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BUILDING AWARENESS OF WORLD ENGLISHES AMONG UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The increasing number of non-native English speakers in the world has led to the use of varieties of English. Today, the number of speakers of English in the expanding circle has exceeded the number of speakers in the outer and inner circles. This has given rise to the scrutiny of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). In this regard, the research and studies in this particular area have increased over the last decades. The purpose of this action research was to build awareness of World Englishes (WEs) among preparatory students at a private university in Turkey. The study was mainly concerned with acquainting the group with the term and raising consciousness about this subject matter. The research was conducted in a private university in İstanbul, Turkey to 20 preparatory students aged 18-21 with A2 level English proficiency. Adapted EFL materials including videos, dialogues, reading and listening texts were utilized. The data were collected through questionnaires and reflective essays. With regard to the results, the students had an idea about the concept of WEs and they became aware of the varieties of English to some extent; specifically, they displayed consciousness about the status of English across the world and sympathy toward WEs.

Keywords: world Englishes, ELF, expanding circle, lingua franca

1. Introduction

English has become the most extensively taught language in the world over the past century. It also has become the most widely used language of communication in a diversity of contexts such as science, business, politics and education (Celce-Murcia, 2014). With this widespread use of English in mind McKay (2002); thus, calls English as an international language. Crystal (2003) similarly calls it 'global language'. In addition to this status of English, it also is getting acknowledged as today's lingua franca, as is observed in communication between non-native users of two different L1 speakers. Therefore, English as

a lingua franca represents the use of English as a means of communication among the speakers of different first languages.

In ELF context it is accepted that English is not only the language of inner circle countries, namely The UK, The USA, Australia etc. (Kirkpatrick, 2008) but also the language of outer and expanding circle countries. Kachru (1985) explains the spread of English through three concentric circles: Inner Circle includes the countries where English is used as mother tongue; outer circle represents countries that use English as a second language (ESL), namely Singapore, Nigeria, India etc.; and expanding circle embodies the rest of the world where English is spoken as a foreign language (EFL). This has been adopted as a common frame used in WEs studies.

World Englishes is a term used to represent indigenized varieties of English across the world. The conceptualization of WEs dates back to the discussions which took place in the 1960s by Kachru and 1970s by Smith. The extended discussion of WEs started in 1978 when the foundations of International Association for World Englishes (IAWE) were first laid. The concept of WEs stresses that there is no such dichotomy as the native and non-native speakers, which is found questionable and impertinent with regard to the functions of English in multilingual communities (Kachru, 1985). For instance, according to Snodin (2014), being aware about the widespread use of English in the Expanding Circle and mixed codes stemming from people who share a common language other than English, using English are necessary for intranational communication. A great number of studies have been conducted concerning WEs in recent years (Fang, 2016; He, 2015; Jindapitak & Teo, 2012). The majority of these studies investigate the perception and attitude toward WEs both from teachers' and students' perspectives.

From early research of WEs the validity of postcolonial Englishes, i.e. 'New Englishes' has been discussed amongst scholars (Kachru, 1985, 1992; Platt, Weber, & Ho, 1984). One of the focuses in these discussions has been on the importance of being able to communicate via the common language, that is English, no matter what accent you have rather than trying to be a perfect imitator of one of the accents of the inner circle when it comes to international contexts (Crystal, 2003; Jenkins, 2005). However, research indicates that ESL/EFL learners praise the use of the language spoken in the inner circle (Derwing, 2003). As for pronunciation instruction, it is paramount that teachers and students set realistic goals, in other words, comprehensibility should be valued over native-like pronunciation (Derwing & Munro, 2005). Moreover, studies have revealed that within the context of EFL settings, pronunciation is of great importance so as to help students communicate in the target language, yet again; students happen to get inadequate guidance to overcome this issue (Breitkreutz, Derwing, & Rossiter, 2001; MacDonald, 2002). For this reason, there has been some research conducted to raise awareness of WEs around the world.

In a study of 100 adult ESL learners in Canada, Derwing (2003) found that the vast majority considered speaking with perfect native pronunciation to be an enticing goal. In the study by Timmis (2002) roughly 400 learners from 14 countries were surveyed and the results showed that they fancied inner circle norms in their pronunciation. Scales, Wennerstrom, Richard and Wu (2006) studied what 37 English language learners and 10 U.S.

undergraduate students think of various accents. Participants in this study were presented a 1-minute passage read by four speakers with different accents of English: General American, Received Pronunciation, Chinese English, and Mexican English and it was found that more than half of the learners preferred to sound like a native English speaker, even though only less than half were able to properly identify the general American accent. Participants also reported that their preferred accent was more intelligible. Ploywattanawong and Trakulkasemsuk (2014) conducted a research to understand the attitudes of 50 Thai graduate students towards ELF in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with respect to its acceptability and understandability. The results of the study indicated that, generally speaking, participants' opinion for acceptability of most of the distinct grammatical features of ASEAN ELF was neutral and in terms of understandability, they caused no problems or communication malfunction. That is to say, it is uncalled-for to avoid the use of ASEAN ELF. Snodin and Young (2015) explored the perceptions and attitudes of 251 Thai learners of English towards varieties of English as these attitudes are among the factors that shape language policy and teaching practices in Thailand. The results of the study revealed that "native-speaker" varieties had dominance over the other varieties.

Regarding the studies in Turkey, the role of ELF has not been paid sufficient attention to and American and British varieties are still dominant in practice. There are several studies investigating Turkey's language policy concerning varieties of English and its place in the school curriculum, textbooks and materials such as Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2012). There are also several studies (Deniz, Özkan, & Bayyurt, 2016; Uygun, 2013) focused on instructors' awareness and perceptions of English as a language of international communication.

