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TEXTBOOKS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN VIEW OF GLOBALISATION, LOCALISATION AND GLOCALISATION¹

(Research article)

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Abstract

Recent research has revealed that the relationship between language and culture stands out as an important factor in language teaching. The purpose of this study was to examine the cultural content of ninth-grade textbooks used in teaching English based on the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (WRSLL), and also from teachers' opinions. The study was conducted via phenomenology, one of the qualitative research paradigms. In accordance with the aim of the study, three textbooks prepared with global, local, and glocal perspectives were selected. As data collection tools, the WRSLL form and also semi-structured interviews were conducted, and with descriptive and content analysis techniques applied in analysing the collected data. The study group consisted of 50 English teachers who had used all three of the selected textbooks. The study's findings revealed that the book with a local perspective was found to be inadequate in terms of its cultural content. It was also concluded that, according to the participant teachers' views, there was no need to prepare a localised book for the Turkish context, and that universal books containing less localised content would be more suited to effective teaching. From this perspective, it is suggested that the regulations on textbook preparation issued by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) should be revised in accordance with requirements of gaining intercultural knowledge.

Keywords: Glocalisation; Globalisation; Localisation; English Textbooks; Culture and Intercultural content in textbooks

1. Introduction

The notion of Intercultural Competence (IC) regarding foreign language teaching (FLT) has gained ground amongst educational researchers and textbook publishers. IC is considered a necessary skill for students' success in their interactions with members of different cultures in order to raise self-awareness of their own culture and the cultural values they hold to (Deardorff, 2006; Wu, 2010). Individuals learning foreign languages should also learn about the cultures of the countries where the language/s being learnt are spoken, and that they should make sense of what they have learnt in terms of shaping their own individual view of the world (Baker, 2014; Matsumoto & Juang, 2016). It is also emphasised that an individual cannot learn a language through only their own cultural knowledge; and that global languages

–such as English– may be acquired through cultural knowledge of the countries where the languages being learnt are spoken (Shaules, 2016).

On the other hand, according to the English First English Proficiency Index 2017 rankings, Turkey, with its 47.79% average score, ranked 62nd among the 80 evaluated countries and 26th among 27 European countries (English First English Proficiency Index, 2017). Ignoring the cultural factor is accepted as one of the causes behind Turkey's failure to achieve sufficient levels of English language teaching (Çalman, 2017; Danacı, 2009; İnci, 2011; Kayapınar, 2009). Since textbooks very often construct overly simplistic notions of culture and cultural differences (Canale, 2016), the current study set out to explore how the cultural component is represented and addressed in three textbooks used within Anatolian High Schools in Turkey. The study also aimed to capture the views of teachers regarding the examined textbooks in terms of IC. The current paper first details how the study was conducted and reports on its methodology; then the study's primary results are presented, followed by interpretation offered of its key findings. In addition, the study includes future lines of research in order to overcome the main limitations of the current study.

2. Culture and Intercultural Competence in ELT textbooks

Culture acts as a medium for the transference of ideas, behaviours, and individual differences from one generation to another (Ali, Kazemian, & Mahar, 2015). It includes the acceptance of a series of assumptions and practices which form part of a specific cultural context (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). As a process of being social within a group of people, understanding the underlying meaning of words and the context in which they are used during the transmission of information in communication becomes crucial (Lustig, Koester, & Halualani, 2017). The notion of culture in FLT implies the existence of both a target and a source culture (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993). Source culture refers to the students' native culture; whereas, target culture is the culture or cultures associated with the study of a language (i.e., the language being learnt). International culture, on the other hand, includes those cultures which are neither native to the students nor associated with the language being studied (Taş, 2010).

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is a term used to describe the global role of the English language in today's world. Lingua Franca is defined as a means of communication between people who share neither a first or any other common language (Jenkins, 2012). The prominent effect of globalisation verifies the importance of IC and in this respect, in learning and acquiring English as a lingua franca, and the inclusion of culture having gained more emphasis and significance over other factors in contributing to the teaching and learning of the language (Arabski & Wojtazsek, 2011). By integrating culture as the fifth skill into language learning, students can make better sense of what they have learnt in terms of shaping their own individual view of the world (Baker, 2014; Matsumoto & Juang, 2016 Tomalin, 2008). Seeing the culture as an inseparable part of the language, the concept of 'lingua-culture' was introduced by Michael Agar in 1994 (as cited in Risager, 2006, p. 135), and which emphasises the necessity of mentioning and expressing the cultures of different local people who share the same language. In other words, lingua-culture establishes the partnership between the language being learnt and the mother tongue.

One of the important factors that stands out in the relationship between FLT and culture is the perspective of a given society on language teaching and learning (Risager, 2011). The role of culture in FLT and why language teachers should integrate culture within their

classroom activities have long been discussed in the literature. What most scholars seem to agree on is that language and culture cannot be separated from one another, even if they disagree on how to determine what cultures need to be studied. Culture should receive proper treatment in FLT, not only from the teacher, but also in terms of the textbooks used within the classroom teaching process. For this reason, if used properly, textbooks should be considered as a potential tool to foster IC in the classroom (Alonso & Ponte, 2015). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was compiled by the Council of Europe (2001) and serves as a common basis for the elaboration of textbooks. According to the CEFR, foreign language learners should acquire intercultural know-how skills which include social, living, vocational, professional, and leisure skills. It also determines that students should acquire the ability to relate the culture of origin with the foreign culture so as to resolve intercultural misunderstandings and to distinguish stereotypes. The current study also claims that communicative language competence should also include linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic components.

In learning and teaching processes, textbooks play a crucial role in leading learners to acquire information in a standardised way (Graves, 2000). Language learning textbooks are not just mere sources of knowledge but form the representation that students will have of different societies and their respective values. In addition to the four skills of language learning (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), IC has recently been taken into consideration in the selection of appropriate textbooks. Textbooks are often considered as one of the most accessible artefacts of language teaching which lend themselves easily to evaluation and analysis. They are static and observable. Also, they present an insight into language pedagogy at a certain point in time through the activities they offer, and from the teaching guides that they provide etc. (Weninger & Kiss, 2015). They are effectively time capsules in that they utilise texts as representative samples of the language and culture of study, which, together with the use of visual aid materials, provide insight into the values and ideologies of the language's culture – the hidden curriculum (McGrath, 2016). One specific area that has received prominent academic attention in recent years is how the culture and cultural content that promotes cultural awareness is incorporated within teaching materials.

The understanding of the relationship between FLT and culture is generally categorised under three groups. The first group consists of those who consider that success in FLT can be achieved and that understanding a target language can be increased by learning about the culture of that language, and by establishing its relation to other cultures (Nault, 2006; Tseng, 2002). According to this approach, which is referred to as 'globalisation', the content of course materials or textbooks should be culturally global in their view. It is therefore plausible to include elements from all over the world without limiting the cultural material to those countries where English (i.e., the target language) is spoken as a mother tongue (Alptekin, 2002).

The second group includes those who consider that in FLT, cultural content should be predominantly delivered based on that of the target language, and that textbooks should be prepared especially by local authors to ensure the correct cultural context is implied (Kramsch, 1993; Prodromou & Mishan, 2008). Known as 'localisation', according to this understanding, texts in which the culture of the target language is dominant may sometimes negatively affect student autonomy, and the language of the texts in the books may be seen as 'foreign' to those who are non-native (Widdowson, 1998). The educational goal of this kind of textbook is to help learners to communicate with foreigners regarding their own culture and national identity, instead of being prepared more to confront other cultures. Therefore, it is suggested that such textbooks should include localised material prepared by local writers (Gray, 2002), and where curricula and course schedules are prepared according to the local

culture. It is even thought to be more effective to use local names and places in a way that is considered the most relevant and representative to the local people.

