

**The Cultural Content Represented in the Middle School EFL Course:  
Target, International, and Source**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This research aims to report the upshots of the textbook analysis in an attempt to figure out which kind of cultural content is represented in the EFL textbook "My Book of English," designed for first-year Algerian middle school classes. Two main research questions are selected to be addressed: 1) To what extent are the cultures represented in the first-year middle school EFL textbook? And 2) which type of culture dominates in the examined textbook? Based on these questions, we would then formulate a hypothesis that aligns with the study objectives: There is an equal representation of cultural content in the middle school EFL textbook as regards international, source, or target. In this research, document analysis is used for data collection, which involves an examination of the textbook itself as the primary source. Analyzing this textbook involves the use of content and cultural analysis, using existing frameworks to identify different elements and examining cultural content to represent different cultural perspectives, respectively. The findings reveal that the majority of the culture content is source (local), followed by a non-specific source of culture that has no reference to any particular culture, whereas target/international cultures are barely represented and an unequal representation of Big 'C' and small 'c' culture types is very noticeable. The research findings aim to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by informing curriculum design and development and providing insights for other researchers to build upon this research by expanding the scope. Additionally, the results may provide valuable insights and guidance for EFL teachers to reflect on their teaching practices. By way of consequence, it sounds plausible that textbook designers find a remedy and provide an equal cultural representation of the source and the target/international culture to enable learners to build successful intercultural communication competence and avoid communication breakdowns and culture shock.*

**KEYWORDS:** EFL Textbook ; Content Analysis ; Culture Representation ; Source Culture ; Target Culture ; International Culture ; Non-specific Culture

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## **1. Introduction**

The use of an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbook can be a great way to learn a language. It can provide structure, focus, and materials that can help learners succeed with minimal effort. However, textbooks can also be limiting in terms of language use and cultural exposure. For example, textbooks can be limited in terms of the topics they cover, and they may not accurately reflect current language usage or cultural norms. Additionally, many textbooks use outdated language and may not reflect the cultural context in which the language is spoken. To overcome these limitations, the present paper would embark on providing implications and recommendation for teachers and learners to supplement their learning with additional activities and materials so as to ensure that the learner has exposure to the language and culture targeted.

## **2. Literature Review**

This section contains information about the different definitions of culture, its relation with language, its characteristics, its elements, common approaches and different techniques and strategies to teach it, the goals of integrating culture in the EFL classroom, and also the importance of teaching it in EFL classrooms.

### **2.1. Culture Definition**

Over the years, many researchers have attempted to clarify and provide a meaningful, appropriate, overall definition for the word “culture”. Brown (2000, p.177) conceives culture as “The ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time” Furthermore, The wildly used definition of culture by Taylor (1871) is that culture is a “complex whole” that included everything a person can acquire as a member of a particular society, including beliefs, norms, customs, habits, and knowledge. In the same path, Seelye (1993) states that culture is a broad concept that embraces all aspects of human life; it includes everything people have learned to do. Also, Sowden perceives culture as “... that body of social, artistic, and intellectual traditions associated historically with a particular social, ethnic or national group” (2007, pp.304 – 305). That is to say, culture has to do with all the habits, traditions, and customs acquired, learned as members of the same community.

In like manner, Moran (2001, p.24) considers culture as “the evolving way of life of a group of persons consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set products ,based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world ,and set within specific social contexts. In addition, Geertz (1973, p.89) views culture as “Historically transmitted semiotic network constructed by humans and which allows them to develop communicate and perpetuate their knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about the world” In summary, it is seen as something within the individual, which helps in communicating, developing, keeping, transmitting his personal beliefs and views about the world.

### **2.2. Culture Characteristics**

#### **2.2.1. Culture is Learned**

“Culture is not transmitted genetically. Rather, it is acquired through learning and interacting with one’s cultural environment” (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2013, p. 37), it means that; it is learned through experience and interaction with other members of a given society. The members of the same culture share certain ideals which shape their lives. The future generations learn to follow the same ideals. For instance, cultural values are imparted from one generation to another, for example the language, the literature, the art forms, the beliefs , the traditions and costumes pass down from generation to generation .