As for students, there are very few studies on the related topic, and the existing studies (Bayyurt & Devrim, 2010; Demir, 2011; Karakaş, Uysal, Bilgin, & Bulut, 2016) have particularly focused on the perceptions and preferences of students of native and non-native teachers. Apart from these, Kaypak and Ortaçtepe (2014) conducted a study in a Turkish state university with 53 Erasmus exchange students having studied abroad, and found that students changed their focus from accuracy to intelligibility in spite of having stayed loyal to native speaker norms, as measured by a language learner belief questionnaire, a study abroad perception questionnaire and student journals. In the study by Yılmaz and Özkan (2016), 45 English language instructors and 92 pre-intermediate level students were investigated to find out their perspectives towards intercultural awareness especially in the ownership of English and integrating culture into English language classes in Turkey. The results indicated that both teachers and students had positive attitudes towards varieties of English, yet they still were prone to favour native-like pronunciation and lacked gaining the ownership of English. In the study by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2009) at a state university in Turkey, 15 English preparatory class students were interviewed via semi-structured interviews. Document analysis and informal interviews with the teachers of the students were the other data collection tools. It was revealed that the students think that only the American and British varieties of English are spoken all around the world and British English sounds better. They were not aware of the facts that English is also the second official language of some countries such as Malaysia, and except from American and British native varieties, there were other

native varieties like Canadian and Australian English and, there are non-native varieties of English.

In conclusion, Turkish learners of English need to be familiarized with cultural norms required for the globalized world so that they can have an effective intercultural communication particularly with non-native speakers of English in the expanding circle countries (Coşkun, 2010). Based upon the literature reviewed above, to our best knowledge, few studies have been conducted with regard to student awareness on WEs. Since students are indispensable participants of teaching and learning process, it is crucial to build awareness among them and investigate their attitudes and thoughts. The present study aims not only to look into the perception of students but also to create awareness of WEs and by doing so it will be a contribution to the second language acquisition literature.

2. Methodology

This action research was based on a case study which integrated a mixed data collection method and included a questionnaire (Saengboon, 2015) which yielded numerical data about the effect of the treatment and reflective essays with two main parts. The present study further aimed to find out the effect of the WEs-adapted classroom materials on building awareness of WEs. In line with this goal, the following question was addressed in this action research:

- To what extent does the preparatory school students' awareness of World Englishes change through adapted classroom materials?

2.1. Sample and Participants

The study was conducted at the preparation school of a private university in İstanbul, Turkey. To pass the preparatory school, the students have to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language™ Internet-based test (TOEFL® iBT) by Educational Testing Service (ETS). At the beginning of the preparatory school, students had taken the Preliminary English Test (PET) by Cambridge, the examination provides reliable assessment at the level above B1 (Level B2) and the level below, Level A2 (UCLES, 2016). According to the results of PET exam, 16 classes with a total of 300 students were identified in A2 level with an average score of 128. Upon completing the test, they were placed to level groups in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)^[1] which is developed by Council of Europe.

These students are instructed in English according to their level, for two academic semesters (8 months) consisting of 4 tracks, each of which lasts for 8 to 9 weeks. First 3 tracks follow the curriculum of general English with Speakout 2nd edition, from Elementary to Intermediate, books by Pearson; and the last track is dedicated to TOEFL-based skills education. TOEFL track follows the book Longman - Preparation Course for The TOEFL iBT Test which is among the list of suggested preparation books by ETS.

¹How to distribute test takers among levels according to their scores can be found on <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/cefr/>

The participants were selected conveniently without any deformation in the natural class size (N=20) which had already been shaped in the beginning of the semester out of student scores in the placement test. The sample consisted of 7 female and 13 male Turkish students with the age range between 17-21 who will probably pursue their tertiary education in their respective departments such as engineering, politics, business and the others. However, the number of the participants decreased to 13 as some of the participants took place in the pre-test and the treatment, yet did not take the post-test and write reflective essays.

2.2. Instruments

For the purposes of this study, a questionnaire (Appendix A) was adapted from the study by Saengboon (2015) which consists of 32 items including 2 parts; the demographic part, which gives information about the backgrounds and the linguistic capabilities of the students, and the WEs awareness questionnaire part. Reflective essays (Appendix B) were also used as data collection instruments to complement the quantitative data and to find out if there was a change in the awareness level of participants related to WEs before and after the treatment or not.

The questionnaire and the items in the questionnaire were aimed to check the viewpoints of students on the matters as follow: perception of varieties of English (items 1 - 6), the term of standard English (items 7 - 10 and 13), the ownership of English (items 11 - 12), Turkish English (items, 14, 25, 30 - 32), the scope of WEs (items 16 - 20), classroom implications (items 15, 21 - 24), opinions on the role of native and non-native English teachers (items 26, 27), importance of communication (items 28, 29). The items were based on participants making a scalar judgement upon a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (SA = strongly agree) to 5 (N/A = no answer).

Lastly, to complement the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire, the participants were asked to write a reflective essay with respect to their opinions and feelings about WEs. The aim behind this task was to find out whether the awareness level of the students on WEs increased after the treatment or not.

2.3. Data Collection Procedures

The study was conducted in the first semester of 2016 and it lasted for 4 weeks, with 3 class hours (40 minutes each) of treatment in total. The students were given the questionnaire in the first week before any treatment as pre-test. The questionnaire was administered to the participants in English, however, translation of the items was provided by the researchers when deemed necessary. After the pre-test, at the beginning of the first week of the treatment, a video indicating the varieties of English on the world map was shown to attract the students' attention. The students were introduced with the term WEs by means of a PowerPoint presentation elucidating the concept of WEs, the varieties of English, English as a lingua franca and the others. The students were informed about inner, outer and expanding circles and that the number of the people who speak English in the expanding circles have outnumbered the ones in the inner and the outer circles. The monomania of native-like speaking was brought into discussion to shed light on the existence of the other varieties of English spoken by non-native speakers across the world. Another video, which contained a

number of people from different origins presenting their speeches on TED Talks, was shown so as to give the idea that whatever the variety of your English is, you can speak in front of millions of people and give your message to these people confidently.

