

The Perceptions of EFL Pre-Service Teachers towards World Englishes

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Abstract

World Englishes (WE) refers to varieties of English that emerge across the world, drawing attention to the pluricentric and multicultural nature of English at present. Studies focusing on WE highlight sociolinguistic realities that challenge established ideas, such as native – speakerism and Standard English ideology, and offer new directions and conceptualizations in relation to English pedagogy, including English language teacher education. Drawing from current WE-related discussions in the field of English language teaching, this study aimed to investigate perceptions of pre-service teachers towards WE and to this end it examined the perceptions of 110 Turkish EFL pre-service teachers enrolled at private and state universities. Quantitative data collected through the WE Perception Questionnaire were analyzed by means of Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples T-test. The statistical results indicated that pre-service teachers enrolled at both private and state universities had positive perceptions towards WE and there was not a statistically significant difference between them in relation to their prior training on WE, overall perceptions towards the ownership of English, the concept of WE, and native and non-native speakers of English teaching them English. The results also revealed that pre-service teachers felt the necessity of instruction on WE during their pre – service teacher education and they were highly willing to participate in training regarding WE. In this context, the results of the study can contribute to curriculum developers, instructors and teacher educators.

Keywords: World Englishes, EFL pre-service teachers, non-native English teachers

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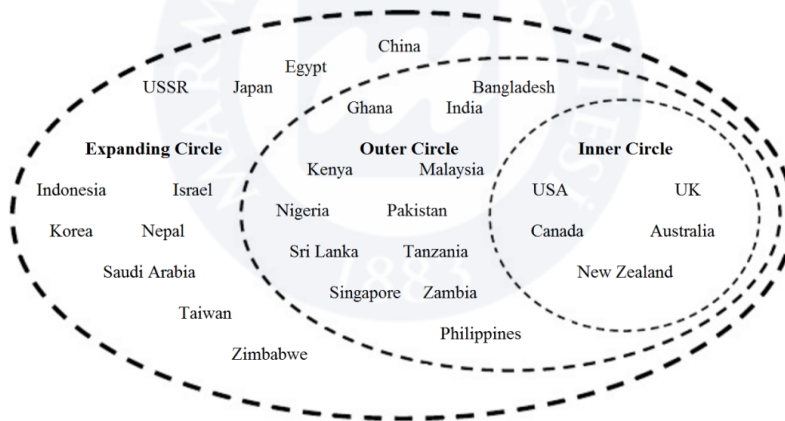
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Introduction

The rapid spread of English around the world has created a number of different sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts and caused the emergence of new norms and standards in these contexts, resulting in new nativized varieties of English. All these varieties of English are referred to as World Englishes (WE) and defined as the “institutionalized second-language varieties of English spoken around the world” (Kachru, 1985). In light of WE, Kachru (1985) categorized the use of English in different countries comprised of three concentric circles. The following diagram (Figure 1) indicates Kachru’s three-circle model and the categorization of different countries.

Figure 1

Kachru’s concentric three circle model: Adapted from Kachru (1992)



Accordingly, while the inner circle includes countries where English is used as the native language (e.g., the UK, the USA) providing norms of English, the outer circle consists of countries where English is used as a second language (L2) (e.g., India, Singapore, Kenya) with a norm-developing role. Lastly, the expanding circle involves countries such as Turkey, Israel, Malaysia, and Korea where English is used as a foreign language (EFL) and is regarded as norm dependent. In this context, the term WE has drawn attention as it is claimed to be a label adopted especially in the outer and expanding circle countries, which functions as an umbrella term including all varieties of English all around the world (Pakir, 2009).

The field of ELT has long been dominated by native speaker ideology (Cogo, 2011), emphasizing a belief that native speakers are characteristically superior to non-native speakers, which becomes most apparent in teacher recruitment. However, what WE bring into ELT is the idea that English does not only belong to its native speakers and it can be taught as a global language. In this respect, in the ELT context, it has recently been accepted that English is not only the language of inner circle countries, namely the UK, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand

(Kirkpatrick, 2008) but also the language of outer and expanding circle countries as the non-native speakers outnumbered native speakers by a ratio of 3 to 1 (Crystal, 2003). As a result of the new conceptualization of English as a global lingua franca and its changing character, English language learning and teaching has moved beyond the dichotomous labeling of EFL/ESL. With more pluricentric orientations, English has become a multi-cultural and global language. In this regard, Matsuda (2003) asserted that English should not be taught with the norms of Standard English (SE) used in inner circle countries but with the ones of WE.

