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Analyzing Cultural Content in the Algerian First Year Middle School Textbook "My Book of English"

Analyse du contenu culturel dans le manuel d'anglais pour la première année du collège algérien « My Book of English »

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Abstract
The present study is concerned with the analysis of the cultural content in the Algerian first year middle textbook "My Book of English", so the aim of the study is to examine the situation of teaching culture in middle school textbook. To reach its aims, a mixed method approach is used to collect data, including a questionnaire administrated to 20 EFL middle school teachers, and a cultural checklist applied to the textbook elements. The findings reveal that source culture is highly integrated while the target culture receives little attention, and foreign cultures were not given much importance. On the basis of the findings, stakeholders and textbook designers are asked to reconsider the place of culture in teaching English language. Finally, a number of suggestions for further research are highlighted.
Keywords: *Culture, First-year Middle School, My Book of English, Textbook.*

Résumé

La présente étude analyse le contenu culturel du manuel scolaire algérien de première année de collège « My Book of English ». Son objectif est d'examiner la place accordée à la culture dans l'enseignement de l'anglais au collège. Pour ce faire, une méthodologie mixte a été employée, incluant un questionnaire administré à 20 enseignants d'anglais de collège et une grille d'analyse culturelle appliquée aux éléments du manuel. Les résultats révèlent que la culture source est largement intégrée, tandis que la culture cible et les cultures étrangères reçoivent peu d'attention. En conséquence, il est recommandé aux acteurs concernés et aux concepteurs de manuels de reconsidérer le rôle de la culture dans l'enseignement de l'anglais. Enfin, quelques pistes pour de futures recherches sont proposées.

Mots-clés : *Culture, Première année de collège, My Book of English, Manuel scolaire.*

Introduction

The necessity of learning a foreign language goes beyond learning grammar forms; it includes developing intercultural awareness that helps students from different cultural backgrounds to establish international relationships and become intercultural speakers. Teaching English as a foreign language must be accompanied with teaching intercultural knowledge and understanding. This raises a number of questions: what is culture? How can cultural content be integrated into the curriculum? What kind of cultural content English textbooks should include? And does the already existing cultural content risk presenting generalization about the target culture? Traditionally, foreign language textbooks, ranging from middle school levels to secondary school ones were designed to serve linguistic purposes, focusing on grammatical and lexical matters. Yet, over the time, textbooks increasingly evolved to incorporate and acknowledge the role that culture plays in language learning. The aim of this study is to analyse the cultural content of the Algerian first-year English middle school textbook "My Book of English". Equally important, this study attempts to examine to which extent the textbook integrate cultural content and evaluate its suitability for learners. The study is significant because it highlights the role of cultural content in enhancing learners' intercultural understanding, which contributes

to helpings learners learn the English language easily, respecting and valuing their source culture, and developing awareness of other cultures.

1. Review of Literature

Drawing on related research, this study is fundamental in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The review is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on the overview and culture different types with the emphasis on the cultural textbook content. The second section examines the school textbook's overview, design, source, and needs analysis without forgetting the textbook evaluation and how would it be evaluated.

1.1 Cultural Content

To understand well what cultural content means, it is pertinent to refer to culture overview taking into consideration its types.

1.1.1 Culture Overview

Organized into several categories, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) collected 164 definitions of culture: broad definitions (social heritage or tradition), normative definitions (rules or ways of doing things), psychological definitions (patterns and organizations) genetic definitions (products or artifact) and incomplete or metaphoric definitions called "on – the – side stabs in passing definitions" (p. 72).

According to Brumann (1999), culture "…can mean the forms of traditional behavior which are characteristic of a given society or of a group of societies, or of a certain race, or of a certain area, or of a certain period of time"; means that culture is an underlying systems of shared ideas that influence behavior, which is developed and learned through time by each generation. Following the same path, CARLA defines culture as shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective underlying that are learned through a process of socialization which identifies and distinguishes members of a cultural group from another.

In addition, some researchers such as Harrison (2006) defines culture as the body of values, beliefs, and attitudes that members of a society share (values, beliefs, and attitudes shaped chiefly by environment, religion, and the vagaries of history) that are passed on from generation to generation chiefly through child rearing practices, religious practice, the education system, the media, and peer relationships.