In the second week, the students were introduced with the varieties of vocabulary items which are used in different circles by some activities including matching the words with and filling in the blanks with the correct variety. At the end of this session the participants got familiar with the words and phrases such as *I'm not financial* (I'm broke in Nigerian variety), *no smoking* (No smoking in Japanese variety), *question authority* (Information desk in Chinese variety), *eye water* (tears in African variety), *lick* (hit in Caribbean variety), *sub-hero* (supporting actor in Pakistani variety), *comfort room* (restroom in Philippine variety), *robot* (traffic lights in South African variety), *no noising* (be quiet in Chinese variety) and many others (Crystal, 2012; Gramley, 2001, 2003).

In the third week, the students listened to a few songs from the singers of different countries. Along with these songs, the students listened to a short passage read by people from different accents which is taken from a website, ("Nik's Daily English Activities", 2016) and they were given a worksheet in which they guessed the nationality of the singers and the speakers from the multiple-choice questions.

In the fourth week, the same questionnaires were given to the students again as post-test and the results of the pre-test were compared with the post-test. Later, the participants were asked to write reflective essays to gather qualitative data from the students with the intention of gaining an in-depth insight of students' viewpoints and letting their voice be heard through the research. As a consequence of the careful analysis of the results of the pre and post tests and the reflective essays, whether their awareness of varieties of Englishes and ownership of English improved during three weeks of our treatment or not was evaluated.

2.4 Data Analysis

The numerical data collected by the questionnaire were analyzed and stated by making categories of the 32 items that were in the questionnaire and the percentages of the participant responses were included so as to present the data in a more tangible manner. While presenting the findings, both "strongly agree and agree" answers and "strongly disagree and disagree" answers were handled together for they served similar purposes from the viewpoints of the researchers. The textual data gathered by the reflexive essays were carefully read and reread separately by the researchers to extract any relevant data and codes and then all of their interpretations were put together to see the overlapping codes and themes as well as reaching interrater agreement. Later, these codes and themes were categorized in a descriptive manner and quotes were provided from respondents' essays under each category with the aim of guaranteeing and exemplifying the sole reflection of the respondents' own ideas. Based on the iterative nature of the qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007), the researchers pulled the data apart and put it back together by reading, analyzing and interpreting the data over and over until they were certain that no more meaningful and relevant inferences can be made.

3. Results

The aim of the study was to create awareness of WEs among Turkish University Preparatory Students by using WEs adapted course materials with the hope that this awareness might result in a decrease in their anxiety and instead an increase in their self-esteem, ownership of English and self actualization in the target language by concentrating in communication and conveying the message across rather than worrying about how they sound or how they are perceived by others especially by the natives of the language. Data were collected from questionnaires which were used before and after the treatment as pre and post tests, and reflective essays. The following sections describe the quantitative and qualitative findings in detail.

3.1. Results of the Questionnaires

Table 1. *The percentage* of Turkish students' understanding of WEs (Pre-test)*

SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; N/A = no answer

Statement	(SA)	(A)	(D)	(SD)	(NA)
1. Correct English is British English only	54	38	0	0	8
2. Correct English is American English only	0	8	61	23	8
3. Australian English should be counted as correct English	0	0	31	31	38
4. New Zealand English should be counted as correct English	0	0	23	46	31
5. Canadian English should be counted as correct English	0	15	46	8	31
6. Other varieties of English are incorrect	23	0	31	31	15
7. Correct English must have one standard	46	38	8	8	0
8. Standard English has the same rules of grammar	31	69	0	0	0
9. Standard English may differ in accents	0	46	8	46	0
10. Standard English is found only in writing	0	23	69	8	0
11. English belongs to those who speak it	8	23	38	23	8
12. British and Americans are owners of English	8	15	46	31	0
13. Syrian, Iranian and Azeri English are standard English	0	0	15	62	23
14. Turkish English is just wrong English	23	31	23	15	8
15. You learned British or American English	39	46	0	15	0
16. WEs use same grammar but different vocabulary	8	23	39	15	15
17. WEs can be found in English novels	46	46	0	8	0

18. WEs can be found in print materials	39	46	15	0	0
19. WEs can be found in adverts	31	15	23	8	23
20. WEs can be found in SNSs (Social Networking Services)	54	30	8	8	0
21. English at school must be British or American English	38	54	0	8	0
22. Other types of English should be taught	0	8	61	31	0
23. English exam items should be British or American English	31	61	0	8	0
24. English exam items may have other Englishes	0	23	62	15	0
25. Turks should use Turkish English for their identity	0	8	69	23	0
26. English teachers should be native speakers	0	46	46	8	0
27. Local teachers are equally effective teachers	8	23	46	15	8
28. Some mistakes are fine if messages are clear	15	46	31	8	0
29. I choose to speak British or American English	54	38	0	8	0
30. Turkish-accented English is embarrassing	0	8	61	23	8
31. Turks speaking with British or American accent is good	0	62	15	23	0
32. Heavy Turkish-accented English is undesirable	8	30	46	8	8

*The numbers are rounded off to the closest number.

A detailed analysis of each of the items in Table 1 is provided below.

Item 1: Correct English is British English only

The vast majority of the participants (92%) strongly agreed or agreed and none disagreed with this item indicating that they accepted British English as the correct English.