As for the Turkish context, just like in any other expanding circle context, English is a foreign language for both non-native language teachers and learners. Teaching English with SE norms as it is done in Inner Circle countries and adopting an inner circle pedagogical model does not necessarily fulfill curricular goals and learner needs (Matsuda, 2003).

Considering the global lingua franca status of English, and the fact that English language learners are expected to use English in interaction with both native and non-native speakers of English, there is a growing need to reconsider ELT practices in light of issues entailed by the WE paradigm. A re-thinking of concepts such as communicative competence, intercultural communicative competence, standard language ideology both globally and for the particulars of the local setting inevitably calls for a re-examination of the pedagogy of English. There is a growing body of literature based on research that reveals the need for both language teachers and learners to be exposed to varieties of English beyond the inner circle, discard the native speaker fallacy and value themselves as intercultural speakers with cultural and linguistic awareness (Snow, Kamhi-Stein, & Brinton, 2006). In response to sociolinguistic changes surrounding the English language and affecting its pedagogy, there is a need to introduce the concept of WE to pre-service teachers so that they have a broader understanding of the current sociolinguistic issues addressing English and are better prepared professionally to meet the needs of their future learners in a globalized world. Thus, introducing WE in language teacher education programs is significant in raising pre-service teachers' awareness of this concept and its applicability in their teaching practices.

In the face of the increasing importance of WE in ELT, there appears a limited number of studies conducted abroad and in Turkey that examine the EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives towards WE. The present study, therefore, aimed to fill in this gap in the literature and shed light on the perceptions of Turkish EFL pre-service teachers toward WE. The findings of the study are expected to serve as an encouragement to language educators to open the doors of the EFL classroom to WE and foster learners with the knowledge, skills, and perceptions essential for today's globalized world.

Literature Review

The WE paradigm has been discussed and supported by ELT scholars around the globe (Alptekin, 2002; Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Canagarajah, 2006; Jenkins, 2007, 2009; Kubota, 2012; Lee,

2012; McKay, 2003; Matsuda, 2003) and is identified to assign an active role to WE users as they are accepted to be “agents” in the spread and development of English(es) contributing to shape the language and its functions (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). Moreover, the WE paradigm aims to create “interculturally multi-dialectical” users with the importance of addressing intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitude in interaction (Lee, 2012). Thus, WE are heterogeneous with multiple norms and grammars, and diversity is the accentuated feature (Canagarajah, 2006; Kubota, 2012).

With an unprecedented spread accelerated by globalization, English has become an international language and its usage is not bound to its native speakers anymore (Jenkins, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2004). The notion of one monolithic English has been replaced by the reality of different nativized varieties that have emerged in different parts of the world where the English used carries not only non-standard features of English but also various local cultural characteristics. Understanding varieties of English, therefore, is crucial not only in language teaching but also providing English users means of intercultural communication skills.

Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of language learners on WE in the EFL context particularly in the past two decades. These studies focused mainly on the WE-related issues and investigated the participants’ perceptions of diversity and plurality that characterized English, WE as a newly emerged concept, SE ideology, and ownership of English. Findings revealed by these studies ranged from an ambivalent view of WE towards a more positive one among university students in a variety of settings. Research conducted by McKenzie (2006) investigated 558 Japanese university students’ perceptions of WE. The results of the study suggested that Japanese learners often have complex attitudes towards standard/ non-standard and native/ non-native varieties of English. Similarly working on the Asian context, Saengboon (2015) investigated the perceptions of 198 Tai university students regarding WE. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were uncertain about WE, although they still prized British and American English as most desirable.

Findings suggesting a more favorable perception of WE relate this more positive outlook to either exposure or awareness. Lee and Green’s (2016) study, for instance, investigated 60 Korean university students’ perceptions attitudes toward WE and the factors that affect their perceptions and attitudes. Results of the study indicated that the students still had a preference for inner circle Englishes but had a keen interest in being exposed to WE for less stressful, more interactive, communicative and comprehensible uses. The study conducted by Floris (2013) with 11 pre-service teachers explored their perceptions of English as an international language (EIL) before and after taking a WE course. The findings of the study indicated that the pre-service teachers became aware of the changes in the uses and users of English and acknowledged the existence of other varieties of English after attending the WE course. Rousseau (2012), on the other hand, examined the impact of raising awareness of WE varieties on the language attitudes of Korean university students and found out that the students had significantly positive attitudes towards Chinese, Japanese, British and Korean speakers of English. In a similar vein, Galloway (2013) examined the perceptions of 52 English learners in relation to the