1.1.2 Types of Culture

Culture is divided into big "C" and small "c". The big "C" shows series of statistics and facts about art, history, geography, education, festivals, business, customs, of the target culture. On the contrary, the small "c" represents that sense of target culture society which is invisible and deeper; such as: norms, beliefs, socio-cultural variables like age, sex, and social position (Lee, 2009). Additionally, Xiao (2010) classified cultural content under big "C" and small "c" types into sixteen themes such as politics, economy, history, geography, literature, social norms, education, architecture, and music.

1.1.3. Textbook Content

School textbooks are divided into two main categories, global textbooks and local ones. The former are designed for an international market with no specific culture, and the later are generally designed as part of a national curriculum of a particular country. EFL texts as failing to engage students while providing limited and unrealistic cultural information, Widdowson (2005) suggests that teachers should use the culture that already exists in the classroom along with more authentic materials which will be of greater interest and relevance to students. For that reason the cultural content should be analyzed in the Algerian school textbooks, more precisely this study is concerned with first year middle school textbook namely "My Book of English".

2. School Textbook

This section presents school textbook's overview, design, source, and needs analysis, and textbook evaluation.

2.1 School Textbook Overview

Textbooks are the product of a particular nation's educational system, and they are the most popular teaching materials used in foreign language classes. It is highly significant that textbooks include essential elements of language and culture while highlighting learners' needs, cultural background, and level of proficiency. In EFL contexts, textbooks aim at providing learners with necessary knowledge of the English language and English speaking countries' cultures, and preparing them for intercultural communication. Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 315) state that "the textbook is an almost universal element of (English language) teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been

set up to produce those in (various) countries…no teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook." In the same view, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) refer to a textbook as a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer and an authority by giving students relevant information about grammar and vocabulary; by showing an outline of linguistic and cultural elements; and by guiding students and teachers to follow the steps taken in previous lessons.

2.1.1 Design

Historically, textbooks have long been subject to control exercised through the education policy by and on behalf of societal elites, a control emerging through competition among specialist subject disciplines and education science, which together define the canon of knowledge to be taught in each school subject through the designed syllabus. The later is defined as "a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level" Dubin and Olshtain (1997, 28).

With the creation of the Algerian Ministry of Education in 1963, the process of building an inclusive and open national education system was set. It is the only authority to design and supervise the Algerian educational system, moreover; the system has been subject to many reforms mainly at middle school levels. Especially first year middle school textbook which has witnessed radical reforms all over the time, thus "My Book of English" is the last version; created in 2016; consists of six sequences:

- Pre – Sequence: Now We Have English
- Sequence 01: Me and My friends
- Sequence 02: Me and My Family
- Sequence03: Me and My Daily Activities
- Sequence 04: Me and My School
- Sequence 05: Me, My Country and the World

2.1.2 Source

In 2016, an anticipated emergence of second-generation textbooks touched first year middle school grade, reforming various aspects which are directed towards learners' autonomy, creativity, and problem-solving skills. "My Book of English" is designed by disciplinary group of inspectors, school and university teachers based on a 'global approach' that allows the same

themes to be tackled through different subject disciplines to make Algerian pupils participate more in their learning in order to leave school with not just a good command of reading, writing, and numeracy but also with attitudes, values, and skills needed by 21st century citizens.

2.1.3 Needs Analysis / Diagnosis

A need is the gap existing between what learners are before being exposed to a given content, and what they are expected to be as a result of instruction. Needs may include wants, desires, demands, expectations, motivation, lacks, constraints, and requirements (Brindley, 1984). Skopinskaja (2003) believes that local EFL textbooks usually aim at developing learners' awareness of their own cultural identity and promoting their awareness of the target culture. While textbook designers always agree that English cannot be taught in a cultural vacuum, they do not agree whether to prioritize the source culture, the target culture, or other cultures. In Algeria, first-year middle school textbook designers must adhere to the national curriculum set by decision makers.

2.2 Textbook Analysis

Agreeing on the crucial importance of textbook analysis within the field of language teaching, Hutchinson (1987) insists upon the necessity of investigating the underlying deeper level of materials evaluation by asking the crucial question why materials are the way they are. Similarly, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) advance that the decidability about the textbook's success or failure requires an insightful perspectives and backgrounds from specialists in the field and from experienced practitioners who agree on the importance of textbook evaluation. Mukunan et al. (2007) distinguishes between three different types of evaluation:

2.2.1 Pre-use Evaluation

Aiming at establishing the future or potential performance of a newly designed textbook, pre-use evaluation is often impressionistic, subjective, and rather predictive (Mukunan, 2007).

