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**HOW DOES CULTURE SHAPE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING?**

**MASTER OF ARTS THESIS**

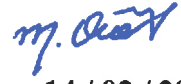
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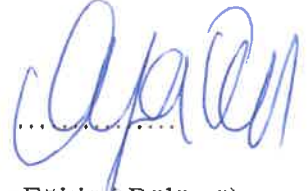
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YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİNİN ADI: HOW DOES CULTURE SHAPE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING?

ONAY: Bu tez, Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunca belirlenen yukarıdaki jüri üyeleri tarafından uygun görülmüş ve Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunun ..... tarihli ve ..... sayılı kararıyla kabul edilmiştir.

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## ÖZET

### KÜLTÜR YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENİMİNİ NASIL ŞEKİLLENDİRİR?

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Bu tez çalışmasındaki amaç öğrencilerin sahip oldukları kültürün yabancı dil öğrenimlerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini, yabancı dil öğrenmek için kendi kültürlerinden nasıl motivasyon aldıklarını ve en çok hangi kültürel faktörlerin yabancı dil öğrenimlerini etkilediğini araştırmaktır. Araştırma Yabancı Dil Öğrenimi, Dilbilimsel Antropoloji ve Sosyokültürel Antropoloji alanlarına hizmet etmektedir. Araştırma Türkiye'nin Konya ilindeki özel bir üniversitede yapıldı. Geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği faktör analizi ile ispatlanan bir ankete dayalı olarak oluşturulan bir ölçek veri toplama aracı olarak kullanıldı. Araştırmaya dahil edilen 364 gönüllü bireyden elde edilen veriler bulgulara ulaşmak için kullanıldı. Ölçekten elde edilen sonuçlar göre yaşanan yerin, anne eğitim düzeyinin, baba eğitim düzeyinin, ailede yabancı dil bilen birinin olmasının ve aile gelir düzeyinin öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğreniminde motivasyonu etkilemediğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu sadece motivasyon faktörü için geçerlidir. Öte yandan önemli kültürel farklılıklar ortaya çıkardıkları gözlemlenen anne eğitim düzeyinin yüksek olması ve ailelerin gelir düzeyinin yüksek olması öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğrenimini olumlu şekilde etkilemektedir. Ailede yabancı dil bilen birinin olması öğrencinin ana dilini kullanmasını ve yabancı dil öğrenimini aynı anda olumlu etkilemektedir. Aile içinde yabancı dilin varlığı dil gelişiminde zenginlik oluşturmaktadır. Öğrencilerin yaşadıkları yerin, anne eğitim düzeyinin, baba eğitim düzeyinin iyi düzeyde olması ve ailede yabancı dil bilen birinin olması öğrenciler için gerekli olan yabancı dil öğrenme ortamını olumlu etkilemektedir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre yabancı dil öğrenme ortamı için öğrencilerin annelerinin eğitim düzeyi babalarının eğitim düzeyinden daha önemlidir. Türk kültüründeki kültürel faktörlerden anne eğitim düzeyi ve ailede yabancı dil bilen birinin olması öğrencinin yabancı dil öğrenmesini en fazla etkileyen faktörlerdir. Öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğrenme süreci için en önemli etken öğrenme ortamının nasıl şekillendiğidir. Araştırmacı sonraki araştırmalar için yabancı dil öğrenimini etkileyen farklı kültürel faktörlerin etkisinin araştırılmasını ya da aynı çalışmanın daha geniş kapsamda farklı kültürlerde yapılmasını önermektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Kültür ve yabancı dil öğrenimi, kültürel faktörler, kültürel etkiler, yabancı dil öğrenimini etkileyen faktörler

## ABSTRACT

### HOW DOES CULTURE SHAPE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LAERNING?

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In the current thesis study, the aim is to investigate how students' foreign language learning is shaped by their own culture, how they get motivation from their culture to learn a foreign language, as well as which cultural factors affect their foreign language most. The research takes place in the fields of Foreign Language Teaching, Linguistic Anthropology and Sociocultural Anthropology. It was conducted at a private university in Konya province of Turkey. A scale, which comes out of a questionnaire that proved its validity and reliability by applying factor analysis, was used as a data collection tool. The data gathered from 364 participants were used to ensure findings. The results gathered from the scale show that the place of residence, mother's education level, father's education level, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income level of the family do not affect students' motivation for foreign language learning. This situation is only valid for the motivation factor. On the other hand, mothers at high education level and families with high income level, which create significant cultural differences, affect students' foreign language learning in a positive way. Having a family member who knows a foreign language affects positively the use of native language and foreign language learning of students at the same time. The positive interaction of family members with foreigners contributes to students' foreign language learning. If 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' of students are at good levels or they have a family member who knows a foreign language, it will positively affect the learning environment necessary for the students' foreign language learning. According to the results, the educational level of mothers of students is more important than the educational level of fathers of students for learning environment of foreign language. From the cultural factors in Turkish culture 'mother's education level' and 'having a family member who knows a foreign language' affect the students' foreign language learning most. The most important determinant for students in foreign language learning process is how the learning environment is shaped. The researcher recommended for further research that it should be investigated the effect of different cultural factors on foreign language learning or the same study can be conducted in different cultures in a vast range.

**Keywords:** Culture and foreign language learning, cultural factors, cultural effects, factors affecting foreign language learning

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PDI	: Power Distance Index
IDV	: Individualism vs. Collectivism
MAS	: Masculinity vs. Femininity
UAI	: Uncertainty Avoidance Index
LTO	: Long Term Orientation
HPD	: High Power Distance
LPD	: Low Power Distance
U.S.	: United States
SES	: Socioeconomic Status
TL (₺)	: Turkish Lira
NCFL	: National Center for Family Literacy

# HOW DOES CULTURE SHAPE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING?

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. 1. Background of the Study

Foreign language education is one of the prominent issues carefully examined worldwide. To make foreign language learning more efficient many theories, approaches, methods and techniques have been raised, examined and implemented. It is necessary to consider the factors that affect foreign language learning in order to make it more efficient. In fact, there are many factors that affect and shape the learning of foreign languages. These factors can be categorized as internal and external. These factors are those in which a student interacts directly or indirectly when learning a foreign language and affect the learning process positively or negatively. Internal factors are entirely relevant to language learners and they bring them with themselves to the learning environment: age, motivation (intrinsic), personality, experiences, cognition and native language. External factors are mostly outcome influences that shape the learning environment: curriculum, socio-economic status, instruction, policy, culture, motivation (extrinsic), science, access to native speakers (Dailey, 2009; Ghania, 2013). One of the most principal factors including most of the factors mentioned and shaping foreign language learning is culture.

Effects of culture on foreign language learning have not been studied in detail by any researchers both in Turkey and in the world. On the other hand, subjects like “Factors Affecting Foreign Language Learning” or “Culture in Foreign Language Teaching” have been studied in a considerable number (Burstall, 1975; Simpson, 1997; Kramsch, 2013; Rojas, 2014). Although there are no detailed studies on this subject, there are studies and researchers which/who mention the importance of the subject for foreign language learning and they directly and/or indirectly deal with the subject, even contribute to the subject in the knowledge base. Thus, the researcher has included these researchers and their contributions to the subject in the current thesis study. The connection of culture and foreign language learning can be

expressed as follows: If students are familiar with what they are learning they all feel more confident and be more interested in foreign language learning process (Hong, 2004). This is directly related to culture itself. As it is known by all researchers the interest and motivation that students have trigger the learning a foreign language. In this context Gardner and Lambert (1959) clearly explain the significance of culture. They indicate that integrative orientation is a kind of a high level of motivation for students to learn more about different cultures to be a member of target group. In other words, the reason for high level of motivation to learn a foreign language can be social and cultural influence on education.

### **1.1.1. What is Culture?**

To be a social creature, people have to share their feelings, needs and ideas with each other. At this point people need to live together and that creates a society. Different features of communities determine their private spheres called “culture”. Avruch (2002) states that because the term “culture” originated in the nineteenth century, different meanings are attributed to the term “culture”. He postulates that culture is always intended as high art, advanced education, superior knowledge, exalted social standing, refinement, or taste. As one can understand from this view culture has not a common definition, however; it has common grounds in different definitions such as; knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, symbols, achievements, values, experiences, past generations, attitudes, assumptions, orientations to life, policies, collective programming of the mind, procedures and behavioural conventions (Hofstede, 1991; Matsumoto, 1996; Adler, 1997; Avruch, 1998; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). These common grounds in different definitions can also be considered within the scope of culture. Hill (2008) follows the ideas of Hofstede (1984), Namewirth and Weber (1987), and he approves ‘culture’ as a system comprised of values and norms. By values he means abstract ideas that are believed to be good, right, and desirable by a group. By norms he means the social rules and guidelines that order appropriate behaviour in particular situations. On the other hand, according to Spencer-Oatey (2012, p. 52) there are minimum six ideas correlatively relevant to culture: Culture is homogenous, culture is a thing, culture is uniformly distributed

among members of a group, an individual possesses but a single culture, culture is custom, and culture is timeless.

These inadequate but important ideas about culture should be taken into consideration to understand what culture is. It is also important to take into consideration Linton's (1945) ideas about to be cultured.

“For the social scientist, there are no uncultured societies or even individuals. Every society has a culture, no matter how simple this culture may be, and every human being is cultured, in the sense of participating in some culture or other.” (p. 20)

Linton (1945) indicates that culture expresses the total lifestyle of any society. It is obvious that culture has a multidimensional system. Nanda and Warms (2014) note that today it is generally agreed by anthropologists that all cultures share comparatively six characteristics that are listed below:

1. Cultures are made up of learned behaviours.
2. Cultures all involve symbols.
3. Cultures are to some degree patterned and integrated.
4. Cultures are in same way shared by members of a group.
5. Cultures are in some way adaptive.
6. All cultures are subject to change. (p. 50)

It is understood that uncultured is an unacceptable term to sociology; because all human beings have one or another kind of culture – a way to survive because there are no people who never interact with other people. Birth is the beginning of acculturation and human being learns symbols, systems, ideas, relation and culture itself. Culture can be seen as a special form or connection of the interaction between civilization and the ages (Savignon & Sosoyev, 2002). Costume, the physical appearance of the people, speech, life standards, food, customs, geographical features, climate all reveal the possible differences (Kosambi, 1965) and all these differences can be the result of requirements of time. Historically, culture can show variations depending on innovations and acculturation. As a result, people's lives are shaped by new needs and even new types of communication. From this point of view



culture can be said to be the result of the historical accumulation of societies in order to fulfil the requirements of the age.

According to Little et al. (2012) there are two dimensions of culture: material culture and nonmaterial culture.

“Material culture refers to the objects or belongings of a group of people. Nonmaterial culture, in contrast, consists of the ideas, attitudes, and beliefs of a society. Clothing, hairstyles, and jewellery are part of material culture, but the appropriateness of wearing certain clothing for specific events reflects nonmaterial culture” (p. 81).

Culture is also identified as being a social, psychological, cognitive, linguistic, historical phenomenon, covered by corresponding concepts in neighbouring scientific disciplines (Budin, 2003). In every society, there are dominant cultural expectations. Culture and society have distinctive characteristics and are independent from each other in many ways nevertheless one could not exist without the other. Czinkota (2007) indicates that every society has its own cultural elements. These cultural elements are listed as: “language (verbal, nonverbal), religion, values and attitudes, manners and customs, material elements, aesthetics, education, social institutions” (p. 64).

There is also a strong connection between culture and psychology. Lehman, Chiu and Schaller (2004) state that culture represents a combination of different norms of behaviour and cognition shared by other individuals in the identifiable population that differ from those shared in other populations and it has an important influence on defining people and nature. To construe nature of human beings, shared knowledge and shared meanings generating a set of everyday practices that also define culture have a crucial importance (Scribner & Cole, 1981). In other words, we cannot separate culture from mind and behaviour. Another issue that we should understand is the relation between culture and cognition. Cole, Engestrom and Vasquez (1997) indicate that society provides experience, and so it is believed that some societies provide a greater variety of experience than others, establishing a proper link between cultural progress and mental progress. It is also important to know that language diversity is one of the main elements of cultural diversity. Kuzmin (2011) refers to language as a means of self-expression, self-identification, socialization, and transmission of cultural experience, knowledge and traditions. He

also states that languages are intellectual products of an amazing richness and versatility and promote the accumulation of human knowledge. Finally, languages are valuable for every user.

European Commission brings a distinct perspective on the importance of foreign language learning and language diversity. European Commission (2004) notes that early foreign language learners embrace their cultural values and influences and tolerate other cultures, they will not be closed to other cultures and be more interested in them.

### **1.1.2. Language and Culture**

Considered fundamental to the task, the concepts of culture and language are taken at the center of applied linguistics activity. Even if these concepts are segregated scientifically, they are linked to each other by a sociocultural perspective on human action. With simple words, language is used to convey meaning while the meaning is determined and interpreted by and within that specific culture (Heidari, Ketabi & Zonoobi, 2014). However, it will be needed to be described and analysed in detail for the understanding of this bond.

Wardhaugh (2002, pp. 219-220) indicates three arguments for the bond between language and culture. The first one indicates ‘effects of language on culture’: “The structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world or, as a weaker view, the structure does not determine the world-view but is still extremely influential in predisposing speakers of a language toward adopting their world-view”. The second one indicates ‘effects of culture on language’: The culture of people finds reflection in the language they employ: because they value certain things and do them in a certain way, they come to use their language in ways that reflect what they value and what they do. The third one indicates “a ‘neutral claim’ which claims that there is little or no relationship between the two”.

