

**THE USE OF MATERIALS FOR THE TEACHING OF
CULTURE IN ELT**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED
FOR THE DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING
PhD - ELT**

**DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND
LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
UNITED KINGDOM**

JUNE 2016

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to access the experiences of teachers of English (i.e. English as a foreign language teachers) when teaching cultural elements through coursebooks which are assigned by their schools/universities, and the materials which they use to deliver these lessons plus the activities that they normally select for their classes. Moreover, teachers' opinions concerning the learning and teaching of cultural elements are studied in this research. Teachers, both native and non-native speakers of English, participated in this research and have EFL teaching experience from 2 years to 30 years. An open-ended questionnaire (85) followed by semi-structured interviews (28) were conducted to learn more of teachers' experiences and to obtain further details of their opinions on teaching and learning cultures through coursebooks. All data from questionnaires were coded manually and Nvivo 9 and 10 were also utilised while processing and analysing the findings (i.e. to store interview transcripts and extracting participants' words and coding them appropriately. The details can be found in the Data Analysis section). The study has clearly shown that EFL teachers use the internet, youtube and other kinds of websites through electrical devices such as computers and smart boards and other sorts of authentic materials (e.g. current newspapers or magazines). Youtube is used for authentic material, and the BBC and some other news channels are also accessed for listening tasks. Written materials are less applied in classrooms since teachers think that electronic media materials are more visual for students, thus helping them to understand more easily, encouraging motivation and gaining more attention in lessons. Teachers recommend that learning cultures through coursebooks would benefit students, as language and culture are interlinked, and it would make students not only become fluent speakers of English but also help them to become interculturally competent persons.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my most grateful appreciation to the following people for their continuous support and assistance during my PhD thesis writing.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my parents for their huge financial and mental support since I started schooling in Myanmar, continued my studies in Thailand and the UK; I have a huge indebted appreciation for their understanding and encouragement throughout the study. I would not have completed my study devoid of their care, strong support, love and sympathy. I am who I am today because of them.

Second, I would like to give my heartfelt to my supervisor, Dr Julian Good, who looked after me, supported and supervised me expertly to complete my study.

Third, I would like to thank and give high respect to my proof reader, Mr Graham Avery, who is a Lecturer from the University of Essex, and who has committed time to proof-read such a long dissertation.

Fourth, I would like to show appreciation to Dr Beatriz de Paiva who is an Assistant Director of Graduate Students, and who has authorized the Department's financial (travel) allowance to enable me to present my papers at local and overseas Conferences.

Fifth, I must not forget to say thank you to the course directors and coordinators who allowed me to recruit participants for this study and to those who participated voluntarily.

Sixth, I must give my gratitude to those who introduced me to their friends and colleagues, and who helped me to reach and gain more teacher-participants through snowball sampling methods.

Seventh, I should like to thank Brian Tomlinson who has expertise in materials evaluation and developments, and who travelled all the way to the University of Essex for the viva of this PhD.

Last but not least, to my officemates who shared the office and office stationery with me, and who contributed knowledge and experiences between 2012 and 2015. In addition, the Administration Staff from the Department of Language and Linguistics who assisted me during these years are sincerely appreciated.

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Introduction

1. Introduction

This chapter will first present the variety of uses of the English language among non-native speakers of English around the world. The roles of native-speakerism (i.e. how native speakers are seen in ELT teaching settings), native and non-native speaking teachers of English will be presented. The common aims and attitudes of adult English learners towards learning the English language and cultures through coursebooks will then be discussed, followed by the cultures in the language coursebooks. The significance of this study will be stated and the organisation of the thesis will also be presented at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Is culture underlined when people are communicating?

Hoang (2007) and Parameswaran (2014) say that English is interlinked with their own cultures whenever two people from two different cultures communicate with each other. Language conveys meanings and English has become a most popular language for communication. The researcher herself always uses English when she meets someone who does not speak the same language or has a different culture to her own (e.g. British and Myanmar cultures), but she is worried about choosing appropriate words and social behaviours when greeting someone because she does not want to offend. The choice of words can convey the meanings (such as using “please” is more polite when requesting something in British culture) and strengthen the relationships

between two speakers. Moreover, as an example of being polite and politeness,

Gan et al. (2015, p.46-47) explain:

“Politeness can be seen as a social phenomenon and understood to be culturally bound where people from different cultures may perceive an action or statement as polite or impolite. Consequently, sometimes an act or statement can be considered polite in one culture but impolite in another.”

Huang (2008, p.96) gives some examples of politeness manners such as

“Offering your seat to the elderly on a bus is considered polite behaviour, and to interrupt when someone is talking is considered impolite behaviour.”

Therefore, learning politeness from different cultures that carry meaning is beneficial to anyone who learns both the target language and its cultures.

As politeness is still important in the use of language and behaviours, people can easily be offended and that happens because different cultures have different meanings for the same things. For example, saying “Thanks” or “Thank you” does not seem to be very different to the researcher, but saying “Thank you” is more formal in English culture (Good, 2015); hugging / kissing each other is common in some cultures and in some countries (e.g. it is acceptable in England), but some people from other cultures might not feel comfortable if their greeting culture is dissimilar to it. It is therefore beneficial for students if they can hear more about the similarities and differences of cultures.

When people of different cultures communicate, Hoa (2007) and Parameswaran (2014, p.408) explained: “cultural barriers to communication often arise due to the differences in their life patterns, social style, customs,

world view, religion, philosophy and so on.” Parameswaran (2014, p.408) continued: “This is often the case when the communicators share a foreign language.” One time, for example, whilst the researcher was having an academic meeting with her academic supervisor in his office, one of the lecturers from the Department knocked on his door. Since she knew someone was about to come into the office, she already stood up and gave up her seat to have it ready for the guest. When the lecturer (the guest) saw her action, she did not understand, but it is a Burmese (Myanmar) custom to give respect to teachers/senior citizens or anyone who has a higher position. Moreover, Tseng and Chao (2012, p.1843) explain one of the obvious differences in meaning and usage of “dinner” in Eastern and Western contexts, and this can cause a lot of misunderstanding:

“Eastern and Western cultures are quite different and sometimes while using the same language form, they are expressing different meaning. For instance, when Western people say the word dinner, they may be referring to pizza or a hamburger. In Eastern culture, dinner might refer to steamed rice or dumplings. In other words, if people do not understand each other’s culture, misunderstandings may occur.”

The sort of misunderstandings mentioned above and the misuse of words (e.g. pragmatic errors, such as “Give it to me!” instead of saying “Could/Can you give it to me, please?” when asking something from someone else) might be confusing to many. Therefore, the researcher thinks that culture has a big role in people’s lives as it “plays a role not only in communicating and receiving information but also in shaping the thinking process of groups and individuals” (Dolan, 2014, p.30).

Yajuan (2009, p.74) gave the example of people from China who realized that there were differences between the target culture (i.e. English) and their own culture. Moreover, in terms of language use, the differences included lexical meanings, pragmatic forms of use and other usages of expressions. Therefore, Yajuan (2009, p.75) pronounced:

“These cultural features may be regarded as cultural differences or variables which often constitute cultural barriers in learning a foreign language and using it in communication, particularly in communication with native speakers.”

The researcher herself is able to identify with this, because she has experienced that she chooses words and speaks or writes in English through her own (i.e. Myanmar) context and this can make it difficult for the listeners (i.e. English native speakers) to understand.

1.2 Background of this study

When foreign language learners want to learn English, their first step is either registering at a language school or buying books to study, although English courses are mandatory for schools in some countries (e.g. Singapore). Leonardi de Oliveira (2009, p.8) said in her study: “coursebooks are also helpful because they reduce the time for class preparation and offer some organisation in class”; and Thanasoulas (1999) pinpointed that other possible reasons for using coursebooks by teachers include the teaching of vocabulary and covering the four skills of the language. On the other hand, Lepionka (2006) contends that a “textbook is a tool for the student”; at least it would be for learners and teachers from undeveloped or distant regions or where there is less access to the language materials outside the classroom. In consequence,

learners only have course-books / textbooks to rely upon for their learning, and course-books are therefore seen as the only material between teachers and learners. Thanasoulas (1999) suggested that “many students working on a coursebook feel secure and have a sense of progress and achievement.” This has credibility with the researcher when she recalls her first steps of learning English (i.e. using coursebooks) back home in Myanmar.

However, the researcher believes that coursebooks alone (which are “dull/boring or outdated materials” according to many teachers who participated in this research) cannot make lessons complete, and Karabetca (2014, p.11) mentioned that “materials and resources should be relevant to the learners’ level, interests, and learning styles.” Therefore, it is interesting to study why teachers use coursebooks and how teachers prepare these specific cultural elements in lessons, such as finding extra/outside materials and creating activities, and their aims and thoughts for their students. Benjamin (2015, p.34) has shared one of his experiences of using coursebooks and the need for the teacher to add other materials:

“The original course-book materials also lacked a clear and productive way for learners to use language to achieve a communicative purpose, and the changes made are designed to give learners such opportunities and contribute to their objective need to communicate with English-speaking peoples.”

Furthermore, Lessard-Clouston (1997) stressed that: “We should and do teach our students the L2 or FL culture in our classes when our goal is communicative competence.” Brown (1986, p.33) also argued that “second language learning is often second culture learning.” In combination with coursebooks and cultural elements, the researcher has sought to elaborate on

how teachers teach cultures (i.e. whether they teach with authentic or non-authentic materials) along with course-books.

Many language schools/language centres present coursebooks as the syllabus and teachers therefore use them on a regular basis. Some teachers may also have their own reasons for using them. Some coursebook writers add cultural elements (e.g. culture as food, tradition, festivals, behaviours, greetings in different settings, etc.), and a sample of cultural elements can be found in Appendix 1 (page 302). In this case, teachers are the people who first have to deal with these kinds of elements if they are in the course-books, apart from those who do self-study or independent learning.

Learning different cultures can be beneficial, because a student's L1 and its culture might be different from English: for example, when ordering something at a café in England, the English might say "Could I / Can I get a cup of tea?" and it is impolite or meaningless to say "a coffee!" or "give me coffee!" However, in other cultures (e.g. Myanmar), it is still acceptable to say "a coffee / give me coffee" when a waiter is taking your order and it is not required to say "Thank you" after the order is taken, unless the customer tends to be polite and gives respect for his service.

Another example of these differences is that it is culturally unacceptable to call male teachers / lecturers by their first names alone in Myanmar culture (although it would be appropriate if the speaker uses "Sayar/U" in front of the teachers' first name). However, this is in opposition to English culture, where calling the first name only is accepted (e.g. Julian or his surname with his title "Dr"; therefore, he can be called Dr. Good instead). Similarly, Jerrold (2013,

p.4) cites an example of one of the big cultural differences between Japanese and Americans: “if an American guest tries to enter their house while wearing shoes, the guest is not necessarily rude, but simply unaware of an important unspoken rule in Japanese society.” Therefore, teachers might have encountered many cultural issues due to the different cultural backgrounds standing between course-books’ cultures and their students’ cultures.

Yajuan (2009, p.77) explained about the cultural denomination of animals such as the dragon in two different cultures. The ‘Dragon’ for the Chinese brings good luck, auspice, power and a bright future; however, to the Greeks it is perceived as a monster which brings evil luck or disaster to people. Therefore, it can be difficult for western people to understand unless they know the different meanings in different cultures (ibid). Whether or not teachers share their cultural experiences and cultural knowledge in class to help students break the cultural barriers is an interest of this study.

Clayton et al. (2007, p.30) said: “the more we learn about another culture, the more we find out about ourselves, which can be done through the use of critical reflection.” Similarly, Jin and Cortazzi (1998, p.98) have explained that “Learning a foreign language implies a degree of intercultural learning: students may be led to become more aware of their own culture in the process of learning about another and hence may be in a better position to develop intercultural skills.” It is therefore of interest to the current researcher to see how real EFL teachers are dealing with these cultural elements and whether they think learning cultures is important through language coursebooks in the classrooms.

1.3 Learning the English Language as a Second / Foreign Language (ESL/EFL)

The researcher has noticed that the percentage of people learning a foreign language/languages is currently increasing among young and adult learners, and learning English has become a trend nowadays for a variety of reasons: to be able to communicate with expatriates or speakers of English as an L2 on business/travel purposes since “English is spoken in large hotels and tourist attractions, at airports, and in shops that tourists frequent” (Kitao, 1996), as well as to have the ability to interpret and read world news for one’s own knowledge; or to work as a translator or interpreter or to set up a translation company or local press and media office; or “to gain reading knowledge within a field of specialization” (Brown, 1986, p.35); or to continue further studies in English-speaking countries or where English is the medium of teaching, e.g. “fulfilling a foreign language requirement in a university” (Brown, 1986: *ibid*).

Graddol (2000, p.2) summarised the press release for the launch of the British Council’s English 2000 Project in 1995 when he said that “English is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, diplomacy, sport, international competition, pop music and advertising.” Therefore, a number of people think that, without English, they can do nothing, and this thought is steadily increasing the number of people learning the English language. The researcher has experienced that most children in Myanmar usually learn another language at the age of five when they start school: for example, studying the English language there is one of the core subjects in the basic

education programme, and some children are sent to special English/Chinese language classes or learn it with a private tutor. Similarly, Çelik and Karaca (2014, p.4) stated that “in countries such as Belgium, Greece, Italy and Portugal, children begin learning English at age 6.”

According to Anwaruddin (2013), EFL is included as a core subject from Grades 1 until 12 in Bangladesh’s curriculum, and Begum (2015, p.247) clearly mentioned how English is used in the education system there: “Literacy in English now commences from play group of 3-4 aged children and English is learnt and taught as a compulsory subject till the tertiary level of education.” Rahman (2005, p.4) explained the history of this development:

“On 19 January 1989, English was introduced as a compulsory language from Class I to class XII with students having to qualify in both English and Bangla in the board examinations. Moreover, at the university level, in addition to the regular courses, English was introduced as a compulsory subject in many disciplines since 90s.”

In schools in the Philippines, English is “the primary medium of school instruction” (Ozaki, 2011, p.52). Looking at these facts, learning the English language has clearly been given great importance in some countries’ education. Moreover, learners are more and more aware of using English, since it is assumed to be an international language and “English is one of the most important means for acquiring access to the world’s intellectual and technical resources” (Talebinezhad, 2001), for it is used all over the world as shown above, especially in the media, press and other kinds of communication methods and education. Parameswaran (2014, p.405) explained that “Since English has emerged as the chief medium of international communication in Sri Lanka, there is an inevitable need for proficiency in English to

communicate with people of other countries.” Therefore, people for whom English is not their first language have to learn it for a variety of their own personal reasons.

Some coursebooks’ writers such as Crace and Acklam (2011) have added one report in their *New Total English* (upper-intermediate level coursebook) on page 42 to note how the English language is used in other countries: “Oliver from Brighton, UK, when travelling around Europe, found that he did not have a chance to practise his French or Spanish as people spoke English to him in shops, and this made him wonder which country he was actually in.” By seeing this example, we can assume that English has become a common language or “lingua franca” (i.e. a language that is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different) (Oxford Dictionaries Online, 2011); or EFL (i.e. English as a foreign language), which means “the English that these learners are taught” (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2008, p.64) and which is certainly applied by non-native speakers of English these days.

Nizegorodcew (2011, p.9) explained that the “EFL may also help speakers to perceive their own culture in a wider perspective, by creating more general connotations of cultural concepts so far closely associated only with the native language”, which is similar to the current researcher’s point of view. This is because the researcher herself uses English as EFL and learnt the language through her own cultural perspective and then balanced it with other cultures

when she communicated with other language users of English (such as either native speakers of English or other non-native speakers of English).

1.3.1 The use of English language across the world for communication and ELF

The learning of the English language has been given many names such as ESL/EFL depending upon where and how the language is used. Barrow (1990, p.3) has noted that English is the second most widely used language in the world among non-native speakers of English, and Kitao (1996) pointed out that English “is the language of business and government even in some countries where it is a minority language.” As mentioned above, English is universally used in communication and people are often persuaded to learn English (i.e. English as a second/foreign language).

Due to this language learning development, people are gradually becoming speakers of two or three languages (i.e. speaking their native and one additional language). In some countries, people have more than one language to speak and most public announcements are broadcast in several languages (e.g. Canada). Bélanger (2001) states that English and French are the official languages of Canada, and Mukundan (2009) mentions that English is currently used as an ESL (i.e. English as a second language) in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and many other countries. Kitao (1996) named some countries where English is substantially used, such as “in Hong Kong, Singapore, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Malaysia.” According to Çelik and Karaca (2014, p.6), English is also used “in many Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Nigeria, Kenya and Zimbabwe; English is given official status and taught as a second,

rather than as a foreign language.” Thus, the English language is used at least as a minimum for communication or as a subject among these citizens.

At any rate, due to the language learning development and influence of the English language, the researcher believes that learning can be done by means of self-study or attending some classes at schools, and that ELT (English Language Teaching) has a major role in ESL/EFL education. In Bourne’s definition (2007, p.193), English as a second language (ESL) refers to “situations in which speakers of other home languages are learning English in a context in which English is the dominant language of public life.” In Longman’s Dictionary (web accessed, 10/09/2012), it is stated that a second language is a language that people speak in addition to the language people learned as children. Moreover, Yalden (1987) explained that if the classroom language is not in the target language environment, it is a foreign language; if it is, it is a second language.

1.3.2 Teaching and Learning English due to the use of English as an official language in countries

The English language has been used in some non-native speaking countries such as India and Singapore for the use of communication and in mass media, and people therefore need to learn some English to understand what is said and to get messages across. People may have their first language if they are not natively born to English speaking parents. There are, for example, still two or more languages presented as official languages in some other countries (for example, Singapore (The 4 Official Languages of Singapore - Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette, 2011)), and Huang and Wang (2008) note that

English has been one of the official languages in a number of other Asian countries such as Hong Kong. In this case, a language which people speak at home is called their first language and another language which has been learned at schools or from their environment becomes a second language; and therefore, some people are able to use English as fluently as their first language. People who tend to reside in or migrate to English speaking countries need the language to communicate with local people and to study or run businesses in those countries and this is where ELT becomes important.

1.3.3 English as a foreign language (EFL)

In some countries, the English language is considered a foreign language (EFL); thus, Broughton et al. (1980) explain that English as a foreign language means that it is taught in schools, often widely, but it does not play an essential role in national or social life. For example, some children are learning English as a foreign language for their own purposes or learn due to the demands of the curriculum, since it is not widely used in their environment. Therefore, the term of English as a foreign language can be applied to learners who do not always use English as a medium language in classrooms (except children who attend private English preparatory schools) or in their environment. Similarly, according to Bourne (2007, p.190), EFL means that English is “taught in a context in which the dominant language is other than English, and where there is little English used in those environments”, such as Myanmar, Thailand, France and Germany.

1.3.4 English as an International Language (EIL)

As explained above, English is needed to be learnt for various reasons (because almost everything is written in English such as airline information, medicines, university websites, BBC, CNN news and other news channels; and many textbooks such as engineering, medicine and social care or computing books are written in English these days by many famous publishers and therefore people who learn those subjects need English to study such specific subjects) and it has been termed differently by many researchers.

Apart from the learning aspect (ESL/EFL), there is one other term for English: this is EIL. EIL has been defined in a variety of ways by many researchers, since “English is the most widely spoken language in the world” (Choudhury, 2014, p.1) and due to its wide usage, many people will learn English. Wandel (2003, p.73) stresses that the English language is commonly used as “a functional tool for cross-cultural communication in international settings” and it is therefore called an international language (EIL). However, McKay (2002) explains that an international language is equated with a language where a large number of native speakers speak it commonly (e.g. English, Mandarin). Sharifian (2009, p.2) argues that EIL means that “English, with its many varieties, is an international language”. Moreover, Smith (1976, cited in McKay (2002)) states that an international language (IL) is one which is used by people of different nations to communicate with one another.

The researcher herself uses the English language as a medium for emailing and phoning when she has to communicate with people who speak different

native languages (e.g. Chinese, Thai, and Greek, etc.) and they exchange emails only in English. Thus, the researcher takes it to mean that English is an international language, since many functions are operated in English and it is commonly used by people on many occasions. As this research aims to study the teaching of English as a foreign language to non-English speaking students, the term of EIL will rarely be used. However, a secondary aim is to determine why teachers think (if at all) there is any benefit of learning English with cultural elements as prescribed by many coursebooks.

1.3.5 English Language as a global language / world language

Many academic and scientific research papers and subject textbooks (e.g. software engineering / architectural textbooks) are written in English and the use of English in the media is in high demand these days. Kitao (1996) stressed that “English is the major language of news and information in the world”, and the term ‘global language’ is therefore applied to the English language by many scholars. Gnutzmann (1999, p.157) and Crystal (2003, p.1) also use the expression “English is the global language/global English”, for it has been printed in thousands of newspapers, magazines and it is used for other social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) and has also been used as a medium language of communication among non-English speaking people. Moreover, Kushner (2003) explains that English is compelled to be a world language from economic, technical and scientific perspectives in the present day. As mentioned previously, English has been put in a variety of terms, but the term Global Language seems to include all uses of the English language.

1.4 The role of first or native speaker of language in English language teaching

The researcher believes that language teachers are of paramount importance for learners, and this leads to a discussion of whether or not they should be native speakers of that language. While the researcher was teaching in Thailand, she noticed that some learners prefer to learn English from native speakers if this is possible. On the other hand, it could be argued that it does not matter whether language is learnt from either native or non-native speakers of the language. Teachers must only be qualified to teach such relevant levels of their language skills (for example, if a teacher's level of language is upper-intermediate/advanced, he/she will be able to teach up to a lower level than this). If the classroom is monolingual (e.g. classrooms from Myanmar where Burmese is used as the first language for communication), the use of L1 is better because it would be more beneficial for students to learn a language from the same L1 teacher. For example, Myanmar students would have more chance to ask detailed questions on grammar and meanings of usage and to discuss any differences between the two cultures (i.e. the students' and target culture) than when having an English-medium instruction or explanation from a teacher where there is a language barrier.

