative studies in social sciences, but also from other ethnographic approaches in the sense that participation in phenomenology-based ethnography is not only about being there or getting close to the action, but about getting "as undistorted and unrestricted a view as possible of the practices of the actors in the field" (p.599).

3.3 Participants

Two newly graduated teachers namely Charlotte and Maria (pseudonyms) participating in the Fulbright Language Teaching Assistantship Program volunteered to take part in this study for the 2015-2016 academic year.

The teachers were chosen by convenience sampling based on the accessibility and proximity to the researcher. It would have probably yielded no in-depth data unless the researcher had worked within the same institution as the participant teachers. The teachers arrived in Turkey on August, 30. Their first two weeks were allocated to Fulbright Orientation Program in Ankara, which was simply described as their "American Bubble" since they were mostly surrounded with the other Fulbright grantees and a group of embassy members. After two weeks of orientation of teaching in general, Turkish language and culture accompanied by city tours and social gatherings, they arrived at their new home on September, 13.

Charlotte was born in Princeton, New Jersey on March 5th, 1993. She lived in Hope, NJ, which she describes as a small historical, and beautiful New England town. She lived in Hope by the time she was about 5, then she moved to Great Falls Montana AFB because of her father's job in the U.S. Air Force. When she was 9, they moved to Mildenhall Air Force base in Suffolk, England. During that time, her father was deployed to Izmir (a coastal city in Turkey) for a year. She stayed with her mother and two siblings in England, but also they got to visit her father during the summer and winter holiday. This was the first time she went to Turkey and

visited Izmir, Pamukkale, Ephesus, and Bodrum. She does not remember much, but she remembers loving the Izmir weather and swimming a lot which every 10 year-old loves. They lived in England for 4 years, and when she turned 13, they moved to Omaha AFB in Nebraska. She went to school there for three years, where she got more involved in cheerleading and choir. Her junior year of high school, aged 16, and her father got stationed in Misawa AFB Japan. She moved there for the last two years of high school. She loved Japan, and it was there that she really developed a love for travelling and immersing herself in different cultures. It was also there that she began to love volunteering after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan that happened in her senior year. In her last year of school, she took a class where she got to spend time in a kindergarten classroom. She loved it, and that was the reason she majored in Elementary Education and ESL Education (English as a second language) in college. Once she graduated from high school in Japan, she went to Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, where she went to school for the next 4 years. During this time she was in 2 different choirs, cheerleading, Gamma Phi Iota sorority, and even travelled to different countries including Ireland, Scotland, Italy, France, Austria, Korea, Panama, Mexico, Peru and Greece. In her last semester of college she lived in Panama for three months, where she was an English Literature teacher for 6-8th graders at a bilingual school in Panama City. That semester she came back to Nebraska where she graduated in May with a BA degree in Elementary education with an endorsement in ESL, as well as with music minor. For the past 5 months, she has been living in Eskisehir Turkey. She knows elementary level Spanish and intermediate level Turkish.

Based on my observations, she has all the characteristics to describe an extroverted person. She likes interacting with people, making new friends and talking. Having a large group of friends around is important to her. She hardly abstains from expressing herself and sharing experiences even if she feels inadequate to speak a foreign language like Turkish. Apparently her prior cross-cultural experiences in the United Kingdom, Japan and Panama made a significant contribution to her being an outgoing and sociable individual. She enjoys helping people and involving in volunteer programs and projects for years. She is quite agreeable and open to new

ideas and suggestions. She is an active and spontaneous person that looks for new adventures, interactions and travels.

Charlotte's decision to come to Turkey was not as planned as Maria's. When she was in college, she heard about Fulbright from a friend and she knew that when she graduated she wanted to get out of the US and she wanted to travel and do her job. For this reason, she thought Fulbright was a great idea. She was considering Fulbright but didn't know where she wanted to go. The first time she typed in the web address, Turkey just incidentally popped up on the front page. She thought that it could not be a coincidence as she had a prior visit to Turkey when her soldier father was working in this country in 2003. Though she didn't remember much about this short trip as she was very little, she knew that she always wanted to go back.

Maria was born in New York, USA in 1993. She lived on Long Island, New York all her life. She is a 2014 graduate of Long Island University. She grew up in an Italian-American family, with many Italian traditions and family values influencing her early life, but unfortunately her mother and father divorced when she was young. Despite the very difficult circumstances that her immediate family faced, her mother ensured that her adolescence was not tainted and nurtured her into being the accomplished young adult that she is today.

When she went to university, she continued to be highly dedicated to her studies, largely due to the fact that she was so interested in what she was studying. She majored in linguistics and teaching English as a foreign language, and also pursued minors in Spanish and Italian. She has been developing an interest in languages since she began learning Italian in middle school, and by the time she got to university, she found that she had a natural talent for understanding languages and linguistics, and settled on a career path in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

She further cultivated her love for language and culture when she studied abroad in the fall of 2012 in Florence, Italy. After living and traveling abroad, she also developed a passion for traveling and interacting with foreigners, which led her to

her decision to eventually apply for a Fulbright grant for the 2015 academic year right after her graduation. She made short visits to Germany, Czech Republic, England, the Netherlands, and Switzerland for touristic purposes. She is the first one in family that graduates from a university and goes abroad.

As for her character traits, Maria can be deemed as an introvert. Unlike Charlotte, she is very reserved and withdrawn. She usually refrains from taking initiatives and prefers to keep a conversation going instead of starting it herself. She likes making time to herself and generally spends her free time watching her favorite TV episodes and cooking. Mostly she is fairly quiet, but not really content with that and pushes herself to be as outgoing as he can be. Though she describes herself as a “laid back” person, my observations and interviews signify that she is really organized, conscientious, and responsible and likes having rules. During the interviews, she deemed herself a realistic person and who always rolls with the punches.

Maria wanted to do Fulbright when she heard about it in her freshman year of college and she really liked the idea and kept back in her head for a few years. When graduation time came around, she researched it more and chose Turkey because, at that time, she was also taking a Turkish linguistics class and she was becoming more and more interested in Turkish. When she was researching, she found that Turkey had a large number of grants so the likelihood of getting a grant to Turkey was greater. The combination of really liking studying the language and the amount of grants brought her to be a Fulbright scholar in Turkey. In her journal she asserted that the main motive behind it was basically learning Turkish and learning about the culture.

The majority of Maria’s prior knowledge about Turkey was coming from the Turkish course she took a year before her sojourn. She knew a decent amount about the culture, food and people in general because her teacher was native Turkish and Maria said the course was really focused on experiential learning so the teacher tried to bring inasmuch Turkish experience as he could. They went out to Turkish restaurants a few times, they visited a few houses of Turkish families, they talked a lot about Turkish, and they listened to music and a lot of authentic materials. Thus, she had a general idea what she was walking into. So the acculturation process for

Maria had already begun the previous year, in a sense, when she started to take this class.

3.4 Setting

According to Merriam (2009), qualitative research requires a description and interpretation of the acculturation process which is only possible with a full awareness of the context in which participants interact. Thus, both the city that teachers lived in for almost a year and the school context the two teachers worked should be described in this section in order to uncover their socio-cultural and academic adaptation processes thoroughly.

The current study took place at a state university in the Central Anatolia region of Turkey, in A Foreign Languages Department. The choice of the research site was of convenience as I have been an instructor at this university since September 2014. While determining the research site, all the factors affecting the time, energy and effort that the study required and close interactional opportunities with the teachers were taken into consideration. Currently, the school has 62 instructors of English and 937 learners. The school accepts students right after they register for their university departments with the aim of bringing learners up to intermediate and upper levels in terms of command of English so that they can follow their studies with necessary skills in English for the following years.

The program requires the learners to obtain a grade over sixty points to be able to transit to their departments without attending the one-year long preparatory program. The learners, who cannot satisfy the aforementioned requirements of the program, are to take the placement examination in order to be ascribed to the classes in accordance with their proficiency level. English is taught to four different levels of students: beginner, elementary, pre-intermediate and English Language Teaching Preparatory Program. The current learners can be categorized into three major faculties: Faculty of Engineering, and Architecture, Faculty of Science and Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences.

The city where the university in question is located is also worth to be mentioned here. Eskişehir is a historical and a popular touristic city in the Central Anatolian Region of Turkey, which has a fairly large population of about 830,000. Covering an area of 2,678 km², it does by no means look like a village but it still has the advantages of being small, while also being a city. The city is well-known as a college town, which has one of the largest numbers of student enrollments in the country due to the two big university campuses based in the city center. It is the only city in the region that has more than one state university except for the three biggest cities in Turkey; namely İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir.

The presence of two big state universities plays an important role in both demographic and socio-cultural characteristics of the city. Although it is surrounded by relatively conservative cities such as Konya, Kütahya and Afyon, Eskişehir is considered one of the most liberal cities in Turkey, which probably has a lot to do with the large amount of students reaching about 100.000. Besides, the dominance of the student population has shaped the city's social life and amenities. At the very heart of the city, the Porsuk River with its colorful bridges, gondolas, and endless riverside cafes, bars, restaurants, and shops flows. This is the area from which Eskişehir got its nickname as 'Turkey's Venice'. The city can be reached by high-speed trains as well as regular trains and intercity buses from other cities. It also has two airports; one is for military purposes. The civil one is not in-service for a few years and passengers use the closest airport located in Ankara.

In 2013, the city was given the title of Culture and Arts Capital of the Turkic World and chosen as UNESCO Capital of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Being home to two symphony orchestras, international festivals and hosting a considerable number of musical events, theater and dance performances, cinematic activities, and art exhibitions, glassblowing workshops and museums, the city can be closely identified with art. For that reason alone, artistic and cultural activities play a central role in the lives of city dwellers.

Residents of the city can be broadly described as middle-class consisting families and students to a large extent. The literacy rate is one of the highest throughout the country and the majority of people are high school or university graduates. Cafe and

bar culture is a very significant aspect of the city. Thus, spending hours in a cafe is a very popular activity for friend groups, couples, book readers and even businessmen. With this distinct cafe culture, a river flowing through the city and bikes as the most convenient form of transportation, it looks more like a European city. However, the access to American goods in the city is almost non-existent as there is only one mall importing only limited amount of foreign products. The nearest city to get access to some American products is the capital city, which is three hours-long drive from Eskişehir.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

This study took place during the two semesters of the American teachers' teaching experience in Turkey. As noted by Wolcott (2008), an ethnographic approach also guides data-collection process. The data were collected through a variety of data collection techniques including weekly one-on-one interviews, teacher journals, class video-tapes, blogs and researcher journal. As a requirement of an ethnographic study, the study drew on interpretive methods in order to capture an in-depth picture of the case. Since ethnography is regarded among scholars as an approach, rather than a particular data collection technique, I used multiple techniques and tools as necessitated by the guiding research questions.

Interviews: Interviews were the first and main method I made use of collecting data. Data collection started with short, informal and unstructured interviews in the very first week of September right after I met Maria and Charlotte and lasted for almost ten months until they left the country in the second week of June 2016. Except for the three-week long winter break and two national holiday weeks, 66 interviews in total were conducted with both of the teachers. The duration of the interviews ranged from five minutes to two hours and they were held at the location and time that the teachers chose. Most of the interviews took place in the form of informal meetings in a nice and cozy coffee shop or in my office at school where we sat and talked comfortably. The majority of the in-depth interviews were

unstructured or semi-structured revolving around the teacher's social and professional lives. The topics that were widely and consistently emerged in the interviews enabled me to come up with the initial codes for analysis. Some interviews took a more reflective form which we talked about the incidents that teachers noted in their journals and the questions that I, as the researcher, asked within the light of the class-recordings of the week or blog posts such as "Why did you feel like that? What happened that day?" They were also asked to clarify some points raised by the teachers and to provide further examples on the issue. I also purposefully had ten of the interviews in the presence of both teachers as a group in order to see whether their opinions and experiences influenced each other. While I was recording the interviews, I also kept taking some notes on the researcher's journal. The ultimate objective of the interviews was to uncover issues raised by the teachers during the observations, class recordings and journals to triangulate data from all three sources to ensure the validity (Sharan 1998). A sample interview extract can be seen in Appendix A.

Teacher Journals: Both teachers were asked to keep a journal starting from their third week in Turkey so that they could take a note of every incident that they found interesting, surprising, confusing or unpleasant within the institution as well as accounts of their daily encounters; particularly the ones relating to any performance of culture. Some parts of the teacher journals also took online forms depending on the preference and convenience for the teachers. Also the posts on their personal Facebook accounts which contained any cultural experience or some comments were included as journal entries since both of them were active social media users. Please see Appendix B for a sample teacher journal.

Class Video Recordings: Class video recordings were taken from each teacher twice a month in order to keep track of the changes in teaching practices of the teachers and their adaptation to the school culture. Since each teacher had more than ten different classes in different levels, it would not be feasible to record every class

they taught. Thus, teachers were asked to choose one of their classes in order to get consistent data. As it was impossible for me to observe Maria's and Charlotte's classes, the recordings were invaluable to get an emic perspective. I received 23 video-recordings from Maria and 24 from Charlotte. I mainly focused on their teaching practices, classroom management techniques, relationship with the students as well as the content of the lessons.

Blog: One of the teachers kept a personal blog where she shared any updates about her living and teaching practices in Turkey on a regular basis. Her blog posts were mostly about her travelling notes, cultural encounters, and personal comments on her experiences. She also gave some specific information about her new lifestyle in the host country supported by visual elements such as images and short videos in order to update her family and friends back in the US and Europe. Though Charlotte did not have any attempt to write a blog, Maria's personal blog contains a lot of data referring to their shared teaching experiences, trips, daily routines, and so forth since they spent much of their time together during and after school. A sample interview extract can be seen in Appendix C.

Researcher Journal: As a researcher and an instructor working at the same institution, I personally took a considerable amount of notes whenever I interacted with the teachers or saw them interacting with students, colleagues or administrators so that I could catch as much detail as possible regarding the teacher's daily and academic lives as well as I could organize my observation notes in an indelible and neat way. Participant-observations are valuable as they enable the researcher to personally take part in the process and to capture genuine communication among participants. See Appendix D for a sample researcher journal page.

Table 2. *Data Collection Timeline*

Month	Charlotte	Maria
September	Short Interviews Teacher's Journal	Short Interviews Teacher's Journal
October	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews & class video Blog + Teacher's Journal
November	Interviews + class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews + class video Blog + Teacher's Journal
December	Interviews + class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews + class video Blog + Teacher's Journal
January	Interviews Teacher's Journal	Interviews Teacher's Journal
February	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal
March	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal
April	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal
May	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal	Interviews & class video Teacher's Journal
First two weeks of June	Final Interviews	Final Interviews

The data were collected on a regular basis each of the following months: September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May and the first two weeks of June. Blog posts and journal entries were discussed as complementary to interviews and class video recordings. Data collection and analysis were conducted simultaneously up until teachers left the country on June, 15th 2016. For the details of the amount of data collected, please see the table below.

Table 3. *The summary and overview of data collected*

	Charlotte	Maria	Total
Interviews	8 hours	6 hours	14 hours
Class recordings	11 hours 15 min	10 hours 10 min	21.5 hours
Teacher Journals	39	36	75 pages
Researcher's Journal	-	-	60 pages
Blog Data	-	18 pages	18 pages

3.6 Data Analysis and Triangulation

My approach to organizing and analyzing data was in parallel with collection procedures, which was informed by both Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Braun and Clarke (2006). Data were analyzed following ethnographic research methods. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the researcher should analyze the data in a prescriptive way, but at the same time let the data speak for itself to obtain the emerging and recurrent themes. I collected the raw data including interview transcripts and class recordings, teacher journals and online blog entries, and then I stored all the electronic data on my password-protected computers.

Merriam (1998) argues that data collection and analysis are simultaneous processes that should go hand in hand in a qualitative research. For this reason the “process is recursive and dynamic” (p.123). To me, data analysis of this study had been an unceasing effort throughout the process of data collection. In other words, the data had been processed from the time when the first interview took place, until the data collection was completed.

The steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed. These steps are familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, producing the project. First, all the interviews were transcribed on weekly basis with some notes or question marks for member-

checking. Then, multiple times I read through all the transcripts while listening to the recordings and took personal notes including my first impressions as the researcher. These little notes helped me a lot to come up with the initial codes. As I ended up with having huge data to manage, qualitative software called MAXQDA was utilized to organize and manipulate the data in a more methodical way. This gave me the opportunity to see the data both holistically and analytically and go back and forth between the data sources.

In order to concentrate on adjustment process, the data were analyzed in terms of aspects of time. By utilizing a timeline (first three, second and last three months), the researcher could see the changes that occurred over time and indications of participants' abilities to become culturally competent. Nevertheless, the data-driven nature of ethnographic studies eventually enabled me to look at the data as non-linear and discursive as also suggested by Creswell (2007).

The focus was on the general, social and academic adjustment patterns of the teachers. For coding process, the initial coding made a deeper analysis possible with addition of some sub-codes, which in turn provided a more interpretive analysis of the data. As an attempt to refine the data, the researcher searched for converging or diverging themes or common ideas (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This was examined in context of the research questions. The data were categorized and coded through a process of data reduction, by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data. I opted to delimit the data with only the key components including the reasons to participate in the Fulbright program and chose Turkey, the challenges in living and teaching in Turkey and how they resolved or attempted to resolve these challenges, also how they perceived the challenge at that time and afterwards, and finally overall learning insights. I presented their expositions with my representation of each participant's experience, and I focused on connections, similarities and differences between the participants. Ultimate themes emerged from this investigation.

In qualitative research, the meaning is assumed to be embedded in experiences in people. Thus, a key purpose of qualitative research is to understand the situation from the participants' perspective (Merriam, 2009). However, this particular study is

informed by ethnography, which necessitates a negotiated perspective of both emic and etic has been implemented through all data collection tools mentioned above. The insights coming from the emic will be negotiated with the theoretical background of the etic in interviews (Drew, Hardmann & Hosp, 2008). This combination of the insider and outsider perspective provides deeper insights than the “native” would provide alone. This triangulation often requires a long and discursive process over the interpretation of the data (Agar, 1996; Borman & Preissle-Goez, 1986). This combination of etic and emic views creates the ethnographic picture with theoretical explanation of the phenomenon under the quest. Along with triangulation, the researcher employed member checking in order to eliminate misinterpretations and improve the validity and credibility of the study.

3.7 Researcher’s Role and Assumptions

This section ends with a brief description of my epistemological stance and role in this study as a researcher and how this has paved the way I approached this particular study as a teacher-researcher.

As opposed to the relatively detached role in quantitative paradigm, researcher in qualitative approach takes more active and emergent roles like being an observer, listener and interviewer. As the researcher in any qualitative study plays an instrumental role in data collection and interpretation, some relevant information about the researcher should be included to better understand the essence of the research (Patton, 2002).

As an emerging researcher, my epistemological stance is more aligned with constructivist paradigm. Schwandt (1998) argues that constructivist approach acknowledges experience “as it is lived, felt, undergone by social actors...and the truth is the result of perspective” (p.236). Thus, not only the participants’ exposition of their lived experiences but also the researcher’s observations and self-construction of meaning are fundamental to this study as the researcher is the one who is in charge of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

The participants and I, the researcher, are similar in that we both had a sojourning experience and BA degree in English Language Teaching. With these shared background, I was able to establish rapport with the Fulbright teachers and put on my once-sojourner lenses in order to empathize with them and to dig into the complexity of the cases. Also being at similar ages and working at the same institution added a lot to create reliance and a candid environment to swap stories and experiences. However, sharing similar backgrounds and experiences might come with some handicaps and predispositions on the part of the researcher. Though my sojourner experience helped me put myself into their shoes better, I perpetually reminded myself of the fact that each sojourner goes through different and unique experiences with unexpected impressions. The notable amount of time I spent with the teachers undoubtedly led us to establish a close relationship and bonds; however I endeavored to preserve my neutral stance of empathy. In other words, I was caring and interested in the participant teachers but never manipulative trying to be “neutral about the content of what they reveal” (Patton, 2002, p. 569).

In order to minimize the researcher bias I made an effort to implement the six components- thick description, triangulation, member-checking, collaboration, reflexivity, and transferability- that Curtin & Fossey (2007) suggested. The term thick description refers to the amount of detail provided by the researcher about various aspects of the research including research design, data collection and analysis procedures, participants as well as researcher role and significance of the research with the overall findings. Throughout the five chapters of this thesis, I attempted to give as much detail as possible as the term thick description suggests. Regarding data triangulation, I gathered data from different sources- interviews, journals, observations, class recordings and online posts- for an extended period of time with the aim of getting both emic and etic perspectives. I asked both teachers to review all the interview transcripts before I moved to analysis. I also sent them the relevant parts of the findings chapter and the participants profile part to ensure that I reported their genuine reflections and asked them to add their comments on it. That was the most collaborative part of the writing process as Agar (1996) calls the participants of an ethnographic study as “co-authors”. It should also be noted here that another researcher looked at the data. It was important to increase objectivity of

the findings. As for the reflexivity, I made my assumptions and biases clear in chapters one, three and five and I tried to be self-critical and reflexive to ensure an analytical description and interpretation of the case. Regarding the transferability of this research, I described all core parts pertaining to the process, context and assumptions clearly so that other researchers can apply for further research.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.0 Presentation

This phenomenology-based ethnographic study explored the social and professional adjustment of two Fulbright English language teaching assistants in Turkey. The chapter as a whole presents the findings obtained through researcher observations, interviews, journals and class videotapes. Based on the three dimensions of in-country adjustment that Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991)'s Framework for International Adjustment Model suggested, the findings are presented under two main sections: the challenges faced and navigated and the adjustment strategies used by the teachers as a reaction to the cultural clashes. As of the in-country adjustment challenges, the experiences of teachers were reported through the three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment: general-environment, interactional and work adjustment as parallel with the model. Following the challenges, the strategies that the teachers developed and used as a way of coping with the challenges were put under the scope. While reporting the findings, the researcher did not separate the cases by participants. Instead, she aimed to grasp a holistic picture of the world lives of the teachers with divergences and convergences emerged. Thus, the cultural dynamics, the challenges experienced by the teachers and the meanings they attached to these struggles were of central importance for data analysis and discussion.

4.1 The Challenges Faced: General Environment-Related Challenges

“Turkey is a culturally specific country; things in Turkey are so ingrained in culture. As an outsider, every day is like a mystery”.

(Charlotte, interview, November, 2)

Being born, raised and educated in American culture for most of their lives, Maria and Charlotte started to experience their first culture shocks as soon as they stepped into their new city of residence right upon their arrival in Eskişehir. The initial challenges they had were mostly general-environment related adaptation problems and dealing with these problems in a language they could not successfully communicate yet. Charlotte called these first days as “struggle for survival”. Similarly, Maria’s one of first expressions of her initial feelings about being a foreigner in a totally new culture and her concerns for not being able to represent her country well were manifested in the quote below.

It was drilled in our heads during orientation that we are cultural ambassadors of America and it’s really hard to do that when you have no idea what’s going on when you’re just trying to survive. I feel like I’m giving America a little bit of a bad name.

(Maria, journal entry, September, 8)

Maria’s profound disappointment above echoes Oberg’s (1960) assertion that frustrations due to cultural differences are usually expected and understandable when physical difficulties come along with the problems stemming from unknown social rules and inadequate communication in the host language.

