

Fostering Pre-service English Teachers' Intercultural Awareness through Lesson Designs

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ABSTRACT: This study explored Taiwanese pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness through lesson designs. Based on the data analysis of textbook evaluation; lesson plans; self, peer, and expert evaluations on lesson plans; videos; and reflection notes, this study had the following major findings. First, the textbook evaluation helped the participants to identify the visual culture and linguistic elements in the textbooks and their relevance to young Taiwanese learners' home or target culture. However, these participants lacked competence in identifying the appropriateness and authenticity of the cultural concepts in the textbooks, introducing relevant cultural issues, and designing activities on practice and production procedure.

KEYWORDS: Authenticity, home culture, intercultural awareness, lesson designs, target culture

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Language and culture teaching are intertwined (Clouet, 2006; Dell-Jones, 2013). When teaching culture, it is crucial for language teachers to avoid stereotypes (Clouet, 2006). Language teachers are the ambassadors of the target language culture in the classroom. In addition to teaching the language, they also have to introduce the social conventions and cultural aspects of the target language community (Llurda, 2004; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004). Cultural comparison or cross-culture understanding is one of the recommended approaches to teaching culture in the classroom (Clouet, 2006; Ruiz-Cecilia, 2012; Shemshadsara, 2012).

Textbooks in Taiwan do not always present authentic or socio-culturally appropriate texts. Some of the materials are not relevant to young learners' daily lives (Chen & Chien, 2003; Chien, 2011, 2013). Most textbooks only present a very limited and superficial view of culture, such as holidays or festivals (Chien, 2011,

2013). Culture consists of learning about the landmarks, celebrations, and cultural objects of people who use that specific target language (Edwards et al., 2006). What is worse, a lack of cultural sensitivity can be commonly found in English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and textbooks, such as asking people's age, as in, "How old are you?" (Anderson, 1992; Bordie, 1970; Zhu, 2011). Under the circumstances mentioned above, English teachers must teach their learners that the cultural background of language usage and meaning is bound in a cultural context (Dash, 2004; Dell-Jones, 2013; Shemshadsara, 2012).

Language teacher education programs should incorporate cultural aspects into their curricula in order to equip both pre- and in-service English language teachers with intercultural awareness (Atay et al., 2009; Chang, 2004; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; Frazier, 2002; Nzai & Feng, 2014; Olaya et al., 2013; Ruiz-Cecilia, 2012; Saricoban & Oz, 2014). Hence, this study aimed to integrate intercultural awareness into a teacher education program for elementary school English teachers in the northwest of Taiwan in order to foster their intercultural awareness. The study aims to discuss the following issues. First, what were pre-service English language teachers' perceptions of intercultural awareness in the English textbooks? Second, how did pre-service English teachers integrate intercultural awareness into the lesson plans? Third, what were the pre-preservice English teachers' attitudes toward the lesson designs? Based on the major findings, a model on effectively fostering elementary school pre-service English teachers' intercultural awareness is provided for teacher educators in integrating such issues in language teacher education programs.

Literature Review

Issues discussed in this literature review included definitions of intercultural awareness, cultural aspects in the textbooks, empirical studies on EFL pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness, and literature gaps. Intercultural competence and intercultural awareness are used interchangeably and scholars tend to have varying definitions of them (Byram, 1997; Fantini, 2006). Byram (1997) proposes three components to be included in intercultural competence: knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Language teachers have to teach some kind of knowledge about the target culture, including cultural similarities and differences. Language teachers have to foster a positive attitude toward the target culture and develop skills for learners to interact with members of the target culture. Hence, in this study, intercultural awareness refers to having the understanding of cultural conventions that affect how we think and behave.

Textbooks are generally used as the major sources of teaching materials for most language teachers. Textbooks also play important roles in disseminating cultures and their elements (Nzai & Feng, 2014; Sándorová, 2016; Sugirim, 2013; Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020). Ahmed and Narcy-Combes (2011) used teachers', learners', and textbook authors' perceptions of three English as a second language (ESL) ESL textbooks to analyze their cultural familiarities, contradictions, and

stereotypes. In their study, Pakistani learners had no contact with the target language community and could rely only on the information provided in the textbook. Hence, textbook authors should include both learners' own culture and the target culture as points of comparison and contrast in the textbooks. Moreover, the cultural contradictions and stereotypes in the textbooks indicated authors' partial knowledge of learners' culture. Hence, Alptekin (2002) claims that instructional materials and activities should be authentic, have global appropriacy, and have local appropriation so the local and international contexts can be familiar and relevant to learners. Learners can feel at home in both the international and national culture.

