CROSS CULTURAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES: DATA REVISITED

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Abstract

The way conflicts are solved is thought to be culturally learned (Hammer, 2005); therefore, this is reflected through language use. Conflicts, as inevitable parts of communication, naturally mirror cultural differences. Intercultural conflict styles have been studied so far by various researchers. How conflicts are initiated, maintained and escalated or terminated are all culture bound (Leung, 2002) and all the related stages vary from one culture to another. In the related literature, there have been attempts to describe different conflict handling classifications. Using Hammer's (2005) categorization that was found to be more refined and summative, conflict resolution styles of Turkish and American College students were explored using Discourse Completion Tests (DCT) with eight conflict situations where the respondents were required to write verbal solutions to overcome the conflicts described in the test. Those utterances were categorized according to Directness/Indirectness Scale modified from Hammer's (2005) "International Conflict Style Inventory (ICSI)" that classifies intercultural conflict resolution styles as high/low level of directness and high/low level of emotional expressiveness. It is believed that the study provides insight into intercultural communication as there are culturally generalizable (etic) and learned patterns of conflict resolution styles pertinent to different cultures (Hammer, 2009, p. 223; Ting-Toomey, 1994).

Keywords: conflict resolution styles, Turkish and American cultures

1. Introduction

In socio-cultural psychology, cultural differences have been questioned by a wide range of researchers. The most influential contribution to the field was made by Hofstede in the 1960s with his Cultural Dimensions Theory that indicate systematic cultural differences and grouped them under four primary dimensions along with individualism and collectivism, which are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity. To his taxonomy, he later added long-term orientation and indulgence versus restraint dimensions to separate cultures from each other (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). "Individualism" and "Collectivism" are thought to be the major dimension of cultural variability (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 40). In Collectivist cultures, rather than "I", "we- identity" is valued. In-group ties, loyalty and group benefits and collective behaviours and respect to the authorities prevail over the individual benefits. In Individual cultures, interests of independent individuals are central. Power distance dimension relates to the inequalities in the society due to the members who have varying degrees of powers. In a society where high power distance is appreciated, the result is a hierarchical order where every member has an unquestioning place or a social role while low power distance is linked to equal distribution of power and justified inequalities (Hofstede, 2017). The Masculinity dimension refers to the tendency in the society to validate either masculine characteristics such as the achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards (competition) for success or to show feminine characteristics like a preference for cooperation (consensus-oriented), modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Such prevailing characteristics have impact on the roles of men and women in the society that creates gender stereotypes. Women in high masculinity score are subservient and expected to work in suitable

jobs for women. The fourth dimension - Uncertainty Avoidance dimension - is how the society approaches and perceives ambiguity and uncertainty. Cultures with High Uncertainty Avoidance support the value of determined codes of beliefs or orthodox behaviour. Low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures are more tolerant of the unknown as they rely on the idea that practice works better than principles.

One of the two newly added dimensions; Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation, can be verbalized with the degree of adherence to the past. Low degree on this dimension demonstrates a disposition to maintain traditions and view change as unfavourable state, whereas the high level on this dimension is characterised with the readiness to change and encourage change. As for Indulgence/Restraint parameter, it concerns the way members of a society view enjoying life and having fun as one society accepts free gratification of life whereas the other suppresses this with strict norms. Following Hofstede, Triandis and Gelfland's study (1998) is an eminent effort that measures four dimensions of collectivism and individualism to classify societies as vertical/horizontal collectivist/individualist to unveil social behavior based on which community "self" perceives her/himself as belonging to.

Intercultural differences in thinking styles was probably first expressed by Kaplan (1966), who asserted that different cultures have different thinking patterns that can be traced in the structures of their rhetoric. His theory of cultural thought patterns put forward that Germanic languages such as English, German, Dutch, Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish use direct and linear communication styles, whereas Oriental languages (of Asia) have a circular reasoning. In Semitic languages (Hebrew and Arabic), Romance languages (Latin languages) and Russian, communication is progressive, but digressive and indirect.