At this stage, before the term of language learning is mentioned, the researcher would like to explain the concept of native/first language speakers. 'Native-speakerism' (Holliday, 2006) has become a critical matter for discussion in view of the fact that many people speak two or three languages nowadays. According to Cook (1999, cited in McKay, 2002), a native speaker is a

monolingual; however, some native speakers are bilingual and still speak the language learned in childhood depending on the country and environment in which they grew up. Davies (1991) and Murray and Christison (2011) say that a native speaker is someone who was exposed to a language and learned it initially from birth, or it was first learned by the speaker with high linguistics intuition. Teachers are classified whether they are native or non-native speakers of English depending upon where they were born and the place where they grew up.

Native English speakers of the language have been defined as people who were born in those countries and are categorised as “inner- circle English” by Kachru (1992, cited in Oxford and Jain, 2008), where English is spoken and used as the first language. Participants of this study may not only be native speakers but non-native speakers of English will also be recruited. The researcher knows (based on her own learning experience) that learning a language from native speakers is preferable as they have a better knowledge of the cultural elements of their language. It can also be better to learn in an authentic setting, where English is commonly used as a medium of communication (such as in schools, offices, etc.) or to learn the language in England or in any other English speaking countries. This is clearly preferable to learning it alone from learning aids materials, although it could also be done in non-English speaking countries. The researcher herself learnt English in a non-native English speaking country (i.e. Myanmar) from non-native English speaking teachers and other learning materials (such as videos and English newspapers), and then became more proficient when she went for further

study abroad. As the researcher had planned to recruit both native and non-speaker teachers, she would like to see whether there is a difference in choosing materials or any language barriers that prevented them from teaching and producing materials.

1.4.1 Native English and Non-Native Speaker Teachers

As explained above, in language teaching settings, teachers are categorised as native and non-native teachers of English depending on what language is used as their first/native language. Since English has been used as an official language in some countries, it has also become difficult to define what the official language of their own country is and it would be a question of where English is originally spoken by a vast majority of people in their daily lives such as in the USA and the UK.

Referring to Rampton (1990, p.97), native speakers mean those people who are “usually citizens of one country and the native speakers of one mother tongue.” However, British and American are the most well-known terms of use to be described as the origins of English, which is categorised as an inner circle of English by Krachu (1992, cited in Oxford and Jain, 2008). Moreover, Canadian, New Zealander and Australian English are also counted in the inner circle as they use English as their first language, although they have their “own special lexical, grammatical, and phonological identities” (Harmer, 2007, p.22). In the same way, looking at teaching and learning settings, learners are taught either American or British English as most schools only offer one of these, usually depending on the setting or country.

Ur (2009, p.5) also explains that many teachers and learners today still prefer a “native speaker” model: thus, schools often employ native speakers of English to reserve the norms of the English language domain. However, there are still some language schools in countries which teach English that do not define what kind of particular English they are using and teaching at their schools, and also teachers are not originally from the English native-speaking countries (and are therefore called non-native English speaking teachers). Here, they intend to teach and operate English for communication purposes, where English is being used as an international language.

Gebhard (1996) also suggests that native speakers (i.e. English, American or Australian, etc.) might feel uneasy answering cultural questions if they might never have been asked them in their own countries and they learn through experience. On the other hand, the researcher thinks that sharing cultural experiences openly with learners helps them to learn more issues and problems, and learners should have a chance to share their own experiences. Therefore, teachers should not mind answering questions or contributing knowledge if they have similar experiences, as “knowledge about culture is a fundamental communicative competence in foreign language learning” (Anderson, 2006, p. 90). Therefore, it does not matter whether the teacher is native or non-native when it comes to choosing materials and lesson planning; and in this study, all teachers (native and non-native) will be recruited, since this study will learn how teachers are coping with teaching cultural elements through coursebooks and it might be interesting to see their different perceptions and their experiences.

1.5 English Language Teaching and Learning

Having said that learning always comes along with teaching, the role of language teaching (e.g. English Language Teaching) is created for ESL/EFL learners, and therefore, a teacher becomes “a professional mediator between learners and foreign languages and cultures” (Byram and Risager, 1999, p.58). Although there is extensive use of English all over the world, Graddol (2006, noted in Harmer, 2007) thinks it doubtful that more than 40% of the global population would ever become functional users of English.

Turkan and Çelik (2007, p.18) explained a reason why people learn English: “The English language plays an important role, because it has become the lingua franca of the world, and the default language that one needs to learn in order to keep up with the information age”. The New English File, Advanced Students’ book writers have mentioned that “some experts estimate that 1.5 billion people– around one quarter of the world’s population can communicate well in English” (Oxden and Latham-Koening, 2010, p.12). It seems, therefore, that the English language plays an important role and is used by people for communication.

The use of English as an international language for multiple purposes (such as for education, work and employment, holiday and tourism, political negotiation, business, and so forth around the world) means that people use and need to learn English for several reasons. This is where language learners are more and more concerned with learning English as it turns into a medium for communication (“contact language”) used among people who do not share

their first language (Firth, 1996; Jenkins, 2007). Consequently, as stated above, the demand for English language teaching has witnessed an upward trend over the years, and more people enrol at schools or do self-study in their own time so that they can become knowledgeable about the language.

The researcher wants to focus more on Saraceni's (2003) comments that language learning means achieving a deeper understanding of different cultures, including the learners' own culture, rather than focusing on cultural stereotypes, since any language comes along with its own specific meaning. Thus, to be able to build better communication, teachers should know who their language learners are and be able to know their typical cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, teachers should know both the target culture (which is not always easy to fully understand, especially for non-native speaking teachers) that they have to teach and the students' cultures (it would be more comfortable for teachers if they and their students are from the same or similar culture groups) so that they know how to help students to overcome the barriers of cultural misunderstandings which could normally happen when people from two or three different cultures come together.

1.6 Adult learners and their perspectives of learning English and Culture

Young children are unlikely to have specific reasons for learning English because most of them are sent to schools by parents or because they are taught under the school curriculum, unlike adult language learners. Gebhard (1996, p. 54) explains that both ESL and EFL students enter language classes with different attitudes and different expectations, such as "they want their learning

to be immediately applicable to their lives” (Knowles, 1973, cited in Florez and Burt, 2001). Thus, they have hopes of earning a good salary and making a good impression as they are able to deal with expatriates and apply English as a medium language, i.e. English as a Lingua Franca which is a common language to use “between people who do not share the same native language” (Davies and Patsko, 2013). Moreover, adult learners have diverse backgrounds, aims, career requirements, interests and some individual difficulties in class as they come from multiple cultural backgrounds. He also points out that learners expect teachers to speak English with them and to model how to express meanings (for instance, the use of humour); and they also expect to learn samples of speech and how to write text.

Cook (2003, p.273) notes: “The adult coursebook is catering for people who do not think, learn, or behave in the same ways as children.” In addition, the researcher understands that some learners might expect teachers to teach some of his/her target culture (i.e. English/American/Australian culture) so that they can learn what customs and traditions are of most importance. Mindful of this, Olajide (2010, cited in Martina, web accessed 2013) contends that students can respect the differences that may fill the gap between their own culture and the target language culture so that they will appreciate other people’s cultures. For this reason, Gebhard (1996) explains that teachers are sometimes cultural informants in language classrooms and they are often asked questions regarding cultural values, beliefs and assumptions. For example: “why do Americans say they value equality but then discriminate against each other?”; “what is traditional about Australia?” (p.70). Thus, learners are keen to learn

not only about language but also culture, and we must ask whether or not teachers are responsive to this curiosity.

1.6.1 Learning English through materials

To avoid misinterpretation, misjudgement or miscommunication, classroom teachers should localise their lesson and classroom activities, such as adapting local cultures, liaising with the target culture and other cultural elements from the coursebooks by speaking of history or stories, plus giving learners opportunities to discuss their opinions, thoughts and experiences. In point of fact, coping with the learners' culture is neither easy nor comfortable for teachers who teach in multicultural classroom settings (i.e. where the learners are from different countries with different backgrounds and they learn English as ESL/EFL in one class). In this case, teachers need to focus more on the content of what the textbook presents and adapt relevant authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines or some video clips downloaded from the internet so that learners get the real sense of texts as well as sharing their personal experiences. For this reason, this research will explore how language teachers adapt their lessons and from where they extract materials when they teach cultures through coursebooks in class.

1.7 Brief definition of coursebook

The researcher would define the coursebook as a "book" that is prepared for language learning and which is prescribed by a language school to use for a course(s). According to Cambridge Dictionaries, it is said that a coursebook is "a book used by students when they do a particular course of study"

(Cambridge Dictionaries Online, last accessed 12/09/2015). Kayapinar (2009, p.69) has expressed his opinions on the preferential use of coursebooks by teachers of English: “the school administrations and the circles of English teachers prefer ready-made coursebooks because they possibly provide ready-made syllabi to be followed by teachers.”

1.7.1 Brief definitions of culture

Culture has been termed differently by many researchers and will be discussed in detail in the Literature Review. The researcher of this study defines culture as the “do’s and don’ts” of a particular group such as bowing or shaking hands when greeting. These are termed as popular culture by Yajuan (2009, p.76) that foreign language learners should learn in order not to break the social rules, whereas literature, any work of art and music are categorised as aesthetic / big “C” culture by Adaskou et al. (1990) and Kramsch (1991) --- these are not initially covered in a classroom setting, but can be learnt slowly at a later time by users of the foreign language.

1.8 Cultures in coursebooks

The New Headway coursebook (published in 1996 by Oxford University Press) and New Cutting Edge (printed in 2005 by Pearson Longman) also tend to present cultural elements of both big ‘C’ such as literature and small “c” such as social behaviours, although the small ‘c’ cultures are slightly more represented (see Inside Out: page 44, Advanced level; New Cutting Edge, 2005: pages 74-75, Intermediate level; Clockwise, 2000: page 59, Upper-

Intermediate; New Total English 2011: page 10, Intermediate level, etc.). The copies can be found in Appendix 1.

Moreover, Smith et al. (2003, p.91) emphasise “the task remains overwhelming as long as culture is seen as a finite body of knowledge that must be taught.” Because language and culture are interlaced, some cultural elements are presented in many coursebooks today and language teachers have to plan teaching culture in language classrooms. On the other hand, the term culture itself can mean a variety of things (e.g. being punctual as culture, shaking hands when greeting, the politeness of using “please” in English when requesting something from someone else, etc.).

Teachers, of course, are only allowed to teach and finish the course in the same amount of time, and the researcher would like to learn how (if at all) cultural elements from coursebooks are taught in the real life classroom, for Widdowson (1998, cited in Hall, 2002, p.112) says “the crucial requirement is learners should have a basic capacity which enables them to learn how to cope when the occasion arises”; and Wen-Cheng et al. (2011, p.92) emphasize that “The teacher seems to be the most important factor” where his/her decisions determine how to teach and the choice of materials that are the best to use to suit the lessons’ aims and students’ needs, etc. In a similar vein, Neff and Rucynski Jr. (2013, p.13) state: “Because no textbook perfectly integrates language and culture education, teachers need to build up supplemental activities to make culture learning a consistent component of their language classes.” Therefore, the researcher is keen to evaluate what cultural elements

are commonly being taught in EFL classrooms and how teachers are dealing with those elements and their students.

1.9 The significance of this study

The researcher has a personal interest in teaching cultural elements because she has often found it difficult to deal with when different cultures bring different values. For example, showing off one's feet is unacceptable in Asian culture (e.g. Burmese), whereas putting one's feet on the table shows a very relaxed manner in some other cultures, although it is not always acceptable. Therefore, she would like to study how other EFL teachers feel about teaching those cultural elements and their students' reactions. The more widely that the English language is used, the more people have to learn it, which means that ELT must be expanded since learners need teachers to guide them, learn the authentic language use and some cultures.

Other researchers (e.g. Gray, 2000) have studied coursebooks' presentation of cultural content in British ELT coursebooks, and Benjamin (2015) has focused on the materials adaptation to the gap between the coursebook that he is assigned to use and his students' knowledge in terms of geographical locations; but still little is done about EFL teachers' difficulties and their perceptions, especially those who come from different teaching backgrounds and who have taught in several different countries. The participants for this study were British, Polish, Chinese, Chilean, African, Sudanese, Taiwanese, Malaysian, Mexican, Burmese (Myanmar) and other non-native and native-English speaking teachers.

Since cultural elements are being presented in many coursebooks and many EFL teachers have to deal with those elements, research of this sort should guide novice or less-experienced EFL teachers how to teach and enable them to predict any potential issues happening in the actual EFL classrooms. The researcher's main interest is whether or not teachers are keen to share their personal cultural experiences, how they learn cultures, how they prepare, what they use as materials, what sorts of difficulties they have faced and how they help learners break the barriers of misunderstanding in their daily life communication.

1.10 The aim of this study

The simple aim of this study is to explore teachers' cultural elements teaching experiences so that their thoughts and beliefs can be shared with novice and less-experienced teachers. The difficulties such as cultural issues between students' cultures and cultures from the coursebooks and the ways that teachers have dealt with them must be shared with the readers of this dissertation - to know how to overcome the problems and to cope with the stress and difficulties of finding suitable materials.

1.11 The organization of the thesis

As mentioned earlier, this study examines whether teachers face any difficulties when teaching cultural elements, and if so what they are, and when they are doing these kinds of lessons. Brief information on the structure of this thesis is given below.

1.11.1 The Introduction

The first chapter introduces what is included in this dissertation, the reasons why this study was done and how this study means to share knowledge and experiences to the ELT world.

1.11.2 The Literature

The researcher has examined some questions throughout this study. A review of the literature and some previous studies is presented in Chapter Two.

1.11.3 The Research Methods

This research has relied upon qualitative research methods by using open-ended questionnaires followed by semi-structured interviews. The details are explained in the Research Methodology Chapter. In terms of data collection, this study was carried out in Britain in 2013 (native and non-native teachers were recruited) and a few non-native teachers of English who worked in Myanmar at that time were also recruited and participated in completing questionnaires. The researcher invited many English Language schools and universities to participate in her study by sending letters and emails to school directors and programme co-ordinators. Teachers who participated in this study come from different schools. They have different experiences and various background knowledge, including different educational backgrounds.

The participating schools from London were the East London School of English, St. Giles International London Central, the IFCELS-SOAS, and Malvern House. The other schools were the British Study Centre in Brighton,

Brighton Language College and the Liverpool School of English, and a few additional teachers were recruited through snowball sampling methods. Moreover, some student–teachers who were doing an M.A. in ELT and Applied Linguistics in 2013 from Kings College London (KCL) and a few students who had prior teaching experiences and were doing postgraduate study (specialized programmes in M.A. ELT, M.A. TEFL, M.A. TESOL and MA in Translation at the University of Essex in 2013) were recruited for this research. All the details can be read in Chapter Three (Research Methodology).

1.11.4 How data was collected and analysed

The following chapter outlines the collection of data, how it was stored and then processed. Thus, it discusses the analysis using Microsoft Excel 2011 for manual coding of the questionnaires, and operating Nvivo 9 and 10 software for the interview transcripts coding and analysis (Data Analysis). The difficulties that the researcher faced are also mentioned.

1.11.5 The Findings of this study

Discussion and presentation were the most commonly used activities among teachers for their cultural elements lessons. In favour of advanced technology, teachers often use the internet and thus Google is seen as a resource for them where they can get any materials that they are looking for. Many teacher participants thought it was good to have cultural elements in their teaching and that they are important for students, since language cannot be learnt without knowing culture. Teachers also need to use a lot of adaptation for such cultural elements lessons in order not to offend anyone (e.g. talking about drinking

alcohol is prohibited from discussion in some cultures) and to create a good learning atmosphere. Further details of the results can be found in Chapter Five (Findings).

1.11.6 The Discussion and Implications

The Discussion and Implications Chapter aims to highlight the main results of this study, plus the advantages and disadvantages of using such materials, and will then provide some discussion points on which areas EFL/ESL teachers need to develop. For instance, teachers can substitute other relevant materials if there is any restriction due to students' cultures such as talking about clubbing. However, allowing students to see themselves, their cultures and other people's cultures from different perspectives would help them to be able to become more competent in intercultural communicative settings. Further discussions and implications can be read in Chapter Six (Discussion and Implications).

1.11.7 The Conclusion

The last chapter reviews and summarises the key findings of this research and adds some of the researcher's points of view and suggestions for novice teachers. The limitations of this study and the further studies that she thinks can be done are additionally presented in Chapter Seven (The Conclusion).

Literature Review

This literature review will first deal with discussion of the relationship between language teaching, learning and cultures as some cultural elements are already presented in recently published coursebooks. The choice of external materials for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks in language classrooms is going to be the major focus of this study. Second, language teaching and the role of coursebooks in English Language Teaching (ELT) will be discussed. Third, the meaning of culture relating to cultural elements, teaching and learning cultures through coursebooks will be presented. There will then be an evaluation of materials, and the steps of evaluation will be presented. Finally, there will be a discussion of other previous related studies and the limitations of this study. In this study, the term ‘coursebook’ also refers to ‘textbook’ as “both terms will be used interchangeably” (Mukundan, 2009, p.35).

2.1 Learning Language and Culture

Harrison (1990) explains that culture flows through language, and many researchers say that language is itself an important element or a product of a culture (Moore, 1996, p.270; Perner, 2010; Moran, 2001, p.35). Tang (1999) defines that “Language is culture” with the example of someone who decides to learn French: s/he does not only learn the linguistic part but also everything to do with French and France. Izadpanah (2011, p.109) and Samovar et al. (1981, cited in Purba (2011)) say that culture is the foundation or vital part of the communication process. This is to say that culture is always bound to

language and it makes meanings across language users. It has been argued by Çakir (2010, p.183) that “language without culture is unthinkable, so is human culture without language.” Therefore, Pulverness (2003), Tang (1999), Brody (2003) and Alemi and Jafari (2012) mention that language and culture are inextricably intertwined with each other: “if any one of them is separated, the other remains incomplete” (Choudhury, 2014, p.17).

Hesar et al. (2012, p.69) also said, “if there is no culture, there is no language.” They continue, saying “Therefore, a language class cannot be imagined without involving the cultural elements of the target language” (ibid.). Kramsch (1993) argues that if language is seen as a social practice, culture becomes a core element of language teaching; and Peck (1984) says: “Without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete.” Tas (2010, p.169) also highlights the connection of culture and language teaching or learning by stating “it is obvious that language teaching or learning can't be achieved without integration of culture and cultural components.”

Similarly, Fishman (1996) notes in Risager (2006) that language is both symbolic and an index of culture. Peterson and Coltrane (2003, p.1) have suggested that “language is not only part of how we define culture, but it also reflects culture”; for example, saying “Thanks or Thank you” is more formal and using “please” seems to be more polite of the speaker in English culture. Therefore, many researchers argue that language teaching can also be called

culture teaching (e.g. Byram, 1989), and language and culture are subsequently always linked.

However, if culture has a role in language teaching, we must discuss what culture will be delivered: i.e. the target language culture only (e.g. British or American), or multiple / multi-cultures (such as cultures that are shared among people from different cultures, mainly customs and etiquette of typical cultures). Similarly, Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2011, p.38-39) explained in his paper that many people have asked questions about the sense of teaching cultures on language courses in Europe and said:

“It seems unclear how much time should be devoted to the teaching of culture, and more precisely: whose culture should be taught, what topics and perspectives should be chosen and how stereotyping can be avoided.”

In fact, this should not only be asked in Europe and it is for EFL teachers from all over the world to consider what to teach and how to deal with cultures and language. To this end, Gray (2010, p.17) quotes Holliday (1994): “the question of teaching of culture along with language, whether or not it should be taught, and if so, which culture should be taught, and how it should be taught.”

Nizegorodcew (2011, p.14) mentioned his experience in one of his articles that English language teachers tend to teach/introduce target cultures such as British or American culture, and said “Teaching cultures mean for them nearly exclusively teaching target culture in the sense of the national target culture.” However, with regards to the researcher’s own teaching experience, textbooks (e.g. New Cutting Edge (2005), New English File (2006), New Total English

(2011)) have been printed with not only the target culture (i.e. English) in mind, but also the other peoples' cultures (e.g. Asian Thai cultures).

Ates (2012, p.19) also says that "global textbooks should not close their doors to the various colours of the world." However, due to students' different background cultures and the classroom culture of their country, teachers must consider 'how it should be taught', and again 'whether or not it should be or must be taught.' This is a critical point to consider due to the learners' backgrounds and religions which may cause cultural restrictions or cultural sensitivities (such as drinking alcohol with friends, and calling someone by their first name is unacceptable). In this case, if culture teaching takes place in the class, it would be interesting to learn how teachers teach, what teaching materials are used and whether or not teachers can manage their lessons (i.e. how teachers gain learners' interest in teaching cultures in the classroom). Thus, the researcher agrees with Makrus (2010, p.6) that "understanding our (i.e. teachers' or learners' own cultures) and others' culture is about creating spaces to not only recognize and value diverse culture, but to support the inclusion of new values and beliefs into our everyday lives and activities." By doing this, teachers will be more able to help their students to broaden their horizons about other people from different cultures: whether the ways they do things are the same or different from the students' own cultures. Studying the teachers' difficulties of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks, their choices of materials and activities in language classrooms is therefore of key interest and will be the main focus of this study.

Additionally, Brown and Eisterhold (2004) state that culture is a tool which helps to organize the world, often through language. Therefore, Argar (2006, p.2) uses the term “languaculture” to illustrate that culture and language are always bound and which draw all aspects of the manner of background knowledge and local information in addition to grammar and vocabulary. Seeing that there is a close relationship between language and culture (or “tightly linked” as Sarangi (2011, p.262) and Risager (2006) point out), there has been an argument to say that language teaching must inevitably be accompanied by teaching about cultural phenomena in the countries where the target language is spoken. Consequently, language teaching can be called “culture teaching” (Byram, 1989, p.42), or “foreign language learning is foreign culture learning” (Thanasoulas, 2001). Since language and culture are “inseparable” (Clarke and Clarke, 1990, p.31), Politzer (1959) notes in Thanasoulas (2001, p.3):

“[i]f we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning.”