2.2.2 Whilst-use Evaluation

Known as In-use evaluation (Cunningswoth, 1995), or Retrospective evaluation (Mukunan, 2007), whilst – use evaluation is a long-term process which takes place as long as the textbook is used. It involves measuring the

value of the textbook either by using it or by observing it being used (Mukunan, 2007).

2.2.3 Post-use Evaluation

It provides retrospective assessment of a course book's performance and can be useful for identifying strengths and weaknesses which emerge over a period of continuous use (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Several models have been proposed to assess the cultural content:

- **Sercu (1998):** focuses on realism, characters depiction, linguistic content, and type of cultural content (factual vs. intercultural).
- **Cortazzi and Jin's (1999):** examines whether textbooks present source culture, target culture, international culture and cultural free or culture neutral content. It also examines the potential of this cultural content in developing the learners' cultural skills.
- **Byram and Escarte-Sarries' (1991):** assesses cultural realism at micro-social level, macro-social level, intercultural level, and author's standpoint.

Checklists are great evaluation tools since they can reveal the strengths and weaknesses in the textbook, determine which cultures are represented, and evaluate whether the textbook provides opportunities to learn about the source and the target culture.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1 Aims of the Study

The aim of this research is to evaluate and examine the situation of teaching culture in the Algerian first-year English middle school textbook "My Book of English". Equally important, this research attempts to determine to what extent does "My Book of English" contain sufficient cultural content, and if it is suitable, given its great contribution in the teaching learning process for both teachers and learners.

2.2 Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

- Does "My Book of English" serve the cultural purposes?
- To what extent does "My Book of English" provide opportunities to learn about the source and target cultures?
- What types and categories of culture based-content used in "My Book of English"?

- Which culture is represented in "My Book of English" textually and visually?

2.3 Research Instruments and Data Collection

To answer the research questions, this research evaluates the consistency and organization of the material in "My Book of English". A checklist is used to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the textbook, determine whether it states which culture is represented, and whether it provides opportunities to learn about the source and the target cultures. This is complemented by a teachers' questionnaire, as the teachers are more familiar with "My Book of English's" content.

3.4 Description of the Checklist

Divided into two sections, the checklist consists of twenty-four (24) elements to be evaluated. The first section, general presentation of the textbook, consists of six (06) elements; name of textbook (01), proposed learners' level (02) , author(s) (03) , publisher (04), year / place of publication (05) , number of pages (06). The second section, textbook evaluation, consists of eighteen (18) elements. They check the cultures portrayed in the book; target culture (01), source culture (13), other cultures (14); culture integration in textbook, in texts (02), in tasks (03), in dialogues (04); the components of the textbook, visual cultural components (11), visual cultural components Vs. textual cultural components (12); the subjects discussed, geography(05), literature/art (06), history (07), food (08), lifestyle (09), values (10); the suitability of the textbook in accordance to the pupils age (15), level(16), and interests(17). These elements are in form of declarative sentences aiming at evaluating the cultural content in the "My Book of English" and seeing to what extent does it have a sufficient cultural content.

2.5 Description of the questionnaire

A total of twenty (20) of Algerian middle school teachers are asked to answer the questionnaire items. Since there is no ideal questionnaire which could cover all the aspects related to cultural content in textbook, an adapted one is conducted. Teachers' questionnaire is followed by (12) questions of multiple-choice and open-ended types, presented in three sections: "General Information", "Cultural Content", and "Textbook Evaluation"

- **Section One: General Information:** seeks personal information about the participants, four (04) items would be asked in this section.
- **Section Two: Cultural Content:** seeks teachers' opinion toward culture, two (02) items would be asked.
- **Section Three: Textbook Evaluation**: seeks teachers' opinion toward culture based content, six (06) items would be asked.

2.6 Limitations

Limitations are the weaknesses of any study that limits its scope as Simon (2011) states "limitations are potential weaknesses in your study and are out of your control. We find limitations in almost everything we do." The scope of this study is limited to certain factors due to lack of teachers, only two or three in one a middle school, and lack of teachers' interest in answering the questionnaires. Because of time constraints and a short treatment period, a longitudinal study is suggested for more accurate and trustworthy results. Only twenty teachers were the sample of the study, yet future studies on a larger example in a longer period of time at different areas are recommended to be more reliable.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Cultural Content

Section One: General Presentation of the Textbook

"My Book of English" is designed for first-year middle school pupils by TAMRABET Lounis, HAMMOUDI Abdelhak, BOUKRI Nabila, and SMARA Abdelhakim. It was published by ENAG Editions in Algiers 2016, and it consists of 160 pages organized in six thematic sequences. Each sequence is divided into two main sections "communicative objectives" and "linguistic objectives", further subdivided into "language forms" and "pronunciation". Each section has its objectives explicitly stated in the book map at the beginning of the book.