sociolinguistic realities of English and how these related to learning English, as well as their responses to WE instruction in a Japanese university. The results of the study revealed that the participants had positive attitudes towards native speaker varieties of English and the WE class was also found to have an important impact on students' attitudes. Learners' changing perception regarding WE following instruction on the concept was also evident in Choi's study (2007) where the researcher examined 159 Korean college students' perceptions toward WE and found out that the group taking formal lectures on WE indicated a relatively less preference towards Standard English. Jin's study (2005) showed not only how Chinese university students changed their attitudes towards WE after taking a course on it but also how such a change influenced their preference of native/non-native English teachers (NESTs/NNESTs).

Literature also includes studies that report learners' inclination towards an inner circle native variety of English. The study conducted by Snodin and Young (2015) explored the perceptions and attitudes of 251 Thai learners of English towards WE and the results illustrated that native-speaker varieties had dominance over the other varieties of English. Honna and Takeshita (2000), mark in their study how strongly Japanese students want to emulate a native speaker variety. The study conducted by Li (2009) revealed that Chinese university-educated language learners strongly aspired to native speaker-like speech.

In terms of differentiating between and reporting preference for NESTs and NNESTs, various studies reveal differing preferences of learners. Liu & Zhang (2007) analyzed student perceptions of native & non-native teachers and found out that Chinese university students regarded NESTs and NNESTs equally proficient and competent. In his study with Saudi university language learners, Alseweed (2012) reported that the participants showed an explicit preference for NESTs for their teaching strategies, however, they showed moderately favorable attitudes towards NNESTs in terms of their response to learners' needs.

Studies pursuing the same questions have also been conducted in the Turkish context. Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2009) investigated 15 English preparatory class students' attitudes at a state university in Turkey and the findings revealed that the participating students who had been unaware of WE asserted their preference for only the American and British varieties of English to be spoken all around the world and marked that British English sounded better. Similarly, Ören, Öztüfekçi, Kapçık, Kaplan, and Yılmaz-Uzunkaya (2017) conducted a study among preparatory students at a private university in Turkey and found a lack of knowledge about WE as the participants showed a strong tendency toward subliming American or British varieties as the correct English.

Üstünlüoğlu (2007) investigated university students' perceptions of native and non – native teachers with 311 language learners. The results of the study indicated that the students perceived each group with their own strengths: non-native teachers fulfil in-class teaching and in-class management roles better than native teachers do while native teachers fulfil in-class communication skills and present more favorable qualities. Similarly, in their investigation of 120 university students' perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs, Karakaş, Uysal, Bilgin and

Bulut (2016) found out that students perceived NESTs in linguistic and professional dimensions, and NNESTs in pedagogical dimension rather positively in their English language learning experience at a private university setting. Also, pointing to a difference in learners' perception of NESTs and NNESTs, the study conducted by Ürkmez (2015) with 120 students at a public university revealed that the participants showed high preference for NESTs because they could learn more about the NESTs' culture. They appreciated both NESTs and NNESTs in terms of helping with their learning process in different aspects as they found NESTs more proficient in listening and speaking skills and NNESTs in grammar, writing lessons.

Although considerable literature has been accumulated, research focusing on pre – service teachers' perceptions of WE in the Turkish context seems wanting. Considering the popularity of English language teacher education programs in Turkey, the varying educational opportunities offered by state and private universities with such programs, and all the efforts to improve the pre-service teacher education in its trajectory to better equip English language teachers for a global world, this is a gap that needs to be addressed.

To this end, the following research questions have been formulated for the purposes of this study:

1. What are the perceptions of Turkish EFL pre-service teachers toward WE regarding:
 - a) Standard English ideology?
 - b) Ownership of English?
 - c) Recognition of localized Englishes?
 - d) The distinction between NESTs and NNESTs?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between Turkish EFL pre-service teachers enrolled at private and state universities regarding their perceptions toward WE?

Methodology

Design

The present study has a descriptive research design, which includes quantitative approaches during the data collection and data analysis phases. In this regard, the quantitative aspect of the study comprised the statistical analysis of questionnaire results to describe pre – service teachers' perceptions toward WE.