Item 2: Correct English is American English only

When they were asked whether American English is the correct English, only 8% of the respondents agreed while 84% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Complying with their answers to the first item, the great majority of the respondents seemed to have perceived British English as the norm.

Item 3: Australian English should be counted as correct English

62% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed when they were asked whether Australian English also should be counted as correct English or not. 38% of the students had no answer to this item. None of the students agreed with the idea that Australian English should be accepted as correct English. As it is clear from their answers to the 3rd item, the majority did not accept Australian English as correct English.

Item 4: New Zealand English should be counted as correct English

The majority (69%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that New Zealand English should be counted as correct English. 31% stated no answer to this item. Similar to the 3rd item, none of the respondents accepted New Zealand English as correct English.

Item 5: Canadian English should be counted as correct English

When they were asked whether Canadian English should be counted as correct English, 15% respondents agreed which was slightly higher than the varieties in item 2, 3 and 4. Again, the majority (54%) didn't agree that Canadian English should be accepted as correct. The 31% of the students stated no answer to this item.

Item 6: Other varieties of English are incorrect

When they were asked if other varieties of English were incorrect, only 23% of them agreed the idea, contrary to the first 5 items. The percent of the students who disagreed or strongly disagreed was 62%, which again didn't comply with their answers in the first 5 items. They accepted British English as the norm and they thought other varieties as incorrect English, however they might have thought it was wrong to claim all others as incorrect since 77% didn't agree. They thought other varieties could not be accepted as incorrect.

Item 7: Correct English must have one standard

Of all the respondents, an overwhelming majority (84%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this item, whereas 16% of the students either disagreed or strongly disagreed, which shows the fact that the majority of the students accepted only one standard of English.

Item 8: Standard English has the same rules of grammar

All of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this item. This finding reveals that the respondents are rigid about the idea of standard grammar rules.

Item 9: Standard English may differ in accents

46% of the respondents agreed with this statement, whereas 54% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, which indicates that less than half of the respondents were open to the view of different varieties of Standard English.

Item 10: Standard English is found only in writing

23% of the respondents agreed, whereas 77% disagreed or strongly disagreed, which shows that according to the respondents, written English was not the only way to indicate the Standard English.

Item 11: English belongs to those who speak it

31% of the students agreed or strongly agreed whereas 61% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed, which indicates that the respondents were opposed to the idea of different varieties.

Item 12: British and Americans are owners of English

23% agreed or strongly agreed whereas 77% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that the respondents approved the validity of other Englishes.

Item 13: Syrian, Iranian and Azeri English are Standard English

77% of the participants seemed to have disagreed with this item, which suggested that the majority of the participants did not regard expanding circle varieties as Standard English.

Item 14: Turkish English is just wrong English

54% of the respondents believed that Turkish English is a wrong variety, which indicates that more than half of the respondents regard Turkish as an unreliable variety.

Item 15: You learned British or American English

Almost 85% in the pre-test believed they learned either British or American English, which shows that most of the respondents considered that they were exposed to either variety in their school life.

Item 16: WEs use same grammar but different vocabulary

In the pre-test around 31% considered that WEs use the same grammar but different vocabulary whereas almost 54% disagreed with this item, which displays that the minority of the respondents believed that varieties have equal grammar. 15% of the respondents had no answer to this item.

Item 17: WEs can be found in English novels

The pre-test showed that 92% considered novels as the source of WEs. This explicitly suggests that the majority of the respondents considered novels as the source of WEs.

Item 18: WEs can be found in print materials

More than 85% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this item that print materials such as newspapers, brochures, magazines involve WEs materials.

Item 19: WEs can be found in adverts

Almost 46% of the respondents agreed with the item in the pre-test, which indicates that nearly half of the respondents found adverts as a clear source of WEs.

Item 20: WEs can be found in SNSs (Social Networking Services)

Like the findings of item 18, the response pattern of this item in the pre-test revealed that the majority of the respondents (84%) found social network sites as the places where WEs can be found.

Item 21: English taught at school must be either British or American English.

The remarkably high response pattern (92%) in this item revealed that almost all of the participants preferred to be taught either British or American English at school leaving only a minority (8%) disagreeing with the idea which indicated a tendency to fancy the traditional way.

Item 22: It may be interesting to teach varieties of English other than British or American English.

92% of the respondents disagreed with the idea that teaching varieties of English may be interesting while only a small minority (8%) were interested in this idea suggesting a strong rejection towards the varieties of English.

Item 23: English exam items should be only British or American English

The response pattern revealed that more than 92% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed and a very little amount of (8%) disagreement was on the table. Such high response rates suggested that there was an undeniable unity in favouring exam items in either British or American English within the group.

Item 24: English exam items may contain other varieties of English.

Although 77% of the respondents disagreed with the idea that English exams may contain other varieties of English, 23% of them were willing to see other varieties of English in exams.

Item 25: Turks should use Turkish English to show their identity.

The considerably high response rates (92%) in this item clearly indicated that the respondents disagreed with this item whereas only 8% agreed which suggested that according to this group, Turkish English did not seem to have a place to be considered a variety of English.

Item 26: English teachers should be English native-speaking teachers only

Almost 46% of the respondents agreed with this item and 54% disagreed which suggested that there were no significant inclinations towards either native or non-native teachers.

Item 27: Local teachers are equally effective teachers

The response pattern concerning this particular item revealed that 31% of the respondents agreed while 61% of them disagreed with the item, which meant that respondents' attitude towards local teachers may be considered as having sweeping generalisation.

Item 28: Some mistakes are fine if messages are clear

61% of the respondents agreed with this item, which meant that they considered English as a means of communication and this might as well conclude that grammatical accuracy should be in secondary importance, thus; the assumption of correct English was somewhat relaxed.