Most empirical studies on EFL teachers' perceptions of intercultural awareness employ survey research and find that teachers lack insights on integrating intercultural awareness into language teaching (Atay et al, 2009; Castro, et al., 2004; Derin et al., 2009; Gu, 2016; Karabinar & Guler, 2012; Olaya & Gómez Rodríguez, 2013; Önalán, 2005). Two survey studies were conducted by Atay et al. (2009) among 503 Turkish EFL teachers and by Castro et al. (2004) among 35 Spanish EFL teachers. Compared to the high value of foreign language teaching in linguistic competence, the culture-learning objective was ranked the least important among these two groups of teachers. Moreover, these EFL teachers were not familiar with the target culture, so they did not devote much time to integrating intercultural awareness into their own classroom practice.

A number of intercultural instruments or inventories have been used to assess language teachers' intercultural awareness in empirical studies (Bayles, 2009; Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2014; Cubukcu, 2013; Mahon, 2006; Nzai & Feng, 2014; Saricoban & Oz, 2014). Nzai and Feng (2014) used inventories to assess seven Taiwanese EFL pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness. The results indicated that participants were still at the second stage of cultural competence (cultural responsiveness stage). They were aware of the importance of becoming cultural insiders in the target culture and sought knowledge about the target culture. Bayles (2009) used version 2 of the Hammer's and Bennett's (2001) Intercultural Development Inventory to assess 233 elementary school ESL teachers' intercultural sensitivity in Texas. The mean 95.9 revealed that these ESL teachers were aware of different culture aspects; however, they only applied universal values and principles to their culture teaching.

Bektas-Cetinkaya (2014) used Byram's (1997) intercultural competence model to propose the Intercultural Competence (IC) instrument and he also used weekly reflections, intercultural tasks, and questionnaires to explore 44 Turkish EFL teachers' intercultural awareness. Compared to the control group, analysis of the instrument, weekly reflections, and questionnaires revealed that the experimental culture group in Bektas-Cetinkaya's (2014) study in Turkey demonstrated better performance in gaining cultural knowledge, intercultural skills, and intercultural awareness after culture content instruction and tasks. However, such culture content instruction and tasks made no significant difference in pre-service teachers' attitudes toward culture teaching.

Interviews and narratives are another type of data collection for empirical studies on teachers' classroom practice and EFL teachers' intercultural awareness that affect their intercultural awareness instruction (Bayyurt, 2006; Cheng, 2012; Göbel & Hesse, 2010; Haim et al., 2020; Luk, 2012). Cheng (2012) used interviews and documents to analyze five Taiwanese EFL university instructors' perceptions of intercultural awareness and teaching practice. These participants acknowledged the values of intercultural awareness in their teaching, but they did not teach such value in their classes, using the textbooks only. Similarly, the analysis of the interviews with 13 Finnish and Swedish EFL teachers in Larzén's (2005) study revealed that culture was regarded as only factual knowledge and their teaching methods mainly focused on providing their students with background information about the target culture.

Recent empirical studies include survey research focused on pre-service English language teachers' perceptions of intercultural awareness (Atay et al., 2009; Castro et al., 2004; Nzai & Feng, 2014) and limited empirical studies on pre-service teachers' practice of intercultural awareness (Lu & Peng, 2004). Bektas-Cetinkaya (2014) discovered that there is limited theoretical contributions to developing and fostering pre-service English teachers' intercultural awareness. This study explored pre-service English teachers' intercultural awareness development through textbook analysis and lesson plan designs.

Method

To better understand elementary school pre-service English language teachers' perceptions of intercultural awareness, a mixed-method case study approach was employed in this study. A case study allows the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009). This study explored pre-service teachers in a teacher education course and practicum. In a case study, multiple sources of data are collected to provide a variety of evidence (Yin, 2009). In this study, triangulation was employed with data collection from lesson plans, videos, textbook analysis, and self, peer, and expert evaluation.

Setting and Participants

A total of 34 elementary school pre-preservice English language teachers were chosen for this study. Of these, 28 were female and six were male. The convenience sampling method was used in recruiting the participants and involved two educational settings, described below. The participants' consent was taken at the beginning of the 2018 fall semester.

First, the participants included 10 student teachers who majored in English instruction and had completed their four-year undergraduate courses and elementary school English education credits in a language teacher education

program in the northwest of Taiwan. They were working on their practicum during the academic fall semester of 2018. The researcher, as their practicum advisor, asked whether they were willing to be involved in this study.