Initiated with Kaplan's pioneering perspective towards thinking modes of different cultures and its reflection in discourse produced Hall (1976) differentiated between "High and Low context communication styles" to categorize cultural differences in communication. Low Context communication is a direct verbal interaction style. Some cultures prefer open and explicit expressions that do not need inferences and predictions. They focus on the exchange of information. Theirs are labeled as Low Context Communication styles as described by Hall (1976). On the other hand, some cultures deliver information in a roundabout way. Messages are implicit and context-oriented, which is referred to as "High Context Communication" styles. "Low-context communication is used predominantly in individualistic cultures and reflects an analytical thinking style, where most of the attention is given to specific, focal objects independent of the surrounding environment; high-context communication is used predominantly in collectivistic cultures and reflects a holistic thinking style, where the larger context is taken into consideration when evaluating an action or event" (Liu, 2016, p. 1).

Hofstede's theory had strong implications on intercultural communication. In Intercultural Communication studies, the following styles of verbal communication have been identified (Gudykunst, 1998; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988).

- direct/indirect communication style

- elaborate/succinct communication style

- personal, or person-centered/contextual communication style

- instrumental/affective communication style, all of which in a way relate to the distinction between individualist and collectivist communication styles.

Similarly, verbal conflict resolution styles are also thought to be culturally learned (Hammer 2005). Conflicts, as inevitable parts of communication, naturally mirror cultural differences. How conflicts are initiated, maintained and escalated or terminated are all culture

bound (Leung, 2002) and all the related stages vary from one culture to another. Within the cultures, however, they appear as recurrent or "etic" (culturally generalizable) patterns (Hammer, 2005). With the purpose to gain insights into the nature of conflict resolution styles of different communities, a wide range of academic studies were conducted. Vast majority of the studies assert that there is a great gap between conflict resolution styles of the Eastern and the Western World, which are thought to be collectivist and individualistic cultures. Among them, the most widespread taxonomy is based on Blake and Mouton's approach (1964). To them, differences in conflict styles emerge from an individual's concern for self-interest against the interest of the other. Constructed on this basis, several taxonomies appeared. A remarkable categorization was made by Rahim (1983) who developed an instrument testing five styles of conflict resolution: dominating style: high self/low other concern, obliging style: low self/high other concern, avoiding style: low self/other concern, integrating style: high self/other concern, and compromising style: moderate self/other concern (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). In the same vein, the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument assesses an individual's typical behavior in conflict situations and describes it along two dimensions: assertiveness and cooperativeness, two poles that can be easily connected to the individualism and collectivism. It provides detailed information about how that individual can effectively use five different conflict-handling modes, or styles: Accommodating, Competing, Compromising, Avoiding, Collaborating (Thomas & Kilmann, 1977, 2017).

Hammer (2005, 2009), in his Intercultural Conflict Style Model, adopts a conceptualization of conflict with a two-core communicative process containing two functions "report" (content) and "command" (how the message or content should be understood or how the contending parties feel about the content). In conflict interaction, he includes "emotion" as an integrative and determining socio-cultural behaviour in addition to disagreements. To him, the conflict dynamic has two contextual features: disagreements and emotions. To put it more clearly, a conflict style is "conceptualized as the manner in which contending parties communicate with one another around substantive disagreements and their emotional reaction to one another". It handles two basic dimensions of cultural differences in the identifying conflicts: The first are the behaviours that reflect more or less direct or indirect approaches to disagreements. The second are those that reflect more or less emotions in dealing with the disagreements.

Hammer's approach is centered on three eminent dimensions of cultural variability: Individualism, collectivism; high-low context communication and emotionally expressive restraint conflict solving styles. In search for an assessment tool of "patterned behaviours of conflict resolution" on those three dimensions, he develops a scale of high/low level of directness and high/low level of emotional expressiveness. In the model he proposes the following four styles comprised of verbal directness and emotions: 1- discussion style (direct and emotionally restrained) 2- engagement style (direct and emotionally expressive), 3- accommodation style (indirect and emotionally restrained), and 4- dynamic style (indirect and emotionally expressive). Discussion style prescribes the motto "say what mean, mean what say". The users of this style are verbally direct, but cautious of displaying emotions that are thought to be dangerous for the interaction. The major principle of the "engagement style" is associated with more verbal directness and confronting the disagreement more bravely. In this style, emotions are more clearly expressed and infused in the conflict situation Accommodation style is an indirect approach to conflict resolution. The conflicting parties are hesitant and reserved in showing their feelings. Instead, they employ implicit messages, indirect language and the intermediaries to solve conflicts. As for dynamic style, it is another indirect approach to conflicts intensified with emotions. Through ambiguity, hyperbole and the use of intermediaries, conflicts are resolved. Here, indirectness may seem irrelevant to emotional expressiveness. Emotions are made visible via body language, laughing, gesturing, body

posture, or facial expressions along with high volume voice or communication (Hammer 2005 p.16).