These three arguments give premise ideas in the interpretation of the relationship between the two. Whether the language forms the culture as in the first argument or the culture forms the language as in the second can be discussed from many aspects; however, it is clear that there is a strong interaction between the two.

Language is, at first, a means of communication and communication almost always takes place in a kind of social context (Cochrane, Julie, & Amberg, 2012). All languages are based on the appropriateness of certain signs to certain meanings that are defined by communities. That is to say, each language creates and interprets meaning within its cultural framework (Scarino & Liddicoat, 2009). It can be called a kind of community contract. So being a nation is related to language first. In other words, the first condition of being a community is to understand each other. The functional use of the language offers diversity for people to carry on their vital activities. This phenomenon is not as easy as it seems to be, the formation of a language is under the influence of a culture which expresses an accumulation of totality. At this point, understanding of culture-language relation has a foremost importance to be an individual that society has accepted.

As it is mentioned before, as a communication system, culture is shaped by some factors that society owns such as; knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, symbols, achievements, values, experiences, past generations, attitudes, assumptions, orientations to life, policies, collective programming of the mind, procedures and behavioural conventions which are common grounds in definitions of culture (Hofstede, 1991; Matsumoto, 1996; Adler, 1997; Avruch, 1998; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Tharp (2009) states that the concept of culture initially described objects of traditional anthropological research; rituals, myths, tongues, values, beliefs and practices of distant peoples in exotic places. In other words, language is one of the most essential elements of culture. In some traditional manners, culture is reflected as an automatic result of all language instructions (Hong, 2004).

Chastain indicates (as cited in Heidari., Ketabi and Zonoobi, 2014) that language and culture are not something separable. Therefore, complete comprehension during any type of intercultural communication depends upon participants' social and cultural significance awareness of the words and expressions employed.

In his study, Lambert (1990) explains that culture and language influence learning and education in many ways. He indicates that people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds think differently, in addition he claims that culture affects the personality structure of people. There is a strong connection between language and culture, and culture has dominance over language. Language has seven functions;

instrumental language, informative language, personal language, imaginative language, interactional language, heuristic language and regulatory language (Halliday, 1975), and it depends on culture to determine and shape any of these functions to make communication meaningful and effective.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

There are many factors that affect foreign language learning: gender, age, the student's beliefs and experiences, cognitive styles, motivation and attitudes, personality etc. (Madrid, 1995). Whether or not the culture is one of these factors is a matter of debate. The problem of research is whether the culture is influential on foreign language learning. The following research questions are to be enquired to set the guidelines of the current study:

- Are there any significant differences among the participants in motivation for foreign language learning in terms of;
  - The place of residence
  - Educational level of mother
  - Educational level of father
  - Having a family member who knows a foreign language
  - Income of the family
- Are there any significant differences among the participants in cultural differences for foreign language learning in terms of;
  - The place of residence
  - Educational level of mother
  - Educational level of father
  - Having a family member who knows a foreign language
  - Income of the family
- Are there any significant differences among the participants in the effects of native language for foreign language learning in terms of;
  - The place of residence
  - Educational level of mother
  - Educational level of father

- Having a family member who knows a foreign language
- Income of the family
- Are there any significant differences among the participants in the attitudes towards foreigners for foreign language learning in terms of;
  - The place of residence
  - Educational level of mother
  - Educational level of father
  - Having a family member who knows a foreign language
  - Income of the family
- Are there any significant differences among the participants in the effects of learning environment for foreign language learning in terms of;
  - The place of residence
  - Educational level of mother
  - Educational level of father
  - Having a family member who knows a foreign language
  - Income of the family

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

In this thesis study, the aim is to investigate how students' foreign language learning is shaped by their own culture, how they get motivation from their culture to learn a foreign language, as well as which cultural factors affect their foreign language learning most.

There are different cultures in Turkey. Although many of them show similarities, they also have certain features that distinguish one from the other. The perspectives of these cultures on foreign language learning may vary depending on the characteristics they possess, the geography they are in, cultural interaction etc. It is not correct to say something definite since there is no study done in this regard. With the research, questions of the study it is aimed to measure the degree of influence of the culture of students on foreign language learning and how they affect them (positively or negatively).

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

To know how culture motivates or negatively influences students in learning process is significant to shape the foreign language education. To determine the place of cultural factors in foreign language learning is important to reveal which cultural factors may be a source of motivation for foreign language learning. In this way, foreign language teaching can be carried out according to the motivation source of students by looking at their cultural characteristics. It is also important that the selection and use of different education models for foreign language learning can be predicted according to the level of impact of cultural factors.

#### **1.5. Assumptions of the Study**

In this study, the effects of Turkish culture on foreign language learning will be investigated. The hypothesis for this study is that Turkish culture affects students' foreign language learning in many ways. For example, the place where students grow up, educational level of parents, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family can influence students' foreign language learning. Furthermore, the case situation to be failure in foreign language learning may be due to one or more of these cultural factors. These assumptions are based mostly on the main factors will be mentioned in the literature review.

#### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

This study is restricted with 364 Turkish university students who have English language classes. The study was conducted in 2017. All the participants are studying at a private university in Konya, but not all the participants are from Konya, there are students from different cities of Turkey who are studying at this university. The students are studying different sciences: 95 students from Physical Sciences, 88 students from Health Sciences, 91 students from Social Sciences, 90 students from Economics and Administrative Sciences. In this current thesis study, since the aim is to analyse the students' foreign language learning who are growing in village, town, city or metropolis cultures, the city they live in is not included in the research

subject. In other words, it is aimed to investigate students' foreign language learning according to the culture they have in their hometown.

### **1.7. Definitions**

Culture: "Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour." (Spencer-Oatey 2008, p. 3)

Language: "Language is a means of self-expression, self-identification, socialization, and transmission of cultural experience, knowledge and traditions." (Kuzmin, 2011, p. 35)

Foreign language: "A language is considered foreign if it is learned largely in the classroom and is not spoken in the society where the teaching occurs." (Moeller & Catalano, 2015, p. 327)

Literacy: "An individual's capacity to understand, use and reflect on written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential and to participate in society." (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2006, p. 46).

Identity: "Identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is." (Oyserman, Elmore, & Smith, 2012, p. 69)

Linguistic anthropology: "Linguistic anthropology is an interdisciplinary field dedicated to the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice" (Duranti, 2009, p. 2)

Anthropology: Anthropology is the scientific study of the origin, the behaviour, and the physical, social, and cultural development of humans. (<http://sociology.morrisville.edu>)

Ethnography: “Ethnography is the study of the socio-cultural contexts, processes, and meanings within cultural systems.” (Whitehead, 2004, p. 5)

Ethnology: “Ethnology is the comparative and analytical study of cultures; cultural anthropology.” (Audi, 1999, p. 290)



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

The current study aims to investigate how students' foreign language learning is shaped by their own culture, how they get motivation from their culture to learn a foreign language, as well as which cultural factors affect their foreign language learning most. In this chapter the researcher will conduct a literature review on topics that are close to the main theme of the current study. The relevant literature review will be collected under five titles. These are cultural differences causing language differences, differences in education, family literacy, socioeconomic factors, cultural identity and predisposition to target culture.

#### 2.2. Cultural Differences Causing Language Differences

To understand this topic firstly the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, which is also known as linguistic relativity, should be discussed. It is a hypothesis that constructed by anthropological linguists Edward Sapir (1924, 1929, 1931) and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf (1940, 1941, 1945). It is based on the idea that people interpret the world with the language they use, and they understand their world with the language of culture they own. The hypothesis also states that the language people use affects their thought and perceptions of reality, which means that our ability to interpret our thoughts and the world is limited by the language we use and, therefore, the language constructed by our culture shapes our reality. Sapir and Whorf (1929) maintain that reality can be determined differently by each culture and that any interpretation of reality is depended on a society's language. That is to say, in every language there are words, expressions or non-verbal communication signals specific to that language.

Culture includes and affects language since language is the mirror of culture and can reflect culture. Lewis (2002) notes that according to Saussure, meaning-making, society and culture are prospects of language and language structures. Each individual's unique characteristics and associations, the social and cultural values in which an individual grows, and culture itself cause language differences. Geng (2010) states that because social background and geographic situations differentiate

according to nations and places even in the same country, cultures have less similarities and more differences. He adds that cultural influence on language often refers to the influence of cultural differences on language. He notes:

“In traditional Chinese family, there are usually a large member of people including uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters, etc. so they tell “ge ge” (brother) from “didi” (little brother), and also tell from “mei mei” (younger sister) to “jiejie” (sister). In traditional English family, they are nuclear family, only the parents and their children live together. So, they don’t tell “shu shu” (uncle) from “bobo” (elder uncle), not because they don’t do so, but because on most occasions, they don’t have to. The feudal culture enriches the Chinese vocabulary, and causes more Chinese words about relative titles. And also because of the influence of western culture, English don’t have many words about relative titles.” (p. 220)

Jiang (2000) comments that while using the same language forms people from distinct cultures can refer to different things. He gives the following examples;

- Using of the word ‘lunch’ may refer to hamburger or pizza in English culture, but in Chinese culture it will most probably refer to steamed bread or rice.
- The word dog in English, and the character gou in Chinese, refer to the same kind of animal. However, most English people associate dog with man's best friend, a good companion, being kept as a pet, together with many commendatory idioms, such as lucky dog. Most Chinese people, by contrast, associate gou with watchdogs, defending the household from thieves, a noisy animal, together with such derogatory idioms as gou tui zi ('hired thug'). (pp. 328-334)

Choudhury (2014) notes that there is cultural influence on vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and translating while learning/teaching a foreign language. He states that while learning a language, grammar rules and the denotative meanings of words will not suffice because it involves much more, such as the culture phenomena, the way of life, habits and customs, history and everything that is contained in culture.

Words may have different uses depending on different geographies. For example, as Hill (2008) states that while there is only one word to describe ‘snow’ in English language, there is no general term for it in the language of the Inuit (Eskimos). The fact underlying this situation is because in Inuit's lives it is very important to make distinction between different types of snow, they have 24 words that identify different types of it (e.g., powder snow, slushy snow, wind-driven snow, falling snow, wet snow, drifting snow).

Cultural differences also cause language differences in terms of linguistic sexism (masculinity versus femininity). Whorf (1956) indicated that people anatomize nature along lines determined by their own language – the world is introduced as a kaleidoscope flow of impressions that has to be regulated by our minds - and in our minds, it is often verbalised by the linguistic systems. Some communities have linguistic sexism system in their using languages while some has no linguistic sexism in their using languages. In their study, Dryer and Haspelmath (2013) note that 112 of the 257 languages (44%) included in the World Atlas of Language Structures have a gender system, and in 84 cases this is sex-based. In another study in the same context, Prewitt-Freilino, Caswell and Laakso (2011) experimentally examine the relation between grammatical gender and social gender equality. One hundred and eleven countries were categorized, according to the grammatical relevance of sex to the language(s) predominantly spoken/used there, as gendered (73), genderless (26) or natural gender (11).

Gabriel and Gyax (2016) state that when evaluating the consequences of grammaticalization of gender in terms of perceptual and social correlates one needs to keep in mind that language is learned through social interactions and thus socially and culturally anchored. They add that speakers of one language may differ from speakers of another language in other relevant culturally bound variables than the language spoken. On the other hand, Rattan and Ambady (2013) indicate that in the context of racial and ethnic groups, the general diversity ideologies of colour-blindness and multiculturalism have been found to have disparate effects for example on stereotyping and prejudice, and on minority and majority members.

Cultural differences can also cause linguistic misunderstandings. Hill (2008) explains that it is often assumed that cultural differences will have been removed when the language barrier is extinguished. On the other hand, if they remain, they may cause miscommunication and misinterpretation. This kind of misunderstanding has emerged through the influence of culture, and even the misunderstanding of the cultural body language is definitely influential. Hill (2008) also notes that different cultures have different ways of offering affirmation or of indicating disappointment in negotiations and different thoughts that may affect a final agreement.

Leveridge (2008) states that everyone's opinions are dependent on their own culture that affects them, as well as they use the language which has been formed by that culture. In order to understand a culture and people with that culture, it is necessary to analyse and understand the language spoken in that culture. There can be both positive and negative transfer from one culture's language to another culture's language which is aimed to be learned. Albakri's (2009) study suggests that comprehensible input is required for language learners, they need to be in situations that provide maximum personal participation in communication and have the opportunities to use target language in social interactions. In other words, the learners must be exposed to the target language and culture. Locally close cultures have more chance for social interaction and comprehensible input in terms of learning languages of each other. For these close cultures, negative transfer can be lower.

### **2.3. Differences in Education**

Differences in education is another dimension of culture that may affect foreign language learning. Elmes (2013) suggests that understanding that languages and their cultures are crucial in terms of linguistic and cultural competence will be a good start for any approach to be determined in language learning and teaching. He also notes that if language learners are expected to acquire any level of real competency in any language, it is needed to establish and implement an integrated language policy that reflects the need to educate learners about both target culture(s) and language(s). However, every culture has a different educational approach. These differences can affect foreign language teaching/learning process.

Gutierrez and Rogoff (2003) indicate that although deficit-model thinking is still in use, the cultural styles approach presents an alternative by characterizing cultural ways of different groups with respectful terms, trying to identify them without making a value judgment to propose value hierarchies in cultural practices. In this context, Hofstede's (1984) study is important to analyse and identify these hierarchies in cultural practices. According to his study, there are five dimensions of culture which affect education: a. Power Distance Index (PDI) b. Individualism vs.