Another group of participants in this study were 24 juniors enrolled in an Elementary School English Teaching Materials and Methods class, an elective course under an elementary school teacher education program in northern Taiwan. The two-credit course aimed to prepare juniors to teach young learners English. This course focused on second language acquisition research, its educational implications, and instructional strategies that support English learners' development.

Data Collection

Data in this study included textbook evaluation; lesson plans; self, peer, and expert evaluations on lesson plans; videos; and reflection notes. Textbook evaluations were used to answer the first research question regarding participants' perceptions of intercultural awareness in the English textbooks. Lesson plans and videos were used to answer the second research question regarding their lesson designs. Finally, self, peer, and expert evaluations were used to answer the third research question regarding participants' attitudes toward the lessons.

First, content analysis was chosen as it is a method for systematic descriptions of the text materials in a somewhat theoretical way (Berg, 2007). Participants were asked to choose one unit for the textbook evaluation on intercultural awareness. The criteria for the textbook evaluation were developed based on empirical studies (Ahmadi Safa et al., 2015; Ahmed & Narcy-Combes, 2011; Bayyurt, 2006; Cheng, 2012; Sándorová, 2016). Documents as data can furnish descriptive information, verify emerging themes and hypotheses, or advance new categories and hypotheses (Merriam, 2009).

Next, based on the textbook evaluations, participants were asked to design lessons for intercultural awareness. Student teachers worked individually and undergraduates worked individually or in groups on lesson plan designs. A total of 22 lesson plans were designed for analysis. At the end of the course, participants were asked to present their lesson plans. They were asked to reflect on their experience in designing such lesson plans and to write their reflection notes.

During the presentations, participants were videotaped for their teaching demonstration or modeling lesson plans. They were asked to do self and peer evaluations. The criteria on the self and peer evaluations were developed based on empirical studies (Ahmadi Safa et al., 2015; Ahmed & Narcy-Combes, 2011; Göbel & Helmke, 2010). The evaluation was sent to two experts in intercultural awareness for content validity and revised based on their comments. The revised evaluation was sent to three seniors who took the course before for a trial test, and the final version was revised based on their comments as shared in the Appendix.

Data Analysis

The quantitative Likert-scale data on textbook evaluation and self, peer, and expert evaluation were calculated on a 5-point scale from 1 to 5. The descriptive analysis of the quantitative data was conducted. Lesson plans, videos, and reflection notes were analyzed using the following steps. First, the researcher read through all the data and gave tentative codes such as “*birthday*.” Based on these tentative codes, new categories or themes emerged as “linguistic elements” for the preliminary analysis. After reviewing the data multiple times, the researcher identified salient themes based on the research questions and conceptual framework. To enhance the validity of the coding and interpretation, peer review was employed by discussing with a professor in EFL the congruency of emerging themes with the raw data and tentative interpretations.

Results

Based on the data analysis of textbook evaluation; lesson plans; self, peer, and expert evaluations on lesson plans; videos; and reflection notes, three major issues were discussed in terms of pre-service teachers’ perceptions of intercultural awareness in textbooks, lesson plan designs, and self- and peer evaluations. These will be discussed below.

Pre-service Teachers’ Perceptions of Intercultural Awareness in Textbooks

As revealed in Table 1, overall, participants highly valued that the culture content of the textbook unit was related to learners’ own interests (mean=4.09), followed by “the culture content of this unit was sensitive to learners’ own cultural background” (mean=3.41). However, participants, particularly the pre-service teachers, felt the linguistic elements provided in the textbooks were not related to learners’ own culture background (mean=2.29).

Table 1

Cultural Elements Related to Learners’ Culture

	Juniors		Student Teachers		Overall	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Learners’ Culture	3.92	0.93	2.2	0.63	3.41	1.16

Learners' Interests	4.46	0.66	3.2	0.92	4.09	0.93
Visual Culture	2.38	1.47	3	0.82	2.56	1.33
Linguistic Elements	2.29	1.27	2.5	0.53	2.35	1.1

Compared to the relevance to learners' own cultural background (mean=2.56, 2.35, respectively) as in Table 1, participants' perception of both visual culture and linguistic elements relevant to the target language culture was higher, with a mean of 3.35 and 3.06, respectively, as in Table 2.

Table 2

Cultural Elements Related to Target Language

	Juniors		Student Teachers		Overall	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Visual Culture	3.33	1.49	3.4	0.84	3.35	1.32
Linguistic Elements	3	1.41	3.2	1.14	3.06	1.32

Picture designs or linguistic elements in the textbooks can construct learners' mental models. Hence, appropriate picture designs and linguistic elements may contribute to the construction of an indented mental model of the target and home culture (Ahmed & Nancy-Combes, 2011; Pramono, 2005).