2. Aim

Following Hammer (2005), considering such theories of cultural variability in conflict resolution process as individualism/collectivism; high-low context communication and emotionally expressive/restraint interaction, we hypothesize that Turkish speakers will be indirect in their communication probably because Turkey is seen to be a part of the oriental world, we aim to compare and contrast conflict resolution styles of Turkish and American university students. This study probes into the language used to solve conflicts as performed by two groups of participants of Turkish and American cultures. The aim of this study is two-fold: First it attempts to describe language used to solve conflicts and identify whether they are direct or indirect in conflict resolution. Secondly, it purports to explore the interface between cultural thought patterns and conflict resolution styles Turkish and American speakers.

Our research questions are as follows:

- Are Turkish and American speakers direct or indirect in solving conflicts?

- Are Turkish and American speakers emotionally expressive or restraint in solving conflicts?

- Are there any differences between Turkish and American speakers in terms of directness/indirectness and emotionally expressiveness in their resolving styles?

Opting for a quantitative approach, the data for the study were collected from Queens College, New York and a Turkish State University. 228 college students participated in the study. Of them, 101 were American citizens (59 of whom were the native speakers of American English) and 130 Turkish citizens (127 of whom were Turkish speakers of English as a foreign language).

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The demographic information gathered in the questionnaires included age, gender, and mother tongue (Table 1-2). Aged between 18-22, 101 American university students from different departments at Queens College and Graduate Center of CUNY like Linguistics, Linguistic Antropology, Law, Educational Sciences and 125 English Language Teaching (ELT) students at a Turkish state university in Ankara were involved in the study. As the University in New York where the study was conducted has a very rich ethnic population, this urged us to analyse the DCTs after we categorize the respondents according to their mother tongues to achieve homogeneity.

3.2. Data Collection

Data collection was made using a Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) with eight conflict situations where the respondents were required to write their verbal solutions to manage the conflicts described in the test (see Alagözlü & Makihara, 2015 for more details). Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) in which conflict situations at schools are presented to the participants and responses are elicited. Situations are structured to test power status. First three situations were for the discovery of the conflict resolution styles with the respondents' peers. Next five checked how they solve conflicts with higher status people: the instructors and the administrators. DCTs were first prepared in Turkish, later translated into English, English

version is proof-read and revised in language and compatibility to culture by a professor at Queens College.

Rather than asking questions directly to the respondents, the utterances elicited from the DCTs were categorized according to Directness/Indirectness Scale modified from Hammer's (2005) "International Conflict Style Inventory (ICSI)" that classifies intercultural conflict resolution styles as high/low level of directness and high/low level of emotional expressiveness. The inventory is originally 36 item measure of intercultural conflict resolution style based on direct and indirect approaches, which are chosen out of 106 items after a factor analysis.

In American setting, contacts were made through the instructors to collect data in the classrooms. In both Turkish and American settings, the instructor distributed and collected the DCTs. This did not take more than 30 minutes. Consent from IRB (Institutional Review Board) and approval by the Queens College were obtained for research involving human subjects conducted by any individual affiliated with the college. Individual consents are taken on site in both settings.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data were analysed using a modified scale from Hammer's (2005) scale of directness or indirectness considering the constructs nested under four aspects: Directness/Indirectness and Emotionally Expressive /Restraint as detailed below: The utterances of the respondents are manually one by one evaluated according to the descriptive information given in Hammers' inventory (Hammer, 2005, p. 8) by two raters after a consensus is reached final decision is made. Sample representative items of directness/indirectness were

1) Candidly express your disagreements to the other party (Direct)

2) Verbally confront differences of opinion directly with the other party. (Direct)

3) Be comfortable with the other party fully expressing their convictions (Direct)

4) Offer indirect suggestions rather than explicit recommendations (Indirect)

5) Express your complaints indirectly (Indirect)

6) Accommodate and go along with the statements made by the other party even though you disagree (Indirect)

Representative items of emotion used as criteria in the evaluation of the utterances were

1) Allow your emotions to come out when interacting with the other party (Emotionally Expressive)

2) Passionately express your disagreements (Emotionally Expressive)

3) Express your deeper emotions like fear and anger (Emotionally Expressive)