Therefore, the questions for this study are: how should they be taught and what materials should be used for those cultural elements lessons? This would be the critical point for teachers to consider what cultural elements should be primarily given to learners, such as festivals and customs or behaviours of the target language. Byram et al. (1994, p.136) state that students need some “factual knowledge”, such as the typical culture in greeting (e.g. bowing or hugging each other) or beliefs (e.g. why red or white is worn for weddings) in order to communicate and behave properly without misunderstanding. Hall (2002, p.94) also argues that the role of the teacher is “to provide ample

opportunities for learners to appropriate the particular communicative cultural knowledge and skills” that have been considered important to participate in target cultural groups.

To gain knowledge and to be able to communicate effectively with target native speakers or other L2 speakers (i.e. using English as a Lingua Franca), learners need to know about some of the cultural elements that may be sensitive and which may cause misunderstanding. For example, referring to the researcher’s personal experience, according to British culture, if someone puts an umbrella up in a house/shop without any specific intention, people often think it brings bad luck; however, the researcher does not see any particular problem with opening an umbrella in a house. Since language and its culture are only delivered by teachers to language learners, these teachers should be able to share their beliefs and superstitions and they should learn their learners’ cultural beliefs and superstitions to avoid the cultural barriers of misunderstanding.

2.2 The language classroom and language learners

In many language schools, learners are allocated into different classrooms depending on the criteria of their age and their language proficiency as a result of placement tests held by schools in which they are registered. The names of the levels are false beginner, elementary, beginners, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced as classified by the schools. In accordance with the British Council in Myanmar, 2012 (formerly Burma), there are five categories along with the additional levels for adult general

English language learners: elementary (EL1 and EL2), pre-intermediate (PI1 and PI2), intermediate (INT1, 2 and 3), upper-intermediate (UI1, 2 and 3) and advanced (AD1 and AD2). The names of the classes (i.e. EL or AD) are different depending on the schools, but all schools range their English classes from Elementary to Advanced levels.

2.3 Teaching language, teaching culture and cultural awareness

Many ethnographers and ESL/EFL researchers say that learning a language means learning the shared meanings, values and practices, and it is therefore impossible to teach and learn a language without learning its culture (Oxford, 1996; Byram and Fleming, 1998; Dweik, 2008). As Byram and Fleming (1998, p.2) explained below:

“Learning a language as it is spoken by a particular group is learning the shared meanings, values and practices of that group as they are embodied in the language.”

Kramersch (1993, p.8) notes that language teaching consists of teaching four skills “plus culture”, whereas language and culture are entrenched features of language teaching around the world. Yet again, Kramersch (1993, cited in Mishan, 2005) states that in language teaching, the cultural element is not an expendable fifth skill, since culture so fundamentally underpins the language; it is always in the background, making evident the limitations of learners’ hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them.

Peterson and Coltrane (2003, p.2) explained that second language culture is taught implicitly and it is embedded in the linguistic forms that students are learning. The researcher believes that learning second language culture should

occur when a learner starts learning another new language (for example, using words such as “educationally disadvantaged” instead of saying “disabilities” which is a culturally unacceptable word in English culture when mentioning someone’s illness, and it is more polite to say “slim” instead of saying “he/she is skinny”). Moreover, she agrees with Hall (2006, p.16), who says “encouraging language learners to consider and understand the perspectives of others in the community decreases the likelihood of conflict.”

Lessard-Cluston (1997, cited in Dweik, 2008) says that whether English is taught as a first language, a second language or a foreign language, cultural components which are embedded in the language’s function or meaning are inevitable, for language teaching is also cultural teaching. Furthermore, Izadpanah (2011, p.111) states: “for L2 students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak the target language or the country in which the target language is spoken.” Having said that language and culture are interlaced, language teaching is evidently cultural teaching, and Scollon (1999, p.195) noted that “Teaching culture in the classroom is a much more complex matter than just analysing codes for opening up social interactions.” Thus, the researcher would like to learn how teachers teach such cultural elements to learners in the limited time that they are given in the class.

Szymanska-Czaplak (p231, web accessed 2/04/2013) said that teaching culture is a challenging task, especially when teachers have limited time (or limited

knowledge of the target language culture if they are non-native speakers) (Ho, 2009). Çakir (web accessed, 2015) gives tips on how to teach cultural elements:

“One way to begin teaching culture on a positive note is to emphasize similarities between people. Such a beginning should be followed by a discussion of differences between members of students’ family, between families, between schools and between cultures. Moreover, the topics to be used to teach the target language should be presented in the contexts accompanying the native ones. That is to say, while teaching a culture specific topic first language equivalent can also be given in order to enhance learning” (p5-6).

Teachers may have to use language coursebooks for a variety of reasons: for example, the coursebook may be on the curriculum, they may believe that it can help them to make the lesson easier and help them manage a large class size without difficulty, or there may be a lack of supported classroom teaching aid materials. Thompson (2005, p.7) expressed the reason why textbooks are used: “Since the students buy their own textbooks, I feel objection to use them for part of the class time.” However, it is not only the target language culture (for instance, English (British/American) culture) that is presented, but cultural elements belonging to other peoples’ cultures such as Thai cultures are also included (see New Cutting Edge (2005, page 74-76, Intermediate level); New Headway (1996, page 40, Intermediate level), New Total English (2011, page. 10, Intermediate level, etc.). It is therefore necessary to find out how teachers handle teaching cultural elements through coursebooks, what other materials teachers use for their lessons and what common problems are experienced by teachers.

2.3.1 Culture or Cultures to study

As presented above, English has become an international language and is widely studied. Learners should therefore know not only about English culture, but also multiple cultures if they deal with expatriates or English-speaking

people as a first or second language (also because England itself is multicultural). Moreover, Bowers (1992, p.30) states that at the international level, English is essentially a cultural constituent which is seen as a medium for subcultures across national and political boundaries. Therefore, learners have to learn at least the target English cultures; and, for that reason, Peterson and Coltrane (2003, p.2) state:

“Language learners need to be aware, for example, of the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone. They should know that behaviors and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target language speech community. They have to understand that, in order for communication to be successful, language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behaviour.”

This indicates that when someone learns a language, he/she has to learn the target culture which is the contemporary culture of that country and should have cultural awareness to communicate well with the minimum of misunderstanding. For example, talking loudly with each other is mundane in some cultures, but it is counted as “bad mannered” in others (except for unexpected quarrels), particularly in the Burmese (Myanmar) culture.

One thing to consider is that learners can get their information from coursebooks, but who teaches those kinds of cultures in the classrooms? The answer is their teachers (who mostly rely on coursebooks); and Nemati (2009, p.91) says “mostly teachers prefer to use a course book, because by using a text teachers can regulate and program the time.” However, it is not always a good idea to rely too much on coursebooks and teachers should have their own materials or other teaching aids to keep the learners’ attention and interest in the lesson and class.

2.3.2 Cultures from the coursebooks

Yet again, if coursebooks only refer to English culture (i.e. the target culture could also include Scottish, Welsh and Irish cultures), teachers would simply have to explain particular cultural elements of it if possible. Ahn (2013) mentioned that she and her friend always felt that English coursebooks were so foreign to them while they were learning English in Korea because most contexts are based on western cultures. Also, Ahn (ibid) said “it has made us feel that it would have been better for us to understand if books have contents that we can relate to.” She continued by stating that “the more students know about the subject, the more they will participate in a classroom.” The researcher agrees with this, for coursebooks are sometimes westernized (for example: “Why is walking under ladders believed to be unlucky?” (page 112-113) is presented in New Headway coursebook, printed in 1996). It seems coursebook writers/publishers are only familiar with western culture since they are all published in the Western part of the world. Furthermore, Asian learners are not very used to such material due to the geographical distance and cultural differences between them (i.e. Western beliefs and theirs).

Nevertheless, EFL classrooms in Britain receive many Asian EFL learners every year and these students are mixed with western students (i.e. students from Italy, Spain, Norway, etc.) and most of their teachers are native speakers of English, for many schools choose to employ such people. The researcher has experienced that learners become active and get involved in all teachers’ activities when they see materials which are related to their cultures or things to which they are accustomed. They become automatically motivated and

enthusiastic to learn more in the classroom. In this case, teachers need to think how they will plan to teach the lesson (i.e. whether they need to personalize, customize or localize materials for students to suit their or the target culture) so that such classes are successful.

However, in the ELT textbooks printed after 2000 (e.g. *Clockwise* (2000), *New Cutting Edge* (2005), *New Total English* (2011)), the publishers add not only the target English culture but also cultures from other ethnic areas and countries to demonstrate the variety of cultures in which English is used (including the target British culture) and to give a wider appeal to learners of different cultural backgrounds. At the same time, learners of English need to be helped to develop “intercultural competence”, which is defined as the ability to manage “a set of cognitive, affective and behavioural skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, 2011: 4), and the competence to manage “the sensitivity to other cultural norms, and the ability to adapt and function appropriately when interacting with people from other cultures” (Alptekin, 2002, cited in Ur, 2009, p.6).

There is a need to learn how teachers prepare their lessons which have cultural elements, what materials (i.e. newspapers, magazines, etc.) they refer to, what teaching aids are useful and what common difficulties they encounter and how they overcome them. On the other hand, teachers might omit cultural element parts as they feel uncomfortable teaching them or consider that they are unsuitable for learners (e.g. discussing politics or alcohol in some countries

such as in Myanmar in the past as the researcher experienced, or the Pacific Islanders' way of not publicly discussing sexual relationships or sex education (Jansen, 1992, cited in Griffiths, 1995)).

Chiarantano (2005, cited in Swe, 2009) expresses that facilitating an understanding of the cultural context of English would help language students communicate more clearly and effectively and give them a better insight and understanding into its usage. If language teaching and learning is also cultural teaching and learning, learners and teachers should be typically aware of cultural values and beliefs. For instance, Gebhard (1996) has described the different American and Saudi Arabian cultural values of time management and punctuality. He says that time is very important for the average American and they might leave even if they have not finished a conversation. An Arab, however, would consider that "it would be rude to leave in the middle of it, as maintaining friendships and engaging in human interaction is more highly valued than being on time."

Thus, if teachers have to teach about cultural values and beliefs in class, they should share the knowledge and experiences that they have acquired and then invite learners to share their knowledge: in doing so, contributing cultural experiences or values to learners will help them to avoid culture shocks and to understand the "signs and symbols of social intercourse" (Adler, 1972, p.8, cited in Brown, 1986, p.36). It should also help to avoid "mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis", where a person gets angry at others for not understanding him/her and becomes filled with self-pity (Brown, 1986,

p.35), and it will help to produce meaningful relationships with people. Moreover, Wang (2008, noted in Choudhury, 2014, p.3) stated that “foreign language teaching is foreign culture teaching, and foreign language teachers are foreign culture teachers”. Therefore, the researcher will study how these teachers deliver their cultural elements lessons through coursebooks in the EFL classrooms.

2.3.3 Three terms: Cultural Knowledge, Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Competence

In language and teaching settings, and in particular in the ELT world, the word ‘culture’ has been utilised when learning and teaching English. It has been discussed by many researchers and theorists about learning and teaching cultures in EFL/ESL classrooms, and Stern (1992, p.216, cited in Shemshadsara (2012, p.95)) explained the reason why it should be taught: “One of the most important aims of culture teaching is to help the learner gain an understanding of the native speakers’ perspective.”

2.3.3.1 What is Cultural Knowledge?

Pilhofer (2010, p.48) mentioned that cultural knowledge “... is considered as the prerequisite in order to understand what one is supposed to manage. Without this knowledge mistakes or miscommunication can lead to failed conversations ...” In the view of Pozas (2013, web accessed 10/3/2016), the term cultural knowledge can underline -

‘... information that can serve to explain why people are and behave in certain ways. Getting familiar with economical, political, societal and historical information of a particular culture will help us understand the reasons behind people’s behavior.’

Any knowledge about other people's culture(s) (i.e. either similarities or differences) is beneficial, in particular not to cause offence and to have a more international outlook. The definition of culture for this study is mentioned on page 57.

2.3.3.2 What is Cultural Awareness?

Cultural awareness is termed as "...the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of cultural values, beliefs and perceptions" (Quappe and Cantatore, 2005). Having a slightly different view, the Health, Education & Training Institute defines it thus: "Cultural awareness is sensitivity to the similarities and differences that exist between two different cultures and the use of this sensitivity in effective communication with members of another cultural group" (web accessed 12/03/2016). The researcher would here like to define the term of cultural awareness thus: someone is aware of things that need to be learnt from a cultural group which seems different from one's own in order not to cause any offence and establish a better relationship between two different cultures.

2.3.3.3 What is 'Intercultural Competence'?

The researcher would argue that 'intercultural competence' is a result of the comprehensive study of intercultural learning, and Jin and Cortazzi (2013, p.1) explained that it was "about how we come to understand other cultures and our own through interaction, how we learn and communicate in cultural contexts, and how we learn culturally."

The Higher Education Academy states that “Intercultural competencies are those knowledge, skills and attitudes that comprise a person's ability to get along with, work and learn with people from diverse cultures” (web accessed, 18/03/2016). In a similar vein, intercultural competence is explained as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2004, p.194, cited in Deardorff, 2006, p.248). However, Jokikokko (2005, p. 79, cited in Atay et al., 2009, p.124) argues that intercultural competence is “an ethical orientation in which certain morally right ways of being, thinking and acting are emphasised.” As this research learns about how cultural elements are taught in EFL classrooms, it is interesting to study how teachers input this competence into students; and intercultural competence should be called someone’s ability to adapt and bear with new cultural behaviours when communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds.

2.3.3.4 Are these above terms linked to language learning and teaching?

Choudhury (2013, p.21) explained that “Language and culture have an inextricable and interdependent relationship”, and therefore, it becomes unavoidable that students will learn some cultural elements once they have started learning a language. Having such cultural awareness would help learners to understand the language better, and Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) stated that it helps them broaden their minds, increases tolerance and achieves cultural empathy and sensitivity. In summary, Kitao recommended that “studying culture is a useful part of foreign language instruction because

of its influence on language and communication” (Kitao, 2000, cited in Vrbová, 2006, p.17).

Teachers and coursebooks’ writers may still question whether these cultures should be taught necessarily through coursebooks or without them and whether cultural awareness brings some values and impacts on learners’ perspectives and strategies of learning a language. On the other hand, it can sometimes depend upon learners’ choice and their requirements for such a specific learning aim. For example, they may think it is essential for daily communication in a lingua franca setting or for business purposes when conversing or exchanging emails/texts with speakers of other languages, etc.

Vrbová (2006, p.9) states that “cultural awareness must be supplemented by cultural knowledge” and he goes on to say that “Cultural knowledge is a part of intercultural competence and can be understood as familiarization with the characteristics of society and culture of the community in which the language is spoken.” Quappe and Cantatore (2005) also gave an example of the different values of social relationships between Italians and Americans, saying:

“In Italy, where relationships are highly valued, lunch, dinner or the simple pauses for coffee have a social connotation: people get together to talk and relax, and to get to know each other better. In the USA, where time is money, lunches can be part of closing a deal where people discuss the outcomes and sign a contract over coffee.”

If any of these people understand the different values and follow other’s cultures as above, people can establish better communication. In consequence, Quappe and Cantatore (2005) suggested that “Cultural awareness becomes

central when we have to interact with people from other cultures”; and it certainly seems true that cultural awareness can erase cultural conflicts (e.g. one might question why are they doing such and such? Are they over-reacting? Why is it that serious?). Such conflicts can happen between two people from totally different cultural backgrounds, but still one needs to have a passion to learn and understand the cultural differences. For this reason, Quappe and Cantatore (2005) gave the following example:

“Misinterpretations occur primarily when we lack awareness of our own behavioral rules and project them on others. In absence of better knowledge we tend to assume, instead of finding out what a behavior means to the person involved, e.g. a straight look into your face is regarded as disrespectful in Japan.”

“Studying culture is also useful for teaching students to understand their own Culture” said Vrbová (2006, p.17), and Crozet (2007, p.3) explained that most teachers teach two kinds of cultural elements in their classes:

1. Culture as background, i.e. the “Fs”, which stands for “foods, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts” (Kramersch, 1991, cited in Tanriverdi and Apak, 2008: 5).
2. Culture as cultural codes embedded in language (such as ways of greeting and the nature and behaviour of either bowing or shaking hands, etc.).

2.3.3.5 The Definition of Culture for this study

The researcher follows Peterson’s (2004, cited in Choudhury, 2013, p.21) definition of little “c” culture as the culture which focuses on common things that are permissible such as customs, traditions, gestures, body posture, clothing styles, food, hobbies, etc., and which are not avoidable when meeting people or being outside of one’s home country. This is, therefore, why she has decided to research how EFL teachers teach those elements through

coursebooks. There can be found “Big C” culture in the coursebooks such as literature, but it is less essential to use in everyday life, and therefore, will not be included in this study.

2.3.4 Language learning and cultural awareness

Onalan (2005, p.216) expresses that it is likely “learners need cultural information for better communication” while learning a foreign language. Following language learning and cultural awareness, Klippel (1994) emphasises that learning a foreign language implies and embraces cultural learning. He continues to explain that cultural learning in the foreign language classroom touches three spheres: empathy, understanding, and knowledge and communicative skills; that is, it trains learners for intercultural competence and is likely to be an enriching experience (ibid). However, what sort of understanding and knowledge should be given if teachers are the leaders of the classroom, and what type of cultural practices should be learnt primarily (e.g. traditions, festivals or beliefs, etc.)? In addition, whether or not teachers are teaching specific cultural lessons or language lessons through cultural elements are to be explored in this study.

Perner (2010) gives a useful example of American society, where one cannot show up to class naked, but “wearing anything from a suit and tie to shorts and a T-shirt would usually be acceptable”. He goes on to say that “failure to behave within the prescribed specific norms may lead to sanctions, ranging from being arrested by the police for indecent exposure to being laughed at by others for wearing a suit at the beach”. In a similar vein, Payne (2004, web

accessed 10/10/2015) explained about culture as semantic in cross-cultural communication by using British and American assumptions as an example:

“U.S. and British negotiators found themselves at a standstill when the American company proposed that they "table" particular key points. In the U.S. "Tabling a motion" means to not discuss it, while the same phrase in Great Britain means to "bring it to the table for discussion."

This is why all learners should not only learn the language, but also some important cultural behaviours, beliefs and customs. Similarly, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.144) and Ryen (2002) highlight that gestures/manners are a form of cultural behaviour and can have different meanings in different settings. For example, nodding “which in most parts of Europe signifies agreement, in several areas of Greece means ‘no’”; and Sarigul and Ashton-Hay (2005, p.2) also explain about the manner of raising eyebrows which has a totally different meaning between American and Turkish cultures: “In Turkey, for instance, raised eyebrows with an upward tilt of the head signify “no,” while in American culture it usually indicates surprise or pleasure.”

Furthermore, Gebhard (1996, p.119) observes that a part of learning to communicate with people from other cultures is knowing how to adapt one’s behaviours, including one’s nonverbal and discourse behaviours. Therefore, learners should know some typical cultural behaviours and customs such as how to greet someone with appropriate courtesy (i.e. shaking hands or bowing to each other), important language usage and also other gestures and social behaviours.

Sumner (2005) argues that “when we teach a foreign language in the classroom, we are also teaching the culture embedded in that language.”

However, as Cortazzi and Jin (1999) address, many textbooks show cultural topics in the outlines of their content (e.g. New Cutting Edge coursebook, published in 2005), and it is a purpose of this study to discover what and how learners are taught this through coursebooks in class. Second, Archer (1986) points out that if there are no representatives of the target culture in the class, the teacher would explain what the behaviours of someone from that culture would probably be, given the same situation. This could be done with less effort and it is more comfortable for the teacher if he/she is a native speaker of that target language.

Conversely, there are a few other cultural elements of countries' cultures that are also presented in coursebooks such as Asian cultures (some Thai cultures and customs are presented in New Cutting Edge Coursebook, 2005), and thus it would be interesting to examine how teachers learn prior knowledge themselves and how they deliver and teach those cultural elements through coursebooks. For example, do they have discussions with learners to let them share their experiences as well as background knowledge, or do they give them some further reading and then ask for a short presentation to be able to improve their reading and speaking skills as the activities of language through culture?

Makrus (2010, p.7) has suggested six activities for teaching culture, one of which is using conversations about teachers' own cultural backgrounds and experiences to prompt students to share their own backgrounds and heritage. Tomalin (2008) also mentions that one of his activities of teaching culture in the classroom is "debrief", which involves eliciting what learners know and

correcting misconceptions to the best of his own knowledge. Sweeney et al. (2002) similarly clarify that background cultural knowledge can help learners to comprehend what they are taught and to discern new words. Therefore, teachers need to expose them to new information through reading, discussions or hands-on learning activities.

In addition, learners should be given a chance to share their own knowledge (e.g. experience of travelling abroad, people's habits and beliefs from their own and other cultures that they have met) in the classroom as they are all from different cultural backgrounds, and this will enable them to learn each other's cultures so that they can compare and contrast foreign customs, beliefs and traditions with their own. As a result, learners gain more confidence in dealing with people and they become competent "intercultural speakers" (Kramsch, 1998, p.27) and international (multicultural) citizens of the world. This is the reason why this current study will explore if teachers engage in discussions (i.e. sharing their own experiences / exchanging information, etc.) in the classroom as classroom activities.

2.3.5 Language learners' difficulties in learning culture

Mishan (2005, p.53) explains that learners from specific cultures such as Japan, Korea and China find it hard to adapt to the Western concept of group work. This represents the experience of the current researcher because she is weak in group/team work and most of the time she used to study and work in pairs/independently. She never used to raise questions or share personal opinions in class. In consequence, the author continued "Their small-group dynamic, coming out of this collectivist orientation (rather than the Western,

individualistic one) operates via different processes and protocols and has different priorities, such as the imperative of group consensus.” Thus, all teachers should be aware of their students’ difficulties and their cultural background to be able to facilitate and avoid these barriers; and also, teachers should be able to create the most effective lesson and fulfil their learners’ needs although this may be difficult in a multilingual class (e.g. students who come from Asian and East European or Western cultures). On the other hand, students should be given a chance to be cultural representatives of their own culture, and it will be examined therefore whether or not “teachers design questions for students to answer that provide them with chances to explain their own cultures to the teachers and classmates”, as Gebhard suggested (1996, p.127).