Pre-service teachers held different perceptions of the cultural information in the textbooks. Juniors held higher perceptions of authenticity (mean=2.96) than appropriateness (mean=2.88) in the cultural elements in the units provided in the textbooks, as revealed in Table 3. Student teachers held higher perceptions of the appropriateness (mean =3.3) than authenticity (mean=3.1) in the cultural elements in the units provided in the textbooks. Authenticity and appropriateness are crucial in cultural instruction. Language learners need to be exposed to authentic materials in order to develop their language knowledge and cultural awareness (Clouet, 2006; Gomez & Fernando, 2012).

Table 3*Cultural Information*

	Juniors		Student Teachers		Overall	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Authentic	2.96	1.76	3.1	0.88	3	1.54
Appropriate	2.88	1.62	3.3	1.16	3	1.5

Pre-service Teachers' Lesson Plan Designs

Of all the 22 lesson plans, 12 integrated both the home and target culture into lessons, as revealed in Table 4. Three lessons only integrated learners' home culture into the lessons, while seven lessons included only the target language culture into the lessons. The cultural issues designed in the lessons were merely surface culture, such as celebrations, landmarks, or famous people. In Table 4, cultural issues are marked with a "v".

Table 4*Analysis of Lesson Plans*

#	Sentences Patterns	Cultural Issues	Home Culture	Target Culture
ST#1	When is your birthday?	birthday traditions	v	v
ST#2	Whose cellphone is this?	flea markets	v	v
ST#3	What time do you get up?	Christmas gift exchanges		v
ST#4	What time do you get up?	Christmas gift exchanges		v
ST#5	What time do you get up?	Christmas gift exchanges		v

ST#6	What are you doing?	netiquette and privacy	v	v
ST#7	What are you doing?	netiquette and privacy	v	v
ST#8	Where is he from?	famous people around the world	v	v
ST#9	What's this?	stationery around the world	v	v
ST#10	How Many Lions Are There?	safari	v	v
JR#1	Constellations	north and south hemisphere	v	v
JR#2	What do you want to drink?	drink culture	v	v
JR#3	How old are you?	birthday traditions	v	v
JR#4	Where is he from?	different ways of names		v
JR#5	What time do you get up?	Chinese New Year activities	v	
JR#6	Constellations	constellations around the world	v	
JR#7	How old are you?	birthday traditions	v	v
JR#8	Where is he from?	Ben's dreams and landmarks		v
JR#9	Where is he from?	habits and taboos around the world	v	v
JR#10	How many lions are there?	safari in Kenya		v
JR#11	Happy Teacher's Day.	origins of teacher's day	v	

JR#12	How many lions are there?	important animals in different culture	v
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Note: ST= Student Teacher, JR= Junior

The topic of safari was integrated into the lesson plans when the topics or sentence patterns were related to animals, as in ST#10, JR#10, and JR#12. Birthday traditions were introduced as cultural issues when the topics or sentence patterns were related to ages, such as in ST#1 and JR#3. Famous people, landmarks, or stationery were introduced when the topics were related to countries, as in ST#8, ST#9, JR#2, JR#4, JR#8, and JR#9. Such findings were consistent with the current situation of cultural teaching. Culture covered in the language classroom consisted of learning about landmarks, celebrations, and cultural objects (Edwards et al., 2006; Gómez Rodríguez, 2015). Joyce and Janet introduced different habits and taboos around the world. The introduction of different habits and taboos can help language learners observe appropriate or inappropriate behaviors that result from specific cultural and linguistic circumstances (Edwards et al., 2006).

The biggest challenge participants faced when integrating cultural issues into the lessons was “choosing the appropriate cultural issue.” Irene said, “Pencils, pens, erasers and other stationery are the key words to be taught. I could not think about any cultural issues to be introduced related to this topic.” Katie also said, “Learning different constellations is fun and having hands-on activities on making constellations. I had a hard time brainstorming any cultural issues to be integrated into this lesson.”

The challenges that participants in this study faced in choosing appropriate cultural elements may have resulted from participants’ lacking intercultural experience, as confirmed by recent studies (Göbel & Hesse, 2010). Language teachers’ competence in choosing intercultural topics, issues, or elements might be based on their knowledge about the target culture, cultural phenomena, and their learners’ cultural background.

In addition, participants also had problems explaining the cultural concepts in simple English. In Excerpt 1, Nancy tried to introduce different facts about animals around the world from #JR12 lesson. However, the words were too difficult for third-graders, so students looked puzzled.