4) Avoid expressing strong emotions (Emotionally Restraint)

5) Keep strong emotions like fear and anger hidden from the other party (Emotionally Restraint)

6) Avoid imposing your feeling s to the other party (Emotionally Restraint)

First, utterances were evaluated based on whether they are direct or indirect and emotionally expressive or restraint before they were counted. Despite subjectivity problem in judging the utterances as direct or indirect, while evaluating two raters reached a consensus though no interrater reliability was statistically measured. In deciding indirect responses, implications,

sarcasm, questions, silence, compromises, one word responses like affirmations (yes, OK or as you like it etc.) were all deemed to be indirect. Additionally, metaphors, ambiguous and analogous expressions, the use of third party intermediaries, and relying on the receiver to clarify misunderstanding were taken as indirect styles. Direct styles were identified with the use of precise and explicit language by following the maxim of clarity "say what you mean, mean what you say" (Hammer, 2005, p. 4). Comparing the number of each type of response with the total number of the respondents, percentages are found.

In addition, a directness score for each respondent is calculated giving 2 points to "direct and emotionally expressive" responses and 1 point to "Indirect and emotionally restraint" responses. **Thus, the upper limit for directness is 32** when all the responses are direct and emotionally expressive. When all the responses are indirect and emotionally restraint, **the score is 16.** To see if the scores are significantly different from each other, the scores of American and Turkish participants are tested with a parametric Independent Group T-Test after the determination of normality of distribution via Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test shows that the data are normally distributed. ($p=0.006$ and $p<0.01$).

4. Results

To support homogeneity, out of 130 Turkish respondents 127 were included into the analysis as their mother tongue is different from Turkish. 8 of 127 did not complete the DCTs fully. For statistical analysis we had 119 respondents. Among 101 American respondents, the responses of 59 participants were analyzed due to the variety of their mother tongues as seen in Table 1 and 2. Non-native speakers of both languages were excluded.

Table 1. *Demographic information about respondents in American setting*

Mother tongue	Number	Gender	Mean Age
American English	59	27 m/32f	22.92
Spanish (Hispanic)	6	3 m/5 f	27.12
Hindi/Bengali/ Urdu	9	2m/7f	23.33
(4+2+3)			
Russian	3	2m/1f	
Chinese	6	6f	22.66
(Mandarin/Cantonese)			22.66
Korean	4	2m/2f	25.25
Hebrew	4	2m/2f	20.75
Dutch	1	f	20
Montenegran	1	m	24
French	2	1m/1f	28
Greek	1	f	53
Arabic	2	1m/1f	30.5
Turkish	1	f	30
Persian	1	f	18
Polish	1	f	19
Total	101		

Table 2. *Demographic information about respondents in Turkish setting*

Mother tongue	Number	Gender	Mean Age
Turkish	127	37m/90f	19.8/19,53
Arabic	1	f	19
Kurdish	1	f	19
Indonesian	1	f	21

4.1. Directness and Emotions Expressed in Solving Conflicts

Percentages of overall directness levels and the levels of the subgroups: peers and higher status people were quite close to each other in both groups. In terms of emotions, there were remarkable differences. Turkish respondents seemed to hesitate expressing their emotions to higher status people as only 28% were emotionally expressive to the authorities while this rate was 53% for American respondents, which means that American participants were more direct to the higher status people than Turkish. Similarly, Turkish speakers were less emotionally expressive to peers when compared to American respondents (45% vs. 57%) (Figure 1.).

Table 3. *The overall score of directness of the groups and their descriptive statistics*

	American Respondents	%	Turkish Respondents	%
Indirect Responses to PEERS *	**47 out of 177**	**26,55**	**127 out of 381**	**33,33**
Direct Responses to PEERS*	130 out of 177	73,45	254 out of 381	66,67
ER Responses to PEERS*	**76 out of 177**	**42,93**	**211 out of 381**	**55,38**
EE Responses to PEERS*	100 out of 177	57,07	170 out of 381	44,61
Indirect Responses to HIGHER STATUS	**83 out of 295**	**28,13**	**181 out of 635**	**28,50**
Direct Responses to HIGHER STATUS	212 out of 295	71,87	454 out of 635	71,50
ER Responses to HIGHER STATUS	**143 out of 295**	**47,47**	**454 out of 635**	**71,50**
EE Responses to HIGHER STATUS	152 out of 295	52,53	181 out of 635	28,50

*First three situations in the DCTs are included. **Last five situations in the DCTs are evaluated. ER: Emotionally Restraint   EE: Emotionally Expressive

Turkish Respondents
- 66.67% of Turkish respondents used direct expressions to solve the conflicts with their peers.
- 71.50% of them were again direct in their communication with higher status people.
- 44.61% were emotionally expressive to peers
- 28.50% were found emotionally expressive to higher status people.