#### **2.2.2. Culture is Universal**

Even though cultures differ from one country to another still there are some common characteristics. This is confirmed by Andreatta and Ferraro “It is important to bear in mind that despite their many differences, all cultures of the world share a number of common features(cultural universals)”(2013, p .42).

#### **2.2.3. Culture is shared.**

Culture is something that is shared. For example, customs, traditions, values, and beliefs are all shared by man in a social situation and in a specific territory on earth. These beliefs and practices are adopted equally

by all members. Andreatta and Ferraro (2013) claim that "for a thing, idea, or behavior pattern to qualify as being cultural, it must have a meaning shared by most people in society" (p. 36). In addition to that, Nieto (1992) postulates that the cultural aspects are shared by the group of people, like common history and geography, and they continue to say, "It is this shared nature of culture that makes our lives less complicated. Because people share a common culture, they are able to predict, within limits, how others will think and behave" (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2013, p. 36). That is to say, being a member of a certain society and having much in common with them will make life much easier and avoid misunderstandings.

#### **2.2.4. Culture is integrated.**

The cultural aspects are interconnected with each other. The development of culture involves the integration of its various parts. For example, a value system is interlinked with morality, traditions, customs, beliefs, and religion. As Andretti and Ferraro postulate, "cultures should be thought of as integrated wholes, the parts of which, to some degree, are interconnected." (2013, p. 44).

#### **2.2.5. Culture is changing.**

It remains changing but not static. The cultural process undergoes changes. But with different speeds from society to society and generation to generation. Andreatta and Ferraro (2013) remark that these changes are the result of internal (inventions and innovations) and external (cultural diffusions). Then, they distinguish between inventions (anything new) and innovations ("a recombination of existing cultural items"). (2013, p. 47).

#### **2.2.6. Culture is symbolic**

The language we use in communication is composed of different symbols, either written (letters) or spoken (sounds). Kramsch (1998, p. 3) stresses that saying: "Language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value." She also says, "We can say that language symbolizes cultural reality."

### **2.3. The Language-Culture Connection**

The idea that language has a deep relationship with culture is not new. In fact, it is generally agreed that language and culture are closely related. Language can be viewed as a verbal expression of culture. It is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Language can provide people with the ability to express thoughts, so it is therefore natural to assume that our thinking is influenced by the language used, and the values and customs in the country a person is growing up in shape the way he thinks to a certain extent (Whorf, 1956; Sapir, 1962). In addition to that, language is not just the medium of culture but is also a part of culture (Brown, 1994). Furthermore, Risager (2005) establishes the concept of languaculture as very useful in the construction of a new understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and society in a globalizing world. Languaculture may be a key concept in the understanding of language as both a social and a cultural phenomenon. The relationship between language and culture varies according to the point of departure.

### **2.4. Types of Culture**

Culture as a notion has many definitions. This shows the complex nature of the term. In this regard, other researchers attempt to define culture by highlighting the countless number of its elements. This definition highlights the various cultural elements and how they are transmitted to the next generation. In addition to that, the cultural types are divided into two main streams: the small "c" culture and the big "C" culture (Atkinson, 1999).

#### **2.4.1. Small 'c' Culture**

Small 'c' culture is about everyday life. It includes the native speakers' ways of behaving, eating, talking, and dwelling their customs, beliefs, and values (Atkinson, 1999). In addition to that, small 'c' culture according to Lee (2009) is the type of culture that represents "the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture" (p. 78), that is to say, it includes attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions of a particular society. Furthermore, Lee (2009) and Chen (2004) classify the elements small 'c' culture as follows:

**Little "c"** culture type includes 10 themes: Food, Holiday, lifestyles, Customs, Values, Hobbies and Gestures/ body language, Opinions, Viewpoints, Clothing styles.

#### **2.4.2. Big "C" Culture**

The Big "C" culture represents a set of facts and statistics relating to the arts, history, geography, business, institutions, education, festivals and customs of a target society. It is, by nature, easily seen, readily apparent to anyone, and memorized by learners, as indicated in Tomalin (1993). Furthermore, Lee (2009) and Paterson (2004) classify the elements of big 'C' culture as follows:

**Big "C"** culture type includes 10 themes: Politic, Economy, History, Geography, Literature, Art, Education, Architecture, Sport, and Music.