The third group consists of those who agree with localisation, yet do not fully support its doctrine (Dong, 2005; Roudometof, 2016). In China, during the 1990s, the adopting of standardised English was learnt from textbooks containing entirely American and British cultures. It was revealed that the local students preferred not to use books containing cultural values that they could not experience or fully comprehend, and that they reportedly lost interest in the course because of this (Xu, 2010). Being an alternative to both the globalisation and localisation standpoints, the importance of local as well as global views was emphasised as a clear need for certain contexts, and some publishers started to act with this international perspective in mind in preparing textbooks and supplementary educational materials (Block & Cameron, 2002). Textbooks originally prepared that targeted the international market were then changed or modified by local writers to include special teaching contents that effectively adapted the content to their own localised systems, and was termed as ‘glocal’ material (Arnold & Rixon, 2008). As English is used in such a wide variety of countries as the predominant international language, the resources used in the teaching of the language are therefore expected to be selected accordingly from the international field.

As far as the representation of different cultures in ELT textbooks is concerned, Kramsch (1993) stated that there should be a uniform balance between representation of both the target and the source culture (p. 203). Furthermore, the UNESCO (Pingel, 2010) and the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) established that international understanding should be promoted through textbooks and different cultures as proportionally representative within textbooks. In other words, textbooks should include three types of culture: target culture, source culture, and international cultures (Taş, 2010). As Canale (2016) suggested, successful cultural representation in any language curriculum involves the development of a nuanced understanding of both the target language’s culture as well as other international cultures, and that this understanding may inform and deepen not only global citizenship sentiments, but also the overall language education experience. However, content analyses of English textbooks in expanding countries, where the English language arrived not due to colonisation but due to its international spread, have proven that the representation of these three subtypes of culture is unbalanced. Studies on cultural content in locally developed ELT textbooks in various outer or expanding countries have shown that there is a tendency to represent the source culture as being predominant; whereas, the target culture and international cultures are scarcely introduced.

Whilst locally developed textbooks generally favour the source culture, the related literature has shown that cultural content in global coursebooks is biased towards the target culture and international cultures. Studies by Abbasian and Biria (2017); Ajideh and Panahi (2016); Gholami Pasand and Ghasemi (2018); Sorongan, Susanti, and Syahri (2014); Papi (2015) and Zareia and Khalessib (2011) in Iran, Davidson and Liu (2020); Schmeer, Ramanathan, and Morgan (2007) and Yamanaka (2006) in Japan; Rahim and Daghigh (2019) in Malaysia; Dinh (2014) in Vietnam; Stranger-Johannessen (2015) in Uganda; Faruk (2015) in Saudi Arabia, and Shreeb (2017) in Iraq found that the locally developed textbooks emphasised the source culture and made very little or no reference to either the target or other (international) cultures. Research has shown that although some textbooks include elements that address cultural diversity, this tends to be associated only with material objects, historical facts, and static artefacts. In other words, they often present culture as static, homogenous facts (Davidson & Liu, 2020; Khajavi & Abbasian, 2011; Olajide, 2010). A few studies – for example, those by Çelik and Erbay (2013) and Kirkgöz and Agcam (2011) in Turkey, and by

Silvia (2015) in Indonesia – found the books that they analysed contained a balanced cultural representation. Studies conducted by Shin, Eslami, and Chen (2011) in several Asian countries, by Doró (2013) in Hungary, by Bahrami (2015) in Iran, by Gómez Rodríguez (2015) in Colombia, and by Chao (2011) in Taiwan, found that imported global textbooks made very little or no reference to the learners' own culture. Also, the results of meta-analysis research conducted by Rashidi and Meihami (2016) showed that while the ELT textbooks of the expanding circle contained more L1 and international cultural content, the ELT textbooks of the outer circle, such as countries where the English language has an established or otherwise important status (mostly due to colonisation), showed a tendency to contain L1, L2, and also international cultural content. This unfortunately means, however, the exclusion of the learners' own cultural values and beliefs in the case of learning the English language. As a result, the capacity that a student is supposed to acquire regarding the CEFR in order to assimilate and understand other cultures, by comparing them to their own or to another, is thereby negatively affected (Vrbová, 2006; Wu, 2010).

The preparation and selection of textbooks and coursebooks in Turkey is the responsibility of the National Board of Education (Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı, TTKB) through the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (Çelik & Erbay, 2013). Although it is compulsory to use textbooks prepared by the MoNE in all public (state) schools, textbooks prepared by foreign (non-Turkish) publishers may be used within private schools. In the English language curriculum of upper secondary schools (high schools; K-9 to K-12), it is stated that the aim of language teaching is to gain communicative skills, but that it is also important to acquire cultural knowledge that enables such communication to be more effective (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [Turkish Ministry of National Education], 2011). Based on the statements of the Turkish Board of Education, the Secondary Education English Curriculum (2011) was prepared in accordance with the CEFR. The use of textbooks with more localised content has since become more commonplace in Turkey, and foreign publishers especially now prepare textbooks especially for Turkey that contain cultural material pertinent to the local culture (Çelik & Erbay, 2013).

When the related literature on this topic is examined, it can be seen that although many studies have been conducted regarding the qualifications of textbooks, the sufficiency of their cultural content for usage in Turkey has been limited. The purpose of the current study, therefore, is to reveal the cultural content of textbooks used in Turkey that are prepared with local, global, and glocal perspectives, based on textbook review criteria and on teachers' opinions.

For this main purpose, the current study sought answers to the following research questions to guide the study:

1. To what extent does the cultural content of English textbooks subject to the research conform to the WRSLL?
2. What are the teachers' views on English textbooks prepared in accordance with the local approach?
3. What are the teachers' views on English textbooks prepared in accordance with the global approach?
4. What are the teachers' views on English textbooks prepared in accordance with the glocal approach?

The significance of the current research study lies in the premise that it attempts to clarify how the local, global, and glocal cultural content of textbooks affects students' communication skills. In terms of reflecting the practitioners' perspective, this study is expected to be used as a resource for identifying the positive and negative aspects of the three forms of textbooks in terms of their IC content.

3. Method

3.1. Research Model

This research was conducted according to a descriptive phenomenology pattern, which is one of the qualitative research paradigms (Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, first, research questions were developed, then, the textbooks and the teachers to be included in the research were determined. Finally, the collected data were analysed and interpreted in relation to the research questions of the study.

3.2. Scope of the Research

The current study covers 'Solutions Elementary – Second Edition (SESE)' for the global perspective, 'Directions Türkiye A1 (DTRA1)' for the glocal perspective, and 'Secondary Education Teenwise (SET)' for the local perspective. SESE is stated as having been prepared in accordance with CEFR; whereas, both DTRA1 and SET are stated as having been prepared in accordance with both CEFR and with the principles and levels indicated by the Turkish MoNE. In both SESE and DTRA1, which were prepared by the same authors, there is a section entitled Culture Bank at the end of each chapter which includes vocabulary exercises and reading texts that illustrate the associated cultural elements. In SET, one unit of the book is on World Cultural Heritage; however, from the very beginning of the book, Turkish names, such as Hakan and Defne and usage of the Turkish flag give the impression of a textbook that will be familiar to Turkish students.

