



An Intercultural Analysis of the Algerian Middle School Coursebook

"My Book of English-Year One"

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الملخص:

أضحى المكون الثقافي للغة ذا أهمية بالغة تجاري مثلتها في المكونات الأخرى وهذا في ميدان تعليم اللغات الأجنبية. إذ انه ينبغي أن تسهم وسائل التعليم ككل والكتب المدرسية خاصة في تنمية كفاءة التفاعل بين الثقافات في عصرنا هذا، عصر العولمة. من خلال هذا البحث نحاول تحليل محتوى كتاب مدرسي عنوانه "كتابي في اللغة الإنجليزية - السنة الأولى متوسط". يندرج هذا الكتاب ضمن البرنامج التعليمي الجديد "الجيل الثاني" الذي تم تطبيقه مؤخرا في المدرسة الجزائرية. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة مدى تعزيز هذا الكتاب المدرسي لمهارات الحوار والتفاعل بين الثقافات. النتائج المحصل عليها تثبت أن جانب معرفة الذات يهيمن على الكتاب بالدرجة الأولى ومضمونه لا يشجع التلاميذ بتاتا على تطوير مهارة المقارنة بين الثقافة الأم والثقافات الأخرى مما يعرقل قدرتهم على تنمية التواصل الناجح وكذا التفاهم المتبادل بين الثقافات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعليم الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية - كفاءة التواصل والتفاعل بين الثقافات - التفاهم بين الثقافات - تقييم الكتاب المدرسي - المحتوى الثقافي - الواقعية الثقافية

Abstract:

The cultural component has become as important as the other language components in foreign language instruction. Teaching materials in general and coursebooks in particular are required to assist learners to develop intercultural communicative competence in today's globalisation era. This work is an attempt to analyse 'My Book of English-Year One', one of the "second generation"



coursebooks introduced recently at the Algerian middle school level, to see to what extent it incorporates the necessary ingredients for intercultural teaching/learning to take place. The analysis revealed that 'knowing oneself' is predominant in the book and pupils are not encouraged to consider cultural information in a comparative frame of reference, facts which do not promote the development of intercultural understanding.

Key Words: culture teaching - intercultural communicative competence - intercultural understanding - textbook evaluation-cultural content

Introduction

Culture has always been present in the foreign language class, but has not always been given due care. Since the inception of the communicative approach era in the 1970s, culture has been gaining more and more importance given its interconnectedness with language as a system of communication. The foreign language class is a context where native and foreign cultures are in constant interaction. It is widely recognized today that effective language instruction considers the cultural component as an integral part, together with the linguistic components. The aim is to develop awareness about 'the other' culture as well as one's own, to be able to communicate appropriately in intercultural communicative interactions. This aim should particularly be reflected in instructional materials; the latter often determine, to a large extent, what is taught/learned in a language class, hence the importance of making informed decisions when selecting or evaluating them.

In the Algerian context, English as a foreign language (EFL) is introduced as a subject at the middle school. EFL coursebooks are locally designed; they have been the object of regular improvement to meet learners' needs and to keep abreast of progress and innovations in the field of EFL teaching/learning. 'My Book of English-Year One' is the latest coursebook intended for first year middle school pupils (11-14 year olds). It was first used in 2016. This study examines the cultural content of this coursebook to assess the general picture it reflects about the target-language culture(s) and the pupils' home



culture, whether realistic or not, whether conducive or not to intercultural knowledge, understanding and tolerance.

1. Beyond Communicative Competence

The field of language teaching has witnessed a considerable momentum over the course of time. Each new approach or method attempts to equip learners with the required skills to communicate successfully in the target language. For a long time, spotlight was put on developing the learners' linguistic skills, and then their communication skills. Only recently, attention has been drawn to cultural and, more particularly, intercultural skills. The concept of 'communicative competence' (Hymes, 1972) has been transcended to incorporate cultural ingredients, hence the new concept of 'intercultural communicative competence' (Byram, 1997). The latter entails awareness of others' cultures as well as one's own, i.e., 'intercultural awareness' (Baker, 2012) or a state of being interculturally sensitive. In other words, the target of foreign language learners is no longer to acquire a 'native speaker's' competence or a 'native-like' competence, but an 'intercultural' competence (Alptekin, 2002).

Byram (2002) puts forward a set of 'savoirs' to define intercultural communicative competence: 'savoirs'; 'savoir-être'; 'savoir comprendre'; 'savoir faire/apprendre' and 'savoir s'engager'.

- 'Savoirs': knowledge of social groups, their products and practices;

- 'Savoir-être': state of being curious about and open to other cultures;

- 'Savoir comprendre': ability to interpret, explain and relate documents or events interculturally;

- 'Savoir faire/apprendre': ability to use knowledge, attitudes and skills to communicate in real-life interactions;

- 'Savoir s'engager': ability to evaluate critically cultural products and practices.

These savoirs operate in relation to both foreign and native cultures. Similarly, Kramsch (1993) advocates a 'critical language pedagogy' that trains learners to become critical thinkers vis-à-vis cultures, to adopt a 'third place' that is somewhere between their



native culture and the foreign one(s). Moran (2001) suggests four categories of culture and culture learning objectives:

- Knowing about, i.e. cultural information or facts about the target culture;
- Knowing how, i.e. cultural practices or behaviours in the target culture;
- Knowing why, i.e. understanding cultural beliefs, values and assumptions in the target culture; and
- Knowing oneself, i.e. cultural self-awareness, or knowing about one's own culture.

The Intercultural Approach is an approach that incites learners to analyse and reflect upon the cultural matter they are exposed to. It also encourages them to develop skills as gathering information, assessing it critically, and taking the other's perspective. They could also reflect on their own culture as seen from the outside. The characteristics of this approach as advocated by Byram, Zarate and Neuner (1997) and summed up by Merrouche (2006) are as follows:

- The learners' native cultural background should be considered when selecting topics and designing activities;
- Learning is viewed as a cognitive process involving skills as thinking, interpreting, analyzing, comparing and synthesizing;
- Developing socio-cultural competence in the target language should achieve a balance between personal and social identity;
- Reference is to be made to both 'declarative' and 'procedural' knowledge. The former means facts and information; the latter has to do with understanding how communication skills operate;
- The content to be taught is to be selected in accordance with three major criteria: cultural representativity; accessibility; and interest;
- Differences between home and foreign cultures should be considered right from the beginning of the learning process, for they are crucial for understanding and communication in the target language and culture; and
- Metacommunication or discussing the learners' experiences with the foreign language and culture is important to consider.

2. Coursebook Evaluation



Coursebook evaluation remains an indispensable process, particularly in situations where textbooks are scrupulously followed by teachers. In the Algerian school context, the curriculum of English is based on the designed coursebooks to enable teachers all over the country to go through the same teaching content at each level, hence the importance of carefully designing and evaluating this content. Traditional textbook evaluation checklists did not cater adequately for the cultural component. In fact, items about the latter were either totally disregarded or given minor importance. Textbooks themselves did not deliberately integrate culture in plans, texts and tasks, and at best supplied some explanatory footnotes related to it.

With the rising importance of the cultural aspect, scholars in the field designed textbook evaluation models that cater for this aspect (Damen, 1987; Skierso, 1991; Cunningsworth, 1995), but the intercultural dimension was not always adequately emphasized. Evaluating the cultural content of a coursebook means, among other things, considering whether or not the learners' target-language culture(s) is (are) adequately represented, whether their home culture is taken account of, and what attitudes the coursebook takes (and encourages others to take) towards these cultures. At the intercultural level, the interaction of these cultures matters; their similarities and their differences and the way they are dealt with in the coursebook should be the focus of the material evaluator. Cultural similarities and differences had been highlighted by Lado (as cited in Merrouche, 2006) in the 1950s when language teaching approaches and methods were purely structural. Lado suggested then that the cultural content be graded beginning with similarities, and only then differences, on the grounds that the latter were believed to be more complex to grasp.

Byram and Escarte-Sarries' evaluation model (1991) draws attention to a momentous aspect, namely realism in culture presentation. A realistic cultural content, according to them, is based on believable people interacting in real situations and places. Four layers of analysis are put forward to assess realism in coursebooks: 'the micro-social level'; 'the macro-social level'; 'the standpoint of the textbook author' and 'the intercultural level'.



● At ‘the micro-social level’, the textbook characters are analysed to see whether they form a representative sample of the target-culture population. They should above all be presented as real human beings with emotions, joys and worries. Their social environment should also be realistic, i.e. it should depict authentic situations and patterns of interaction, not just those that are tourism-oriented.

● ‘The macro-social level’ has to do with the social, political, economic, geographical and historical facts characterizing the target culture. These issues should be adequately considered in the coursebook in the form of information packages, statistics and pictures.

● ‘The standpoint of the author’ can be assessed through his/her selected type of characters, suggested advice and evaluative statements about cultural issues. For instance, the author may (or not) encourage learners to reflect critically on native and foreign cultures. In a word, the general picture about the target culture one gets after going through the coursebook, whether realistic or not, reflects the beliefs and viewpoints of the coursebook author.

● ‘The intercultural level’ of analysis, the object of this study, has to do with the way cultures interact in the book. The material evaluator has to uncover first of all whether cultural information is presented in relation to one culture only or different cultures. Focus is then to be put on the mutual representations of native and foreign cultures. The evaluator needs to know whether the textbook avoids or relativizes stereotypes, whether it exhorts learners to compare and contrast their views and lives with others’, whether it promotes or not intercultural understanding. Other aspects to be analysed are reference to the historical and contemporary relationships between the learners’ home country and the target-language country, reference to several target-language speaking cultures (a fact which perfectly applies to the English language), reflection of the multicultural character of the foreign society, and illustration of intercultural encounters and incidents.

3. Methodology



This work examines the content of 'My Book of English-Year One' from the intercultural point of view. A qualitative research method is adopted, namely content analysis, as applied in the field of education in general, and the analysis of the cultural content of textbooks in particular (Sandorova, 2014). The following major questions are to be answered:

- Is information in the textbook presented in relation to one culture or is it presented in a comparative frame of reference?
- Does the textbook bring out similarities and contrasts between native and foreign cultures?
- Does it encourage learners to reflect on cultural differences?
- Do cultural incidents occur in the book?
- Does the textbook promote intercultural understanding and tolerance?
- Does the textbook deal with the mutual representations of native and foreign societies?

It should be noted that this work considers culture as incorporated in texts, tasks and artwork.

4. Analysis of the Algerian Middle School First Year Coursebook

4.1. General Descriptive Information

Name of the coursebook: 'My Book of English - Middle School - Year One'

Intended learners' level: 1ère AM (première Année Moyenne) or 1st year, middle school level

Authors: Head of project: Tamrabet Lounis (inspector of national education)

Authors: Hammoudi Abdelhak (university teacher)

Boukri Nabila (middle school teacher trainer)

Smara Abdelhakim (middle school teacher trainer)

Publisher: ENAG editions

Year/Place of publication: 2016/Algeria

Number of pages: 160

'My Book of English-Year One' is one of the so-called "second generation" manuals introduced at the primary and middle school levels beginning from the academic year 2016-2017. Their aim



is to increase the pupils' opportunities to develop competencies in the subjects taught, in a complementary way across disciplines, and in a progressive manner through school levels. Second generation coursebooks are meant as a revision and an update on those introduced in the framework of the Algerian school reform of 2003. The teaching rationale remains faithful to the principles of competency-based education.

4.2. Structure and Topics

'My Book of English-Year One' is made up of one 'pre-sequence' and five 'sequences' (instructional units or blocks, Richards, 2001). The pre-sequence is entitled 'Now, we have English'. It is an introductory step that provides learners with some survival vocabulary which enables them to build their first phrases/clauses in English. The pre-sequence is preceded by 'My Charter of Good Conduct', a list of some school regulations illustrated with pictures.

Each sequence includes eleven stages, most of which have headings pointing to learners' strategies or performances: 'I listen and do', 'I pronounce', 'My grammar tools', 'I practise', 'I read and do', 'I learn to intergrate', 'I think and write', 'Now I can', 'I play', 'I enjoy', and 'My pictionary'. The titles of the five sequences are thematic in nature: 'Me and my Friends', 'Me and my Family', 'Me and my Daily Activities', 'Me and my School' and 'Me, my Country and the World'. It is worth noting that it is more commonplace and more polite to say 'My Friends and I (or me)' and 'My Family and I (or me)' instead of what is suggested by the authors.

The manual, in addition, assigns pupils three term projects: 'My Family Profile', 'My School Presentation' and 'My Country Profile'. All these topics and titles might suggest that the coursebook is wholly about the pupils' home culture (if we exclude the last sequence). An in-depth analysis is required to find out more about the cultural and, more importantly, the intercultural content of the manual.



4.3. Intercultural Analysis

4.3.1. Pre-sequence

Foreign cultures are not considered in the pre-sequence and its cultural content is typically native. We can see a picture of pupils with the Algerian uniform: pink overalls for girls and blue ones for boys (p. 11). The Algerian flag as a conspicuous cultural symbol is present in artwork, decorating the classroom picture and the charter of good conduct (p. 13). Arabic or Algerian names are used: Miss Meriem (the teacher), Rania, Akram, Djamel, ... (the pupils). All the characters in the pictures are dark-haired (like most Algerian people). One of the pupils is portrayed in a wheelchair (p. 13), which may be a sound idea; it denotes that crippled people are an integral part of the society and should be treated on equal footing with other people. Photos of some Algerian known figures are presented: Djamila Bouhired (an Algerian 'moudjahida'), Ryad Mahrez (a football player). There are by far more drawings than photographs in this part as well as in the manual as a whole. Drawings, it should be stated, are less realistic, and hence less valuable culturally speaking.

On the whole, the cultural content of this pre-sequence can be said to be of the culture-general type, having to do with, for example, school things, school commands, colours, days of the week, months of the year and numbers. The English culture is merely embedded in the greeting formulas: 'hi', 'hello', 'good morning' ... The context in which these formulas are used is rather artificial if we exclude the English class context. Why would Djamila Bouhired or Ryad Mahrez introduce themselves in English? It would have been more natural and culturally insightful if well-known native speakers of English had done so instead.

4.3.2. Sequence 1

In sequence 1, 'Me and my Friends', we find the same setting, the Algerian class of English, and the same characters, the Algerian teacher of English and her pupils. The pupils greet each other repeating the formulas they learnt previously. In addition, they are provided with some grammatical and phonological forms to assist them in performing the functions of greeting, asking and responding to simple questions. Some foreign names as 'Diana' and 'Maria' are



introduced, but the latter happens to live in Adrar (in the south west of Algeria) while nothing is said about the former. Another character, Susan, is British and lives in London; however, she is pictured as a girl in a wheelchair (p. 41). It seems bizarre that the Algerian pupils' "first contact" with a native speaker of English is conceived in this way.

The national flag of the United Kingdom or the Union Jack and that of Australia are added in this sequence (p. 41). It is worth pointing out that the Union Jack is not only the flag of Great Britain as put by the authors of the coursebook, but it is the flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the country made up of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The characters of the book interact almost exclusively with each other: They greet and introduce themselves to each other, whether in face to face interactions in the schoolyard (p. 35), through the school blog group (p. 42), or through the school English language club (p. 43). There are no instances of intercultural interactions except the one with Susan, the crippled girl. The positive point is that the interaction is done online, which is commonly done today. The negative point is that the interchange does not sound natural; in fact, there is no interchange: Razane first said all what she had to say 'in one breath', and then Susan responded similarly. The sequence ends with a non-authentic song written by the coursebook authors (p. 46) and a pictionary, a list of words illustrated with pictures (p. 47). All the songs of the book are not authentic.

4.3.3. Sequence 2

As expected, the family being described in this sequence, 'Me and my Family', is an Algerian family. Omar shows Peter, his British guest, photos of his family. It would have been culturally significant to Algerian pupils to be introduced, in addition, to a typically British or American family, given that they are familiar with Algerian families. Pupils are expected to repeat a created dialogue (p. 49). For example, the question 'who is this?' is not common in the context of asking about the identity of a person in a picture. A native speaker would say instead 'who is this girl/boy/man ...?'. 'Who is this?' is rather used to mean 'who is on the other end of this telephone line?'



(or other communication means, as is often the case today with social media).

In 'I practise', Omar once again introduces his family members to his friend Margaret via e-mail (p. 57). We wonder why it is not the other way round. Algerian pupils are familiar with facts as fathers working as carpenters or mechanics, for instance; mothers being usually teachers or nurses, and most of the time housewives; grand-parents living at home; pets being mostly cats. They may wonder whether families abroad are (or not) different: Do families in the UK and the USA consist of a married couple, children and grand-parents? What is the average number of children per family? What type of relationship do children have with their parents? Do fathers and mothers play the same roles in the upbringing of children as here in Algeria? If answers to questions as these had been catered for in this manual of English, pupils could have gained a better understanding of the family concept in English-speaking cultures as well as their own.

In 'I read and do', the blog of Jack Smith, a Canadian student is presented (p. 59). Jack introduces himself, his pet but not his family, if we exclude the sentence 'my mother is from Scotland'. Pupils are left with no clear idea about the Canadian family. Therefore, this blog would have been more appropriate in the previous sequence. This fact applies to the e-mail sent by the Nigerian Adaku to Razane (p. 60). There is no word about the Nigerian family, and hence no opportunity for the pupils to compare what is native to what is foreign.

In 'I learn to integrate', Margaret sends Omar a short e-mail with an attached picture of her family tree. If real photographs had been used instead of drawings, the attachment would have been more real and more accepted by pupils. Here again, information about the family (age, job, ...) is lacking. Pupils learn nothing about the British family from the e-mail or the attachment. What is more, beginning the e-mail with the statement 'I hope you are fine' is not accurate. Opening lines in an e-mail would be: 'I hope you're doing well/great' or 'I hope this e-mail finds you well/in good shape' (more formal). 'I hope you are fine' would be suitable in case one's addressee felt terrible before.



Many flags are found in the section 'I think and write' (p. 63), flags of English-speaking countries and others. They are put in an international friendship blog. It would have been interesting to provide the web address of this blog (if it exists) for the pupils to actually introduce themselves, make new friends, and practise the little English they are supposed to have learnt at this stage. Throughout the whole sequence, we do not find instances of actual intercultural communication reflecting a real interaction of cultures.

The activity 'I enjoy' displays the drawings of four English families: 'The Williams', 'the Johnsons', 'the Taylors' and 'the Wilsons' (p. 66). These drawings leave much to be desired, for they are based on the same one drawing that is slightly modified to represent each time a family. These pictures would have stood for any nationality. The aim of the activity is to test the pupils' ability to recognize numbers in English. At the cultural layer, pupils may only learn about some common family names in England. This sequence ends, like the previous one, with a created song and a short pictonary.

4.3.4. Sequence 3

In this sequence, pupils are taught how to talk about daily and weekend activities, and how to tell the time. Information is first presented in the pupils' home culture (Amel's and Younes' daily activities, p. 75 and p. 80, respectively), and then in the English culture ('A day in the life of Margaret', p. 85). Nevertheless, pupils are not encouraged to approach this issue in a comparative way. They handle each passage independently, with emphasis being mainly laid on practising language forms and identifying what actions are done at particular times of the day, without any attempt to compare or to understand why things are done this way. In other words, small 'c' culture based on cultural beliefs, values, assumptions and expectations, i.e. deep culture (Seelye 1993, Brooks 1997) is totally neglected, and pupils' 'savoirs' remain superficial. It is worth noting that intercultural learning takes place when the same point is viewed and discussed from different cultural perspectives. Another point worth mentioning is that the texts suggested by the authors are not authentic; they are written following the same pattern and their content is similar.



Some parts are devoted to animals, with an emphasis on pets. This content may negatively affect the overall coherence of the cultural content of the sequence, which is about daily activities. Furthermore, there is a dialogue between Margaret and Younes (p. 84) which informs pupils about animals recognized as symbols in Algeria (the fennec) and England (the lion); however, it is written in a rather stilted language, following the question and answer pattern and using complete sentences.

In 'I think and write', Margaret sends Younes a post-card, with a British stamp (p. 90), enquiring about his mum's daily activities. As explained before, pupils would be more interested in learning about Margaret's mum's activities to compare them to their mothers'. It should be stated that learners are required not only to note cultural similarities and differences, but to analyse them from the other's as well as one's own perspective (Byram, 1997) to create 'a sphere of interculturality' (Kramsch, 1993). In this way, they will develop different ways of seeing the world, and will become less ethnocentric.

4.3.5. Sequence 4

Sequence 4 is entitled 'Me and my School'. 'My school' is obviously an Algerian institution and every school building picture where the Algerian flag is up gives evidence of that. Pupils do's and don'ts, rights and duties, are the focal point throughout the sequence. The characters are the same Algerian pupils enumerating their duties, describing and locating different places in their school (the library, the canteen, the computer room, the staff room, etc.). We expect young learners of English to be eager to know about schools abroad and their regulations, especially in English-speaking countries. For instance, pupils could have been informed about the fact that in the UK and the USA, there are state schools which charge no fees and private ones which are fee paying, and that there are schools for one sex only. An introduction could have been made to school-leaving examinations or the grading system (the seven-point scale from A to G, which is totally different from the scale Algerian pupils are acquainted with).