Collectivism (IDV) c. Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS) d. Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) e. Long Term Orientation (LTO).

a. *Power Distance Index (PDI)*: Power distance can be explained as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (cited in Hadley, 2001; Hofstede, 1997, p. 28). In cultures which have high-power distance (HPD) properties, every individual is expected to protect his or her rightful place in society. High status members have power over the members of lower status. On the other side, in cultures which have low power distance (LPD) properties individuals try to minimize the unequal distribution of power and reject hierarchical structures. There is equality between subordinates and superiors with separate roles in society (cited in Hadley, 2001; Samovar and Porter, 1991).

b. *Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)*: Hofstede (2011) explains that in individualist cultures, individuals do not have strong ties: everybody is obliged to look after him/herself and his/her family and it has a more introverted society structure. On the other side, in collectivist cultures from birth people are considered strong, they are integrated into interdependent groups, and the relations in these cultures are totally outward oriented. In collectivist cultures, there are extended families (with uncle, aunts and grandfather) who continue to protect each other with mutual unquestioned loyalty.

c. *Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS)*: It is related to the distribution of emotional roles between men and women in cultures (Hofstede, 2011). In a feminine culture, men take the role of nurturing and there is an equality between women and men in society e.g. equal work, equal pay. Masculinity points to the degree of one's strength and weakness in society. Men are dominant in a masculine culture and differentiation of gender in this society is very high (Geng, 2010).

d. *Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)*: It is explained as “the extent to which people feel threatened by and try to avoid uncertainty and ambiguity” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 113). Cultures that avoid uncertainty and ambiguity often need strict rules and formalities to maintain their lives in order. Hofstede (as cited in Altuncu, Aktepe & Islamoğlu, 2012) notes that in UAI cultures, to make interpretation and prediction of

events clear people are looking for a system for their organizations, institutions and associations.

*e. Long Term Orientation (LTO):* Hofstede and Bond (1988) indicate that there can be two kinds of orientation in cultures: long-term orientation and short-term orientation. Long term orientation pictures a dynamic, future-oriented mentality emphasizing persistence, ordering of relationships based upon status and observing this order, thrift, having a sense of shame, supports interrelatedness through sensitivity to social contacts, and has a positive relationship with economic growth. On the other side, short-term orientation has a guidance toward present and past, it presents a relatively static, tradition-oriented mentality emphasizing personal steadiness, stability, protecting face, respect for tradition, reciprocation of greetings, favours and gifts, and has a negative relationship with economic growth.

These five cultural dimensions revealed by the Hofstede, which cause many differences in education, have been proven in a number of researches. According to Wursten and Jacobs' study (2013) the implications of power distance on teaching are worthy. For example, their study points out that in LPD culture education is student centred, students are expected to start communication and to find their own way to learn, students can contradict and criticize, and effectiveness of learning is a function the amount of two-way communication. On the other hand, in HPD culture education is teacher centred, teacher is expected to start communication and to show the way to learn, teacher can never be contradicted nor criticized.

About this subject, it is also indicated that “for a vast country with its diversity of languages, social customs, manners, mores and uneven economic development, the needs and demands of individuals and society will have differential pulls on the school curriculum, varying from one region to the other” (Government of India, 1977, p. 3). Similarly, Derderian-Aghajanian and Cong (2012) state that culture cause educational differences in learning styles. They comment that differences in education between English-speaking countries bring another challenge to English Language Learners. They give such an example; Chinese students learn with teacher-centred classrooms in their own country. In contrast, in the U.S. teachers teach with more student-centred classrooms in which there is teacher-student and student-student interactions. Every culture reflects its learning style to its education and this

affects foreign language learning. Heath and Mangiola (1991) conclude that there are different ways for all cultures to teach the background knowledge about the world to their children and ask them to show what they know. It is certain that these different ways will always take place in education.

#### **2.4. Family Literacy**

One of the dimensions of culture that affects foreign language learning is family literacy. Lieshoff et al. (2004) indicate that comprehensive family literacy should include:

“Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children (PACT Time), training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children (Parent Education), parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency (Adult Education), and an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (Children’s Education)”. (p. III–1)

Lieshoff et al. (2004) note that as a matter of culture, language, and education, it is clear that family literacy affects children’s eventual literacy and limited literacy may limit positive parental involvement in the education of their children and their interactions with teachers, administrators, and counsellors about their children.

Family literacy does not only affect children in one way. Lack of literacy as Nieto (2009) mentioned in her experience, shows itself negatively in many stages of life, especially in the educational process.

“...According to the traditional educational literature, my home and family situation could not prepare me adequately for academic success. My mother did not graduate from high school, and my father never made it past fourth grade. They came to the United States as immigrants from Puerto Rico and they quietly took their place in the lower paid and lower status of society. In my family, we never had bedtime stories, much less books. At home, we didn’t have a permanent place to study, nor did we have a desk with sufficient light and adequate ventilation, as teachers suggested.” (p. 2)

Nieto (2009) describes the reasons for the lack of her family literacy and poor economic status of her family until this part of the story, and continued to tell the effect of these factors on her education.

“...In a word, because of our social class, ethnicity, native language, and discourse practices, we were the epitome of what are now described as “children at risk,” young people who were described when we were coming up as “disadvantaged,” “culturally deprived,” and even “problem” students. ... My new address (college) made a profound difference in the education that I was able to get. I eventually dropped the ain’t and the mines, and I hid the fact that I spoke Spanish.” (p. 3)

As it is noticed from Nieto’s experience that the negative effects of lack of literacy have been reduced with a good literacy. It is clear that the family literacy and learning environment directly influence the learning process. Nieto believes that the bond between language, literacy and culture gives a richer picture of learning for students who have identities with a traditionally low status in society. She notes that:

“One result of this reconceptualization is that more education programs are reflecting and promoting a sociocultural perspective in language and literacy, that is, a perspective firmly rooted in an anthropological understanding of culture; a view of learning as socially constructed and mutually negotiated; an understanding of how students from diverse segments of society—due to differential access, and cultural and linguistic differences—experience schooling; and a commitment to social justice” (p, 3)

Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman and Hemphill (as cited in Nieto, 2009) note that it is generally accepted that literacy can be promoted by families and home conditions, which include an abundant promoter books and other beneficial reading materials, consistent talks between adults and children about the books they read, and other similar conditions.

Wasik and Herrmann (2004) state that they also use this expression (family literacy) to describe studies of young children in the way of becoming literate, including the links between family literacy practices and children’s literacy and language development. In that vein, Battleson (as cited in Han, 2007) argue that the proportion of those participating in literacy activities in families directly affects the literacy development of the children and all family members, including grandparents, contribute to children's literacy development. However, whose literacy in the family affects children's literacy development more is not clear.

Incorporating the mother tongue into the foreign language learning process will enable younger children to associate reading and writing with meaning and literacy



knowledge derived from their own home experiences (TESOL, 2010). Chitester (2006) indicates that:

“Teachers often see the lack of family literacy in linguistically diverse families as a predisposing factor to the child having problems in school. In practice, it can complicate the second language acquisition process substantially. Such children can and often do wind up in special education instead of in an English Language development paradigm when critical opportunities for language building are missed and the absence of a strong family literacy base may have been the first “domino” in a series of falling dominoes.” (p. 1)

Nikolov’s (2009) study shows that a strong connection is seen between the level of education of parents and the achievement of students in foreign language learning in Hungary. One can conclude that cultures including low family literacy have a strong negative effect on foreign language learning. However, this case is not the same in every country or culture. For example, the findings of study that have been done by Yazigy (1991) in two universities in Lebanon illustrated that 78% of the participants’ fathers were professional, 45% of them were university level graduates and 16% were secondary level graduates. On the other hand, 72% of the students’ mothers were unemployed, but the second highest percentage (23%) was for professionals, and 78% were university graduates. According to findings, these participants belonged to higher social class in Lebanon. The analysis of the results shows that there is no relationship between social classes and students’ achievement in the target language.

## **2.5. Socioeconomic Factors**

Although the educational impact of socio-economic factors is an important debate issue and there have been many researches to indicate the relationship, its effect on students’ achievement is not clear. Schuele (2001) notes that while some studies investigated the relationship between children’s language performance and socioeconomic status (SES) differences, other studies, in light of group differences related to the previously described SES investigated the differences in language learning experiences offered to children. Nieto (2009) claims that in school discourse power and privilege, and the way they are comprised in language, culture, and learning, have been invisible. This is due to the fact that the links between language,

literacy and culture are more firmly established and inequality and it becomes increasingly clear that many learners do not have access to equal education.

Children's language development is completed through certain periods and at certain stages. Every child's language development is not at the same level. The influence of the environment on language development may be quite different across the various domains of language (Huttenlocher, Haight, Bryk, Seltzer, & Lyons, 1991). In all around the world socioeconomic factors have more or less impact on students' foreign language learning. That is, low-income families have not got the same opportunities that wealthy families have for their children. To illustrate Munoz (2008) stated that students from different socioeconomic status are studying at different types of schools (public vs. private) and this situation is changing gradually as the learning of target language is interfered by the extracurricular programs or materials (e.g. private tuition, learning resources, study abroad etc.). From another point of view, the study of Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh (2006) proposes that the geographical location which is related to the socio-economic situation of the pupils and the parents has a significant effect on the choice of foreign language and therefore the orientation of the goals.

Montero, Chaves and Alvarado's (2014) study shows that students from low income families want to learn a foreign language for their future but family economic environment has made few of them want to quit studying. On the other hand, social inequalities from society are encouraging them to finish their major in order to have better opportunities than their parents. This shows that it can also be an instrumental motivation source for foreign language learning.

Gayton's (2010) study points out that in Scotland, parents of a lower socioeconomic status to give less weighting to their children's foreign language learning, but there are also exceptions, namely, parents of a relatively high socio-economic background rejecting foreign language learning as worthless. Her findings maintain that there is a correlation between low socio-economic status and low motivation on the one hand, high socio-economic status and high motivation on the other. She also indicated that children belonging to high-income families have a chance to travel target language culture and those are more familiar with and more motivated to learn target language than who has little or no mobility to see active use of target language. In a similar

study in Australia, Carr and Pauwels (2006) maintain the same indication that students belong to low social classes who are not able to go abroad show less useful foreign language learning attitudes.

In his study, Pourjafarian (2013) indicates that differences in family socioeconomic status (cultural capital, the past/present occupations of father and the past/present occupations of mother) impact significantly on students' willingness to communicate. Compared with those students with high SES and rich cultural capital, those who do not have high cultural capital are less willing to communicate in English. He adds that many students like to communicate in English but the most important barrier that they have is lack of competence which is the result of insufficient instruction that they receive at school (three hours a week).

Ariani and Ghafournia (2015) indicate that the scope of socioeconomic status and its relationship to students' beliefs about language learning should be investigated to get a better understanding of the factors that support or hinder students' motivation, beliefs, and progress. Their findings show the relationship between the students' socio-economic status and their beliefs about language learning.

*Table 2.1. Relationship between the students' socio-economic class and their beliefs about language learning (Ariani and Ghafournia, 2015, p. 22)*

	<b>Upper Class</b>	<b>Upper Middle Class</b>	<b>Middle Class</b>	<b>Lower Middle Class</b>	<b>Lower Class</b>
<b>Foreign Language Aptitude</b>	9	15	58	31	18
<b>Difficulty of Language Learning</b>	17	35	79	67	f
<b>Nature of Language Learning</b>	11	26	62	52	49
<b>Learning and Communication</b>	22	63	99	101	38

<b>Motivation and expectations</b>	18	45	87	81	32
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The results in the table confirm that for all classes the most important factor is factor 4 (learning and communication strategies) while the less important one is factor 1 (foreign language aptitude). Factor 5 (motivation and expectations) is the second important component which all socioeconomic classes paid attention to.

Ariani and Ghafournia's study points out that students from different socioeconomic classes have similar beliefs about language learning. They also indicate that the findings show that students' beliefs and perceptions about the language learning process are also dependent on the socio-economic status to which they belong. In another study, Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) conclude that socio-economic status of family has no significant influence on the academic performance of learners. However, they also state that socioeconomic differences might still be a factor that can affect student's education.

In their study, Kormos and Kiddle (2013) examine the relations between socio-economic factors and different components of motivation, self-regulation strategies and autonomous learner behaviour in context of foreign language learning in Chile. They used a questionnaire to collect data from 740 students studying at secondary school who belong to different social classes in Santiago, the capital of Chile. The results of the study propose that socio-economic status have strongly affect the motivational factors and self-efficacy beliefs. The learners who belong to high social class and upper-middle class have better motivation, self-regulation and learner autonomy characteristics in foreign language learning process than the learners belong to the lower, lower-middle and middle classes. In that vein, Rothman (2003), who stated that the family and the society belonging to the low economic status can negatively influence academic success, argues that this disadvantage has been reduced by organisation of schooling in Australia.