3.3. Study Group

The study group consists of 50 secondary school English language teachers (37 female and 13 male) who used and/or had been using the textbooks selected for this research. Taking into account the issue of accessibility of the researcher to the participants, and due to factors of both time-based convenience and economics (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016), the teachers' interviews were conducted in seven districts of Turkey's İzmir² province with teachers that were able to offer their views on all three of the selected textbooks. The length of service of each of the participant teachers ranged from 3 to 25 years.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

In order to achieve the desired results and to ensure data diversity (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016), two data collection tools were employed in the current study.

² Izmir; Turkey's third largest city, located in the west of the country in the Aegean Region

For the review of the three selected textbooks, a question list was considered that was prepared by Cisar (2000) in accordance with the WRSLL, which has had a major impact on how instructors are prepared and how languages are taught, especially at the elementary and secondary education levels (Magnan, 2017), was taken as the base criteria. WRSLL is used in textbook evaluation since it provides for the analysis and interpretation of data according to themes, associating them with each other, and allowing for quotations from the selected resources to be examined. Within the scope of the current study, only the cultural aspect of the aforementioned question list was taken into consideration.

For the second form of data collection, a semi-structured interview form was prepared in order to organise the questions in a certain form so as to obtain in-depth answers from the interviewees, to be able to add related questions, and to enable the participant interviewees to express themselves more easily (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Having been prepared in accordance with the related literature, the questions included in the interview form were presented to three experienced faculty members for their opinion. The selected faculty members were experts in the area of textbook analysis at Kocaeli, Dokuz Eylül, and Katip Çelebi universities. After the experts' review, a pilot study was conducted with four teachers working in two different Anatolian high schools in İzmir before finalising the form.

3.5. Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was employed in order to analyse the content of the three textbooks selected in the current study. In the analysis of the data, particular attention was paid to the stages that Forster (1995, as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p. 193) stated for accessing documents, checking authenticity, understanding documents, analysing data, and in using the collected data. The data obtained in the descriptive analysis of the current study were interpreted according to predetermined themes and then described systematically (Kıncal, 2015). For this purpose, as the first stage, after having examined the selected textbooks according to the questions in the WRSLL, each question was answered separately for each textbook. The data analysed were then tabulated in order to make the similarities and differences between the books clearer in the juxtaposition phase. In the comparison and conclusion phase, judgmental and suggestive conclusions reached were included (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016), and the relational connections between descriptive interpretations were systematically integrated. In addition, sample visuals and excerpt texts from the textbooks were included so as to highlight the responses to the research questions.

Applied in the analysis of the participant teachers' views, content analysis was used in order to increase the understanding of the data by analysing verbal communication messages (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In the study, selective coding (Böhm, 2014) was preferred. Accordingly, the data obtained were examined, divided into meaningful sections, and then coded on the basis of research questions and conceptual framework (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In the first step of the analysis, attention was paid not to code any data deemed irrelevant to the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). External consistency in the thematic coding was rendered possible by ensuring that the themes were different from each other, but at the same time, that they created meaningful integrity amongst themselves. Internal consistency was ensured by making sure that the codes under the themes formed a meaningful whole within themselves. In the final part of the data analysis, the results derived from the findings, and the significance of the results were explained.

3.6. Validity and Reliability

In this study, data triangulation was created in order to increase validity (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016), and with weaknesses of one method supported by the strengths of the other. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collection tools, each stage of the research has been detailed in the data analysis section of the study. The selection of the textbooks was made through face-to-face meetings held with representatives of the publishers; and the most widely used books were chosen as the samples that were examined in the study. The interviews conducted with the participant teachers were video recorded for the purposes of improved reliability of the data gathering process; with notes also taken by the researchers during each of the interviews. The questions contained in the interview form were reviewed first by experts, and then a pilot study was conducted prior to the main application of the study.

The researcher's commitment was presented to each of the participants and their consent to participate in the study obtained from each of the participants prior to their interview. Attention was paid to the fact that the teachers were selected from both public and private schools. In the data analysis process, after the interviews were transcribed into written texts, the codes and themes were created separately by the two researchers. Following their comparison, the codes that originally differed were assigned to the appropriate themes or cancelled once consensus between the researchers had been reached. The ratio of the total number of initially agreed codes to the total number of codes where a difference of opinion was found was then calculated (Wang, 2011), and for the current study the coder reliability was found to be 90%. In addition, direct excerpts from the teachers' statements were then used in the presentation of the findings so as to increase the study's reliability. Rather than using the actual names of the participant teachers, pseudonyms were appointed using the same initials as their actual names in order to distinguish each of the participant teachers.

4. Findings

4.1. Findings on the Compatibility of the Cultural Content of the Textbooks to the WRSLL

In this section, first, the evaluation of each book in the context of the questions in WRSLL are presented, along with sample visuals and explanations taken from the textbooks. Each of the questions are then handled according to the form presented in Table 1, in order to contribute to the uniform integrity of the study's analysis.

4.1.1. Currency of visual images

Although the images in the SESE are generally considered to be up-to-date, a few images were notably older. For example, the photograph of the celebrity from the *Twilight* (Hardwicke, 2008) films in Figure 1 is not considered to be current (the actor starred in a series of films released between 2008 and 2012). All of the visuals in DTRA1, such as the image of the British Royal Family in Figure 2, are considered to be up-to-date. On the other hand, the visuals in SET are mostly drawings, and the quality of the images were mostly found to be poor. The lack of a clear picture representing African tribal lifestyle in Figure 3 makes it difficult to ascertain whether or not the image can be considered up-to-date.

SESE

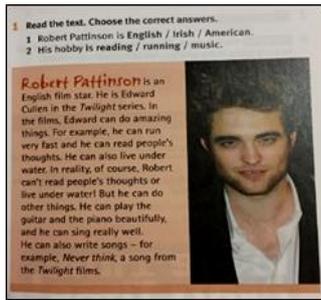


Figure 1

DTRA1



Figure 2

SET

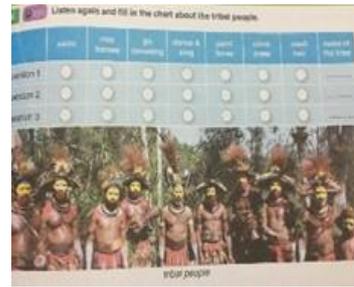


Figure 3

4.1.2. Authenticity of visual images

In SESE, excluding the exercises based on daily life and storyline illustrations, all visuals, such as in Figure 4, use real photographs. In DTRA1, the visuals of family members, friend relationships, eating and drinking habits, and photographs of school life as reflections of culture are all real photographs. In Figure 5, the photograph of the Radford Family appears to be a real family photo. In SET, it is seen that the visuals used, other than those of India, Japan, and China, were created using digital technologies. That the original images have low colour quality and the photographs small and far from being sharp gives the impression that the images are only intended to add colour to the pages. Family members shown in Figure 6 are only sketches, and it is almost impossible to understand that the photograph used in Figure 7 is of Vienna without reference to caption beneath the image.

SESE



Figure 4

DTRA1



Figure 5

SET



Figure 6

SET

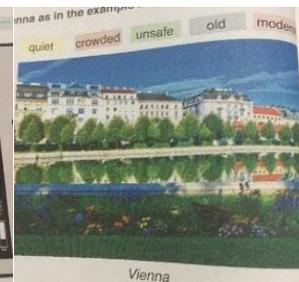


Figure 7

4.1.3. Visuals including different cultures

In the visuals given under the title 'Culture' in SESE, it can be seen that they include a variety of different cultures apart from those pertaining to countries where the target language is spoken. For example, in Figure 8, the visuals of Sumo wrestling in terms of Japanese culture helps readers to add understand the text given regarding the sport. In Figure 9, the text-related visual, which includes the cultural activities of young people spending time in Sydney, Australia, reflects the activities within the local culture. DTRA1 seems to show sufficient visual cultural elements deemed as specific to the target language. The photograph in Figure 10 features countries such as Canada and Vietnam, plus the lifestyle on an island in the Pacific Ocean, and these are seen as well-integrated with the reading of the text and with the vocabulary exercises. As for the visuals used in SET, they do not seem to sufficiently

exhibit the corresponding texts, having been created by means of digital drawing techniques or due to their inadequate sizing. The image in Figure 11 has text and dialogue according to people living in Japan and China, but it remains unclear where the image itself belongs.