To conclude, the term culture is like an umbrella that includes visible and invisible behaviors, traditions and customs, values, and beliefs that shape the lives of certain groups of people. Thus, a person who is exposed to a target culture; for instance, may have a misunderstanding because of some behaviors, which may lead to humorous situations (Tzoutzou & Kotsiou, 2015). This happens because these elements of culture are linked to the unspoken actions and traits that are related to a specific society.

#### **2.5. Goals of Integrating Culture in the EFL Classroom**

As described earlier, culture is present in one way or another in the different approaches to language teaching. This confirms that the study of language cannot be separated from the study of culture. As Cortazzi and Jin (1999) state, "it is crucial that foreign language learners become aware of differing cultural frameworks, both their own and those of others; otherwise, they will use their own cultural system to interpret target language messages whose intended meaning may well be predicated on quite different cultural assumptions ". ( p197).

In the same year, Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) reviewed Seelye's goals for cultural instruction and modified them. According to them (ibid. ), the teaching culture is there:

- To help learners develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours.
- To help learners develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence influence the way in which people speak and behave.
- To help learners become more aware of conventional behavior in common situations in the target culture.
- To help learners increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language.
- To help learners develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture in terms of supporting evidence.
- To help learners develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture.
- To stimulate learners' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people

#### **2.6. The Importance of Teaching Culture in the EFL Classroom**

Teaching culture in the EFL classroom has been given more attention due to its importance in developing learners' cultural competence, and also due to inseparable nature of culture and language; that is to say, it is impossible to teach one without the other. Byram (1989) also postulates that teaching language goes hand in hand with teaching culture.

Furthermore, the deep connection between language and culture makes researchers and experts in second and foreign language teaching shed light on the importance of incorporating culture within EFL classrooms to raise cultural awareness. This awareness ameliorated the perspective that language teaching is indeed culture teaching. whereas teaching and learning cultures in SL and FL curricula have now become unavoidable. As Higgs (1990, p. 74) states, "it is the recognition of an unbreakable bond between language

and culture that motivates our profession's implicit commandment that shall not teach language without also teaching culture". In addition to that, learning a foreign language is not only a process of acquiring the way of communicating or grammar rules, but rather the ability to acquire the intercultural consciousness that allows learners to understand the meanings and social standards of the target language, and even express themselves in any situation and context. (Rathje, 2007).

According to Graves (1996), a teacher who treats culture as an integral part of a syllabus should incorporate adequate materials in teaching the target culture knowledge, and the aim is not to make the learners adopt the habit of thinking or acting like a foreigner or think that no culture is superior to the other, but to strengthen their cultural awareness and make them more competent in case they travel to English-speaking countries.

### **2.7. Types of Cultural Content Displayed in Textbooks**

According to Tang (2006), culture is getting more attention in the curriculum nowadays because it is increasingly considered to be an integral part of the syllabus in foreign language education. Therefore, it was stressed by many researchers to display different types of cultural content while designing textbooks, whether they focus on the target culture, the source culture, or the international culture. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) state that it is often expected that second or foreign language textbooks should contain elements and characteristics of the target culture; that is; it is preferable to include the target culture in the EFL textbooks. However, through their examination of some textbooks from different countries, Cortazzi and Jin found that the target culture is not always included in the textbooks, which is the case for the Algerian middle school textbooks, where the focus is almost entirely on teaching the source culture rather than the target one (English culture).

The cultural content types that can be displayed in the textbook are:

- **Target culture content:** includes materials that focus on the culture of a country where English is spoken as a first language; that is, the teaching materials (e.g., textbooks) should include only the elements and characteristics of the English culture. Hatoss (2004) suggested a model that can be used for evaluating language textbooks in terms of their adequacy in teaching culture and developing intercultural skills. The model is based on theories of culture and language learning. She claims that a textbook should represent the culture of the target society.
- **Source culture content:** includes materials that focus on teaching the learners' own culture's aspects. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999), "a deeper reason is that such materials are usually designed to help students become aware of their own cultural identity" (1999, p. 205), which means that the presentation of the source culture in EFL materials is to assist learners in preserving their cultural identity. As an illustration, Scott (1980) notes that Chinese EFL textbooks are designed to transform and reinforce Chinese norms and values rather than the target language culture.
- **International target culture content** includes materials that focus on teaching a variety of cultures in English and non-English-speaking countries around the world. As noted by Cortazzi and Jin (1999), EFL/ESL textbooks' content includes characters from all over the world that use English as a global language in order to enhance learners' intercultural competence. Therefore, the international target culture content develops the learners' perception of their own culture; in addition to that, it develops the learners' cultural awareness