In a similar vein, Charlotte described the prevalent feelings she had within the first weeks of her sojourn as “jealousy and isolation” towards country nationals since they could lead their lives easily, whereas she could not even do very simplistic things like shopping. She also brought her feelings into question in an interview in October and she uttered: “Everybody around me seems like they know what they’re doing and they do it very well...I’m jealous. They can figure out everything. I can’t do that.”

Following their placement to Eskişehir, the only person Maria and Charlotte was in contact with was an assistant professor from the Education Department, who was also in charge, as the university representative, of exchanging correspondence with Fulbright teaching assistants. As agreed upon in advance, the professor took the teachers from the train station and drove them to the guesthouse located in the campus and helped them carry their luggage. This place was their first but temporary home in Eskişehir only for a few days. On their first day in a new city and on their first attempt to leave the campus to explore it, they went down the wrong direction and got lost. Though it took an hour and half to find their way, Maria's first impression of the city was very positive as follows:

Standing in the center of the city, I was completely taken back by the charm of my new home. The downtown area is bustling, but somehow still homey at the same time. It's hard to put into words, but all that was running through my head was Wow, I can live here. I can definitely live here.

(Maria, blog entry, September, 17)

With the excitement of opening a new chapter in their lives, Charlotte and Maria were quite impressed by their new city and the well-known Turkish hospitality. This was the very short honeymoon stage that they were going through as they were overwhelmingly positive about the people and food in general and infatuated by the language even if they could understand only a few words and common expressions. However, these days lasted rather shorter than expected and started to give a way to the next stage of frustration with the emergence of unexpected problems pertinent to their basic needs such as accommodation, transportation, shopping, health care, etc. As put forth by Ward, Bochner & Furnham (2001) there is usually a downward trend common among sojourners, which indicates growing level of stress and decreasing level of contentedness in the host culture. This frustration and acculturative stress were quite observable and usually accompanied by constant comparisons made between American and Turkish culture as clearly seen in the upcoming sections.

4.1.1 Food

At the beginning of their sojourn, Maria and Charlotte were amazed by the variety and taste of Turkish food and particularly fondness of people for Turkish tea during a day and also their habits of having big and long breakfasts. It took for the teachers' comparatively shorter amount of time to adapt to Turkish cuisine and eating culture and Charlotte asserted the reason by describing Turkish food as "comfort food" which is more natural and less processed. That being said, Maria liked the taste and presentation of Turkish food.

They easily adjusted themselves to Turkish eating habits such as preferring Turkish coffee to drip coffee, consuming bread in all meals, going to kebab and breakfast places as well as taking their guests to those places, trying to make Turkish food even the hard ones to make such as stuffed grape leaves and some Turkish desserts at home.

Besides their relatively quick adaptation to Turkish food, they swiftly got used to going to the open local market (pazar) nearby on Mondays to get fresh produce. This market can be described as rows of stalls full of fresh fruit and vegetables advertised by local farmers. It took only a few weeks for Maria and Charlotte to observe and find out how the system worked and the necessary shopping expressions in Turkish. Charlotte kept asking me the names of the vegetables and fruit that she was unfamiliar with or how to say "half a kilo". The people at the pazar straight away realized that Maria and Charlotte were foreigners and were always so curious and ask them where they were from. The teachers enjoyed to communicate with these people as they had no other option but to speak Turkish. Charlotte told me that she kept going there every week for the interactions and the fresh food. However, the loud exclamation style of farmers was a big culture shock for Charlotte as she specified below.

It can be intimidating, sometimes when they scream "ÇILEKKKK! (Strawberries!)" it still startles me. No one advertises food like that in the States. If you don't buy it, they don't care, I guess!

(Maria, journal entry, October, 15)

Not only was the concept of local markets, but also grocery stores in Turkey was another component that created a cultural dissonance. Charlotte stated that grocery stores in Turkey are typically a lot smaller than in the States and much more accessible as they are dispersed all over the main streets in every district. Also the produce section runs differently. In Turkey, there is usually someone weighing and labeling things near the section, whereas in the US this is all done at the checkout. Charlotte also mentioned the difficulties she had while paying and packing by again making comparisons between her own country and Turkey.

It took me a very long time to learn what to say when they ask how you will pay. I used to say “para” (money) but then I learned you have to say “kart or nakit” (credit card or cash). Also, you have to be super-fast when packing your groceries into bags! No one helps you, unlike in the States there is usually always someone who packs the items. They start scanning the next person’s items here, so things can get confusing at times.

(Charlotte, interview, October, 21)

Apart from getting accustomed to paying and packing system in Turkey, Maria also commented on the amount of interaction required for any kind of shopping in Turkey. Even though she deemed these interactions as opportunities to practice the language and communication skills, some days she admitted that she avoided to go to supermarket or local market when she did not feel confident enough to go into any interaction in Turkish.

The one (sometimes) downside to buying food here compared to buying food at home is the amount of interaction required. If I go to the market, I have to ask for my food, and say how much I want (and I also don’t get to hand-pick my produce - another downside). If I go to the supermarket, I have to have my produce weighed, which actually resulted in tears the first time that I bought produce from the supermarket, and forgot that I can’t simply bring my bags up to the register like I can in America. I also have to ask for my meats, and can’t choose my own package, and sometimes even my cheeses. So on days that I’m not feeling confident with my Turkish, or am too tired to speak; even a trip to the supermarket can seem daunting. Add to that the fact that I can’t read labels as fluently as I once could, and sometimes I skip going to the supermarket all together and just use what I have at home.

(Maria, interview, October, 22)

Fitting in the norms of buying food and eating culture in a few months, Maria and Charlotte’s favorite food surprisingly became traditional Turkish food such as

Iskender kebab, stuffed grape leaves, and rice pudding. Nevertheless, after a while they started to miss American food as they noticed that most of the food is usually the same, some form of meat, tomato sauce, rice, bread and Turkish food was usually the only option in Turkey.

Though Maria loved Turkish cuisine in general, there were quite a few things that she really missed from home that she simply could not access in Turkey. By the end of November she began to complain about the lack of popularity of world cuisines in Turkey.

Above all is the vast array of international cuisine available in America. After living here, I can say with certainty that Turkish people are simply not adventurous eaters, and it sometimes the lack of access to non-Turkish food kills me ... The last major thing that I'm missing is good Italian food and ingredients (mozzarella, parmesan, ricotta cheeses, year-round basil, prosciutto, etc.), which I grew up eating and is easily accessible at home, so living without it is frustrating.

(Maria, journal, November, 25)

In December, they discovered a shopping mall where they could access to imported products. This made them quite happy as they could buy coffee, peanut butter, vanilla extract, garlic powder and liquid coffee creamer. No matter how far away from the city center, they quite often went there for shopping. For the items that they could not find, they asked their families to ship smaller things by mail. Thus, they both received a number of packages from the U.S. containing particularly food. In brief, Maria and Charlotte got adapted to Turkish cuisine and eating culture relatively easily as compared to other aspects of culture, but they both were not happy with having very limited options in terms of variety. Shortly after their arrival, they integrated majority of Turkish elements into their daily eating habits such as excessive consumption of tea and Turkish coffee, bread and Turkish desserts.

4.1.2 Housing Problems

During their first week in the new city, since they had quite limited time at the guesthouse due to the prior reservations made for the busy season of the beginning term, they were hopelessly seeking for someone available who could speak Turkish to help them find accommodation. On that day, I volunteered to accompany them with their search for a place to live and we made a quick tour around a few “aparts” (long-term hostels) that are mostly preferred by students and also some flats for rent. After long hours of apartment hunting translating and negotiating, they finally decided on a furnished flat near the center and signed the ten-month contract. Since Maria and Charlotte were given a very limited amount time-only two days-to check out of the guesthouse, they felt obliged to make a very quick decision and rent the most eye-pleasing flat with the fear of ending up being homeless. Then, they returned to the guesthouse with the inner peace of finding a permanent and livable home without foreseeing the potential problems that await them during the move-in process.

As the first step of moving to a new place in Turkey, they faced the challenge of activating the utilities. As I was free all that week, I accompanied them to the gas, electricity, and water departments as I anticipated that no person in charge would speak English to help them and that turned out to be the case. It was the first day they met the Turkish bureaucracy. Official dealings and paperwork took two days and they could get water instantly right after the application. As for the electricity and gas, they were given appointments and told to wait the men in charge to unseal the fuse. However, things hardly happen on time in Turkey. Besides, that week overlapped the ten-day long Sacrifice Feast in Turkey. During these days without electricity and gas, they had no other option than to stay in a hostel in the city center. Maria found this situation “exceedingly strange”, and expressed her reflections about Turkish bureaucracy in a sarcastic manner as in the quotation below:

Well... Where do I start? Good news – we found an apartment! Bad news – this post is not brought to you from my apartment, but rather from a hostel

about a mile away thanks to a lack of electricity, gas, and as a result, personal hygiene. Thanks Turkish bureaucracy!

(Maria, blog, October 28)

At the end of the official holiday when nobody from electricity department came despite numerous calls made, Maria and Charlotte took matters into own hands and ventured down into the basement of their building to cut the wire that was preventing the breaker from being turned on. Although that action normally imposes a punitive fine in Turkey, the electricity center didn't charge them admitting that it was their fault to delay the activation for so long. After solving the electricity problem, the next challenge for them was to figure out reading the Turkish manual of the central heating boiler. Though it took for Charlotte and Maria more than an hour to switch it on and Maria called it a "victory".

Unfortunately, though, the hot water did not magically start working in the week that we were gone; and so we spent the next hour or so with a Turkish heating unit manual and a dictionary, trying to figure out what combination of buttons would turn the light on next to that little picture of a fire, which obviously meant one thing: warmth. An hour later, the unit finally ignited and the water ran hot – hurray! It really is the little victories that count when you're in a situation like this, and they are so, so important to acknowledge.

(Maria, blog entry, October, 2)

This clearly shows how little things might be perceived as big problems to cope with for the expatriate teachers. Taking all the rising problems into consideration, the settling process took longer than the teachers expected before their departure. Despite unanticipated issues and the efforts they had to make to settle down, Maria still wanted to remain hopeful and appreciative for her current situation instead of constant complaining:

It's been almost a month since we landed in this country that we now call home, yet only my second night sleeping in my own bed. Let me tell you though, after all of the mishaps, cleaning, and stress surrounding this apartment, it feels so good. We now have gas, electricity, and water (it even gets hot now!), and I can finally see the light at the end of what seemed like an endless amount of cleaning. The last big piece of the puzzle is to get some Wi-Fi in here so that I can actually do my job and communicate properly. But for now, I'm just thankful that I can lie in my own bed and read a good book.

(Maria, journal entry, October 25)

When the moving in process completely ended, new challenges emerged such as paying the bills. Maria uneasily talked about this problem in our interviews and said she never had to pay her bills except for her credit card as she always lived with her family. However, she realized that in Eskişehir the dates of the bills depend on when the attendants come to read the electricity or gas meter. Thus, she got a bit confused and stressed about when to pay the bills as there was no physical reminder like a text message or e-mail. After forgetting to pay their bills a few times, they got fairly used to reminding each other when the bills were due and paying without any problems. Once the documentation procedures for bank transfer were done, they started to use online banking, which eliminated the problem of paying the bills.

Another set of accommodation-based problems arose from the size of the flat that the teachers rented. Compared with a regular American detached house with more and bigger rooms, and usually with a big backyard and a garage, the flat Maria and Charlotte shared had only two rooms and a little kitchen. Since these flats in the city were generally designed for students, the common trend among young people was to rent one of these small furnished flats. Although the teachers both agreed to pick that flat, the only thing they were content with it was its central location. In majority of the interviews we had and also in the journals, they grumbled about flat-related problems and the poor quality furniture and utilities offered to them.

4.1.3 Transportation

Eskişehir is an easy city to navigate in terms of transportation. Most of the important places in the community are within walking distance, yet the tram is the most common means of transport that connects the city center with the uptown areas. Considering the fact that university is a twenty minute ride away from the center, Maria and Charlotte had to commute to school by tram or bus.

Along with a few incidences of getting lost, Turkish public transportation appeared to be a big problem to tackle with. For this reason, they initially tried to avoid using it. Within a few days, when they figured out where to buy tickets and tram directions, they started to take it more often. Transportation remained an issue for a

while since both of the teachers were not used to taking public transportation back in the US. Thus, they experienced the very first culture shocks when they had to buy tickets or getting a travel card, putting money on them and squeeze themselves into excessively crowded morning trams. Maria frequently reflected on this situation by highlighting how much she missed driving and owning a personal car. In the interviews, she admitted she got really stressed while commuting to school by public transportation as she rarely had to use it back in the US. It took a long time for her to navigate the challenges of taking the bus and tram in a crowded city, particularly in the morning and evenings when the teachers were on their way to home or school.

Oh, public transportation, how I loathe you! My entire life, I grew up using cars to get everywhere, only venturing onto public transportation when I was visiting NYC. Although I knew how to navigate it, after years of using it, it was never a major part of my life... until this year.

(Maria, journal, November, 4)

The factors that turned public transportation into an “exhausting and unpleasant” experience can be listed as extremely crowded trams, ride distance from home to school and certain attitudes of people and bus drivers. These were pointed out by Charlotte in one of the interviews as energy-draining since these factors even affected her psychological state and motivation. Considering the importance of psychological factors in cross-cultural adaptation, even a bad day due to transportation problems made Charlotte think that she would not be able to adapt the living and working conditions in Turkey.

I think that it is actually one of the biggest contributors to my lack of energy when I get home from school - from the crowdedness, standing at times, and long commute time, it is not something that I think I’ll ever truly get used to.

(Charlotte, interview, December, 22)

Despite the fact that giving seats to the elderly, pregnant or sick is a common universal practice, it is a more culturally-driven issue combined with social pressure in Turkey especially in small cities and towns. After experiencing this situation several times, Charlotte cannot understand why she has to give her seat to a middle-

aged woman and the stares directed to her in bus. She shared her genuine thoughts about people she observed in a detailed way as follows:

...There are smells, and stares sometimes. But usually if a man is staring I'll shoot him a disgusted or dirty look and he stops! I don't mind standing for an elderly person at all, but sometimes it feels like they get on the bus or tram at the worst times possible! I also wonder how they even get around in such poor health. They sometimes are really overweight or so unhealthy and although yes I don't know them or their life, I can't help but wonder how they got to that unhealthy state, or if they are slightly being a little bit over dramatic. For elderly people I have no problem standing up. But some middle aged people like to pressure you by standing so close to your seat or huffing and puffing when they are only like forty, they can stand honestly.

(Charlotte, interview, December, 12)

Just as Charlotte, Maria highlighted her perceived public transportation etiquette by making cultural comparisons between home and Turkey. In addition to that, a new conflict in cultural identities of Maria is clearly seen in the following quote as she was sometimes stuck between acting like a Turk or an American.

...When an old person, a handicapped person, a pregnant woman, or someone with a young child walks on, it never takes long for someone to give up their seat unless it's so packed that nobody can move or even see. This is a welcome change from NYC, where this behavior only really occurs in more extreme cases (very old people, very handicapped people, and very pregnant women). It does, however, annoy me greatly when middle-aged people glare at me when I'm seated and they're standing. Occasionally if I'm really not in the mood to be glared at and wearing comfortable enough shoes, I'll offer my seat. More often than not, however, I stay seated out of spite for their rudeness (maybe it's the New Yorker in me). On the other hand, people who are standing are so reluctant to move their spot to make more room for more passengers, which is incredibly frustrating for me, and sometimes results in me pushing myself through crowds to make room because I see an empty area.

(Charlotte, interview, November, 25)

When Charlotte was also sharing the cultural shocks she experienced during commuting to school almost every day, she highlighted that these differences emerge mainly from the cultural discrepancies in upbringing and social practices. Despite recognizing the differences in independence and respect issues between Turkish and American cultures, she still thought that it was not "normal" as she described it as something "imposed" by the society rather than "heartfelt". This shows us that she

was still in adjustment phase and tries to figure out her identity and her place within that culture system and how she should act.

Here things centered more on family than America, the children are a lot less independent, more respectful, people don't give up their seats on the buses, trains in America. Some people do, but it is not a normal thing whereas here they make you feel obligated to give up your seat for an old person. It's like "get up, you sat long enough".

(Charlotte, interview, November, 25)

Another obvious area of extreme annoyance on the part of the American teachers is the fact that people try to enter the tram before passengers can get off. Maria commented on this in her journal that she would never understand the lack of logic behind it. Similarly, Charlotte reflected that she never made sense of people (particularly the ones she called as *teyze* meaning older women) slipping in front of her to get on first, and she described them as "rude and selfish" in her journal.

4.1.4 Political Issues

Every day here in Turkey brings on an onslaught of emotions, both new and old. Like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get when you wake up in the morning.

(Maria, blog entry, October, 10)

This post was written by Maria on the day of a big unfortunate bombing incident that took place in the capital city of Turkey, Ankara. During the year, unfortunately they witnessed nine serious bombing attacks in Turkey, which resulted in a huge number of deaths and injuries. The obscurity and worries that many Turkish people felt could also be sensed in Maria's post above with perplexity.

Initially, she could not anticipate that the number of bombings and deaths would gradually increase, and turned into a big, nation-wide problem as the attacks were only limited to the Eastern regions of Turkey before that incident. Hence, in an interview, she referred to the mass-shooting problem in the U.S. by making

associations between the two events, and she tried to normalize it in her own way it with a very relaxed and light-hearted tone as below:

There are mass shootings in America all the time. I probably have much lower of a chance being in a bombing experience here than being in a shooting experience in America. That's how I calm down my family.

(Maria, interview, January, 03)

Only a few months later in one of the bombings happened in Istanbul, Sultanahmet; however, Maria and her sister were only within walking distance of the fearful bombs and the prior perplexity became a real but a terrifying experience. During the interview she told me the whole story about that day and how much she concerned about her sister's and her own life by saying:

The morning that we got back to Istanbul, there was the bombing. It was scary obviously but what made it worse that my sister and it was her first time abroad, obviously I felt awful. She was also hysterical, which made me more scared. I just took the role of calming her down when she was in a complete panic. I had to call my mum and tell my mum that we were within walking distance of the bombing. And that was the worst phone call to make.

(Maria, interview, January, 19)

That was the third attack so far in major touristy areas. Having actually been in the area, Maria began to worry about her life and tried to avoid touristy places as much as possible since that day. Even though she described herself as a person "not involved or interested in politics ever", particularly after this incident, Maria started to share frequent posts informing people about the details of the incidents, her concerns and comments in order to let people be aware of things happening in Turkey. The feelings and empathy that evoked by the series of bombings created a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to her host country.

I feel more belonging to Turkey, because I think if I had never come here, I would have probably the same as most people, not knowing or only knowing what I saw on my feed. This is the place I call home for a while and how can I remain indifferent? It makes me think about my life and how much more

attentive I need to be, but also it makes me happy that I can be in the role of informing people.

(Maria, interview, March, 16)

Even after they left the country, for all the political issues in Turkey, both of them tried to follow the news and keep up with the latest political issues. Their concern for the Turkish especially the people they were caring and their posts on various social media tools were indicators of how they thought that they were still a part of the society they lived for only ten months.

It is quite interesting that these political events transformed Maria from a person “not involved or interested in politics ever” to a person who cares about other people’s lives and who puts an effort to make others aware of the problems. Nevertheless, Charlotte never reflected on these political issues. I assume this was because her father was a military officer and also she did not experience any of these political events in Turkey as Maria did in Sultanahmet.

4.1.5 Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy in Turkey was one of the very first things that Maria and Charlotte met upon their arrival. They had to deal with a huge pile of paperwork for their residence permit, school, insurance and phone registrations, lease contract, utilities activation and deactivation before leave, and so forth. Coping with bureaucracy and paperwork in Turkey was a cultural shock as it takes long waiting time and exhaustive procedures. It took a long time for them to comprehend the procedures they were asked to follow as stated by Charlotte:

On Friday they told us that we need to register ourselves as teachers. Why does a teacher need to register herself? I have an ID already. I don’t understand and I don’t think I ever will.

(Charlotte, interview, October, 12)

Besides dealing with bureaucracy, having to do these things in a language that they are not capable of understanding and speaking, made the situation even more complicated. Though Maria was a little more familiar with this sort of bureaucracy

tradition from her first abroad experience in Italy as an exchange student, she implied that this was the first time for her to get things done only by herself.

I experienced this bureaucracy going on when I was a student abroad in Italy but I was still a student. All the things were taken care of by some people. This is another level. Not being speaking the language. I have never done it before as is. Not knowing what I'm supposed to do and not knowing how to communicate anything it's impossible to navigate on your own, absolutely impossible.

(Maria, journal, November, 10)

Charlotte, speaking for Maria as well, stated that the combination of bureaucracy itself and the language barrier brought about a decline in their self-reliance. This evidently had a huge impact on their emotional and psychological state. She described this situation of being dependent on someone and constantly asking for help as “biting the bullet” and continued with the reasons why she did not like it at all as:

Not only bureaucracy as frustrating, the fact that we're helpless adds to it. Back home we would normally do these things on our own, we don't need our parents to do things for us. Some people in the US do, but we personally don't.

(Charlotte, interview, December, 24)

4.2 The Challenges Faced: Linguistic and Socialization Challenges

4.2.1 Language barrier

Establishing a social life in a foreign country was observed and also reported as one of the “hardest processes” that the teachers went through during their sojourn in Turkey. The biggest obstacle that hinders the interactional opportunities was the language incompetency. Thus, first the language barrier and its impact on their social interactions with people will be presented.

Turkish is the only official and national language of Turkey. To this respect, being an English teacher in an almost non-English spoken country does by no means help

fully interact and function outside of the school. At the university setting, things worked more easily for Charlotte and Maria as nearly everybody at school could speak English to an extent. However, when it came to day-to-day interactions, language barrier turned into the biggest challenge that the teachers had to face and overcome in the early days as they could barely understand and engage in long Turkish conversations. Not only for interacting with host country nationals but also particularly for meeting their most basic needs such as buying food, finding accommodation, taking public transport that presented in the previous section, they needed to speak Turkish. Anytime they had difficulty in understanding and producing the language, they tended to lose their motivation for adjusting themselves into the new environment. Maria implied that the language barrier made her feel “impotent” and asked for some empathy by saying:

Now imagine doing anything in a language you hardly understand, and not being able to ask all of the questions that you want to, and only receiving the very little information that is translated for you. Not so fun!

(Maria, interview, February, 24)

While trying to adjust to live and work in a foreign country distinctively different in terms of language and culture, they were also discontent with the amount of time things take. As a result they always needed someone who is fluent in English and Turkish in order to get information from and communicate on behalf of the teachers. Charlotte expressed her dissatisfaction with this “dependent and passive” status as she did not need her parents’ help back in the U.S even when she was a student. She summarized how her life was going without necessary language repertoire and how it makes her feel like in the following quote.

I think we are used to everything happening quickly and in our own language. The fact that we have very little control over what goes on around us because we can’t communicate anything makes me feel like an idiot...I’m not with my family since eighteen. My parents want to help me still but I do everything on my own and I like doing that. Here I can’t do that. It’s frustrating. In the orientation they told us you’ll figure things out on your own that I have to do. Yeah but there isn’t so much you can do on your own without knowing the language. And you don’t know where to go and what to do when you get there, but you have to do it at some point and you have to do it in Turkish.