Excerpt 1

Nancy’s Introduction on Pork Meat Festival

Nancy: Why do Muslims not eat pork? The religious commentary is that pigs are dirty animals. After Muhammad finished eating pork for a few days, he asked the owner what meat he had given him.

Students: (look puzzled)

The input provided by Nancy was incomprehensible to her learners. Language teachers must provide meaningful and comprehensible input based on relevant cultural issues so language learners can acquire the intercultural competence and skills in the target language (Nakamura, 1998).

Overall, participants held a positive attitude toward designing lessons for intercultural awareness. Jack wrote, "I have never designed a lesson on cultural issues. This lesson plan design was meaningful. I learned to be aware of the cultural difference." Becky also wrote, "This project helped me brainstorm different issues and activities that could be used to teach culture to young learners." This finding of the study was similar to Holguín's (2013) study on the influence of intercultural workshops on Colombian pre-service teachers' intercultural competence and skills. Language teachers can be trained to develop skills in analyzing and contextualizing cultural practice as well as being aware of contextual complexities.

Pre-service Teachers' Peer and Self-Evaluations on Lesson Plans

Overall, visual culture designed in the lesson plans was evaluated with a mean over 8 by participants' self and peer evaluations, as revealed in Table 5. However, regarding the linguistic elements designed by participants, the self-evaluations, particularly the linguistic elements relevant to young learners' own culture, were lower with a mean of only 7.3.

Table 5

Cultural Elements Related to Learners' Culture

	Visual Culture				Linguistic Elements			
	Self-evaluation		Peer-evaluation		Self-evaluation		Peer-evaluation	
	L1	TL	L1	TL	L1	TL	L1	TL
Overall ST	8.4	8.1	8.4	8.4	7.5	8.6	8.3	8.7
Overall JR	8	8.28	8.1	8.4	7.17	8.15	7.7	7.9
Overall	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.4	7.3	8.4	8	8.3
ST#1	10	10	8	8	9	9	8.5	9
ST#2	8	8	8	7	6	9	7	8
ST#3	10	10	9	9	9	9	8.7	8.3

ST#4	8	7	8.5	9	9	8	10	10
ST#5	8	7	7.5	7	7	7	9	8.5
ST#6	10	5	7	7	5	8	6	6
ST#7	8	8	10	8	8	10	8	8
ST#8	8	9	9.3	10	5	9	9	10
ST#9	6	8	9	10	8	8	9.5	10
ST#10	8	9	8	9	9	9	7.7	9.3
JR#1	7.5	7	7	8.7	5	7	6.7	7.1
JR#2	9	8.67	8.3	8	9	9	8	8.3
JR#3	8	9	7.3	9.3	8	8.5	8.3	8.3
JR#4	9.3	9.3	8	8.7	9.3	9.3	5.7	6.1
JR#5	6.5	6.5	7.7	7.7	3	8.5	8	8.1
JR#6	7	9	8	7.7	7	9	7	7.1
JR#7	8	8	7.7	8	8	8	8.3	8.3
JR#8	9	9.3	8.3	8.3	8.67	9	8.3	8.3
JR#9	9	9	9	9.3	5.5	7	9	9.4
JR#10	9	9	8	9	8	8	7.3	8
JR#11	8	8.5	8.7	7.3	7.5	7.5	7.7	7.8
JR#12	6	6	8.7	8.3	7	7	8.3	8.2

Compared to visual culture or linguistic elements designed by participants, participants' peer evaluations were higher than their own self-evaluations, regardless of whether the designs were relevant to learners' local or target culture. Compared to the self-evaluation with a mean of 8.15, the linguistic elements designed by pre-service teachers were evaluated lower by the peer evaluation, with a mean of only 7.9.

Student teachers Alice and Carol highly valued the visual culture in their lessons and rated their own lesson plans at 10 out of 10 points. Alice introduced different birthday customs, such as piñata, in ST#1. Novice language teachers like

Alice and Carol must be trained to identify the cultural resources and constraints that arise from their home and target culture, particularly the visual culture, so they can decide how to incorporate this self-understanding of birthday issues into their teaching (Menard-Warwick, 2008).

Carol prepared gifts to explain Christmas gift exchange to her students, as in ST#3, highlighted in Excerpt 2.

Excerpt 2

Carol's Modeling

Carol: Christmas is coming. My friend, Grace, is going to have a Christmas gift exchange event. What does exchange mean?

Carol: Like, I give you my gift. (Give the red box to a student)

S1: (Receives the red box with surprise.)

Carol: (Points to a pink box on S1's desk.) Could you give the pink box to me and say, "This is for you?"