2.4 What culture is

In the foregoing, the researcher has discussed teaching and learning culture through coursebooks in the language classroom. At this point, it is necessary to provide a definition of culture and the elements of culture that are considered one of the key research areas of this study.

Williams (1983, cited in Pulverness, 2003, p.428) argues that culture is “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language”; and in terms of the relationship to a language, Mishan (2005, p.45) says that “the relationship between language and culture has been endlessly reconfigured over the centuries.” According to Clandfield (2008), the terms of culture can be divided into three: the cultural artefacts that people make and use, the

cultural knowledge of what people know, and the cultural behaviour of what people do. There are, in fact, many more definitions of culture among educators and researchers. Peck (1984) states that “culture is a network of verbal and non-verbal communication”, and Bowers (1992, p.31) says that:

“culture is an inherited wealth in which all can share, but it is passed on to us from different sources, and we share it in different parts with different groups to which we belong.”

As many scholars define the meaning of culture in different ways, Lado (1957, p.52) said the term of culture is a synonym of “the ways of a people.” Kramersch (2003) claims that it is simply a social symbolic contract, the product of self and other perceptions. Linsay et al.(1999, cited in Levy, 2007) say that “Culture is about groupness. A culture is a group of people identified by the shared history, values, and patterns of behaviour.” Similarly, Brown (2007, p.188) defines it as “... ideas, customs, skills, arts, tools which characterize a given group of people in a given period of time ...” Gebhard (1996) and Palfreyman (2005) describe culture as referring to the beliefs of people, their common values and also the customary ways of behaving (behaviours) that are reflected in different communities; and “culture is the expression of the values and beliefs of a community” (Corbett, 2010, p.4).

Moreover, Sadker et al. (2008) say that culture is a set of learned beliefs, values and behaviours, and a way of life shared by members of a society; and Choudhury (2014, p.3) defines it thus: “Culture is the characteristic of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social, habits, music and arts.” Similarly, the Cambridge online dictionary defines culture as “the way of life, especially the general customs

and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time” (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, web accessed 20/06/2015).

However, Longhurst et al. (2008, p.4) state that “culture is not something that we simply absorb – it is learned.” This definition sounds relevant to the researcher because she learnt some English cultures such as shaking hands (which does not commonly occur in her Burmese culture) when the researcher was learning a foreign language (i.e. English) to continue her further study in England, to be able to understand the greeting customs (such as shaking hands or kissing on a cheek, etc.) or how to introduce herself to someone else. Hence, in this case, English culture was learnt by her rather than being absorbed.

As explained earlier, many scholars have their own definitions about culture, and Kidd (2002) and Inglis (2005) suggest that culture means the way of life of a group of people, including their values, norms, beliefs, behavioural patterns, customs and rituals and even material objects. Mahadi and Jafari (2012, p.232) contend that “culture is not natural, inborn and will-less; it is a social product”; and Byram et al. (1994) have a similar definition for culture, arguing that it is the shared knowledge of a given social group, realised in part through behavioural norms and conventions. Moreover, Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) note in Dweik (2008) that culture can be divided into three categories:

- firstly, culture as products, such as literature, folklore, art, and music, which are categorised as Big C culture, and these elements represent the group of peoples’ norms as well as their identity;
- secondly, culture as ideas, such as beliefs, values, institutions and behaviours; and

- thirdly, culture as behaviours, such as customs, habits, dress, food and leisure.

In addition, Murphy (1986, cited in Mishan, 2005, p.45) says that culture with a small “c” is defined by more recent writers in terms such as the following:

“Culture means the total body of tradition borne by a society and transmitted from generation to generation, thus refers to the norms, values and standards by which people act, and it includes the ways distinctive in each society of ordering the world and rendering it intelligible.”

Brown and Eisterhold (2004) suggest that a small “c” culture is often what students of foreign languages are told they are studying when teachers bring in pictures of people in folk costumes. Moreover, they quote Geertz (1973) to express what is meant by culture:

“Culture is best seen not as complexes of concrete behaviour patterns – customs, usages, traditions, habit clusters, as has been the case up to now, but as a set of control mechanisms – plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call ‘program’) for governing behaviour.”

To sum up these definitions, we can argue that a group of people’s thoughts and beliefs, behavioural patterns, customs, traditions with festivals/occasions, and rituals (being punctual as an example) are catalogued and mainly termed as culture. Moreover, Adaskou et al. (1990, p.3-4) suggest that there are four senses of culture:

1. The aesthetic: “Culture with a capital C: the media, the cinema, music (whether serious or popular) and literature.”
2. The sociological: “Culture with a small c: the organisation and nature of family, of home life, of interpersonal relations, material conditions, work and leisure, customs and institutions.”

3. The semantic: “Many semantic areas (e.g. food, clothes, institutions) are culturally distinctive because they relate to a particular way of life.”
4. The pragmatic (or sociolinguistic): “The background knowledge, social skills, and paralinguistic skills that, in addition to mastery of the language code, make possible successful communication as below:
 - The ability to use appropriate exponents of the various communicative functions;
 - The ability to use appropriate intonation patterns;
 - The ability to conform to norms of politeness, where different from the learners’ culture, including taboo avoidance;
 - Familiarity with the main rhetorical conventions in different written genres, e.g. different types of letters and messages, form-filling, advertisements.”

According to Yajuan (2009, p.76), culture can be divided into two main categories such as advanced or formal culture (alternatively it can be called ‘civilization’) and popular or deep culture.

The advanced/formal culture includes geography, history, literature, art, music, politics, economy, education, philosophy, law, religion, moral concepts, inventions, and accomplishments in science and technology.

The other term --- popular/deep culture --- includes those things that are more related to everyday life and living styles, patterns of behaving, both verbal and non-verbal, thoughts, values, beliefs, social customs and habits, social norms and conventions.

Brooks (1975, cited in Teaching Culture, 2009) has similar views to Adaskou et al. (1990), arguing that there are two elements of major importance in culture:

- Hearthstone, or “little – c”, culture: Culture as everything in human life (also called culture BBV: Beliefs, Behaviour, and Values).

- Olympian, or “big – C”, culture: the best in human life restricted to the elitists (also called culture MLA: great Music, Literature and Art of the country).

In addition, Riley (2007) draws attention to the fact that culture is the sum total of the information, beliefs, values and skills one needs to share and apply in society and situations. The National Center for Cultural Competence’s definition (Goode et al., 2000, extracted from Peterson and Coltrane, 2003) defines culture as an:

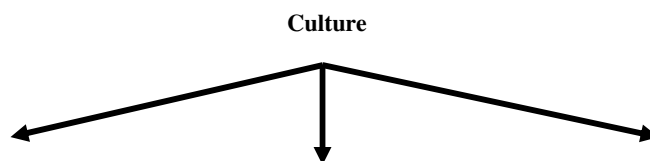
“integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations.”

Moreover, Lessard- Cluston (1996) and Hedge (2000, cited in Gray, 2010) state that teaching and learning materials production have divided culture into four senses, such as the aesthetic (information about the arts), the sociological (information about the everyday life of a ‘native speaker’), the semantic (how words and concepts relate to a particular way of life), and the pragmatic (norms of politeness, rhetorical conventions in writing). In this study, cultural elements such as behaviours, beliefs/superstitions, traditions, customs, habits, festivals and food will be considered as teaching cultural elements as these elements are commonly prescribed by coursebooks’ writers. It is also best to avoid having/doing culturally unacceptable behaviours to a particular group of people.

2.4.1 The elements of culture

Dorottya (2008) cited in Swe (2009) defines cultural elements as shown in

Table 1:



Civilization	Behaviour and Speech	Text/Discourse Structure and Skills
History	Patterns	Discourse features
Geography	Greeting, leave taking	Developing arguments
Tradition	Starting a conversation	Supporting arguments
Customs	Inviting opinions	Linking and connecting ideas
Institutions	Expressing opinions	Cohesion & Coherence
Economy	Agreeing, Disagreeing	Logic, relevance
Arts	Interrupting	Figures of speech
Science	Requesting, refusing	Mediation: translation
Literature	Socializing	Interpretation, summarizing
Popular Culture	Advice, suggestions	Discourse process and skills
Values	Visiting, telephoning	Focusing on issues
Administrative and other practicalities	Complaining, criticizing	Researching a topic
	Complimenting	Relating to audiences
Cultural connotations of vocabulary	Pragmatic features	Developing and structuring ideas
	Body language	Drafting, re-writing, etc.
Socio-linguistic features, etc.	Cultural dimensions, etc.	

Table 1. The elements of culture (Dorottya, 2008)

2.4.2 Cultural elements in Coursebooks (textbook)

More and more cultural elements (such as cultures as custom on pages 74-75 in New Cutting English, Intermediate Level, printed in 2005) are presented in ELT coursebooks these days, yet teachers still need to adapt some other relatively authentic “real-life material” (Riddell, 2003, p.209) or non-authentic “artificial” (Peacock, 1996) materials to deliver lessons smoothly and to attract learners’ attention in lessons. Valdes (1990) acknowledges that cultural materials selected for a language course will vary: thus, a course for foreign students who are learning English as EFL/ESL in the United States is different from a course in France (EFL in France) and this is true of many EFL countries such as Myanmar and Thailand. For example, the researcher had chosen some Thai/Burmese cultural topics to encourage students’ attention towards the lesson and this technique proved very successful (i.e. students were more involved in every stage of the activities, and spoke and shared their experiences and thoughts). In addition, Rubdy (2003, p.52) identifies the potential of some cultural sensitivities to consider, and the teacher should therefore check the following before he/she uses it in the classrooms:

1. What aspects of culture are in focus?
2. Are they relevant / suitable / appropriate to the learners’ cultural context and sensitive to their values and beliefs?
3. Do the materials reflect awareness of sociocultural variations?
4. Does the book show parallels and contrasts between the learners’ culture and others?
5. Is this done in a non-patronizing way?
6. Does the coursebook enshrine stereotyped, accurate, condescending or offensive images of gender, race, social class or nationality?
7. Are accurate or “sanitized” views of the USA or Britain presented; e.g. are uncomfortable social realities (for instance, unemployment, poverty, family breakdown, racism) left out?

Of these seven examples, the researcher believes that the appropriateness of learners' cultural context and the sensitivity to their values and beliefs are the most important things that teachers need to think about, choosing other additional materials before they bring the lesson into the classroom. For example, some cultural topics such as taking one's shoes off when visiting pagodas and temples is mundane for Myanmar Buddhist people and it would be a sin if they did not do so. This sort of custom has to be a lesson for other students who are from different cultural backgrounds, so that they can follow the social etiquette and can then compare them with their own customs. If a teacher is new to his/her learners' culture, he/she should endeavour to learn this beforehand. For example, one might argue that drinking alcohol, politics (this was banned from open discussion in Myanmar in the old days) and sexism should not be topics for discussion in some language classrooms for the reason that it is against the countries' culture.

On the other hand, it could equally be argued that learners ought to learn these things and should have the ability to cope with them to prepare themselves to be ready to deal with people from different cultural backgrounds if the target culture (such as British culture) is open to discuss any topics even though these topics would not be allowed for discussion in their countries. Therefore, Altan (1995, p.59) says that:

“ELT coursebooks convey cultural biases and implicitly communicate attitudes concerning the culture of the target language and indirectly the learners' native culture. Passages and units with foreign cultural themes and topics not only cause difficulties in comprehension, but actually seem to increase misunderstanding and confusion about the non-native culture, leading to a lack of production and of success. When both the materials we use and the way we use them are culturally adverse, then inevitably learners

switch off and retreat into their inner world to defend their own integrity.”

2.4.3 The definition of cultural elements for this study

According to Gray (2000, p.274), ELT materials that were produced in Britain and the United States include grammar, lexis, and activities for language practice, and also some cultural commodities (like Levi’s jeans and Coca Cola) which are presented with cultural promise. Although the word culture can be seen as “a synthetic organisation as well as structured systems of pattern behaviours” (Ho, 1997, p.5), there are many other elements (e.g. traditions, religious festivals and others) which learners should know about to avoid cultural misunderstanding. Kitao (2000, cited in Dweik, 2008) argues that studying culture means learning about the geography, history, beliefs, values, and society of the target culture. Thus, the more learners know about other people’s culture, the more they will be able to avoid the barriers which they may come across as cultural misunderstanding/misinterpretation or culture bump, which “occurs when an individual has expectations of one type of behaviour, and gets something completely different” (Archer, 1986, cited in Jiang, 2001, p.382).

However, this research will only focus on those cultural elements which are the most common and the most important for people. Therefore, this research focuses on cultural elements such as festivals, customs, traditions, beliefs, behaviours, habits, and the food of countries: i.e. “culture is taught as factual knowledge through coursebook” (Hui, 2010, p.96), which learners might need to know and which can be seen as products (the National Standards in Foreign

Language Education, cited in Ho, 1997, p.4); culture as perspective: beliefs (ibid); and culture as practices: behaviours (i.e. patterns of social interaction, ibid).

2.5 Learning culture through language coursebook

Whether learners are studying in English speaking countries or non-English speaking countries, the most common way for them to acquire new language patterns and other people's culture is learning through their coursebook. Hui (2010, p.246) explained that "the textbook is the main channel to learn language and culture", particularly in the EFL context of learners who are learning language in undeveloped/developing countries. Kramsch (1991, p.218) states that American foreign language textbooks distinguish between 'big C' (the culture of literary classics and works of art) and 'small c' (the culture of the four Fs: food, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts).

In view of the fact that the textbook plays a major role in ELT, Garinger (2002) states that it "should meet the need of the learners in several ways, not only in terms of language objectives." Moreover, he explains "the content of the textbook should also be sensitive to a range of cultural backgrounds and also allow for comfortable and safe discussion of cross-cultural experiences and concerns." Certainly, learners should learn some cultural elements (for instance, greeting informally "Hello! How are you?" with/without shaking hands to anyone you know or when you meet on the street or when you enter an office) when they start learning another foreign language, and the

coursebook should provide information about other peoples' culture so that learners can discover the world and gain a more international outlook.

Therefore, McKay (2002) believes that culture learning is a social process, as understanding one's own culture in relation to that of others is paramount, which is true if it is compared to the researcher's personal experience of communicating with native and non-native speakers of English who have different cultural backgrounds. For example, she had to learn saying 'Thank you' to a bus driver before she got off to appreciate his service when she was in her first year in the UK because it was not necessary to say it in her own culture, nor does it matter whether she is rude or polite to bus drivers. She gradually developed and got into English culture through social interaction and started saying 'Thank you' to everyone who has served her in any situation and she could see that she can build a warmer social relationship.

After discussing teaching and learning culture, the researcher will now consider the relationship between coursebooks and cultures. Jiangqiong and Tin (2010, p.273) say "almost everything in a coursebook is capable of cultural information." Because "culture is placed at the heart of course books" (Gray, 2010, p.21), Pulverness (2003, p.427) notes that the most recently published coursebooks have "more pluralistic representations of English-speaking cultures", such as walking under a propped up ladder against a wall is believed to be unlucky (see New Headway coursebook, 1996). Similarly, Giaschi (2000, cited in Taylor-Mendes, 2009, p.67) notes that images in EFL texts are "produced in or by one culture and in context-specific conditions."

Furthermore, Mishan (2005) states that if the texts used for learning the language are to truthfully represent the culture of the target language, they must be ones that are products both of and for that culture: i.e. authentic texts, such as newspapers, journals and other publications.

As cultures can be embedded in all sorts of things, they can be found not only in texts but also in historical architectural buildings or in people, such as the habit of sending cards (e.g. Christmas cards, Thank you cards) which is typically done by many English people, the punctuality of the British and the British-ness of wearing suits and ties as formal attire for business meetings, plus having Sunday roast or having Christmas Turkey at many family houses in England. These typical traditions of English can convey the message through teachers' knowledge of English culture or other mass media materials such as a video or documentary clips about people from different corners of the world.

Therefore, Mishan (2005, p.51) explains that ELT coursebooks have to deal with two culture-related problems: the English culture as it exists and the culture/s of the learners who use it. Textbooks have a variety of cultures from the majority of races (for example, Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Zulu and others) and convey this cultural information in images, reading texts or listening parts; and therefore, learners have to learn not only about the target culture but also the varieties of cultural differences from different ethnic groups. In doing so, they gain a wider understanding of different cultures and of different meanings, and the best part is that they learn two at a time (i.e. the target language and

cultural knowledge) because they are doing language lessons points (such as grammar, punctuation, vocabulary) through those cultural facts. Therefore, Tomalin (2008) asks, as a teacher, why should we only be teaching a specific culture (i.e. British or US) and why exclude Australian, Singapore, Indian and other countries' cultures? The researcher supports Tomalin's (2008) point of view, considering the presentation of the variety of as many cultural elements as they can acquire from different cultural groups, because the more students can see the differences between their own cultures and other people's cultures, the more they will learn about language and people from different parts of the world and this can inspire them to be eager for language learning.

At any rate, the researcher believes that, if there were more multicultural elements in textbooks, the lessons would be more interesting for both learners and teachers; and secondly, learners might acquire the language gradually through culture if they like learning new things. By learning some cultures, they would be able to gain more knowledge about other people's ethnicity, customs (the ways other people are) and traditions, which could help them to avoid culture shock which usually happens when one's familiar culture is different from the foreign cultures that they have never learnt or experienced. Thus, if they have learnt these things while learning language, it would be helpful when they visit English speaking countries or with native speakers and enable them to communicate better with lingua-franca users.

Wandel (2003) suggests that textbooks should be flexible in a way that would contain materials which allow and provoke diverging opinions and discussion

on cultural stereotyping; and Adaskou et al. (1990, cited in Jiangqiong and Tin, 2010) argue that everything in a coursebook is capable of carrying cultural information such as informative or descriptive text materials, texts presenting the attitudes and values of a cultural group, dialogues, vocabulary, communicative functions, illustrations, activities and instructions for teachers and learners. For example, there should be a medium-length dialogue about experiencing the cultural differences which are inappropriate in some Asian cultures: e.g. taking shoes off when entering into an Asian house is considered as suitable manners; or waiting to be allowed to have food by the host when someone is invited as a guest for dinner. By learning this, students from different cultures can update their knowledge, balance it with their own culture if it is different and avoid being offended when they have to visit Asian families.

Nevertheless, the researcher will explore what kinds of culture (e.g. culture as tradition, customs or behaviours) are primarily being taught in classrooms and what materials are used by teachers, as “some books include, appropriately, a range of English-speaking cultures; others include non-English-speaking cultures” (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999, p.196). Consequently, the study will look at how language teachers adapt the local culture and a target culture, and how they adjust or operate activities in their classrooms to keep the balance of different cultures (local culture, target English culture and other cultural elements) in classrooms.

In EFL settings, teachers should consider both students' local cultures and coursebooks' presented culture to liaise between two different cultures. Therefore, Çakir (online accessed, 09/04/2015) suggested that the easiest way is to show the similarities between people and also promoted that:

“the topics to be used to teach the target language should be presented in the contexts accompanying the native ones. That is to say, while teaching a culture specific topic first language equivalent can also be given in order to enhance learning” (p.6).

This could be done in monolingual classrooms, but it might be difficult to provide this facility if the teacher is taking a multicultural class. On the other hand, there is a chance that they can call for students to share and represent their own cultures and allow them to find the most similarities and differences. Since teachers are bound to follow the textbook as mentioned depending on the schools, it is interesting to study how and what culture they focus on as well as how they adapt additional materials such as newspapers, postcards or other media (i.e. live TV channel recordings or advertisements, etc.).

2.5.1 Teaching and Learning culture in ESL/EFL classroom

Ahn (2013) says studying English as a foreign language is part of studying an English culture. Bryam (1988, cited in Gray, 2010) also argues that learning a foreign language signifies learning the habits and culture of the native language speakers. Furthermore, Hui (2010, p.290) says “without the inclusion of a cultural dimension in language learning, effective communication cannot take place.” Thus, learning about culture supports the students' power of learning and ability to extend knowledge, which could help them to get more depth into learning a language. In particular, they can gain

confidence (i.e. they will be able to use the target language, English, to communicate with anyone as they have already had a sufficient grounding in understanding cultural differences) and proficiency if they are allowed to study new cultural elements from other parts of the world with authentic learning materials which are visualised for language learners.

As Byram et al. (1994, p.5) have said, “if cultural learning is counted in secondary texts” and learning a language is considered as primary, learning culture could help learners to understand more about language usage; it is more practical than merely learning the language and can therefore be called ‘successful’ language learning. In consequence, Valdes (1990) claims that culture is at the forefront from the first day of the class, for the teacher and learners have to greet and introduce themselves, and this is culturally determined. Hui (2010) also found that the aim of many teachers (given by some participants in his study) when teaching culture is to enhance students’ interest and help them to learn and remember more easily. Moreover, a culture class can “help learners observe similarities and differences among various cultural groups” (Izadpanah, 2011, p.113). However, teaching cultural elements through coursebooks does not seem an easy task for teachers, especially when the teacher is not familiar with the culture that is presented in coursebooks, and it will be interesting to see how teachers cope with students’ cultural restrictions, how they reduce the rate of cultural conflicts and how they try to overcome them. Ali and Walker (2014, p.33) have suggestions for teachers on what and when to teach cultures and they have come up with the following diagram:

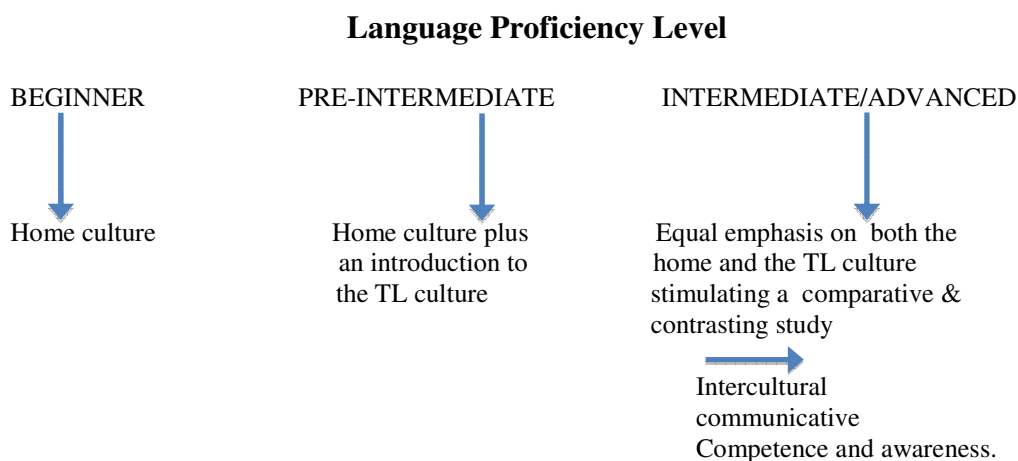


Figure 1: Ali & Walker (2014) model for cultural adjustment in TESOL material

In this current researcher's eyes, this model might be suitable to use with a group of TESOL students who belong to one own culture, and this can still be good to apply to a group of monocultural EFL students. However, the suitability might decrease when a teacher receives many EFL students in one class who are from a variety of different cultural backgrounds, such as EFL classrooms from Britain, which receive many students from all over the world. In such a case, this may be the time that teachers should start thinking about what to add, how to teach, how to adapt and balance between students' cultures and target English cultures or any of the coursebooks' presented cultures.