Sequence	Heading
1	Pre-Sequence We Have English Now!
2	Me and my Friends
3	Me and my Family
4	Me and my Daily Activities
5	Me and my school
6	Me, my country, and the world

Table1. Sequences' Headings in "My Book of English"

Options	Seq1		Seq2		Seq3		Seq4		Seq5	
1. Target culture is portrayed in "My Book of English".	✔		✔		✔			✘	✔	
2. Culture is integrated in texts.		✘	✔		✔			✘	✔	
3. Culture is integrated in tasks.	✔		✔		✔			✘	✔	
4. Culture is integrated in dialogues.	✔		✔		✔			✘	✔	
5. It deals with geography.	✔		✔			✘		✘	✔	
6. It deals with Literature/ Art.	✔		✔		✔		✔		✔	
7. It deals with history.		✘		✘		✘	✔			✘
8. It deals with food.		✘		✘		✘		✘	✔	
9. It deals with lifestyle.		✘		✘	✔			✘		✘
10. It deals with values.		✘		✘		✘	✔			✘
11. It contains enough variety of visual cultural components.		✘	✔		✔			✘	✔	
12. It contains more visual cultural components than textual ones.		✘		✘		✘		✘	✔	
13. It considers the pupils' source culture.	✔		✔		✔		✔		✔	
14. Cultures other than the target and the source are portrayed.	✔		✔			✘		✘	✔	
15. It is suitable to the pupils' age.	✔		✔		✔		✔		✔	
16. It is suitable to the pupils' level.	✔		✔		✔		✔		✔	
17. It is suitable to the pupils' interests.	✔		✔		✔		✔		✔	
18. There are enough hints that allow expressing culture appropriately.		✘		✘		✘		✘	✔	

Table2. Textbook Analysis

The first pages of the textbook goes under the pre-sequence "Now we Have English" which starts with a picture representing pupils going to class. Culture integration in this part is so limited it can be seen only in some dialogues like in (p. 13) when the teacher introduces herself to her pupils and vice versa "Meriem, Djamel, and Rania" and also in (p. 25) "Akram", in addition to some tasks concerns proper names like in "I ask and answer" rubric; pupils intended to ask their classmates about their names.

Geography, history, literature, food, lifestyle, and values are not stated in contrary to art is presented in two songs (p. 22, 23) by course book authors. "Now we Have English" lacks visual cultural components except in page 13 "the Algerian flag", page 15 "picture of Djamila BOUHIRED", and page 17 "picture of Riad MEHREZ".

With a painting which represents children holding hands all together forming a circle around the globe, information about the TC forms a limited amount of the core of sequence one because it consists only of proper names like "Margaret" (p. 36, 39, 45), "Diana" (p. 40), "Susan, Australia, Great Britain, and London" (p. 41). Concerning culture integration in texts, tasks, and dialogues; sequence one does not deal with texts, and culture is noticeable only in few tasks such as "Razan, Lina, Rafik, Rania" in task two (p. 36), "Younes" task four and task five "Margaret" (p. 36), "Maria, Adrar" task three (p. 40), and in few dialogues like in "I read and do" rubric (p. 41); when Razan and Susan were discussing with each other via e-mail. In one hand, geography is merely stated in examples like "I live in Batna" (p. 39) and in dialogue between Susan and Razan "I am from Great Britain, and I live in London" (p. 41); however, art is presented in only one song about friends by course book authors at the end of the sequence whereas literature and history are not presented at all. In another hand, food, Lifestyle, and values are not presented as well. Following the same path, visual cultural components are not enough to portray culture, and the sequence does not contain more visual cultural components than textual ones. Dealing with other cultures alongside with the target one, sequence one takes a great consideration to pupils' source culture with paying attention to their age, level, and interests. Finally, hints that allow expressing culture appropriately are not enough.