Item 29: I choose to speak British or American English

92% of all the students who participated in the study agreed that they chose to speak British or American English while only 8% of them was found to disagree with the item, which also revealed that the pattern of responses illustrated a strong tendency on the part of the respondents to count on British or American English as standard varieties of the English language when it comes down to speaking in the target language.

Item 30: Turkish-accented English is embarrassing

Out of all the respondents, only 8% agreed with the item, whereas; 84% of them were seen to have disagreed with the statement, which disclosed that the respondents did not find it embarrassing to speak the language with a Turkish accent.

Item 31: Turks speaking with British or American accents is good

62% of the participants agreed while 38% of them disagreed with the item, revealing that Turks with a British or an American accent were better speakers of the English language, which might affirm that respondents value the accents found in the inner circle more than the other accents found in outer and expanding circles.

Item 32: Heavy Turkish-accented English is undesirable

Of all the respondents, 38% seemed to have agreed that having a heavy Turkish accent is undesirable whereas 54% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, which might as well indicate that the findings regarding this item suggested heavy Turkish-accented English would not affect their ability to communicate in the target language. Yet again, 8% of the students seemed to have no answer concerning the statement mentioned in the item.

Table 2. *The percentage* of Turkish students' understanding of WEs (Post-test)*

SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; N/A = no answer

Statement	(SA)	(A)	(D)	(SD)	(NA)
1. Correct English is British English only	15	31	31	23	0
2. Correct English is American English only	0	23	54	23	0
3. Australian English should be counted as correct English	15	8	54	23	0
4. New Zealand English should be counted as correct English	15	8	46	31	0
5. Canadian English should be counted as correct English	16	23	46	15	0
6. Other varieties of English are incorrect	8	15	62	15	0
7. Correct English must have one standard	23	39	15	23	0
8. Standard English has the same rules of grammar	62	38	0	0	0
9. Standard English may differ in accents	38	23	31	0	8
10. Standard English is found only in writing	15	31	54	0	0
11. English belongs to those who speak it	23	54	0	15	8
12. British and Americans are owners of English	0	31	31	38	0
13. Syrian, Iranian and Azeri English are standard English	0	23	31	31	15

14. Turkish English is just wrong English	0	15	62	23	0
15. You learned British or American English	31	38	31	0	0
16. WEs use same grammar but different vocabulary	16	54	15	15	0
17. WEs can be found in English novels	69	31	0	0	0
18. WEs can be found in print materials	69	31	0	0	0
19. WEs can be found in adverts	61	31	8	0	0
20. WEs can be found in SNSs (Social Networking Services)	69	23	8	0	0
21. English at school must be British or American English	38	31	31	0	0
22. Other types of English should be taught	0	31	54	15	0
23. English exam items should be British or American English	23	61	8	0	8
24. English exam items may have other Englishes	0	31	54	15	0
25. Turks should use Turkish English for their identity	0	15	46	39	0
26. English teachers should be native speakers	8	30	54	8	0
27. Local teachers are equally effective teachers	0	54	23	23	0
28. Some mistakes are fine if messages are clear	23	69	8	0	0
29. I choose to speak British or American English	38	31	23	8	0
30. Turkish-accented English is embarrassing	0	15	46	39	0
31. Turks speaking with British or American accent is good	16	38	38	8	0
32. Heavy Turkish-accented English is undesirable	8	84	8	0	0

*The numbers are rounded off to the closest number.

A detailed analysis of each of the items in Table 2 is provided below.

Item 1. Correct English is British English only

When they were asked whether they thought the correct English was British only, 46% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed while 54% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed. This indicated that they did not accept only British English as the correct version.

Item 2. Correct English is American English only

In the second item, only 23% of the respondents agreed that only American English was correct. The majority of the respondents (77%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. It is evident that they did not accept American English only correct English.

Items 3 & 4 Australian / New Zealand English should be counted as correct English

When it came to Australian or New Zealand English, only 23% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that it should also be counted as correct English with the statements in both the 3rd and 4th items in the post test. 77% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed which indicated that these varieties were not accepted as correct English by vast majority of the students.

Item 5. Canadian English should be counted as correct English

As for the Canadian English, the number of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the idea that Canadian English should be accepted as correct English was slightly higher than the former three items with the percentage of 39%. However, the majority (61%) thought that it should not be accepted as correct English.

Item 6. Other varieties of English are incorrect

Only 23% of the respondents thought that other varieties were incorrect while 77% did not agree with the statement. They thought other varieties could not be accepted as incorrect.

Item 7: Correct English must have one standard

62% of the respondents seemed to have either agreed or strongly agreed with the opinion that correct English must have one standard. 38% of them either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. This result revealed that more than half of the students were not in favour of WEs.

Item 8: Standard English has the same rules of grammar

All of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this item. These findings revealed that the respondents were not in favour of the idea of varieties in grammar.

Item 9: Standard English may differ in accents

61% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed; yet, 31% of the respondents disagreed with this item, which suggested that the majority of the respondents considered other varieties of English as acceptable.

Item 10: Standard English is found only in writing

46% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed while 54% disagreed with this item, which revealed that the respondents were hesitant about the way to measure the Standard English.

Item 11: English belongs to those who speak it

77% of the students agreed or strongly agreed whereas 15% strongly disagreed with the item, which showed that the respondents supported the idea of different varieties of English.

Item 12: British and Americans are owners of English

31% of the respondents agreed whereas 69% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed with the item, which suggested that the students were familiar with other varieties and the idea of WEs.

Item 13. Syrian, Iranian and Azeri English are Standard English

In the post-test 62% of the respondents stayed in disagreement, which suggested that the majority of the participants did not regard foreign varieties as Standard English.