2.6 The role of coursebooks in ELT

In accordance with the researcher's experience, she recognises that the role of coursebooks, especially in Asian classrooms, is immense. Many students are asked to buy them when registering for the course and many teachers rely on them, especially when teaching in far-flung areas, and Andon and Wingate

(2013, p.184) pronounced that “Textbook is an important carrier of content in language teaching.” It is undeniably true as the literature says, “Textbook is seen as a stimulus or an instrument for teaching and learning” (Graves, 2000, p.175) as well as “a common element” in ESL or EFL (Tsiplakides, 2011, p.758), and “course books are the key elements that both teachers and students have in foreign language teaching” (Çakir, 2010, p.188). In a similar vein, Abdel Wahab (2013, p.1) says “Textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching/learning process as they are the primary agents of conveying knowledge to the learner.” Moreover, the coursebook is described as “a reference point for both teachers and learners” (Vettorel and Lopriore, 2013, p.484), which is more true in some situations where it is difficult to get access to additional materials.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p.315) considered it as “an almost universal element.” Therefore, Ansary and Babii (2002) say that teachers, students and administrators are all consumers of textbooks (coursebooks), and Sheldon (1998) writes that they are often seen as having commercial and pedagogical demands. Similarly, Sheldon (1988) says that coursebooks are often seen by potential consumers-teachers, learners and educational purchasers, since “the textbook is the cheapest way of providing learning material for each learner; alternatives, such as kits, sets of photocopied papers or computer software, are likely to be more expensive relative to the amount of the material provided” (Ur, 2006, p.184, cited in Al-sowat, 2012).

Furthermore, Garinger (2002) explains that “A textbook can serve different purposes for teachers: as a core resource, as a source of supplementary material, as an inspiration for classroom activities, and even as the curriculum itself.” Similarly, Lepionka (2006) contends that a textbook is also a tool for the student and, as mentioned before, it is true, at least for learners and teachers from undeveloped countries where there is less access to the language materials outside the classroom. Having mentioned the role of coursebooks in ELT, Gray (2010, p.1) uses the term “Global coursebooks” for those texts that are produced in the UK and used in many EFL classrooms across the globe and which refer to designed English courses for the global market.

Many researchers (e.g. Gray, 2010; McGrath, 2002; Kullman, 2013) have their own ideas of why coursebooks/textbooks have a major role in ELT, and these can be summarised as follows:

- “the key role / a crucial role / important role (central element) in many English language teaching, learning and classrooms around the world / a useful tool in the hands of the teacher ” (Riasati and Zare, 2010, p.54; Gray, 2010, p.1; Bell and Gower, 1998, p.117; Hutchinson and Torres, 1994; Riazi, 2003 noted in Razmjoo, 2010), “a pedagogical tool but also a cultural artefact” (Kullman, 2013, p.17) as well as “the visible heart of any ELT program” (Sheldon, 1988, p. 237).
- “guidance on teaching” (Bourne, 2007, p.193), as English language coursebooks are used by private language schools which are not tied to the national syllabus and may have unqualified teachers. Thanasoulas (1999) shared his expression on the coursebook as being “extremely helpful, as it guides me on what and how to teach, giving me some useful advice on the best techniques for presenting the material.”

The other terms are defined thus:

- “under curriculum; cannot skip and only stick to one coursebook” (Cunningsworth, 1984); and Bolitho (2008, p.215) shared his experience that teachers have “no opportunity to choose a textbook for their students” as they have to use a prescribed one, apart from

freelance private teachers, because it helps them to see what can be taught and enhance students' level of improvement gradually and it controls the structure of the course.

- “make revision (refresh themselves with past lessons) and preparation for learners” (McGrath, 2002, p.10; White (n.d.)), as learners need a coursebook that reinforces what the teacher has done, thus offering support for learning outside the class.

These comments strongly suggest that the coursebook has a major role in teaching and learning in the language classroom. Although the coursebook is brought by educational providers into schools, teachers are the only people who first make use of it to plan the lessons. Therefore, teachers or course coordinators should evaluate coursebooks to see whether they meet or provide students' needs (i.e. language skills and cultural diversity in the target language and other people's cultures, etc.).

2.6.1 Teachers, Learners and Coursebooks

Savova (2009, p.1) considers that there are three main physical components in language classrooms: teachers, students, and textbooks and other instructional materials. Tomlinson (2003) and Mukundan and Ahour (2010, p.336) also explain that most language learners learn from and heavily rely upon coursebooks as they are counted as an essential component of their learning materials. Similarly, Ansary and Babaii (2002) identify some of the arguments for the use of textbooks in ELT: for example, without a textbook, learners think their learning is not taken seriously, that it is out of focus, and that it is heavily teacher-dependent.

Ur (1991) and McGrath (2002) note that coursebooks supply ready-made texts and learning tasks as well as the structure for teaching that are likely to be of an appropriate level for most of the class. Therefore, they can help teachers to save time and be a useful tool in language classrooms. Ansary and Babii (2002) suggest that a textbook can mean security, guidance and support for novice teachers; and Mukundan (2010, p.291) and Islam (2003, p.262) emphasize that the textbook (coursebook) is usually the only supply for the teaching and learning of English (especially in some cases for teachers and learners who lack the financial resources to buy other materials, and who do not have the time or experience to produce their own materials). It is typically used in schools which are situated in far-flung areas of countries (such as the North-Western part of Myanmar), where there is no easy access to local libraries or the internet that would help teachers to obtain additional suitable materials. All teachers should have good lesson planning and relevant materials, and an appropriate coursebook will provide sufficient language support.

2.7 Coursebooks and Materials Adaptation

According to Masuhara and Tomlinson (2008, p.20), coursebooks are mentioned as “provid[ing] readily available resources for teachers” and “for learner needs” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p.7). However, Garinger (2001) believes that using only textbooks without any supplemental material is not the most acceptable method for meeting students’ needs, and he thinks that “textbooks alone cannot provide students with all the knowledge they require”. Day (2003, p.7) argues that “Teachers need to use materials that are

appropriate for the abilities of their students.” He emphasizes that “Materials need to be appropriate in terms of language, both the level and the type or variety or dialect and in terms of the activities tasks and exercises that students are asked to do.” Therefore, the researcher is interested in whether teachers are only using their coursebooks for their language teaching and cultural elements teaching, or what materials are normally, often or sometimes applied as supplementary material to enhance their teaching. How they balance these concerns in order to have a good lesson is a key issue, although “the problem of material selection is a very serious one for English language teaching” (Klippel, 1994, p.55) and “this is difficult” (Day, 2003: *ibid.*).

Graves (2000, p.174) stresses that “the content or examples may not be relevant or appropriate” to the target group of learners: for example, some western cultural practices are not open for discussion in some cultures, such as dating or civil partnership. Teachers need to adapt materials, such as changing the local context (i.e. localization and personalization by changing things with students’ familiar themes such as food and cooking vocabulary which can be taught using students’ familiar foods as examples – how to make biryani or dumplings, or how to grill chicken instead of roasting turkey, which students cannot imagine if this is not commonly done in their cultures).

However, it is still important to identify the specific criteria that they use for the adaptation. Furthermore, it remains crucial to get learners involved in learning and teaching settings if they are not very homogenous groups. For example, asking learners to participate in activities by requesting them to share

their cultural or personal experiences can be daunting for them, although it can allow them to practise speaking, become familiar with varieties of accents, and promote confident speaking in public. However, students can be demotivated: “if the student lacks self-confidence or has a bad attitude towards learning the target language, the student will lack motivation and be limited in the language acquisition process” (Walker, 2011, p.7). Therefore, teachers need to keep students motivated by choosing interesting materials (such as a recent interview with a famous person from a magazine or a cultural historical place from the internet).

In support of teaching cultural elements and adapting materials to coursebooks as supplementary materials to suit lessons’ aims and learners’ needs (e.g. a target exam or studying abroad at higher institutions), teachers can choose culture as either source (i.e. students’ culture) / target (the culture of the country) or international that includes any culture (English and non-English speaking cultures) of the people (McKay, 2002, p.88; Cortazzi and Jin, 1999) that are more appropriate and relevant for a particular set of teaching settings. The researcher believes that coursebooks’ writers and publishers have already added some materials from the target language (i.e. English) and other international materials to give learners a wide range of knowledge about cultures from different groups of people such as some “do’s and don’ts” of Thai culture on pages 74-75 in the New Cutting Edge (Intermediate level), published in 1995.

However, to implement classroom lessons, teachers need additional materials which should be drawn from “source cultural materials” (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999), such as extracting pieces of students’ culture if possible so that learners would feel comfortable learning a foreign language and adapt and adjust their thoughts and beliefs to see the world in a wider context. Choudhury (2014, p. 12) said “various materials can be used in teaching culture in foreign language classes”, but the researcher wants to look at what (outside) materials are commonly used and the teachers’ reasons for choosing them.

Cullen and Sato (2000) have given a list of sources of information that they could think of and to be used as materials for teaching cultures. These include: Video, CDs, TV, Readings, Internet, Stories, Students own information (for example: student’s local knowledge of their customs and traditions or their personal travel experiences), Songs, Newspapers, Realia, Fieldwork, Interviews, Guest speakers, Anecdotes, Souvenirs, Photographs (such as pictures of a traditional English Christmas dinner and how to set the table, or bonfire night), Surveys, Illustrations and Literature. It is interesting to study where teachers are getting outside additional materials and what they are using for their lessons.

Ahn (2013) expresses that “it may help language learners if a coursebook includes some of students’ culture into its context.” However, coursebooks are published internationally, such as the New Cutting Edge series of books which is commonly used by many language schools, and they have to generalise their content unless they are locally published for a target-specific group of learners

(such as the South East Asian or Middle Eastern markets). If teachers teach the same L2 background students (for example, groups of Thai or Japanese students), they would probably be able to adapt and customize materials and track students' cultures as a relevant source. Looking at multicultural ESL/EFL classrooms (i.e. especially ESL classrooms from the UK), there are sometimes group classes that occur upon the learners' requests and their needs (e.g. a group of Japanese or Myanmar students may want to learn English for business or travel).

The researcher has also experienced that many schools receive students from all over the world who bring different native languages, backgrounds, experience and knowledge to their ESL classrooms, and most language teachers in the UK are originally native English-speaking qualified teachers who have earned English teaching qualifications such as CELTA, DELTA or M.A in EFL, etc. By contrast, Summer temporary school teachers are employed for a short period of time to fill vacancies when the ratio of foreign students and teachers increases.

Skierso (1991, p.432) points out that "no teacher is entirely satisfied with the text used", and they must therefore try to modify the texts by finding some more suitable materials (and then adapting or omitting some parts). As Ansary and Babii (2002) suggest, no textbook is perfect, and teachers should have some supplementary materials as well as teaching and learning aids for their own classroom, their lessons and their specific teaching situation. Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p.325) contend that teachers usually "follow their own

scripts by adapting or changing textbook-based tasks, adding new tasks or deleting some, changing the management of the tasks, changing task inputs or expected outputs, and so on". If a teacher makes any changes to the original materials, such as "omission/deleting, addition, reduction, extension, simplifying, rewriting/modification, replacement, reordering and branching", this can be called materials adaptation (Maley, 1998, p.281 and McDonough and Shaw, 2003, p.78). However, his/her materials should be effectively adapted for learners' needs.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) assume that textbooks are merely a pre-packaged form of classroom materials, but not every single thing can be applied in any classroom. For example, students may have grown up in different cultures (e.g. those attending girls and boys separated schools will not understand the nature of mixed schools settings and their cultures, or doing group work may cause discomfort for some quiet natured students). Therefore, O'Neill (1982) mentions that a textbook is not necessarily unsuccessful if its style and content do not please some learners at the level at which it is aimed. Similarly, Sheldon (1987) says that, particularly in ESP, published materials must be modified or used selectively. As a result, McDonough and Shaw (2003, p.85) confirm that "adaptation is a very practical activity carried out mainly by teachers in order to make their work more relevant to the learners with whom they are in day-to-day contact".

In any case, the materials have to be adapted depending on the learners' needs (i.e. supporting their cultural backgrounds), and Saraceni (2003) explains that

materials should be adapted in different classroom situations. McDonough and Shaw (2003) explain that teachers need to adapt and adjust materials so that they are personalized and relate to learners' interests and their academic, educational or professional needs, such as how to address people in formal settings. Moreover, there is a need to personalise and address the learning styles both of individuals and of the members of a class working closely together. Zhimei et al. (2009) and Murray and Christison (2011) say that published ELT materials often need to be adapted to a particular classroom so that they can accommodate a wide range of learners. In the researcher's eyes, all teachers need to be aware of their learners' culture (if they are from the same L1 culture) and the classroom setting; hence, they ought to be able to adapt some suitable materials for their lessons.

2.7.1 Adapting materials

McGrath (2013, p.60) explains that material adaptation is “an attempt to tailor so that they are a better match for a specific context” and “it makes materials interesting for learners” (McGrath, 2013, p.62). Mukundan et al. (2011, p.100) argue that “materials used in the language classroom and the textbook can often play a crucial role in students' success or failure”, and that teachers therefore need to make sure of their supplementary materials while they are preparing their lessons. Equally, Moran (2001, p.6) says that “there is no shortage of useful materials and valid techniques for teaching culture”, and “teachers must plan for teaching culture” (Moore, 1996, p.272). If this is the case, “teachers decide that supplementary resources (e.g. materials from other books, authentic texts or online resources) will be needed” (McGrath, 2013,

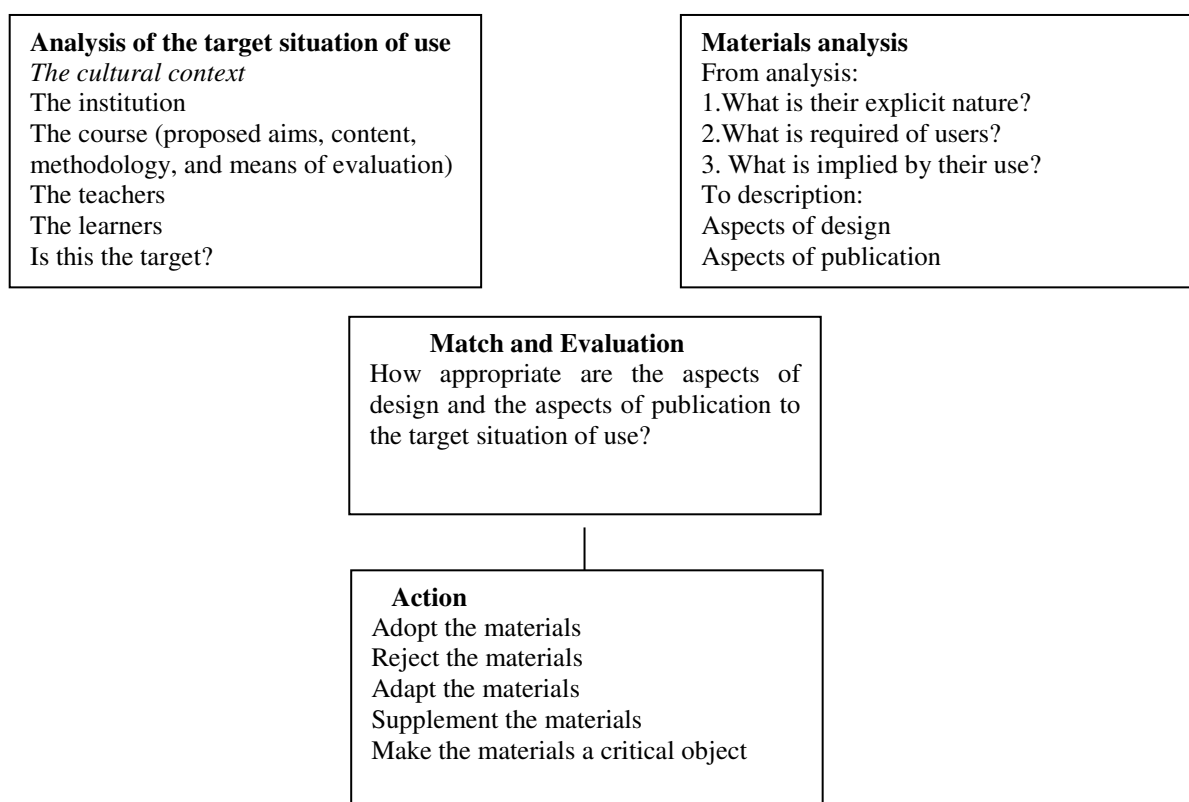
p.59); and it will therefore be interesting to study how teachers actually plan, where they go for references, and how they adapt and prepare for their students, since there are many techniques for adaptation. For example, it is possible to supplement the existing materials or materials can be replaced, depending on the goals of a particular class (Islam and Mares, 2003).

Moreover, some researchers suggest that teachers can adapt published materials (i.e. the textbook to teacher-made materials) to the local learners' context to allow them to feel more comfortable. They can, for example, block the barrier of uninteresting lessons and get the students' attention by creating a local map: local stores and building names can be incorporated when textbooks include street maps so that students learn and practise directions (Epstein and Ormiston, 2007; Murray and Christison, 2011).

Epstein and Ormiston (2007, p. 5) also point out that teachers can ask students to bring along their "experiences, intelligences and creativities" into the language classroom as "student-generated materials". Although these are not paper-based materials, they are reasonably practical (and can be called genuine materials) as students bring their own past experiences into the classroom. This can be particularly useful and helpful for their language skills improvement and could raise their self-confidence in public speaking if teachers ask them to deliver short presentations or role-play such as creating a police report about pickpocketing: one is using his phone and wallet and the other one is taking notes and dealing with the report. Alternatively, students could be asked to present their favourite movies, holiday spots from their own

countries, and then question them in detail so as to give more speaking practice.

Therefore, these sorts of additional activities can offer opportunities that textbooks rarely provide. Tsiplakides (2011) states that adapting the coursebooks for their students is an essential skill for teachers. For this reason, this research will study how teachers prepare (adapt / modify) their lesson plans with their selected materials and whether or not learners are allowed to participate in contributing to their knowledge and experience in the classrooms. According to Littlejohn's (1998, p.204) framework for materials analysis (Table 2) as below, teachers are encouraged to account for the students' cultural context before taking action on adaptation.



A preliminary framework for materials analysis, evaluation and action (Table 2)

Epstein and Ormiston (2007) also suggest that teachers need to adapt their coursebook content to local students' cultural context and adjust to meet students' cultures if they are teaching in North America, where a good British English textbook may not be culturally relevant although it brings solid grammatical progression, relevant functions and proper usages, communicative practice and activities which cover all skill areas. In this case, materials adaptation will have a major role in lesson planning and teaching, and it will be interesting to see how teachers adapt/modify coursebooks for their multicultural classrooms in the UK and in other countries.

2.7.2 What materials are

Above and beyond presenting about language teaching and learning culture through coursebooks, another thing to discuss is the term 'materials'. Maley's (1998, p.279) layout of materials, teachers and learners is thus:

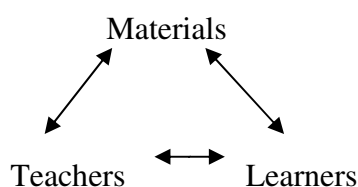


Figure 2: The three major elements in equation (Maley, 1998)

As shown in Figure 2, Maley (1998, p.279) suggests that materials, teachers and learners are obviously all interlinked and that they all rely upon each other. Therefore, lessons can never be worked out solely by a teacher, for s/he is a “third participant in the classroom (materials and the content and methodologies)” (Holliday, 1994, p.16). Brown (1995) and Mishan (2005)

note in Harwood (2010) that materials is a term used to encompass both texts and language-learning tasks: texts presented to the learner in paper-based, audio, or visual form, and / or exercises and activities built into such texts. In Tomlinson (2001, cited in Rashidi and Asl, 2011, p.19), the term ‘materials’ means “anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language.”

Similarly, Hall (2010) says that they mean everything that constitutes tangible input into the language-learning context. Epstein and Ormiston (2007) present what are included in terms of materials: textbooks; handouts and worksheet; written text such as stories, songs, and poems; audiovisual materials on DVD, CD, or tape; and computer software. The visual aids materials (for instance, videos, documentaries, TV channels broadcasting, magazine pictures, photographs, flashcards, charts and graphs, the internet, and realia) can also be useful for teaching and learning. In addition, Doff (1990) and Curtain and Dahlberg (2004, cited in Epstein and Ormiston, 2007) argue that visual materials (i.e. TV cultural programmes, photos, vignettes and others) provide a link between the classroom and the world outside.

2.7.3 Audio/visual materials and ESL/EFL learners in classrooms

Jenks (1981, cited in Kim, 2001: PhD Thesis) contends that materials must be selected according to the needs of the students. Apple (1984), Liu (2005) and Luke (1988, cited in Harwood, 2010) also argue that materials have been seen as cultural artefacts because of their thematic content. Troncoso (2010, p.84) explains that:

“current learning materials make learners aware of the value of communication in modern multicultural societies as well as promoting

the idea of mutual understanding, tolerance and respect towards differences in diverse multicultural scenarios”.