(Charlotte, interview, November, 19)

The lack of language capabilities in the target language, being an inhibitor of achieving successful communication, was the central issue that hindered Maria and Charlotte from not only socializing with people outside of work, but also from the very basic tasks that require verbal interaction. Host language incapability resulted in avoidance at times.

Shopping can sometimes be another frustrating experience here in Turkey, especially in smaller stores. Many times, a worker follows me around the store, either just following or trying to help. While this does happen sometimes in America too, it's more frustrating here because I usually have no desire to talk while I'm shopping, and I never know how to say what I'm looking for when they ask, which leads to awkwardness and embarrassment for me. It can actually be very discouraging sometimes, and I've found myself avoiding shopping in some stores that I really enjoy, because I know they always try to help.

(Maria, journal entry, January, 14)

Charlotte experienced a similar problem when one day we were shopping at the mall. We went to one of the personal care stores one day and Charlotte was looking for a specific lipstick color. She could not find it so she just pulled out the drawer underneath to look for it. All of a sudden the lady working there came and said "pardon?!" and started lecturing her on how she was not allowed to do that and she should have asked her if she needed something but she said it with an attitude. Though she knew that it was her fault to open the drawer without asking, she still did not make sense why the lady scolded her. She looked so angry; however, she did not say anything to her except for "sorry" and we left. When she was talking about this incident afterwards, she said how this challenge had an impact on her character as well.

If I was in the States, I would have given her attitude right back and explained that I didn't know it wasn't allowed, and that she should be kinder to customers or they won't want to buy your products. Instead I just blushed and said "kusura bakma" (sorry) and left quickly. I sometimes feel not as bold or brazen as I am in the States, I don't put up as much of a fight sometimes. Since then I've never shopped at that store though, so they lost a valuable customer!

(Charlotte, interview, March, 2)

The language barrier made Charlotte feel more like a “foreigner” no matter how much she made an effort to use it. In her journal, she mentioned that there were things that people in the community knew and could find, but impossible for her. Similarly, in the class recording on November, 12, she brought this issue even to the class. As the speaking topic of the day, she was asking some questions related to free time activities in Eskişehir. Since most of the students were from other cities and towns, they remained a bit silent and expressed that they knew only little about life in Eskişehir. Hearing this, Charlotte told them not to feel themselves alone and she was feeling the same things. After these moments of “empathy and emotional support” as described by Charlotte later on, they proceeded to other topics. However, in her journal on the following days she compared herself to her students who were also new in town, and she thought that the students had more opportunities to find a certain kind of club, or an activity or some kind of volunteering opportunity. They could find it as long as they wanted only because they had the language skill, word of mouth, and they know people. She concluded with how harder it was for her since she did not know many people besides that she could not read or speak Turkish.

Another sort of linguistic challenge that the teachers faced was related to the other parties involved in the conversations and their biased approach towards foreign-looking people. Considering the central role of communicative competence in the acculturation process, it is doubtless that the easiest way to learn to communicate is by communicating. However; when the linguistic repertoire that allows speakers to communicate is not adequate, not only the socialization process is hindered but also the self-esteem of the speakers lowers due to the reactions that the other party shadowed forth on the teachers in a Turkish conversation.

Maria wrote an anecdote in her blog about how prejudiced people are based on appearance, particularly in touristy places in Turkey. When Maria went to Pamukkale, a famous tourist attraction in the Aegean Region, she tried to ask the driver in her best Turkish whether the bus came to the top of the hill or they had to go down again. He was just looking at her the entire time, and when she finished, he said: NO ENGLISH! (meaning I don't speak English). She said she didn't know

how to react because she spoke completely in Turkish. And then she said “Ama Türkçe konuşuyorum” (but I’m speaking Turkish). Then, he asked her to say that again and he clearly understood and answered her question when he put his biases away and listened to her attentively.

Charlotte had almost the same reactions from a number of Turkish people, and she asserted that she “hated that feeling” when people did not strive for understanding her as much as she endeavored to be understood in Turkish. She thought it was easier for some people to label someone as a foreigner, instead of trying to listen with full attention. While we were talking about some embarrassing moments, she criticized such people and their attitude towards foreigners by saying:

I get embarrassed because the second I open my mouth, their face change. Ow ‘yabancı’! (foreigner). They look like what are you saying to me? I hate that when I think I’m saying something perfect and then they’re like “What? I don’t understand you”. I literally said something; she looked at me like she didn’t understand a word; however she repeated the same thing back.

(Charlotte, interview, December, 27)

The language problem particularly during the first phases of their adaptation process, even made Charlotte to question her identity as being an American in Turkey, and to establish an empathetic stance for the immigrants back home.

Actually it’s very frustrating. I’m a really outgoing person I love talking to people. Usually when I’m in the states any waiter, anybody, I talk to them, it’s great. However here I feel like I can’t connect with anybody when I go out. So it’s kind of isolating, frustrating. You kind of feel like helpless...And I learned the word “yabancı” (foreigner) very quickly. It just makes you feel speaking English is like a shame. It makes me to think of all the Spanish immigrants back home and how they can’t communicate in English and how they must feel.

(Charlotte, interview, November, 4)

Though Maria and Charlotte did not need Turkish much at the school since they were teaching English and the majority of the people at school could understand and speak English, the host language capability was still needed for their social interactions with colleagues and also relationships with students. In one class recording right after Valentine’s Day, Charlotte had a difficult time in interacting

with students because the students took advantage of her inability to speak Turkish, and this affected Charlotte's feeling in a very negative way.

- C: What did you do? Did you do anything on Valentine's Day?
S: Do you have a boyfriend? Did you do something special with him?
C: Noo, unfortunately I don't. (She pretends to be sad, and the students were all sad)
S: Aaa Kezban yani? (So, you're Kezban?)
C: Excuse me? Kezban?
S: Oooh anlıyor!
C: Yes, I understand, why did you say that?
S: No no no! I didn't mean like that?
C: I know Kezban means an ugly desperate girl.
S: No nono it's just a single girl.
C: That's a lie.

(Charlotte, February, 16, class recording)

She made the students feel really bad and apologize in the class. During the interview, she said that "I was really angry, and they say a lot of things in class and they think I don't understand. I know that they said things in class about me, it's so rude. I'd never fun of them or of their English. I wish I could understand everything." It was evident that the language barrier was even affecting her work adjustment.

Beginning with the fall semester, Charlotte and Maria voluntarily started to take Turkish classes offered by TÖMER (Turkish and Foreign Languages Research and Application Center). These classes became another sphere for them to acculturate and socialize alongside of practicing Turkish. The students in TÖMER were mostly incoming students from countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. Maria and Charlotte were the only Americans in TÖMER. They deemed these classes as being a great learning platform not only for immersing themselves into Turkish language and culture, but also exploring other cultures different from Turkish and their own. In our one of last interviews, Charlotte pointed out the gains of TÖMER as being open, culturally sensitive and aware. She also referred to the third culture perspective that TÖMER gave her.

It taught me to be more understanding and accepting of different views. How other foreigners have been treated, especially in TÖMER. How important miscommunication can be. The way you talk about things, it's the way you say rather than what you say. I had a third perspective of how Turkish culture

could be seen from other cultures and other cultures could be seen from Turkish culture. There are many differences, and I just try to go positively about those differences.

(Charlotte, interview, May, 18)

All foreign students were required to take certain amount of Turkish classes in TÖMER and had to pass the final proficiency test given at the end of the spring semester. However, the position of Maria and Charlotte was different from the others as they were not only students in TÖMER but instructors of English in the prep school. Hence they were not obliged to attend all classes but advised to follow the program for their language improvement. For this reason, their being part time student and full time teacher in the same building complicated their status particularly on the part of their TÖMER friends. Although Maria and Charlotte tried to conceal their teacher identity, soon it was revealed and transformed the relationship between the Fulbright teachers and their classmates. Maria got really “surprised” when her classmates learned about her teaching position and started to call her “siz” (formal second person singular pronoun) instead of using “sen” (second person singular pronoun) anymore. She also confessed that she liked it, too.

Yes I’m learning Turkish but I don’t think of myself as much as a student, I am a guest. I don’t introduce myself as a teacher to the students but Charlotte does. It took the TÖMER students for a while to understand what we are doing here. A lot of them call me “hocam” now, which is cute. One of my friends there started to call me “siz” after learning that I’m a teacher.

(Maria, interview, October, 26)

Maria and Charlotte attended TÖMER classes throughout the year. Even though they liked being a part of TÖMER, they started to skip Turkish classes as they got busier with the prep school and teaching workload. Nevertheless, both the necessity and the inner motivation to learn the language contributed a lot to their linguistic and communicative performance. Particularly in the spring semester when they started to make friends outside of the school and expanded their linguistic repertoire substantially, the increasing number of successful interactions and dialogues with the colleagues and students boosted their self-confidence and facilitated their integration into the culture. Just like the communication problems and language incompetency that discouraged the teachers from immersing themselves into the

host language and culture, successful interactions and attempts to use the language meant great victories that not only led the teachers to feel “capable and proud”, but also to help them gain a sense of belongingness. Thus, the role of language in the cross-cultural adjustment process was incontrovertible. Charlotte emphasizes the importance of language in her integration to the society as follows:

When I communicate in Turkish and I have a successful communication with someone Turkish, I feel like I’m more a part of this society and I’m a successful person, I can buy this thing I want to buy. I can understand a lot more, but there are so many verbs that I just don’t get and need to learn.

(Charlotte, interview, December, 17)

When Maria was asked about her accomplishments during the year, the first moment that came to her mind was when she went to Hagia Sophia on her own and managed to talk to three different security guards in Turkish. She narrated that the mosque was closing in an hour. Just to be sure she asked what time they would close and the security guard said there was still an hour to go. She bought the tickets, walked around the ground floor for a few minutes and just as she was going upstairs, the guards were closing the doors and all in Turkish she asked three or four different security guards if she could go upstairs very quickly. When she got a negative reply, she made her last attempt at the exit. She concluded the story with these remarks indicating her pride:

I told the story again and the security guard took pity on me and told me that if I could come back tomorrow and tried to get me in the next morning without any extra charge and it worked. I’m so proud of myself.

(Maria, interview, March, 27)

Maria and Charlotte’s challenges and experiences clearly show that language is an important contributor to socialization and there is a strong connection between language capability and adjustment to social life, general environment as well as work environment.

4.2.2 Socialization Challenges

After Maria and Charlotte made some progress in Turkish language, another group of problems rose to the surface due to variation in their personality traits and perspectives on life. Seeing that only language does not suffice to socialize, the socialization process was analyzed in terms of their experiences of making new friends and ways of spending their spare time.

Before moving to the analysis of the social interactions that the teachers engaged in detail, it is worth to draw a portrayal of the distinct characteristics of the two teachers briefly here. Based on my observations and relations with them, Maria and Charlotte had opposite personalities with regards to their disposition to form social interactions. Whereas Maria had the traits of introverted personality such as being reserved and quiet, talking less, avoiding social activities that demand interaction with a group of people, Charlotte was a complete introvert who loves being social and having friends around, conversing and she was also fairly spontaneous and emotion-based. The sharp contrast in personality dimensions led them to go along different paths in terms of socialization.

At the initial stages of their sojourn, Maria and Charlotte opted for spending all their free time and vacations with their Fulbright group in other cities. These gatherings were a source of motivation for them to see their limited number of friends in Turkey. Despite meeting only in a few weeks earlier, the Fulbright program connected most of them with the same goal and challenges. As Maria and Charlotte preferred to empower their friendship with other Americans, they did not have ample time to meet Turkish people outside of the school.

The Fulbright group served more like a community of interest in which everyone shared daily or culture-specific problems from American perspective, travel trips, lesson plan ideas and funny posts. As they all lived in different cities all over Turkey, their experiences varied to a large extent. However, it was soothing for them to see that everybody was having struggles and culture shocks. Particularly on their Facebook group, they were sharing posts about their new discoveries in Turkey, particularly when they find something similar to American products, local

ways of entertainment and travelling tips, questions about Turkish culture such as what to bring as a gift for a new born baby or what to cook for Turkish guests.

Towards the mid-semester, Maria and Charlotte's teaching workload increased and they started to complain about not having a balance between their personal lives and school. Thus, they suspended all their travel plans and concentrated on teaching and school-related issues. However, not having friends around made them feel a bit isolated and made them realize that they had to make friends in the city where they could easily meet up and exchange the culture with. Yet still, making friends as the key point of socialization was considered as the hardest part for many reasons. For Maria, it was a part of her personality that she could not change even in the U.S. In the interview, she made a self-reflection on her personality and said:

Meeting people was not particularly difficult as they generally came to me but actually building relationships with people that I'm forced to, it's not something I'm good at home either. So, it's even harder here with language barrier. So I'm still working on it. That's a personal issue all around.

(Maria, interview, March, 2)

Knowing her limits, she still tried to force herself to get involved in some interaction with the host country nationals. Nevertheless, it was obvious from her reflections that she was never the one to initiate the interactions. When compared to Charlotte, Maria had a very decent amount of Turkish thanks to the class she had had in the U.S. However; she did not thrive for practicing her knowledge as she usually refrained from reciprocal verbal actions. Her personality traits as an introvert and therefore the limited number of friends minimized her social life in Turkey to an almost non-existent level particularly at the initial stages of her sojourn. When I asked her about her usual free-time activities, she told me honestly that most of the time she was at home on the internet or watching American series.

Unlike Maria, Charlotte made a huge effort to socialize and make friends in spite of the fact that she could speak almost no Turkish. Her communication skills and body language helped her a lot while contacting Turkish people. The grammatical mistakes and wrong choices of vocabulary did not stop her from continuing to interact with people in and outside of school, even random people. As a

consequence of this determination and social skills, she made a number of friends who also helped her improve language capabilities as well as learn about cultural and region-specific issues that they could not have accessed in English otherwise.

I also observed that Charlotte made most of her friends over social media or through a friend she already knew. Although it sounded a bit strange to me that she accepted a number of online friend requests from Eskişehir, social media facilitated her ability to expand her social network and meet new people aside from her extrovert personality. Charlotte's problem, on the other hand, was not about making friends; but the approach of people towards her as "the American token friend" not truly seeing her as a true friend. A reason for that might be her typically American appearance with blonde hair and blue eyes. During the interviews, she argued that since she did not look Turkish, she always received stares from people. This made her feel even more "foreign" when she tried to make connections with people. She also stated that no matter how much she tried to approach people, she got the message "You are different and you'll never be us".

Not only the strangers passing by on the street, but even her students sometimes made her feel like "a token". During the classes, there were tens of incidents that the students trying to take a photo of or with Charlotte. Likewise, lots of students were observed in the corridors that asked for a picture or a selfie. Although she perceived this as a way of showing their "sympathy" at first, gradually she got annoyed with it as it made her feel "like an alien".

Being seen as "token American", Charlotte stated that she felt almost every time that she met someone new, they saw her as an opportunity to practice English. This demotivated her and sometimes hindered her socialization process. She also highlighted that when she started to speak Turkish, people immediately realized that she was a foreigner. Right after she introduced herself as a Californian and an English teacher, the way people talked to her, their looks and everything changed. And they wanted to hang out with her, but never girls.

Maria, on the other hand, despite not being as social as Charlotte thought that Turkish girls usually had a cold attitude at first and they were hard to make friends

with. Furthermore, she added that anytime she tried to be friendly with a guy, she felt that they had some ulterior motives inside. Both Charlotte and Maria agreed that most of the Turkish men misunderstood their attempts to make friends and perceived it as emotional intimacy.

After getting to know Maria and characteristics, Charlotte decided to help Maria extend her social network by inviting her over the meetings with her friends, introducing Maria to her friends circle including Turkish as well as foreign people. Maria seemed quite content with Charlotte's attempts as a facilitator, as she could not personally make new friends. This was the biggest difference between the teachers in terms of personality, which inevitably affect their adjustment process in Turkey. Maria highlighted this difference as follows:

It's still the hardest part (socializing), it's been getting a lot better, a lot because of Charlotte. I owe a lot to her because she goes out and finds people. I don't really have the motivation to do that. She is inviting me to things. I want to have friends; she's making it a lot easier for me. Thank goodness for that. But yeah within the past few weeks, we're meeting with more foreigners; we went to two people's houses, our colleagues' houses. We had been over people's houses. It feels good to get in more of a comfortable situation and have friends that I can communicate with, have friends that are not teachers here. It's nice to have friends from other walks of life.

(Maria, journal entry, April, 12)

Having friends out of the school eased the stress of the teachers as they were sometimes hesitant about saying wrong things about school and talking about different aspects of life helped them learn a vast array of cultural elements. As a result, they added these elements into their lifestyles and behaviors. Charlotte reflected in her journal that she learned how to read coffee cups, some cooking tips, Turkish practices such as kissing hands and most of the unique expressions that have cultural connotations like *ellerine sağlık* (health for your hands), *hayırlı olsun* (May it bring good to you), *afiyet olsun* (good appetite) from her Turkish friends. Furthermore, Charlotte started to make tea and Turkish coffee and offer them to her guests at home and office in order to be a good host. Maria liked baking a lot and she formed a habit of baking pumpkin bread and American style cookies to bring as gifts to people houses when she visited them, instead of buying something ordinary or purely Turkish. She called this a means of cultural exchange.

As of another aspect of socialization, how teachers spent their free time and how they adjusted themselves to the new social activities were of interest to the research. Based on my observations, travelling was the only form of socialization and entertainment as they did not have many friends in their host city at the beginning of their sojourn. During the weekends, national holidays and winter break, Maria and Charlotte travelled to quite a few cities in Turkey including Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, Bolu, Amasya, Sinop, Konya, Giresun, Nevşehir, Antalya, Çanakkale, Denizli, Adana and Samsun. Most of these trips were either for touristic purposes or visiting their Fulbright friends. These times spent with Fulbright scholars, were specified as “happiest times” in their journals. Especially they put the effort to get together on special occasions like Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. These were the times they missed their home culture and families the most. Hence, sharing these feelings with someone they have much in common relieved them a lot, and they all liked being “stick together”.

The interesting point was that they were all open to bridge their traditions with elements from Turkish culture. A specific example for that could be the costume Charlotte chose to wear for Halloween party. Charlotte preferred to be “çiğköfte” (a Turkish snack translated as seasoned raw meatballs) whereas her best friend was all in white representing ayran (a cold yoghurt beverage) that usually complements with çiğköfte. When I asked the reason for wearing that costume, she told me that that was her favorite food and she wanted to wear it in order to integrate something “meaningful and cultural” into her own cultural practices.

Particularly after winter break, their travelling time was replaced more by recreational activities and local ways of entertainment. Charlotte summarized her routine ways of entertainment as follows:

I spend much more time in cafes here than I do in the States and I love that! Cafe culture is so fun, to just hang out, get breakfast with friends and drink coffee or tea. Tavla (backgammon) and nargile (hookah) are also really fun things to do which I don't do in the States and I love to do here. Also in the States, there isn't the expression to “gezmek” which is basically just to wander around and enjoy the day or time with friends with no specific plan time or place to go. In America we are so busy and always rushing. We have no time to stop and relax with friends or “gezmek” and I really like days

where time seems to slow and you just enjoy exploring and wandering around a city or area.

(Charlotte, journal entry, April, 25)

Besides exploring the city and enjoying the coffee culture, Charlotte started Salsa lessons but that fell through because she didn't like the people in her class and she felt like she was treated like a child since her Turkish wasn't perfect. She clarified the reasons and her embarrassment as "They talked down condescendingly to me like "ANLADIN MI?!" (Do you understand?!) and everyone would chuckle. They didn't mean it rudely, but it felt like that, so I stopped. It was also expensive and not at a convenient time".

Just as Charlotte, Maria added Turkish varieties to her lifestyle and she realized a change in herself as she became more open to making plans on the spot. She enjoyed meeting her friends, colleagues and even students in a cafe, especially outdoors and sipping her Turkish coffee or tea. She asserted that this strong coffee culture was something that she would really miss after returning to home. One of her favorite free time activities was going to the gym and lifting weights, but her attempts failed for similar reasons as in Charlotte's salsa class experience.

In the states, for about 9 months before coming to Turkey, I was going to the gym and lifting weights 5-6 days/week, but here, I just couldn't get myself to do it. The gym that I chose (and I think the gyms in general here) was much, much smaller than I'm used to, and although I never had a problem working out with men around before, the cramped space made me feel uncomfortable. Also, people in the gym here were much more likely to try to correct my form or ask me how much longer I would be using a machine or spot, which I did not appreciate because I knew that I was being watched, and again, I didn't really understand what they were saying and couldn't communicate back with them other than to tell them "bir set daha var" (one more set to go). So yeah, the gym unfortunately did not work out and I can't wait to get back to my gym at home during the summer.

(Maria, journal entry, May 13)

When she stopped going to the gym, Maria found a new activity to fill her free times and started taking glass-making classes in a small shop in a very historical district of the city. Finding something very culture-specific and traditional, Maria was proud of herself to concrete her memories by learning that craft that she had always

fascinated by and wanted to take lessons. She also added in her journal that she would always be thankful for what she did as it became one of her fondest memories of the year in that city. She was quite happy for not only finding a new hobby, but also a super unique one that would be difficult to access elsewhere, including her own country.

4.3 The Challenges Faced: Work-Related Challenges

Being a beginning teacher has its own challenges and expectations for both teachers and consequently learners. Entering classroom which belongs to a totally different national culture and institutional subcultures adds a lot more to the complexity and rigor of being a novice teacher. While still trying to immerse themselves into the new set of norms of the host culture on the macro level, the teachers also needed to learn the culture of their new working context because educational institutions function as promoters of national and local cultural capital and norms to its members. According to Moran, Harris and Moran (2011), the micro culture of organizations involves many dimensions such as political, geographic and economic, and each organizational culture is unique.

Maria once emphasized in an interview that teaching was technically the reason why she was in Turkey, so her responsibilities and interactions at school were of notable importance for her as a source of motivation to adjust to her new life. To her, having good relations at school with the teachers, administrators and students was as important as teaching professionally. Likewise, Charlotte was aware of the term “organizational culture” and she was a little worried about not having enough background knowledge of teaching English in a culturally different context. Both teachers started their first year in teaching with a number of questions in their minds to be answered.

They made their first visit to their new school on September, 15. It was also the day we saw and met each other. That day, with the company of the university representative, they came to prep school building to meet the administrative staff and to complete some school procedures and paperwork. They totally seemed

shocked by the physical condition of the school as it was opened only a few days before, still under construction. They simply could not make sense why the incomplete building was taken into service. Later on, Charlotte addressed her first week impressions as follows:

The way things are set up is sometimes weird. Prep building is brand new which is great, but why don't we have the internet? Even the plumbing and bathrooms are not done. That's not okay! Why are we all here? We have windows, but we are not supposed to open them. We have nice computers which we cannot use yet.

(Charlotte, interview, October, 1)

Apart from the disadvantages of a brand new building, the lack of initial support and communication on the part of university and school administration was another point that made them feel lonely and even isolated. Hearing that majority of the other Fulbright scholars were provided with big furnished houses with running utilities, the time they spent and waited for completely settling in their flat by themselves made them even disappointed. The indifferent and unwilling attitude of the administration put them somehow into a "sink or swim" situation instead of a warm welcome.