### **3. The Problem at Issue**

As technology develops ever more quickly and shortens the distance that separates nations, it is so important that we teach children, teenagers, and even adults to understand and respect the cultures of other people. The future stability of the world individuals will live in requires teachers to have this level of understanding now. The major focus of the middle school EFL textbooks is non-native culture, inadequate and insufficient inter-cultural harmony is found in it, and the least interest has been devoted to the target culture. Yet, the more teachers enable learners to understand that people of other cultures and ethnic origins are just as



human as they are, the more we reduce the ignorance that feeds racism and opens doors to misunderstanding, conflicts, and culture shock. Researchers argued that there must be a precise representation of the home and foreign cultures in order for learners to build a clear image of both cultures and thus succeed in developing intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and become a member of the global world, or what is called "a global citizen".

#### **4. The Rationale**

The current research is concerned with investigating the source and target/foreign cultural representations in first-year, second-generation middle school EFL textbooks through content analysis and evaluation. First, it aims to shed light on to what extent the target culture is represented and figures out the dominant type of culture, either big 'c' or small "c." Second, it seeks to raise teachers' awareness and knowledge about the fact that language is culturally loaded and should be included in every step of lesson delivery. Third, the issue of source versus target culture representations in the EFL textbook "My Book of English 1" has not been dealt with previously; the fact that the idea of conducting this investigation flashed upon the researcher's mind.

#### **5. Research Questions**

This research study aims at addressing the following questions:

- To what extent are the cultures represented in the first-year middle school EFL textbook?
- Which type of culture dominates the examined textbook?

#### **6. Overview of the Methodology**

In order to investigate the source and target/international cultural representations in the examined EFL textbook intended for first-year middle school classes, the researcher analyzed the content of the textbook via a quantitative approach. In this study, data were collected through an adapted checklist based on Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) framework regarding cultural content for English materials and textbooks as regards the categorization of target culture, source culture, and international culture. Yet, there exists another source of culture in the textbook that has no reference to any particular country, and for this reason, it was plausible enough to add the category "*non-specific culture*" as the fourth culture content.

The concepts of little "c" and big "C" were a modified version of Chen (2004) and Lee (2009)'s concepts on the cultural themes under Big "C" and little "c". (See Appendix A). The 15 themes referring to the Big "C" and little "c" cultures are as follows:

1. Big "C" culture (9 themes): Economy, History, Geography, Literature, Education, Architecture, Sport, Family and Leisure/Music.
2. Little "c" culture category (6 themes): Greeting, Daily routine, Food/Customs, Dress/styles, Beliefs and Values, Gestures/ body language

##### **6.1. Material for Textbook Analysis**

A content analysis was conducted in order to figure out which type of culture is dominant in the EFL textbook designed for the first-year middle school classes "My Book of English". The middle school is a period of four years; in each year, pupils have to pass three semesters in order to advance to the next level. At the end of schooling and after a final examination, pupils obtain a diploma called "Certificate of Basic Education," which is 'Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen' (BEM) in the French version. A series of four EFL textbooks entitled 'My Book of English' is designed for pupils from the first year to the fourth year. "My book of English 1" is the material selected for analysis. The rationale behind choosing this book is that it is the first time pupils are exposed to English as a foreign language. In Algeria, pupils take French at grade 3 in the primary school (around the age of 8), whereas English is first introduced in the middle school at the

age of 11. Hence, pupils are supposed to learn the language associated with the culture of this additional language, which explains the motive behind focusing on the analysis of the book as far as cultural aspects are concerned.

With the approval of the Ministry of Higher Education, all English teaching materials currently used in the Algerian state schools are designed, compiled, and published by local authors. In Algeria, EFL textbook publications fall into two spectrums: local writers who design all textbooks intended for governmental schools and textbooks written and published by native authors but only used in private language centres.