Furthermore, Novawan (2010, p.39) states that visual aids in materials (defined as single and composite pictures, stick figures, colour or black-white photographs and other ELT materials such as media selection) help learners comprehend particular concepts or words which are hard to understand. He goes on to suggest that using good-looking photographs in ELT materials can attract learners' attention in order to engage in interactive warm-up activities as well as to provide particular schematic knowledge of language such as contextual and cultural inputs. Epstein (2010) says that audio visual materials (for example, a picture of a box of English fish and chips which is not sold in many other countries) can also fulfil the needs of adult learners when learning a language. In the researcher's eyes, teachers who teach General English or ESP courses still need to prepare some other materials when lessons are about certain parts of culture that are presented in coursebooks. They might need to find suitable authentic materials (e.g. a photo of what the teacher wants to say) by browsing the internet or finding some realia such as cutlery which suits the lesson's purpose.

2.7.3.1 Authentic and Artificial Materials

According to Tomlinson (1998, cited in Mukundan, 2009), materials mean anything which is used to help to teach language learners. There are authentic materials (i.e. films, music, (such as pop/rock or country songs) or pictures of the London Bridge and Eiffel Tower, vegetables and fruits or any things from real life which are more easily visible materials and help learners to interpret

the meaning promptly) that can be selected to bring meanings to learners; for example, an apple can be shown and students can learn what it is called in English. There are also artificial (non-authentic) materials such as short stories, which fall under the same umbrella. As for the use of authentic materials, Wong et al. (1995, cited in Day, 2003, p.2) say that they “can help us to achieve the aims of enriching students’ experiences in the learning and the use of English.” Authentic materials can therefore convey a message that makes it easier for students to understand (for example: a student might know the word “basketball” because it is termed differently in his L1 or he might be confused between the two terms of “basketball” and “baseball”; however, this confusion can be resolved by showing the picture of a basketball). If there is time, teachers can expand on speaking practice by asking more questions such as “Have you ever played basketball/baseball/football?”, “Do you like basketball/baseball/football matches?”, etc. that would allow students to share their preferences and experiences.

Polio (2014, p.1) stressed that authentic materials means “materials that were not created for language learning purpose.” Epstein and Ormiston (2007) give an example of authentic materials such as using real newspaper articles or newscasts. Polio (2014, *ibid.*) defines some examples of authentic materials. These include “magazine ads, movie reviews, television shows, conversations between native speakers, train schedules, nutrition labels, and so on”, which the researcher thinks can often be obtained from local newsagents, libraries (such as British Council’s libraries) or on the internet through a google web engine if the internet is easily accessible. Purba (2011, p.51) gives more

examples of authentic materials, such as websites, photographs, magazines, restaurant menus and travel brochures.

Similarly, Gebhard (1996) classifies materials in detail, and the researcher would like to extract some significant and common materials that are applied in classrooms, such as TV commercials, news, and dramas (authentic listening materials); photographs, pictures from travels, stamps and postcard pictures (authentic visual materials); newspapers, articles, novels and short stories (authentic printed materials); and dolls, scissors, folded papers, furniture, chalks and toy animals (realia), all of which are “essential in helping students to develop a mental image” (Peck, 1984). Bahrani and Soltani (2012, p.802) pointed out the advantage of the use of authentic materials by saying:

“It is essential for language learners to listen to and read different kinds of language material because it helps motivate the language learners by bringing the content and the subject matter to life for them, and enable them to make the important connections between the classroom world and the real world outside the classroom setting.”

They also highlighted the disadvantage of inauthentic (artificial) materials:

“the artificial language materials tend to cause continual repetition of certain grammatical constructions, certain elements of the vocabulary, or certain combinations of words” (p.803).

It is, however, difficult to advise teachers that they should only be using authentic materials because not all EFL classrooms and EFL teachers are able to find more relevant materials than coursebooks which are prescribed by schools and which save time on preparation. Therefore, it is still interesting to study what kinds of materials are commonly chosen for cultural elements lessons.

2.7.3.1.1 The benefit of using authentic materials

Amongst these authentic materials, Blatchford (1973, p.130) points out that by using newspapers in the classroom, students can “take part in real tasks that the newspaper provides, and they learn useful information about how to exist in their English-language surroundings.” Practically, this is true, but the researcher believes that magazines, video clips and TV programmes are also useful for teaching, as they are more visual and help learners learn the authentic tones and accents of native language speakers and other speakers who speak English as a medium language. Day (2003, p.2) writes that authentic texts are “considered interesting, engaging, culturally enlightening, relevant, motivating and the best preparation for reading authentic texts and understanding authentic speech.” Kilickaya (2004) highlighted that “Authentic materials enable learners to interact with the real language and content rather than the form.” The researcher therefore wants to explore how and what sort of materials are ordinarily applied by teachers for their teaching in the practical English Language classrooms.

Gebhard (1996) explains that authentic materials and media offer a means of contextualizing language learning as they allow learners to touch and experience real life materials. This could also offer them a valuable source of language input, as students “can be exposed to more than just language presented by the teacher and the text” (p.105). The researcher agrees with Gebhard and it will be interesting to analyse whether or not language teachers are using authentic materials in classrooms when they teach language through culture. Sherman (2003) also points out that by using video, which is seen as a

global cultural product, the researcher can think about bringing the actual motion of any cultures that teachers want to show to students in a visual format for learners in the language classroom. This can then be a window for learners to learn both language and culture, for it brings cultural elements to learners and they are able to absorb more general knowledge and language skills. Cooker (2008, p.111) states that:

“For those learners who are strong readers or who come from less oral-based learning cultures, films in DVD format offer valuable support as the closed captions can be switched on and read whilst watching the film.”

The other benefit of using this is it would really help learners to acquire both words and the correct pronunciations of English speakers. However, it is time to learn whether teachers use videos as materials for the teaching of cultural elements through coursebooks and what other materials are used, for this is one of the key questions of this research.

Pulverness (2003, p.434) says that the teacher, whether a native or non-native speaker, has “a vital role to play in acting as an intercultural mediator and providing some of the cultural coordinates missing from the coursebook”. This would include the “do’s and don’ts” about countries, how to greet people in formal/informal settings, how to thank people, and taking one’s shoes off when entering an Asian house --- all of which students need to know to avoid cultural misunderstandings, because “language cannot be used without carrying meaning” (Byram, 1989, p.41). In addition, Farid and Mayam (2015, p.70) explained the inappropriate culture of drinking alcohol: “drinking wine in different occasions and going to dance parties, so common in European

countries, are not among the religious and social norms in many Islamic countries like Iran.” As a result, teachers have more work to do, such as learning in more depth about their assigned lessons, finding or creating relevant materials to be used in their lessons, and also giving tasks or homework about particular topics to help learners to improve their L2 language skills and to gain more understanding by themselves. For example, if a teacher has taught about Easter time in England and chocolate eggs or preparing Sunday roast on Sundays by typically English families or bringing a homemade cake or something else when someone is invited for dinner, or opening presents at home, visiting relatives and some people hunt bargains online and in stores on Boxing Day as there is a big sale launching throughout the UK’s stores, students can be asked to write about one of their traditional foods that are prepared for a particular day or can be assigned as a group work to present about their national/ traditional/ religious days and their customs in order to be able to improve their verbal and public speaking skills.

Good (2011, lecture) has identified that some teachers spend one night for lesson preparation (such as finding suitable materials) before the lesson, while others only spend a few minutes planning before it begins. The researcher believes that lesson planning is key, as teachers will find materials, set times and think of activities to facilitate their learners’ needs or achieve their lesson objectives. Gray (2000, p.276) found in his research that teachers “sometimes felt uncomfortable with reading exercises”. Therefore, the researcher would like to try to find out if this is true of the participants in this study. Green (2004) explains that when teachers are dealing with cultural issues, it is always

a good starting point to have the learners talk about the traditions, practices and expectations in their native countries. Therefore, the researcher will study whether or not they (teachers) have faced cultural issues and how they solve them.

2.7.4 The impact of materials, material adaptation and their evaluation

In terms of the principles of material adaptation, McGrath (2013, p.66) explains that there are seven forms of adaptation which can be done by teachers for any lessons to meet the lessons' aims. These are:

1. localization (materials need to be perceived as relevant by learners),
2. modernization (be up-to-date),
3. individualization (cater for differences in learning styles),
4. personalization (encourage learners to speak / write about themselves and their own experiences),
5. humanizing (engage the whole person),
6. simplification/complexification/differentiation (be appropriate to learners' level / offer an appropriate level of challenge), and
7. variety (i.e. to be varied) with different sorts of attractive materials.

Before selecting and adapting (modifying/adding/omitting) materials for a lesson, teachers need to analyse them for their current students, and the researcher would say this is principally needed for culturally sensitive content.

As mentioned earlier, teachers will have to deal with some cultural elements through coursebooks in their experience of teaching and they might have seen many students who come from different cultural / religious backgrounds. If this time comes, how will teachers cope with their teaching and what are their

most common problems? Hutchinson (1987, p.37) explains that “materials evaluation plays such an important role in language teaching”, and Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1992) say that it is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning. Moreover, Sheldon (1987, p.7) has said that “materials are evaluated not only by teachers and reviewers, but also by educational administrators charged with obtaining the best value for money” from textbooks. In the researcher’s eyes, teachers are the people who have the most responsibility here, since they know where learners are from and the potential cultural sensitivities such as religions or sexism, etc. They should therefore be able to predict what impact they would get if they did not carefully choose the right materials, topics, and activities for lessons.

Masuhara and Tomlinson (2010, p.410) state that “material evaluation happens when certain materials are ineffective in engaging learners or at the beginning of the course.” In fact, the material evaluation/development could be done not only at the beginning of the course as they said but also during or at the end of the course. The point is not only about when teachers have to do this, but that they need the evaluation to access what materials are really useful, helpful and applicable in classrooms so that they can work out their lessons with their students.

Chou (2010) explains “outside reading materials could also enhance student motivation, especially if they find the reading passages from the coursebook too easy or uninteresting.” In this case, teachers have to decide what sorts of materials will meet learners’ levels and have to guess what impact they can get from their own developed materials (i.e. attention, motivation, or lack of

interest to some degree). Having said that materials evaluation is a procedure that involves measuring, judging and adjusting the value (or potential value) of the impact of a set of learning materials and the effect of the materials, Mertens (2005, p.47) noted in Al-sowat (2012, p.340) that evaluation is “the process of determining the merit, worth or value of something.” Tomlinson (2003) goes on to explain that it tries to measure some or all of the following:

- The validity of the materials (i.e. is what they teach worth teaching?);
- The reliability of the materials
(i.e. would they have the same effect with different groups of target learners?);
- The ability of the materials to interest the learners and the teachers;
- The ability of the materials to motivate the learners;
- The learners’ perceptions of the value of the materials;
- The teachers’ perceptions of the value of the materials;
- The assistance given to the teachers in terms of preparation, delivery and assessment;
- The flexibility of the materials (e.g. the extent to which it is easy for a teacher to adapt the materials to suit a particular context);
- The contribution made by the materials to teacher development.

2.7.5 Types of Materials Evaluation

As mentioned earlier, coursebooks are the first resource for teachers. However, teachers might need additional adaptations to suit students’ needs and their cultural contexts and backgrounds. To proceed, they need to evaluate the content, lessons’ aims, and their desires on what to deliver before they choose

relevant materials; therefore, the evaluation becomes key while preparing a lesson.

Tomlinson (2013, p.21) defines the terms of materials evaluation as “a procedure that involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials.” Many scholars like McGrath (2002), Cunningsworth (1995) and Tomlinson (2003) explain that there are three types of materials evaluation: pre-use evaluation, whilst-use evaluation and post-use evaluation. Tomlinson (2003, p.23) says that pre-use evaluation (termed “predictive” by Ellis (1996) and Mukundan (2009)) means making predictions about the potential value of materials as, for example, when a teacher selects a course-book for his/her particular class.

The whilst-use (in-use) evaluation stage measures the value of materials while using them or while observing them being used by looking at the clarity of instruction and layout, the impact of the materials and their flexibility (Tomlinson, 2013, p.33). It can be more objective and reliable than pre-use evaluation for the reason that it makes use of measurement of students’ attention, the reliability of the materials, the outcome of whether students can cope with the level of language that was used in it, and the suitability of material so that it fits in with students’ cultures and within their context.

It is done while teaching and dealing with students by noticing students’ behaviours and their movements (e.g. students are willing to learn and follow teachers’ instruction in every stage of the lessons, participating in every task they were given, etc.). It also looks at the learner context (i.e. whether the

content of the lesson is suitable or whether materials are accepted by students) rather than prediction. It has also been mentioned that in-use evaluation can assess “short-term memory effects through observing learner performance on exercises” (Tomlinson, 2003, p.4) as teachers can see whether or not students understand the lesson such as vocabulary and its usages, “but it cannot help teachers to measure durable and effective learning because of the delayed effect of instruction” (Tomlinson, 2003: *ibid.*). Therefore, this in-use materials evaluation is noted as a very useful tool but is also problematic, since “teachers and observers can be misled by whether the activities seem to work or not” (Tomlinson, 2003: *ibid.*). For instance, some students are attentive to lessons, while others are quite slow students who are keener on self-study to improve their learning.

These sorts of students develop their language skills by doing more homework or study by themselves quietly than working in class with groups of people.

Jolly and Bolitho (1998, cited in Tomlinson, 2003, p.24) state:

“lessons provided interesting case studies of how student comment and feedback during lessons provided useful evaluation of materials, which led to improvements being made in the materials during and after the lessons.”

“Post-use evaluation” (Tomlinson, 2003, p.25), also known as “retrospective” by Ellis (1996), can be considered the most valuable type of evaluation as it can measure the actual effects of the materials – a teacher can see whether his/her materials worked well and were suitable for his/her lessons by assessing the students’ response (i.e. whether they reacted appropriately during the lesson) and assessing the classroom atmosphere after the lesson has finished. By recalling every moment of the lesson, it might be possible to see,

for example, that the activities part was slightly weak as some students found it too easy or the grammar part looked confusing for others as it did not have any relevant grammar point in their L1. In consequence, the teacher can then make modifications and adjustments to have a better lesson in future classes. He mentions that it can also “measure the short-term effect regarding motivation, impact, achievability, instant learning, and so on. Moreover, it helps to provide opportunities to measure the long-term effect as regards durable learning and application” (Tomlinson, 2003, p.25).

Tomlinson (2003, p.25) continues that post-evaluation can answer such important questions as:

- What do the learners know which they did not know before starting to use the materials?
- What do the learners still not know despite using the materials?
- What can the learners do which they could not do before starting to use the materials?
- What can the learners still not do despite using the materials?
- To what extent have the materials prepared the learners for their examinations?
- To what extent have the materials prepared the learners for their post-course use of the target language?
- What effect have the materials had on the confidence of the learners?
- Did the teachers find the materials easy to use?

By doing this sort of evaluation (post-evaluation), the teacher can see the outcomes of the lesson (such as students’ attention, boosting their confidence to use the language, the suitability of materials, etc.) as explained above and it can also show whether or not the teacher should still be using the same materials for later classes or should modify some parts by studying students’ needs and backgrounds. In addition, if the teacher uses the above questions

formulated by Tomlinson as a checklist, the teacher should be able to produce better lessons for successive classes.

Although the 'post-evaluation' (Tomlinson, *ibid.*) can point teachers and evaluators to the outcomes and the strengths and weaknesses of the recently used materials, the researcher's own teaching experience in Myanmar and in Thailand is that teachers rarely do this, due to time constraints and other reasons. Nonetheless, in all three evaluation procedures, the researcher identifies that the language teacher is the most responsible person for the classes as aforementioned and he/she has to perform at least a minimum of evaluation, since he/she knows all the strengths and weaknesses of students' needs (i.e. the level of language proficiency, cultures and others). Tomlinson (2003, cited in Stillwell et al., 2010) says that, although pre-evaluation is the most common, post-evaluation is potentially much more valuable for its focus on the effect of the materials on the learners.

Again, for the textbook evaluation, Mukundan (2007) notes that the evaluation of textbooks (coursebooks) is considered an important activity in the lives of the English teacher for the reason that wrong decisions will result in the selection of inappropriate books. These might subsequently have adverse effects on teaching and learning, lead to wastage of financial resources, and they may also lose students to another school. However, the researcher believes that these evaluations are most commonly performed by the course co-coordinator/programme director, since they are able to choose a coursebook for their course without restrictions and they are responsible for

decision-making. On the other hand, teachers who are in-service or employed by schools have less opportunity to select a coursebook on their own and they normally tend to teach and finish all lessons in a limited amount of time. Therefore, the researcher thinks that they can only do in-use evaluation and post-use evaluation if the time is given.

The researcher has experienced that some teachers have never done their own evaluations and they only prepare for a lesson one hour before the class starts. Some other teachers re-use the old lesson plans for many classes with no modification or adaptation of updated materials, since the textbook has been used for more than a year. In consequence, teachers' lose learners' attention and self- motivation, and the researcher would therefore like to study if the participants of this study have done materials / coursebook evaluation.

2.8 Cultural-learning Activities in the English Language Classrooms

Chou (2010) gives an example about using outside reading materials and generally suggests "if a class is reading a short story, the teacher can use class discussion as a form of conversation practice. Teachers can also have students do different kinds of presentation based on their readings." Purba (2011, p.51) states that "cultural activities and objectives should be carefully organized and incorporated into lesson plans to enrich and inform the teaching content."

Cullen and Sato (2000) mentioned that some types of activities can be used for students such as quizzes (True/False), action logs, reformulation (narrating / retelling a story to a partner), noticing (asking students what they have noticed). An example that they have given is watching a video of a target-culture

wedding and asking students to note all the differences with their own culture), prediction, student research (i.e. asking students to search the internet or library and find information on any aspect of the target-culture that interests them), games, role-play, field trips, reading activities, listening activities, writing activities, discussion activities and singing. It can help students acquire the sense of other people's cultures, ways they act in their cultures (including customs and "do's and don'ts"), and allows students to balance and adjust with their cultures and the cultural conventions of the target society.

Byram (1989, p.42) summarized that "language learning is culture learning" and, of course, learners can learn a language not only through the target culture (e.g. British) but through their own. Huang and Wang (2008) used a vocabulary task with pictures showing on powerpoint for their teaching of English through local Chinese cultures with some authentic materials (i.e. demonstrating how to cook rice dumplings) in the classrooms. They found positive results of doing these tasks along with using those authentic materials and thus they said:

"The input of photos and pictures using PowerPoint, and most important of all, the use of authentic cooking materials, ingredients and utensils enhanced the students' acquisition of new vocabulary words as manifested in the language games. Moreover, students actively interacted in English with both teachers and partners throughout the whole cooking process. Wrapping rice dumplings stood out as a unique task involving Chinese culture, thus giving students an opportunity to explore their own cultural legacy."

Therefore, many activities can be done depending on the lessons' aims and teachers' choices of what they think are the most suitable for students. The researcher herself had also given a group the task of designing brochures and

advertisements to promote the tourism industry of their own countries. Thus, they had to choose some interesting local cultural and historical or relaxing places, arts and crafts, and local foods, which made them explore their cultures themselves in depth, and practise reading and writing skills (i.e. how to compose sentences while preparing the assignment and receiving information when reading their classmates' work). She experienced that these kinds of activities help students not only to improve their language skills, but also stimulate cultural awareness. To expand this, the researcher would like to study what sorts of cultural elements are taught in other EFL classrooms, and it is part of this research to study what activities (such as listening, reading, etc.) are chosen for their lessons and what are the common types of activities for cultural concerns lessons.

2.9 Previous related studies

In this section, the researcher would like to discuss some previous studies of textbook evaluation, the evaluation of cultural content in ELT coursebooks and teachers' perceptions of teaching cultures.

2.9.1 Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi's study

Adaskou et al. (1990) studied textbooks and their cultural content in the new English course for secondary schools in Morocco. They examined why cultural components included in foreign language textbooks were based on four senses of culture: aesthetic (i.e. literature, music), sociological (i.e. customs and family life), semantic (i.e. food and clothes) and pragmatic/sociolinguistic (i.e. presenting the various communicative functions,

different types of letters and messages and form-filling). They assumed that pragmatic and semantic content should be included to provide communicative components for learners which are the key for communication. To evaluate learners' motivational value – positive or negative towards learning foreign cultural content -- their study was conducted by interview with three research questions¹ (structured interview). The participants of their study were teachers, teacher-trainers and inspectors, and they found that foreign culture content in textbooks should be at a minimum level. They could, however, have also sent questionnaires to students to get their points of view of learning foreign cultural elements through coursebooks and then they would have been able to produce a more balanced perspective.

2.9.2 Moore's (1996) study

Moore studied how teachers teach culture in one high school for second language learners in New York in 1996. He observed what and which techniques are used for teaching culture, and whether or not the techniques used were effective. Additionally, he examined whether or not teachers' approaches were different from each other and what causes these differences.

¹ *Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi's three research questions:*

- Can the use of a foreign milieu, by inviting cultural comparisons, contribute to students' discontent with their own material culture and to the yearning for the big city and the fleshpots of Europe?
- Are there patterns of behaviour in an English-speaking social context that most Moroccans would prefer not to see presented as models to their young people?
- Will Moroccan secondary learners still be motivated to learn English if the language is not presented to them, as it has been up to now, in the context of an English-speaking country?

He enquired about the frequency of cultural instruction included in their lesson plans and he tried to analyse the difficulties of teaching culture in a high school. Questionnaires were sent to participants and two follow-up telephone calls and one reminder were applied as additional methods of data collection. All of his data were analyzed by using quantitative SPSS statistical methods. Although he was able to answer all his questions, the drawback was that the only method of data collection was the questionnaire and this did not provide extensive data. Nevertheless, he was able to find a number of teachers' difficulties of teaching culture in classrooms: the insufficient time in their timetable, the inadequate instruction materials, the lack of training, and the absence of culture tests. In contrast to Moore's study, this current study is looking for the teachers' difficulties of teaching culture through coursebooks from general English language courses, teachers' perceptions, plus the modification and the use of teachers' cultural elements teaching materials.