Another challenge and a source of disappointment for Maria and Charlotte was that they were provided with neither a formal nor an informal orientation program. On their first visit to school, they only met the vice chair of the Foreign Languages

Department and were introduced to a few teachers who were present that day by chance. They were also given a very brief job description with no mention of a syllabus or a course book. Not having an orientation, the teachers were left on their own for meeting the other staff and finding out the system of the prep school, which was out of their expectations as Charlotte reflected:

As a part of our program, we're supposed to get an orientation, maybe meeting with some people which we kind of did. We have been introduced to 15 even fewer people. We would have done like a campus tour. It was like this is our building, have fun! I would have expected a more official meeting, because we mostly met people just on the way.

(Charlotte, interview, October, 19)

This situation put a greater pressure on the teachers as they had to explore their new workplace by navigating with their American cultural and academic dispositions. For this reason, they went through another set of cultural shocks related to the differences between American and Turkish education systems. Taking the importance of work adjustment to the whole acculturation process, it took longer than expected for teachers to adjust to the cultural frames and norms of the preparatory school for a variety of reasons. In the next section, the factors which took major roles in the teachers' professional adjustment are presented in detail.

4.3.1 Differences between American and Turkish university cultures

4.3.1.1 The concept of mandatory preparatory school

The teachers found the whole concept of prep school itself was very different from anything that American universities offer. Prep schools in Turkey can be described as a transition from high school to university aiming to enable students to gain satisfactory language proficiency for their undergraduate studies. Prep schools are mostly mandatory for some particular departments which require a certain level of English as a means of the program. Only the students who meet the minimum requirement of their departments can follow their studies without enrolling to the prep school.

The particular English language preparatory program that Maria and Charlotte involved in had 62 teachers and 937 students. It consisted of three main units based on the language performance of the students on a placement exam performed at the beginning of the fall semester. Each unit was managed by two coordinators. Students received 20-24 hours of tuition per week. They had to get 60 as the minimum requirement in the proficiency examination at the end of the year.

One thing that surprised Maria about the prep school was the organizational and curricular system which reminds more of a high school system and mentality. As the students are grouped based on a placement test and remain in their classes all day throughout the year, this creates a certain degree of solidarity between the students.

One of my students' mother in Ankara died in the middle of the week, and he received the news during school. When he received the news, a group of 5 or so boys actually left school with him to make sure that he was ok and got home safely, and on my end, class was very somber that afternoon. I was amazed, however, that the boys had formed such strong bonds that they would do that for their classmate, because something like that would never happen in America between classmates given the system that we have where every class has a different set of students.

(Maria, interview, November, 7)

While Maria put emphasis on the unexpected bonds among students as a result of the class system in the prep school, Charlotte made a very negative point about this system of grouping students based on her educational background and system in the US.

I am still absolutely baffled that university students are forced to sit in the same classroom with the same classmates all day every day. For me, that concept is strictly reserved for elementary school aged students. But the more I ask questions, the more I learn that this is normal, and happens at every level from elementary school to university. Again, I really think that this is a shame. Although they do have the opportunity to form strong bonds with their classmates, I think that it is much more important for adolescents to experience different people's opinions, and so on, and there is very little opportunity for that in the Turkish education system. Even beyond prep school, students' classes are scheduled for them, and though they may meet for different classes in different classrooms, they still wind up with, generally, the same group of students in every class. I think that this really contributes to the boredom and misbehavior that I see on a daily basis.

(Charlotte, interview, November, 10)

Another point that puzzled Maria and Charlotte that they had to take attendance for each and every class they taught and submit the attendance sheet to the person in charge in the department's student affairs office. Letting alone the paperwork and workload placed on the teachers, Maria considered that taking attendance at the university level did not make sense to her and she had only one professor who took attendance throughout her college education. Charlotte, sharing similar thoughts as Maria, added that, students were forced to attend the classes that way and this was seen as the biggest cause of student's lack of motivation and accountability. They both found the education system in Turkey as quite controlling and restrictive. They

also argued that most of the times students had no control over their own learning, and this resulted in reluctant students to learn English or any other subjects.

4.3.1.2 University Culture

The university that the teachers worked for was relatively new and still developing in many ways. The campus is more like a commuter campus and there is not as much as a campus community when compared to long-established universities in Turkey and the U.S., as well. Although Maria and Charlotte went to different types of colleges in terms of location and student capacity, they were both confused with the static campus atmosphere and lack of a shared campus culture as it did not match with the concept of university and the perception of college experience they had back in the U.S.

Another thing that I've observed generally is that there seems to be a big lack of 'campus culture' here compared to what I know. On a typical American university campus, there are always events for students, always tables promoting clubs or services, and campus life and dorm culture are an integral part of the 'college experience'. Here, although I do see the occasional promotional poster or table in the canteen, this concept seems to be basically non-existent in comparison, which I think is a shame, because students don't have as much opportunity to branch out.

(Charlotte, interview, November, 10)

Another difference that Charlotte observed, which is almost non-existent in American university culture, is the involvement of parents. Starting with the very first week of the academic year, a number of parents were seen both in the campus and even in the faculty buildings for varying reasons such as dropping off their children, touring the campus, meeting some academics. The presence of the parents and their active engagement in academic issues caught the attention of the teachers and regarded as "strange". Upon seeing a number of parents in the prep building, Maria found it "weird".

In the U.S., you only see parents in like the enrollment, not even enrollment the admissions or financial procedures. Here they're like speaking to professors in the department. It's so weird for me.

(Maria, interview, October, 19)

In addition to the parents, another type of involvement that astonished Charlotte and Maria is the involvement of security forces on the campus. Beginning with some major political events and a wave of protests happened in 2013, armored water cannon called TOMA (standing for Intervention Vehicle to Social Events) has come into Turkish people's lives including university campuses. Maria's first encounter with TOMA was an afternoon while she was teaching peacefully.

One last thing that really stands out in terms of my experience on campus was the presence of a certain TOMA truck right outside of my classroom one day during the fall semester. At this point in my Turkish cultural immersion, I didn't really know much about TOMAs, and could only vaguely remember learning about them at orientation. One day during my ELT class, I noticed my students gradually becoming more and more distracted by something outside. When I finally got fed up and stopped what I was doing to take a look out the window, to my surprise, there was this giant tank-looking truck, and at least 50-70 police officers in full riot attire (masks, shields, batons, etc.). At this point, I understood that there was no returning to my lesson for the moment, so we all watched (them with amazement, me with slight panic) as the action began to unfold. Before I knew it, I felt like I was watching a battle scene. Students began to run at the officers, and the next thing I knew, they were being sprayed with a quite excessive amount of water and tumbling on the grass as the officers advanced. At this point, my students were literally standing on the windowsill taking pictures of the action, with a few of them closest to me torn between looking at the scene unfolding outside, and looking at the look of absolute astonishment on my face as I tried to decide if I should be preparing them for a bomb scare or not, and contemplating every decision that led to me moving to Turkey. As quickly as the action unfolded, it ended, and although I tried to wrap up my lesson (it was nearing the end of our session anyway), I simply could not pull myself back together, or pull their attention back to me, and I gave up and dismissed them. Many of them left satisfied - not because I let them leave early, but because they got their first real university TOMA experience. I, on the other hand, left the building with a million questions, and opted to take the long way around to get back to the prep building for my afternoon classes. What a day that was.

(Maria, journal entry, December, 13)

4.3.1.3 Student Profile

As argued by Maria in our interviews that the unique cultural elements of prep school aforementioned also affect the mentality of students. The common characteristics that the students in the prep school had in common were reported as being immature, irresponsible in their own learning, having very low proficiency in English, lower thinking skills and lacking motivation to learn.

In our first interviews during September and October, while Maria and Charlotte were still getting to know the students, they shared their first impressions for the students as quiet, respectful, scared of native speakers. However; over time they brought up the common characteristics of prep school students in their classes.

The issue of immaturity of the learners in prep school was brought up several times by both of the teachers during the interviews. Charlotte below specified all immature behaviors that her students displayed in class.

Another thing that amazes me every day is the (lack of) maturity level of so many of the students. In the U.S., college aged students may still act immaturely outside of class and in their daily lives, but in the classroom, I could never imagine them acting the way that Turkish students do. Sure, they use their phones and fall asleep, but what amazes me is the amount of talking and other distracting things that they do while I'm talking, explaining an activity, or while they are supposed to be doing an activity. From taking selfies and not even remotely trying to hide it to painting nails, to literally pushing toy cars back and forth across the floor to their friends, I continue to be amazed at their misbehavior on a daily basis.

(Charlotte, interview, January, 5)

This was really surprising for me as the researcher as I was working at the same institution and I always regard my students as very respectful towards the teachers. These misbehaviors that Charlotte mentioned above and observed in the class videotapes could only be explained by the fact that the students did not take Fulbright teachers' classes seriously as these classes had only three percentages on students overall quiz grades. Having once a week forty five minute class also plays a role in students' underestimation of the activities in class. Maria and Charlotte got very demotivated by this and deemed themselves as "very small piece of the puzzle"

when they realized that their students could literally do nothing in class and be perfectly fine in terms of grades.

The grading procedure and percentages are generally determined by the administrators and coordinators in the prep school and it has a very strict pre-set system for grading the quizzes, midterms and final. However; the very little percentage devoted to speaking classes with foreign teachers changed the perception of the students towards the importance and relevance of these classes to their midterm and final performances. The result and grade-oriented system and the students thereby took a big part in the motivation and belongingness level of the teachers and had a very critical impact on their professional adjustment process in a negative way.

The second characteristics of the students, which surprised the teachers was the incredibly low level of English proficiency and particularly incapability of speaking despite long years of studying the language throughout their educational lives. The main reason lying behind this problem was clearly the examination-centered education system in Turkey. This system unfortunately, forces students to set their goals based on their success in standardized multiple choice examinations and hinder them from bring out their potentials and improve skills including language. For this being the reason, Maria and Charlotte were really puzzled to see the very limited English production of the students. Charlotte laid an emphasis on this problem in her journal and seemed a bit confused about preparing lesson plans for her students due to the mismatch between the content of her lessons and the language incapability of the students.

I kind of forget how low they are. I have all these brand sites to teach American culture like Black History Month, but they can barely say what they did on the weekend. How am I going to teach them all these hard concepts? I really like my students, they're sweet but I go to the classroom every week having no idea how my lessons will go.

(Charlotte, February, 18)

For that reason, she decreased the number of the tasks that require higher thinking skills and extensive vocabulary particularly in the spring semester. She started to

teach them some grammar and essential words and worked on making them speak more and practice English instead, just as the most Turkish colleagues did.

As another consequence of the education system, Maria found her students not responsible and accountable enough for their learning. She assumed that her students usually put the blame of their failure on teacher or anyone except themselves. However, she did not agree with this attitude and complained about irresponsibility of her students by sharing the following anecdote in her journal.

In one of her favorite classes to teach, Maria let the students to choose the date of the speaking exam. She gave them three weeks to choose between and they chose the week after the midterm. When she went into my classes, the first thing she did was to ask whether they were ready for the quiz. However, the students were just looking at her and one of them finally spoke up and said they were not prepared for the quiz. A lot of the students were absent and they were on holiday. A lot of them went home for the weekend to see their family; they just had the midterm as their biggest excuse. So Maria seemed really offended and asked them “Would you ever do that to your other teachers? You guys picked this date, and you know you have a speaking quiz, you could have asked me to change the date beforehand, and I would have understood and accepted their excuses.” Then she threw all responses back out of them in a very disappointed and disheartened way and made them feel really bad about it. She left the room angrily and brought a few activities to do for the rest of the class and tried to change her mood as professionalism requires. While reflecting on that experience during the interview, she was still annoyed and shocked by the students’ attitude.

They said they never do that to another teacher. I also said because you know my class is a joke, they don’t care. They also said that they didn’t have time because they were studying for the midterm. My speaking quiz is a 2 minute presentation on a very easy topic. What do you mean you didn’t have time, this doesn’t take much preparation? You can still do some school work while you’re at home with your families. You had two weeks to do this, a two minute presentation! A terrible experience, Turkish students!! I wasn’t expecting that one. I hope it will never happen again.

(Maria, interview, April, 17)

In line with Maria's impressions and experiences with Turkish students, Charlotte thought that her students in general were far away from being autonomous as they were also reluctant to make decisions regarding their own learning and preferences. Charlotte was really puzzled when she asked the students what they wanted to do and learn about and got no answer most of the time usually with their eyes blank. In one class recording, she got the answer from a student as "You are the teacher, you decide". When we talked about this later on, she attributed this as a problem that the Turkish education system brought because the students had probably never been asked that question before.

4.3.1.4 Hierarchy

The strict hierarchical structure is a highly common practice and it is exercised in almost every aspect of life in Turkey, particularly at workplaces. The school that the teachers worked for was not exception for this symbolic power that the hierarchical positions entail. The head of the department is hierarchically at the top of the ladder. Then comes the vice head, coordinators, instructors, respectively. There is also hierarchy between instructors with respect to seniority. Teachers who have the same age usually call each other by first names, but a senior teacher is always called as "hocam". The seniors in the hierarchy level generally avoids acting as equals and expect some forms of formalities and respect shown through behaviors as well as ways of talk.

In these circumstances, there were some codes and norms that the American teachers needed to learn and follow. These symbolic respect codes, as a part of the school culture, were expected from all the personnel in the department. However, it was initially harder for Maria and Charlotte to grasp the power relations as this was something that they were not familiar with within the American culture system where equality is seen as one of the core values. According to Lee (2015) cited in Chestnut (2016), in American work culture "hierarchy is established for convenience, superiors are always accessible and managers rely on individual employees and teams for their expertise. Both managers and employees expect to

be consulted and information is shared frequently and the communication is informal, direct, and participative” (p.13). In contrast with the American perspective, Charlotte, in an interview, mentioned the role of the department head at school as the final decision maker at the top of the hierarchy chain, always slow in acting and distant from the others at school.

The week before the Christmas, Charlotte and Maria wanted to switch their classes with their partners so that they could extend the holiday and travel. In order to do this, they had to receive a number of permissions from the coordinators, the head, the university representative of Fulbright and the actual Fulbright committee, respectively and Maria described this process as “abnormal” and added that:

This really big hierarchy and priority level in Turkey, the boss, you have to be really respectful you have to say some certain things to show your respect. In the states the relationship between the head and the teachers is more equal. Can't we just be normal? If you want to switch your class, which is apparently a simple thing, you need to ask one of the coordinators. If she is positive, then you go to the prep head. Only after he says yes, then you can do it.

(Maria, interview, January, 16)

Seeing the strict hierarchical organization, Charlotte admitted that it took a while for her to figure out that level jumping in the hierarchical ladder was not a good idea and she should always see the first level superior. In the journal, she also included that age also mattered in social and professional relations. She felt that she had to respect for the teachers older than her even if they were in equal positions. This reminded Charlotte of her earlier experiences in Japan, but still hard for her to put it into practice even when she had to choose the right words of addressing forms to display respect and formality.

Another aspect that the teachers were felt challenged as a result of hierarchy structure was the long procedures for taking any actions. Charlotte criticized the teachers and other Turkish people in general for not being open to change and not taking any initiative to manipulate the flaws of the system.

At the school, the bureaucracy is obnoxious. I want to do my job. To start a project takes forever, opening the speaking club took a semester because of

the permissions needed, and things take so long here. Though everybody is aware of the problems arising from this hierarchy structure, nobody wants to change. Turkish people are not really open to change, no matter how educated they are.

(Charlotte, interview, May, 16)

4.3.2 Institutional problems

There were a number of institutional challenges that the teachers encountered during their teaching time at school. These challenges were stemming from the expectations mismatch between the teachers and some members of the institution such as administrators, colleagues and other personnel. The three most important institutional problems that the teachers found culturally dissonant and hard to adjust can be listed as lack of planning, lack of communication, lack of professional support and feedback. These three issues were the ones that challenged the teachers and constantly reported in their journals and the interviews. The common pattern that both teachers shared in the interviews and their journals is they are both newly beginning teachers and started their teaching career in Turkey. Teaching in a foreign country was a different experience for them with uncertainties and discrepancies arising from differences related to professionalism, ethnocentrism, work ethics and interactional issues. They started teaching in a new context and first adhered to their American norms and dispositions; but once the American way of thinking and acting did not work, they had to acquire a Turkish perspective in order to function socially and professionally.

Maria and Charlotte described their first day at school as “stressful” and “frustrating” as they were not informed by any people in charge about their classes and schedules. Taking that it was also their first year in teaching, this uncertainty became as double frustrating since they did not even know what to teach to which level of students. This last minute scheduling was a very typical and cultural element of the prep school Maria and Charlotte was working for. However, for Maria and Charlotte, this was unprofessional and something that they were not used to in American educational system. In her journal Charlotte wrote that American

universities have classes planned months in advance, even a semester before. It is quite evident that in the beginning they didn't comprehend the concept of prep school as they usually compared it to their undergraduate classes. Maria and Charlotte reflected their discomfort stemming from procrastination on scheduling and the lack of planning in the interviews. Maria reflected on her first days at school as below:

Monday rolled around and there was still no word of the majority of our teaching schedules. "Things take time in Turkey", we have been told over and over again. While I have learned to be patient from my previous time abroad, this was taking a little bit too much time for me to be comfortable with.

(Maria, interview, October, 10)

Echoing Maria's reflection, Charlotte stated that it would be nice if she had an office right away but she seemed more tolerant and understanding that the school moved to a new building and there were flaws. However, she was more concerned and shocked by the fact that she did not know her schedule in advance and did not have a lot of background knowledge about her expectations of the classes, what levels she was teaching. Thus, she couldn't plan anything and that was the hardest part of the work adjustment process as she regarded herself as a type of teacher who needs to plan everything ahead.

After her first class which she went in with big question marks in her mind, Charlotte felt "worried and unprepared" and talked about how much effort she made to leave a good impression even though she had no idea about what to teach or the school system in general.

I wasn't even thinking about classes or anything, I was just thinking getting this hour, and making a good first impression. That was all I could think about. And I was worried about my first impression because I felt so unprepared and I was worried about not making a good one.

(Charlotte, interview, October, 22)

Another key problem accompanying organizational failures that the teachers confronted at school was the lack of communication and not being updated or even

informed about school and class related issues. Here again problems rooted in disorganization of school management and lack of communication are observed and discussed with the teachers. During an interview, Charlotte was talking about the breakdowns she had experienced during the first weeks at school. She highlighted some problems arising from teaching in a new but still incomplete building. After seeing that everybody around had similar problems, she felt that the communication gap and lack of debriefing and guidance doubled her frustration. With a few more question marks in mind, she said:

I'm still getting used to the institution. It's a brand new building and everybody is having more or less the same problems. We had a little more than theirs. Because no one gave us the computer keys for a few weeks, we didn't have an office for a few weeks. Having a 3 hour listening class but not having working speakers! A couple of things I wish they had told us before. I'm sometimes trying to figure things out on my own. But if no one tells me, how can I know it?

(Charlotte, interview, November, 23)

The communication gap between the administrators and the teachers grew so much that Maria and Charlotte did not receive any e-mails from the prep school because they were not added to the group until they realized it in November. For more than two months, they were not informed about school issues. During this time, new regulations on limits of making copies were brought. However, uninformed about the issue, Maria and Charlotte thought the machines were broken. They learned about the new rules during a small talk by chance.

Not only they were not getting updated, but also they were somehow expected to keep up with the changes and new rules. Maria wrote about this with a bit anger and disappointment as follows:

The most frustrating thing so far nobody communicates anybody. The head told me yesterday that I should have signed the attendance sheet, nobody told me! There was a sign on the door but it was all Turkish!

(Maria, journal entry, September, 28)

The communication problem continued in spring semester, too. During the first week of Maria and Charlotte were again trying to cope with the tentativeness of their schedule. Maria was told that she was not supposed to teach because her

classes were rescheduled after she already taught the class for ten minutes. In the journal she wrote about how she had to leave the class just because the head double-scheduled the teachers without any notification. In the class videotape, she seemed quite confused and hesitant to leave the class as she did not really understand what was happening.

Another major problem that the teachers confronted was the lack of professional support and feedback. As compared with the monitoring and feedback system in American schools, they were given neither a form of feedback nor evaluation. During the initial months, Charlotte did not regard this as a big problem as she liked the idea of being free to create her own syllabus and materials. However, it did not take long for her to realize that she was running out of teaching ideas. Especially when she had some task-related or management problems in her classes, she felt the need for some performance evaluation and constructive feedback. Nevertheless, it was obvious from the quote below that she never received the feedback she asked for.

Nobody gives me feedback. I'm not a perfect teacher. I'm only 23 years old. I don't know what I'm doing most of the time. I asked to be invited to the meetings of elementary group. No one tells me anything. I specifically asked them. Nobody questions what I'm doing in class.

(Charlotte, interview, April, 28)

Though Maria was aware of the fact that as a novice teacher she was not perfect and needed support, her opinions and practices started to change in the course of time. She admitted that she did not want to put as much effort as before into her lesson plans since nobody was monitoring. It was interesting to hear the similar complaints usually made by nonchalant Turkish teachers from Maria such as: "I guess I got used to it, everyone else does it. If my lesson turns into a chaos, it's not my fault. If they don't give me any notice, they can't expect much out of me". Charlotte found this a little strange that nobody checked what they were doing in class. Still, she gave all her lesson plans to the coordinators, but none of them gave her any feedback.

In the prep school among all the non-native English language teachers Maria and Charlotte were the only native language teachers. That being the case, the

administrators expected the Fulbright teachers only to immerse the students to English language. The classes given to them were separated from the regular program, and the classes were deemed as merely “speaking practice” with only a little grade percentage given. Given no specific job responsibilities, no syllabus and materials to follow, the teachers were asked to go to class and just talk. However, this approach was contradicting with the role that both the teachers and the Fulbright program casted for them. The conflict can be understood from Charlotte’s remarks:

Being a native speaker doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re a really good language teacher. This crosses my mind constantly...What do you want me to teach? Don’t just say “go and speak with them”. I want to help these students, the expectation is just like this girl is speaking English, the students are going to listen and learn how to speak, which is not something I was taught at school.

(Charlotte, interview, May, 3)

Despite the minimum expectations and not specified roles in teaching, Maria implied that she was pushing herself to do her best as she studied education and knew how to plan appropriate lessons. She took her job seriously and considered it necessary to impress herself and her students a lot more. Although nobody was monitoring her, she felt a lot of pressure to improve her teaching skills. Meanwhile she was trying to find her role in the school even months after the classes started. She reflected her concerns about this and said:

I’m still worried that I’m not doing what they need. Ok I’m a native speaker, supposedly they want native speakers. Ok well I’m here. How can I benefit from them the most with me being a native speaker? What can I do with that? I think I’m still trying to find out my place within that. I love doing my own things. My problem is I don’t know what the student need. I don’t know what they know already and what they need. They keep telling do speaking activities, but what does that mean?

(Maria, interview, April, 19)

The contradictions and clashes in expected roles and the vagueness of job responsibilities made the teachers feel like “excluded”. They felt that the people at school treated them like that as they were guest teachers with a temporary status. Charlotte asserted that though it sounded good to have the freedom of doing

whatever they wanted to do with the students, it actually turned into something “annoying”. She continued that she wanted to be treated just like the other teachers and be an active member of the prep school teaching community as follows:

I don’t want special treatment. Sometimes I think about the fact that I never go to the meetings and I have no role in creating exams or anything. Charlotte and I are native speakers of English, if you need help creating exams, we can help. We studied education, but nobody seems interested.