### 6.2. The Textbook Layout and Content

This study's data were drawn from the textbook "My Book of English 1," which was designed and written by Abdelhak Hammoudi (a university teacher), Abdelhakim Smara, Nabila Boukri, who are middle school inspectors and teacher trainers. Lounis Tamrabet, the inspector of national education, supervised the textbook's design and publication in 2016. An electronic version of the examined book is available at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gUCEyyp9Oc60g3WZm2tBhywkv3umucHA/view?usp=sharing>.

It comprises 160 pages and includes five sequences. Each sequence contains 11 tasks, which are summarized as follows:

Topics	Tasks
<b>Sequence Two:</b> Me and my Family <b>Sequence One:</b> Me and my Friends <b>Sequence Three:</b> Me and my Daily Activities <b>Sequence Four:</b> Me and my School <b>Sequence Five:</b> Me, my Country and the World	I listen and do
	I pronounce
	My grammar tools
	I practise
	I read and do
	I learn to integrate
	I think and write
	Now i can
	I play
	I enjoy
	My pictionary

Table 1 .Sequences and Tasks (My Book of English- Year One):

In the beginning of the book, the authors illustrated what they named 'the book map' which represents the objectives of each sequence; communicative and linguistic. The overall objectives are recapitulated in the table below:

Sequences	Objectives	
	Communicative	Linguistic
<b>Sequence One:</b> Me and my Friends	Greeting- getting acquainted	-Grammar (simple present tense, 1 <sup>st</sup> person pronoun and possession, numbers from 1 to 13) -phonetics: short 'i' and diphthongs including 'i' sounds

<b>Sequence Two:</b> Me and my Family	-Functional language - names of professions	Grammar: articles, adjectives, pronouns, WH questions - Numbers from 14 to 100 - Phonetics : words pronunciation with new sounds
<b>Sequence Three:</b> Me and my Daily Activities	<b>Talking about activities</b> <b>Tell the time</b> <b>Name pets</b>	Grammar (simple present tense, 3rd person singular Place prepositions Phonetics : words pronunciation with other new sounds
<b>Sequence Four:</b> Me and my School	<b>School description</b> <b>Functional language</b>	Grammar: the use of time and place prepositions -phonetics: words pronunciation with a set of sounds
<b>Sequence Five:</b> Me, my Country and the World	-functional language - locate places on the map	- Grammar: adjectives and simple present tense used with "it" -Phonetics: words pronunciation with a set of new sounds

Table 2.Objective aimed to attain

Big Themes	Culture Categories							
	Source Culture (Algerian)		Target Culture (English Speaking Countries)		International Culture (Speakers of Other Languages)		Non-Specific type of Culture	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
<b>Education</b>	3	5.45%	6	24%	0	0%	4	13.33%
<b>Economy</b>	4	7.27%	2	8%	0	0%	5	16.66%
<b>History</b>	8	14.54 %	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Architecture</b>	12	21.81 %	4	16%	0	0%	3	10%



<b>Literature</b>	2	3.63%	1	4%	0	0%	6	20%
<b>Leisure/Music</b>	1	1.81%	2	8%	0	0%	5	16.66%
<b>Geography</b>	11	20%	7	28%	23	76.66%	4	13.33%
<b>Sport</b>	1	1.81%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Family</b>	13	23.63%	3	12%	7	23.33%	3	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>39.28%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17.85%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21.42%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21.42%</b>
<b>Little Themes ‘c’</b>								
<b>Values and Beliefs</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Values and Beliefs</b>	7	16.66%	0	0%	0	0%	7	21.87%
<b>Dress/ Styles</b>	0	0%	0	0%	3	37.5%	2	6.25%
<b>Body Language</b>	2	4.76%	2	10.52%	0	0%	2	6.25%
<b>Food/Customs</b>	4	9.52%	1	5.26%	3	37.5%	3	9.37%
<b>Greeting</b>	17	40.47%	6	31.57%	1	12.5%	7	21.87%
<b>Daily Routine</b>	12	28.57%	10	52.63%	1	12.5%	11	34.37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>41.58%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18.81%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7.92%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31.68%</b>
<b>Big “C” + Little “c”</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>40.24%</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18.25%</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>15.76%</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>25.72%</b>

Table 3. Analysis criteria of cultural contents

As demonstrated in Table 3, four sources of culture were identified. Yet, it would be plausible to divide them into two main sources (target, international target, and source culture) as specific cultures and those that are not specific. As regards the representation of culture in the EFL textbook, the upshots revealed that the source culture accounted for the largest proportion (40.24%) of the total, whereas the international culture represented the lowest percentage of cultural content (15.76%).