SESE

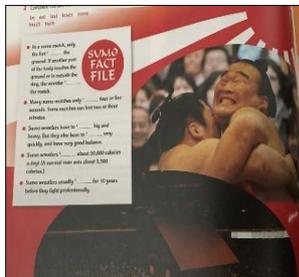


Figure 8

SESE

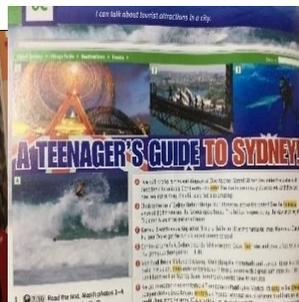


Figure 9

DTRA1



Figure 10

SET



Figure 11

4.1.4. Integration of visuals with activities

In SESE, through an activity of organising a celebration or ceremony such as different ceremonies and festivals in America, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Figure 12), the students are tasked with understanding the text and to integrate it with the given visuals. In DTRA1, the students are expected to create their own texts in order to describe living spaces based on their imagination, with text that describes the pros and cons of sharing a room or an apartment with a friend, using visuals of different habitats (e.g., home, dormitory, classroom). For example, in Figure 13, through pictures given to match the reading text, the students are asked to compare their own shopping habits with those of their peers in an American context. In SET, Unit 9 includes invitations and celebrations. Although it is a topic that should permit students to discuss or analyse, it can be seen that there are only words and short dialogues used within the unit. Figure 14, for example, provides information on Hollywood and Bollywood; however, the students are not offered the opportunity to develop an activity based on this.

SESE



Figure 12

DTRA1



Figure 13

SET



Figure 14

4.1.5. Representation of countries where English language is spoken

In the 'Introduction' unit of SESE, examples are presented from Ireland, New Zealand, and also from Paraguay (Figure 15). The subsequent units included expressions involving

Canada, Australia, Scotland, different American states, and also Japan. DTRA1 provides visuals both from countries where the English language is spoken as a native language such as America and the United Kingdom (Figure 17), and also from countries where the English language is learnt and spoken as a foreign language (such as Germany and Indonesia). Figure 16 provides information about the Pacific Ocean and its island settlements, and in some activities, students are encouraged to conduct research about a given country. SET was found to be limited to readings about Brazil, Japan, and China. In addition, under the title ‘Birthday Treats’, the celebration traditions associated with Australia, England, Mexico, China, Canada, and Jamaica are briefly mentioned in the text. However, it remains unclear as to which country the visuals in Figure 18 are supposed to represent in the text.

SESE



Figure 15

DTRA1



Figure 16

DTRA1



Figure 17

SET

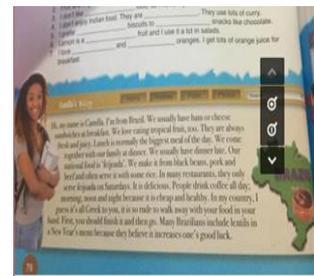
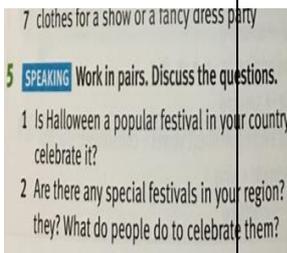


Figure 18

4.1.6. Games, songs, stories, and dramas through which culture is addressed

Units 2, 4, 8, and 10 of SESE all include songs. These songs (Figure 19) include linguistic expressions used in spoken English and in the written English language of the past. The students are expected to provide comments on the situation, emotions, and actions contained in the song through a vocabulary activity. The book also includes entertaining activities such as storytelling, roleplaying, and memory games. As can be seen in Figure 20, with regards to festivals and celebrations, the students are expected to participate through speech and writing activities. Whilst DTRA1 does not contain songs, there is a ‘memory game’ activity in one of the chapters. In this game, the students are expected to talk about and invent a story, in which they provide examples of sports and festivals related to Turkey, or to express themselves through roleplay and discussion regarding subjects selected at their own discretion. The students are not expected, however, to respond to the activities reflecting foreign cultures, but in a few exercises, for example as shown in Figure 21, the students are required to practice dialogue which includes experience of someone touring in Africa. SET does not include songs, plays, or stories, but includes dialogue activities that focus on the practice of grammar. For example, although sports activities are included in Figure 22, they are not specifically related to any one culture.

SESE	SESE	DTRA1	SET
			
Figure 19	Figure 20	Figure 21	Figure 22

4.1.7. Discussions on perspectives and behaviours in foreign cultures

In SESE, students are often tasked with analysing and discussing behaviours or perspectives based on different countries. Though these countries are generally chosen from the culture most associated with the target language, the activities offer students the opportunity to gain different perspectives or new experiences to that of their own culture. For example, the students are requested to speak about their opinions on ‘cheerleading’, which is predominantly common to American culture, and they are asked about what cheerleading means to them. Figure 23 offers a discussion activity on the idea of taking a 1-year break after school to do ‘whatever they would like’ during that year. DTRA1, which is intensive in terms of speech-based activities, tasks students with commenting on and judging the behaviours of those in foreign countries. Figure 24 provides examples from countries with a distant education perspective, and the students are asked to debate on how such a perspective could be met in Turkey. In SET, where foreign cultural behaviours and perspectives are limited, there are a few festivals and celebrations included besides eating and drinking habits associated with foreign countries. In Figure 25, text about the Basant Panchami Festival in India is integrated with visuals, and the students are tasked with commenting on the visuals pertaining to the festival, and are then tasked with planning a similar festival in Turkey.



Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25

4.1.8. Potentiality to evaluate tangible and abstract products specific to foreign cultures

SESE includes many elements such as clothing, songs, and works of art from both abstract and concrete cultural products. In all of these, the students are tasked with expressing their opinions. Figure 26 provides information about clubs that include activities such as dancing and photography, and the students are then tasked with writing a response paper. Similarly, in Figure 27, the students are expected to comment on the paintings of famous artists. In DTRA1, the events relating to culture and artistic activities are somewhat limited; and instead includes concrete elements such as fashion, clothing (Figure 28), and eating habits. In SET, concrete elements such as food and beverages are included more rather than abstract elements. Figure 29 asks students to identify in which countries the Seven Wonders of the World are located, yet does not include any commentary-based activities.

SESE

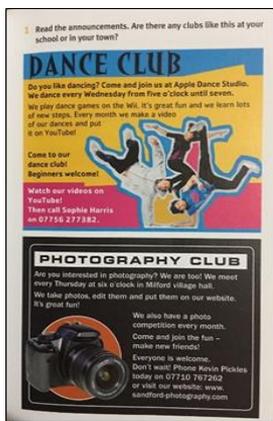


Figure 26

SESE



Figure 27

DTRA1



Figure 28

SET



Figure 29

4.1.9. Opportunity for students to compare their own culture with foreign cultures

In SESE, the students are expected to compare given situations with that of their own country in a section starting with ‘... in your country’ (Figure 30). All of these parts contain some cultural text about foreigners. In DTRA1, the students are expected to share their own knowledge or to undertake research using the Internet on each assigned topic relating to culture. For example, in Figure 31, the students are asked to compare the Turkish bath with both the Russian ‘banya’ and the Japanese ‘sentos’. In Figure 32, the Eastern Black Sea region is portrayed through text and visuals in order to reveal the difficulties and living conditions similar to that which students in Indonesia, Vietnam, and Colombia may experience on their way to and from school. In SET, it is possible to compare the cultural elements of different countries according to the students’ own cultures (Figure 33). One of the activities looks at the type of celebrations held for birthdays, although the comparisons are predominantly based on eating habits.