## 2.6. Cultural Identity

Language can be described as a system of conceptual symbols that enable us to communicate. The language that the person uses is a reflection of his/her identity. The way the individual uses the language to express his/her feelings, to share his/her feelings, to convey messages and to convey information is the characteristics of his/her identity. In sociological framework, identity create a meaningful connection to complete the gap between the "inside- the real me" and the "outside- the cultural worlds". Reflecting "ourselves" into these cultural identities and internalizing their meanings and values as " part of us", helps us to identify our subjective feelings with the objective places we occupy in the social and cultural world (Hall, Held, Hubert & Thompson, 1996). On the other hand, White, Zion and Kozleski (2005) state that everyone has their own unique traditions, values and beliefs (language, ethnic identity, religion and formal/informal community, neighbourhood, and family connections) that help us see how we are connected to each other.

Ericson (1950) suggested that the identity is not fully completed at any moment in life, but it is changed by human's experiences through life. Many researchers investigated that how language and culture work together to form one's identity as well as the underlying meaning of such processes (Nunan & Choi, 2010; Pupavac, 2012; Rivers & Houghton, 2013). Zou (2012) notes that cultural difference generates different identities. Furthermore, culture can structure the individual and the individual is able to construct himself or herself through culture. Cultures which are predominant or despot on children can be much more decisive in shaping identity. For example; interrupting a child, between the ages of three and six, while speaking his/her native language may influence his/her identity (Sheffield, 2013). Each individual has an identity influenced by his/her culture, this is called as cultural identity. Language is the strongest marker of cultural identity (Chambers and Trudgill, 1998).

Green (1995) indicates that cultural identity of person decides to create positive or negative attitudes towards foreign language learning and he supports that positive attitudes are only possible with 'intercultural awareness'. To illustrate he notes that the rising interest in recent times for 'European' identity, encouraging a sense of being European, provides the background against which the multi-cultural issues are

being explored in part of a project funded by Lingua/Socrates programme (Promotion of the language learning etc). Lin (2009) notes that learners' culture identity plays an essential role in L2 learning, especially in developing oral communicative skills. Furthermore, from Tarhan and Balban's (2014) study one can conclude that every culture has different motivating factors to learn foreign languages and if the concept of learning a foreign language is a part of cultural/learner identity, students will be more motivated to learn it. On the other hand, Lee (2002) believes that if foreign language learners construct an identity towards their cultural identity, this will affect their learning in a positive way.

In her study Seppälä (2011) investigates to find out whether the English language and the Western culture affect the cultural identity of Chinese people or not. In background information she explains the effect of globalization and the importance of English language in China and the difference between past and present Chinese culture. To gather the information for this qualitative study with some quantitative aspects, she used questionnaires answered and completed by three English language classes, and additional interviews with selected 78 participants from Guangzhou University in Guangzhou, China. The result of the research shows that the participants' ideas, attitudes and identities were greatly influenced by their English language knowledge. The result of her study also points out that:

- learning English has not only brought forward language skills, but also some level of cultural knowledge and understanding. This knowledge and understanding extends further than only the English language speaking world, or even the Western world.
- for many of the informants of this study, learning the English language and about the Western world and culture(s) actually evoked a desire to return to their traditional Chinese heritage and embrace the Chinese culture.
- many of the informants actually felt that the globalization has made them more patriotic and more interested in the traditional Chinese culture and way of life, strengthening their cultural identities as Chinese people. (pp. 104-120)

This Seppälä's (2011) thesis study is a clear indication of the results of acculturation and effects of learning foreign languages on cultural identity. On the other hand, there are researches examining the effects of foreign language learning on cultural identity.

In his study Gixti (2006) notes that Greeks are aware of having a language not widely spoken worldwide, it is a necessary to learn foreign languages to be competitive in a globalised world. They are also aware of knowing foreign languages is considered an asset that facilitates free movement and the discovery of different cultures and mentalities. As a result of globalization, today's societal demands bring a new perspective to foreign language education. Because of that, in Greece there is an increased interest in foreign language learning outside schools. In the same study, Gixti (2006) also indicated that in Greece, the students' instrumental orientation toward learning of foreign languages is highly influenced by socio-cultural factors. That is to say, the demand of foreign language learning is adopted to cultural identity.

### **2.7. Predisposition to Target Culture**

Saito, Garza and Horwitz (1999) report that people who had already had experiences with the target culture are more familiar with the target (foreign) language and who had had little or no experiences have anxiety against foreign languages. Collier and Thomas (2001) notes that most people around the world are inspiring their languages and cultures to communicate with other people. Teaching of other cultures within the educational process or within the community may encourage students to learn foreign languages. Chavez (2002) supports that teaching culture draws students into language learning process and takes their attention to it. Even if this is the case, the influence of native culture may be positive or negative on students' foreign language learning. Nevertheless, Hong (2004) emphasizes that learning target culture has a strong impact on getting motivation of learning foreign/target language. The importance of motivation in foreign language education is an indisputable truth accepted by linguists. The predisposition of students to target culture can be mostly due to their own culture's specifications.

Svanes (1988) claims that the more learners have a positive attitude towards the target culture, the more they will be successful in foreign language learning. Wu's (2003) study points out that when a person chooses to learn French, he or she is not merely interested in the linguistics of the language, but everything to do with French and France. What he or she is taking in includes all the preconceptions about the

French language; romantic and beautiful. In addition, somehow culture of a foreign language can also be a matter to learn the language, for example; learning English in Puerto Rico is clearly linked to accepting American cultural sovereignty (Saville-Troike, 1978).

Bosher (1997) states that immigrant students in U.S. create a bridge between the two cultures and combine elements from both. She also mentions that those students seemed fairly confident in the use of English. Vallette (1977) considers that monoculturalism is a handicap for students when learning a foreign language. Because of that reason she wants students to be aware of target culture. She has four cultural goals that should be taken into consideration when designing a foreign language learning syllabus. These are:

- developing a greater awareness of and broader knowledge about the target culture,
- acquiring a command of the etiquette of the target culture,
- understanding differences between the target culture and the students' culture,
- understanding the values of the target culture.

Vallette uses “the cultural test” to assess these aims and gives examples from the results to make teaching process more efficient. The aims which are manifested by Vallette are really useful for foreign language classroom setting; however, target culture is not something to be qualified easily.

In their study Genc and Bada (2005) creates a culture class to teach English language. During this course lecture-type sessions, as well as research project presentations had been held for three months. The results of their research confirm that the course helps students to raise awareness for both their own and target cultures. In the study 68.4% of the students felt such awareness and students indicated that this awareness contributed their four skills especially speaking in language use. Similarly, in the study 73.7% of the students stated that their attitude towards target culture changed at the end of this course. Their study illustrates that the more familiar students are with target culture, the more they will be motivated to learn target language.



Literature review of the study shows that different cultures have effects on foreign language learning in different ways. It is seen that cultural differences can cause language differences in many ways such as words, expressions, language structures, non-verbal communication signals, linguistic sexism and linguistic misunderstandings. Differences in education is another dimension of culture that affect foreign language learning. It has effects on language policy, school curriculum and learning styles. In that vein, the third dimension of culture affecting foreign language learning is family literacy. It has effects on students' education in many ways such as literacy development, learning activities, learning environment, learner identity and learning materials. The fourth cultural dimension affecting foreign language learning is socioeconomic factors. It has effects on children language performance, equal education, learning environment, motivation for foreign language learning, students' beliefs about language learning, self-regulation strategies and autonomous learner behaviour. The fifth dimension affecting foreign language learning is cultural identity. It has effects on foreign language learning in many ways such as language uses, attitudes towards foreign language learning, oral communication skills, motivation for language learning and acculturation. In this regard, the last cultural dimension in literature review is predisposition to target culture. It has effects on anxiety against foreign language learning, motivation for foreign language learning, attitudes towards target culture and awareness for target culture.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **3.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the methodology applied for the realization of the current thesis study is explained in detail by the researcher. The researcher first presented the methodological framework of the study to make sure that which method/s of data collection and method/s of analysing the data will be applied. Then respectively the population and sample of the study, methods of data collection, data collection process and methods of analysing the data were discussed. The demographic background of the participants will be handled under the title of ‘the population and sample of the study’. Besides, reliability and validity of the study and how gathered data is analysed were examined in detail under the title of ‘methods of analysing the data’.

#### **3.2. Methodological Framework of the Study**

In this current thesis study, the aim is to investigate how students’ foreign language learning is shaped by their own culture, how they get motivation from their culture to learn a foreign language, as well as which cultural factors affect their foreign language most. This research will take place in the field of Linguistic Anthropology beside Foreign Language Teaching since it does not directly measure students’ knowledge of foreign languages and it measures influence of cultures on foreign language learning. Being one of the four subfields of anthropology, “linguistic anthropology is an interdisciplinary field dedicated to the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice” (Duranti, 2009, p. 2). The study also takes place in the field Sociocultural Anthropology. Sociocultural anthropology is the study of human society and culture, the subfield describing, analysing, interpreting and explaining social and cultural similarities and differences (<http://content.inflibnet.ac.in>). To study and interpret socio-cultural diversity, the anthropologists are involved in two kinds of activity: ethnography (based on field work) and ethnology (based on cross cultural comparison). Ethnography is a methodology that includes both qualitative and quantitative methods studying

beliefs, social interactions, and behaviours of small societies, involving participation and observation over a period of time, and the interpretation of the data collected (Naidoo, 2012; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Whitehead, 2004). Ethnology examines, interprets, analyses and compares the results of ethnography and the data gathered in different societies. And, the ethnologists explain cultural differences and similarities, to test hypothesis and to build theory to enhance socio-cultural system (<http://content.inflibnet.ac.in>). There is a strong link between ethnography and anthropology. Seppälä (2011) indicates that anthropology has contributed a lot to ethnographic research techniques.

In this interdisciplinary study, the relationship between culture and foreign language learning will be explored by making use of the fields mentioned above (Linguistic Anthropology, Sociocultural Anthropology, Ethnography, Ethnology), and the study will contribute to the field of Foreign Language Teaching. In this current thesis the quantitative research technique, which is one of the ethnographic research techniques, will suffice as according to the planned purpose of reaching there is no need to scan information based on observations. The fieldwork of the study took place in Turkey, in the city of Konya at a private university from September to November of 2017. The questionnaire was applied twice within this period and with the first one the factor analysis was performed to measure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. With the second application, the scale was applied to students to gather the expected information to be achieved and to shape the results of the study.

### **3.3. The Population and Sample of the Study**

The research was conducted at a private university in Konya province of Turkey. The students were reached by obtaining permission from the university and signing a contract with the university. According to this contract, the name of university will not be mentioned in the study. The prepared scale applied to 400 students and 364 participants were left after the one-way extreme value scanning (36 participants extreme value). Descriptive statistics of the 364 participants included in the study determined by their gender, department, place of residence, mother's education level, father's education level, foreign language knowledge of the mother, foreign language knowledge of the father, having a family member who knows a foreign language,

having a relative living abroad, the type of previous school, foreign language level and the income of the family are shown in Table 3.1.

*Table 3.1. The results of descriptive statistics*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	226	62.1
	Male	138	37.9
<b>Department</b>	Economics and administrative sciences	90	24.7
	Health sciences	88	24.2
	Social sciences	91	25
	Physical sciences	95	26.1
<b>Place of Residence</b>	Village	35	9.6
	Town	18	4.9
	City	105	28.8
	Metropolis	206	56.6
<b>Mother's education level</b>	Illiterate	7	1.9
	Primary School Graduate	150	41.2
	Secondary School Graduate	67	18.4
	High-School Graduate	71	19.5
	Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	69	19
<b>Father's education level</b>	Primary School Graduate	82	22.5
	Secondary School Graduate	69	19
	High-School Graduate	89	24.5
	Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	124	34.1
<b>Foreign Language</b>	Knows	51	14
<b>Knowledge of Mother</b>	Does not know	313	86
<b>Foreign Language</b>	Knows	99	27.2
<b>Knowledge of Father</b>	Does not know	264	72.8
<b>Having a Family</b>	Yes	268	73.6

<b>Member Who knows a Foreign Language</b>	No	96	26.4
<b>Having a Relative Living Abroad</b>	Yes	202	55.5
	No	162	44.5
<b>The Type of Previous School</b>	State School	260	71.4
	Private School	104	28.6
<b>Foreign Language Level</b>	Good	46	12.6
	Average	201	55.2
	Poor	117	32.1
<b>Income of the Family</b>	0-1500 ₺	31	8.5
	1501-3000 ₺	94	25.8
	3001-5000 ₺	133	36.5
	5001-10000 ₺	84	23.1
	10001 ₺ and over	22	6

The descriptive questions given in Table 1 were asked in the questionnaire, but it was not necessary to use all of them for the analyses. In order to analyse the information obtained and to reach the desired target the determinants such as ‘place of residence’, ‘mother’s education level’, ‘father’s education level’, ‘having a family member who knows a foreign language’, and ‘income of the family’ were used.

### **3.4. Methods of Data Collection**

A questionnaire to be used in this thesis was initially created by the researcher. It has been prepared considering the literature review since there is no other study investigating the link between cultural dimensions and foreign language learning. Questions were prepared for each subject in literature review and a question list was created with expert opinion. A questionnaire with a total of 47 items, covering the whole of the subject and including demographic information, was prepared with expert opinion. The process of transforming the questionnaire to a scale is given in the sections 3.5 and 3.6.