The second largest percentage (25.72%) was occupied by non-specific cultural content, and the target culture represented 18.25% of all cultural sources.

As regards whether the source culture is more quantified than the target culture in "My Book of English", it is worth mentioning that, surprisingly, two sources of culture are predominant; the source (home) culture

and a non-specific type of culture. In short, the content of "My Book of English" was mainly related to source culture and non-specific sources of culture.

## 7. Discussion

The five sequences of analysis were further analyzed for two cultural themes under Big "C" and little "c". As revealed in Table 3, of the 15 cultural themes, the most frequent theme in the textbook was under Big "C" and two themes under "little C." To elucidate more, the overwhelming majority (76.66%), of the total themes was the Big "C" theme of "geography," followed by the little "c" themes of "daily routine" (52.63%) and "greeting" (40.47%).

It sounds surprising that the most popular categories of culture were non-existent in the textbook, such as "hobbies" and "holidays" and the least attention was given to "education", "body language" and "customs". It is very apparent that "Geography" in the Big "C" domain overwhelmingly dominated the cultural content. "Geography" representation in source culture included Algeria's map, flag, landscape and regions. In the same vein, "daily routine" occupies a large proportion of the book when it comes to the source culture. It was greatly emphasized how the Algerian pupils spend their whole days (from waking up in the morning to returning home from school). Similarly, "greetings" performed by Algerians occupied a considerable proportion of the book. It was noticeable that the number of Algerian (Arabic) names outnumbered the number of foreign names.

In short, regarding the sources of culture, non-specific culture and source (home) culture were the primary focus in the textbook "My Book of English", while target culture and international target culture were given little attention. For types of culture, among the 15 themes, the Big "C" culture of "Geography" dominated other cultural themes. The reason behind such a decision might be that the book's authors would intend to illustrate the beauty of the country to the pupils and lead them to stick to their own culture and be proud of their own identity.

For daily routine and greeting, it could be explained that the writers were more interested in enhancing the pupils' ability to express their daily life routines and how to greet and introduce themselves in English. Hence, it is worth pointing out here that the ability to talk about one's daily activities and greet others in the foreign language can by no means help the pupils compare and contrast the expressions of daily routine and greeting of target language or international speakers. For example; greetings in Ireland or South Africa were absent. Also, Algerian learners still ignore how people greet in India, China, or Japan, for example. What aggravates the situation is that the "body language" aspect of culture is given the least importance, though it could be an important factor in misunderstandings or miscommunications. All in all, the book was intended to introduce cultural information in order to enhance the learners' speaking abilities rather than develop their intercultural skills in an international context. The outcomes have shown that the biggest percentage of the cultural representation was that of the source culture. It can be argued from the findings above that demonstrating the low percentage of target and international target culture in "My Book of English" does, by no means, suffice for the development of Algerian students' ability to get integrated in intercultural settings. For example, pupils learn the names of some Algerian regions and their borders and talk about them, but they are not taught the names of the UK cities, their respective languages (dialects), or even their famous dishes. Here, we could conclude that the learners are equipped with cultural knowledge of their home country represented in a foreign language, but they are totally ignoring the English-speaking countries'. Authors might intend by this to let students preserve their own culture and stick to their own identity.

Since the authors emphasized "geography", "daily routine" and "greetings", they may intend to shape a whole image of the Algerian learners (what they belong to and how they are). Nonetheless, the source cultural information could not help the pupils develop their ICC and enable them to be global citizens. The lack of target culture content in the little "c" themes might be one reason why Algerian students have low competence in intercultural interaction. In fact, little "c" culture plays a more significant role in daily

communication across cultural lines than Big "C" culture because students need to have the ability to communicate about their daily way of life in order to be successful in intercultural communication (Wintergerst & Mcveigh, 2010).