Sequence two begins also with a painting which represents a family composed of grandparents, parents, and siblings. Information about the TC forms a small part of the core of sequence two; it consists only of proper names like "Margaret" (p. 57) and "Jack Smith" (p. 59). With reference to culture integration in texts, tasks, and dialogues; it is presented in text (p.49) "Omar is at home with his British guest, Peter." text page (p.59) "Jack, Canada, Scotland", and text (p.60) "Adaku", it is noticeable in task one (p. 49) "Omar and Peter", in task one (p. 59), "Jack Smith, Canada, and Scotland", task two (p. 60) "Adaku, Nigeria", moreover; in a dialogue

between "Omar" and "Peter" (p. 49), geography is merely stated in texts like "I am from Canada, my mother is from Scotland" (p. 59) and text (p.60) "I am from Nigeria", and in "I think and write" rubric (p.63) "Great Britain, The U.S.A? Brazil, Algeria, Nigeria, Australia, and China", however; art is presented in only one song "Parents…!!" by course book authors at the end of the sequence whereas literature and history are not presented at all.). In another hand, food, Lifestyle, and values are not presented as well. Similarly, visual cultural components are enough to portray culture, and the sequence does not contain more visual cultural components than textual ones. Sequence two takes a great consideration to pupils' source culture with paying attention to their age, level, and interests. When dealing with other cultures (Nigerian culture) alongside with the target one (British culture). Finally, hints that allow expressing culture appropriately are not enough.

"Me and My Daily Activities" sequence begins also with a painting which represents a picture with different daily activities. Information about the TC forms a small part of the core of sequence three; it consists only of proper names like "Margaret" (p. 79, 84, 85, 86, 90). In the matter of culture integration in texts, tasks, and dialogues; culture is presented in text (p.80) "Younes is expressing his Algerian lifestyle", text (p.85) "Margaret is expressing her British lifestyle", on top of that it is noticeable in task four and five (p. 75) "Amel, Setif", task one (p. 84) "Margaret, Younes", and task two (p. 87) "Margaret lifestyle", and in a dialogue between "Younes" and "Margaret" talking about their pets (p. 84). Geography, literature, history, food, and values are not presented at all whereas art is presented in only one song "Birds" by course book authors at the end of the sequence. Likely, visual cultural components are enough to portray culture, and the sequence does not contain more visual cultural components than textual ones. Taking a great consideration to pupils' source culture with paying attention to their age, level, and interests, sequence two deals only with the target culture. Finally, hints that allow expressing culture appropriately are not enough.

"Me and My School" sequence begins with a painting which represents a school and two pupils going to it where they get exposed to their rights and duties. The TC is not presented at all in sequence three whilst culture integration in texts (p.116), tasks one (p.117), and dialogues is limited. In one hand, geography, literature, food, and lifestyle are not portrayed in the sequence, in the other hand; history is presented in a

picture of Abdelhamid BEN BADIS (p.115), Hassibe BEN BOUALI, Mostafa BEN BOULAID, and EL Amir Abdelkader (p. 116) as well as values which are presented in text (p. 116) "My ideal school" written by the course book authors notwithstanding art is represented in only one song "Thank You My School!" by course book authors at the end of the sequence. Likewise, visual cultural components are enough to portray culture, and the sequence does not contain more visual cultural components than textual ones. Taking a great consideration to pupils' source culture with paying attention to their age, level, and interests, sequence two neither deals with the target culture nor with other cultures. Finally, hints that allow expressing culture appropriately are not enough.

Sequence five starts also with a portrayal that represents the globe showing different countries from different continents such as The U.K, U.S.A, Algeria, Brazil, Australia, China, and Nigeria surrounded by famous Algerian places like Timgad, Assekrem, Sahara…Information about the TC forms a large part of the core of the sequence; it consists of U.K map showing famous "Edinburgh National Monument, Big Ben, The British Museum" (p. 129), proper names like "Margaret" (p. 129) and the British Flag (p.133-135). With respect to culture integration in texts, tasks, and dialogues; it is demonstrated in text one "Amin, Algeria, Algerian Dinar, couscous", text two "Adaku, Nigeria, Naira"(p.130); it is noticeable in task one (p. 128) "The Algerian map, Assekrem, Constantine, the Casbah" (p.128), and in task six (p. 133), "different nationalities, flags", task two (p. 60) "Adaku, Nigeria"; and in a dialogue between "Margaret" and "the pupil" (p. 49) talking about famous places in Algeria. Besides, geography is strongly stated in the first page of the sequence presenting the globe, the Algerian map with famous Algerian places (p.127-128), U.K map with famous places (p.129), moreover; art is presented in only one song about pupils homeland written by course book authors at the end of the sequence whereas literature and history are not presented at all. Food is expressed in pictures of famous dishes like "Couscous, Rice and beans" (p.130), "Peking roasted duck, Thanksgiving turkey and pumpkin pie" (p.131). Lifestyle and values are not presented, put it differently; visual cultural components are enough to portray culture, and the sequence contains more visual cultural components than textual ones, and takes a great consideration to pupils' source culture with paying attention to their age, level, and interests when dealing with