Participants and Setting

The participants of the study were 110 sophomore EFL pre-service teachers (79 females and 31 males) enrolled at the Department of English Language Teacher Education (ELTE) Departments of one private (PU) and two state universities (SU) in Istanbul, Turkey during 2017-2018 academic

year as indicated in Table 1. They were selected through random sampling. During the four-year undergraduate program, these pre-service teachers are required to gain theoretical and practical knowledge relevant to language teaching. The program consists of general pedagogy courses as well as field-specific courses on language teaching methodology and cultural courses. In the fourth year, pre-service teachers are required to fulfil a year-long Practicum requirement.

The participants' ages ranged from 21 to 26. All the participants were informed about the research at the beginning of the study and asked to give informed consent before taking part in the study.

Table 1

Distribution of the participants

School type	N	Gender	
		Male	Female
State university one	56	15	41
State university two	22	10	12
Private university	32	6	26

Data Collection Instruments

Data for the present study were collected by means of the modified version of WE Perception Questionnaire adapted from Choi (2007). The WE Perception Questionnaire adapted from Choi (2007) was used to explore the perceptions of pre-service teachers on WE. The initial part of the questionnaire included five closed-ended “yes-no” questions regarding the participants' previous trainings on WE during pre-service teacher education period. These questions were included in agreement with Choi that receiving instruction on WE may have an impact on their predispositions towards the concept and its attendant issues.

The second part of the questionnaire contains 26 items which were all answered on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to strongly agree” with values 1 to 5 assigned to them, respectively. It includes four different sections. While the first three sections contain seven questions, the last section includes five questions: The first section comprises of statements regarding American English and British English as SE and ownership of English whilst the second section includes issues of WE and varieties of English. The third and fourth sections aim to find out the preference of the pre-service teachers of NESTs/NNESTs. The reliability estimate was $\alpha = .99$ for the questionnaire and it was also justified to have the content validity (Choi, 2007). For the present study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the inventory was .81.

Procedure

All of the participating pre-service teachers were provided with the details about the research at the very beginning of the study and they were asked to give informed consent before taking part in the present study. In this regard, the questionnaire aiming to investigate the perceptions

of Turkish EFL pre-service teachers on WE was administrated to all of the participants who were informed that (a) the questionnaire wasn't a test, (b) their answers wouldn't be graded, and (c) they didn't have to give any details about their identities. The administered questionnaire contained 5 yes no questions and then comprised of 26 items which were all answered on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to strongly agree" with values 1 to 5 assigned to them respectively.

Data Analysis

In accordance with the purpose of the study, the data obtained from the perception questionnaire were analyzed by means of quantitative techniques including Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples T-test via using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Prior Teacher Training on WE

In order to find out the pre-service teachers' previous trainings regarding WE, their responses to five yes-no questions were assessed by means of descriptive statistics. In this respect, the results of the frequency analysis indicated that majority of the participating pre – service teachers not only in SU (group 1) (79.5%) but also in the PU (group 2) (65.6%) stated not having taken specific courses on WE. Similarly, only a small number of pre-service teachers enrolled at both SU (6.4%) and PU (15.6%) had other prior training on WE. However, more than half of the pre-service teachers in SU (55.1%) and majority of the pre – service teachers in PU (75.0%) asserted that they were familiar with the concept of WE. A high number of the participants both in SU (79.5%) and PU (84.4%) found WE-related training necessary. Lastly, the majority of pre-service teachers in SU (89.7 %) and PU (87.5 %) stated that they were eager to attend training in relation to WE as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

Results of the Frequency Analysis of Participants' Responses regarding Prior Trainings on WE

Teacher training & WE Variables	GROUPS	AGREE	DISAGREE
Taking courses on WE	1	20.5%	79.5%
	2	34.4%	65.6%
Taking training on WE	1	6.4%	93.6%
	2	15.6%	84.4%
Familiarity with WE	1	55.1%	44.9%
	2	75.0%	25.0%
Feeling the need of training on WE	1	79.5%	20.5%
	2	84.4%	15.6%
Willingness to attend training on WE	1	89.7%	10.3%
	2	87.5%	12.5%

The Perceptions of Turkish EFL Pre-Service Teachers toward WE

In order to reveal the perceptions of Turkish EFL pre-service teachers towards WE in terms of SE ideology, ownership of English, recognition of localized Englishes, and the distinction between NESTs and NNESTs, Descriptive Statistics were used. Table 3 specifically indicates pre-service teachers' perceptions of WE in terms of sub-scales. In addition, the results obtained from the descriptive analysis including mean, standard deviation, and the percentage distributions of their perception are illustrated in detail in Table 4.