The research technique used for this study consists of a scale which was answered by 400 university students. The research was conducted at a private university in Konya province of Turkey. The scale (see Appendix 1) contained two sections, categorised as follows: 1. Demographic information, 2. Questions containing motivational factors for foreign language learning, cultural differences, language differences, cultural identity, and learning environment affecting foreign language learning. The first section was aimed to find out the demographical and sociological background of the students including gender, sciences they are studying, place of residence, educational level of mothers, educational level of fathers, mother's foreign language knowledge, father's foreign language knowledge, having a family member who knows a foreign language, any relatives living abroad, type of last school, foreign language knowledge of participants and income level of the family. In the second section, students are expected to answer the questions by selecting scores from a 5-point Likert scale (1 = I strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = I strongly agree). In the survey scale, students first answered the demographic information section and then proceeded to the 5-point Likert scale section. The explanations required were made by the researcher to the participants before the application.

### **3.5. Data Collection Process**

As mentioned above, the data collection method of the research is a scale. After receiving permission from the university to conduct the scale, firstly it was applied in October 2017 to measure the validity and reliability, and to change the questionnaire into a scale. The pilot study was applied to 190 students. Factor analysis of applied questionnaire was performed, so it grouped under five factors and turned into a scale. Expert opinion was taken, and mistakes were corrected before it was reapplied. The scale, of which validity and reliability were defined, was reapplied to 400 (364 participants were left, 36 participants extreme value) students between November and December of 2017 and the results were obtained.

### 3.6. Factor Analysis of the Questionnaire and Scale Procedure

Identification of the reliability and validity of a study is important to know the degree to which the data obtained is useful to analyse and whether the findings of the study are available to practice. If a new questionnaire is to be prepared and used in a research, the measurement of validity and reliability should be estimated. The planned questionnaire to be implemented was prepared in Turkish (see Appendix 2) to avoid a confusion of meaning and in terms of the fact that the participants could express themselves better. After collecting empirical data, factor analysis was used to investigate the frequency values and after the extreme value analysis was done, participants who were coding outside of the tolerance limits of +/- 3 and showing extreme value properties were dropped. Normally there were 190 participants and 162 participants were left after this analysis (28 participants extreme value). In factor analysis, those below .30 and overlapping items were discarded (Items 4, 7, 16, 23). There are 32 non-demographic items remaining. Items 4 and 23 were about socio-economic factors related foreign language learning. With expert opinion, instead of these items, an item has been added to demographic information to measure this situation. The remaining 32 items were collected under five factors and the expressions for each item are shown in the table 3.2.

*Table 3.2. Detailed Factor Analysis Results.*

<b>Item numbers</b>	<b>Factor 1 (motivation for foreign language learning)</b>	<b>Factor 2 (cultural difference)</b>	<b>Factor 3 (effects of native language)</b>	<b>Factor 4 (attitudes towards foreigners)</b>	<b>Factor 5 (effects of learning environment)</b>
Item 33	.814				
Item 26	.718				
Item 24	.699				
Item 27	.697				

Item 31	.674				
Item 34	.655				
Item 32	.644				
Item 10		.785			
Item 12		.769			
Item 11		.759			
Item 14		.679			
Item 15		.556			
Item 9		.486			
Item 13		.453			
Item 8		.408			
Item 36			.843		
Item 35			.818		
Item 20			.645		
Item 19			.633		
Item 22			.494		
Item 21			.409		



Item 28				.773	
Item 29				.771	
Item 30				.735	
Item 18				.483	
Item 17				.367	
Item 2					.722
Item 1					.711
Item 3					.576
Item 6					.552
Item 5					.492
Item 25					.408
Variance Ratio = Sum (50.018%)	12.639%	11.280%	9.011%	8.614%	8.474%
Reliability Coefficients Sum (.837) The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the scale was .837.	.804	.797	.741	.708	.703

KMO = .751

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: Approx. Chi-Square = 2302,073      df = 496

Sig. = .000

As it is shown in Table 3.2. Factor 1 has seven questions (item 33, item 26, item 24, item 27, item 31, item 34, item 32), Factor 2 has eight questions (item 10, item 12, item 11, item 14, item 15, item 9, item 13, item 8), Factor 3 has six questions (item 36, item 35, item 20, item 19, item 22, item 21), Factor 4 has five questions (item 28, item 29, item 30, item 18, item 17) and Factor 5 has five questions (item 2, item 1, item 3, item 6, item 5, item 25). The reliability of Factor 1 (Motivation for foreign language learning) is .804, the reliability of Factor 2 (Cultural Differences) is .797, the reliability of Factor 3 (Effects of native language) is .741, the reliability of Factor 4 (Attitudes towards foreigners) is .708, and the reliability of Factor 5 (Effects of learning environment) is .703. The Variance Ratio is 50.018% and Reliability Coefficient is .737. The items collected under different factors are given in Table 3.3.

*Table 3.3. The groups of factors.*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Item Numbers in the Questionnaire</b>
Motivation for foreign language learning	33, 26, 24, 27, 31, 34, 32,
Cultural Differences	10, 12, 11, 14, 15, 9, 13, 8
Effects of native language	36, 35, 20, 19, 22, 21
Attitudes towards foreigners	28, 29, 30, 18, 17
Effects of learning environment	2, 1, 3, 6, 5, 25

After factor analysis was applied to the questionnaire, the results show that questions are divided in five factors which turns it into a scale. The scale has been named as 'Scale for the Effects of Culture on Foreign Language Learning' by the researcher. The expressions which were removed after the factor analysis are listed below:

1) Item 4: The socioeconomic level of my family influences my foreign language learning.

2) Item 7: There is somebody at home from whom I can get help while learning foreign language.

3) Item 16: Where I grew up, people who know a foreign language are precious.

4) Item 23: The socioeconomic level of the society in which I grow up affects my foreign language learning.

As a result of the analyses and changes made, the scale was ready to check the effects of cultural factors on foreign language learning.

### **3.7. Data Analysis Process**

In this section, the researcher will explain how the collected data is analysed and how the results are obtained. The data obtained by the scale were analysed using statistical package program. One-way extreme value scanning was performed on the data, and by determining  $\pm 3$  as the cut point (Raykov and Marcoulides, 2008), and excluding the values outside this cut point out of the analysis, analyses were made. The normality of the data was checked by the skewness-kurtosis coefficients. For the skewness-kurtosis coefficients, the  $\mp 1$  interval is considered as the cut point. Measurements from a population with normal distribution should usually be accepted as parametric (Garth, 2008). Therefore, data with normal distribution were analysed with parametric methods such as One-way Anova Test and Independent Samples T-Test, and data with non-normal distribution were analysed with nonparametric methods such as Mann Whitney-U Test (2 Independent Samples) and Kruskal-Wallis Test (3+ Independent Samples).

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Introduction

To investigate the effects of culture on foreign language learning, the scale was applied to 364 students at a private university in Konya province of Turkey. The data obtained by the scale were analysed using statistical package program. In this chapter, the researcher will give the results of the study and explain how the tests were applied to data. The findings will be given under five titles (motivation for foreign language learning, cultural differences, the effects of native language, attitudes towards foreigners and the effects of learning environment).

#### 4.2. Motivation for Foreign Language Learning

In this section the results of the first research question will be given. The question is: Are there any significant differences among the participants in motivation for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family? Data with normal distribution were analysed with parametric methods such as One-way ANOVA Test and Independent Samples T-Test, and data with non-normal distribution were analysed with nonparametric methods such as Mann Whitney-U Test (2 Independent Samples) and Kruskal-Wallis Test (3+ Independent Samples).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the participants for 'motivation for foreign language learning' sub-dimension differed in terms of the place of residence of participants. Test results are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Motivation for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence.

	The Place of Residence	N	Mean Rank	df	$\chi^2$	p
<b>Motivation for Foreign Language Learning</b>	Village	35	181.41	3	3.435	0.329
	Town	18	165.22			
	City	105	169.45			
	Metropolis	206	190.84			

\*p<0.05

As shown in the table 4.1, there is no significant difference among participants' scores for 'motivation for foreign language learning' ( $\chi^2_{df=3, n=364}=3.435$ , p=0.329) sub-dimension in terms of their place of residence.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the participants for 'motivation for foreign language learning' sub-dimension differed in terms of the education level of mothers. Test results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Motivation for foreign language learning in terms of the education level of mothers.

	Mother's Education Level	N	Mean Rank	df	$\chi^2$	p
<b>Motivation for Foreign Language Learning</b>	Illiterate	7	252.07	4	7.265	0.123
	Primary School	150	169.70			
	Graduate					
	Secondary School	67	191.05			
	Graduate					
	High-School Graduate	71	179.94			
	Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	69	197.61			

\*p<0.05

As indicated in the Table 4.2, there is no significant difference among the scores of individuals included in the study for 'motivation for foreign language learning'

( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=7.265, p=0.123$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the education level of their mothers.

One-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the participants for 'motivation for foreign language learning' sub-dimension differed in terms of the participants' fathers' education levels. Test results are shown in Table 4.3.

*Table 4.3. Motivation for foreign language learning in terms of the education level of fathers.*

	<b>Source of Variance</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Motivation for Foreign Language Learning</b>	Between Groups	91.506	3	30.502	1.992	0.115
	Within Groups	5511.492	360	15.310		
	Total	5602.997	363			

\*p<0.05

According to the one-way ANOVA test results, it was determined that the scores of participants did not differ significantly in 'motivation for foreign language learning' ( $F_{(3,363)}=1.992, p=0.115$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the participants' fathers' education levels.

The independent samples T-Test was conducted to determine whether the scores gathered from participants for 'motivation for foreign language learning' sub-dimension differed significantly in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language. Test results are shown in Table 4.4.

*Table 4.4. Motivation for foreign language learning in terms of whether or not students have a family member who knows a foreign language.*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Motivation for Foreign Language Learning</b>	Yes	268	30.64	3.83	362	1.173	0.241
	No	96	30.09	4.18			

\*p<0.05

According to the results obtained, it was determined that the scores of 'motivational for foreign language learning' ( $t_{(362)} = 1.173, p=0.241$ ) sub-dimension gathered from the individuals included in the study did not significantly differ in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of participants for 'motivation for foreign language learning' sub-dimension varied in terms of participants' family income. Test results are shown in Table 4.5.

*Table 4.5. Motivation for foreign language learning in terms of students' family income.*

	Family Income	N	Mean Rank	df	$\chi^2$	p
<b>Motivation for Foreign Language Learning</b>	0-1500 ₺	31	198.65	4	3.008	0.556
	1501-3000 ₺	94	167.55			
	3001-5000 ₺	133	187.39			
	5001-10000 ₺	84	184.45			
	10001 ₺ and over	22	186.57			

\*p<0.05

As seen in the table 5, there is no significant difference among participants scores for 'motivation for foreign language learning' ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364} = 3.008, p=0.556$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the income of the families.

### 4.3. Cultural Differences

In this section the results of the second research question will be given. The question is: Are there any significant differences among the participants in cultural differences for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family? Data with normal distribution were analysed with parametric methods such as One-way ANOVA Test and Independent Samples T-Test, and data with non-normal distribution were analysed with nonparametric

methods such as Mann Whitney-U Test (2 Independent Samples) and Kruskal-Wallis Test (3+ Independent Samples).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the individuals included in the study for ‘cultural differences’ sub-dimension differed in terms of the place of residence of participants. Test results are shown in Table 4.6.

*Table 4.6. Cultural differences in terms of the place of residence.*

	<b>The Place of Residence</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Cultural Differences</b>	Village	35	167.66	3	5.200	0.158
	Town	18	196.08			
	City	105	166.34			
	Metropolis	206	192.07			

\*p<0.05

As shown in the table 4.6, there is no significant difference among participants’ scores for ‘cultural differences’ ( $\chi^2_{df=3, n=364}=5.200, p=0.158$ ) sub-dimension in terms of their place of residence.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for ‘cultural differences’ sub-dimension varied in terms of the education level of mothers. Test results are shown in Table 4.7.

*Table 4.7. Cultural differences in terms of the education level of mothers.*

	<b>Mother’s Education Level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Cultural Differences</b>	Illiterate	7	240.29	4	11.905*	0.018
	Primary School Graduate	150	163.31			
	Secondary School Graduate	67	208.95			
	High-School Graduate	71	183.61			
	Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	69	191.54			

\*p<0.05



As indicated in the Table 4.7, according to scores of participants it can be said that the differentiation in ‘cultural differences’ ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=11.905, p=0.018$ ) sub-dimension is the point to take into consideration. Mann Whitney-U test was performed respectively for all groups in all sub-dimensions to identify the source of the difference. According to test results; it has been identified that in ‘cultural differences’ sub-dimension, the scores of the children of mothers at the level of the secondary school graduate and the primary school graduate are different ( $U=3801.00, p=0.004$ ). When the mean rank is taken into consideration, the scores of the children of the secondary school graduate mothers were found to be higher than the scores of the children of the mothers at the primary school graduate level.

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine whether the participants’ scores of ‘cultural differences’ sub-dimension differed in terms of the participants’ fathers’ education levels. Test results are shown in Table 4.8.

*Table 4.8. Cultural differences in terms of the education level of fathers.*

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
<b>Cultural Differences</b>	Between Groups	97.831	3	32.610	1.386	0.247
	Within Groups	8467.320	360	23.520		
	Total	8565.151	363			

\* $p<0.05$

According to the one-way ANOVA test results, it was determined that the scores of individuals included in the study did not significantly differ in ‘cultural differences’ ( $F_{(3,363)}=1.386, p=0.247$ ) sub-dimension in terms of their fathers’ education levels.

The independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether the scores gathered from participants for ‘cultural differences’ sub-dimension differed significantly in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language. Test results are shown in Table 4.9.