other cultures (Nigerian culture, Chinese culture, American culture, Spanish culture…) alongside with the target one (British culture). Finally, hints that allow expressing culture appropriately are fairly enough.

4.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

This section consists of four (04) questions, and it explores personal information like the years of experience and cultural teaching training. The researcher used frequencies and percentages to clarify teachers' responses.

Q1: *Years of experience*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	3	15,0
	No	17	85,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table3. Teachers' Years of Experience

Table 3 shows teachers' responses towards the first question about years of experience they got, which is recapitulated in three categories, exist in the Algerian educational system; entry level teachers (1 to 5), principle teachers (6 to 20), and trainer teachers (above 20). It is clear that the principle teachers are the majority of respondents of the current questionnaire making up (55%). It is followed by the entry teachers (25%) and finally by the trainer teachers with a percentage of (20%). The years of experience are very important elements to decide about the capability of teachers to transmit culture appropriately.

Q2: *Have you travelled before to the target culture countries?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	3	15,0
	No	17	85,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table4. *Number of Teachers Who Have Travelled to Target Culture Country*

According to Table 4, 17 (85%) of middle school teachers had not visited the target culture country whereas, 03 (15%) of them had. In fact, this question was conducted in order to see teachers' familiarity with the target countries, traditions and customs.

Q3: *Have you had a previous contact with native speakers?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	08	40,0
	No	12	60,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table5. Number of Teachers Who Had a Previous Contact with Native Speaker

In this item, teachers were asked if they had a previous contact with natives whether face to face or via social media in order to know their familiarity with natives' target culture. It is clear from the table above that 08 of the participants had previous contact making up (40%) in contrast; most of them 12 making up (60%) did not have any contact with natives meaning that they are less familiar with the target culture.

Q4: *Have you received any cultural teaching training?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	7	35,0
	No	13	65,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table6. Number of Teachers Who Received any Cultural Teaching Training

Table 6 shows that seven (07) participants, making up (35%), had experienced a cultural training before. Whereas (13) participants, making up (65%), did not receive any cultural training. The different trainings that those (35%) of teachers had got can be summarized in three points:

- Training held by natives and another by the British Council on how to teach English language to EFL pupils.
- Teaching culture in foreign language context Master studies.
- And others had tutorials and seminaries with inspectors.

Section Two: Cultural Content

The current section consists of two (02) questions that would give an idea about teachers' opinion toward culture.

Q5: *what is culture?*

In order to find out teachers' understanding toward culture (Q05) was conducted in the questionnaire. It is a multiple choice question which presents five options about culture definition. Three options are correct (a, b, d) and the other two are wrong (c, e).

Culture is:

a) The geo-political aspects of a nation such as history, geography, politics…
b) Culture and language cannot be separated in any way, they go hand in hand.
c) Culture is not learned as language rather it is something we are born with.
d) Behavioral patterns of people such as costumes, daily life, standard of living, religion, hobbies, food, etc.
e) Culture is a concrete entity which involves a number of usually made-man, collective and shared artefacts, behavioural patterns, values or concepts.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a)	6	30%
b)	12	60%
c)	7	35%
d)	13	65%
e)	8	40%

Table7. Teachers' understanding toward culture

The above table presents the details about teachers' answers toward culture definition. (65%) of the participants had answered more than one correct answer which means that they understand what culture is, (25 %) of the participants had given answers varied between correct and wrong ones, the reminder (20%) had answered more than one wrong answer which means they do not understand culture very well.

Q6: *Is culture used purely as a source of facts to learn about or is it presented as stimulating material which students can learn from?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	A source of facts to learn about	05	25,0
	Stimulating material which students can learn from	13	65,0
	No answer	2	10,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table8. Culture Use

In this close ended question, the majority of the participants 13 (65%) see culture as a stimulating material which pupils can learn from. Whereas, 05 (25%) see it as a source of facts to learn about and used as information, while 02 (10%) of them did not answer the question. The percentage and frequencies are in details in the table below:

Section Three: Textbook Evaluation

In order to seek teachers' opinion toward culture based content, nine (09) questions were asked.