SESE

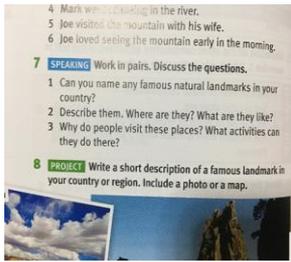


Figure 30

DTRA1

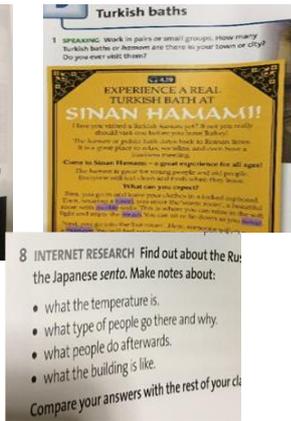


Figure 31

DTRA1



Figure 32

SET

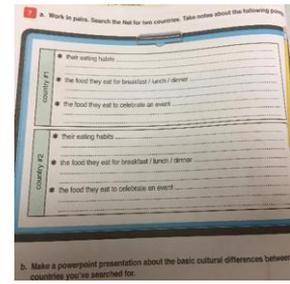


Figure 33

Table 1: Overview of Textbooks relating to World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

	SESE	DTRA1	SET
Are visual images current?	3/4	4	0/1
Are visual images authentic?	4	4	0/1
Do they depict different people/cultures that use the foreign language for communication?	4	4	3
Are text activities integrated with the visual images inviting student observation, identification, discussion, or analysis of cultural practices or products?	4	4	2
Are a variety of regions/countries where the foreign language is spoken represented?	4	4	3
Do students have opportunities to participate in games, songs, celebrations, storytelling, dramatizations, sports, or entertainment representative of the foreign culture?	4	2/3	0/1
Do students have opportunities of identifying, analysing or discussing perspectives, behaviours or practices of the foreign culture (e.g., school, family, games, sports, etc.)?	4	4	1
Are students asked to identify, experience, analyse, produce, or discuss tangible (e.g., toys, dress, foods, etc.) and expressive (e.g., artwork, songs, literature, etc.) products of the foreign culture?	4	2	1/2
Does the text offer opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding of similarities and differences between their own language and the foreign language being studied?	4	4	3

4.2. Findings on teachers' opinions

The positive and negative opinions of the interviewed participant teachers were grouped, and placed into categories. Figure 34 presents an overview of the teachers' opinions regarding the three textbooks analysed in this study.

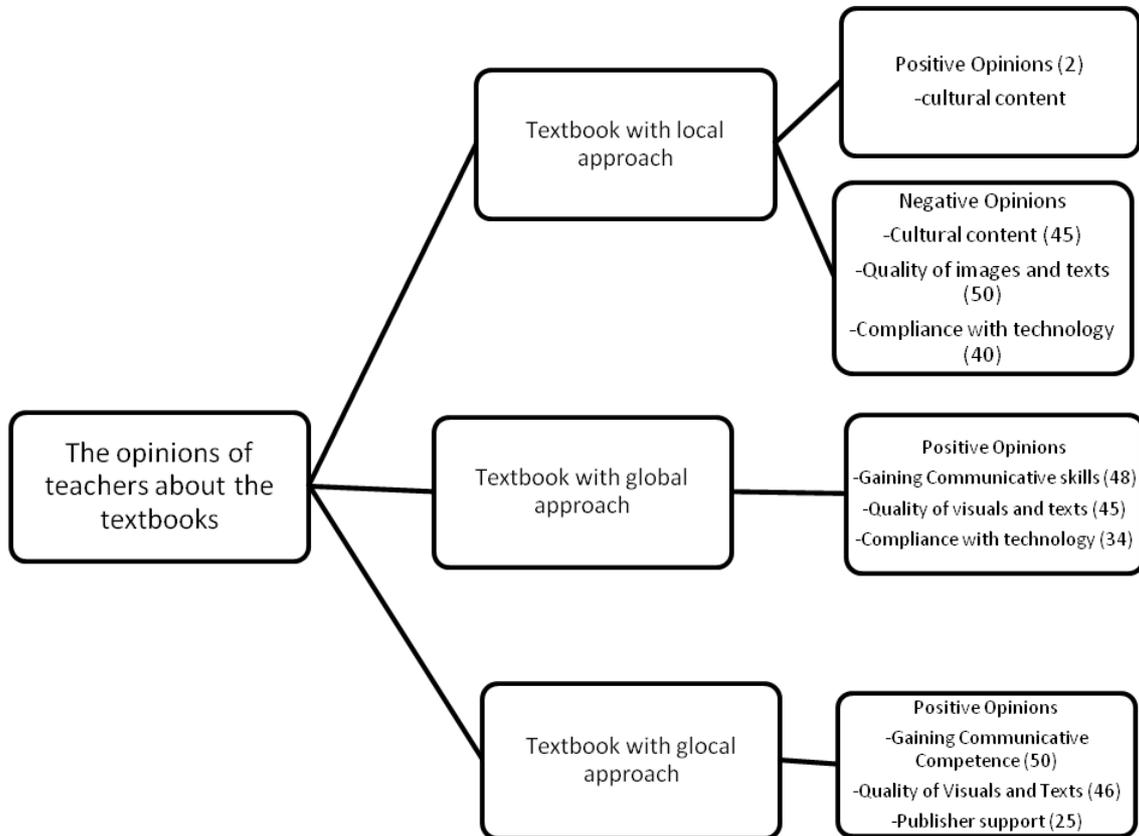


Figure 34. Teachers' opinions about SESE, DTRA1 and SET

4.2.1. Findings on Teachers' opinions on the textbook with a local approach (SET)

The positive opinions of the interviewed participant teachers on SET under the category 'Cultural Content' were mostly about how the textbook enables students to feel closer to the language that they are learning, and also to compare their own culture with that of others.

'...Although we live with a generation of kids constantly using the Internet through their smartphones, texts with cultural elements from outside of Turkey occasionally bore them'. (Neslihan, Female, State School, 21 years' experience)

Negative opinions were grouped under the categories; 'Cultural Content', 'The quality of Images and Texts', and 'Compliance with Technology'.