*Table 4.9. Cultural differences in terms of whether or not students have a family member who knows a foreign language.*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{X}$	<b>S</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Cultural Differences</b>	Yes	268	32.51	4.98	362	1.609	0.108
	No	96	31.58	4.43			

\*p<0.05

According to the results obtained, it was determined that the scores of 'cultural differences' ( $t_{(362)}= 1.609$ ,  $p=0.108$ ) sub-dimension gathered from the individuals included in the study did not significantly differ in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for 'cultural differences' sub-dimension varied in terms of participants' family income levels. Test results are shown in Table 4.10.

*Table 4.10. Cultural differences in terms of students' family income.*

	<b>Family Income</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	$\chi^2$	<b>p</b>
<b>Cultural Differences</b>	0-1500 ₺	31	196.85	4	15.160**	0.004
	1501-3000 ₺	94	153.71			
	3001-5000 ₺	133	190.81			
	5001-10000 ₺	84	181.14			
	10001 ₺ and over	22	240.27			

\*\*p<0.01

As seen in the table 4.10, it was determined that the difference among participants' scores for 'cultural differences' ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=15.160$ ,  $p=0.004$ ) sub-dimension is the point to take into consideration. Mann Whitney-U test was performed respectively for all groups in all sub-dimensions to identify the source of the difference. According to test results; it was determined that in 'cultural differences' sub-dimensions there are differences between the scores of the individuals with a family income of 10001 TL and over and the individuals with a family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL ( $U=565.50$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), the individuals with a family income of

3001 TL-5000 TL ( $U=1047.500$ ,  $p=0.033$ ), the individuals with a family income of 5001 TL-10000 TL ( $U=608.00$ ,  $p=0.014$ ). When the mean ranks are taken into consideration, it can be said that the scores of the individuals with a family income of 10001 TL and over are higher than those with family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL, 3001 TL-5000 TL and 5001 TL-10000 TL. Besides that, the scores of the individuals with family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL and the individuals with family income of 3001 TL-5000 TL differed significantly ( $U=4939.00$ ,  $p=0.007$ ). When the mean rank is examined, it is observed that the scores of the individuals with family income of 3001 TL-5000 TL are higher than the scores of the individuals with family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL.

#### **4.4. The Effects of Native Language**

In this section the results of the third research question will be given. The question is: Are there any significant differences among the participants in the effects of native language for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family? Data with normal distribution were analysed with parametric methods such as One-way ANOVA Test and Independent Samples T-Test, and data with non-normal distribution were analysed with nonparametric methods such as Mann Whitney-U Test (2 Independent Samples) and Kruskal-Wallis Test (3+ Independent Samples).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the individuals included in the study for 'effects of native languages' sub-dimension differed in terms of the place of residence of participants. Test results are shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11. *Effects of native language in terms of the place of residence.*

	<b>The Place of Residence</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Effects of Native Language</b>	Village	35	193.53	3	2.008	0.571
	Town	18	201.44			
	City	105	172.39			
	Metropolis	206	184.12			

\*p<0.05

As shown in the table 4.11, there is no significant difference among participants' scores for 'effects of native language' ( $\chi^2_{df=3, n=364}=2.008, p=0.571$ ) sub-dimension in terms of their place of residence.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for 'effects of native languages' sub-dimension varied in terms of the education level of mothers. Test results are shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12. *Effects of native language in terms of the education level of mothers.*

	<b>Mother's Education Level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Effects of Native Language</b>	Illiterate	7	130.00	4	2.981	0.561
	Primary School Graduate	150	180.54			
	Secondary School Graduate	67	195.18			
	High-School Graduate	71	177.67			
	Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	69	184.75			

\*p<0.05

As indicated in the table 4.12, there are no significant differences among the scores of individuals included in the study for 'effects of native language'

( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=2.981, p=0.561$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the education levels of their mothers.

One-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine whether the scores of 'effects of native language' sub-dimension differed in terms of the participants' fathers' education levels. Test results are shown in Table 4.13.

*Table 4.13. Effects of native language in terms of the education level of fathers.*

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
<b>Effects of Native Language</b>	Between Groups	0.852	3	0.284	0.014	0.998
	Within Groups	7204.387	360	20.012		
	Total	7205.239	363			

\*p<0.05

According to the one-way ANOVA test results, it was determined that the scores of individuals included in the study did not significantly differ in 'effects of native language' ( $F_{(3,363)}=0.014, p=0.998$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the education level of fathers.

The independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether the scores gathered from participants for 'effects of native language' sub-dimension differed significantly in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language. Test results are shown in Table 4.14.

*Table 4.14. Effects of native language in terms of whether or not students have a family member who knows a foreign language.*

	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	t	p
<b>Effects of Native Language</b>	Yes	268	19.07	4.33	362	2.404*	0.017
	No	96	17.81	4.67			

\*p<0.05

According to the results obtained, it was determined that the scores of participants for 'effects of native language' ( $t_{(362)}= 2.404, p=0.017$ ) sub-dimension differ

significantly in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language. It can be said that the scores of the participants having a family member who knows a foreign language ( $\bar{X}=19.07$ ) are higher than the scores of the participants who do not have a family member knowing a foreign language ( $\bar{X}=17.81$ ).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for 'effects of native languages' sub-dimension varied in terms of participants' family income. Test results are shown in Table 4.15.

*Table 4.15. Effects of native language in terms of students' family income.*

	<b>Family Income</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Effects of Native Language</b>	0-1500 ₺	31	185.65	4	4.194	0.380
	1501-3000 ₺	94	197.74			
	3001-5000 ₺	133	173.30			
	5001-10000 ₺	84	184.97			
	10001 ₺ and over	22	159.11			

\*p<0.05

As seen in the Table 4.15, there is no significant difference among the scores of participants for 'effects of native language' ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=4.194, p=0.380$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the income of the families.

#### **4.5. The Attitudes towards Foreigners**

In this section the results of the fourth research question will be given. The question is: Are there any significant differences among the participants in the attitudes towards foreigners for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family? Data with normal distribution were analysed with parametric methods such as One-way ANOVA Test and Independent Samples T-Test, and data with non-normal distribution were analysed

with nonparametric methods such as Mann Whitney-U Test (2 Independent Samples) and Kruskal-Wallis Test (3+ Independent Samples).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the individuals included in the study for ‘attitudes towards foreigners’ sub-dimension differed in terms of the place of residence of participants. Test results are shown in Table 4.16.

*Table 4.16. Attitudes towards foreigners in terms of the place of residence.*

	<b>The Place of Residence</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Attitudes Towards Foreigners</b>	Village	35	183.17	3	1.466	0.690
	Town	18	158.58			
	City	105	178.05			
	Metropolis	206	186.74			

\*p<0.05

As shown in the table 4.16, there is no significant difference among participants’ scores for ‘attitudes towards foreigners’ ( $\chi^2_{df=3, n=364}=1.466, p=0.690$ ) sub-dimension in terms of their place of residence.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for ‘attitudes towards foreigners’ sub-dimension varied in terms of the education level of mothers. Test results are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17. Attitudes towards foreigners in terms of the education level of mothers.

	Mother's Education Level	N	Mean Rank	df	$\chi^2$	p
<b>Attitudes Towards Foreigners</b>	Illiterate	7	151.64	4	7.930	0.094
	Primary School	150	166.95			
	Graduate					
	Secondary School	67	199.83			
	Graduate					
	High-School	71	183.98			
	Graduate					
	Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	69	201.09			

\*p<0.05

As indicated in the Table 4.17, there is no significant difference among the scores of individuals included in the study for 'attitudes towards foreigners' ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=7.930, p=0.094$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the education levels of their mothers.

One-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine whether the scores of 'attitudes towards foreigners' sub-dimension differed in terms of the participants' fathers' education levels. Test results are shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18. Attitudes towards foreigners in terms of the education level of fathers.

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
<b>Attitudes Towards Foreigners</b>	Between Groups	98.087	3	32.696	2.263	0.071
	Within Groups	4980.602	360	13.835		
	Total	5078.690	363			

\*p<0.05

According to the one-way ANOVA test results, it was determined that the scores of individuals included in the study did not significantly differ in 'attitudes towards



foreigners' ( $F_{(3,363)}=2.263, p=0.071$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the education level of fathers.

The independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether the scores gathered from participants for 'attitudes towards foreigners' sub-dimension differed significantly in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language. Test results are shown in Table 4.19.

*Table 4.19. Attitudes towards foreigners in terms of whether or not students have a family member who knows a foreign language.*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{X}$	<b>S</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Attitudes</b>	Yes	268	17.15	3.71	362	2.612**	0.009
<b>Towards</b>	No	96	16.00	3.69			
<b>Foreigners</b>							

\*\*p<0.01

According to the results obtained, it was determined that participants' scores have significantly differentiated in 'Attitudes Towards Foreigners' sub-dimension in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language ( $t_{(362)}=2.612, p=0.009$ ). The scores of participants with a family member who knows a foreign language ( $\bar{X}=17.15$ ) are higher than the scores of participants who do not have a family member knowing a foreign language ( $\bar{X}=16.00$ ).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for 'attitudes towards foreigners' sub-dimension varied in terms of participants' family income. Test results are shown in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20. Attitudes towards foreigners in terms of students' family income.

	Family Income	N	Mean Rank	df	$\chi^2$	p
<b>Attitudes Towards Foreigners</b>	0-1500 ₺	31	164.61	4	4.564	0.335
	1501-3000 ₺	94	200.22			
	3001-5000 ₺	133	179.41			
	5001-10000 ₺	84	179.33			
	10001 ₺ and over	22	162.77			

\*p<0.05

As seen in the Table 4.20, there is no significant difference the scores of the participants in 'attitudes towards foreigners' ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364}=4.564, p=0.335$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the income of the families.

#### 4.6. The Effects of Learning Environment

In this section the results of the fifth research question will be given. The question is: Are there any significant differences among the participants in the effects of learning environment for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family? Data with normal distribution were analysed with parametric methods such as One-way ANOVA Test and Independent Samples T-Test, and data with non-normal distribution were analysed with nonparametric methods such as Mann Whitney-U Test (2 Independent Samples) and Kruskal-Wallis Test (3+ Independent Samples).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of the individuals included in the study for 'effects of learning environment' sub-dimension differed in terms of the place of residence of participants. Test results are shown in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21. *Effects of learning environment in terms of the place of residence.*

	<b>The Place of Residence</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Effects of Learning Environment</b>	Village	35	142.36	3	9.244*	0.026
	Town	18	200.33			
	City	105	171.01			
	Metropolis	206	193.62			

\*p<0.05

As shown in the Table 4.21, it can be said that the scores of the participants show a significant difference in ‘effects of learning environment’ sub-dimension ( $\chi^2_{df=3, n=364}=9.244, p=0.026$ ). Mann Whitney-U test was performed respectively for all groups in all sub-dimensions to identify the source of the difference. According to test results; a significant difference was found between the individuals living in the village and the individuals living in the town ( $U = 203.0, p = 0.034$ ) and the metropolis ( $U = 2595.0, p = 0.008$ ). Considering the mean ranks, it can be said that the scores of the participants living in the town and the metropolis are higher than the scores of the participants living in the village. No meaningful differences were found among the other groups.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for ‘effects of learning environment’ sub-dimension varied in terms of the education level of mothers. Test results are shown in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22. *Effects of learning environment in terms of the education level of mothers.*

	<b>Mother’s Education Level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Effects of Learning Environment</b>	Illiterate	7	103.21	4	19.370**	0.001
	Primary School	150	166.29			
	Graduate					
	Secondary School Graduate	67	206.36			

High-School Graduate	71	169.25
Bachelor's and Postgraduate Degree	69	216.24

\*\*p<0.01

As indicated in Table 4.22, it can be said that the differentiation in ‘effects of the learning environment’ ( $\chi^2_{df=3, n=364}=19.370, p=0.001$ ) sub-dimension is the point to take into consideration. Mann Whitney-U test was performed respectively for all groups in all sub-dimensions to identify the source of the difference. The results show that in ‘effects of learning environment’ sub-dimension, the scores of the children of the illiterate mothers differed significantly from the scores of the children of the mothers at the secondary school graduate level ( $U=116.00, p=0.028$ ) and of the children of the mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree ( $U=115.500, p=0.023$ ). When the mean ranks are examined, the scores of the children of the mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree levels and at the secondary school graduate level are higher than the scores of the children of the illiterate mothers. In addition, the scores of the children of mothers at the primary school graduate level differ significantly from both the scores of children of the mothers at the secondary school graduate level ( $U = 3958.500, p = 0.012$ ) and the scores of children of the mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree ( $U = 3736.00, p = 0.001$ ). According to mean ranks, it is determined that the scores of the children of mothers at the primary school graduate level are lower than both the scores of the children of the mothers at the secondary school graduate level and those of the mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree. It is found that the scores of the children of mothers at the secondary school graduate level differ significantly from the scores of the children of mothers at the high school graduate level ( $U = 1883.00, p = 0.034$ ); the scores of the children of mothers at the secondary school graduate level are higher than the scores of the children of mothers at the high school graduate level. Finally, it was determined that the scores of the children of mothers at the high school graduate level and the scores of the children of mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree significantly differed ( $U = 1768.50, p = 0.004$ ). According to mean ranks, the scores of the children of mothers with bachelor's and postgraduate

degrees are higher than the scores of the children of mothers at high school graduate level.

One-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine whether the participants' scores of 'effects of learning environment' sub-dimension differed in terms of the participants' fathers' education levels. Test results are shown in Table 4.23.