S1: This is for you.

Carol: Thank you. This is called "exchange of gifts."

The custom of Christmas gift exchange may be a new cultural concept to young Taiwanese learners. Carol gave the gift to a student and that student was surprised to receive the gift. Carol's modeling with authentic materials was useful in scaffolding young learners in developing intercultural awareness. Teachers' modeling assisted language learners in developing intercultural awareness (Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004).

JR#5, a project designed by two juniors, Hank and Daisy, was evaluated by themselves with only a 3 out of 10 in terms of its linguistic elements. The sentence patterns for this lesson were "What time do you ___?" and "I ___ at ___." In addition to the daily routine such as getting up or going to bed, Hank and Daisy designed the scenario based on Chinese New Year, as in Figure 1. Young Taiwanese EFL learners can practice these sentence patterns with cultural concepts, such as "I write the couplets at 2 p.m."

Figure 1*Hank and Daisy's JR#5*

In addition to the target culture and multiple cultures, as in Figure 1, home culture is encouraged to be included in cultural instruction. The exposure to discussing and learning a different culture through English can help to foster intercultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding (Alptekin, 2002; Clouet, 2006; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; McKay, 2002).

Of all the teaching procedures, overall, participants had the highest score in presentation (mean=8.55 for self-evaluation, mean=8.9 for peer evaluation), but the lowest score in wrap-up for cultural teaching (mean=7.78 for self-evaluation, mean=8.35 for peer evaluation), as presented in Table 6.

Table 6*Teaching Procedure on Culture Lessons*

	Warm-Up		Presentation		Practice		Production		Wrap-Up	
	Self	Peer	Self	Peer	Self	Peer	Self	Peer	Self	Peer
Overall	8.35	8.75	8.55	8.9	8.45	8.65	8.2	8.45	7.78	8.35
Overall ST	8.3	9.1	8.2	9.1	8.4	8.9	7.9	8.4	7.3	8.4
Overall PR	8.4	8.4	8.9	8.7	8.5	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.25	8.3
ST#1	8	9.5	10	8.5	7	8.5	7	8	7	8
ST#2	2	9	8	8	2	7	2	7	2	7

ST#3	9	8.5	9	10	9	10	9	9.5	7	9
ST#4	10	9	7	10	9	9.5	9	9.5	5	10
ST#5	9	9.5	7	7.5	7	8.5	8	6	8	5.5
ST#6	7	8	10	7	10	7	8	6.5	8	6.5
ST#7	10	7.5	10	10	10	10	8	10	8	10
ST#8	10	10	5	10	10	10	8	10	7	10
ST#9	10	10	7	10	10	9	9	8	8	8
ST#10	9	10	9	9.5	9	9.5	9	9.5	9	9.5
JR#1	6.5	7.7	7.5	7.7	7.5	7.3	8.5	7	7.5	7.3
JR#2	8.5	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.5	8.3	8	9	8.5	8.3
PR#3	7.5	8.3	8.5	9.3	8.5	8.7	9	8.7	9	8.3
JR#4	9.5	8.3	10	8.3	10	7.7	10	7	8.5	6.7
JR#5	9	8.3	10	8.3	8.5	9	7	8.3	7.5	8.3
JR#6	7	8.3	10	8.3	9	8.3	9.5	9.3	8.5	8.3
JR#7	9	8.3	8	8.3	8	8.3	8	7.7	8.5	8.7
JR#8	8.5	8	9.5	8.7	10	9	9	9.3	9	8.7
JR#9	8.5	10	8.5	9.3	8.5	9	8	8.3	8	9
JR#10	9	8.3	9	8.7	8.5	7.7	9	9	7	9
JR#11	7.5	8.7	8	9	8	8.3	9	8.7	9	8
JR#12	10	8	10	8.7	7	8.7	7.5	9.3	8	8.3

The analysis of all 22 lesson plans revealed that participants mainly introduced these cultural concepts during the warm-up or presentations, as in Figures 2 and Excerpt 1. They did not design any activities for practice, production, or wrap-up. This finding was consistent with the current situation of cultural teaching. Cultural knowledge has remained peripheral to language learning (Cheng, 2012; Clouet, 2006).

Of all the lesson plans designed by the ten student teachers, ST#7 completed by Flora was rated the highest, with a mean of 9.35. Figure 2 was Flora's true or false activity on netiquette. This activity was used to arouse young Taiwanese learners' awareness of using Facebook.