Item 14. Turkish English is just wrong English

In the post-test 15% of the respondents believed that Turkish English is a wrong variety, which evidently indicated that around 40% of the participants changed their mind after the treatment with regard to Turkish variety of English.

Item 15. You learned British or American English

Almost 70% in the post-test believed that they learned either British or American English, which suggested that most of the respondents realized that they had learned the inner circle English rather than Turkish English.

Item 16. WEs use same grammar but different vocabulary

In the post-test around 70% considered that WEs have the same grammar but different vocabulary, which certainly suggested that the majority of the respondents agreed that WEs differ in terms of vocabulary.

Item 17. WEs can be found in English novels

The post-test showed all the respondents consider novels as a source of WEs. This explicitly suggested that the respondents consider novels as a source of WEs.

Item 18. WEs can be found in print materials

All of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this item considering that print materials such as newspapers, brochures, magazines involve WEs materials.

Item 19. WEs can be found in adverts

Almost 92% of the respondents agreed with this item which indicated that a great majority of the respondents found adverts as a clear source of WEs.

Item 20. WEs can be found in SNSs (Social Networking Services)

Like the findings of item 18, the response pattern of this item in the post-test revealed that the majority of the respondents (92%) found that social network sites were the places for WEs as it is in the print materials.

Item 21: English taught at school must be either British or American English.

69% of the respondents agreed with this item leaving 31% disagreeing. Still a great many of the respondents seemed to be in favour of the British or the American English being taught at schools.

Item 22: It may be interesting to teach varieties of English other than British or American English.

Although 31% of the respondents agreed with this item, the majority (69%) still refused the idea of teaching varieties being interesting which indicated the group being prone to either British or American English to be taught at school.

Item 23: English exam items should be only British or American English

84% agreed with this item whereas 8% disagreed leaving almost 8% not answering. The preference was obviously towards exam items being only in British or American English.

Item 24: English exam items may contain other varieties of English.

The response pattern in this item revealed that 31% of the respondents agreed with this item as opposed to 69% who disagreed. Although there seemed to have been an acceptance towards other varieties of English, still the majority seemed to favour English exams in British or American English only, leaving not much place for the varieties.

Item 25: Turks should use Turkish English to show their identity.

Of all the respondents, 15% agreed and 85% disagreed with the idea of Turks using Turkish English to reflect their identity while using English as a means of communication.

Item 26: English teachers should be English native-speaking teachers only

38% of the respondents agreed with this item whereas 62% disagreed indicating that the participants did not consider native English teachers be superior over the non-native ones.

Item 27: Local teachers are equally effective teachers

The response pattern for this item revealed that 54% of the respondents agreed while 46% of them disagreed with the item, suggesting that there were no significant differences between local and foreign teachers.

Item 28: Some mistakes are fine if messages are clear

Of all the respondents having participated in the study, 89% of them thought mistakes were fine if messages were clear enough, which indicated that grammatical accuracy should be in secondary importance as what matters is to be able to communicate using the target language.

Item 29: I choose to speak British or American English

69% of the respondents agreed, whereas; 31% of them disagreed with the item, which suggested that the vast majority of the respondents preferred British or American English to the other possible varieties of the English language.

Item 30: Turkish-accented English is embarrassing

61% of the respondents agreed with the item while 31% of them disagreed, which suggested that the respondents found it embarrassing to speak the target language with a Turkish accent.

Item 31: Turks speaking with British or American accents is good

54% of the respondents agreed with this item while 46% of them disagreed, which revealed that the majority of them categorises Turkish-English as a nonstandard variation of the English Language, hence they favour the idea of picking up a British or an American accent.

Item 32: Heavy Turkish-accented English is undesirable

Almost all of the respondents (92%), were found to have agreed with this item while only 8% of the respondents disagreed with it.

3.2. Results of the Reflective Essays

To complement the quantitative data, the participants wrote reflective essays about WEs. The following part reveals the findings obtained from these essays.

Category 1: Providing convenience with English language learners

To begin with, the majority of the participants reported that WEs provides English language learners with great convenience because they could easily and confidently speak in their own accents without wasting time and energy for practising a single accent; thus, removing the barrier of excelling at the original accent, which is illustrated in the following excerpt:

World Englishes is very helpful because people feel more relaxed when they speak in English and they do not try to speak in original accent and they do not worry about their accent. (Student-1, Reflective essay, Dec. 16, 2016)

Category 2: Non necessity of speaking in British or American accent

The other common view of the participants about WEs is on the Standard English. Most of them stated that it is not necessary to be able to speak in British or American accents because what matters between interlocutors is to communicate rather than being able to speak in British or American as indicated in the following excerpts:

In my opinion, English is not only the language of the British or the American but it is the language of the world as well. The bottom line is to be able to communicate, not to speak it in certain accents. (Student-7, Reflective essay, Dec. 16, 2016)

English does not belong to the UK or the USA; there are a lot of people speaking English but not as a native language. If you can communicate it is what matters. (Student-9, Reflective essay, Dec. 16, 2016)

Category 3: Breakdown in communication

Three participants stated that if everybody speaks in different varieties, it could result in problems in communication. Also, two of them claimed that speaking in different varieties could make people stressed about whether the people understand them or not as illustrated in the following excerpt:

If everybody speaks in the way they like, people get in trouble in understanding each other. (Student-3, Reflective essay, Dec. 16, 2016)

Category 4: A world language, a standard variety

Only three of the students stated that if English is the world language, there should be one Standard English. Two of the students explicitly stated that British English should be the Standard English.