*Table 4.23. Effects of learning environment in terms of the education level of fathers.*

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
<b>Effects of Learning Environment</b>	Between Groups	184.367	3	61.456	4.419**	0.002
	Within Groups	4497.707	360	12.494		
	Total	4682.074	363			

\*\*p<0.01

According to the one-way ANOVA test results, it was determined that there is a significant difference among participants' scores for 'effects of learning environment' sub-dimension ( $F_{(3,363)}=4.419$ ,  $p=0.002$ ). Tukey test from post-hoc tests was performed to determine the source of the difference and according to the obtained results, it was determined that the scores of the children of fathers at primary school graduate level ( $\bar{X}=24.45$ ) are lower than the scores of the children of fathers at the bachelor's + postgraduate degree ( $\bar{X}=26.27$ ).

The independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether the scores gathered from participants for 'effects of learning environment' sub-dimension differed significantly in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language. Test results are shown in Table 4.24.

*Table 4.24. Effects of learning environment in terms of whether or not students have a family member who knows a foreign language.*

	Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	t	p
<b>Effects of Learning Environment</b>	Yes	268	25.72	3.33	143.049	3.087**	0.002
	No	96	24.29	4.07			

\*\*p<0.01

According to the results obtained, it was determined that the scores of participants differ significantly in 'effects of learning environment' sub-dimension in terms of whether or not they have a family member who knows a foreign language ( $t_{(143.049)} = 3.087, p=0.002$ ). The scores of participants with a family member who knows a foreign language ( $\bar{X}=25.72$ ) are higher than the scores of participants who do not have a family member knowing a foreign language ( $\bar{X}=24.29$ ).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the scores of individuals included in the study for 'effects of learning environment' sub-dimension varied in terms of participants' family income. Test results are shown in Table 4.25.

*Table 4.25. Effects of learning environment in terms of students' family income.*

	<b>Family Income</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>df</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Effects of Learning Environment</b>	0-1500 ₺	31	151.92	4	6.537	0.162
	1501-3000 ₺	94	169.84			
	3001-5000 ₺	133	188.26			
	5001-10000 ₺	84	191.76			
	10001 ₺ and over	22	209.52			

\* $p < 0.05$

As seen in the Table 4.25, there is no significant difference among participants' scores for 'effects of learning environments' ( $\chi^2_{df=4, n=364} = 6.537, p=0.162$ ) sub-dimension in terms of the income of the families.

Obtained findings revealed that while some factors showed a significant difference on foreign language learning in relation to cultural dimensions, on the other hand, it was observed that in some cultural dimensions, these factors have little or no effect on foreign language learning. The significant and puzzling relations that are found in the findings will be discussed in the discussion section of the current study.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

#### 5.1. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the findings gathered from the scale will be discussed. The research questions will be examined depending on the findings. Short and concise interpretations will be made on situations that have no significant difference between cultural factors and foreign language learning. If there is a significant difference according to the findings, it will be discussed how cultural factors (the place of residence, mother's education level, father's education level, having a family member who knows a foreign language learning, and family income level) affect the learning of foreign language.

The discussion has been divided into five different sections in accordance with research questions. The first one is titled as 'Motivation for foreign language learning' discussing whether or not cultural factors can be sources of motivation for foreign language learning. The second section is titled as 'Cultural differences' discussing how cultural factors shape cultural differences that affect foreign language learning. The third section is titled as 'Effects of native language' discussing how cultural factors shape the effects of native language on foreign language learning. The fourth section is titled as 'Attitudes towards foreigners' discussing how cultural factors shape the effects of attitudes towards foreigners on foreign language learning. The fifth section is titled as 'Effects of learning environment' discussing how cultural factors shape the effects of learning environment on foreign language learning.

##### 5.1.1. Motivation for Foreign Language Learning

Under this title, to find out whether cultural factors are a source of motivation for learning a foreign language, the researcher will discuss the results of the following research question: 'Are there any significant differences among the participants in motivation for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who

knows a foreign language, and income of the family?'. The study of Montero, Chaves and Alvarado (2014) shows that parents support their children in foreign language learning process because they know the importance of the languages. They state that the motivation parents provide encourages children during the process, but students are not supported by enough economic resources. However, it was found from the results that the factors such as the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language, and income of the family are not significant sources of motivation for foreign language learning in Turkish culture. It does not mean that there will not be a source of motivation for learning foreign languages depending on Turkish culture. The ideas on this issue will be declared in the suggestions section.

### **5.1.2 Cultural Differences**

It is not easy to understand the target language, and it is very important to be aware of cultural differences, but only in this way one knows how to respect other cultures and how to use their language (Wang, 2011). To find out whether cultural factors that shape cultural differences affect foreign language learning, the researcher will discuss the results of the following research question: 'Are there any significant differences among the participants in cultural differences for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language, and income of the family?'. All the results obtained from the scale revealed that while some factors (educational level of mother and income of the family) in Turkish culture affect the learning of foreign languages, the others (the place of residence, educational level of father, and having a family member who knows a foreign language) do not affect significantly. It is understood that cultural differences may affect foreign language learning in terms of educational level of mother and income of the family.

“Parents’ success in a family literacy program provides them with cultural knowledge, relational knowledge (i.e., parent-child relations), and brings about more involvement in their children’s schooling (cited in Zygouris-Coe, 2007, p. 8; NCFL, 1994).” It was indicated in findings that the scores of the children of mothers at the



level of the secondary school graduate and the primary school graduate are different. The results show that the scores of the children of the secondary school graduate mothers were found to be higher than the scores of the children of the mothers at the primary school graduate level. It shows that the educational level of mothers is a significant factor in cultural differences that affect students' foreign language learning process. However, it can not be said that illiterate mothers do not give importance to their children's foreign language learning. On the other hand, it is seen that secondary school graduate mothers and illiterate mothers are giving more importance to their children's foreign language learning. These mothers may know the importance of education and learning a foreign language for their children's future better than the others because of their living conditions.

It was also indicated in findings that in factors shaping cultural differences there are differences between the scores of the individuals with family income of 10001 TL and over and the individuals with a family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL, the individuals with family income of 3001 TL-5000 TL and the individuals with family income of 5001 TL-10000 TL. It can be said that the scores of the individuals with a family income of 10001 TL and over are higher than those with family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL, 3001 TL-5000 TL and 5001 TL-10000 TL. Besides that, it was determined that the scores of the individuals with family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL and the individuals with family income of 3001 TL-5000 TL differed significantly. It is observed that the scores of the individuals with family income of 3001 TL-5000 TL are higher than the scores of the individuals with family income of 1501 TL-3000 TL. In that vein Gayton (2010) states that socio-economic status makes differences in opportunities such as travel and academic progress in terms of foreign language learning. Similarly, the results of the current study show that family income creates significant differences in learning foreign languages. In this context, it can be said that in Turkish culture the students with high-income family are positively influenced in the foreign language learning process while the students with low-income family are negatively influenced. It can be because of that high-income families may have more opportunities than low-income families to offer their children to observe different cultures in the world.

### **5.1.3. The Effects of Native Language**

With this title, the researcher will discuss the results of the following research question: 'Are there any significant differences among the participants in the effects of native language for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language, and income of the family?'. When looking at the results of the scale, it is seen that 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' and 'family income' do not have influence on native language with regard to affecting foreign language learning, while 'having a family member who knows a foreign language' does. It is understood that native language may affect foreign language learning in terms of having a family member who knows a foreign language.

According to the results obtained, it is observed that the scores of the participants having a family member who knows a foreign language are higher than the scores of the participants who do not have a family member knowing a foreign language. It means that the presence of someone who knows a foreign language in the family affects native language and foreign language learning. Having a family member who knows a foreign language may give an opportunity to make a comparison between the native language and the foreign language. The individual may be inclined to make sentences in mother tongue in different ways when hearing this foreign language spoken. More importantly, this situation can make the individual predisposed to learning a foreign language.

### **5.1.4. The Attitudes towards Foreigners**

Under this title, the researcher will discuss the results of the following research question: 'Are there any significant differences among the participants in attitudes towards foreigners for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language, and income of the family?'. The results obtained from the scale indicate that 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' and 'family income' do not have influence on attitudes towards

foreigners with regard to affecting foreign language learning, while 'having a family member who knows a foreign language' does. It is seen that having a family member who knows a foreign language can shape individuals' attitudes towards foreigners in this regard.

From the results, it was determined that scores of participants with a family member who knows a foreign language are higher than the scores of participants who do not have a family member knowing a foreign language. It will be correct to say that the presence of someone who knows a foreign language in the family affect family members' attitudes towards foreigners positively. Montero, Chaves and Alvarado (2014) note that the negative attitude towards the foreign language or towards the cultures or countries in which it is spoken decreases the willingness to learn it. The positive interaction of family members with foreigners will contribute to students' foreign language learning. Similarly, Green (1995) indicates that cultural identity of person decides to create positive or negative attitudes towards foreign language learning and he supports that positive attitudes are only possible with 'intercultural awareness'. In this case, the fact that someone who knows a foreign language in the family actually breaks the prejudice against foreigners at first, and more importantly, it can also be considered as a positive factor to learn a foreign language in Turkish culture.

#### **5.1.5. The Effects of Learning Environment**

To make the results more comprehensible, the researcher will discuss the results of the following research question under this title: 'Are there any significant differences among the participants in effects of learning environment for foreign language learning in terms of the place of residence, educational level of mother, educational level of father, having a family member who knows a foreign language, and income of the family?'. Battleson (as cited in Han, 2007) argues that the proportion of those participating in literacy activities in families directly affects the literacy development of the children and all family members, including grandparents, contribute to children's literacy development. The results show that 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' and 'having a family member who knows a foreign language' have influence on learning environment that affect

foreign language learning, while 'family income' does not. These results confirm that the learning environment in Turkish culture has a great importance in learning foreign languages because it has been revealed that four of the five cultural factors studied in the research were found to affect the learning environment.

Firstly, it can be said that the place of residence of students affects learning environment for foreign language learning. According to results; a significant difference was found between the individuals living in the village and the individuals living in the town, city and the metropolis. It revealed that the scores of the participants living in the town, city and the metropolis are higher than the scores of the participants living in the village. It is understood that the foreign language learning environments of the students living in town, city and the metropolis are better than the students living in the village. This may be because the opportunities in the town, city and the metropolis are better than in the village. On the other hand, the highest scores belong to children living in towns. The fact that the learning environment in the town is better than the others can be attributed not only to having better conditions than villages but also to being away from the stress of city and metropolis life.

Secondly, it can be said that the educational level of mother of students affects learning environment for foreign language learning. Nikolov (2009) indicates that there is a strong relationship between education level of parents and achievement of students in language learning. Similarly, the results show that the scores of the children of the mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree levels and at the secondary school graduate level are higher than the scores of the children of the illiterate mothers. It is also determined that the scores of the children of mothers at the primary school graduate level are lower than both the scores of the children of the mothers at the secondary school graduate level and those of the mothers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree. Besides that, the scores of the children of mothers at the secondary school graduate level were higher than the scores of the children of mothers at the high school graduate level. Finally, the scores of the children of mothers with bachelor's and postgraduate degrees are higher than the scores of the children of mothers at high school graduate level. Generally, it is understood that if students have a mother with a high-level of education, they can have better learning environment for foreign language learning than the students

have a mother with a low level of education. It may be because of that mothers with a high-level of education are able to analyse the educational process well and provide the necessary settings for their children. It may also result in like that because mothers with a high-level of education place importance on foreign language learning. They can know the importance of learning foreign languages for the career of their children.

Thirdly, from the results it was determined that the scores of the children of fathers at primary school graduate level were lower than the scores of the children of fathers at the bachelor's and postgraduate degree. It can be understood that if students have fathers with high-level of education they will have better learning environment for foreign language learning than the students have fathers with low level of education. However, according to results it can be said that the education of mothers of students is more important than the education of fathers of students for learning environment of foreign language. It may result in like that because in Turkish cultures, mothers deal with their children and their education much more than fathers.

Finally, according to the results obtained, it was determined that the scores of participants with a family member who knows a foreign language are higher than the scores of participants who do not have a family member knowing a foreign language. It is understood that in Turkish culture the presence of someone who knows a foreign language in the family affects the learning environment of foreign language positively. The reason can be that the person who has previously learned a foreign language knows how to design a foreign language learning environment. Besides, it is known that the person who knows a foreign language also helps the student in this regard. These results reflect the views of Lieshoff et al. (2004). They state that as a matter of culture, language, and education, it is clear that family literacy affects children's eventual literacy and limited literacy may limit positive parental involvement in the education of their children.

## 5.2. CONCLUSION

In this section the researcher will explain what he has done throughout the research, the results of the research and to what extent the research is successful. The literature review of study showed that culture has a profound influence on foreign language learning. All common grounds of culture such as; knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, symbols, achievements, values, experiences, past generations, attitudes, assumptions, orientations to life, policies, collective programming of the mind, procedures and behavioural conventions shape cultural differences, education, family literacy, socioeconomic factors and identity. The reviewed data reflect that language differences, differences in education, family literacy, socioeconomic factors, identity and predisposition to target culture covered by a culture can direct foreign language learning.