(Charlotte, interview, April, 28)

Maria also emphasized that the uncaring attitude of the administration and other teachers in charge had a negative effect on students’ perceptions about her classes as “free time or fun time”. Demotivated by the situation, Maria revealed that this somehow put pressure off of her and she started to make less effort since she did not get any feedback. Her reflections echoed some Turkish teachers that I was in contact. It was obviously a school-wide problem and Maria accepted this as a part of school culture. That might be the reason why she could not change it, and preferred to act like the rest of the teachers.

4.3.3 Challenges in Class

Neither Maria nor Charlotte had a clue about what it meant to be a teacher in Turkey. Thus, navigating with totally American perspectives on teaching and learning, Maria and Charlotte initially tried to go with their own teaching practices and philosophies that they acquired throughout their education years. However, when they saw that their American perspective was not helpful in some circumstances, they had to acclimate to the new necessary cultural cues.

The first conflicting issue in class was the addressing issue. Maria and Charlotte asked their students to call them by their names just as in the U.S. Although this idea sounded appealing to the students at first, it was obvious in the class video tapes that only a few of them kept calling them by their first names. It was probably the first time in their school lives that the students were experiencing such a problem and the majority thought that it was disrespectful to the teacher.

Interestingly, Maria and Charlotte changed their minds after a few weeks and during the interviews Maria told me that “hocam” started to sound more respected.

In her journal, Maria wrote that she had a student that started the mail with “Maria”, but he wrote a whole paragraph about how he couldn’t decide to start with informal Maria, Miss Maria, Teacher, or Hocam. Finally he wrote Maria and finished the mail with his apologies if he had been disrespectful. After reading the e-mail, Maria reported that Maria was fine but she liked being called as “Hocam” by her students rather than Maria as it sounded “cool”.

Unlike that student of Maria, the majority of the students refused to call Maria and Charlotte’s first names really long time, until they started to feel comfortable enough to go with it. During the interview Charlotte was really surprised when her students called her “teacher”.

Teacher? What? Even in the States, you say like Mr. or Mrs. with the last name, but you never say teacher unless you don’t know the name of the teacher. It’s weird.

(Maria, interview, October, 21)

In our first interviews, Charlotte was talking about her characteristics as a teacher as friendly, understanding and relaxed. However, as time passed by, Charlotte noticed some changes in her teaching style and her behaviors towards the students. Just like she preferred “hocam” as the address form, she also started to remind her students that she is the teacher and they need to respect the same way they respect their Turkish teachers. Below, there is an extract from a class videotape where Charlotte had a respect issue with one of her male students. Similar dialogues happened at different times with different male students, as well.

Student: Hocam, çok tatlısın. (You are so sweet)

Charlotte:(ignores)

S: Çok tatlısın hocam. (You are so sweet teacher)

C: If you are going to treat your Turkish teacher in a different way, treat me the same. You can say “çok tatlısın” to your friend, but you need to say “çok tatlısınız” (with formal second person pronoun suffix) to your teacher!

S: I’m sorry hocam, you are right.

(Charlotte, class recordings, March, 5)

Charlotte started to comment on the dialogue by saying “I need to demand my authority in class.” and continued with how much her views on respect changed. She also underlined that in Turkish language, there were things one needs to say in order to be inappropriate and respectful. This clearly is an indicator of Charlotte’s progress in the host language and the cultural symbols embedded in the language and how she started to integrate them in her own teaching practices.

Unlike Charlotte, Maria did not mind the authority issue much, but she had problems more about class management related ones. In her journal, she wrote that she did not like to see herself as the authority in the class. Thus, during her classes, her students were more active and mostly chatty. Though she liked seeing her students actively talking in the class, some incidents during the class made her start to question her class-management skills. In one of her classes within the midterm project week, Maria got really annoyed when a student was giving a presentation and the rest of the class was talking over her in Turkish. In the tape, she shouted at the class a few times and had to take an early break before the time the class was supposed to finish. When she reflected on this afterwards, she said she might have needed more classroom management techniques and that had been one of her biggest frustrations school-wise.

Charlotte and Maria also had some other challenges with the students in terms of participation in the class, punctuality and cheating issues. When we talked about these problems and incidents from the class recordings and the reasons lying behind these teacher-student clashes, the discussion inevitably moved to the emic and etic distinction. In one of our interviews with Charlotte and Maria together, they asserted that some intercultural misunderstanding occurred when they used their American cultural framework as the only filter to interpret some Turkish behaviors. They shared some of their experiences in which they or their students failed to understand each other, when they looked from merely American or Turkish perspectives.

Maria referred to the day when she got really angry with her students because they always got late to the class, even the ones in the afternoon. As an American instructor she agreed that she perceived this attitude annoying when majority of her students came to class minimum of five minutes late every day. She also added that

is a common behavior among teachers as well. With her American cultural framework, time is an entity and punctuality is important; however, her students got surprised by the attitude of their instructor as they did not even consider themselves to be late at all. Maria concluded this anecdote by saying that she did not regard these practices as explicit because both parties acted on their unquestioned culturally-based assumptions and she gradually became a more tolerant person when it comes to punctuality, concept of time and time management in Turkey.

Another conflict was experienced between Charlotte and her students in one class concerning plagiarism. After realizing that a few of her students copied their project from a website without giving any citations and resource, Charlotte got quite disappointed and she gave them zero. Interestingly, the students did not even know that the thing they did was illegal and had some serious consequences. Upon this reaction coming from the students, Charlotte allocated one of her classes to explain what plagiarism is, and the ethics behind it. When we talked about this during the interview on that week, she reflected on her astonishment that the students in her classes did not care about the issue of plagiarism, and why they were not taught about this for years.

Similarly, Charlotte had some problems with her students when she caught up cheating in the exam papers. It was clearly seen in the class video tape that she detected cheating beforehand. In the class, she distributed the papers to the students and asked “Do you have any problems or any questions with your results?”, but none of the cheaters said something or apologized. Then, she called their names and asked to see them during the recess. She reflected on what happened that day as follows:

I have three students cheated. I lectured each one separately. The boy got upset and left class. He didn't sign up or anything. Two girls came out later. They came and denied it. I said I caught up some cheating. I showed them the questions, then said they cheated because they looked up and everyone was cheating, which I don't think was true. I haven't decided what to do yet, but this is inconceivable and really disgraceful.

(Charlotte, interview, April, 26)

Like plagiarism, cheating during exams was another problematic issue stemming from differences in perception of students and Charlotte. For Charlotte it was “inconceivable and disgraceful, whereas the students perceived their behaviors as “normal” and “acceptable”. When the two parties realized that they were approaching the issue from different cultural and personal perspectives, they looked for new ways to understand each other. Charlotte lectured them on plagiarism and cheating, and the students promised to be more responsible and careful from then on.

Another set of problems occurred in terms of students’ lack of motivation in speaking the target language and actively participate. The students seemed to be talkative, but during the classes, the majority of them refused to talk English. One reason for this might be the differences between the teaching philosophies of the teachers and the way most Turkish students were accustomed to learn. As mentioned in the previous sections, Turkish education system, particularly language education is heavily based on mechanical practices and rote-learning (Bozkurt, 2007; Şimşek, 2004; Yumuk, 2002). For years, the students were exposed to drills and grammar-based exercises and foreign language classes were taught in Turkish and just like equations in mathematics. Although the system started to change in the direction of communicative language teaching within the last decade, the learners are still under the influence of traditional class techniques and practices. Karabıyık (2008) and Yumuk (2002) argue that prep school students in Turkey lack in autonomy and majority of the classes are still traditional, teacher centered and authority oriented. Another reason might be the status of English in Turkey. In a country, where English is only a foreign language at school and there is almost no opportunities to speak it in daily life, the English level of a student studying at a state school is more likely to be low.

Amazed by the low English command of students and poor comprehension skills, Maria and Charlotte’s attempts to do purely communicative activities failed. The majority of the activities was based on group work and did not include any prescriptive grammar points to teach. The radical change in the nature of classes and probably having a foreign teacher for the first time in their lives made the students

puzzled and a bit worried at first. However, it took only a few weeks for Charlotte and Maria to establish good connections with the students. Although the students gradually got used to the student-centered tasks and activities requiring production, the exam-based evaluation system of the school did not allow the teachers to fully utilize their potentials to prepare communication-based activities on cross-cultural issues.

Students' motivation towards their classes and the attendance rate showed a great decline particularly during midterm and final weeks. This made Maria and Charlotte highly upset and they felt the urge to include some grammar points and multiple choice exercises into their lesson plans to attract some attention from the students.

The challenges though hard to cope with for Maria and Charlotte at times, were reported to enable the teachers to look at their own culture more often with a critical lens and developed their own concept of culture as can be seen in the following quotes:

Why don't we take off our shoes in America? Actually it's nasty. But I think it has become a cultural thing. I'm wondering why we do different things. Why don't we do that? America doesn't really have like a cuisine. When we think about our food, it's like little bit of from every culture. It's hard to explain to my students. So weird.

(Charlotte, interview, April, 17)

Seeing that cultures are unique and dynamic in nature, the teachers started to develop some kind of appreciation for Turkish culture as well as for all cultures. Charlotte's remarks show that she is quite aware of the cultural differences and began to appreciate them by embracing the peculiarities.

Knowing the fact that there are still cultural differences, the things don't change quickly in here, or people and their ideas no matter how much open they are somehow fixed. There is like a mentality, that's just different from mine as far as work ethic, values, perspectives and gender roles. I have my own ideas; I still share them even though I know they won't change. I don't want it change, though. It is what makes us "us". I just go positively about the differences.

(Charlotte, interview, March, 19)

Maria, on the other hand, highlighted that this cultural experience and challenges in particular eventually gave her opportunities to establish empathy with her students. She also added that this will also empower her as a teacher who has gone through the stages of adjusting to a new culture and learning a new language.

Since English language teaching is my career plan, I can stay here for the second year, even though the first year helped me empathize with my students, the second year will give me the background and experience to tell my future students that yes language learning and adapting to a new culture is hard but I've been there, I've done it I can tell you that it gets better and really allowed me to empathize with them, that really motivates me. I think that's a very good reason to stay, and it can really make a big difference me as a teacher.

(Maria, journal, May, 03)

4.4 Strategies Employed to Cope With the Challenges

4.4.1 Strategies used for communal life

Despite their divergent personalities, character traits and backgrounds, Charlotte and Maria had both successful and unsuccessful attempts of adjusting themselves to the new systems of culture(s). While trying to navigate the challenges emerged, they developed various strategies to fit in the social norms. The major strategies they used in their social lives were: avoidance, being a good observer, benefiting from prior cross-cultural experiences and resorting to cultural informants.

The first strategy they undertook for a very limited amount of time was avoidance. The lack of language capabilities in the target language, being an inhibitor of achieving successful communication, was the central issue that hindered Maria and Charlotte from not only socializing with people outside of work, but also from the very basic tasks that require verbal interaction. Host language incapability resulted in avoidance at times as can be seen in the following quote.

Shopping can sometimes be another frustrating experience here in Turkey, especially in smaller stores. Many times, a worker follows me around the store, either just following or trying to help. While this does happen sometimes in America too, it's more frustrating here because I usually have

no desire to talk while I'm shopping, and I never know how to say what I'm looking for when they ask, which leads to awkwardness and embarrassment for me. It can actually be very discouraging sometimes, and I've found myself avoiding shopping in some stores that I really enjoy, because I know they always try to help.

(Maria, journal entry, November, 11)

Charlotte experienced a similar problem when one day we were shopping at the mall. We went to one of the personal care stores one day and Charlotte was looking for a specific lipstick color. She couldn't find it so she just pulled out the drawer underneath to look for it. All of a sudden the lady working there came and said "pardon?!" and started lecturing her on how she was not allowed to do that and she should have asked her if she needed something but she said it with an attitude. Though she knew that it was her fault to open the drawer without asking, she still did not make sense why the lady scolded her. She looked so angry; however, she did not say anything to her except for "sorry" and we left. When she was talking about this incident in the interview, she said:

If I was in the States, I would have given her attitude right back and explained that I didn't know it wasn't allowed, and that she should be kinder to customers or they won't want to buy your products. Instead I just blushed and said "kusura bakma" (sorry) and left quickly. I sometimes feel not as bold or brazen as I am in the States, I don't put up as much of a fight sometimes. Since then I've never shopped at that store though, so they lost a valuable customer!

(Charlotte, interview, November, 2)

There were times that they avoided taking the tram with the fear of getting lost or being obliged to talk to people in Turkish, and walked long distances. Maria, a few times avoided going to a doctor after she had some traumatic experiences with a doctor incapable of speaking English. Nevertheless, this strategy of avoidance gradually disappeared when they gained moderate command of Turkish in a few months, and had successful communication with the host nationals.

Another strategy that they frequently used was making observations. As previously noted, transportation was a big challenge for the teachers. After Maria and Charlotte

overcame the first transportation-related culture shocks, they started to observe other people and their actions in order to find new cultural cues. It is of notable importance to see how they developed strategies, which were similar to the ones that many young people in the city usually display. Charlotte reported in her blog that she developed these strategies to avoid the potential looks or any interaction from strangers. She asserted this in her following quote:

Middle-aged people give you the stare. I started to pick my seat strategically, the farthest away from the doors or I just like look down on my phone and don't look up for anything because the second you look up you're going to look into the old lady's' eyes.

(Charlotte, interview, February, 27)

With their observation skills and being open to any kind of learning facilitated the process and made it possible for them to gradually internalize the cultural cues and adapt their behaviors and expectations accordingly. Offering their seats or choosing their seats strategically, cooking Turkish food and sharing it with others, bringing gifts while visiting someone were some indicators of how they started to integrate themselves into the host culture by constantly observing others and interactions. Maria started her reflection with these words “On the tram, on the bus, in the stores, I try to take note of things. There're so much things in Turkey to observe and learn” and added:

I came here pretty open-mind about culture and I knew that I needed to observe things, how the culture worked so I don't make fool of myself. Took me a while to remember I should take off my shoes in front of people's doors. Sometime I forget to kiss both sides of the cheek and that gets awkward.

(Maria, interview, February, 19)

The other strategy that helped Maria and Charlotte so as to cope with the cultural challenges was taking advantage of the prior cross-cultural experiences. For both teachers, Turkey was not their first abroad experience. Except for their short touristic visits, Maria participated in exchange program in Italy and stayed there for six months for educational purposes. Charlotte, on the other hand, lived in Japan for four years during her high school years as her father was commissioned as a soldier. Years later, when she graduated from university, she took part in a voluntary

teaching project in Panama and lived there for three months. During the interviews, they both addressed to the prior cross-cultural experiences they had as these provided them with a number of benefits particularly for setting conceivable expectations.

Charlotte's first time abroad without her parents in Panama taught her to keep her expectations at a certain level since she had the first biggest culture shocks of her life there. In one of the interviews, she talked about the challenges she faced in Panama and highlighted how that teaching and living experience turned into a success story as follows:

My summer in Panama, that was the biggest culture shock in my life because it was the first time away from my family. I was teaching and I was alone. All the other abroad experiences I was with my family on the military base. However, in Panama I was on my own. There things are really different. I went there with a lot of high expectations, it just didn't go as I expected. By the end, I loved it and it was worth everything!

(Charlotte, interview, March, 19)

Maria also thought that her sojourning experience in Italy raised her cultural awareness and respect for variety. She prepared herself for the potential culture shocks as she remarked: "Living abroad, things never goes like you expect them to be, I knew that it was a different culture and its norms, I knew that I was going to have some culture shocks". She continued to give some specific examples based on her experiences and culture shocks in Italian restaurants. She told the story of how she sat in the restaurant for hours waiting for the check without knowing she had to ask for it. That was something she did not get surprised in Turkey as she relied on her prior knowledge.

Besides her prior cross-cultural experience, Maria also reflected on her previous studies and the Turkish class she took as grounds for her present knowledge particularly about the language and culture. She saw her sojourning experience in Turkey as a way to put all her prior knowledge into practice by saying: "Because the Turkish course I took in NY was a big part of my adjustment, cultural background.

A lot of things could have surprised me if I hadn't taken that class. Still it was cool to see and experience the things I learned.”

As put forth by Nameth (2014), when sojourners encounter different cultural perspectives, they need someone to help them navigate culturally-based challenges, and these people are called as cultural informants. Both Maria and Charlotte, while describing the challenges they had during the whole year such as finding a flat to live, and settling process, navigating the transportation system, finding a doctor, addressed either host country nationals including their colleagues and students at the university and new friends or other Fulbright friends as integral to their adjustment process. For the obstacles about general living and interactions with people, the teachers usually relied on a few colleagues whom they had a closer relationship and their local and non-local friends.

Both Maria and Charlotte accessed local people and interacted with them in order to gain local knowledge and understanding of Turkish culture. Though their interaction level varies due to the differences in their personalities and communication skills, both of them developed relations with these informants. It came in forms of informing, emotional attachment, psychological relieving and other favors. They reported that all kinds of help and support from these sources facilitated their cross-cultural adaptation. The data reported that each group of cultural informant provided the teachers with different types of information and aspects of culture.

4.3.2 Strategies used in institutional life

As the teachers were not provided with any professional support, orientation period, teaching materials and feedback sessions, in the institution they reported to feel “left alone” and “uninformed” mostly. Charlotte described their situation as “sink-or-swim” underlining that they were newly beginning teachers. Thus, the strategies that help teachers to handle the unexpected issues and school-related challenges were trial and error, self-effort and resorting to the colleagues and students.

Maria and Charlotte, as novice teachers, mostly used their self-effort to plan their lessons, create their own materials and exams, find alternative ways to assess the students' English performance, and initiate a speaking club. As they received almost no support in terms of teaching and professional issues, they had to find the best ways to teach by trial and error strategy. This strategy was more obvious when their lesson plans did not work as they expected. Maria elaborated on her confusion about planning a good lesson for her students as follows:

I had all these brand sites to teach American culture like Black history month but they could barely say what they did on the weekend. How am I going to teach them all these hard concepts? I really like my students they're sweet but I go to the classroom every week having no idea how my lessons will go. Sometimes a lesson goes great and I did not expect that. Or I spent two-three hours planning of a lesson, but it just didn't work.

(Maria, journal, October, 27)

Similarly, Charlotte learned a lesson by making trials in terms of her teaching practices. In one of the class recordings, she had a class that she had not met before because of the schedule changes in beginning of the second term. Instead of doing a big introduction with them like she did in the first term, she did a very quick introduction, met them all, shook their hands, she talked about herself a bit and jumped to the lesson. However, a few boys in the class wanted to draw her attention and he started to answer all her questions in Turkish. Getting angry with the situation towards the end, she did not know what to do and dismissed them earlier with tears in her eyes. During the interview, she reflected on that day as "I wish I wouldn't have done that and I wish I would have spent the day really trying to get to know them. Next time I'll spend more time to get to know them and I'm going to talk about some classroom policies that I have." These failures made her reflect on her mistakes and make some alterations for the following classes by herself.

Taking the amount of time that the teachers spent at school, colleagues were obviously helpful for school culture related problems and challenges in particular. They found younger colleagues particularly easy to communicate and more willing to maintain their relationship out of the school, as well. Maria and Charlotte asked a lot of questions pertaining to the operation of school and school culture.

A small group of colleagues served as another solidarity group for the teachers that they could share their teaching experiences and culture-based problems. Apart from that, through observing colleagues, teachers changed the way they dressed, talked to the students as well as the administrators. When it came to professional adjustment and teaching challenges, Maria and Charlotte resorted to colleagues and students to help them make sense of their teaching environment, show them cultural cues and solve the problems with ease. They also deemed these cultural informants as “motivational grounds” in their adjustment processes.

The students served as another group of cultural informants for Maria and Charlotte. In the class videotapes, there were several instances of cultural exchange. Charlotte and Maria familiarized the students with American culture elements such as Halloween, Black history month, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, Columbus Day, etc. In most of these classes, it turned out a reciprocal cultural exchange as student taught a lot of things about Turkish culture. Despite their lack of interest in American culture, Turkish students functioned more as culture transmitters as they loved talking about Turkish culture in and outside of the class. They provided the teachers with a lot of information regarding particularly Turkish pop-culture, food and history, special days and rules of Islam. They also liked being in the position of teaching Turkish phrases and cultural elements to their English teachers.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

5.0 Presentation

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study with a holistic understanding of this research by referring to the literature on cross-cultural adjustment and acculturation studies. The chapter begins with a statement of purpose followed by the discussion of the findings. The conclusion is made with some recommendations for future researchers.

This phenomenology based ethnographic study addressed the challenges and strategies that the two American Fulbright teaching assistants faced and developed during their ten-month cross-cultural adjustment process in Turkey. The study uncovered that highly strong cultural elements were embedded in the behaviors and perspectives of the participant teachers. The emerging challenges and dissonances which were mostly inflicted by cultural differences and the meanings that the teachers ascribed to these challenges were of the central focus when investigating the social and professional adjustment patterns and also variations between the teachers. In the light of the interpretation of the findings presented in the previous chapter, this study clearly shows parallelisms with the previous literature regarding cross-cultural adjustment and acculturation with regards to the common challenges encountered by sojourners (Van Vianen, De Pater, Kristof-Brown, & Johnson, 2004; Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer & Luk, 2005; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, Black, & Ferzandi, 2006; Romig, 2009; Nameth; 2014, Liao, 2010).

The unique experiences of the teachers with the host culture and host nationals support the multidimensional nature of cross-cultural adjustment including both prior experiences and the ones during their sojourn. The primary finding is related to culture shock. Though the study is limited to only ten months, the teachers have gone through a certain series of cultural shocks that eventually foster their potential

to develop cultural competency and successfully integrate a set of host culture paradigms with their own home culture practices.

As also aspired by the nature of all qualitative studies, international experiences should be investigated through the lenses which prioritize individuality, variations as well as shared patterns and commonalities among the participants rather than reaching generalizations (Coleman, 2013). Hence, this study aims to unearth the particularities of the living and teaching experiences with the intention of inspiring other researchers to further practice it in different contexts by connecting the findings with their own cross-cultural experiences under quest (Smith et al., 2009).

The in-depth analysis of the experiences of the two American teachers is in line with the findings of the research concerned out by Coleman (2013), Palthe (2004) and Waxin & Panaccio (2005) in that international experiences, particularly cross cultural adjustment experiences are complex and show variations among people due to internal and external factors and individual differences. The study also suggests that the challenges faced during sojourn show significantly influential impact on cross-cultural adjustment, which eventually enables them to develop some strategies to operate successfully in the new society.

The major findings of this study are discussed around the research questions that guided the study. The two main discussion themes in this chapter are facing and navigating challenges during the process of social and professional adjustment and the strategies that help teachers better adjust to their social and institutional lives.

5.1 Facing and navigating challenges during the process of social and professional adjustment

The central focus of this phenomenology-based ethnography was to gain an in-depth insight into the challenges that the teachers encountered both in their social and professional experiences in the host city. The findings of the study are congruent with those of the recent research pertaining to the challenges and culture shocks faced in the course of cross-cultural adjustment (Matusitz, 2015; Campbell, 2015; Slagoski, 2014; Nameth, 2014; Liao, 2010; Romig, 2009).

Following their entry to the host culture, the teachers began to face a remarkable number of challenges, particularly on culture-related issues. Damen (1987) describes this process as “dealing with new ways and systems of beliefs and patterns of an unfamiliar cultural group” (p.140). When the teachers attempted to navigate with their own cultural values and American perspectives they brought with them, they usually ended up with dissonances and failures stemming from the cultural differences. Then, they tried to find some strategies to successfully operate by following the rules and cues of the host culture. This process of finding new ways to act in the host culture did not terminate until the moment they left the country.