Cultural Content

The negative opinions expressed with regards to cultural content were mostly concerned with the effects of students having learnt enough of their own culture in other courses, accepted their culture as dominant, and having started to exhibit a negative attitude towards other cultures and languages (ethnocentrism). That is to say, it is unrealistic to teach a global

language with localised content. Some of the negative opinions expressed by teachers on this were as follows:

'The book we use (SET) lacks cultural texts. Language is influenced by culture, and language teaching is not a matter of teaching children 1,000 words and giving them grammar. In England, people can still form sentences that are completely wrong grammatically, but they can still communicate. What we teach is quite often far removed from the practical use of English'. (Ayris, Female, State School, 17 years' experience)

'The Turkish cultural elements are much greater in the state books (SET). In some places, there are elements of the target language, but cultural elements from all over the world are rare. Athletes like Süreyya Ayhan and the weightlifter Naim Süleymanoğlu are of course valuable, but students also want to see other sports from around the world. We have been working on the Seven Wonders of the World for years and years...' (Ersen, Male, Private School, 19 years' experience)

'Local cultural elements are already handled by the teacher through comparisons, depending on the subject. Since the Turkish language is not used in other countries, it does not make sense to include cultural elements pertaining to it. There are lots of pictures of many parts of the country such as Istanbul, Ephesus, and Pamukkale; but there none of places like London or New York and other cultural centres that are usually associated with the English language'. (Sevgi, Female, State School, 23 years' experience)

The Quality of Images and Texts

The negative opinions about SET in terms of the quality of images and texts can be summarised as follows: Both the visuals and texts in SET are not considered as being very interesting or current. The colour quality of the visuals is not good, the visuals are not supportive of the text, the majority of the visuals are drawings, and the usage of real photographs is minimal, and has no conformity with real life.

'... (SET) is much better than the old state books, but the visuals... [interviewee laughed]. Just a small photo on the top of a reading text does not serve any purpose. The students also come up with comments like "it was put there just to decorate the subject". Sometimes it is not even possible to understand why they are even put there. Mostly they are drawings and they are not big or qualified enough to be talked about. Comparisons can be better made through the use of real photos'. (Gizem, Female, Private School, 16 years' experience)

'Some images are out of date... As a matter of fact, the students can access any photograph immediately thanks to the Internet. The visuals and texts which far from reflect reality are not convincing at all'. (Mehmet, Male, Private School, 14 years' experience)

'The drawings look childish. When the content of the text is uninteresting and unrealistic, the students begin to despise the textbook. The texts are full of words that are not used in the daily use of English: Even we, the teachers, need to consult a dictionary every now and then. When students see some cultural elements from different countries of the world, they are able to participate more willingly. I also become more motivated when I come across an interesting piece of information'. (Gonca, Female, State School, 13 years' experience)

'The texts on Egypt and Mesopotamia attract little attention in Turkish lessons, let alone when learning English. Rather than rely upon pieces with universal cultural values or popular culture, YouTuber's dialogues and blogs have come to replace the "Seven Wonders of the World" in recent years'. (Merve, Female, Private School, 6 years' experience)

The ratio of teachers who thought that the choice of books should be left up to the schools to decide upon was quite high too.

'...I have used the resources of many publishers and also from the MoNE... I am one of those who persistently states that the contents of the MoNE books are lacking, that they aren't prepared in accordance with our current-day student profile, and that the choice of books should therefore be left open to the schools and their teachers. The use of extra resources is not allowed, but even the books of foreign publishers necessitate sometimes the use of additional resources. It is true that the MoNE books include the four skills of language learning, but the texts used are either too simple or too complex for children to use in daily life, and the students are therefore naturally bored. With the worldwide popularity of the textbooks prepared by experienced native speaking staff of foreign publishers, their attractiveness to the students is as clear as daylight'. (İlker, Male, State School, 17 years' experience)

Compliance with Technology

The teachers often stated that due to delays in uploading parts of books to the EĞitim, Bilişim Ağı (EBA) system, which is Turkey's Education and Informatics Network, a national online platform that includes materials, listening parts, and documents to be used by teachers, they have had to resort at times to using DVDs, videos, as well as other alternative resources.

'The textbooks (SET) contain a lot of listening sections, but the audio files are generally only ready and uploaded to the EBA system for teachers to use at the beginning of the second semester each year. Meanwhile, for the first semester, if we have a teacher's book, and sometimes we don't even have it, unfortunately, we are forced to read out loud the listening sections to our students'. (Gül, Female, State School, 28 years' experience)

'Students pay more attention to those texts that can be accessed using the smartboard application. Visuality becomes more important than reading. Such an opportunity exists in using the EBA system, but it is currently still very limited, and only includes the unit structure'. (Yeşim, Female, State School, 13 years' experience)

4.2.2. Findings on Teachers' opinions on the textbook with a global approach (SESE)

All of the interviewed participating teachers expressed positive opinions about the SESE textbook. Their positive opinions were grouped under the categories of 'Gaining Communicative Skills', 'Quality of Visuals and Texts', and 'Compliance with Technology'.

Gaining Communicative Skills

The teachers' positive opinions in this area focused unanimously on the point that English is a universal language and that it can be learnt from a universal perspective using textbooks that cover all countries equally. All of the interviewed teachers stated that language and culture cannot be separated from each other, that a language can be learnt through giving the culture of the language, that students acquire the words of a target language through the content encountered in the target language, and that 'Culture' parts of the instructional units are needed to enable students to gain the ability to communicate all over the world. It was stated by the majority of the teachers that when cultural elements in the textbooks belong not only to the target language, for example, where they are not predominantly representative of just British or American culture, that there will be much less cultural degeneration, and thereby students will have less prejudice against language learning, and that they will also realise their own cultural values. Some of the positive opinions expressed by teachers on this topic were as follows:

'Global cultural values are important in terms of the development of a sense of sympathy among students, and also enables students to become more tolerant of the behaviours and

attitudes of those from different social structures. In most of the activities in the textbook, cross-cultural comparisons are made, and the students are asked about similar situations that could be experienced in Turkey. This saves us time'. (Burak, Male, State School, 20 years' experience)

'Sources of foreign publishers present language and culture together, as a whole, and they lead the students in developing critical thinking skills'. (Adnan, Male, Private school, 12 years' experience)

'The English language becomes more meaningful when it is taught in authentic contexts. When the cultures of the source and the target language are combined globally, children can make easier comparisons, which improves their communication skills'. (Neslihan, Female, State School, 19 years' experience)

'Having a universal mindset is important for students to develop their own perspectives on a language. We can't teach a kid anything about Christmas Day if they are prejudiced to believe that is just another celebration around the time of the New Year, even though it is not something that can be reconciled with the New Year. The students need to learn through authentic texts that it is in fact a separate celebration. I learned to speak French when I was in Switzerland, and not only the vocabulary or grammar either; I also learnt how they lived. It is important to know about that culture and to know what they do, and why'. (Gamze, Female, Private School, 15 years' experience)

'I do not think it is necessary to express the culture of a child in a foreign language. The child can express their own culture through the language structure that they have learnt. Knowing how the social structure works in a country helps one to achieve a proper level of communication. For example, touching a child's head may be an indication of love and compassion in Turkish culture, but it can cause humiliation in other cultures. Failure to learn about a culture along with its language may lead to communication problems'. (Özge, Female, State School, 17 years' experience)

Quality of Visuals and Texts

In terms of the quality of its visuals and texts, the positive opinions on SESE were largely that the visuals were considered to be of high quality, that the students become active in lessons by combining the visuals and the text through interpretation, that the text and images are considered to be supportive of each other, and that the visuals are given in such a way as to attract the interest of the students and increase their motivation.

'There are up-to-date and actual texts. The fact that the student can search and find information on the Internet increases the interest of the students. For example, quoting from a real magazine or website can inspire the student to check out that page on the Internet. The student is actually therefore more interested when he sees such a page'. (Ali, Male, State School, 9 years' experience)

'The contents of the texts are very good; they don't need to be supported much from the outside. Students can connect texts to both their own lives and with the lives of other communities'. (Tuğba, Female, Private School, 3 years' experience)

'The visuals and texts attract the children's attention, they become curious, and their participation in the class increases as a result. For example, Far Eastern sports or cold climate countries may be deemed of natural interest to a student living in Izmir'. (Mine, Female, Private School, 8 years' experience)

Compliance with Technology

The teachers stated that the adaptation of the textbook to the smartboard makes it easier for teachers and students to follow the lesson, enables them to save time and to make good use of videographic opportunities offered through the functionality of modern smartboards.