This current thesis study aims to find out which cultural factors and cultural dimensions in Turkish culture affect students' foreign language learning. The research takes place in the fields of Foreign Language Teaching, Linguistic Anthropology and Sociocultural Anthropology. It was conducted at a private university in Konya province of Turkey. A scale, which comes out of a questionnaire that proved its validity and reliability by applying factor analysis, was used as a data collection tool. The data gathered from 364 participants were used to ensure findings. The place of residence, mother's education level, father's education level, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family answered by participants were used as cultural factors that wanted to be analyse with five subdimensions of Turkish culture (motivation for foreign language learning, cultural differences, effects of native language, attitudes towards foreigners and effects of learning environment) affecting students' foreign language learning.

The results show that in Turkish culture the place of residence, mother's education level, father's education level, having a family member who knows a foreign language and income of the family do not affect students' motivation for foreign language learning. This situation is only valid for the motivation factor. When looking at cultural differences subdimension in Turkish culture it is seen that the place of residence, father's education level and having a family member who knows a foreign language that shape cultural differences do not affect significantly students'

foreign language learning. On the other hand, mother's education level and income of the family create significant differences in learning foreign languages. In this case, mothers at high education level and families with high income affect students' foreign language learning in a positive way. The results also show that cultural factors such as 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' and 'income of the family' in Turkish culture do not have influence on native language with regard to affecting students' foreign language learning. On the other hand, having a family member who knows a foreign language affects the use of native language and foreign language learning of students at the same time. The presence of a foreign language in the family creates wealth in language development. It is concluded from the results that 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' and 'income of the family' cultural factors in Turkish culture do not have influence on individuals' attitudes towards foreigners with regard to affecting students' foreign language learning while having a family member who knows a foreign language shapes individuals' attitudes towards foreigners in this regard. The presence of someone who knows a foreign language in the family affects family members' attitudes towards foreigners positively. The positive interaction of family members with foreigners contributes to students' foreign language learning. This can also be considered as a positive factor to learn a foreign language in Turkish culture. Finally, the results show that in Turkish culture 'the place of residence', 'mother's education level', 'father's education level' and 'having a family member who knows a foreign language' have influence on learning environment that affect foreign language learning, while 'family income' does not. It is concluded that the foreign language learning environments of the students living in town and the metropolis are better than the students living in the village. Besides, if students have a mother with a high-level of education, they can have better learning environment for foreign language learning than the students have a mother with a low level of education, and if students have fathers with high-level of education they will have better learning environment for foreign language learning than the students have fathers with low level of education. According to the results it can be said that the education of mothers is more important than the education of fathers for learning environment of foreign language. Uluğtekin (1977) states that mother's behaviours had a great effect on their children's behaviours; however, there is no meaningful relationship between the behaviours of the father and the behaviours of the children.

It is also concluded that in Turkish culture the presence of someone who knows a foreign language in the family affects the learning environment of foreign language positively.

It is seen that the place of residence, education level of fathers and family income are only affecting students' learning environment for foreign language learning. Education level of mothers is both creating cultural differences may affect foreign language learning and affecting students' learning environment for foreign language learning. Having a family member who knows a foreign language is affecting native language, attitudes towards foreigners and learning environment in terms of foreign language learning.

All in all, from the cultural factors in Turkish culture 'mother's education level' and 'having a family member who knows a foreign language' affect the students' foreign language learning most. The most important factor for students in foreign language learning is how the learning environment is shaped.

### **5.3. SUGGESTIONS**

In this section the researcher will explain the difficulties encountered during this study and will make suggestions for both further studies and what should be done for students' foreign language learning according to findings. The suggestions will be given in two lists. The first list is for further studies:

- a) Cultural factors influencing students' motivation for learning foreign languages were not reached in the research. In this context, it is recommended to study different cultural factors which may affect the motivation of foreign language learning or to carry out a broader research of the same factors in further studies.
- b) It is a question of whether the desired heterogeneous population has been reached, as the research has been applied to students studying at a private university. It is recommended by the researcher that similar studies like this should be conducted with more participants and in different universities.
- c) If this research is desired to be done in different countries, it is suggested to analyse and select well the cultural factors in the country.



- d) How the presence of foreign language in the family affects the native language may be a research topic for further ethnographic studies.

The second list is for what should be done for students' foreign language learning according to findings:

- a) Based on the results of the research, it is recommended to prepare the learning environment well for students who are trying to learn a foreign language and get help from the people who are good at learning foreign languages.
- b) It is necessary to make necessary arrangements for raising the education level of mothers throughout the country and to increase the possibilities in this regard. Maternal education should be prepared about how to prepare a foreign language learning environment for children.
- c) Mothers should be provided with opportunities to receive training on foreign languages and how to help their children (professional teaching knowledge) in this regard, and if possible, these opportunities should be increased.
- d) Material support should be provided by government for children living and studying in the villages, and families in the villages should be informed about the learning environment setting.
- e) In order to lighten mothers' burden in terms of foreign language education for their children, fathers should also make an effort and they should take education in this regard.
- f) If there is no one who knows a foreign language in the family, children should be exposed to foreign languages in the home environment using technology, games, visuals and other possibilities as much as possible. To make it more effective, families should be informed by experts.
- g) It is also recommended that parents who want to help their children learning foreign languages should work with their children to identify foreign cultures.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Scale for the effects of culture on foreign language learning (English)

This scale was prepared for the purpose of collecting data for thesis study entitled "How does Culture Shape Foreign Language Learning?" in master's thesis stage and will definitely be used for scientific purposes. Thank you for your participation.

Haci Mehmet ÖCAL

#### Demographic Information

Please chose the option that is right for you.

**1. Your gender** a) female b) male

**2. Department you are studying:** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Place where you grew up**

a) village b) town c) city d) metropolis

**4. What is the education level of your mother?**

a) illiterate

b) primary school graduate

c) secondary school graduate

d) high-school graduate

e) bachelor's degree

f) postgraduate

**5. What is the education level of your father?**

a) illiterate

b) primary school graduate

c) secondary school graduate

d) high-school graduate

e) bachelor's degree

f) postgraduate

**6. Does your mother know a foreign language?** a) yes b) no

**7. Does your father know a foreign language?** a) yes b) no

**8. Does anyone in your family know a foreign language?** a) yes b) no

**9. Do you have a relative living abroad?** a) yes b) no

**10. What was the type of your previous school?** a) state b) private

**11. What is your level of foreign language proficiency?** a) good b) average c) poor

**12. What is the monthly income level of your family?** a) 0-1500 TL b) 1501-3000 TL c) 3001-5000 TL d) 5001-10000 TL e) 10001 TL and over

Please tick the box in the column that best reflects your thoughts for the following questions.

		I Strogly Disagree	I Disagree	Neutral	I Agree	I Strongly Agree
1	I want to go abroad.					
2	Participating in foreign exchange programs motivates me to know a foreign language.					
3	My curiosity about foreign cultures motivates me to learn foreign languages.					

4	I want to communicate with foreign friends coming from abroad.					
5	I enjoy the cultural interaction with foreigners.					
6	I find it necessary to learn a foreign language.					
7	I want to know different cultures.					
8	Where I grew up, people respect the foreigners.					
9	Where I grew up, foreigners are well hosted.					
10	Where I grew up, people help foreigners.					
11	Where I grew up, people show tolerance to different behaviours of foreigners.					
12	Where I grew up, people show tolerance to foreign languages.					
13	My family supports me to go abroad.					
14	Where I grew up, people communicate with foreigners even if they do not know foreign languages.					
15	My family wants me to have foreign friends.					
16	Differences between the two cultures affect my foreign language learning negatively.					
17	Differences between the two cultures affect my foreign language learning					

	positively.					
18	Differences between the two languages affect my foreign language learning negatively.					
19	Differences between the two languages affect my foreign language learning positively.					
20	My lack of knowledge in my mother language affects my foreign language learning negatively.					
21	My knowledge in my mother language affects my foreign language learning positively.					
22	I help my foreign friends with problems about language differences.					
23	I help my foreign friends with problems about cultural differences.					
24	I get information from my foreign friends about their culture.					
25	My previous education contributes to communication with foreigners.					
26	Where I grow up, I can often come across foreigners.					
27	My family motivates me to learn a foreign language.					
28	My family believes in the importance of knowing a foreign language.					
29	My family gives all kinds of financial support to me for learning a foreign					



	language.					
30	I can easily access audio-visual resources (internet, CDs, movies, etc.) that will support foreign language learning at home.					
31	I can find written material supporting foreign language learning in our home supporting foreign language learning.					
32	My academic major requires a good level of foreign language.					

## **Appendix 2. Scale for the effects of culture on foreign language learning (Turkish)**

Bu ölçek yüksek lisans tez aşamasında Kültürün Yabancı Dil Üzerine Etkileri başlıklı tez çalışması için veri toplamak amacıyla hazırlanmıştır ve tamamen bilimsel amaç doğrultusunda kullanılacaktır. Katılımınız için teşekkür ederim.

Haci Mehmet ÖCAL

### **Demografik Bilgiler**

Lütfen size uygun olan seçeneği işaretleyin.

**1.Cinsiyetiniz**      a) kadın      b) erkek

**2. Okuduğunuz bölüm:** \_\_\_\_\_

**3.Doğup büyüdüğünüz yer**

a) köy      b) kasaba      c) şehir      d) büyükşehir

**4. Annenizin eğitim düzeyi nedir?**

a) okuryazar değil

b) ilkokul mezunu

c) ortaokul mezunu

d) lise mezunu

e) üniversite mezunu

f) lisans üstü

**5. Babanızın eğitim düzeyi nedir?**

a) okuryazar değil

b) ilkokul mezunu

c) ortaokul mezunu

d) lise mezunu

e) üniversite mezunu

f) lisans üstü

6. Anneniz yabancı dil biliyor mu? a) evet b) hayır

7. Babanız yabancı dil biliyor mu? a) evet b) hayır

8. Ailenizde yabancı dil bilen biri var mı? a) evet b) hayır

9. Yurt dışında yaşayan yakınınız var mı? a) evet b) hayır

10. Bir önceki okulunuzun türü neydi? a) devlet b) özel

11. Yabancı dillerden en az birisini ne derecede biliyordunuz? a) iyi b) orta c) kötü

12. Ailenizin aylık gelir düzeyi nedir? a) 0-1500 TL b) 1501-3000 TL  
c) 3001-5000 TL d) 5001-10000 TL  
e) 10001 TL ve üstü

Lütfen aşağıdaki sorular için düşüncenizi en doğru yansıtan sütunda yer alan kutucuğu X ile işaretleyiniz.

		Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	Yurt dışına gitmek istiyorum.					
2	Yurtdışı değişim programlarına katılmak beni dil bilmek konusunda motive ediyor.					
3	Yabancı kültürlerle karşı merakım yabancı dil öğrenmemde beni motive ediyor.					
4	Yurt dışından gelen yabancı arkadaşlarla iletişim kurmak istiyorum.					
5	Yabancılarla kültürel etkileşim hoşuma gidiyor.					

6	Yabancı dil öğrenmeyi gerekli buluyorum.					
7	Farklı kültürler tanımak istiyorum.					
8	Büyüdüğüm yerde yabancılara saygı duyulur.					
9	Büyüdüğüm yerde yabancılar iyi ağırlanır.					
10	Büyüdüğüm yerde yabancılara yardım edilir.					
11	Büyüdüğüm yerdeki insanlar yabancıların farklı davranışlarına karşı hoşgörülüdürler.					
12	Büyüdüğüm yerdeki insanlar yabancı dile karşı hoşgörülüdürler.					
13	Ailem yurt dışına gitmemi destekler.					
14	Büyüdüğüm yerdeki insanlar yabancı dil bilmeseler bile gelen yabancılarla iletişim kurarlar.					
15	Ailem yabancı arkadaşlarım olmasını destekler.					
16	İki kültür arasındaki farklılıklar yabancı dil öğrenmemi olumsuz etkiliyor.					
17	İki kültür arasındaki farklılıklar yabancı dil öğrenmemi olumlu etkiliyor.					
18	İki dil arasındaki farklılıklar yabancı dil öğrenmemi olumsuz etkiliyor.					
19	İki dil arasındaki farklılıklar yabancı dil öğrenmemi olumlu etkiliyor.					
20	Anadilimdeki bilgi eksikliğim yabancı dil öğrenmemi olumsuz etkiliyor.					

21	Anadilimdeki bilgi birikimim yabancı dil öğrenmemi olumlu etkiliyor.					
22	Yabancı arkadaşlarıma dil farklılıklarından ortaya çıkan sorunlarda yardım ediyorum.					
23	Yabancı arkadaşlarıma kültür farklılıklarından ortaya çıkan sorunlarda yardım ediyorum.					
24	Yabancı arkadaşlarımdan kültürleri ile ilgili bilgi alıyorum.					
25	Önceki eğitimim yabancılarla iletişime katkı sağlıyor.					
26	Büyüdüğüm yerde yabancılarla sıklıkla karşılaşabilirim.					
27	Ailem yabancı dil öğrenmem konusunda beni motive eder.					
28	Ailem yabancı dil bilmenin önemine inanır.					
29	Ailem yabancı dil öğrenmem için her türlü maddi desteği verir.					
30	Evimizde yabancı dil öğrenimimi destekleyecek görsel- işitsel kaynaklara (internet, CD, filmler vs.) kolaylıkla ulaşabilirim.					
31	Evimizde yabancı dil öğrenimimi destekleyecek yazılı materyal bulabilirim.					
32	Üniversitedeki bölümüm yabancı dil bilmemi gerektiriyor.					

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## HOW DOES CULTURE SHAPE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING?

### MASTER OF ARTS THESIS

Haci Mehmet ÖCAL

Yr.1. Ds. Dr. F. Örlen Saka