2.9.3 Gray's findings

Gray (2000) did a small survey with twelve teachers, exploring teachers' experiences and attitudes to aspects of cultural content in ELT coursebook reading materials. He distributed his questionnaires to native English speaker teachers in Barcelona and found that teachers sometimes feel uncomfortable with the reading exercises that are followed by irrelevant, outdated, stereotyped and sexist content. He quoted one participant to support this finding:

“Represents a (mercifully) tiny sector of British society-outdated-ridicules British parenting-The ‘kissy-cuddly’ bit would either be inappropriate, of no interest, or acutely incomprehensible to most groups of learners.”

Gray also looked at adapting materials and he realised that some teachers would drop materials that they felt were unsuitable and replaced them with other more relevant materials. He quoted one of his participants as “[I] changed the situation from pub to school cafeteria-found a tape with similar language that didn’t mention alcohol.” Therefore, he assumed that his participants have full awareness of cultural content in ELT coursebooks as they were concerned about the relevance of materials with students’ backgrounds, cultural sensibilities and comprehensibility of cultural materials.

2.9.4 Litz’s evaluation

Litz did a study of textbook evaluation at Sung Kyun Kwan University in South Korea in 2005. The textbook which he evaluated was English Firsthand # 2 (hereafter EF2), published by Hong Kong, Longman Asia ELT. His study was implemented in 2000-2001 with eight instructors (who taught intermediate level course) and five hundred students who enrolled on that programme. The research method he used was simply a questionnaire.

In his survey, “cultural consideration” was one of the matters to consider for textbook selection. During his textbook evaluation, he examined skills which textbooks particularly give learners, their design and layout and so on. He typically found that EF2 has a variety of contemporary topics of travel, culture and customs and a diverse array of ethnic groups, realistic characters and so forth. He assumed that these textbook writers tended to avoid stereotypes and biases of age, race and ethnicity, gender and class.

The issue which he pointed out was the demotivation and disinterest of Korean learners (10 – 15 South Korean students in one class) because of the topics of travel, culture and customs. He highlighted and suggested that these topics would work well if they had been generated in “heterogeneous ESL/EFL classes in Britain / North America where they receive students from a wide variety of different cultural backgrounds” (p.32). Although Litz has mentioned the problems with topics that may cause a lack of interest to Korean learners, he did not properly ask learners directly whether or not this was their experience.

2.9.5 Gray’s investigation

Gray (2006) investigated the cultural content in British ELT global coursebooks from a cultural studies perspective and also examined the views of teachers from Barcelona on the content and the role of culture in ELT.

His study was carried out by means of interviews with four publishers and EFL teachers (native and L1 Spanish speakers) from Barcelona in Spain. Of the four activities he performed, the most interesting part was that he applied the four senses of culture of Adaskou et al. (1990): i.e. aesthetic, sociological, semantic and pragmatic. At least a week before the interview, to get more of an idea and to avoid anxiety during his interview sessions, he sent out a paper along with three semi-structured interview questions: “which of the above senses are most important for you in your teaching? Rank the senses in order

of importance. Bring two pieces of coursebook material to talk about - one which has implicit or explicit cultural content which you disapprove of.” He also designed a card written with some statements concerning teaching and culture and asked participants if they thought they were true or false. He concluded his study thus: “the form cultural content takes is best decided by locals for whom English may have a range of meanings other than those determined for them by British ELT publishers” (p.251). However, in his study, there were no interviews or questionnaire sets with learners. Since learners are the key, apart from teachers and coursebooks, their sensitivities should have been considered.

2.9.6 Hui’s research

Hui (2010) studied Chinese teachers’ perceptions of teaching culture, their understanding of culture, what techniques they apply to teach culture, time allocation to culture teaching and also their attitudes towards intercultural communicative competence in secondary schools. Her study was implemented by means of a quantitative survey method and her questionnaire was only distributed to teachers and trainers from China (i.e. not Chinese students).

Her findings were that most teachers were interested in teaching culture and had positive attitudes towards it. Hui mentioned her teacher-participants’ definitions of cultures thus: “teachers understand “culture” mainly as customs and traditions; as history of language (proverbs, idioms, etc.) and as a daily life” (p.237). Interestingly, 339 teacher-participants (87%) preferred small “c” culture topics such as daily life, food and drinks, customs and festivals. Among the used materials, pictures and multi-media were not well-used by her

participants. Hui also found that teachers only have little freedom to choose textbooks in China, but nearly half (174 / 46.01%) of the participants have the right to choose and use additional materials.

Although her findings were similar to the concept of the current research, this researcher would like to delve more deeply into teachers' difficulties when they teach cultures which are presented in coursebooks; what kinds of cultural elements are commonly printed in coursebooks; observing whether or not learners have a chance to participate in sharing their experiences during lessons; and how teachers handle materials to gain learners' attention in the classroom.

2.9.7 Duarte and Escobars' evaluation

These two researchers conducted a study on the impact of using adapted materials on their University students' motivation in 2008. Their study was divided into two phases. They started by collecting teachers' and students' perceptions towards the materials they were currently using by distributing questionnaires. After this, they implemented designed materials in their second phase to study and compare their perceptions of current and new adapted materials. Both current and new materials were used for four hours each in four different sessions to research students' perceptions on those two types of materials. To access this, they recruited 5 teachers and 15 intermediate level students who were studying an undergraduate program and took English as a compulsory subject. In their findings, their teacher-participants said they did not think there is a good connection between global materials and their local

students' cultural and social context. Student-participants showed their preference was for using local materials. Researchers also said "the local material had more integrated activities than the global one" (2008: 71), and they emphasised this by saying "when implementing the local material, students felt more motivated to finish the activities since they were more meaningful to them."

They presented that their students preferred more local materials and they consequently assumed there is a direct impact on students' motivation. They also found that their students still have a feeling that global coursebooks' contents and situations that are presented are often far from their reality. They concluded by saying "Students felt more familiar with the local adapted materials rather than with the global one" (p.74). Despite the fact that they studied the level of students' motivation and questioned their perceptions on their materials, this current research has only focused on teachers' use and their experiences of using outside materials for cultural elements lessons.

2.9.8 Tas's findings

Tas (2010) studied cultural elements and the perspectives of teaching and learning culture when teaching language with 15 teachers and 35 students. The study was conducted by interviewing (i.e. open-ended interviews) 15 teachers and 35 students at the Namık Kemal University in Turkey. In Tas's findings, students (91.5%) thought it was necessary to learn culture while learning a language, whereas only 86.7% of the instructors thought that coursebooks should teach culture; the other 13.3 % said that coursebooks should aim to

teach culture but only to some extent. Surprisingly, all of the instructors agreed that the coursebooks which they had used had numerous parts which were designed to teach cultures and cultural aspects of that language.

2.9.9 Srakang and Jansems' research *

They studied 12 teachers' perceptions of using English textbooks who taught 10th grade in Maha Sarakham Province in Thailand. It was a case study completed with mixed methods data collection tools: that is, the quantitative questionnaires (composed of a five-point Likert scale) along with 36 hours of classroom observations and qualitative semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions which took an average of 30-45 minutes each. All participants were interviewed with open-ended questions at a different time. During the study, while doing classroom observations, these two researchers took the role of non-participant observers. Their questionnaire was formed with 35 statements under 3 categories (i.e. Evaluation on Textbook, Roles of textbook and Teachers' perceptions towards textbook). They discovered two different points of view (i.e. pro-textbook views and anti-textbook views). Among their findings, in the pro-textbook views, textbooks were seen as an instructional framework and were considered as a guideline for their courses. From the anti-textbook views, they were seen as inadequate materials which did not meet learners' needs and some topics were too far beyond learners' proficiency levels.

* The researcher found this study on the internet, but no publication date has been mentioned. Therefore, the researcher is only able to refer to the date and year (20/8/2013) when she read this study. The title and the details of the link are presented in the bibliography.

Moreover, they mentioned that topics dealt with cultural information of native countries and this often made learners uncomfortable. They finally concluded their study with some distinct remarks: firstly, textbooks were essential tools and teaching cannot be made without the use of them; secondly, textbooks should go hand in hand with other supplementary teaching materials to serve learners' needs; and thirdly, using textbooks often wasted time and they preferred teacher-made materials to commercial textbooks. As this study's focus was on teachers' perceptions towards using coursebooks, they did not look at what other materials were typically being used by them. This is the major difference from this current research, which evaluates teachers' perceptions of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks and their use of other supplementary teaching materials for lessons.

2.9.10 Grammatosi and Harwood's study

They performed a case study in 2014 on teachers' overviews of the use of textbooks and the way they use them in their teaching by raising 2 main questions: what factors impact upon teachers' patterns of textbook use, and why do teachers use the textbook in the way they do? ²

It was researched at one UK University language centre where there is a preparatory English programme for International students who need to top up their level of English proficiency. Their methods included collecting the participant's lesson plans and his use of all materials, observing the classroom, and conducting semi-structured pre- and post-observation interviews with the

² The researcher read about this study as an article which was published in one book (the details of which can be found in the Bibliography). The opinions and the difficulties therein resulted only from one of the five teacher-participants of the first author.

participant. To be precise, the participant in that study was researched for 10 consecutive teaching periods for 10 times. As they observed teachers' reasons for using a coursebook, this is one of the similar questions that would be asked in this current study.

It was found that the teacher used the coursebook accompanied with some of his own materials which he designed or took from somewhere else such as other textbooks or websites so that he could flexibly adhere to the textbook's language syllabus. His purpose was also to keep more students interested in the lessons, to provide more useful vocabulary and make the lessons more relevant to the learners' everyday lives. The participant had mentioned about his struggle with the textbook as it looked too difficult for his students; it was too inconsistent in terms of quality in its presentation; there was a lack of clarity and relevance; and it was found uninteresting by his students on some topics. Thus, the teacher needed to adjust and adapt to meet the level of appropriacy by using his own materials. The two researchers revealed that these materials made the participant feel more comfortable as he knew what he was doing and knew how far he could meet the target of what he wanted students to learn from each lesson (i.e. addressing learners' needs).

In their study, they typically focused on the teacher's compromise of using a textbook and outside materials and the reasons why teachers needed to be flexible enough to use outside materials to fill the gap between students and textbook. The major difference between Grammatosi and Harwood's study (2014) and this current research is the consideration of teachers' (native and

non-native speakers) use of supplementary materials for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks and teachers' views on whether or not teaching cultures is essentially happening in EFL classrooms through coursebooks.

2.9.11 Yuyun's study

Yuyun (2010) studied six teachers' perceptions of the use of EFL textbooks with a questionnaire assessment. The questionnaire had a total of 30 questions with four major items: teachers' perceptions toward KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan), the role of the EFL textbook, teachers' perceptions towards the EFL textbook and evaluation of the textbook in order to answer the following research question ---*“What are the teachers' perceptions towards the use of EFL textbook School-Based Curriculum context?”*

In line with this current research, Yuyun found that teachers were pleased with the organization of the textbook, the layout and design was clear and appropriate, and the price was reasonable. They considered EFL textbooks as collections of topics which allowed them to choose and which were seen as a source of ideas and activities for them. Some others thought it helped them to teach English efficiently and play an important role in the ELT curriculum. In addition, teachers thought that these EFL textbooks can be used as a day-to-day guide, but they also provided other materials for students (from the internet, other textbooks, magazines, newspapers, etc.) to be able to engage their interest in teaching learning activities. Although Yuyun's small-scale study has found some interesting results of teachers' perceptions of textbooks

and their use of other materials, it would be more interesting if the current researcher recruited more participants to include the questions of what external materials are used for cultural elements lessons along with textbooks for this present study.

2.9.12 Arin's research

Arin researched primary school teachers' awareness and use of supporting teaching materials for four language skills for young learners in 2010. It was a descriptive mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) study, assessed with 52 primary teachers, only 20 of whom were interviewed. To measure teachers' awareness of the importance and effectiveness of using supporting materials, Arin designed a questionnaire composed of 32 questions for four different skills.

The study found that the majority of teachers use supporting materials. They adapt when the book is inadequate for learners and when they need to adjust for their students' levels, cultures, and needs. They proved that there is a benefit of using supporting materials – enhancing visuality. Arin said there are a number of teachers who still do not use supporting materials for young learners, and concluded by saying “supporting materials have lots of merits for both the teachers and the young learners. For this reason teachers should apply them continually.” Although Arin included young learners, teachers would only have some distinct preference in choosing materials compared to adult learners. However, the researcher of this study would still consider it and see the value (how powerful effective learning could be, what impacts it can have

on students' learning progress) and benefits of using external materials of other EFL teachers to compare the findings with her own study's results with her recruited EFL teachers.

2.9.13 Otwinowska-Kasztelanic's assessment

Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2011) studied Polish teachers' and learners' views on teaching culture. They looked at Polish's teenage students' cultural identity, their aims and their motivation for learning English; and they assessed whether Polish teachers of English were aware of what their students' needs were, their motivation to learn English, and whether or not they would seek to enhance learners' intercultural competence. The research was implemented with 239 Polish teenagers from Polish schools and 98 in-service and 135 pre-service teachers of English. The method of data collection was distributing closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaires to participants, which had 25 items for learners and 26 items for teachers. Their backgrounds were also requested in the questionnaire. The statistical Mann-Whitney U tests and Spearman R were used to calculate and analyse the data.

It was found that English is important and it could be used anywhere in the world; and their common reasons were to settle in an English-speaking country or to study / work abroad. Otwinowska-Kasztelanic presumed that Polish learner participants in this study had instrumental motivation to learn English. In terms of teaching and learning culture, it was found that teachers organised lessons around topics, including cultures from English-speaking countries, and then having open topics to promote intercultural competence.

Their choices were mainly influenced by the content of their coursebooks and it was found that teachers were not completely aware of their students' aims and motivations (reasons for learning English). In the conclusion, teachers preferred teaching the USA and British cultures than implementing a wider cultural perspective and this might be because of the content of coursebooks or how teachers were trained.

2.9.14 Benjamin's materials adaptation

A materials adaptation study was carried out by Benjamin (2015). His research is about adapting and contextualizing localised materials. He picked a reading lesson such as "natural wonders" and said in his article:

"... They are directly relevant to the points made above about cultural appropriacy and the culture of the classroom. Although they are culturally appropriate in the sense that they contain no overtly religious overture, they are not appropriate for the culture of the classroom as the centerpiece of this material, the reading texts themselves are about distant places unknown to these [his] learners" (p30).

In his adaptation study, he rewrote some parts to make them more suitable for his students' context, and therefore replaced them with their local things which were from natural wonders that were closer to the students' recognition. Instead of Patagonia, the Everglades and the Victoria Falls that are presented in original texts, he substituted new texts written about the Dead Sea in Jordan, the Jabal Qarah Caves in Saudi Arabia, and the Cedars of God in Lebanon which were more familiar to his learners.

Furthermore, he added some relevant and effective tasks such as the original speaking task, which had been transformed into writing a leaflet for tourist information in groups. By doing this, he had achieved his goal such as

allowing students to learn new lexis by seeing things which are already familiar to them, and he stated in his conclusions: “The result has been the development of materials that complement the culture of the classroom by tapping into the existing world knowledge the members of the class share and adapting the materials to tie in with that knowledge.” He continued: “These adaptations have allowed a blend between the needs of the learners and course aims, as well as the culture of the classroom” (p.34). The researcher would like to see how other teachers are localizing and adapting such materials to bring students’ familiarity into the lesson; and therefore, she will explore how teachers adapt their lessons in this research.

2.9.15 Tseng and Chao’s questionnaire study

Tseng and Chao (2012) carried out a quantitative questionnaire study with college level students in Taiwan. They mentioned that “*Responses of the students were expected to reflect the understanding of culture teaching.*” To access students’ knowledge and awareness, they had a set of questions (such as “When is Halloween? Please note the month”) about American cultural days which are main holidays (these are Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter and Halloween).

The results demonstrated that students got correct answers for the ones they were familiar with or had been taught in class (i.e. Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving) and it was evident that they did not acquire any knowledge about Easter which had not been taught and which was not very familiar to student-participants. In conclusion, they were able to say that “learning the culture in the EFL classroom is indeed helpful for the students to understand

the Western culture” as they were able to see students had already acquired what they were taught. Similarly, Brody (2003, p.38) said “foreign language classrooms may be the unique locus of foreign culture learning.” Therefore, the researcher would like to expand her knowledge on what and how teachers are teaching cultures through coursebooks.

2.9.16 *Shu-Chin’s study*³

Shu-Chin studied teachers’ and students’ perspectives and attitudes about using newspapers and other authentic materials. The findings indicated that both ESL instructors and ESL students had conveyed positive attitudes towards authentic materials of discussions and newspapers. ESL students indicated that the Internet, discussions, newspapers, TV programs, telephone, and computer programs were the most important authentic materials when learning English. The participating ESL instructors expressed that discussions, newspapers, application forms, magazines, maps, stories (printed), internet, and food were the most used authentic materials in their ESL classes.

2.9.17 Other related studies

Taylor-Mendes (2009) has studied pictures (images as discourse) to see whether they have been racially stereotyped in EFL textbooks which represent English cultures(s), as well as outlining teachers’ and students’ impressions of the target foreign-language culture. In his study, he recruited 11 students and 4 teachers in Brazil. He interviewed participants three times throughout his study. He built questions which were based on the EFL coursebooks that they

³ Shu-Chin’s study was found on the internet; however, the published year was not mentioned with the article. [22/02/2016]

were using or books which they had recently studied at that period of time of data collection for the first interviews.

In the second stage of the interview, he gathered groups of teachers and students and then questioned them. After this stage, he called upon a third interview as a follow-up. However, this was not as successful as he planned due to participants' time constraints, and he could therefore only meet a few participants in this stage and some only corresponded by email. Nevertheless, he found that there were three typical things mentioned by his participants: 1. the United States is portrayed as the land of the White Elite; 2. Blacks are consistently represented as poor or powerless, while Whites are represented as wealthy and powerful; and 3. Race is divided by continent (p.72). Although this current study did not examine coursebooks' printed contents' pictures in any depth, the researcher would countenance participants' views on whether pictures and contents are suitable and applicable.

2.10 The Current Research

Those researchers mentioned above mainly studied teachers and teachers' perceptions of teaching culture and culture content in ELT coursebooks. Aiming for language learning in the classroom, learners ought to listen to other peoples' experiences; they should be allowed to discuss and express their cultural personal experiences and learn from classmates' experiences to open their eyes to the world (e.g. a student can know that on Christmas Day in England all public transport is off and shops are shut except for some

restaurants so that everyone has family time) and how Christmas is celebrated in other countries while practising their speaking skills throughout the lesson.

The reason for learning new things and sharing cultural personal experiences is that it can inspire more motivation and enthusiasm, for this is more authentic to them and would be more likely to encourage them to speak out and improve their communicative language skills (Listening and Speaking), and Byram (1989: 121) explained “the ideal of empathic experience of the foreign culture requires learners to be exposed to aspects of the culture in the complexity which propositional description and interpretation can facilitate but not simulate.” In order to do that, teachers should have discussions with learners to get to know their difficulties of learning culture in the class.

However, Case (2013) pinpointed a common problem of these activities: “where... students not coming up with anything to say, or at least not coming up with anything that they can explain in English.” For that reason, this present study will focus on teachers’ difficulties of finding relevant materials for cultural teaching, their adaptation techniques, their choice of activities and their perceptions of teaching culture through coursebooks. The researcher will access teachers’ reasons for choosing such materials since “the problem of material selection is a very serious one for English language teaching” (Klippel, 1994, p.55).

2.11 Summary

This literature review leads to the present study and the researcher's interest: teachers' difficulties of teaching culture through coursebooks in the classroom, the most common materials used for teaching cultural elements, and the activities which teachers use for the cultural concerns lessons. This study will be implemented with the research questions as follows:

Research Questions

1. *Do teachers use outside materials for teaching cultural elements? If so, what are they?*
2. *Why do teachers adapt coursebooks with other materials?*
3. *What activity/activities do teachers use when they teach cultural concerns lessons in the classrooms?*
4. *Do teachers think students should learn culture through coursebooks?*

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines how this study was carried out and what methods were applied to validate the results. In particular, it details how the “data” was collected and how the project was designed and re-designed during the course of the research. This research was originally planned to be carried out with questionnaires, interviews and observations as methods of data collection. However, this plan was altered due to several reasons (mainly because teacher-participants had limited commitment to taking part in the research and were not willing to be observed and recorded). Therefore, the final methods that were chosen for this research were questionnaires with 85 participants and 28 follow-up interviews to ask more details of their experiences and to expand upon responses to their returned questionnaires.

3.1 Qualitative Study

This research attempts to evaluate teachers’ used materials, access teachers’ difficulties of teaching culture through coursebooks and their perceptions of teaching culture in a language classroom. The qualitative method has been chosen to implement this study, for as Higgs and Cherry (2009, p.10) have explained: “by interpreting the lived experiences of practitioners and participants in practice (e.g. clients), qualitative research helps to enhance the researcher's understanding of the nature, processes and experiences of practice.” In a similar vein, McLeod (2008) explains that qualitative research is useful to find out in-depth what people think and feel such as

“understanding phenomena” (QSR International, web accessed, 26/01/2013) and its strength is to show “how people experience a given research issue” (Mack et al., 2005, p.1). It is also useful for “exploring new topics and understanding complex issues; for explaining people’s beliefs and behaviour” (Hennink et al., 2011, p.10), which, in this study, seems to mean the teachers’ use of materials and their perception of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks. In addition, it can “uncover the *meaning* that people give to their experiences” (Hennink, *ibid.*), which can reveal the teachers’ experiences of teaching cultural elements in the classroom for this study.

By means of qualitative research, this study will deal with words rather than numbers and its methods are based on interviews or documents (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.9 cited in Good, 2003). As Basit (2010) suggests, information will be textually presented and without the use of numerical data. Moreover, as a qualitative study is “interpretive” (Warden and Wong, 2007, p.3), Kumar (2011, p.104) explains that the qualitative study helps “to understand feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people”. In order to study teachers’ difficulties, teachers’ perceptions of teaching cultures in language classrooms, and teachers’ use of teaching materials, the researcher believes a qualitative study will be the most suitable method to use, as it considers the context for understanding an issue under study (Flicker, 2007: x). Pre-task open-ended questionnaires and interviews with teachers have been adopted as the methods of data collection for this study, and Richard (2001, p.297) explains that information obtained from these kinds of sources should be called “qualitative measurement”.