'It is of the utmost importance that foreign publishers have online support. Parents and teachers can then follow them too. Checking assignments represents a loss of time for teachers; but, if you do not check assignments, students will stop doing them. Equally, if you do not check them in detail, they go on to repeat their errors and stop gaining from the assignments set. However, with online exercises, the system can automatically evaluate the child and give immediate feedback to the teacher'. (Osman, Male, Private School, 19 years' experience)

4.2.3. Findings on Teachers opinions on the textbook with a glocal approach (DTRA1)

There were no negative opinions forthcoming from the participant teachers with regard to this book, other than one teacher who said that its content was considered as 'intense'. The positive opinions about DTRA1 were grouped under the headings of 'Gaining Communicative Competence', 'Quality of Visuals and Texts', and 'Publisher support'.

Gaining Communicative Competence

The teachers stated that some of their students were prejudiced against foreign cultures and that they felt closer to languages when they were able to see elements of their own culture in the classroom. Second, providing the target culture and source culture as a whole is considered beneficial for the students' learning. Being able to establish connections between a foreign culture and their own enables students to participate better in lessons. When teachers also know about those foreign cultural elements in detail, they can lead the students to more effectively express their ideas.

'It is not always easy to please all of the students and to keep them fully active in the class. Local cultural elements should also be included in the textbooks, but the aim should not be to provide a view of the local culture. Where a global language is being taught, the textbook must contain universal content in this sense. And because Turkey is also located in this sphere, the book would normally contain elements of Turkish culture too'. (Tijen, Female, State School, 24 years' experience)

'The book is obviously tailored for Turkey, as one can always find something from Turkish culture in there too. Turkish names and places make the students feel closer to the language. They like to see Turkish names, places, and food dishes in books published in England'. (Bora, Male, State School, 20 years' experience)

Quality of Visuals and Texts

The teachers stated that the content of the texts is successful in informing the students. Furthermore, when the topicality is confirmed by another source to the student, there is trust built around the use of that book. Stating that the gradual sequence of subjects, themes, and activities is a positive feature, the teachers emphasised that it is easier for students to make sense of texts that are integrated with cultural visuals, and then to participate in post-text activities. It was stated that the quality and dimensions of the visuals were seen as being quite good, and that the students do not experience problems in interpreting the visuals. Giving visuals in relation to a subject is beneficial for students to be able to establish connections between the texts and the visuals.

'Students often check the information they see using the Internet, so the fact that the texts and visuals are up to date is a factor in their taking the course seriously. The texts and topics in the content can be linked, therefore, directly to the students' own experiences'. (Elif, Female, State School, 11 years' experience)

One teacher suggested that the texts should be filtered further, although it was seen as appropriate to combine the target culture and the source culture.

'Texts should be filtered. For example, a friend of mine, though British, was against teaching topics like Fox Hunting, which was a text presented in the book, and criticised such a point of view'. (Ömer, Male, Private School, 13 years' experience)

Publisher Support

The interviewed teachers, in making their positive responses, mentioned additional components that are provided by the publisher to support both teachers and students. For the teachers, it is seen as advantageous that publishers provide a 'teacher's book', a tailored learning management system to check their students' progress, iTools for use in interactive exercises and worksheets, as well as test CD-ROM and class audio CDs. Teachers also talk about the importance of both the online platforms of the publisher that offers additional exercises in order for them to assess the progress of their students, as well as the effectiveness of reflecting those exercises on the classroom smartboard.

'Foreign published books also provide webinars. You can directly ask the author or publisher if you want to know about the goals of the book or the goals you want to achieve. They can direct you and share with you their ideas and data about how and in what situations you can apply any material in the class. There is no such opportunity presented with textbooks from the MoNE. Also, I have no idea really who it was prepared for, and you can't even question it'. (Nihal, Female, State School, 24 years' experience)

5. Discussion and Suggestions

Prepared on the basis of a local cultural approach, SET was found to be insufficient according to the views of the participant teachers, and also based on the following requirements as specified in the WRSLL: authenticity of visuals; the presence of games, songs, dramas to represent the foreign culture; opportunities for students to experience the foreign culture's behaviour and practices; and, allowing room for the analysis of abstract artefacts belonging to the foreign culture. The results of the current study were found to be in line with a study conducted by Iriskulova (2012) on another textbook (Spot On 8) prepared by the MoNE, in which the cultural content of the textbook was deemed to be inadequate, and that the percentage of cultural elements in the reading passages was significantly low. The results of the current study also differ from those of studies by Kirkgöz and Avcı (2011) and Çelik and Erbay (2013) in Turkey, which found that locally developed ELT textbooks that were analysed contained a balanced representation of cultures. It is important, therefore, that students know how to talk about their own country when getting to know people from other countries. This also might help them to understand cultural differences and to build a multicultural identity. In this way, the representation of Turkish culture in English language textbooks is understandable. However, when using English globally, it is also important to understand different cultures, and since Turkey gets so much room in the textbooks, many other inner, outer and expanding circle countries are omitted.

Considering the opinions of teachers and the WRSLL standards, DTRA1, which was prepared on the basis of a global approach, was found to almost fully meet all the standards, except that it does not include plays and songs in which a foreign culture is represented, as well as an analysis and discussion section for abstract works relating to a foreign culture. This finding of the current research partially intersects with those of other researchers (Başkan, 2006; Dat, 2006; Gray, 2002; Honna, 2016; Mahabadi, 2013; Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008; Melliti, 2013; Song, 2013) in terms of the effect of students not resisting the learning of foreign languages when they feel closer to the language and to their culture. Also, as students develop a positive attitude towards textbooks that contain local cultural content, there is an established need for language teaching textbooks to contain localised content. However, in the current study, the interviewed teachers also posited that although their students felt close to the local content, they became bored when the local culture was excessively emphasised, and that the important aspect was, after all, the presentation of the book.

Handled with a global approach, SESE was found to meet the WRSLL standards in all aspects. Although the cultural elements of the target language are presented more intensively in the book, it contains both visuals and texts about the cultural characteristics of several other countries. Though there is no content specific to Turkey, at the end of the texts under the title '*Culture*' and in a section named '*In your country*', the students are expected to compare the situations in the given country with those of their own country.

When the three textbooks were examined together, it can be concluded that the textbook with the global cultural content improved the students' feelings of sympathy and tolerance, and that the textbooks prepared with this understanding were found to be more effective in the acquisition of communication skills in the real sense. That textbooks including global material being effective in the acquisition of communicative competence was also revealed by other research conducted both within Turkey (Ocak & Akar, 2016) as well as in other countries outside of Turkey (Bolitho, 2008; Hasanen, Al-Kandari, & Al-Sharoufi, 2014; Rashidi & Soureshjani, 2011). In terms of gaining communicative ability, the participants stated that language learning and culture cannot be separated from each other, that interaction with different cultures can be ensured through language, and that textbooks containing global cultural elements are considered important in gaining this ability. These findings from the current study were found to be in harmony with the views of Lantolf and Genung (2002), who emphasised that the communicative approach is not the acquisition of knowledge in language, but the use of acquired knowledge and therefore universal cultural values should be taken into consideration for the interaction of various cultures. On this, Byram (1989) stated that effective communication that provides knowledge, skills, behavioural, and critical cultural awareness is related to the acquisition of cultural communicative skills. The current study, too, reveals that the activities in the textbooks that are rich with global cultural content not only convey linguistic knowledge to the students, but also lead those students to how to use it at the right place and time. These findings are in harmony with those of Kocaman (2009), who posits that true communication is not mere acquisition of pieces of information, but is rendered possible through knowing what, where, when, and why it is used.