The general environment related challenges that the teachers faced were found to be related to domestic issues. The data reported that the teachers were overwhelmed with the feeling of frustration and anxiety arose from general-environment related challenges particularly in the first months of their sojourn. In a supportive vein to Liao (2010)’s study, similar challenges of housing, shopping, dealing with bureaucracy, and transportation have been found among expatriate teachers in Taiwan. Likewise, Şahan et al. (2014) in their study on the difficulties that Fulbright teaching assistants in Turkey had during their sojourn, dealing with bureaucracy was found the most difficult challenge. As of the reasons why the teachers had to deal with a substantial number of culture shocks in regards to, the data showed parallelisms with findings of Peltokorpi (2008) in that the lack of sojourners’ host language ability was of paramount importance particularly in general environment adjustment.

The biggest source of challenge besides cultural differences was the language barrier. Selmer (2006) stated that “language affects and reflects culture just as culture affects and reflects what is encoded in language” (p. 352). The difficulties due to the lack of necessary language and communication skills impeded Maria and Charlotte’s cultural adjustment processes, particularly within the first months of their sojourn. It took almost a semester for them to bring their language proficiency up to the level to engage in daily conversations and interactions. Within these months of first cultural shocks and limited communication skills, the teachers usually felt frustrated, isolated, helpless and inferior. These findings echoed Brown

(2000)'s idea of communication as “the most visible and available aspect of a culture” (p. 183). The study also confirms the argument of Schumann (1975), Brown (2000) and Acton & Walker de Felix (1986) that culture learning is the first phase of cross-cultural adaptation, and culture is learned mainly through language. In order to engage in cross-cultural issues, the teachers first had to learn the host language.

The findings pertaining to the pivotal role of host language capability in cross cultural adjustment validates the studies such as Cui and Awa (1992), Charalambous (2013), Ward and Kennedy (1993), Tomich et al. (2003), Kim (2000), Erwin and Coleman (1998) arguing that language ability is a strong factor to pave the way for particularly interactional adjustment.

The data evidently displayed that language capability is highly related to all three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment specified in Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)'s model. The language command of the teachers played a central role in coping with their general environment related problems, socialization and also relations at school. Echoing Selmer's (2006) findings, Maria and Charlotte's language and communication improvement in time showed a strong relationship with interactional adjustment and relatively weaker relationship for work adjustment as Turkish was of not much importance in the first place and superfluous for the workplace.

Regarding socialization challenges, apart from the language barrier, interacting with the host nationals and making friends were the main concerns of the teachers. The degree of their comfort showed an upward trend only towards the first half of their sojourn. The teachers deemed the moments of successful interactions with the host nationals as “victories” and this increased their belongingness level to the host society by increasing their motivation to engage in more interactions with the host country nationals. This is also highlighted by other scholars such as Liu and Lee (2008) and Graf (2004) as the ability to speak the language of host nationals to be the most important intercultural competency and sojourners that are better socialized in the host country are likely to adjust more effectively.

Alongside the social and interactional challenges stemming mostly from the language barrier, the teachers faced a considerable number of challenges related to the differences in the educational system, institutional problems and teaching-related problems. Considering that it was their first year in teaching, Maria and Charlotte were novice teachers, by definition. Therefore, they encountered many challenges typical of any novice teacher, in addition to the complexity of adjusting to a different culture (Romig, 2009). Their cultural backgrounds and expectations were highly embedded in their perspectives and actions. Some teaching ideologies and practices, work ethics, and autonomy in learning, interacting with students and colleagues usually caused confusion because of the clashes of cultural morals and values between the teachers and the students. This can also be explained through the concepts of “material” and “ideological” challenges” suggested by Nameth (2014).

The biggest challenge that Maria and Charlotte faced in their teaching environment was role ambiguity. Morley (2003) considers role conflict as a typical source of stress, which may lead to lack of adjustment. Maria and Charlotte had hard times in navigating the challenges in their new workplace as they had almost no help and guidance from administrators and other teachers. Having only a little knowledge about the school culture and the expected roles of them, the teachers had to cope with the challenges by themselves. These findings have parallelism with what Shaffer et al. (1999) and Palthe (2004) found in their studies relating to the impact of work related variables like role clarity, novelty and discretion on cross-cultural adjustment.

Work performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were found to play a central role in cross-cultural adjustment, particularly related to work adjustment (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Morris & Robie, 2001; Hechanova, Beehr & Christiansen, 2003; Selmer, 2006; Liu & Lee, 2008). These studies reveal that job satisfaction serves as a facilitator of intercultural adjustment. If expatriates manage to develop a sense of belonging to their workplace and content with their status and role in the institution, they hardly show intents to leave their assignment. Despite the challenges and problems that Maria and Charlotte faced at the prep school pertaining to school organization, role ambiguity, communication, work ethics, they

liked teaching and interacting with the students and they put their teacher identity in the center of their lives.

The findings regarding the adjustment challenges revealed that these challenges could have been minimized if the teachers were provided with pre-departure cross cultural training or extensive orientation sessions with a mentor, particularly for their adjustment to work. Cross-cultural trainings enable sojourners to develop skills that are necessary for cross-cultural adjustment (Littrell et al., 2006). Eschbach et al. (2001) also calls for effective cross-cultural training rather than the duration, time of the cross-cultural training delivery, or the methodology used.

This can be an implication for the prospective Fulbright scholars since cross-cultural training is believed to facilitate the adjustment of the expatriates in terms of ease and pace and to improve intercultural skills (Caligiuri et al., 2001; Hutchinson & Jazzar, 2007; Littrell et al., 2006). Ji'nan (2013) also stated that effective intercultural training can shorten the U-shaped curve “crises” phase, and allow individuals to make a smooth transition to the “recovery” and “adaptation” stages.

5.2 Strategies Employed For Coping with Adjustment problems

Another scope of this study, apart from the challenges that the two American teachers navigated, was the strategies they used in order to overcome these challenges. There is a remarkable number of research investigated the issue of adjustment strategies that support the findings of this study (Zhang, 2013; Liao, 2010; Wang, 2015; Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam, 1997).

Coping strategies are the tactics that adopted by sojourners to reduce the tensions of challenges and ease the cultural transition (McClure, 2007). The major finding of the study related to coping strategies was that the teachers employed several coping strategies depending on the dimension of the challenge, namely social or institutional. These strategies showed variations and overlaps with regards to situational and individual differences, as well.

Trial and error strategy was mainly used by both teachers especially when they were “swimming in the deep end” (Hoare, 2013) and did not receive any help about the challenge in question. As also supported by Constantine, Anderson, Berkel, Caldwell and Utsey (2005) and Wang (2015), trial and error is a common strategy used by sojourner students, while exploring and negotiating new ways of learning. Nebedum-Ezeh (1997) noted that some coping strategies used by African international college students to deal with cultural adjustment concerns included studying and working harder to overcome academic problems; using “trial and error;” and seeking help from fellow African students, campus staff and officials, faculty members, and even strangers.

Observing was another strategy that the teachers employed while trying to navigate the challenges. Within the light of social learning theory introduced by Bandura (1977), it is quite common and natural for human beings to learn by observing others. An important feature of this finding is that the teachers learned a lot from their actions unfitting the host culture norms, and shaped their subsequent acts accordingly by observing others (Castelfranchi, 2001).

One of the most frequently strategy used by the teachers was resorting to cultural informants. Both Maria and Charlotte, while describing the challenges they had during the whole year such as finding a flat to live, and settling process, navigating the transportation system, finding a doctor, dealing with students, addressed either host country nationals including their colleagues and students at the university and new friends or other Fulbright expatriates as integral to their adjustment process. For the obstacles about general living and interactions with people, the teachers usually relied on a few colleagues whom they had a closer relationship and their Turkish speaking friends they made within their immediate surroundings.

Both teachers arrived in Turkey after attending the orientation that Fulbright required and offered. During this two-week period, Maria and Charlotte learned some basic factual and historical information about their new temporary home, but by befriending host country nationals, they got the opportunity to learn deeper things about socio-cultural and region-specific issues. Some studies such as Kim (1982), Berry (1997) and Berry & Sam, (1997) addressed this issue as social

support, and they argue that social support influence cross cultural adaptation in addition to the acculturation strategies performed.

The teachers received this social support both from local and non-local friends, family, colleagues and students. It came in forms of informing, emotional attachment, psychological relieving and other favors. They reported that all kinds of help and support from these sources facilitated their cross-cultural adaptation. This finding is in line with the social capital theory which suggests that social support serves as social capital and it can be transformed to other forms of capitals like financial capital, human capital and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2011; Coleman, 1988; Lin & Cook & Burt, 2001; Portes, 2000). Thus, the social support offered a lot to the teachers to enhance their adjustment.

The last finding related to cultural informants is that the teachers were not only recipients of local culture and Turkish culture in general, but they also involved in mutual intercultural exchange as they had the mission of being a cultural ambassador. They tried to maintain their American identity and acted as cultural informants of American culture, while they were immersing themselves in the host culture. This supports that assimilation in which individuals dismiss their home culture in favor of the host culture is not the desired outcome of acculturation (Berry, 1997; Kim, 1996; de Araujo, 2011). Acculturation is instead observed as intercultural contact which results in cultural changes in the home culture of individuals and groups, as well as in the host culture.

As for the final strategy, there were many times that teachers resorted to their prior cross cultural experiences. These experiences helped them cope with the potential challenges in the host culture, by enabling them setting more conceivable expectations. This study supported the findings of the previous studies that found a positive relationship between earlier experiences with cross-cultural adjustment (Church, 1982; Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Winkelman, 1994; Masgoret & Ward, 2006, Caligiuri, et al., 2001; Eschbach, et al., 2001; Holopainen & Björkman, 2005; Black, 1988; Shaffer et al., 1999; Kinginger, 2015).

Maria and Charlotte's initial frustrations have been transformed into attempts to understand their own and others' cultural assumptions and to effectively adapt to the diverse cultural assumptions and values of others. Bennett (1986) terms this as developing intercultural sensitivity. According to Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, people become more competent in understanding and navigating differences between cultures, when they face, conceptualize and negotiate cross cultural challenges (Endicott, Bock & Narvaez, 2003). Maria and Charlotte were quite close to moving to this phase of intercultural sensitivity before their departure. As argued by Leiba-O'Sullivan (1999) sojourners who develop cultural sensitivity are the ones who can find positive meanings in new cultural context and cope with cultural clashes and diversities by establishing cultural empathy. The social and emotional support received from host country nationals and other foreigners helped them cope with work and non-work related adjustment challenges (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011).

All the cross-cultural challenges and subsequent strategies discussed in this study enabled the teachers to develop their own sense and perception of culture and see cultural differences as something to respect and appreciate rather than create conflicts or dichotomies among people (Church, 1982). Considering Maria and Charlotte's efforts and accomplishments in adjusting to diversity and developing intercultural sensitivity during their first year of teaching, they have a great potential to become "culturally responsive teachers" of the future as suggested by Gay (2010).

5.3 Conclusion

This phenomenology-based ethnography addressed the research gap in the field of cross-cultural adjustment regarding short-term or temporary living and teaching abroad experiences of short terms language teachers in Turkey. The purpose of this ethnographic study was to understand the cross-cultural adjustment process that the two American Fulbright teaching assistants went through based on the three dimensions of Black et al (1991)'s model. The study uncovered that the participant

teachers displayed highly strong cultural components embedded in their behaviors and perspectives during their ten-month sojourn in Turkey. The emerging challenges and dissonances which were mostly inflicted by cross-cultural differences were of the central focus when investigating the social and professional adjustment patterns and also variations and similarities between the two teachers.

The ten month period encompassed by the study provided the opportunity to investigate acculturation issues such as prior cross-cultural experiences, initial culture shocks, and the process that the teachers started to develop cultural competency and awareness out of the challenges. Considering that cross-cultural adjustment vary greatly among different individuals, ten months would not have enabled us to uncover the whole process of acculturation, and the study leaves Charlotte and Maria with much cross-cultural adjustment remaining. However, it sheds light on the general challenges and problems of cross-cultural adjustment once teachers cross national, societal and linguistic borders in order to teach their native language as foreign language to students whose backgrounds are foreign to them and to live in a distinctively different cultural context.

First, the teachers' adjustment processes started with difficulties and challenges of the adjustment originating from the newness of the living and working environment. Despite their familiarity with the host culture to some extent, prior cross-cultural experiences and orientation period offered by the Fulbright Committee, their first months were overwhelmed with cultural shocks, moments of strain and transitions in cultural understanding. As they failed to cope with the new environment, the new language and the new social norms, they had some feelings of isolation, desperation and impotence. The most outstanding obstacle the teachers had to cope with was the language barrier. Since language is the backbone of communication, Maria and Charlotte had difficulties in interacting with the host nationals in a city where English is almost non-spoken. This lack of language skills minimized their socialization potential and having interactions with the host nationals and thereby led to a decline in their motivation level to adjust.

The cultural shocks that they faced were closely related to the three dimensions of cross-cultural adjustment model suggested by Black et al. (1991), namely general

environment, interactional and work adjustment. As of general environment, the central challenges were concerning accommodation, shopping, using public transport, dealing with the bureaucracy and managing their daily routine. Apart from these, they had some problems with communicating in Turkish, making friends and socializing, which delayed their adjustment to an extent until they were able to form effective relations with people and spend their time as Turkish people do. Lastly, challenges and dissonances pertaining to workplace adjustment and teaching emerged. These were mostly the issues of differences in expectations, roles, work ethics, teacher-student relations and teaching practices between American and Turkish educational contexts.

Secondly, after they recovered from the very first culture shocks in terms of living and teaching in Turkey, they came to realize that their American mindset was not working in most of the situations. They needed to grow new cultural competencies in the new environment and modify their behaviors in order to overcome the cultural dissonances and miscommunications. In order to gain this required knowledge and competence, the teachers resorted to some cultural informants, when they did not make sense of cultural rules, or lose the cues. These people were a group of colleagues, Fulbright friends and TÖMER friends, a small group of Turkish friends, students and sometimes strangers from the host culture. Each group of cultural informants provided the teachers with different kind of information and insights about the particular culture. This social support and experiences gained helped teachers develop belongingness to the target culture and also fostered their language and communication skills and competencies.

Supporting the overwhelming body of research, this study revealed that some common characteristics helped teachers better adjust their new lives. These characteristics and commonalities were being a part of the Fulbright program, which pre-sets some criteria for being open to exploring new cultures. Willingness and curiosity to live in another culture, respect for diversity, ability to tolerate failure, academic and social skills to work abroad and having professional objectives for the future were the fostering elements that both teachers had in common during their adjustment process.

While the teachers adjusting to the norms of the host culture system in which they lived and worked for ten months, they also served as cultural informants for the other people. As cultural exchange is pivotal in cross-cultural experiences, Maria and Charlotte put forth an effort to fulfill their mission of being cultural ambassadors and representatives of their own culture as much as they could. This experience, as a whole, helped them expand their intercultural sensitivity and awareness, which will have an indisputable impact on their teacher identity and practices in the future.

5.4 Recommendations for future studies

This study was limited to studying two newly graduate American Fulbright teaching assistants in their new social and professional contexts. Thus, the focus was only American teachers sharing similar cultural values and expectations, centering on only one culture group. Even considering the variations and individual differences between two people from the same country, this study would have yielded different insights and results, if the teachers were chosen from different nationalities or cultural backgrounds. For further studies, replication of this study can be done with different nationalities and languages and the findings of this study can be compared.

The length of the study is only limited to the teachers stay in the host country. However, as noted earlier this was the whole life cycle of the teachers in the Fulbright program. As they had a ten-month contract, they had to leave the country. As the length of time spent in the new country is regarded as an important variable in cross-cultural adjustment research (Church, 1982; Ryder et al., 2000), for the future studies the duration of the study can be extended in order to get more data to reach the mastery stage of adjustment. In addition to that, participants' readjustment process can also be investigated after their re-entry into the home country.

This study investigated only two teaching assistant teachers. They were selected using convenient sampling procedure, since there were only two Fulbright teaching assistants in the researcher's institution. As the researcher aimed to conduct an ethnographic research and closely examine the lives of the teachers, the number of

the participants was sufficient to enable her to delve into their cross cultural adjustment processes. However, the number of the teacher participants can be increased for the future studies if generalizability rather than peculiarity is aimed.

5.5 Recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of Fulbright English language teaching assistantship program

Within the light of the findings and discussion, this study suggests some implications and propositions in order to improve the quality of the short term teacher exchange program for the following years.

1. The first recommendation is related to the gap between the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), Fulbright commission and participating higher education institutions. As the findings have displayed, there is a lack of communication and cooperation between the YÖK, Fulbright commission and higher education institutions in Turkey. There also seems to be a mismatch between the aims and expectations of the two parties. Fulbright ETA program aims to provide these grantees with cultural exchange opportunities and teaching experiences. Thus, the upcoming teaching assistants should inure themselves for the potential challenges that might arise from cultural differences. The Fulbright program can enhance the effectiveness of the program by selecting more culturally sensitive applicants and also providing more culture training sessions and orientations even before the departure. On the other hand, the Turkish universities take part in this program so as to improve the quality of English language teaching and learning practices, as well as enabling the learners to meet instructors from a different culture. However, they do not provide orientation sessions or role clarity to the teachers by leaving them on their own. Though the ultimate goals of both parties entail that these young teachers will bring their own culture and values with them, and that is the significantly important for cultural exchange, these values can sometimes be seen as sources of challenges, dissonances and problems. Hence, this gap should be bridged as far in advance as possible by establishing an open communication between the Fulbright commissioners and administrators in universities. Meetings, orientations and some visits during the year could be organized to strengthen the bonds. Both institutions

and ETAs need to make special effort to reap the most benefit from the opportunities of cultural exchange and English language teaching and learning.

2. Considering the length of the teaching assistantship program, ten months is not a long time to fully adjust to a new culture and develop cultural competency. Thus, training sessions and orientations for regular basis are needed. The Fulbright program provides the grantees with a two-month long orientation at the very beginning of the year, but this has not been found sufficient to give site-specific information. Besides, one of the main findings of this study is related to language barrier. The teachers reported several times that the majority of the challenges they initially had been due to the lack of host language skills. Though most of the Fulbright grantees attend Turkish classes offered at their institutions with foreign students, these classes are usually optional for them. And sometimes they have problems with the way the instructors teach Turkish or the syllabus and textbooks. Thus, effective orientation sessions including language and culture trainings should be regularly given even before the teachers embarked on their journey and during the year by a group of professional trainers or academicians. These trainings can be both online and face-to-face.

3. The grantees also show differences in their cross-cultural training experiences. The ones, who have been to abroad for professional, academic or touristic purposes, may rely on these prior life experiences, whereas the ones who have never had these kinds of experiences are expected to have different problems and develop different strategies to cope with the adjustment challenges. Thus, the program administrators should take these differences into account both in the program application process and throughout the training sessions.

4. The cultural challenges that the teachers perpetually have can be minimized to a large extent or even eliminated by establishing a mentorship program under the responsibility of Fulbright program. These teaching assistants need a mentor at their institutions, different from the university representatives assigned. Structuring the relationship with the mentor and the teaching assistants is important here since the responsibilities and the function of the mentor is expected to be different than a formal relationship with the heads or administrators. The mentor should be a person

who is willing to provide guidance to these teachers both for their social and institutional needs and problems. Preferably, the mentor should be a person who has some cross-cultural experiences and good communication skills and qualifications. An effective mentorship system can be established through following a reference-based procedure. Each grantee, upon completion of their tenure, can be asked to give reference about the potential mentor for the next academic year within the host institution.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A- INTERVIEW SAMPLE

Researcher: Can you tell me about your students

Sometimes they have been calling me hocam now, I liked it. I have one student he just started the mail with Maria, but he wrote a whole paragraph about how he couldn't decide what to call me. Should he go with informal Maria, Miss Maria, Teacher, or hocam, he decided Maria I hope I didn't disrespect you. I said Maria is fine, I promise. But hocam is kind of cool too.

Researcher: Do “hocam” and “teacher” have the same effect on you?

I was like really surprised when they call me teacher. Turkish Teacher in America, taught us about hocam and anything when we were talking about his teaching experience in Turkey. He taught English here, he just introduced himself to his students just by his first name said you don't need to call me hocam, and the students really really shocked by it. They refused to call his first name really long time, until they feel comfortable enough to go with it. I was so excited about they would call me hocam. Teacher? What? Even in the States, you say like Mr. Mrs. and last name, never say teacher unless they didn't know the name of the teacher. It's weird. Some of my students still don't know my name! They, like, I still have some students that don't know how to call me. I remember all their names and I work really hard to get their names right, but they don't remember my name. I think it's a part of culture. I don't know.

Researcher: What's culture then? How do you describe Turkish culture?

I would say something about Turkish hospitality; I don't know it is hard because I feel like here in Eskişehir people are just living their lives, just like anywhere else. Sometimes when I visit other people in smaller cities, I feel it more overtly. Like when I went to Sinop, everyone was so sweet and my friend there knew a lot of

local people and they were so hospitable. Eskişehir is a little different I guess, because it is a bigger city. I have some friends that keep asking me “How is Turkey? What are people like?” I really don’t know what to tell.

Researcher: Is it difficult to describe? Or you haven’t had enough of it yet?

No, I just. Here things centered more on family than America, the children are a lot less independent, more respectful, people don’t give up their seats on the buses, trains, some people do but it’s not a normal thing whereas here they make you feel obligated to give up your seat for an old person. It’s like “get up, you sat long enough”. Middle-aged people give you the stare. I started to pick my seat strategically, the farthest away from the doors or I just like look down on my phone and don’t look up for anything because the second you look up you’re going to look into the old ladies’ eyes. The guys are a lot open about their feelings. Everyone is more open about their feelings. In America, it’s obnoxious. More emotional, more expressive. Also guys offer carry my things when I go to office or something, sometimes my students stand there wait for me open the door for me, I’m like “what are you doing? “ on the bus too, they let me on first or they offer their seats. I got up for an old lady, and then my student got up for me.

By the way, is it normal that teacher walk out of the classroom before the students? I like being the last one in the classroom. I don’t know my students got confused sometimes, stand around by the door. They started packing up 5 minutes before class is over but then they don’t leave the door until I say “you can go”. It pisses me off sometimes. Very odd. They can’t wait to leave but then they won’t leave until you’re absolutely positive.

APPENDIX B-TEACHER JOURNAL SAMPLE

Maria, December, 13

Something that I always seem to forget about public transportation (and also elevators) here in Turkey is that doors don't have automatic sensors, and that just because I stick my arm in between the doors, that won't stop them from closing like it will in America. This has resulted in my arm nearly being closed in doors, and me subsequently throwing my body weight at a closing door, numerous times. Most notably was the previous day on the bus... I was riding the bus to school, and we stopped at the first stop on campus, where many people usually get off. The bus was very crowded that day and I was standing in front of the back door, so when it stopped, I got off of the bus to let other people on. For some reason, only one or two people got off, and the doors started to close. Instinctively, I tried to step back on the bus, but of course, the doors continued to close and my leg was stuck in the door from my thigh down. I let out a weird scream - a result of not wanting to say something in English but not knowing what to say in Turkish in the moment, and the people on the bus yelled for the driver to open the door. After my leg was free, a swarm of people exited the bus, and finally I got back on - baffled! Where were all of these people when I was standing outside of the bus waiting?! Thank *goodness* none of my students were on that bus, because I was completely embarrassed (not to mention my knee reallllly hurt).