Figure 2*Flora's Activity on Netiquette*

True or false quizzes for pairs is encouraged to be used in cultural instruction (Clouet, 2006). The true or false quiz allows learners to share knowledge and make predictions. When learners discuss or predict, they tend to become more interested in finding the answers (Clouet, 2006). Moreover, learners can use their existing knowledge to review and discuss the cultural topics or issues. Hence, the true or false quiz as a high-interest activity can motivate learners to be involved in the cultural issue discussions.

Of all the lesson plans, Project 8 completed by Fiona, Nick, and Hazel was rated the highest with a mean of 8.97. Fiona, Nick, and Hazel used the picture book, *Ben's Dreams*, for teaching the sentence pattern, "Where is Ben?" Learners were asked to identify the country's name and flag and say the sentence, "Ben is in the United States." Picture books, one type of authentic reading material, are loaded with diverse levels of cultural expressions and presentations. Hence, picture books as literacy texts should be recommended to be used in the language classrooms by teachers to promote learners' meaningful negotiation and cultural knowledge (Gomez & Fernando, 2012).

Discussion

In order to foster 34 pre-service English language teachers' intercultural awareness, culturally relevant lesson designs were integrated into a language teacher education program in the northwest of Taiwan. The data analysis of textbook evaluation; lesson plans; self, peer, and expert evaluations on lesson plans; videos; and reflection notes concluded with the major findings discussed below.

First, the textbook evaluation helped participants to identify the visual culture and linguistic elements in the textbooks and their relevance to young Taiwanese learners' home or target culture. Teachers must gain fundamental cultural knowledge in terms of concepts, values, and beliefs. Such textbook evaluations can enable teachers to gain competence in terms of critical cultural knowledge and awareness (Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2014). However, 24 juniors and 10 student teachers held different perceptions on the appropriateness and authenticity of the cultural concepts in the textbooks. This discrepancy indicated that English teachers need to be equipped with knowledge, attitudes, competencies, and skills. Language teachers' cultural competence should involve knowledge not just about the target language culture but culturally acceptable forms of behavior within the culture (Ahmed & Narcy-Combes, 2011; Lazaraton, 2003). They need to be acquainted with insights into culture learning theory and intercultural communication (Atay et al, 2009).

Secondly, half of the 22 lesson plans included both the target and home culture. Language learners should be taught to have intercultural awareness, so knowledge of both the home and target culture is essential for them to be able to communicate adequately (Saricoban & Oz, 2014). The target and home culture should be equally valued in English instruction. English teachers are encouraged to teach English in a culturally sensitive manner by respecting the local culture of learning (Alptekin, 2002; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; McKay, 2002). However, participants' activity designs on cultural issues were limited. Similar concepts were introduced for the same topics, such as safari for the topic "animal" and birthday traditions for the topics "birthday" and "age." Such limited designs on topics or concepts indicated language teachers' static and fixed body of knowledge of the culture associated with culture instruction (Gu, 2016). According to Garrido and Alvares (2006), "teachers need explicit training in dealing with social and cultural values, the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity and citizenship" (p.163). Language teachers should be trained to be aware of intercultural awareness and perspectives in language teaching (Cubukcu, 2013; Gu, 2016).

Of all the teaching procedures, participants mainly introduced cultural issues for "presentation" or "warm-up," but not "practice," "production," or "wrap-up." This finding is consistent with Castro et al. (2004) who found that language teachers appeared to perceive culture teaching mainly as introducing relevant cultural concepts to their learners. Language teachers often neglect the aims of promoting the acquisition of intercultural skills, as well as the concepts of comprehensible input and comprehensible output. English teachers might not know how to integrate culture into their own classroom practice due to insufficient training focusing on the integration of culture in language education (Atay et al, 2009).

Third, participants' peer evaluations of these lesson plans tended to be higher than their self-evaluation. Overall, participants regarded culturally relevant lesson designs as useful. However, when designing culturally relevant lessons, they faced two major challenges in terms of choosing the appropriate cultural issues and explaining the cultural issues in simple English. In language teacher education, teachers need to learn to collect or develop appropriate teaching materials needed

for learners' understanding of intercultural awareness. Moreover, culture teaching methods and techniques should also be integrated into language teacher education so language teachers will be equipped with intercultural competence (Cubukcu, 2013; Karabinar, & Guler, 2012).