The analysis of the first section of the questionnaire including items from 1 to 7, aiming to find out the perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding the American and British English as SE, ownership of English and their attitude towards nativized varieties of English showed that pre-service teachers particularly supported the SE ideology and believed that SE was British English or American English, as can be seen in Table 4 ($M=3.73$, $SD=1.20$).

In terms of ownership of English, Table 3 indicated that pre-service teachers did not specifically accept American and British speakers as the owners of English ($M=2.58$, $SD=.78$). As pointed out in Table 4, pre-service teachers believed that English didn't solely belong to the UK and the USA since they disagreed with other six items of this section regarding the ownership of English.

The analysis of the second section of the questionnaire concerning the issues of WE, varieties of English, and recognition of localized Englishes showed that pre-service teachers had positive perceptions towards different varieties of English used around the world and learning localized Englishes ($M=3.81$, $SD=.57$) as indicated in Table 3 since all the statements from 8 to 14 illustrated that most of the participants wanted to know WE-related practices were used as revealed in Table 4. The participants also reported a preference for familiarization with the local varieties of English. In addition, they indicated positive perspectives regarding their Turkish accent and appreciated the materials including NS-NNs interactions in English as shown in Table 4.

When the sub-scales were taken into account, in relation to the pre-service teachers' preference of the NESTs/NNESTs, the results in table 3 illustrated a stronger preference towards NESTs ($M=3.19$, $SD=.93$) and relatively less preference towards NNESTs ($M=3.17$, $SD=.79$). The analysis of section three, including items from 15 to 21, which dealt with the preference of pre-service teachers' on NESTs indicated that most of the pre-service teachers preferred learning English from NESTs since they mostly agreed with the statements in this section except when they were asked if they do not want to be taught English from Turkish teachers. Findings revealed that there was a particular preference for NESTs in learning English in accordance with the participants' strong support and tendency towards SE ideology.

The analysis of section four which aimed to explore the preference of the participating pre-service teachers for NNESTs revealed that most pre-service teachers agreed that Turkish teachers can teach English more easily than the native speakers of English since they can

benefit from their mother tongue. The participants found Turkish teachers of English better at explaining grammar and providing motivation, a reporting they drew from their own experiences as English language learners themselves which is visible in their responses to items from 22 to 26 in Table 4.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for sub-scales

Statements	N	Mean	SD
Total	110	3.19	.37
Ownership of English	110	2.58	.78
WE and Varieties of English	110	3.81	.57
Preference of NESTs	110	3.19	.93
Preference of NNESTs	110	3.17	.79

As aforementioned, pre-service teachers' perceptions of WE are taken into consideration and illustrated in terms of detailed, item by item analysis in Table 4.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics for teachers perceptions regarding WE

Statements	Mean	SD	SD	D	UN	A	SA
1. Standard English is British English or American English.	3.73	1.20	7.3%	10.9%	12.7%	40.0%	29.1%
2. English belongs to the UK or the USA.	2.66	1.41	27.3%	27.3%	13.6%	16.4%	15.5%
3. It is British or American English speakers who have the right to decide how English should be.	2.65	1.33	24.5%	26.4%	20.9%	16.4%	11.8%
4. I am embarrassed by my Turkish (local) accent.	2.54	1.25	26.4%	28.2%	15.5%	25.5%	4.5%
5. If English is used differently from British or American English, it must be wrong.	2.11	1.06	32.7%	39.1%	15.5%	10.0%	2.7%
6. Only the people born in the USA and the UK are native English speakers.	2.39	1.32	32.7%	30.0%	11.8%	17.3%	8.2%
7. English can be used in ways different from the ways used by NSs.	3.98	.79	22.7%	60.0%	10.0%	7.3%	0.0%
8. I have heard of WE.	3.71	1.33	11.8%	10.0%	6.4%	39.1%	32.7%
9. More lectures should be given on WE and Turkish English.	3.84	.94	1.8%	6.4%	23.6%	42.7%	25.5%
10. I am proud of my Turkish (local) accent when I speak English.	2.92	1.10	12.7%	18.2%	41.8%	19.1%	8.2%
11. I would like to learn about different varieties of English used in the world.	4.26	.83	0.0%	6.4%	5.5%	44.5%	43.6%
12. It is important to be familiar with different local varieties of English.	4.34	.68	0.0%	1.8%	6.4%	48.2%	43.6%
13. I'd like to study English from books where NSs and NNSs communication is shown.	3.96	1.02	4.5%	5.5%	10.0%	49.1%	30.9%
14. I'd like to study English from books where communication in English is shown only among NSs.	2.31	1.19	6.4%	11.8%	16.4%	37.3%	28.2%