That day continued as bad as it started. During my ELT class in the afternoon, I noticed my students gradually becoming more and more distracted by something outside. When I finally got fed up and stopped what I was doing to take a look out the window, to my surprise, there was this giant tank-looking truck, and at least 50-70 police officers in full riot attire (masks, shields, batons, etc.). At this point, I understood that there was no returning to my lesson for the moment, so we all watched (them with amazement, me with slight panic) as the action began to unfold. Before I knew it, I felt like I was watching a battle scene. Students began to run at the officers, and the next thing I knew, they were being sprayed with a quite

excessive amount of water and tumbling on the grass as the officers advanced. At this point, my students were literally standing on the windowsill taking pictures of the action, with a few of them closest to me torn between looking at the scene unfolding outside, and looking at the look of absolute astonishment on my face as I tried to decide if I should be preparing them for a bomb scare or not, and contemplating every decision that led to me moving to Turkey. As quickly as the action unfolded, it ended, and although I tried to wrap up my lesson (it was nearing the end of our session anyway), I simply could not pull myself back together, or pull their attention back to me, and I gave up and dismissed them. Many of them left satisfied - not because I let them leave early, but because they got their first real university TOMA experience. I, on the other hand, left the building with a million questions, and opted to take the long way around to get back to the prep building for my afternoon classes. What a day that was!!!

APPENDIX C-SAMPLE RESEARCHER JOURNAL

September, 8, 2015

This is the first day that I could observe Maria and Charlotte closely. After having coffee at campus, we left for apartment hunting. All I could see in their eyes was “being an outsider”. Maria knew very limited amount of Turkish, whereas Charlotte had almost none. They got stares from people on the tram and they got annoyed with that. Then, we looked for furnished flats, and found one after hours of negotiating, translating and thinking.

December 8, 2015

Today I dropped by Charlotte and Maria’s apartment. I was really surprised when I saw a large size Turkish flag that was hung on the wall of Charlotte’s room. I knew that the majority of American people have a strong devotion to their flags and displaying them is one of the most outstanding cultural symbols, it was still quite surprising for me as I even did not have a flag in my house as a Turkish person. Charlotte’s sympathy for a Turkish flag may be seen as a part of her culture which was being transformed by elements from Turkish culture.

February, 8 2016

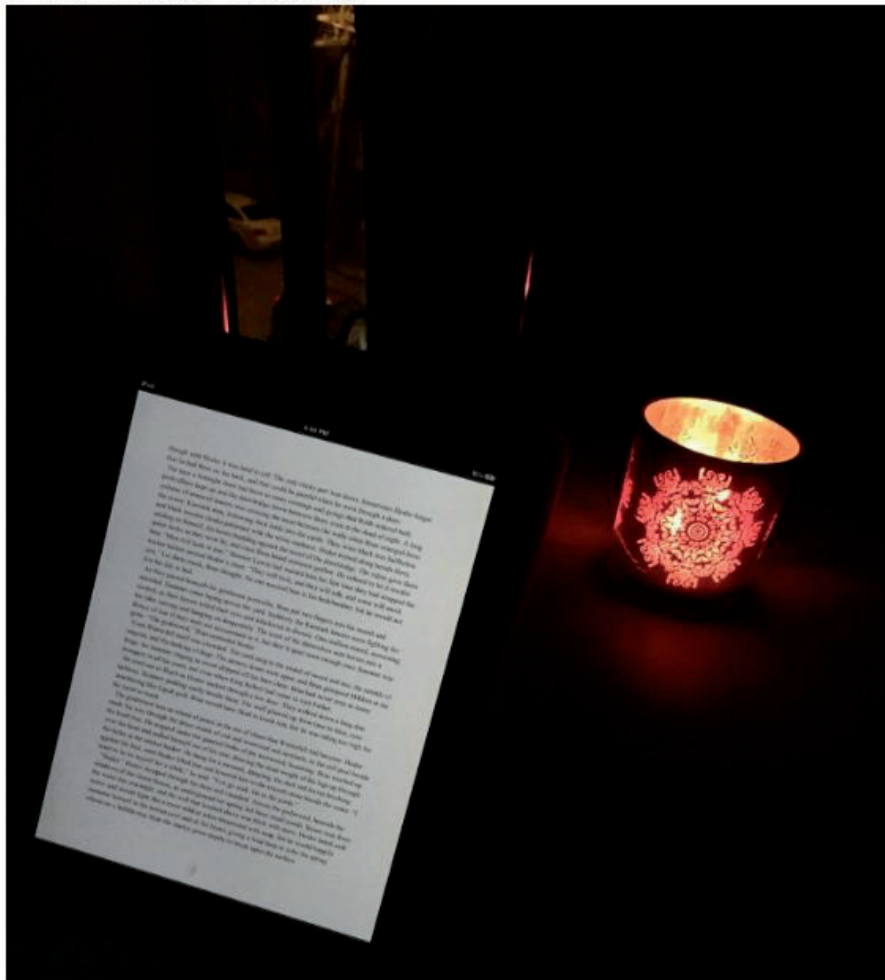
Today is the first day of the spring term. As far as I observed, the students were happy to see Maria and Charlotte. As Maria thought her schedule remained the same as the first term, she was really excited to see her favorite class in the morning. However, she came back to my office in fifteen minutes. It turned out that the coordinators double-scheduled the class with another teacher. She had to skip that class for that week. Maria was quite disappointed and confused. She was wondering why nobody informed her about the schedule changes. The lack of communication continued to be a problem for her.

APPENDIX D: BLOG SAMPLE

SEPTEMBER 26, 2015 / LEAVE A COMMENT

Well, as promised, this post is (finally) brought to you from my apartment! I'll keep it short and sweet for tonight, we'll get around to the big update soon enough.

It's been almost a month since we landed in this country that we now call home, yet only my second night sleeping in my own bed. Let me tell you though, after all of the mishaps, cleaning, and stress surrounding this apartment, it feels SO good. We now have gas, electricity, AND water (it even gets hot now!), and I can finally see the light at the end of what seemed like an endless amount of cleaning. The last big piece of the puzzle is to get some wifi in here so that I can actually do my job and communicate properly. But for now, I'm just thankful that I can lay in my own bed and read a good book by candlelight – oh the irony!



Apartment hunting:

Apartment hunting is stressful, let's just put that on the table right away. Now imagine doing it in a language you barely understand, and not being able to ask all of the questions that you want to, and only receiving the very little information that is translated for you. Not so fun. On the first day of our hunt, I'm not even going to sugar coat it, I was actively fighting back tears the entire time. Being a 'student city', there is an abundance of what are called 'kiz aparts' and 'erkek aparts' - girls and boys dormitory style housing, respectively. Basically, they sell you a shared bedroom, a shared kitchen, and a shared bathroom - and that's it. American college suites are bigger and nicer (generally) than many of these places. On our first day of looking, this is what our university rep showed us, with no indication that we would be looking to find any normal apartments any time soon. So yeah, almost cried when I thought that that was how I was going to have to live for a year. Knowing that real apartments obviously existed, I politely insisted that I needed to look at other options. On day 2 of our hunt, an angel by the name of Günce (read: goon-jay), one of our colleagues, fell out of heaven and volunteered to spend her entire day with us to help us find an apartment. Again we started off looking at these dormitory situations, but finally Lizzie and I were able to successfully communicate that we were in the market for a 'flat' (read: real apartment). After looking at a few apartments, and being under a time limit to give an answer on one, we found a suitable one and made a quick decision to take it. By the next day, the contract was signed, we had keys, and Günce spent another entire day walking us around the city to the gas, electricity, and water departments to open our utilities.

When we first looked at our apartment, we knew it needed a good cleaning. We did not, however, intend to spend days scrubbing every dusty, dirty, and hidden surface. We also did not anticipate that our utilities would not work immediately, although we were told they would (minus the gas). We went about 5 days without electricity or hot water, 3 of which, as you may have seen, we spent in a hostel to shower and, well, live with electricity. In the end, we even took matters into our own hands and ventured down into the basement of our building to cut the wire that was preventing our breaker from being turned on - good thing mom grew up as a superintendent's daughter. Needless to say, over the course of that week, there was lots of stress, discomfort, and second guessing surrounding our decision to take that apartment, but finally, things are coming together and we are able to just go home and relax. Just waiting for that wifi guy to come set up our connection and we'll be (almost) good!

APPENDIX E: ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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26 KASIM 2015

Gönderilen: Doç. Dr. Betil ERÖZ-Tuğa

Yabancı Diller Eğitimi

Gönderen: Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER

İnsan Araştırmaları Komisyonu Başkanı

İlgi: Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Günce ERMAN "Acculturation Process of Two American Teachers Within A Turkish University Setting" isimli araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Komisyonu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 20.11.2015-15.06.2016 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER

Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi
İnsan Araştırmaları Komisyonu Başkanı

APPENDIX F: TURKISH SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

“BURADA HER ŐEY ZAMAN ALIYOR”: İKİ FULBRIGHT ÖĖRETİM ASİSTANININ TÜRKiYE’DEKİ SOSYAL VE MESLEKİ UYUM SÜRECİNDE YAŐADIĖI ZORLUKLAR VE GELİŐTİRDİKLERİ STRATEJİLER ÜZERİNE FENOMENOLOJİK BİR ETNOGRAFYA

GİRİŐ

Her yıl binlerce yeni mezun Amerikalı öĖrenci veya araŐtırmacının katıldıĖı en popüler ve saygın kabul edilen kısa dönemli öĖretmen deĖiŐim programından biri de Fulbright İngilizce ÖĖretim AsistanlıĖı (İÖA) Programıdır. Katılımcılar, çoĖu İngilizcenin yabancı dil statüsüne sahip olduĖu, 65'ten fazla ülkede, İngilizce öĖretmek ve eğitim kurumlarında Amerikan kültürünü en fazla iki yıl temsil etmek üzere kültürler arası deneyimlerine başlamaktadırlar. Programın popülerliĖi ve etkisi son zamanlarda hibe oranları ve katılımcı üniversitelerin sayısının artmasıyla artış göstermiŐtir.

Tüm olumlu kazanımlar ve kişisel gelişim yönünde öngördüĖü amaçlarla birlikte, kısa vadeli deĖiŐim programlarına yeni bir kültüre geçiŐ sürecinde karmaŐık durumlar ve zorlukların eŐlik etmesi olasıdır. Bennett (1986) ve Kohls (2001) tarafından ortaya konduĖu üzere baŐka bir kültürde yaşamak ve çalıŐmak, kısa süreli bir turistik ziyaretten pek çok yönüyle farklıdır. Bu nedenle, yeni bir kültür keŐfetmek ve deneyimlemek genellikle zorluklar ve kültürel uyuŐmazlıkları beraberinde getiriyor. Bu zorluklar ve sorunlar çoĖunlukla hem çeliŐen kültürel deĖerler, bakıŐ açısı, inanç ve uygulamalarla, hem de yeni bir dilde iletiŐim kurma zorluĖundan da kaynaklanmaktadır (Lyon, 2002; Leki, 2001). AraŐtırmacılar yeni bir kültüre uyum sürecinin karmaŐıklılıĖını ve sürece ait zorlukları ve stratejileri çalıŐmalarında vurgulamaktadır (Palthe, 2004; Romig, 2009; Nameth, 2014).

Oryantasyon programları veya ön hazırlıklar öĖretmenlerin hızlı kültürel uyarlamalar yapmalarına yardımcı olabilir, ancak bu hazırlıklar onların beklenmedik

şeylerle yüzleşmeyeceğini garanti etmez, çünkü çoğu durumda bu hızlı ve yüzeysel eğitimlerden elde edilen bilgiler, öğretmenlere karşılaşacakları tüm durumlarda geçerli çözümler vermeyebilir (Lyon, 2002). Ne kadar bilgi sahibi olsalar da, yeni bir ülkenin kültür sisteminde yaşamaya ve çalışmaya başladıklarında sıklıkla kendi temel varsayımları, değerleri, tutumları ve inançları ile farklılık gösteren yeni bir kültür veya kültürler sistemine uyum sağlamak durumundalardır. Ortaya çıkan bu kültürel çatışmalar, öğretmenleri kendi "bilme, yapma ve var olma" yollarını sorgulamaya yönlendirir (Mezirow, 1978). Bu nedenle, belirsizlik ve yabancılık duygularıyla birlikte radikal kültürel değişimle baş etmeleri gerekmektedir (Kim & Gudykunst, 1988).

İngilizce Öğretim Asistanlığı (İÖA) programı ilk kez 2010 yılında üniversitelerde İngilizce eğitiminin kalitesini artırmak için Türkiye Yüksek Öğrenim Kurumu ve Fulbright Komisyonu tarafından ortak bir kararla başlatıldı. Türkiye, Kachru'nun modeline (1990) göre İngilizce'nin yabancı dil statüsünde yer aldığı bir ülke olarak, 2015-2016 akademik yıllarında İÖA programının bir parçası olarak yüz dört İngilizce öğretim asistanını istihdam etmiştir. Çalışmanın yapıldığı 2015-2016 öğretim yılında katılımcı üniversite ve şehirlerin sayısı ve hibe miktarları zirveye ulaşmıştır.

Seçilme sürecini tamamlayan adaylar Fulbright komisyonu tarafından gerçekleştirilen ve zorunlu kılınan iki haftalık eğitim programına katılmak için okullarının resmi başlama tarihinden birkaç hafta önce yeni ülkelerine hareket ederler. İki haftalık eğitim döneminden sonra, öğretim asistanları yeni ikamet edeceği şehirleri öğrenir ve birkaç gün içinde görevine başlaması gerekmektedir. İki hafta süren bu eğitim programı, öğretim asistanlarına detaylı bir kültürel eğitim sunmak için yeterli değildir. Bu nedenle, bu öğretmenlerin çoğunun, kendilerine yabancı olan yeni bir ortamda yaşaması ve çalışması bekleniyor. Yeni yaşam ve çalışma ortamlarına aktif olarak katılmak için yeni kültürel normları tanımaları ve onlara göre davranmaları gerekiyor. Bu kültürel geçiş döneminde, öğretmenlerin uyum ile ilgili sorunlarla karşılaşmaları ve bu zorlukları aşmak için stratejiler geliştirmeleri olasıdır (Romig, 2009).

Özetle Fulbright bursiyerlerinin zorlu bir başvuru sürecinden geçmeleri yeni kültüre kolaylıkla uyum sağlayacaklarını veya programı yarıda bırakmayacakları anlamına gelmiyor. Kültürü, kişinin davranışlarını ve düşüncelerini şekillendiren önemli bir unsur olarak gören bu fenomenolojiye dayalı etnografya, iki Amerikalı öğretmenin, kendi alışkın oldukları dil, eğitim sistemi, sosyokültürel beklentiler ve pratikler açısından farklı unsurlar içeren bir yaşam ve çalışma ortamına uyum süreçlerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın odak noktası, öğretmenlerin hem yaşadıkları ülkenin ve şehrin kültürüne, hem de çalıştıkları okulun sahip olduğu kültür ve mikro kültürlere uyum süreci ve bu süreçte geliştirdikleri stratejilerdir.

Öğrencilerin akademik ve toplumsal bağlamlarda kültürler arası uyum deneyimleri üzerine çok sayıda araştırma yapılmış (örn., Lesjak, Juvan, Ineson, Yap ve Axelsson, 2015; Li, Olson, & Frieze, 2013; Matusitz, 2015; Pitts, 2009; Smith & Khawaja, 2011); ancak öğretmenlerin yaşadığı sosyo-kültürel ve mesleki uyum deneyimleri, özellikle de öğretmenlerin adaptasyon sürecinde kültürün oynadığı rolü inceleyen araştırmaların nispeten çok daha az olduğu görülüyor. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye'de ise öğretmen değişimi veya burs programlarına katılan öğretmenlerin sayısı önemli ölçüde artarken, bu tür tecrübelerle ilişkin yayınlanmış nitel araştırmaların neredeyse yok denecek kadar az olması göze çarpıyor. Bu eksiklik, sosyal ve mesleki ortamlarda kültürlerarası uyum sağlamanın önemini göz ardı edilmesine neden olabilir. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma hem literatürdeki boşluğa katkıda bulunacak hem de Fulbright programına katılmayı planlayan ve benzer kültürel ortamlarda çalışacak olan yabancı dil öğretmenlerine fikir verecektir.

YÖNTEM

Bu çalışma, iki Amerikalı Fulbright öğretim asistanının İç Anadolu bölgesinde bulunan bir şehir ve üniversitede sosyal ve mesleki uyum süreçleri boyunca karşılaştıkları güçlükleri araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Öğretmenlerin toplumsal ve günlük yaşama nasıl ve ne şekilde uyum sağladıklarının yanı sıra, yeni öğretim ortamları ve yabancı bir ülkedeki yeni yaşamlarını ve deneyimlerini nasıl

anlamlandırdıklarını anlamaya yönelik üç temel araştırma sorusu sorulmuştur. Bu yol gösterici soruların ışığında, bu çalışma öğretmenlerin Türkiye’de kaldığı süre boyunca yaşadığı kültürel şok ve çatışmaları ortaya koyuyor.

Araştırmanın nihai amacı, sayısal verilerle genellemelere erişmek yerine iki Amerikalı öğretmenin kendine has deneyimleri hakkında bütünsel ve ayrıntılı bir tablo çizmektir. Merriam (1998) 'e göre "Gerçeklik nesnel bir varlık değildir; aksine gerçekliğin birden çok yorumu vardır "(s.22). Dolayısıyla, gerçekliğin bireyler tarafından sosyal dünyalarıyla etkileşimleri aracılığıyla birlikte oluşturulduğunu savunuyor. Bu felsefi varsayımdan yola çıkarak, nitel araştırmayı yürüten herhangi bir araştırmacının temel çıkarları, bireylerin yeniden inşa ettikleri anlam veya bilgiyi anlamaktır. Başka bir deyişle, araştırmacı, insanların günlük yaşantılarındaki etkileşim ve tecrübelerine verdikleri anlamı ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Yorumlayıcı yaklaşım geleneği insanın gerçeklerini inşa etmesinin yorumların değişmesiyle birlikte sürekli olarak geliştiğini ileri sürer. Dolayısıyla, bu gerçeklerin bir bağlama yerleştirilmesi ve yorumlanması bireylerin veya toplumların kültürünün araştırılmasının asıl amacıdır (Glesne, 2011). Yorumlayıcı yaklaşım, araştırmacıya, kültür fikirleri ile zengin olan bireylere ve topluluklara erişim imkânı sağlama biçiminde benzersizdir (Glesne, 2011; Nader, 2011). Sıkı bir soruşturma süreci sonrasında ortaya çıkan yorumlanmış gerçekler bize insan kültürünün doğası hakkında fikir verir.

Bu çalışma, fenomenolojik yaklaşımı içeren bir etnografyadır. Araştırmacı, belirli bir kültür paylaşım grubunun bilgi ve birikimini elde etmeyi amaçladığı için etnografik bir araştırmadır (Creswell, 2007) ve öğretmenlerin yeni bir ortama uyum sürecini sosyokültürel bir süreç olarak görmektedir (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Başka bir deyişle, araştırmacı, Fulbright öğretim asistanlarının davranışlarını şekillendiren deneyimleri, zorlukları ve başa çıkma stratejilerini ortaya çıkarmak ve açıklamaya çalışmaktadır.

"Etnografya" terimi, bir kültürün ürünlerinin incelenmesi ya da tanımlanması sürecine atıfta bulunmaktadır. Fetterman (1998), etnografyayı "bir grup ya da kültüre ilişkin sanat ve bilim" olarak tanımlamaktadır. Wolcott'a (1999) göre, etnografik araştırmanın amacı kültürel davranışları tanımlamak ve yorumlamaktır. Bütün tanımlar "kültür" üzerine odaklanıyor ve Merriam (1988), bunun "kültürel bağlamla ilgili endişenin bu tür araştırmayı diğer nitel araştırmalardan ayrı olarak belirleyen şey" olduğunu öne sürerek etnografyanın bu konuda benzersiz olduğunu savunuyor. Gregory (2005), etnografik araştırmanın amacının sıradan olan insanlar adına konuşup, hikâyelerini sıklıkla anlatılmayan insanların hayatlarını görünür kılmak " olduğunu savunuyor.

Etnografyalarda genellikle vurgulanan öge katılımcı gözlemi olsa da, bu etnografik araştırmanın tek bir yöntemle sınırlı olduğu anlamına gelmez. Aksine, Honer ve Hitzler'e (2015) göre, etnografya ne veri toplama ne de veri analizi açısından saf bir biçim değildir. Creswell (2007) vaka incelemesi, etnografya, fenomenoloji, anlatı ya da temel teori gibi beş temel nitel yöntemi ele almaktadır. Bunları "saf" yaklaşımlar olarak kabul etmesine rağmen, birçok araştırmacı bir çalışmada onlardan birkaç ögeyi bir araya getireceğini belirtiyor. Dolayısıyla, etnografya araştırmacıları belirli tek bir yöntemle değil, bilimsel uygulamayla ilgili ortak bir anlayışla birleşmişlerdir ve bu eklektik yöntem son yıllarda belirginleşmiştir (Breuer & Reichertz 2002).

Fetterman (2008), etnografik araştırmalar için en uygun yaklaşımın fenomenoloji olacağını ortaya atmış, bunun çok kültürlü bir perspektifi benimsemeye yararlı olacağını ve çoklu gerçekleri yansıtacağını öne sürmüştür. Bu etnografik çalışma " sosyal ve psikolojik olaylara dâhil olan kişilerin bakış açılarından daha yakından anlamak için (Welman & Kruger, 1999) fenomenolojik bir yönelime sahiptir. Husserl'in felsefi fenomenolojisinden esinlenen Schutz, "toplumun olağan üyelerinin günlük yaşamlarına nasıl katıldığı" konusuna odaklanmak için fenomenolojiyi uygun bulmuştur. Etnografya ve fenomenolojinin ortak kullanılmasının sebebi etnograf olarak benim gözlemlerime ek olarak, öğretmenlerin

yaşadığı deneyimlerimle ilgili derin görüşmeler yapılmış olmasıdır (Greene, 1997; Maypole & Davies, 2001).

Maggs-Rapport'a (2000) göre, etnografya ve yorumlayıcı fenomenoloji farklılıklardan ziyade ortak noktalar taşımaktadır. Her ikisi de açıklayıcıdır, açık yapılandırılmış mülakatlar kullanır, hem anlatılardan hem de gözlemlerden elde edilen anlam üzerinde dururlar. Etnografya, belirli bir kültür grubunun veya bireylerin paylaşılan görüş ve değerleri üzerine yoğunlaşırken; yorumlayıcı fenomenoloji, katılımcıların sözlerinde gizlenmiş anlamları ortaya çıkarmak için gösterilen bir çabadır (Sorrell & Redmond, 1995).