## **8. Recommendations**

The present study shows that the overwhelming culture category represented in the EFL textbook "My Book of English" is the source (Algerian) and non-specific, whereas the target/international culture is given low importance even though the textbook is written in English.

In light of these findings, curriculum designers and teachers should follow some important procedures:

- The book authors should give at least equal representations of source and target culture content to help pupils compare the two cultures, make successful cross cultural communication, and avoid culture shock and communication breakdowns.
- When book writers give importance to target culture and represent it in the textbook, teachers will be more aware and knowledgeable about it, and their pupils will also be more aware.
- Teachers should not be slaves to the textbook, but they are to adopt and adapt whenever they think it is necessary and bring realia to the classroom. That is, teachers are hereby called to be very selective when dealing with cultural topics to motivate their pupils and enrich their knowledge and understanding, thus preparing them for successful cross-cultural communication.

## **9. Conclusion**

This study has investigated the representation of culture in the first-year middle school EFL textbook "My Book of English," with a special emphasis on key issues such as what cultural categories are found in terms of source culture and target/international culture, and what types of culture, big 'c' or small 'c' are given more attention. The analysis of the textbook cultural content revealed the source culture in addition to non-specific sources of culture; i.e., cultural content that may be applicable to any country was more emphasized than the target and international cultures. It was also found out that among the 15 cultural themes under Big "C" and little "c" culture, the predominant theme was Big "C" of "geography" and little "c" of "daily routine" and "greeting", whereas the most common little "c" themes (i.e., "holidays", "hobbies," and "body language") were absent and "body language" was given little attention. Such a lack of significant target culture information and an imbalanced representation of cultural themes might be the main reason Algerian students fail to develop ICC and get integrated into the target or international society in order to take part in intercultural communication and be global citizens. The cultural content of "My Book of English" represents, to a great extent, a preservation of the learners' home culture and talks about it in English. As a consequence, the Algerian student would be an odd or interculturally deprived individual.

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### Appendix A

#### 1. Lee's (2009) themes of the Big "C" and little "c" aspects of cultural learning

<b>Big "C" categories(22 themes)</b>	<b>Little "c" categories(26 themes)</b>
Races/ geography/historical sites	Freedom
Arts/crafts/national treasures	Privacy/individualism
Agriculture	Equality/egalitarianism
Literature	Fairness
Medicine/ science	Competition
Currency/shopping/market/ industry/business	Materialism
Infrastructure/metropolitan	Hard work
Education	Confrontation
Dress/style/food/housing	Novelty-oriented
Festivals/ party/ceremonies/celebrations	Self-improvement
Holidays	Nurture
Postal system/ Mass communication	Personal control over environment
Various social customs	Control over time
Region/ regional varieties	Action (work)-oriented
Regions	Informality
Sports/ leisure/music/recreation	Directness/openness/honesty
Traffic/transportation	High involvement
Family	Liberal
Meaning of touch/space/artifact	Experimental
Nonverbal behaviors	Future-oriented
Space communication	Rules/regulations-oriented
Government/politics	Male-dominated
	Self-interest oriented
	Self-reliance
	Weak-face consciousness
	Result-oriented



## 2. Chen’s (2004) themes of the big “C” and little “c” aspects of cultural learning

Big “C” categories(7 themes)	Little “c” categories(9themes)
Music	Cultural value
History	Daily routine
Geography	Lifestyle
Politics	Holiday
Economy	Food
Education	Body language
Social system	Weather
	Greeting
	Custom

### Appendix B

#### Analysis Criteria of Cultural Contents (Final Draft)

Big Themes	“C”	Culture Categories							
		Source Culture (Algerian)		Target Culture (English Speaking Countries)		International Culture (Speakers of Other Languages)		Non-Specific type of Culture	
		N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Education									
Economy									
History									
Architecture									
Literature									
Leisure/Music									
Geography									
Sport									
Family									

<b>Total</b>									
<b>Little Themes</b>	<b>‘c’</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Values and Beliefs</b>									
<b>Dress/ Styles</b>									
<b>Body Language</b>									
<b>Food/Customs</b>									
<b>Greeting</b>									
<b>Daily Routine</b>									
<b>Total</b>									
<b>Big “C” + Little “c”</b>									

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