Some Algerian known figures of the past are referred to in this unit, namely Abdelhamid Ibn Badis, El Amir Abdelkader, and others. Pupils would probably learn much about these renowned people in



other school subjects such as Arabic, history, civic education and Islamic education. We believe that the English class is an occasion to point to some English-speaking scholars, for instance.

This sequence includes a world map, where the flags of Algeria, the USA, Brasil, China and Australia are spotlighted (p. 117). The way this map relates to the topic of the sequence ('Me and my School') is not clear, however. Besides, pupils are not given a task to work on this map. In 'I think and write', there is a picture formed of several drawings accompanied by nine class regulations written in Arabic (p. 120); even the heading is in Arabic. We wonder why the Arabic language is introduced at this stage. What pupils have to do is not explained here again; they are not explicitly asked to translate. We note that at the end of the book, there is a trilingual glossary with lexis in English, Arabic and French.

4.3.6. Sequence 5

The title of this sequence 'Me, my Country and the World' seems promising, for it reflects variety and multiculturalism. The sequence opens with the previously described map of the world, and then another map, that of the Maghreb, with Algeria at the centre (p. 127). Several Algerian landmarks are pointed out, such as the Casbah and El Qual'a of Beni Hammad. In the following sections, Younes introduces these monuments to his British friend Margaret, who, in turn, does the same as regards her country. In this respect, a map of the British Isles is presented (p. 129), together with photos of some famous places as the Cardiff Castle, Big Ben and Edinburg National Monument.

In the subsequent parts of the unit, reference is made to the national currency, dish and celebration days of four countries, that is, Algeria, Nigeria, China and the USA. These aspects are illustrated with drawings and photographs. Similar information about Great Britain is also made available to learners through a dialogue between Margaret and Meriem. Furthermore, the flags of several other countries are added, for example, those of Saudi Arabia and South Africa.

In this sequence, there is a poem written by the coursebook authors. The latter could have suggested an authentic poem from the



English literature meant for children. It would have been pertinent to introduce as well a short extract from the British or the American national anthem. In the remaining parts of the sequence, pupils are to discover more things about their home land, Algeria, but also about the USA. This cultural data is supplied to learners in the form of exchanges between pupils from Algeria and other world countries.

Accordingly, it is possible to say that this book sequence, unlike the previous ones, is culturally rich regarding both native and foreign cultures. It clearly enlarges some aspects of the pupils' big 'C' cultural knowledge, known also as formal or high culture, i.e., what relates to history, geography, social institutions, literature and fine arts (Seelye 1993, Brooks 1997). On the other hand, it is momentous to state that the manual characters are merely depicted exchanging cultural data of the 'tourist-oriented' type; they are not involved in discussing similarities and differences between their respective cultures. Moreover, there are no activities requiring pupils to do so.

Conclusion

In the light of this analysis, it is possible to state that 'My Book of English-Year One' is mainly concerned with the pupils' home culture, the Algerian culture. The coursebook incorporates topics, contexts, names that are familiar to Algerian pupils to raise their self-awareness and strengthen their cultural identity. The 'knowing oneself' component is necessary but not sufficient to develop intercultural knowledge and understanding.

When information about other cultures is provided in the manual, it is done in partial glimpses and is not presented in a comparative frame of reference. No activities are suggested to encourage learners to analyse, compare, contrast, or even think about this cultural information. Small 'c' cultural issues, which stand for what a culture really is, are totally disregarded. There are no cultural incidents or intercultural misunderstandings, not even instances of authentic life-like intercultural communication. Besides, the textbook does not deal with the mutual representations of native and foreign societies, or with their historical or contemporary relationships. In a word, no attempts are made in this manual to promote intercultural



understanding and tolerance. Its created texts and the prevalence of drawings have negatively affected realism in its cultural content.

Sequence 5, the last unit in the book, can be said to have the best cultural content compared to the previous sequences. This fact might announce a better consideration of the intercultural elements in the English coursebooks meant for subsequent levels. Put otherwise, 'My Book of English-Year Two' and 'My Book of English-Year Three'... might be expected to have a better intercultural focus. This supposition needs to be verified through further research. It should be remembered that teachers remain the ones who decide about how a coursebook is to be used in class; they should feel free to supplement the coursebook (as in the case of 'My Book of English-Year One') and adapt it to their particular teaching context.

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