Q7: *What are the categories of culture which are more dominants in "My Book of English"?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Target Culture	9	45,0
	Source Culture	8	40,0
	Other Cultures	3	15,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table9. The Dominant Culture in the Textbook

This question is a close ended question limited to the types of the dominant culture found in "My Book of English". Nine out of twenty participants agreed that the dominant culture in the textbook is the Target culture, making up (45%). Eight of the participants (40%) believed that the source culture is the dominant one. Whereas, the reminder 03 (15%) were for the dominance of other cultures

Q8: *Does the cultural content "topics and themes" distributed in "My Book of English" represent the aspirations of the Algerian societal needs expressed on the educational documents?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	17	85,0
	No	3	15,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table10. Teachers' Opinion to Culture in the Educational Documents

Table 10 above shows that 17 (85%) of participants believe in the idea that the cultural topics and theme distributed in the textbook reflect the aspirations of the Algerian societal needs as they are expressed in the educational document whereas, 03 (15%) of them believe that it does not reflect the aspirations of the Algerian societal needs as they are expressed in the educational document. Only few teachers gave explanation for their

choice; they see that many texts in "My Book of English" and even tasks deals with the Algerian cultural aspect especially in the fourth sequence.

Q09: *Do you think that there are enough designed activities about culture in the textbook?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	13	65,0
	No	5	25,0
	No Answer	2	10,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table11. The Designed Cultural Activities

In order to find out teachers' opinion about the designed activities in "My Book of English' and their cultural reference this close ended question was conducted in the questionnaire. The results obtained show that the majority of the participants (13) agreed on the statement that says there are enough designed activities about culture in the textbook, making up (65%). Whereas, the other 5 participants (25%) believed that the designed cultural activities in "My Book of English" are not sufficient. While (10%) did not answer the question.

Q10: *The role of the visual components included in "My Book of English" may help the teaching of culture-related issues alongside the role of the textual components of textbooks.*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	10,0
	Agree	17	85,0
	Disgaree	1	05,0
	Strongly Disagree	0	00,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table12. The Role of Visual Components in Teaching of Culture- Related Issues

The majority of the participants 17, making up (85%) agreed with the statement; the visual components included in "My Book of English" may help the teaching of culture-related issues alongside the role of the textual components of textbooks, and 02 (10%) teachers strongly agreed. Whereas, 01 (5%) see it differently and disagreed with the role of visual components in teaching culture-related issues, while no one (0%) strongly disagreed with the role of images in representing culture within the textbook.

Q11: *Does the textbook you use offer you enough materials for discussing culture related issues in your class?*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes, quite a lot.	3	15,0
	Enough	7	35,0
	No	10	50,0
	Total	20	100,0

Table13. The Adequacy of Textbook Materials Discussing Cultural Related Issues

The majority of the participants 10 (50%) disagreed with the adequacy of textbook materials discussing cultural related issues. Whereas, (07) of them which means (35%) see that the amount of materials discussing the cultural content of the textbook is enough, while 3 (15%) see it differently and they are convicted with the adequacy of the textbook materials. Helping to avoid the cultural gap that the textbook create, (Q11) is followed by another question to know the other materials used by teachers alongside of the textbook here are some of responses that listed the different tools used:

- Most of the time I use my own resources to prepare my lessons i.e the textbook is just an extra means.
- Posters, printed pictures, videos (Data Show)
- Role play, video tapes, and songs
- We should use ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) to show our learners real life situations e g: In England and USA.
- Postures, video games

Q12*: The aim of the cultural components*

Item	Yes F (%)	No F (%)	No answer F (%)
a. Developing pupils' knowledge about the target culture(s).	9 (45%)	9 (45%)	2 (10%)
b. Developing pupils' knowledge about their own culture.	9 (45%)	9 (45%)	2 (10%)
c. Developing pupils' awareness of the underlying bases of the foreign language.	6 (30%)	12 (60%)	2 (10%)
d. Helping pupils' to think about the similarities and differences	14 (70%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)

that may exist between their own culture and the foreign cultures.			