Bu çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katılan yeni mezun olan iki öğretmen, Charlotte ve Maria (takma isimler kullanılmıştır), Fulbright Dil Öğretim Asistanlığı Programına katıldılar ve 2015-2016 öğretim yılı için bu araştırmaya katılmaya gönüllü oldular. Öğretmenler, erişilebilirliğe ve araştırmacının yakınlığına dayanan uygun örnekleme yolu ile seçildi. Maria and Charlotte 30 Ağustos 'ta Türkiye'ye geldi. İlk iki hafta Ankara'daki Fulbright Oryantasyon Programına katıldılar. Bu programda, çoğunlukla diğer Fulbright asistanlarıyla ve elçilik mensuplarıyla Türk dili ve kültürü hakkında genel bilgiler edindiler, şehir turu yapıp sosyalleştikten sonra, 13 Eylül'de yeni evlerine vardılar.

Bu çalışma, Amerikan öğretmenlerinin Türkiye'de öğretmenlik deneyiminin iki yarıyılı boyunca gerçekleşti. Veriler haftalık birebir görüşmeler, öğretmen günlükleri, sınıf video kayıtları, blog ve araştırmacı günlüğü dâhil olmak üzere çeşitli veri toplama teknikleri kullanılarak toplandı. Görüşmeler, Maria ve Charlotte'la tanışmamın hemen ardından Eylül ayının ilk haftasında kısa, gayri resmi ve yapılandırılmamış olarak başladı, Haziran 2016'nın ikinci haftasına kadar on ay boyunca sürdü ve toplam 66 görüşme yapıldı. Görüşmeler beş dakika ila iki saat arasında değişiyordu ve çoğu hoş ve rahat bir kafede ya da okulda oturduğumuz ve rahatça konuştuğumuz ofisimde gerçekleşti. Derinlemesine görüşmelerin çoğunluğu, öğretmenin sosyal ve mesleki yaşamlarını sorgulayan yapılandırılmamış ya da yarı yapılandırılmıştı. Aynı kurumda çalışan bir araştırmacı ve bir öğretmen

olarak öğretmenlerle her etkileşim kurduğumda gözlemlerimi not aldım ve böylece öğretmen günlükleri ile ilgili mümkün olduğunca çok ayrıntıyı yakalayabildim. Öğretmen günlükleri, her iki öğretmenden de ilginç, şaşırtıcı, kafa karıştırıcı veya tatsız buldukları her olayı ve günlük karşılaşmalarını not alabilmeleri için Türkiye'de üçüncü haftalarından başlayarak bir günlük tutmaları istendi. Her ikisi de aktif sosyal medya kullanıcısı olduğu için, herhangi bir kültürel deneyim veya yorumları içeren kişisel Facebook hesaplarındaki mesajlar da günlüğe dâhil edildi. Öğretmenlerin sınıf içi uygulamalarında meydana gelen değişiklikleri ve okul kültürüne uyumlarını takip etmek için ayda iki kez video kaydı yapıldı. Öğretmenlerden tutarlı veriler elde etmek için derslerinden birini seçmeleri istendi. Maria'nın ve Charlotte'un sınıflarını gözlemlemem imkânsız olduğu için bu kayıtlar, içeriden bir bakış açısı elde etmek için çok değerli idi. Maria'dan 23, Charlotte'dan 24 video kayıt aldım. Bu kayıtlarda, temelde öğretim uygulamalarına, sınıf yönetimi tekniklerine, öğrencilerle olan ilişkilere ve ders içeriklerine odaklanıldı. Öğretmenlerden birisi kişisel bir blog tuttu ve burada Türkiye'deki yaşam ve öğretim uygulamaları ile ilgili güncellemeleri düzenli olarak paylaştı. Blog yazısı, çoğunlukla seyahat notları, kültürel karşılaşmalar ve deneyimleriyle ilgili kişisel yorumlarla ilgiliydi. Charlotte blog yazmak için herhangi bir girişiminde bulunmadığı halde, Maria'nın kişisel blogunda, okulda ve sonrasında vakitlerinin çoğunu birlikte geçirdiklerinden, paylaşılan öğretim deneyimlerine, gezilere, günlük rutinlere ve benzerlerine değinen çok sayıda veri bulunmaktadır.

BULGULAR

Öğretmenlerin uyum sürecinde yaşadığı zorluklar Black, Mendenhall ve Oddou (1991)' nun üç boyutlu modeli temel alınarak incelenmiştir. Bu modelde, ülke içindeki kültürler arası uyum süreci üç boyutta incelenmiştir: genel çevreye uyum, etkileşimsel uyum ve işyerine uyum. Bulgular, modelin de öngördüğü gibi öğretmenlerin yaşadığı temel zorlukların genel çevre, etkileşim ve iş ile ilgili uyum zorlukları olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu zorlukların üstesinden gelmek için ise, Maria ve Charlotte sosyal ve mesleki hayatlarında çeşitli uyum stratejileri geliştirdiler.

Genel Çevre ile İlgili Uyum Zorlukları

Hayatlarının çoğunda Amerikan kültürünün içinde büyümüş ve eğitim görmüş olan Maria ve Charlotte, ilk kültür şoklarını Eskişehir'e varır varmaz yaşamaya başladılar. Karşılaştıkları ilk zorluklar çoğunlukla genel çevreyle ilgili adaptasyon problemleri idi ve bu sorunları henüz başarıyla iletişim kuramadıkları bir dilde anlamaya ve çözmeye çalışıyorlardı. Charlotte bu ilk günleri "hayatta kalma mücadelesi" olarak adlandırdı. Bu durum, Oberg'in (1960), kültürel farklılıklardan kaynaklanan zorlukların, bilinmeyen sosyal kurallardan ve ana dilde yetersiz iletişimden kaynaklanan sorunlarla birlikte genellikle beklendik olduğu iddiasını desteklemiştir. Genel çevre ile ilgili yaşadıkları zorluklar, yemek, ulaşım, kalınan yer bulma ve yaşama, bürokrasi ve politik olaylar temel başlıkları altında toplanmıştır.

Yemek kültürünün hızlı bir uyum gösteren öğretmenler kısa süre içinde Türk yeme içme alışkanlıklarını kendi hayatlarının bir parçası haline getirmeyi başardılar. Ancak; Türkiye'deki pazar ve market kültürüne alışmak biraz zaman aldı ve bu günlük alışveriş gereksinimleri belirli oranlarda etkileşim ve dil kullanımı gerektirdiği için, zaman zaman kaçınma yoluna gidip alışverişlerini ertelediler.

Kalacak bir bulma ve bu eve yerleşme kısmında da, öğretmenlerin bir takım zorluklarla tek başlarına başa çıktığı görüldü. Geçici kaldıkları misafirhanede günlerini geçirdikten sonra, evsiz kalma korkusuyla iki gün içinde kendilerine kalacak bir yer buldular. Bir öğrenci şehri olan Eskişehir'deki apart kültürünü anlayamadıkları ve uygun bulmadıkları için kısa sürede buldukları ilk mobilyalı evi kiraladılar ve yıl boyunca yaşadıkları bu küçük evden memnuniyetsizliklerini dile getirdiler. Bilmedikleri bir dili konuşmaya çalışarak ve çeviri yoluyla evlerini bulduktan sonra, doğal gaz, elektrik, su açma işlemleri gibi hayli bürokratik zorunlulukları yardım almaya çalışarak tamamladılar ve bayram tatili dolayısıyla bu süreç bir ay kadar uzun sürdü ve bu durum onların okula uyum çabalarını da olumsuz yönde etkiledi. Yıl içinde, fatura ödeme, ev ile ilgili arızaları giderme konusunda da zorluklar yaşayan öğretmenler sıklıkla Amerikan ve Türk kültürleri arasında karşılaştırmalar yaptılar.

Ulaşım, en çok zorluk yaşadıkları durumlardan biri olarak karşımıza çıkıyor. Bunun en önemli sebebi, Maria ve Charlotte'ın Amerika'daki yaşamlarında toplu taşımayı yaygın olarak kullanmamaları ve kendi hususi araçlarına sahip olmaları olmuştur. Toplu taşımacılığı "yorucu ve tatsız" bir tecrübe ve bir kültür şoku unsuru haline getiren faktörler, aşırı kalabalık tramvaylar, evden okula olan uzun ulaşım mesafesi ve bazı yolcu ve otobüs şoförlerinin tutumları olarak sıralanabilir. Öğretmenler, pek çok görüşmede bu sorunun psikolojik hallerini ve isteklerini etkilediğini söylemiştir.

Türkiyede art arda yaşanan bombalama olayları da yıl içinde, öğretmenlerin Türk kültürüne ve yaşantısına uyum süreçlerini etkilemiştir. Öncelerde yaşanan bu olaylara, Amerika'da sık yaşanan toplu silahlı saldırı olaylarına benzetmeler de, özellikle kendileri de bizzat bu olaylara şahit olduktan sonra, hem Türk toplumunun gösterdiği endişe ve hassasiyeti göstermeye başlamış, hem de sosyal medya paylaşımlarıyla Amerika'daki insanları bilgilendirmek ve bilinçlendirmek için çaba sarf etmişlerdir. Bu olaylar onları da fazlasıyla korkutmuş ve zaman zaman sosyal yaşantılarını ve uyum süreçlerini etkilemiştir.

Bürokrasinin Türkiye'de hemen hemen her kurumdaki varlığı ve bireyler üzerindeki etkisini, geldikleri ilk günden itibaren hissetmiş olan Maria ve Charlotte, yıl içinde pek çok kez anlamlandıramadıkları kültürel sorunlar yaşamıştır. Resmi devlet dairelerinden, okuldaki evrak işlerine ve onlardan yapmaları istenilen usullere kadar, öğretmenler oldukça farklı bir bürokrasi kültürüne maruz kalmıştır.

Etkileşim Zorlukları: Sosyal İletişim ve Dil Zorlukları

Yabancı bir ülkede sosyalleşme, arkadaş edinme ve insanlarla etkileşime girme öğretmenlerin Türkiye'de kaldıkları süre boyunca yaşadığı "en zorlu süreçler" olduğu bildirildi. Etkileşim fırsatlarını engelleyen en büyük engel, dil yetersizliğiydi. Türkiye'nin tek resmi ve ulusal dili Türkçe olduğu için, neredeyse İngilizcenin günlük hayatta hiç kullanılmadığı bir ülkede İngilizce öğretmeni olmak, sosyalleşme süreçlerine fazla katkı sağlamadı. Üniversite ortamında, Charlotte ve Maria için işler biraz daha kolaydı çünkü neredeyse herkes İngilizce biliyordu. Fakat günlük yaşamlarında, dil engeli, öğretmenlerin karşılaştıkları en büyük zorluğa dönüştü ve Türkçe konuşmaları anlamak ve karşılık vermek fazlasıyla zorluk vericiydi özellikle de ilk zamanlar. Sadece Türk vatandaşlarıyla etkileşim

kurmak için değil, aynı zamanda özellikle alışveriş yapmak, barınmak, toplu taşıma araçlarını kullanmak gibi temel ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için Türkçe konuşmaları gerekiyordu. Dili anlama ve üretme konusunda fazlaca zorlandıklarında, yeni çevreye uyum isteklerini kaybetme eğiliminde oldukları görülmüştür.

Okul başlar başlamaz, kendilerine sunulan üniversite bünyesindeki Türkçe derslerine katılan Maria ve Charlotte'ın özellikle ilk üç aydan sonra Türkçelerini kayda değer ölçüde ilerlettikleri ve çok sınırlı olan arkadaş çevrelerini genişletmeye başladıkları görüldü. Bu ilk üç aylık süreç boyunca, kendilerini ifade edecek yeterlikte olmadıklarından çoğunlukla “yalnız, pasif ve başkalarına bağımlı” hissettiklerini belirttiler.

Yine ilk aylarda, Maria ve Charlotte, boş zamanlarını ve tatillerini Fulbright grubundan arkadaşlarıyla farklı şehirlerde geçirmeyi seçti. Bu buluşmalar, Türkiye'deki sınırlı sayıdaki arkadaşını görmeleri için bir istek kaynağıydı. Maria ve Charlotte, diğer Amerikalılarla olan dostluğunu güçlendirmeyi tercih ederken, okul dışındaki Türklerle tanışmak için yeterince zaman yaratmayı tercih etmediler. Fakat özellikle ikinci dönemin başlamasıyla birlikte, çok fazla şehir dışına çıkmaya zaman bulamadıkları ve kendilerini Türkçe konuşurken daha güvenli hissettikleri için, boş vakitlerini kendi buldukları şehirde ve Türk arkadaşlar edinerek geçirmeye çalıştılar.

İş ile ilgili Zorluklar

Öğretmenlerin yeni çalışma ortamına, arkadaşlarına, okul kültürüne ve öğrencilerine uyum sağlamada bazı kültürel çatışmaların yer aldığı gözlemlenmiş ve aynı zamanda öğretmenler tarafından rapor edilmiştir. Yaşanılan temel zorluklar üç ana başlıkta toplanabilir. Bunlardan ilki, Amerikan ve Türk üniversite kültürü farklarından kaynaklanan problemlerdir. İki öğretmen de çalıştıkları üniversite kültürünü, daha önce eğitim aldıkları okul ve üniversitelerden oldukça farklı ve alışılması güç bulmuşlardır. Amerika'da zorunlu hazırlık okulu gibi bir kavramın olmaması, ilk olarak öğretmenlere görev tanımlarını ve öğretim felsefelerini sorgulattı. Öğrenci profili, okuldaki dinamikler, hiyerarşik yapı, üniversitede yerleşik bir öğrenci kültürünün olmaması Maria ve Charlotte için önceleri bazı

problemler yarattı ve Amerikan kimlikleri ile onlardan beklenen öğretmen davranışları arasında bir uyumsuzluk yarattı. Kendi dillerini, iletişim odaklı yöntemlerle öğretmeye çalışan öğretmenler, okulun sınava yönelik müfredatında bir süre kaybolduktan sonra, kendi uygulamalarıyla okulun beklentilerini harmanlayan pratikler geliştirmeyi başardılar. İkinci grup sorunlar kurum kültüründen kaynaklanan sorunlardı. Kurum tarafından öğretmenlerle herhangi bir eğitim veya dönüt verilmemesi, plansızlık ve son dakika alınan kararlar, idare ve Fulbright asistanları arasındaki iletişim eksikliği, öğretmenlerin uzunca bir süre kendilerini kuruma ait hissedememesine sebep oldu. Ancak, bazı yakın bağlar kurdukları meslektaşları ve öğrencileri sayesinde, öğretmenler yaptıkları işten verim almaya ve okuldaki zamanlarını en yararlı şekilde geçirmeyi amaçladılar. Son grup zorluklar öğretmenlerin sınıfta yaşadıkları, öğretme temelli zorluklardır. Hem farklı bir kültürde öğretmen olmanın zorlukları, hem de her iki öğretmenin de mesleğinin ilk yılları olması, zorlukları ikiye katladı. Bazı öğrencilerle iletişim kurmanın zorluğu, öğretmen-öğrenci etkileşimleri, beklentiler arasındaki uyumsuzluk sınıf içinde bazı problemler yaşamalarına neden oldu. Fakat tüm bu sorunları, farklı stratejiler geliştirerek aşmaya çalıştılar. Sosyal ve çalışma alanında geliştirdikleri stratejiler şöyle sıralanabilir: gözlem yapma, deneyerek öğrenme, kaçınma, geçmiş tecrübelerden yararlanma, kültürel bilgilendiricilerden tavsiye alma.

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bu fenomenolojiye dayalı etnografyanın amacı, iki Amerikalı Fulbright öğretim asistanı tarafından Black et al (1991) modelinin üç boyutuna dayanan kültürler arası uyum sürecini anlamaya çalışmaktır. Bu çalışma, katılımcı öğretmenlerin, on ay boyunca Türkiye'de kaldıkları süre içinde davranışlarının ve düşüncelerinin oldukça güçlü kültürel bileşenler taşıdığını ortaya çıkardı.

Çalışmanın kapsadığı on aylık dönem, kültürler arası geçmiş deneyimler, kültür şoku ve öğretmenlerin zorluklardan kültürel yetkinlik ve farkındalık geliştirmeye başlamaları gibi konuları araştırma fırsatı sağladı. Bununla birlikte, öğretmenler ulusal, toplumsal ve dilsel sınırları aştıktan sonra ana dillerini yabancı bir dil olarak

öğretmek için yaşadıkları genel zorluklar ve geliştirdikleri stratejiler konusunda ışık tutar.

Öğretmenlerin uyum süreçleri, yaşama ve çalışma ortamının yeniliğinden kaynaklanan zorluklarla başlamıştır. Bir dereceye kadar ev sahibi kültüre aşina olmalarına rağmen, ilk ayları kültürel şoklar, gergin anlar ve kültürel anlayıştaki geçişlerle geçmiştir (Matusitz, 2015; Campbell, 2015; Slagoski, 2014; Nameth, 2014; Liao, 2010; Romig, 2009). Yeni çevreyle, yeni dille ve yeni sosyal normlarla başa çıkamadığı için tecrit, umutsuzluk ve acizlik duyguları ortaya çıktı. Öğretmenlerin üstesinden gelmek zorunda oldukları en büyük zorluğu dil engeli oluşturuyordu. Dil, iletişimin omurgası olduğu için, Maria ve Charlotte, İngilizce'nin neredeyse hiç konuşulmadığı bir şehirde insanlarla etkileşimde zorluk çektiler. Bu dil yetersizliği sosyalleşme potansiyelini de en aza indirdi.

Karşılaştıkları kültürel şokları, Black et al (1991) tarafından geliştirilen kültürlerarası uyum modelinin üç boyutuyla yakından ilgiliydi. (1991), yani genel çevre, etkileşimsel ve işyeri uyumu. Genel çevre açısından en temel zorluklar konaklama, alışveriş, toplu taşıma araçlarını kullanma, bürokrasi ile uğraşma ve günlük rutini yönetme konularındaydı. Bunların yanı sıra, Türkçe iletişim kurmak, arkadaş edinmek ve sosyalleşmek gibi bazı sorunlarla karşı karşıya kaldılar. Son olarak, işyeri ve öğretmenlik ile ilgili zorluklar ve uyumsuzluklar ortaya çıktı. Bunlar çoğunlukla beklenti, rol, iş etiği, öğretmen-öğrenci ilişkileri ve Amerikan ve Türk eğitimi arasındaki uygulama farklılıklarından meydana geldi. Türkiye'deki yaşam ve öğretim açısından ilk kültür şoklarından kurtulduktan sonra, Amerikan değer ve tutumlarının çoğu durumda işe yaramadığını ve yeni sosyal kuralları öğrenmeleri gerektiğini fark ettiler.

Kültürel farklılıkların yanı sıra yaşadıkları zorlukların en büyük kaynağı dil engeli idi. Selmer (2006), bunu "dil kültürü etkilediği gibi kültürü de etkiliyor ve yansıtıyor" şeklinde ifade ediyor. Gerekli dil ve iletişim becerilerinin eksikliği yüzünden yaşanan zorluklar, Maria ve Charlotte'ın kültürel uyum süreçlerini, özellikle de ilk aylarında olumsuz etkiledi. Dil yeterliliğini, günlük konuşmalar ve

etkileşimlere dâhil olma düzeyine getirmek neredeyse bir dönemlerini aldı. Kültür sokları yaşadıkları ve iletişim becerilerinin sınırlı olduğu bu aylarda, öğretmenler genellikle kendilerini sınırlı, yalıtılmış, çaresiz ve aciz hissettiler. Bu bulgular Brown'ın (2000) iletişimi "bir kültürün en görünür ve mevcut yönü" gördüğü fikrini desteklemektedir. Çalışma aynı zamanda kültür öğrenmenin kültürler arası adaptasyonun ilk aşaması olduğunu savunan Schumann (1975), Brown (2000) ve Acton & Walker de Felix (1986) ve kültürün esas olarak dil yoluyla öğrenileceği fikrini doğrular.

Yeni çevrede yeni kültürel yeterlilikler geliştirmeli ve davranışlarını kültürel uyumsuzlukların ve iletişim olanaklarının üstesinden gelmek için değiştirmeliydiler. Bu gerekli bilgi ve yetkinliği kazanmak için, öğretmenler, kültürel kuralları anlamadıklarında ya da ipuçlarını kaybettikleri zaman bazı kültürel bilgilendiricilere başvurdu. Bu insanlar iş arkadaşları, Fulbright arkadaşlarını ve Türkçe derslerindeki yabancı arkadaşları, küçük bir Türk arkadaş grubu, öğrenciler ve hatta yabancı insanlardı. Her kültürel bilgilendirici, öğretmenlere Türk kültürü hakkında farklı bilgi ve görüş kazandırıyor. Sağlanan bu sosyal destek ve tecrübeler, öğretmenlerin hedef kültüre aidiyetlerini geliştirmelerine ve ayrıca dil ve iletişim becerilerini ve yetkinliklerini geliştirmelerine yardımcı oldu. Uyum zorluklarıyla ilgili bulgular, öğretim asistanlarına atanacak kendi kurumlarından bir danışman ve ülkeye gelmeden önce başlayan ve sonrasında devam eden eğitim programlarının programın iyileştirilmesinde önemli olabileceğini ve böylelikle öğretmenlerin yaşadığı zorlukların en aza indirgenebileceğini ortaya koymuştur. Littrell et al, 2006, Caligiuri et al, , 2001, Hutchinson ve Jazzar, 2007 Eschbach et al, 2001'in da savunduğu gibi, kültürler arası eğitimin, öğretmenlerin daha kolay ve hızlı uyum sağlamasında önemli rol oynar. Ayrıca bu eğitimlerin etkili U şeklindeki eğri "kriz" safhasını kısaltabileceğini ve bireylerin "iyileşme" ve "adaptasyon" aşamalarına sorunsuz bir geçiş yapmasına izin verebileceği de Ji'nan (2013)'in çalışmasında öne sürülmüştür.

Öğretmenlerin gerek sosyal gerekse mesleki zorluklara karşı geliştirdikleri stratejiler de literatürdeki bazı çalışmaların bulgularıyla paralellik göstermiştir. Öğretmenler

sıklıkla, deneme yanılma (Constantine, et al.; Wang, 2015), gözlem (Bandura, 1977), kültürel bilgilendiricilere danışma (Berry & Sam, 1997; Lin, 2001), ve geçmiş kültürlerarası deneyimlerine başvurmuşlardır (Caligiuri et al, 2001; Masgoret, 2006; Kinginger, 2015).

Bu stratejiler içinde en sık kullanılan ve yararlı bulunan kültürel bilgilendiricilerden gelen sosyal destek olmuştur. Öğretmenler, bu toplumsal desteği hem Türk hem yabancı arkadaşlar, aile, meslektaşlar ve öğrencilerden aldılar. Bu kaynaklardan gelen her türlü yardım ve desteğin kültürler arası uyarlamayı kolaylaştırdığını bildirmişlerdir. Bu bulgu, sosyal desteğin toplumsal sermaye olarak görüldüğünü ve finansal sermaye, beşeri sermaye ve kültür sermayesi gibi diğer sermayelere dönüştüğünü gösteren sosyal sermaye teorisi ile uyumludur (Bourdieu, 2011; Coleman, 1988; Lin & Cook & Burt, 2001; Portes, 2000).

APPENDIX G: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Erman
Adı : Servet Günce
Bölümü : İngiliz Dili Öğretimi

TEZİN ADI: (İngilizce) “Things Take Time Here”: A Phenomenology Based Ethnography on the Social and Professional Adjustment Challenges and Strategies of Two American Fulbright Teaching Assistants in Turkey

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: