

Evaluation of Intercultural Communicative Competence in the English Language Textbook “New Prospects” for the Third Level Secondary School in Algeria

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المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم كتاب اللغة الإنجليزية للمستوى الثالث من الطور الثانوي في الجزائر من حيث المحتوى الثقافي. لقد فحصت الدراسة مختلف العناصر الثقافية باعتماد طريقة تحليل المحتوى الثقافي المتضمن في الكتاب المدرسي المستهدف، وذلك باستخدام مقياسين للتقويم. وعلى الرغم من أن الدراسة أظهرت بأن الكتاب يحتوي على مضمون ثقافي متنوع المواضيع فإن هناك فروقا ذات دلالة إحصائية في ما يتعلق بنوعية المحتوى حيث يلاحظ طغيان الثقافة الكلية على الجزئية والثقافة المحلية على المستهدفة. وفي ضوء هذه الفروق، أوردت الدراسة بعض التوصيات من خلال إجراء تعديلات في توزيع المواضيع الثقافية، ومعالجة أوجه القصور في الكتاب لتحقيق الأهداف المرجوة

الكلمات المفاتيح: الثقافة، الثقافة الكلية، الثقافة الجزئية، الثقافة المستهدفة، الثقافة المحلية، المحتوى الثقافي في

كتاب اللغة الانجليزية

Résumé

La présente étude a pour but l'évaluation du livre d'anglais de 3 années secondaires en Algérie à partir du contenu culturel. L'étude examiné les différents éléments en s'appuyant sur la méthode d'analyse du contenu. Même si l'étude a montré un contenu culturel diversifié, elle présente des différences statistiques significatives qui montrent la dominance de la macro culture sur la micro culture, ainsi que la culture locale sur la culture ciblée. A la lumière de ces différences, l'étude a donné lieu a certaines recommandations a travers l'établissement des remaniements dans la distribution des sujets culturels pour traiter les aspects de carence et réaliser des objectifs attendus.

Mots clés : Culture, Macro Culture, Micro Culture, Culture Cible, Culture Locale, Culture dans le Livre d'anglais.

Abstract

The present study evaluates whether or not the Algerian secondary school textbook “New Prospects” is culturally-suitable and supports the intercultural principles. It aims at exploring the categories and types of culture using frequencies and percentages. The data are collected through the content analysis method using two checklists. The findings show that even the textbook incorporates a variety of cultural input, it is still inappropriate in the distribution of big “C” over small “c” culture and the dominance of source culture. This deficiency made it possible that the study shows some changes in the distribution of cultural information in order to meet the intercultural objectives.

Key words: culture, big “C” culture, small “c” culture, target culture, non-target culture, culture in EFL textbooks

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Introduction

The National Curriculum for English as a Foreign Language in Algeria issued by the National Ministry of Education in the 2005 reform encouraged both teachers and learners to come to a fruitful interaction under the Competency-Based Approach. The syllabus designers have realized that structural approaches to Foreign Language education have produced structurally competent but communicatively- incompetent learners because EL skills have been taught in isolation from the real communication situations. Additionally, there has been a growing awareness that linguistic competence does not ensure an adequate level of successful communication¹. Consequently, they have made a shift from linguistic to communicative objectives as it is recognized that “through the process of learning a FL at school, learners are also encouraged to get involved in the construction of the world around them”².

Following these recent changes, the National Curriculum comes as a response to the overall rapid global changes taking place around us as well as to the demands of national economic needs. In that the communicative objectives cannot be possible if appropriate cultural content is not incorporated. It seems that it is possible for EFL learners to be highly competent in communicating with others who share with them the same cultural background but not competent when they come to interact with others who are culturally different i.e. learning English as a FL requires the ability to communicate effectively with those from different and other cultures. Consequently, the researcher of this study thinks that an intercultural approach to EFL education is not just a need, but a strong necessity since it requires incorporating variety of cultural topics, themes and categories.

The concept of Intercultural Communicative Competence ICC is more than just being able to speak the native language of our interlocutors but it

requires certain attitudes, knowledge, and skills to be promoted alongside linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competence³. So, ICC is that ability of knowing as much as possible about our interlocutor’s cultural background such as where they are grown out? What do they care for? How do they react? And so on. In brief, it is about communicating successfully with people from different target cultures using abilities more than languages’ forms and structures⁴.

The main cause that led the researcher to think deeply about the issue of ICC is to discover the dimension of ICC in order to see to what extent it places our learners in a world of myriad cultural diversity for the sake of directing EFL education in Algeria towards a full development of the Algerian personality both intellectually and emotionally. In short, to translate the Algerian’s individual, societal, and governmental aspirations towards the idea that those who have better command of EL usually have a better opportunity for employment, professional development, and future prospects. To meet these requirements, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the cultural types and categories displayed in “*New Prospects*” textbook?
2. Does the cultural content in the “*New Prospects*” textbook prompt the idea of making learners understand one another when they do not share a common cultural background?
3. Is the cultural input of the “*New Prospects Textbook*” suitable for intercultural communication

Research Hypothesis

If in-use textbook for third secondary school level incorporate enough culture-based categories and types, learners will better learn about culture.

1. Theoretical Background

1. 1. Culture in Language Classroom

Before approaching this topic, we need first to consider the significance of the term culture; what culture is. Generally, culture is viewed as a complex issue and difficult to define; it is a wide and diverse word with several perspectives and interpretations. The diversity of the term has led to a debate among researchers. According to⁵, "culture is a slightly problematic and complex concept since it can mean very different things for different people in different contexts». It seems that there are as many definitions for culture as researchers who are interested about it. For this study, culture means those varieties of topics; themes and categories that need to be taught altogether in any FL textbook.

1. 1. 1. Topics of Culture

Brooks⁶ suggests that there are two domains of culture are of major importance which are "big-C" culture and "little-c" culture. According to Lee, Big "C" culture is "the culture which represents a set of facts relating to the arts, history, geography, business, education, festivals and customs of the target speech community. In this line, Chastain⁷ states that any culture, which focuses on the products and contributions to a society and its outstanding individuals, is often referred to as big "C" culture, including politics, economy, history, literature, fine arts, sciences and geography. Additionally,⁸ Lafayette indicates those that fit the Big "C" category include explaining geographical monuments, historical events, major institutions, and major artistic monuments. Brooks also defines "big C" culture as the best in the human life restricted to the elitists. Wintergerst and Mcveigh⁹ support Brooks' view and maintain that the domain of big "C" culture is for the highly educated people. This social class has the power to understand big "C" themes because their nature implies a kind of intellectual efforts. Finally, big "C" culture is

important to be incorporated within any language documents such as textbooks.

Small "c" culture refers to the daily aspects of life that embody everything as a total way of life¹⁰. For Lee¹¹ this type of culture is "the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture" including attitudes or beliefs and assumptions. Peterson¹² defines little "c" culture as the culture focusing on common or minor themes. It includes themes of the two types; the first one is the invisible culture such as popular issues, opinions, preferences and tastes, certain knowledge (trivia, facts). The second type is the visible culture such as gestures, body posture, use of space, clothing style, food, hobbies, music, etc. According to Lafayette¹³, the little "c" culture includes explaining everyday active cultural patterns such as eating, shopping and greeting people; every passive pattern such as social stratification, marriage and work; and acting appropriately in common everyday situations. It is clear by now that little "c" culture is not restricted to any particular social class but it is intended for all categories and individuals. Little "c" cultural knowledge is very essential for intercultural communication because it affects ways of thinking, behaving and using a language. The socio-cultural values, beliefs and assumptions entailed in small "c" culture assists members of a particular culture or society to use "appropriate and polite" language.

1. 1. 2. Categories of Culture

Cortazzi and Jing¹⁴ provide a novel look at the sources of cultural information by classifying them into categories: target culture, and non-target culture "source culture".

The first category "source culture" refers to the learners' native culture. Jing (1999) states that learners generally need to become familiar, more conscious, and understand their own culture. This assumption generates a debate among scholars on whether the English teaching and learning should be related only to target culture or to other culture. This

situation raises an important question which is; is it fair to use one culture category at the expense of others? In fact, the introduction of the source culture into the content of EFL textbook is as important as other categories of culture. According to Laohawiriyanon¹⁵, it cultivates learners’ knowledge of their own culture and makes them have a chance to learn about topics and themes which are related to their native background so that they can interact successfully with people from different cultural backgrounds since it enables learners to talk about their own culture to foreigners. Though it is an important category, it is often criticized as “there is no attempt to understand other cultures”. The main aim of EL education is to achieve a mutual understanding. That is to say, to understand and to be understood.

The second category «target culture” usually focuses on one or two target cultures. It is also considered as the most popular instructional materials in EFL context (Jing¹⁶). According to McKay¹⁷, the rationale for integrating the target culture into the English classroom lies in the fact that learning a target culture will enhance students’ motivation and develop their attitudes toward language learning. In addition, the use of the target culture in the FL classroom makes it possible for learners from different societies to make best use of the same cultural materials in EFL context. Though the target culture is widely used all over the world, it is often criticized for its commercial nature and seen as publisher’s promotional materials (Jing¹⁸). Its main purpose is to enable learners to talk with others who are culturally different from them and be prepared to encounter other cultures.

1. 2. Culture in EFL Textbooks

English textbooks have been undergoing huge changes in terms of content and objectives in order to correspond with knowledge required from the secondary school levels. Early English textbooks were conceived mostly as grammar textbooks

because at that time the language teaching and goals were linguistic ones “to study language meant to study grammar theory in most cases”¹⁹. There were many examples of textbooks designed under the product curricula: product-based syllabi and Grammar-Translation Method. Today, the situation is completely different. EL is present virtually everywhere and learners can be in contact with an EL through many and many sources. The recent circumstances of EFL education imply that English textbooks must ensure that they are not only suitable, but also capable of helping teachers and learners to realize the pedagogical goals of the nowadays language curricula and syllabi. That is why, recently the three target textbooks for secondary education levels are designed by the National Curriculum Committee of the Ministry of National Education in December 2005, relying altogether on the Competency-Based Approach which stresses many outcomes such as the communicative and intercultural outcomes which are in-built, i.e., made to be part and parcel of the process of teaching and learning, notably through a pertinent typology of activities²⁰. The current study is going to report on content related to cultural issues “categories and themes” in the in-use textbook to see to what extent it meets today’s requirements.

Since language and culture are closely interwoven, the integration of culture into textbooks used for teaching English as a FL has become a widely accepted phenomenon. Many linguists strongly suggest that culture should be integrated into EFL teaching materials. Kilickaya.,²¹ emphasizes that FL materials should include a variety of cultural elements in order to help learners develop an interest in language learning and to foster learners’ motivation. In addition, he further suggests that textbooks that focus learners’ attention on grammatical and linguistic structures are uninteresting and do not stimulate learners. Consequently, EFL classroom should be an

environment where learners attempt to learn a new language; namely, they should know how to address cultural and intercultural issues such as address people, make request, agree or disagree with the people who represent the TC. Thereby, it could be possible for EFL learners to view the world from the perspective of others. In short, it seems that EFL textbooks vary in their content and approach to cultural issues treatment and the representation of culture in EFL textbooks. Cortazzi & Jin²² divide EFL textbooks into categories depending on their focus on cultural content. They are as follows:

The first category includes textbooks which refer to learners’ own culture. Usually, these textbooks are produced at a national level for a particular country. Within this type of textbooks, learners are prepared of how to talk about their own culture to visitors to their country rather than be prepared to encounter other foreign cultures. So, these textbooks help learners to become aware of their cultural identity. A number of examples of such textbooks are; “*El Libro de Ingles*” which is a Venezuelan textbook which describes the country’s chief geographic features. The second one is “*Spotlight on English*” which is a Turkish one which describes Turkish culture rather than a TC. The third one is “*English for Saudi Arabia*” which presents and talks about going to pilgrimage to Mecca. This type of textbooks encourages EFL learners to do familiar things through the medium of the FL textbooks and make learners see members of their own cultures speak English through their culture.

The second type is those textbooks which are based on the TC. Though this type is widely used all over the world, they are often criticized for their commercial nature. TC textbooks assumes that teaching materials should reflect TCs and often include “...materials designed to promote awareness of race, gender, and environment issues” Kilickaya. An outstanding example of this type is “*Success-Communicating in English*” which is set in the U. S.

A. but marketed all over the world. It presents an overview of the multi-cultural nature of the American society and some aspects of the minority groups. Another amazing example is that of “*English Occasions*” (Longman, 1952), “*Success with English*” (Course-book 1, Penguin, 1968), and “*the Language of Business*” (British Broadcasting Corporation, 1970) are all good examples.

The TC textbooks are written to present EFL learners with different voices from the countries where English is spoken as first language and provide them with a spacious room for analyzing problematic situations. This is an opportunity to help EFL learners to be more prepared to act successfully in real life situations if they have an occasion to interact with people from the TC mainly by being more conscious of the stereotypical feature related to their interlocutors.

2. The Study

2. 1 Research Methodology

2. 1. 1The Data

The data of the current study are all the cultural information that belong either to the target culture or the non-target culture. And also those cultural themes of the big “C” culture such as “government, economy, history, geography, literature, arts, society norms and values, education, architecture and music” in addition to the themes of small “c” culture such as “food, holiday, living style, customs, beliefs, values, hobbies, and gestures” which appear in the “*New Prospects*” textbook which is designed for Algerian third level secondary school learners.

In order to investigate the themes, topics and categories of culture that are taught through the selected EFL textbook, a content analysis is selected using the frequency and percentage of occurrence of cultural topics and themes. Content Analysis is a method which helps the researcher to analyze the content of documents. Basically, it is a method that

can be used with any “text”, whether it is in the form of writing, sounds or pictures, as a way of quantifying the content of the target document. Educationists use it to study the content of textbooks, syllabi and curricula to introduce judgments about it²³.

Additionally this method is “a technique that enables researchers to study human behaviors in an indirect way through an analysis of their communication”. It is seen as an “unobtrusive or non-reactive methods of social research” since it is a method of observation in the sense that instead of asking people directly, it takes their communications indirectly²⁴. So it is concerned with getting the data from human beings communications.

2. 1. 2. Research Materials

The three in-use EFL textbooks “third generation” for the secondary levels in Algeria represent the target materials of the study while the “*New Prospects*” textbook represents sampling material of the study. This sample textbook “*New Prospects*” is designed for the third level learners. It is divided into “6” unit recommended in the syllabus with recurrent language functions, grammatical structures and language components as well as skills and strategies. The six units are entitled as follows: “Exploring the Past”, “Ill Gotten Gains never Prosper”, “Schools: Different and Alike”, “Safety First”, “It Is a Giant Leap for Mankind”, and “Keep Cool”. As a matter of fact, learners are supposed to undergo different real-life experiences, they are

promptly impelled to respond to different problem-solving situations, where they are set individually, in pairs or in groups to ponder, formulate thought and rejoin to behavioral patterns acting out in society. This textbook proves to converge with the syllabus and the integral national curriculum finalities. In that, it really constitutes a basic means for incorporating national values with universal target ones so as to urge learners to freely gird themselves for the trials they would encounter ahead.

2. 1. 3. Checklists of Evaluation

a. Cortazzi& Jin Checklist

Among the checklists of evaluation is that of Cortazzi& Jin checklist²⁵ which investigates the cultural information with some modifications to best cover all the cultural content found in the textbook. This checklist is adopted according to the following categories;

- The target culture “English speaking countries such as U.S. A and U. k. etc”,
- The non-target culture “where English is not spoken as a first language.”

b. Chen& Lee Checklist

The second checklist is that of Chen (²⁶2004) & Lee (2009). This checklist is composed of 9 themes for big “C” culture and 7 themes for small “c” culture’. The following tables “1 and 2” introduce these themes with their definitions and possible topics for each one.

Table (1): Coding Guidelines for Big “C” Themes of Culture

Theme	Definition	Topics
Politics	The activities involved in getting, controlling and using power in public life, and being able to influence decisions that affect a country or a society	-Legal provision -Political policies and leaders -Acts of government -International conferences
Economy	The relationship between production, trade and the supply of money in a particular country or region	-Activities of enterprises -Business in a country -Statistical data of consumption
History	All the events that happened in the past, and development of particular place, etc.	-History of a farming and agriculture of a country
Geography	The scientific study of the earth’s surface , physical features, divisions, population,	-Geographical description of a geographical places, etc.
Literature “Art”	Literature: pieces of writing that are valued as works of arts, novels, plays, Art: the imagination to express ideas or feelings, like paintings, drawing, etc	-Paintings -Sculpture and decorative arts -Textiles and costumes -Literature
Social Norms	The behavioral expectations and cues within a society like “clothes and so on” with «suitability» to say or not	-Using the appropriate questions -The most important which should included in a resume
Education	A process of teaching and learning to improve knowledge and develop skills	-Organizations, curriculum & structures of education
Architecture	The art and study of designing buildings,	-A styles and great of building
Music	Sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. People.	-Types of modern music -Introduction to great works

Source: Xiao, J. (2010: 39). *China*

Table (2): Coding Guidelines for Small “c” Themes of Culture

Theme	Definition	Example
Food	Things that are people eat; a particular type of food.	-Dietary and types characteristics -Etiquette when people eat
Holiday	A day when most people do not go to work or school, because of a religious or national celebration	-Purpose and significance of the holiday -Symbols and signs of the holidays -People’s particular activities on the holiday
Life Styles	The way in which a person or a group of people lives and works	-Interpersonal interactional activities -Styles of entertainment and fashion
Customs	An accepted way of behaving or of doing things in a society	-Wedding ceremony traditions -Invitations and traditions
Values & Beliefs	Beliefs are about what is right and wrong and what is important in life.	-Identifying what is good , beneficial, useful, beautiful, desirable, appropriate -Values for love, life and jobs, and ethics
Hobbies	Activities that you do for pleasure when you are not working	-TV program preferences -Reading books, etc
Body Language	A movement that you make with your body to show any meaning.	-Body postures, facial expressions, and so onto show attitudes or state of mind.

Source: Xiao, J. (2010: 40). *China*

2. 2. Findings, Analysis, Discussion, and Results

2. 2. 1. Findings in all Units

Table (3): Cultural Categories and Types Found in All Units

Culture Type	Culture Theme	Target Culture		Non-Target Culture	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Big “C” Culture	Education	22	09.82%	21	09.37%
	Architecture	/	/	05	02.23%
	Society Norms	04	01.78%	05	02.23%
	Government	03	01.33%	08	03.57%
	History	03	01.33%	25	11.16%
	Literature	08	03.57%	05	02.23%
	Music	04	01.78%	/	/
	Economy	18	08.03%	33	14.73%
	Geography	11	04.91%	11	04.91%
Small “c” Culture	Beliefs & Values	05	02.23%	07	03.12%
	Hobbies	/	/	01	0.44%
	Gestures	/	/	/	/
	Food	08	03.57%	06	02.67%
	Customs	/	/	01	0.44%
	Living Styles	02	0.89%	06	02.67%
	Holiday	01	0.44%	01	0.44%
Total	09 + 07 = 16	89	39.65%	135	60.35%

Source: “*New Prospects Textbook*, 2006”

2. 2. 2. Data Analysis

The table above demonstrates the distribution of cultural information in terms of types and categories of culture throughout the textbook “*New Prospects*”. It summarizes all the findings which were seen in all the units. At this stage of discussion, this table represents the frequency and percentage of 16 cultural themes. As far as types of culture are concerned, the frequency and percentage of big “C” culture and small “c” culture are 94.73% and 05.27%, showing a strong higher percentage of big “C” culture than small “c” culture. Concerning the categories of culture, the percentage of target culture and non-target culture are 39.65% and 60.35%, showing a higher percentage of non-target culture than target culture. In short, the analysis is divided into two sections. The first one is about big “C” culture and the second one is about small “c” culture.

2. 2. 2. 1. Big “C” Culture

“Education”, “Architecture”, “Society Norms”, “Government”, “History”, “Literature”, “Music”, “Economy”, and “Geography” are 09 themes under big “C” culture which were significantly found in the textbook. The latter 09 themes were ranked as following; the “Economy” theme ranked as top frequency, with a total percentage of 72.76% occurrences in the textbook. The second highest was “Education” (19.19%), followed by “History” (12.49%), “Geography” (09.82%), “Literature” (05.8%), “Government” (04.9%), “Society norms” (04.01%), “Architecture” (02.23%), and the last theme was “Music” at 01.78%. More details of these themes are as follows;

Economy: This theme introduces the different relationships between production, trade and the supply of money in a particular country. This theme is detailed in terms of issues such as activities of enterprises, business in a country, statistical data of consumption, and international economy in relation to both categories of culture. The

economical aspects are mostly detailed more explicitly in unit 2 and 4. The major topics illustrated in the unit 2 are aimed to increase the awareness and the ability of the target learners of how to deal with ethics in business as being active participants in the process of development of their society. In unit 4, it introduces some economic aspects related to the target culture in which it aimed to relate learners with the values of the modern economy and how the target nations manage their economy in the sense of making them understand the multiple issues about advertizing, consumption, and safety. Additionally, it is presented in an implicit way dispersed over some units such as in unit 1 when the authors show how ancient people and civilizations practiced economic activities such as irrigation and farming systems “page 37”. In short, the theme of economy was displayed in order to raise the learners’ awareness about economy and make them contribute positively in the development of their nation when they encounter them.

Education: The ways in which the process of teaching and learning, especially in schools to improve knowledge and develop skills is presented under the theme of education. It develops them in terms of the organization of education systems, structures, curriculum, syllabuses, and courses. Schools and educational institutions are discussed from many different angles in the textbook. According to the textbook, a good education is highly appreciated and young people and their families want to get a proper education. Education is seen as a factor that will improve the quality of one’s life since one cannot get a good job without education, especially in the time of technology and globalization. For these reasons young people, families, and governments take the matter of studying more seriously “unit 03: 74-105”. Furthermore, it becomes clear that getting an education is not a self-evident privilege for everyone in some societies because of the major differences in

the standards of living. In some families children and youngsters have no time for school since they have to work for their living “page 65”. The American school system is also discussed “pages 98-99”. It is told that although most American people prefer to limit the influence of government, this is not the case where education is concerned. All levels of government are involved in education; the Federal Government provides some money for education through the Department of Education. But state and local governments have direct control and are responsible for the education of students. All Americans agree on the importance of education being available to all, but there is disagreement about what should be taught. The greatest area of disagreement is the place of religious and moral education. On the other hand, the British school system is also discussed “pages 83-84”. It is told that no subject has as much importance for the British people as that of education. It is said that most citizens believe that the state should provide education free of charge and to a high standard as well for all. These requirements are more or less similar to what is required by American schools and universities. This topic opened a vast arena for making comparison between educational systems of different cultures.

History: This theme deals specifically with the multiple periods and events of any particular country. It involves the presentation of the history of the ancient civilizations which concentrates mainly on describing some decisive points of their emergence and decline. In one example, a picture in page 15 presents a map in which it locates the areas where most of the ancient civilizations stand such as the Sumerian civilization, Egyptian civilization, Maya civilization, and Aztec civilization . And it is said that the Sumerian civilization was the oldest civilization in the world, and the Egyptian civilization invented agriculture, spread the alphabet in the Mediterranean Basin and developed a system

of government and farming. It is told also that nearly all the ancient civilizations had some common points such as they rose along rivers, agriculture formed the basis of their economy and strength, they flourished during periods of peace, and they fell into ruins during periods of wars. To summarize, the historical events presented in the textbook considered mainly that these historical facts constitute the benchmarks of the modern world in the sense that they can help us to understand the events of today. Concerning the target culture, it involves the presentation of the national history of the U. S. A. through a picture in page 141 about an important stage of the U. S. A. in terms of the discoveries in the space. It is told that the American astronaut Neil Armstrong was the first one to orbit the earth.

Geography: This section is about the geographic factors and characters of the target culture and non-target culture. Which of them are significant for the members of the culture and which are important for outsiders in intercultural communication settings? Quite many statistical and general facts about the non-target culture are given in the textbook. For example the geographical areas of the ancient civilizations were mentioned as well as the famous Algerians’ seven World Heritage Sites. Additionally, in multiple examples some statistical information and general facts about the distances of some planets, the universe, and the space as well the solar system are mentioned in page 145 in unit 5. Furthermore, the theory about the creation of the world is discussed. It is pointed out that there are two categories of this theory: religious and scientific “page 149”. Also a cartoon about Earthmen on Mars is presented on page 150 to show that man has really reached the surface of the moon. In conclusion, most of the examples are important and interesting for learners to know about geography as a cultural aspect.

Literature: The different pieces of writings that are valued as works of arts, especially novels,

plays and poems are introduced to manifest the literature theme. It involves the presentation of some famous Algerian works of art which symbolizes the great cultural heritage of the nation “page 22” through a picture about the sculptures that the ancient inhabitants made on the rocks. The latter drawings provide us with much access to the Mediterranean and the Sahara of Algeria. Furthermore, the literature theme was observed through the famous pieces of art produced all over the world in multiple given periods of time. Such works are illustrated on page 41 through a number of pictures like “Polyphemus the Cyclops”, “Paris’s Abduction of Helen”, “Trojan Horse”, “Ulysses’s Homecoming”, “The Sirens”, “Greek Siege of Troy”, and “Penelope and Ulysses”. The literature theme was also noticed at the end of each unit in the “Time For” section with some poems about the topics dealt with in each unit.

Government “Politics”: This theme introduces the institutions of the state and their meanings related to the target culture and non-target culture. In the textbook, there are only few references to the governmental and political institutions “4.9%” and most of them are only mentioned by name and meanings. It is, for example, pointed that the “Accounting Counsel” building in Algeria is in charge of fighting corrupt practices. The customs body is mentioned and it involves its meaning in terms of fighting corruption through a picture about a customs officer showing counterfeits of famous European paintings “page 53”. Other political-governmental institutions mentioned are the Old Royal Observatory at Greenwich “page 135”, “the center of research about space matters in Algeria page 135”, and a passage about the NASA functions in page 156. It is concluded that the previous institutions are governmental bodies which are in charge of managing state affairs.

Society Norms: This section of cultural theme, discusses the behavioral expectations and

cues within a society of both categories of culture (social class, social interaction, and behaviors) are presented in the textbook. These aspects explore behaviors in terms of when and where it is appropriate to say certain words, to discuss certain topics or wear certain clothes, and when not to do. It is mainly presented in Unit 02 where some inappropriate behaviors are shown through both images and texts throughout the unit. Bribery, fraud, money laundering, false accounting, tax evasion, and smuggling are all corrupt practices which should be avoided in a way or another “pages 46-52”. It is said that all the corrupt practices without exception should be fought, and the correct practices such as probity, honesty, loyalty, and business should be encouraged. Furthermore, some sayings about business are introduced, for example, “business is business” on page 61 is shown to be totally a mistaken belief in the sense that ethics has everything to do with business. Many and many businessmen “pages 61-65-70” have to fire at least hundreds of workers in order to make more profit. Through these kinds of actions it is clearly that there are major differences in the standards of living in these societies and there are strong as well weak social classes in the U.S. A. The textbook makes also a difference between American and British people in the way of how they express themselves. Americans and British people do not have much in common when they come to express their feelings. For American; nearly all of them find it better to share what they think or feel. In contrast, the British people do not like showing or talking about their feelings “page 174”. To summarize, the multiple cues and expectations with any society were mainly discussed through criticizing the differences in the standards of living and by presenting what is acceptable within this society and not acceptable within another one as cultural differences.

Architecture: The arts of designing buildings and their styles are discussed to some extent in the

textbook. This section discusses “Architecture” theme in terms of the aspects such as great architectural products, styles of buildings, cities and towns’ designs. The historical huge buildings in Egypt are one of the greatest constructions which were established by human beings and considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World “pyramids”. It is told that they were great efforts and recourses needed to build them which went back from the 25 century onwards as well as the rock toms in ancient Egypt “page 36”. Other topics of “Architecture” are pictures about “the Trojan Horse” and “Greek Siege of Troy” page 41. The aspects of this theme show in fact the true contribution of Architectural dimension in the construction of all human beings civilizations all around the world and as one great manifestation of their culture as ways of life. So, it can be concluded that the absence of architectural aspects implies neither civilization nor culture existence.

Music: The sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant to listen to is introduced in some parts of the textbook under the “Music” theme. It involves some types of modern music, traditional, classical and great musical works. It is usually introduced in the “Time for” section. It is presented through some famous songs such as “what did you learn in school today?” by Tom Paxton in page 105, “a song for eating” in page 134 and another one in page 195 which is about love. It is noticed that these various songs aimed to make learners feel relaxed after completing each unit and relate each topic with musical works. In conclusion, it seems that music is an integral part in human beings life whatever and whenever they are either in their professional, social or private life and it goes side by side with all the aspects of life.

2. 2. 2. 2. *Small “c” Culture*

“Beliefs & Values”, “Hobbies”, “Gestures”, “Gestures”, “Food”, “Customs”, “Living styles”, and “Holiday” are 07 themes under small “c” culture which were significantly found in the textbook. The

latter 07 themes were ranked as following; the “Food” theme ranked as top frequency, with a total percentage of 06.24% occurrences in the textbook. The second highest was “Beliefs & Values” (05.35%), followed by “Living styles” (03.56), “Customs” (0.44%), “Hobbies” (0.44%) and “Holiday” (0.44%) respectively. Most details are as follows;

Food: This theme introduces how the actions related to the food and eating habits for both the target culture and non-target culture in the textbook. According to the findings, the daily routines of food were mainly discussed in Unit 04. It is noticed that food theme was discussed in terms of making a comparison between organic food and genetically modified food “109”. It is concluded that genetically-modified foods are harmful to both man’s health and the environment. Consumers are encouraged to buy conventional food which is healthier and less damaging to the environment. The groups of consumers are also advised to have a culture about food consumption through reading the labels on the packages of food before they buy them to make them aware about the ingredients, the expiry date and other information about the product they consume “107”. In addition the eating habits were further explored through the role of advertisement. The latter make consumers buy more fast foods and processed food which is dangerous to their health “109”. Consequently, there are many associations which provide consumers with information about marketed products in Britain today and aim to protect consumers from abuse by dishonest advertisement “111”. The advantages of the organic food were introduced through eating the “garlic”. The latter is proved with no doubt to be good for consumers’ health and particularly for blood pressure. Moreover, we are likely to see more “no smoke” signs than we have so far; yet, we will not see any “no breathe” signs for garlic eaters.

Beliefs and Values: This section presents the examples of taken- for- granted actions within any social group. The moral beliefs and values which form daily life of the target societies are found in the textbook. The moral beliefs and values of American and British people are mainly discussed by introducing some differences between American and British people in many ways. American and British people are similar in many ways, but in expressing their feelings they have not much in common. It is said that nearly all Americans believe that it is better to share what they think or feel rather than hide it. A great many of them expect their relatives and friends to say “I love you”, “I care for you”, or “I am glad to have a friend like you”. Almost all of them enjoy talking about their own experiences and most of them will go so far to share ideas with foreigners the first time they come into contact with them. In contrast to this, the traditional British reserve a national tendency to avoid showing strong emotion of any kind. The British people like to keep a stiff upper lip. In other words, they do not like showing about their feelings. They rather prefer hiding them because people who reveal their emotions are thought to be weak and bad-tempered “174-175”. To conclude, American people are said to be more extrovert while British people are said to be more introvert.

The moral beliefs about business are also introduced on page 64 when the textbook instructs the learners to express their beliefs and values when doing business. In short, to compare whether ethics has nothing to do with business or ethics has everything to do with business.

Another discussion related to the beliefs and values was further developed on page 38. It was about the ancient Egyptians’ beliefs about the Pharaoh who provided the strongest unifying force for all. The Egyptian people believed that the king was thought to be the chief servant of the god. The Egyptian idea of kingship went further than this.

They thought that their king was himself a living god, a divine ruler who had magic control over the weather, the Nile, and their lives. To sum up, they thought that their king was the first and the last responsible one who brought safety, prosperity, and happiness to the Egyptian nation.

Living Styles: The practices like the daily routine, interpersonal interaction and social activities, activities and styles of family life, and styles of entertainment constitute the living styles theme. In the textbook, there are some examples of the conventions of verbal behavior. It is told that Americans love to express their feelings openly by being more direct while British people are said to tend to hide their feelings. Another aspect of social interaction is introduced through the way friends behave in the Algerian culture. It is told that friends in Algeria help each other in hard times and they do not laugh at each other when they say embarrassing things. Moreover, they invite each other to a restaurant on special occasions “177”. Another important aspect of interpersonal interaction is mentioned on page 183 about friendship. It is about the concept of the degrees of friendship in British culture starting from closest friends, best friends, close friends, good friends, acquaintances, till the strangers. Moreover, it links this concept with the Algerian culture when learners are instructed to make some comparison and look out for some equivalent words for the words symbolizing friendship in the British culture.

Customs: The different accepted ways of behaviors and other things done in a society are introduced under the theme of “Customs”. It is presented through wedding ceremony, invitations and all the traditions that symbolize the life mode of any society. Great deals of these topics were displayed in Unit 06 in which some special modes of life are demonstrated through pictures that symbolize the structure of families in the target culture “page 165”. Another aspect about wedding

ceremonies is shown on page 179 about Diana Frances Spencer with Prince Charles. Concerning the non-target culture there are some picture of Algerian famous comedians and their performances and how their performances are similar to or different from those of the foreign comedians “166”. The aspects of customs are strongly connected with culture in the sense that they have great effects on social behavior, teach learners moral laws, and closely linked with national character. As a whole it is advisable to maintain healthy customs and avoid sick ones.