Table14. The Aim of the Cultural Components

The above table shows teachers' answers to item (a) in which 09 (45%) participants said 'yes' the aim of the cultural components in "My Book of English" is to develop pupils' knowledge about the target culture(s), whereas 09 (45%) of them said that the textbook does not serve as a developing tool, while 02 (10%) did not give their opinions. Additionally, The table shows teachers' answers to item (b) in which (09) participants (45%) said 'yes' the aim of the cultural components in "My Book of English" is to develop pupils' knowledge about their own culture, whereas (09) of the participants (45%) said that it does not serve as a developing tool, while (02) participants (10%) did not give their opinions. In a statistical term, 09 (45%) participants said 'yes' the aim of the cultural components in "My Book of English" is to develop pupils' awareness of the underlying basis of the foreign language, whereas 09 (45%) of them said that the textbook does not serve as a developing tool, while 02 (10%) did not give their opinions. Moreover, 14 (70%) participants said 'yes' the aim of the cultural components in "My Book of English" help pupils to think about the similarities and differences that may exist between their own culture and the foreign cultures, whereas 04 (20%) of them said that the textbook does not work as a helping tool, while 02 (10%) did not give their opinions.

4.3 General Discussion of the Findings

In order to analyse the cultural content in "My Book of English", the current research is conducted using two research tools; teachers' questionnaire and cultural checklist. The checklist analysis process showed that the source culture is highly integrated rather than the target one whereas the foreign cultures had not given a great importance. Culture integration in texts, tasks, and dialogues is limited, it is found in only few pages. Big "C" themes lack full scope representation of the core of the textbook sequences, and small "c" themes are limitedly incorporated. "My Book of English" lacks enough visual cultural components alongside the textual ones. Pupils' age, level, and interests are taking in consideration. Hints that allow expressing culture appropriately are portrayed only in the last sequence.

Teachers' questionnaire which is composed of three (03) sections general information, cultural content and textbook analysis revealed results. In the first section, general information, the majority of teachers' answers showed that they have experience teaching English as a foreign language for more than 6 years which makes their answers deep and subtle. Moreover, the majority did not visit the target culture or even had a conversation with natives. More than half of the participants did not experience a cultural training before. The results showed that teachers are unfamiliar with the target culture. In respect to section two, cultural content, the majority of participants' responses indicate that they understand what culture is and its usage as a stimulating tool.

Concerning the last section about the main objective of the current study, textbook analysis, the majority of respondents' answers agreed on the dominance of the target culture alongside with the source culture in "My Book of English". The latter is respected in terms of the Algerian social needs that are expressed in the educational document present through concerning the distribution of "topics and themes" in the core of the sequences. In one hand, respondents saw eye to eye the adequacy of the cultural activities designed in the textbook without disregarding that they strongly accorded with the role of visual components in teaching cultural related issues, in the other hand; they agreed with the insufficiency of the textbook materials that allow discussing cultural related issues claiming that they use posters, ICT, video games, songs, role-play… instead.

4.4 Recommendations

This study sought at evaluating the cultural content in first year middle school textbook namely, "My Book of English". The study findings gave rise to pedagogical recommendations related to culture integration in the curriculum. For instructional design purposes, stakeholders, curriculum designers, and teachers should consider culture integration in instruction for optimal benefit as it has proven to be effective in enhancing foreign language learning. In the first place, curriculum designers are kindly asked to reconsider the question of balance between the linguistic competence and the cultural one. Stakeholders are urged to hire qualified teachers to train middle school teachers locally on how to incorporate culture in class. Teachers are kindly requested to look beyond what is suggested on the school textbooks and rely on their creativity in exploiting it.

Conclusion

This research was conducted to shed light on culture integration in first year middle school textbook "My Book of English", it followed an exploratory research design. The latter aimed at analysing the cultural content of first year English middle school textbook and examining the situation of teaching culture. The tools used to reach the aim were a questionnaire of twenty participants from different Setif region middle schools, and a cultural checklist to collect quantitative and qualitative data in the current study. The checklist and the questionnaire analysis brought about illuminating results which provided answers to the research questions. It showed that although "My Book of English" lacks culture integration visually and textually, it provides opportunities to learn about the source culture and limited opportunities to learn about the target culture. Although the study was conducted with a small number of participants (20 teacher), it provided evidence for the necessity of the integration of culture in first year middle school textbook. Nonetheless, if replicated with a sufficient number of participants, similar future studies can disclose results which can be more representative of the whole population. It is worthwhile to consider carrying out more extensive research with pupils involved in the project rather than only with teachers. This study focused on textbook, yet further research can focus on the ICTs that may help culture integration in the curriculum.

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