American respondents
- 73.45% of American respondents preferred direct expressions for conflict resolution with their peers.
- 71.87% were direct in conflict resolution with higher status people.
- 57.07% of American respondents used emotionally expressive utterances in communication with peers.
- 52.53% were found to include emotionally expressive utterances when speaking to higher status people.
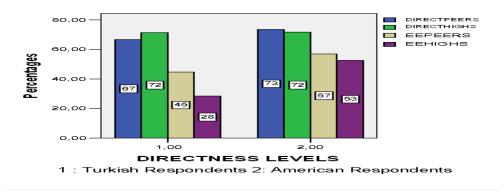
Figure 1. *Percentages of direct and emotionally expressive responses of Turkish and American respondents*

4.2. Any Differences between Turkish and American Speakers in Terms of Directness/Indirectness and Emotional Expressiveness in their Resolving Styles

Whether there was a statistical difference between the groups' overall directness levels is revealed using an Independent Samples Test as shown in the above tables. It was found that mean directness levels of 119 Turkish respondents was 25.7119 while American respondents' mean directness levels was 25.0420 out of 32. The Sig.(2-tailed) value (0.197) showed that the difference in their directness levels was not statistically significant as it was bigger than (0.05) (Tables 4-5).

Taking the two layers of the data; that is; responses to the peers and the school authorities, regarding directness, no statistical difference is intended to calculate in the styles used to peers and higher status people by both groups as the percentages are quite close to each other.

Table 4. *Group statistics*

Groups	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std Error Mean
Turkish	119	25.7119	3.63911	.47377
American	59	25.0420	3.0420	.27897

Table 5. *Independent samples test for overall directness*

Sig.	t	df	sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference	STD Error Difference
.024	1.294	176	.197	.66985	.51774
	1.218	99.322	.226	.66985	.54980

Additionally, a second Independent Samples Test on the use of emotions expressed in solving the disputes was run, but a statistical difference is not found in terms of the use of emotions in solving conflicts (p>0.05) (Table 6.) although American respondents are seen to use more affective explanations than Turkish respondents when addressed to peers (57% vs. 28%) and the school authorities (28% vs. 53%). The percentages of the emotionally expressive responses to the authorities in the two groups are observed to display a noticeable difference (Figure 1.).

Table 6. *Independent samples test for emotional expressiveness in conflict resolution*

Sig.	t	df	sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference	STD Error Difference
.464	-,948	176	.344	.22290	.23514
	-,922	107.735	.359	.22290	.24173

According to the model of Hammer (2005), Turkish respondents are verbally direct, but emotionally restraint (use discussion style) and they are cautious of using intense emotional expressions, whereas American respondents are direct and more emotionally expressive (use engagement style) (28% vs. 53%) when involved in conflicts with higher status people. When addressing to peers Turkish respondents are direct and emotionally restraint (again discussion style) while the Americans are direct and more expressive (engagement style) (45% vs 57%).

5. Conclusion

Conflicts are inevitable in communication. In multicultural settings where many different cultures are face to face, this becomes more remarkable and indispensable due to social, cognitive, perceptual, and intellectual differences of different cultures. Cultural diversity can cause deflations in communication. Some cultures may try to solve conflicts getting to the root of the problem when exposed to conflicts, whereas the others may choose to disregard and simply skip it without admitting even the presence of a problem. Whatever the attitude is, people approach conflicts in a direction taught, permitted or governed by their culture. What causes and escalates conflicts is culture bound. Communities show different patterns of communicative behaviours in certain situations. Seeking and revealing those cultural patterns is imperative as a source of knowledge in intercultural communication, which may be used to support parties to better understand each other.

If cultural miscommunications are not managed or undefined well, they may become interpersonal conflicts (Ting-Toomey, 1994 p. 1). Understanding the nature of conflicts may help build and restore peace from a broad perspective. It also helps the management of the institutions where a multiplicity of cultures are in contact whether they be educational, social or political. From the lenses of the educators, conflicts in multicultural classrooms and in educational setting can be surmounted thanks to such knowledge. Therefore, knowledge of how different cultures resolve conflicts is crucial so that intercultural communication could be supported and maintained. Additionally, this sort of knowledge is equally invaluable for international relations in the field of politics.

The present study aimed to explore the directness levels of Turkish and American college students in oral conflict resolution styles in communication in two sub groups: students' directness attitudes to peers and to higher status people at school that is, instructors and administrators. Directness scale also covered the measurement of "emotionally expressiveness" in Hammer's (2005) scale. If the speakers prefer to reflect their feelings such as anger, opposition, reaction, affection, pity, sympathy that support their conflict resolution efforts, this is considered to be a direct and open expression. Roughly evaluating, it can be said that Turkish and American college students in the study had similarly high levels of directness, but American respondents were relatively more direct in conflict resolution when looked at the mean scores. Mean percentages of the direct responses were 69.085 (Turkish) and 72.66 (Americans), which were quite close to each other even though there were no statistically significant difference. Similarly, in terms of emotions expressed to solve conflicts, percentages displayed remarkable differences though not statistically significant again. Turkish respondents seemed to hesitate expressing their emotions to higher status people as only 28% were emotionally expressive to the authorities while this rate was 53% for American

respondents. Likewise, they were less emotionally expressive to peers when compared to American respondents.

According to Hammer's Model, this study found that Americans opt for the "engagement style" while Turkish respondents choose the discussion style when approaching conflicts in school environment. This means they are verbally direct and emotionally expressive. Turkish respondents were seen to have the discussion style by which they employ direct and emotionally restraint expressions. Looking in depth into the results, both research groups are found to be verbally direct, but in terms of the degree of emotions infused in conflict interaction, Americans are found to employ more intense feelings that are connected with the "sincerity" by Hammer (2005). In our research, in other words, it is the emotional level where cultural variability shows itself. In many studies, the emotional expressiveness/restraint is taken as the key dimension of cultural differences in solving conflicts. Individualistic cultures tend to display more emotions to "honestly" engage in conflict resolution. Yet, negative feelings in collectivist cultures are avoided as they insult the feeling of harmony (Ting-Toomey 1999, p. 215).

The results confirm the idea that Hammer (2005) was right in his model by taking emotions as one of the core dimensions that pinpoints cultural differences. How much emotion must be included in the communication is also culture specific and a powerful determinant in revealing cultural differences. As a follow-up study to Alagözlü and Makihara (2015), a part of which attempts to explore ways of terminating verbal conflicts in academic settings according to five solutions strategies of Kilmann (1977) that is; collaboration, compromise, avoidance, competition, and accommodation, results confirmed each other. Results of the former study showed that Turkish respondents compete, collaborate and compromise significantly more than American respondents to solve conflicts. These three strategies represent high level of assertiveness that requires directness, autonomy and competitiveness, which are generally observed in individualist cultures. The data revisited with Hammer's approach, emotions form an additional layer which gives clearer picture of the difference between two settings.

With the results showing quite similar levels and no statistical difference, the study appears to have refuted so called cultural difference between the two groups of respondents in contrast to the view that was widely backed up in the related cross cultural communication literature. Restricted to the universe investigated in this study, American culture accepted as a representative part of Western culture, did contradict the view that American way of resolving conflicts is not different from Turkish speakers' styles to a great extent. This may be associated with America's being a mixing plot and ethnic richness along with various multicultural backgrounds of the participants. Despite the situation that they are the second or third generations of the migrants from other cultures born in the US who were thought to be accommodated to American culture, they might still have shown a tendency to mirror their native thinking behaviours.

Turkish speakers' preference in favor of direct conflict resolutions in school environment as much as the American respondents may be associated with the amount of exposure to western culture via language study, literature, media, popular culture and the permeability of the boundaries across countries. In addition to the effect of higher education, the results may be related to several other factors including the content of the measurement and different perceptions of self-concept, obligations, identity or membership etc. that are questioned in the scales. These may affect the validity and measurement of the constructs as Fiske (2002) highlighted. Even, as Turkish students all major English language education, their pragma-linguistic failures may explain their directness in communication. If all those factors fall short in uncovering why the magnitude of the difference was not significant, convergent percentages

of directness of Turkish and American respondents in resolving conflicts in the educational settings may show two parties' analogous styles, which can be easily associated with globalization and the shrinking world.

Acknowledgements

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