15. I do not want a Turkish teacher of English to teach me English.	2.38	1.28	31.8%	26.4%	22.7%	10.0%	9.1%
16. I want a NEST to teach me English as their English is Standard English.	3.43	1.22	8.2%	14.5%	25.5%	30.0%	21.8%
17. NESTs provide more reliable linguistic knowledge.	3.30	1.32	10.9%	19.1%	22.7%	23.6%	23.6%
18. NESTs correct me better when I make mistakes.	3.25	1.18	8.2%	20.0%	26.4%	30.0%	15.5%
19. Eventually, I will speak native-like English if I study with a NEST.	3.16	1.12	8.2%	20.9%	27.3%	33.6%	10.0%
20. An American or a British teacher of English sets a better example of an English speaker than a Turkish teacher of English.	3.46	1.26	10.0%	16.4%	13.6%	38.2%	21.8%
21. I have a better chance to learn English with a NEST.	3.38	1.27	9.1%	20.05	15.5%	34.5%	20.9%
22. I learn more with Turkish teachers of English as they explain grammar better than NESTs.	2.87	1.06	11.8%	23.6%	33.6%	27.3%	3.6%
23. I learn more with Turkish teachers of English since they sometimes explain in Turkish and that helps me understand English better.	3.13	1.08	9.1%	18.2%	30.0%	36.4%	6.4%
24. Turkish teachers help me better with difficulties in learning English since they have experienced similar difficulties.	3.72	.95	4.5%	5.5%	19.1%	55.5%	15.5%
25. Turkish teachers of English set a good example of successful English learners which motivates me to study hard.	3.38	1.08	4.5%	18.2%	25.5%	38.2%	13.6%
26. I want to have a Turkish teacher as my English teacher since their English is more realistic for me to achieve as a learning target.	2.76	1.13	13.6%	28.2%	36.4%	12.7%	9.1%

In conclusion, findings revealed that pre-service teachers expressed a desire to recognize and learn localized varieties of English used all around the world. On the other hand, they preferred NESTs to teach them English, reserving a preference for Turkish teachers of English when learning grammar rules, making use of L1 for clarification and for motivational purposes. However, their preference for the NESTs was relatively higher compared to the NNESTs.

The Comparison of Turkish EFL Pre-Service Teachers Enrolled at Private and State Universities regarding their Perceptions toward WE

The second research question aimed to find out whether there was a statistically significant difference between state (Group 1) and private (Group 2) university pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding WE. To this end, an Independent Sample T-Test was used to analyze the data. In this research, the level of significance ($\alpha = .05$) was found to be sufficient to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between two groups. The analysis of Independent Samples T-Test indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference

between the means of both groups ($t(108) = -1.69, p > .05$; Cohen's $d = 0.35$). In this regard, the analysis showed that there was not a statistically significant difference ($p > .05$) between state and private university pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding WE in total as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5

Independent Sample T-Test Statistics of Private and Public University Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions

Statements	Groups	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P
Total	1	78	3.17	.36	-1.69	108	.988
	2	32	3.30	.41			$p > .05$

In addition, in order to see whether there was a statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of sub-scales, Independent Samples T-Tests were conducted for each sub-scale separately. Table 6 represents the differences between the groups' sub-scale scores in terms of their views toward WE.

Table 6

Differences Between Private and Public University Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions in Terms of Sub-Scales

Statements	Groups	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P
Ownership of English	1	78	2.80	.65	-1.361	108	.069
	2	32	3.00	.81			$p > .05$
WE and varieties of English	1	78	3.57	.46	-1.686	108	.982
	2	32	3.73	.44			$p > .05$
Preference of the NESTs	1	78	3.13	.96	-1.090	108	.359
	2	32	3.34	.84			$p > .05$
Preference of the NNESTs	1	78	3.18	.76	.230	108	.453
	2	32	3.14	.86			$p > .05$

Table 6 reveals that the results of the Independent Samples T-Test did not indicate any statistically significant differences between two groups in terms of four sub-scales including the perspectives of pre-service teachers' towards the ownership of English; issues of WE, preference of NESTs/ NNESTs. In that sense, for all the scores of the given four subscales, there were not statistically significant differences between the means of both groups ($p > .05$).