Hobbies: The different activities which are done for pleasure when people do not work are listed under the theme of “Hobbies”. It is introduced in terms of some TV program preferences and reading books and so on. Topics about hobbies are listed in Unit 04 on page 112 through some shopping habits, entertainment and leisure activities. According to the textbook the next decades are likely to bring about radical changes in our life styles. People are becoming more addicted to shopping either online shopping or robot shop. In Unit six “page 167”, a comparison is made between British and American people in terms of how they spend their free time. It is said that British people have a dry sense of humor. They can keep straight face and let their voice sound as though they were being serious when they joke. As for American people humor is usually more direct. All in all, an individual’s sense of humor is influenced by many things. Hobbies activities demonstrate the degree of happiness people enjoy in their time. The textbook introduces some key words that make people everywhere happy and have the sense of hobbies such as savor a moment, take control of your time, be positive, give priority to close relationships, act happy, and do not vegetate.

Holiday: The actions in which people do not go to work or school, because of a religious or national celebration is not mentioned strongly in the textbook. It is expected to discuss it through the

purpose, significance of the holiday, symbols and signs of the holidays, and people’s particular activities on the holiday. This theme is presented only on page 130 when learners are instructed to imagine themselves as holiday makers who have come back from a disappointing holiday abroad and asked to complete the letter of complaint.

2. 3. Results

In order to meet the requirements of the research questions, the researcher has carried out a deep and thorough analysis of the contents of the textbook and arrived at a number of sound objective results using the frequencies and percentages of the cultural types and categories mentioned in the textbook. The analysis of the two categories of culture with the two types of culture shows multiple results. Below is a detailed description of the results:

According to the findings and discussion above, two striking findings are the dominance of the big “C” culture over small “c” culture. Even big “C” cultural themes are important within any language textbook in a way or another, they do not best respond to the real cultural needs of the learners. In short, it is not acceptable to teach particular cultural themes at the expense of others because also small “c” cultural themes are very essential for intercultural communication since they affect the ways of thinking, behaving and using a language appropriately and politely. So macro cultural knowledge does not constitute the real Algerian needs and aspirations especially at individual and societal levels as micro cultural knowledge. In other words, the textbook content should reflect the national Algerian aspirations through big “C” culture and personal aspirations through small “c” culture.

The textbook proved to have a remarkable deficiency in the topics devoted for small “c” cultural themes “only 37 / 224”. This deficiency might be a good reason that hinders Algerian learners to communicate successfully with others

who are culturally different and henceforth have a low competence of intercultural interaction. In fact, according to the theories of big “C” and small “c” culture “²⁷Wintergerst and Mcveigh, 2010”, small “c” cultural themes and topics play a more significant role in daily communication across cultural boundaries than big “C” cultural themes and topics because learners need to have the ability to communicate about the daily actions, practices, thoughts, behaviors and private life when they encounter real-life intercultural situations ahead. Furthermore, even the Upper-Case Cultural topics are valuable information; it is limited in its utility to the face-to-face concerns of intercultural communication. One can know a lot about the history of a particular culture and still not be able to communicate with an actual interlocutor from that culture. Understanding big “C” culture may create knowledge, but it does not necessarily generate competence. In other words, micro cultural topics and themes are more effective and important for intercultural communication in the target cultures than macro cultural topics and themes.

According to the findings and discussion above, concerning the categories of culture, the percentage of target culture is “39.65%” and non-target culture is “60.35%”. These statistics show a higher percentage of non-target culture than target culture. More than half of the overall topics devoted for cultural content were related to the non-target culture. This fact is not in agreement with the question of textbook’s suitability in terms of the cultural content. Even the analyzed textbook is overloaded with cultural materials of the non-target culture and it contributes in a way or another to respond to the learners’ needs by being more prepared of how to talk about their own culture, it is not acceptable to teach particular cultural category at the expense of others because most studies which examine the same area of interest conclude that most of the textbooks are heavily overloaded with the

cultures of the English speaking countries or the target culture by which learners are prepared to encounter other foreign cultures. In short, the cultural content in terms of the cultural categories found in the textbook does not agree with what should be incorporated to achieve the final objective of understanding and being understood. It is better to overload any language textbook with cultural materials of the target culture since it is supposed to enjoy more exposure to the target culture.

Conclusion

To sum up, the wealth of research indicated that the cultural content in this sample EFL textbook

in Algeria appeared to provide less appropriate cultural information and to broaden learners’ worldview about intercultural understanding. Consequently, the study seems to declare that changes in the distribution of cultural information over categories, themes, types and topics of culture should be made if Algerian educators really want to prepare learners to communicate in the intercultural world of English and more especially in the Target English world by shedding more light on the small “c” cultural themes and topics which seem to be more culturally-suitable for EFL education in Algeria.

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