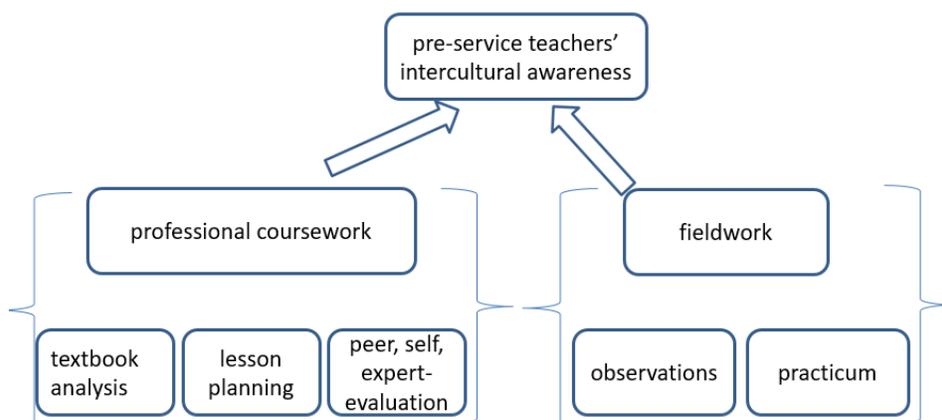
Conclusions and Implications

This study demonstrated the influence of integrating lesson planning and textbook evaluations on pre- and in-service English teachers' intercultural awareness. These participants had positive attitudes toward intercultural awareness; however, they lacked competence in identifying the appropriateness and authenticity of the cultural concepts in the textbooks, introducing relevant cultural issues, and designing activities for practice and production. However, from the perspective of language teacher education and pedagogical implications, the framework in this study engaged pre-service elementary school English teachers in analyzing textbooks, designing lesson plans, and examining the contents of lessons from an intercultural awareness viewpoint. Drawing on previous research that focused on teachers' perceptions of culture and cultural teaching through survey research or inventory instruments, this study provides preliminary insights into what knowledge pre-service teachers need to be equipped with for intercultural awareness.

Designing and implementing lessons on intercultural awareness are highly recommended to be included in language teacher education programs (Atay et al., 2009; Castro et al., 2004; Derin et al., 2009; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). Based on empirical studies (Göbel & Helmke, 2010; Larzén, 2005) and the findings of this study, a model in Figure 3 is proposed to effectively foster pre-service elementary school English teachers' intercultural awareness. Pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness can be fostered through professional coursework and fieldwork because pre-service teachers can put theories into practice through coursework and fieldwork. Through the textbook analysis; lesson planning; presentations; and peer, self, and expert evaluations in the language teacher education program, pre-service teachers gained content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge on intercultural awareness. Moreover, through the observations and practicum of fieldwork, they gained pedagogical content knowledge and intercultural awareness regarding how a lesson could be implemented among elementary school students.

Figure 3

Model of Training for Pre-Service Teachers' Intercultural Awareness



This study has some limitations. First, this was a small-scale study concerning a special group of pre-service teachers in a specific language teacher education program. The findings of the study may not be generalizable to other contexts. Another limitation was regarding gender. With the limited number of participants through convenience sampling, the sample was primarily female pre-service teachers. Next, data regarding participants' ethnic backgrounds were not gathered. This was another limitation to this study. This data would have allowed the researcher to determine differences in intercultural sensitivity based on ethnicity. Finally, data collection was carried out during a one-semester practice and course. This was a relatively short time.

This study focused only on pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness. Future studies need to expand the exploration of intercultural development to include a larger population. The intercultural sensitivity of student teachers' cooperating teachers, cooperating English teachers, learners, or native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) could also be measured and examined to see whether schools as educational settings can become culturally competent environments in which all stakeholders can address cultural issues. Moreover, this study focused mainly on 34 pre-service elementary school English teachers' textbook analysis and lesson plan designs on intercultural awareness. Chen's (2012) study explored the factors that affected the team teaching between NESTs and non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) in the Taiwan context. A further study could explore collaborative lesson planning on intercultural awareness between NESTs and NNESTs and their identity construction on intercultural competence.

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Appendix

Evaluation

Answer the following questions based on the scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest)

Statements

1. The lesson plan is sensitive to the cultural background of the learners.
2. The lesson plan is sensitive to the interest of the learners.
3. This lesson plan contains visual culture on the first language culture.
4. This lesson plan contains visual culture on the target language culture.
5. This lesson plan contains linguistic elements for the first language culture.
6. This lesson plan contains linguistic elements for the target language culture.
7. The warm-up activity can help arouse learners' intercultural awareness.
8. The explanations on cultural aspects are culturally appropriate.
9. The activities on practice can help arouse learners' intercultural awareness.
10. The activities on production can help arouse learners' intercultural awareness.
11. The wrap-up activity can help arouse learners' intercultural awareness.
12. The assessments in this lesson plan can help arouse learners' intercultural awareness.

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