...British English or American English is to be the standard, even British English should be the first choice. (Student-12, Reflective essay, Dec. 16, 2016)

If there is one shared language, there should be a shared variety. (Student 12, Reflective essay, Dec. 16, 2016)

In brief, most of the students assumed a new and positive point of view towards other varieties of English and they believed learning without struggling with the difficulties of British or American accents was more relaxing and they reflected that as their priority was intelligibility they praised communication without clinging to strict pronunciation rules; however, some students could not completely abandon the idea that British English is or should be the standard all over the world.

4. Discussion

The present study aimed to build awareness of WEs amongst preparatory students at a private university in Turkey. In an attempt to do so, the study was mainly concerned with acquainting the group with the term and raising consciousness about the subject matter. In line with this goal, answers to the research question were sought; “to what extent does the preparatory school students’ awareness of WEs change through adapted classroom materials?”. Such being the case, adapted EFL materials, such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, audios, and written materials were utilised throughout the study with the purpose of getting the students to be familiar with the term. Pre-tests, post-tests and reflective essays were used as tools to observe the reactions of the participants to the treatment. Careful analysis of the findings and scrutiny of the data obtained from the aforementioned materials revealed that participants were more aware of what WEs actually is in the end, which may be interpreted as in line with Scales et al.’s (2006) and Kaypak and Ortaçtepe’s (2014) results. Specifically speaking, what we were committed to achieving was to help the students think out of their comfort zones onto new territories, thus helping them cherish the varieties of English across the globe and get rid of all these anxiety-related feelings, which then might result in the fact that they would be better speakers of the target language with higher levels of self-awareness and self-esteem in speaking in English.

The researchers found that a lack of knowledge about WEs or varieties of English was widespread in the university preparatory level students just as it was indicated in Coşkun’s (2010) study, as well as, the participants showed a strong tendency toward subliming American or British varieties as the correct English which complies with Timmis’ (2002), Derwing’s (2003), Bektaş-Çetinkaya’s (2009) Saengboon’s (2015) and Yılmaz & Özkan’s (2016) findings. However, the consequence of the treatment designed to create awareness of the status of English as lingua franca revealed that the participants became aware of WEs, even showed sympathy toward the other varieties of English, as generated through quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments. For instance, in the pre-test while

31% accepted that English belonged to those who speak it, in the post-test 77% acknowledged this item. Moreover, while 54% considered that Turkish English was wrong, this rate decreased to 15% after the treatment. In the same way, the reflective essays of the participants centered on the belief that English language learners ought to feel comfortable while speaking without trying to be as perfect as a native speaker or fearing to make mistakes with regard to pronunciation. These and many similar data explicitly monitor us that the awareness aimed to be built in genesis of the study has been built among the university preparatory students.

Even though in this study awareness was built on WEs, the view of the students towards their native language variety (Turkish English) has not changed much in a positive way contrary to their view on other varieties. Also, after the treatment some points regarding their view on Turkish English seemed to have changed in a negative way.

One of the aims of this study was to decrease the level of speaking anxiety of the students by raising awareness on WEs as implied by Crystal (2003) and Jenkins (2005). It is suggested that further studies be administered to examine how the level of speaking anxiety has changed after building awareness on WEs. As well as, similar studies could be endeavoured with different age groups, which is likely to yield a distinct set of data.

5. Conclusion

After analyzing the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires conducted as both pre-test before the treatment and post-test at the end of the treatment; and interpreting the statements of the students in the reflective essays which they wrote immediately after the treatment sessions, the following conclusions elucidate the consequence of the study.

5.1. Students' perceptions of correct variety of English: (Items 1-6)

When the students were asked about the correct English in the questionnaire, they indicated a great deal of reliance to British English only before they were familiarized with the concept of WEs by means of various classroom activities. In the first item, for example; 92% of the students agreed and none of them disagreed that only British English was correct when they were first given the questionnaire; however, more than half of them changed their ideas about it and 54% disagreed and only 46% agreed when they were asked the same question for the second time. More or less 20% of the students changed their minds about American, Australian, New Zealand or Canadian varieties and they agreed those varieties might also be accepted as correct English; however, the majority of the students remained distant to those varieties as it is evident with their answers to the items 2-4 in the post-test. As for item six, the percentage of acceptance of other varieties as correct increased by 15%.

5.2. Standard of English (Items 7-10, 13)

On the matter of standards of English, the students were rigidly stuck to the grammar rules in both times they were given the questionnaire with 100% agreement with the statement that Standard English has the same rules of grammar. Even though they were more flexible with the other aspects of English such as accent or vocabulary, both the results of questionnaire items 7-10 and 13 and their claims in the reflective essays indicated that they believe that English must have a standard and this standard must be British. The majority of the students

did not agree with the statement that Syrian, Iranian and Azeri Englishes were standard Englishes in item 13 in both pre and the post tests with little decrease from 77% to 62% indicating that they did not accept expanding circle's English as a standard.

5.3. Ownership of English (Items 11-12)

The students developed a great deal of awareness for the ownership of English after the treatment sessions in the classroom. 77% percent of the students agreed with the statement that English belongs to those who speak it (item 11), when only 31% of them had agreed at the first time that the questionnaires were given. However, a confliction is visible in the answers to item 12 as the percent of students agreeing with this item increased by 8% in the post test.

5.4. Attitudes towards Turkish English (Items 14, 25, 30-32)

Vast majority of the students (85%) disagreed with item 14 which stated that Turkish English is wrong in the post-test when the percentage of the students who disagreed with this item was only 38% in the pre-test. This difference indicated that they became aware of that Turkish English was also one of the WEs which might be accepted as correct English. It was also evident with their disagreement with item 30 stating Turkish-accented English was embarrassing. They did not see Turkish English as wrong or embarrassing; however, as it was apparent in the results of the items 25, 31 and 32 that, they believed Turkish English was undesirable and Turkish people had better speak with British or American accent. The answers to these items were contradictory with their statements in their essays where they claimed that it was better to speak in their own accents as it was waste of time to struggle for speaking in a single accent. This indicates that they developed an idea about owning the language, but they were not ready to accept their own English as an acceptable variety yet.