Discussion and Conclusion

The current study aimed to find out the perceptions' of EFL pre-service teachers enrolled at one private and two state universities in Turkish context towards WE. To that end, the WE perception questionnaire was utilized in the investigation of participating pre-service teachers' (a) previous training on WE during pre-service teacher education period (b) perceptions of

standard English ideology; (c) thoughts on ownership of English; (d) recognition of localized Englishes; and lastly (e) preference of NESTs and NNESTs. The findings revealed that regardless of their enrollment at SU (79.5%) and the PU (65.6%), the majority of the participating pre-service teachers stated not having taken any specific courses on WE. In the same vein, the findings illustrated that a high number of pre-service teachers enrolled at not only SU (93.6%) but also PU (84.4%) received no prior training on WE. However, more than half of the pre-service teachers in SU (55.1%) and majority of the pre – service teachers in PU (75.0%) claimed to be familiar with the concept of WE. Even though these participants received no prior training or attended no courses on WE during their pre – service teacher education programs, the majority both in SU (79.5%) and PU (84.4%) found training on WE necessary for themselves. In parallel with this finding, a significant number of pre-service teachers in SU (89.7 %) and PU (87.5 %) expressed eagerness and stated that they would like to volunteer and attend courses or training sessions regarding WE if they had an opportunity.

Given this lack of education in relation to WE, the emerging willingness to receive academic instruction on WE indicates a positive disposition towards WE and is in line with the existing literature. Studies conducted in higher education context to investigate perceptions regarding different varieties of English revealed previously noncognizant or slightly aware research participants revealing willingness to learn WE (Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2009; Floris, 2013; Galloway, 2013; Lee & Green, 2016; Ören et al., 2017; Rousseau, 2012). Pre-service teachers' keenness on learning WE also indicates a necessity they feel for their professional development. Resonating with the study conducted by İnal & Özdemir (2015), this has clear implications for teacher education programs. Both the state and private universities where the research was conducted provided very limited opportunities for prospective teachers who had a limited awareness of WE to gain a deeper understanding of it. It is important to note that when pre-service teachers have a chance to critically engage with WE as part of their academic studies, they are likely to develop more as reflective teachers which results in reconsidering the effectiveness of their teaching practices, specific features of the curriculum and course books, as suggested by Sifakis and Bayyurt (2015). This means a transformative and innovative re-orientation for them in relation to their self-awareness as 'non-native speakers' and their use of instructional techniques, as well as the communication strategies they teach their students. These transformations will increase their self-confidence not only as NNS communicators but also as teachers at the same time as asserted by Park (2012). This finding also highlights the importance of Turkish EFL learners' eagerness to familiarize with norms necessary for the globalized world to establish an effective intercultural communication specifically with non-native speakers of English in the expanding circle countries (Coşkun, 2010).

On the matter of standard English ideology, pre-service teachers' tendency towards American or British varieties and their acceptance of them as standard English confirms the findings of the previous studies in the literature indicating the learners' appreciation of inner circle varieties (Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2009; Derwing, 2003; Honna & Takeshita, 2000; Lee & Green, 2016; Li, 2009; Ören et al., 2017; Saengboon, 2015; Snodin & Young, 2015; Timmis, 2002; Yılmaz

& Özkan, 2016). This conveys the impact of SE ideology in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. As a country in the expanding circle, Turkey is a setting to an ELT pedagogy that perceives English as a foreign language and adopts the norms of SE usage. This strongly upheld view has prevailed among not only pre-service but also in – service teachers. In terms of the ownership of English, however, the participants of the study expressed their belief that English did not solely belong to the UK and the USA as English is a common language used by many speakers of other languages around the world; and British or American speakers were not to decide how English should be used. This indicates a global ownership of English and reflects the shift in this respect from native speakers to non-native speakers as claimed by scholars (Kachru, 1985; Widdowson, 1994).

In terms of the participants' preference towards NESTs and NNESTs, the findings were in parallel with the previously conducted studies in the literature (Choi, 2007; Jin, 2005; Ören et al. 2017). Pre-service teachers had positive perceptions towards NESTs as they believed that these teachers set a good example of an English speaker. Their positive perceptions regarding the notion of WE, however, had no apparent impact on their preference for NESTs. This could be related to SE ideology and native speakerism. The participants' preference for NESTs to teach them English seems to spring from an association between NESTs and their SE use. The participants thought that they would eventually speak native – like English if they studied with NESTs since they would provide them better examples in terms of fluency in oral communication skills, which was also stated in Ürkmez's study (2015).