According to the results of the current research, the interviewed teachers had more positive opinions about the inclusion of foreign cultural elements rather than local ones. Most of the participants stated that the local culture is already dealt with in many other lessons, and that the intense presentation of the local culture in books written for a foreign language course is therefore meaningless and superfluous. In other words, it is considered unnecessary to prepare a special book with localised content that is already provided by teachers through comparative activities. This finding of the current research links to the results of Danaci's

(2009) study, which reported that high school students wanted to experience different cultural perspectives, and also the findings of Lumala and Trabelsi (2008), who stated that excessive locality in textbooks in public schools in Africa sometimes led to indifference in the students. In addition, the teacher's opinions found in the current study were found to be in line with the findings of Xu (2013), who emphasised the importance of global culture in China, and with the findings of İnci (2011), who posited that knowledge on local cultural elements could be shared by the teacher. The findings of all these research studies show that cultural gain can only be achieved through the acquisition of global cultural values. On the other hand, some teachers in the current study, although limited in number, stated that, due to the excessiveness of cultural elements belonging to the target language, students remain in a communicative dilemma and, over time, as McKay (2000) pointed out, they feel assimilated and start to move away from their own culture. Other researchers stated beliefs that the global content of a book improves the general culture of students, and that cultural degeneration can be prevented through the inclusion of content from other cultures aside from the countries associated with the target language. The results of the current study, when compared to certain others in the literature (Kang-Young, 2009; Matsuda & Friedrich, 2012; McKay, 2012), showed that cultural content should present a variety of English cultures such as American, Australian, British, New Zealand, Indian, and a number of others too.

Another reason why the glocal and global textbooks were affirmed is that they are prepared by experts who are native English speakers. Although Başkan (2006) stated that the books created by local authors may appeal more to the students, the teachers' opinions in the current research were found to be contrary to the view of Başkan. Another point emphasised by the interviewed teachers was that they had the opportunity on occasion to reach out to the authors of foreign publishers, conduct online interviews, and communicate their views on the books directly with the author. On the other hand, among the negativities faced by the teachers, there was frustration reported as to the lack of information about the authors of the books chosen by the MoNE, a lack of opportunity to reach the authors directly, and the lack of any acknowledgment by the MoNE as to whether or not comments submitted to the MoNE website are even taken into consideration. One important point that the teachers reported as a negative was that the MoNE conducts a rigid policy on the preparation of conventional textbooks. The teachers in the current study believed that they should be allowed greater autonomy in the choosing of their course textbooks, and that their opinions should be sought in the preparation of textbooks, or that as teachers, they should be allowed to at least choose from among a selection of approved books. From this perspective, it is suggested that the regulations on textbook preparation by the MoNE should be revised, and that teachers should be afforded greater autonomy, with textbook choices left to the discretion of the boards of language teachers at the school level.

Considering how to attract students' attention and in motivating them to learn, two different perspectives were identified by the current research: On the one hand, some teachers stated that when students saw elements of their own culture in the textbook, they would develop a positive attitude towards the language being learnt and would follow the lessons more willingly; whilst other teachers stated that students who prefer learning new information and who care about their cultural development are seen as being more enthusiastic about learning the English language and are often more successful as a result. However, what both opinion groups shared in common was that it is the presentation of the books that counts most, and that books should be prepared in line with changing cultural perceptions since the scope of culture shifts to align with popular culture, and students are often more naturally interested in such elements.

In terms of visuals, the participant teachers considered that the textbooks prepared with either a global or a glocal understanding to be very effective in terms of both their authenticity, and also the attractiveness of the visuals they contain which naturally capture the attention of students through their consistency with the texts. It was seen that the aesthetic perception, as stated by Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990), was one of the issues emphasised by the teachers in the current study in terms of the presentation of visuals in course textbooks. The necessity of preparing textbooks in accordance with the overall and specific objectives of a curriculum cannot be denied, but neglecting the interests of the students and the requirements of the age in determining the content may constitute an obstacle to the realisation of those objectives.

As also specified by the interviewed participants, it was seen that the themes in the textbook prepared by the MoNE were in accordance with the ninth-grade curriculum, but that their content was deemed inadequate for the effective communication goals set out by the MoNE itself and by the CEFR. In addition, although it is stated that the book was prepared in accordance with the CEFR gains, it was notable that it did not indicate accordance with either levels A1 or A2 of the CEFR; rather, that the level was unusually expressed as simply being appropriate for the ninth grade. On the point that the determination of topics in textbooks may be in accordance with the curriculum, that notably does not make the content automatically adequate or acceptable. For example, the participant teachers in the current study revealed that the ninth-grade English textbook was inadequate in being able to improve students' critical thinking skills. It was also stated that textbooks with localised cultural content were always prepared in the same format, and that although they addressed the four basic language learning skills, their activities were weak, their visuals and listening sections insufficient, and needed to be supported with additional resources in order to achieve the set goals. It can be said, therefore, that the teachers found the textbook to be inadequate in providing the necessary communicative ability, which paralleled a statement by Heyworth (2004) in that gaining language skills is equivalent to gaining communicative ability. Based on the interviewed participant teachers' ideas, it can also be concluded that teachers need better support with more authentic materials using the EBA network, CDs, or other online resources, and that the EBA content must be made fully ready prior to the start of the school year, and not half way through at the beginning of the second of the two semesters.

To summarise, the imbalance in the representation of the source, target, and other cultures in the three textbooks examined in the current study was found to be at the expense of learners' learning. Imbalanced cultural representations have negative educational consequences, including causing unnecessary conflict among students, and missed opportunities that deepen a lack of intercultural awareness and the perpetuation of stereotypes. On the one hand, the localisation of cultural content may cause learners to become detached from the target language culture, whilst globalisation leaves learners sometimes as if looking in from the outside and, to some extent, marginalised in the world of English language speakers (Gray, 2002). Educators and textbook authors and publishers should consider that the cultural content in ELT materials should in fact bridge the world of the English language with that of its learners, allowing the possibility of a two-way trace, of cultural exchange, and for a place for the local in the global.

The current research has implications at four levels: education, FLT textbooks publishers, researchers, and syllabus designers. Concerning education, the current study provides evidence about the role three particular and representative textbooks in fostering students' IC in the classroom context. This concurs with the recommendations given by the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), which considers the development of IC as a required skill in language learning. Teachers should therefore take into consideration the results when

choosing the course textbook. They should be aware of the limitations of certain textbooks and try to complement their shortfall with alternative activities that encourage IC. In addition, teachers may benefit from the findings of the current study in focusing more on certain elements overlooked in the textbooks, and to include supplementary tasks and assignments in order to help their students become familiar with different contexts, both in the local and global setting. As far as FLT textbooks publishers are concerned, the current study sheds light on certain aspects of cultural content which appear to be in need of improvement in course textbooks with a local approach (e.g., treatment of target and international cultures). For educational researchers, the approach chosen in the current study also has its limitations, since it did not take into account the students' viewpoints or what actually transpires in the classroom. Even though the examined textbooks are widely used, the teachers also reported using additional educational materials in their teaching, which emphasised what they found as most important regarding teaching of the English language. The ways that these textbooks are used and interpreted is also an important point to be taken into consideration. These findings have important implications for syllabus designers too, through incorporating national, international, and target cultural context in order to augment students' cultural familiarity for more effective communication.

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