5.5 Scope of WEs: (Items 16-20)

Part of the goal of the treatment was raising the awareness of the students on the variety of vocabulary used by nations from different circles and it was accomplished as can be seen when the results in the related parts of pre-test and post-test are compared. When compared to the pre-test the number of the students that think WEs use same grammar but different vocabulary increased, along with the number of the students that think WEs can be found in English novels, print materials, adverts and social networking services.

5.6. Classroom Implications (Items 15, 21-24)

The comparison of pre-test and post-test in terms of perception change with regard to classroom practices showed that fewer participants continued thinking that they learnt British or American English in the classroom. And a more serious decrease was also found in the opinion of the variety choice; in other words, even fewer students remained determined in their preference of American or British English in the school. The same rate of decrease was also found in the suggestion students disagreed with the delivery of English in other varieties. In association with the language of exams the results indicated a sharp decrease rather than increment in the preference of American or British English. The data with respect to classroom implications explicitly suggest that following the treatment more students changed

their attitude towards other varieties of English in a positive way, thereby suggesting that the treatment gave rise to the awareness of WEs.

5.7. Native and Non-native Teachers (Items 26-27)

As regards to what the participants think of teachers, being either local or foreign, the findings revealed that there were significant differences between pre and post tests in item 27 which shows that after the treatment the percent of the students who had faith in the capabilities of local teachers increased by 23%. In addition to this, in the pre-test, the majority of the respondents (54%) disagreed with the idea that English teachers should be English native-speaking, which also yielded similar findings (62%) when they were asked the same question in the post-test; therefore, it might be concluded that there was no particular preference towards native-speakers of the English language when it comes to teaching process.

5.8. Importance of Communication (Items 28, 29)

When the participants were asked what is more important when it comes down to communicating in the target language; is it the way they speak the language and/or is it being able to get across the message to people in a clear way, the majority (61%), first off, thought that mistakes were fine as long as the message to be delivered was clear enough and upon completing the treatment, they were accordingly asked the same question and the number of the participants thinking that mistakes were fine remarkably increased, which might indicate that they were more inclined to get their messages across rather than clinging on to the idea of picking up a particular accent. Moreover, when the participants were asked which variety of English they would favour, at first the vast majority of them (92%) stated they chose to speak with a British or an American accent but, after having completed the treatment; it was found that there happened to be a decrease in the number of the students (69%) favouring the idea of picking up a British or an American accent, which might as well show that they were more prone to being able to communicate using the target language.

6. Implications for Education and Teaching

While conducting the research, during the treatment weeks, it was observed by the researchers that WEs-adapted classroom materials that were utilized in this study captured the attention of the students immediately, caused a curiosity among the students and created a lively atmosphere in the classroom. Although the aim of the treatment was to build awareness of WEs among the students, the increase in interest in the lessons was also a happily welcomed serendipity.

Based on this observation, it is humbly suggested to EFL teachers to make use of PowerPoint presentations, videos, speeches on TED Talks, interesting vocabulary and/or grammar items that belong to different varieties of English, songs, movies, etc. while they are planning lessons with the aim of building or raising awareness of WEs among their students. By making their students aware, teachers can stress out the importance of intelligibility, help their students to gain ownership of English, improve their students' self-confidence and get rid of any anxiety due to their accent sounding different from the speakers of the inner circle, etc.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Part I (Demographic Information about the students):

1) Students' Background Information

1. Gender
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
2. How old are you?
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-21
 - c. 21-25
 - d. Over 25
3. Is English your first, second or foreign language?
 - a. First language
 - b. Second language
 - c. Foreign language
4. What grade are you in?
(Please specify)_____
5. Field of studying?
(Please specify)_____

2) Students' Linguistic Information

6. Overall English proficiency (self evaluation):
 - a. High
 - b. Intermediate
 - c. Low
7. Use of English currently:
 - a. Frequently
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Others

Part II: World Englishes Awareness Questionnaire

Please thick one of the answers below about your opinion

SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; N/A = no answer

Statement	(SA)	(A)	(D)	(SD)	(N/A)
1. Correct English is British English only					
2. Correct English is American English only					
3. Australian English should be counted as correct English					
4. New Zealand English should be counted as correct English					
5. Canadian English should be counted as correct English					
6. Other varieties of English are incorrect					

7. Correct English must have one standard					
8. Standard English has the same rules of grammar					
9. Standard English may differ in accents					
10. Standard English is found only in writing					
11. English belongs to those who speak it					
12. British and Americans are owners of English					
13. Syrian, Iranian and Azeri English are standard English					
14. Turkish English is just wrong English					
15. You learned British or American English					
16. WEs use same grammar but different vocabulary					
17. WEs can be found in English novels					
18. WEs can be found in print materials					
19. WEs can be found in adverts					
20. WEs can be found in SNSs (Social Networking Services)					
21. English at school must be British or American English					
22. Other types of English should be taught					
23. English exam items should be British or American English					
24. English exam items may have other Englishes					
25. Turks should use Turkish English for their identity					
26. English teachers should be native speakers					
27. Local teachers are equally effective teachers					
28. Some mistakes are fine if messages are clear					
29. I choose to speak British or American English					

30. Turkish-accented English is embarrassing					
31. Turks speaking with British or American accent is good					
32. Heavy Turkish-accented English is undesirable					

Appendix B

Write a reflective essay (2-3 paragraphs) including your opinions and feelings about World Englishes (WEs). Do you think it helps you to learn English better? Why/Why not?