However, when the pre-service teachers' perceptions of NNESTs were investigated, the results showed that it was also positive. The participants stated that they could learn more with Turkish teachers of English due to their explanations in L1, which resulted in an improved understanding of English. In addition, a significant number of pre-service teachers thought that the Turkish teachers helped better to overcome difficulties in learning L2 because of their shared learning experiences when faced with difficulties during language learning process, which has been discussed as an asset of NNESTs in the Expanding Circle (Seidlhofer, 1999). These pre-service teachers may feel themselves more comfortable and motivated with NNESTs who can better understand the challenges they meet in learning English. This also echoes Phillipson's (1992) suggestion that an educated local teacher is an ideal English teacher. It should be noted at this point, however, that the teacher education programs have to focus on how to identify the assets of NNESTs and develop them as important resources to meet the needs and preferences of their learners. It is vital for pre – service teachers to capitalize on the motivation that is built in learners when they have a competent and successful NNEST (Bayyurt, 2006). The participants' divided preferences for NESTs and NNESTs reiterate the findings of the previous studies that focus on the same topic (Alseweed 2012; Karakaş et al., 2016, Üstünlüoğlu 2007). Emphasizing the linguistic and professional competence of a NNEST placed next to a NEST, the integration of WE courses in pre-service teacher education programs may better equip prospective teachers for their future jobs with a more WE-aware and confident manner.

There are, however, responses indicating a tendency towards NESTs, mostly aligning with native speakerism. Carrying traces of the established definition of a native speaker, pre – service teachers profiled native speakers solely as people born only in the USA and the UK and opted for them as their English teachers. It is also possible that NESTs that the participants might have encountered in their educational contexts influenced their outlook on them in positive way.

The difference in responses to items regarding familiarity of WE given by participants coming from private universities may result from the fact that more international instructors are likely to be found in private universities. Pre-service teachers enrolled in private universities being more familiar with WE may be accounted for by their increased contact with international teachers and their interactions with them in English. This might also lead to these pre-service teachers' comfort with their Turkish accent while speaking English.

The similarity in responses to items regarding the ownership of English, WE-related issues, preferences of NESTs and NNESTs that were obtained from the two groups of participants can be interpreted within the frame of a centralized higher education system of Turkey. As both state and private universities are regulated by the Higher Education Council (HEC), teacher education programs offered by universities across Turkey are almost the same. The recognition of WE as a sociolinguistic reality of English by the policy makers at HEC and its integration into the curriculum as a subject of study will pave the way for WE – awareness that is asked for by pre-service teachers. Such an outlook on WE is likely to entail intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence – two concepts that have inevitably evolved – and provide an academic platform for the way they are being discussed by scholars today. Furthermore, it could also reflect on teaching material and cater to the need expressed by the majority of the participants of the present study: learning English from books that show interaction in English occurring among native and non-native speakers of English. The integration of WE into the curriculum of teacher education programs could also provide prospective teachers with meaningful tools to integrate WE into their own classrooms within their traditional EFL curriculum via taking responsibility of the implementation, as suggested by Sifakis and Bayyurt (2015). Accordingly, as teachers, they could reflect on life – changing or transformative issues both for them and for their learners, even for their wider social circle. They will, then, have an opportunity to raise awareness, increase knowledge, develop skills, implement different strategies on WE and facilitate pupils' EFL learning process more effectively.

The strength of the present study arises from the gap it aims to fill in the literature suggesting an understanding of the perceptions of pre-service teachers towards WE. Although there are studies that explored the students' preferences of NESTs/ NNESTs, this study, in a more elaborate manner, aimed to find out the pre-service English teachers' perceptions regarding SE ideology, ownership of English, localized varieties of English, and their preference of NESTs/ NNESTs. The sample size, which presents a limitation here, is small and could be increased with multiple cases. Further research can be carried out for exploring both the perceptions and practices of pre-service teachers during their Practicum. Another suggestion can be an exploration of



possible changes that may arise in the pre-service teachers' perceptions and practices following training on WE. Further mixed method design studies could investigate prospective teachers' perceptions by means of combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches during the data collection and data analysis phases for gaining more in-depth insights regarding WE in Turkish context. Lastly, with regard to teacher education, future research could examine how to constitute and implement a WE curriculum.



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