3.2 Choosing the participants

In this study, the core participants were teachers as mentioned above. Before the main study was started, the researcher piloted her research designs and the details are presented in the following sections. As for the pilot study participants, the researcher intended to interview 5 teachers as a minimum, and 8 would be a maximum. The researcher expected to get more participants during her data collection, but this would depend upon the situation at that time. The sampling and selection process is one of the most important processes of qualitative research when it is accomplished appropriately (Mason, 1996, cited in Nogami, 2011). Both native speaking teachers and non-native speaking teachers who were teaching adult ESL/EFL courses were interviewed.

As explained above, to look at the teachers' use of teaching materials and their difficulties of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks in classrooms, the researcher firstly went to School 1 in London and School 2 in Liverpool. Before the study started, the researcher personally contacted the directors of these schools and she was invited to visit School 2 before she started the pilot study and main research whilst contacting as many schools as she could. Both schools are run in the UK and are already well-known and accredited with the British Council, thereby giving assurance that they are qualified to stand as language schools.

The major reason why the researcher decided to choose these two schools is that they receive students from all over the world, coming from approximately

87 different countries to learn English in England. The school also employs both English native and non-native speakers who have teaching qualifications such as CELTA, which is highly accredited and earned under the Cambridge English Teaching Qualification for teachers who want to teach English. The researcher's interest was in how teachers deal with teaching multicultural elements through coursebooks in their classes while these students are from different backgrounds. Therefore, the researcher decided to look in more detail at teachers' difficulties of teaching cultures and their chosen materials for their lessons.

3.2.1 The difficulties with recruiting participants while piloting the study

During her pilot study, as explained above, the researcher recruited participants by sending out invitation letters by post and also electronic mails to schools' directors. The researcher contacted over 33 language schools in both the UK and Myanmar, but unfortunately was only accepted by three schools. Many schools declined to participate in this research project for a variety of different reasons, such as being unwilling to give their time voluntarily to answering questionnaires, not being happy to receive strangers in the language classroom, or being unhappy to be observed in classrooms.

One school in Cambridge refused to participate because they stated that they are a busy school as new students are coming in and leaving on every Monday and Friday; in consequence, the school director decided not to impose this extra pressure on staff and students. Another school director responded that, although her school uses coursebooks for language courses, it only has a few

students and few teachers, and she therefore believed that it was not an appropriate school to participate in this research.

Although the British Council in Myanmar agreed to participate in this study, financial and time constraints prevented the researcher from going there for classroom observation of the teaching of cultural elements which is done in conjunction with coursebook instruction. Later, School 5 from Brighton asked the researcher to shorten her questionnaires in order not to take too much of their teachers' time. However, the researcher and her academic supervisor did not find any reason to make changes as this study is essentially qualitative research, and therefore all the questionnaires should be designed as being open-ended to get richer data. Due to this inconvenience, the researcher decided to remove School 5 from her research field list. Thus, School 2 from Liverpool was the only place where the researcher was able to gain access with no restriction for her pilot study, although it is geographically far from the University of Essex where she was studying.

3.3 Language schools from where data collection was taken

To be able to meet teachers who are the key participants for this study, the researcher contacted another 17 schools from both Myanmar and the UK in 2012. Only School 2 in Liverpool replied to the researcher to participate in this research at that time. However, in 2013, a few teachers from School 3, School 4, School 5 and School 6 from Brighton, School 7 and School 8 from London and student-teachers from Essex (School 9) who had been contacted via

personal contacts and some friends' connections agreed to participate. This will be explained in detail later in the following section.

3.4 Recruiting schools

Gaining access to teachers who can mostly be found in schools or University language centres was the key while recruiting participants for this study. During the period of data collection, the researcher tried to get in touch with many more schools to participate in her research and subsequently wrote to Directors, Academic Managers, and Course Co-ordinators of Schools, who are called "gatekeepers" by King and Horrocks (2010, p.31), and who hold the authority to welcome or deny access to teachers and schools. As mentioned earlier, many schools had their own reasons for not being able to participate (e. g. the course director did not want to impose an extra burden on teachers who already had pressure in their daily working environment, and the school was very busy with new intakes every week). One school replied that they did not have many students to form a class and they normally run private one-to-one classes. Moreover, it did not provide a variety of materials for teaching cultural elements.

During that time, the researcher received a response from the school director of School 3 in London. The school's Director of Studies suggested giving a gift card or present for teachers who would take part in this research and to show appreciation for giving their time. The researcher therefore prepared Starbucks £5 gift vouchers. Thirteen teachers participated in answering the questionnaire, but only 4 were happy to be interviewed. The final 2 were only

interviewed as the other 2 stopped communicating with the researcher. Their reasons were mainly connected with having limited time and that they did not wish to be recorded on tape.

The researcher then contacted School 5 again, which had requested her to shorten the questionnaire so as not to consume a lot of teachers' time. There were minor changes in numbering in the questionnaire upon his request as explained earlier in the Research Method Chapter. Following this, he liaised with teachers, the researcher sent out the questionnaire and the Consent Form by email, and the prepaid postage self-addressed envelope was also sent out to him by post for return. A total of 6 teachers completed the questionnaire and all were returned by post as arranged.

At the same time, the researcher contacted School 8, which is one of the well-known Universities from London, and was allowed by the programme director to distribute her questionnaire to postgraduate students (M.A. in ELT and Applied Linguistics) who had prior teaching experience. Students completed the questionnaires. Some were collected in person and the rest were returned to the programme director. These were collected two weeks later, but only a few of these participants were selected for interviews since some participants mentioned in the returned Consent Form that they would be unavailable to find a sufficient amount of time in their busy daily routine. Luckily, the researcher was also welcomed by School 7 from London and she obtained another 10 participants, but one failed to return the questionnaire and thus he

was removed from participation. Only 6 teachers replied while the researcher was contacting them to arrange interviews.

In addition, the Research Participation Invitation was circulated in the Department of Language and Linguistics (School 9). Participants were currently doing postgraduate courses (M.A. ELT, M.A. TESOL, M.A. TEFL and M.A. Translation) and had worked as EFL teachers in their home countries. They were all interviewed, but only a few produced substantial information that was transcribed for interview analysis because some participants did not really talk much and some were poorly recorded as a lot of noise (such as building maintenance or installing something in the building) was included during the interview sessions.

Later, the researcher received a reply from an Academic Manager of School 6, saying she would be able to talk with teachers and see how many would be willing to take part in this study. She eventually returned with the reply that only 3 teachers from that school could do the questionnaire. The researcher sent out the questionnaire pack (including covering letter, Consent Form and Questionnaire), plus a pre-paid stamped and self-addressed envelope to the school. Only 2 questionnaires were eventually returned.

3.5 The snowball sampling

To access the teachers' community, the researcher used a number of strategies, such as using some of her personal contacts and asking them to refer someone that they know who is currently teaching at schools or who runs language

schools in the UK, and asking participating schools to recommend other schools to participate in her research. This method is what is theoretically called the snowball sampling method, sometimes known as “chain referral sampling” (Mack et al., 2005, p.5). The researcher also asked for personal contacts from one of the lecturers from the Language and Linguistics Department, University of Essex, but failed to hear anything. She then requested the Director of the International Academy, University of Essex to distribute her questionnaire and he sent out emails to all teachers, but none of them completed it.

The director of School 5’s colleague from Bournemouth was also contacted and he initially gave some cause for optimism, but this too failed because it was mentioned by teachers that they were all very busy and 30-40 minutes for a questionnaire and an interview was a substantial amount of their time for something that they perceived carried no incentive. Thus, what the researcher has learned from this is that, although School Directors were willing to help and had passed information to teachers, the decision of whether or not to take part is entirely the teachers’ own decisions. Nevertheless, this snowball sampling can also happen “where participants are volunteered to be part of research rather than being chosen” (Saunders, 2012, p.43), and thus another 4 EFL teachers were contacted through the researcher’s personal contacts. One was also contacted with one participant’s help, but this person failed to return the questionnaire as well.

During her data collection at School 7 in London, the researcher was put in touch with a lady who is in charge of School 4. With her help, the researcher was able to gain access to the school and started data collection. The 5 teachers from that school participated in both the questionnaire and interview procedures. The interviews took place in one of their classrooms on the school premises. She was offered the use of the library, but due to some noise and a fear of being obstructed by other people, she declined this offer and was given a classroom to use for interviews.

During this time, the researcher contacted a few of her friends who are in the education industry in Myanmar to help her get in touch with EFL teachers there, since she was unable to travel back home due to financial constraints and working part-time during her study in the UK. However, many teachers did not wish to take part for a variety of personal reasons, such as not being happy to speak out in an interview, never having participated in any research before, and not having much time to fill out the questionnaire after a long day. Nevertheless, 5 Myanmar EFL teachers did complete the survey.

3.6 The use of Language

If the researcher wants to welcome any English teacher to the study, either native or non-native speakers of English, then it is important to consider what language should be used to access and get to know people. This research is based in the UK and, although some teachers from Myanmar were recruited, undeniably the majority of teachers who are employed by language schools and universities are native speakers of English by birth (i.e. someone who was

born in the UK or any other English-speaking countries with English as their L1) and only a few non-native speakers who speak English as nearly native speaker levels were hired. Thus, the researcher has chosen their L1 (i.e. English language) for collecting the data.

In this research, therefore, English was the only language used throughout the study in both parties (the researcher and the participants) during the stage of recruiting participants for the questionnaire and interviews. It was also used when participants were doing the survey and conducting interviews, except for the 5 participants from Myanmar who were contacted and completed the survey via the researcher's personal contact and snowball sampling through friends and old colleagues. The researcher presumed that they were contacted in Burmese, although they completed their questionnaires in English.

3.7 Methodological Triangulation and Designing Research Methods

Triangulation is “the systematic comparisons of findings on the same research topic” (Bloor and Wood, 2006, p.170). According to Silverman (2011, p.269), triangulation refers “to combining multiple theories, methods, observers and empirical materials, to produce a more accurate, comprehensive and objective representation of the object of study” as well as “using multiple sources of evidence” (Yin, 1994, p.91). In addition, Silverman (2011: *ibid.*), Warden and Wong (2007, p.9), and Heigham and Croker (2009, p.11) affirm that triangulation in qualitative methods is using “multiple (a variety of data collection) methods”, which is in line with Basit (2010, p.67) who suggested

“using two or three methods of data collection” such as interviewing, observing, and distributing questionnaires to validate findings.

Simons (2009, p.33) and Bloor and Wood (2006, p.28) argue that one should interview key persons, observing the specific situation where each case is based, audio or video record a group of people or a place, write field notes and documentary methods and so forth; and the researcher picked as many of these methods as she could to validate the data. To achieve this current study, the researcher finally chose several methods: pre-task open-ended questionnaires to teachers; observing their classrooms with the researcher’s own specifically designed observation form and a notebook to keep small field notes to explore the real classroom setting; and interviewing (a retrospective ‘stimulated recall’) to gauge their perception and experiences of teaching cultures in the language classroom. These were applied throughout the pilot study and the details are mentioned in the following section.

3.7.1 The paradigm of Good’s (2003) questionnaire

The researcher has made use of Good’s (2003) study and applied the idea of distributing questionnaires to teachers before the actual interviews are conducted. In his questionnaire, he combined both quantitative and qualitative elements. However, the researcher of this study has chosen to use only a qualitative open-ended questionnaire. The idea was to collect their ideas and reasons, because written answers enable the researcher to review them at any time and some people prefer questionnaires to interviews and observation (which need an extra amount of committed time). Moreover, the questionnaire

can be completed at any time at their convenience such as on the train while they are travelling or doing it before they go to bed. The researcher can also get prior information and ask more in-depth questions when she interviews the participants so that she can validate the answers. The questionnaires which the researcher used for her study had qualitative open-ended questions to give absolute freedom to the participants in their answers. It would also help to avoid participants simply ticking answer boxes without thinking, which might otherwise yield irrelevant/incorrect answers. The researcher also collected participants' profiles and backgrounds (i.e. their teaching degrees, years of teaching and their teaching experiences).

3.8 The Questionnaire pack

The researcher prepared a pack of questionnaires which includes everything such as the covering letter (which introduces and briefly explains the aim and target of the study and the approximate time it would take to complete the questionnaire) as it has to bring "sufficient detail to encourage the reader that they should complete and return the questionnaire" (Basit, 2010, p.93); the ethical consent form (which had to be signed and included both parties' contact details for further use. For further details, please see Appendix 2); the questionnaire (i.e. an open-ended questionnaire. The detailed reasons for using a questionnaire are explained in the following section); and a background questions sheet (i.e. to learn participants' teaching background, to determine the level of education and training that they have been given, and to ascertain their native language, etc.). Anonymity and confidentiality were assured for this study.

3.9 Open-ended qualitative questionnaires

Looking back to the literature and the reason why the researcher chose these specific methods, Kumar (2011, p.145) notes that “a questionnaire is a written list of questions, the answers to which are recorded by respondents” and all questions should be clear, not too personal and easy to understand for participants. Moreover, Denscombe (2010) points out that questionnaires can help researchers to better understand opinions, attitudes, views, beliefs, and preferences of participants; and therefore, all of the questionnaires were specifically designed to obtain teachers’ factual knowledge and opinions. In consequence, the researcher designed pre-task qualitative open-ended “unstandardized” (David and Sutton, 2011, p.253) questions to provide respondents with freedom to express their own words, although this consumed more of their time than would have been the case with closed-ended questions.

Although de Vaus (2002) says that closed / forced-choice questions allow respondents to classify themselves, thus avoiding coders misclassifying what people meant, and that “open-ended questionnaires are more difficult to analyze” (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2000, p.234), the researcher believes that the major advantage of using ‘open’ questions is that “the responses are more likely to reflect the full richness and complexity of the views held by the respondents” (Denscombe, 2010, p.165), since they are “free to provide any answer they believe is appropriate” (Peterson, 2000, p.29).

Furthermore, Marshall and Rossman (2006, p.126) point out that one of the strengths of using surveys is that “results can be generalized to a larger

population within known limits of error.” As the researcher had planned to get as many participants as she could, she thought that surveying would be useful for this study. However, she soon realised that an open-ended qualitative questionnaire would be more useful as it can help to obtain and collect a lot of information from respondents. Although Basit (2010, p.84) warns about the possibility of a lower response rate, saying “questionnaires with too many open ended questions have a poor response rate, mainly because participants prefer talking to writing”, this did not change the researcher’s mind because “open ended questions enable research participants to write a free flowing account in their own words, to explain and justify their responses without the constraints of pre-set categories of responses” (Basit: *ibid*). Therefore, all questions were structured in an open-ended format. When composing questions, they should be in a logical order, going from “easy to difficult” and not starting with “personal questions” (BIZ, web accessed, 10/02/2014). This is the reason why all personal information was asked at the end of the questionnaire. (The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2).

A collective administration (such as school director / course co-ordinators who were happy to spare the time to liaise between the researcher and participants and then control all questionnaires until they were collected by the researcher) was chosen for this study, as this was a more efficient method of collecting questionnaires and helped to increase the response rate. Firstly, the researcher recruited participants (i.e. teachers in this study) in person by visiting schools and then gave pre-task open-ended questionnaires for her pilot study. This method (visiting schools) was repeated for the main study. All questionnaires

were collected the following week (7 days were allowed as the time span for participants) --- some were returned to their Academic Co-ordinator from School 2 who liaised between the researcher and participants, and some were returned by email. However, for the main study, many of the teacher-participants communicated through Academic Co-ordinators, Academic Directors, Schools' Directors and Universities by post and by email. Only a few replied positively to the request to participate in this study.

3.10 The Observation

An observation method was one of the methods chosen initially for this study to gather and validate the data. It was applied throughout the pilot study in combination with field notes. Observation means “watching events and people in such a way that self-consciously heightens your senses (hearing, seeing and monitoring) of what is happening” (Burns, 2009, p.118) or “the detailed examination of participants’ behaviour in a naturalistic setting” (Cowie, 2009, p.166). According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), observation is central to qualitative research and the researcher was certainly able to see the actual atmosphere, actions of students’ participation and teachers’ performance in EFL classrooms which cannot be captured in statistical data.

Such observation explores teachers’ emotions and attention in the class rather than simply counting in numbers, for these things are more abstract than fixed answers of YES/NO. Observation enables and allows researchers to record behaviours, events and artefacts (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p.98) which only take place in “natural settings” (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996,

p.207). The “observation” has an “ontological and epistemological perspective” (Mason, 1996, p.61) as it helps researchers “to capture people’s naturalistic actions, reactions, and interactions, and to infer their ways of thinking and feeling” (Saldana, 2011, p.46) and to observe and allow the researcher to gain “knowledge or evidence of the social world” (Mason, 1996: *ibid.*) by observing and experiencing at first hand. Most case study data relies upon observation and Stake (1995, p.60) also explains that “observations work the researcher toward greater understanding of the case.”

Kumar (2011, p.140) states that “The observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place”, and he continues: “it is also appropriate in situations where respondents either are not co-operative or are unaware of the answers.” Moreover, Adler and Adler (1994, cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p.457) say “we cannot study the world without being part of it.” Observational data “can be used with participants with weak verbal skills and it is also invaluable for providing descriptive contextual information about the setting of the targeted phenomenon” (Dornyei, 2007, p.185). It was, unfortunately, difficult for the researcher to set up a case-study and she also preferred to collect information from a larger population to yield more valid results.

The researcher believed that sitting in a classroom would be the best way to learn the actual classroom setting. Cohen et al. (2011) also explain that the observation can record the events as well as a real-life situation of what happens in a classroom or their collaborative work (i.e. teachers and learners)

as well as focusing on the qualities such as teachers' behaviours. In addition, Parmeggiani (2011) argues that researchers observing the classroom could better understand teachers' communication methods with students and how they are able to facilitate their students' learning.

Although there are many advantages of observation, Bourque and Clark (1994) mention that it is time-consuming, and Mason (2002) emphasizes that observational research can also be resource-consuming. In an ethnographic study, Heigham and Sakui (2009, p.96) explain that the observation is "supplemented with interviews to learn what those in the group make of their experiences". Nevertheless, the researcher had chosen observation and also interviewing participants (i.e. retrospective interviews) as the methods of data collection because the observation would allow the researcher to see how teachers used materials with their students. It would also enable her to see what activities were being performed and how students reacted to them in the actual classroom settings. Thus, answers from the questionnaires would be cross-checked and it would be possible to see if they are actually applied in their lessons. Subsequently, the interview would allow the researcher to have more time with the participants to go into greater depth of the topics she was researching. The observation was done with an observation checklist to catch all elements of the class. The reasons for using this checklist can be found in the next section, and its design can be found in Appendix 2.

3.10.1 The observation checklist form

Many researchers explain that observation is employed as one of the methods of data collection for case studies as it can help to get “authentic data” (Cohen et al., 2011, p.456) as well as provide “a reality check” (Robson, 2002, cited in Cohen et al. 2011, p.456) at the same time as it covers the reality of events in real time (Yin, 2009, p.102). Before starting the classroom observations, Denscombe (2010) suggests that the researcher should have observation schedules which contain a list of items that operate something like a checklist. “Preparing a checklist to tick off can help the researcher save time while observing in the real life classroom setting” (Marshall and Rossman 2011) as it can “ensure that there is a systematic coverage of what is important” (Nation and Macalister, 2010, p.132). The researcher designed her own observation form (i.e. checklist), which included not only items that simply required a tick, but also left a space to write down whatever she noticed in the classroom (see Appendix 2). Her own field notes were also taken during the study.

3.10.2 The complete observer

According to Cohen et al. (2011, p.457), there are four ways of observation for researchers: the complete participant, the observer-as-participant, the participant-as-observer and the complete observer. The last of these, also called “outside observer” (Perry, 2005, p.114), allows the researcher to observe and catch every teacher’s moves and lesson process while completing her observation form. Furthermore, the researcher of this study believes that whether she took the role of being a participant-observer or an observer-as-participant would not make big changes for her study, since they both take her

into the classroom to access teachers' experiences and the real life classroom setting and allow her to focus on the teachers. Therefore, the researcher would like to call herself simply an 'observer' (i.e. taking a role of complete observer). Silverman (2011) also suggests that if the researcher is interested in people's experiences, interviewing only should not be considered as an appropriate method; and, as the researcher has explained earlier, she would adopt an observer-as-participant role if schools were agreeable to this.

Denscombe (2010, p.206) notes that "the participant-observer will be able to see everything - the real happenings, warts and all" and he continues that "participant observation can produce data which are better able than is the case with other methods to reflect the detail, the subtleties, the complexity and the interconnectedness of the social world it investigates." He goes on to mention that "the participant observation scores highly in terms of the validity of the data." However, the reason why the researcher has not chosen to take a role as an observer only and decided to take a role as observer-as participant is so that learners did not feel frustrated or disturbed if they knew someone was coming in every week for an individual purpose. Kumar (2011, p.141) defines participant observation as when "a researcher participates in the activities of the group being observed in the same manner as its members, with or without their knowing that they are being observed." Being a participant-observer enables the researcher to build good communications with learners as well as being a classmate. This approach would also allow her to see whether or not learners are really having opportunities to share their cultural experiences, and

she would be able to gauge their difficulties (if any) of learning culture through coursebooks.

Moreover, “only the human observer can be alert to divergences and subtleties that may prove to be more important than the data produced by any predetermined categories of observation or any instrument” (Spindler and Spindler, 1992, cited in Saldana, 2009, p.46). In addition, Kumar (2011) stresses that the main advantage of participant observation is gaining much deeper, richer and more accurate information. Thus, the researcher of this study would be able to judge if teachers categorically use their lesson plans and other prepared teaching-aid materials. The researcher as the complete observer of this study also expected to learn and balance the pre-task questionnaires and retrospective interview results of teachers’ difficulties in teaching cultural elements through coursebooks while teacher-participants were teaching their lessons as normal. The researcher stood as a complete observer to be able to record all movements of students and teachers.

3.10.3 The observation field notes

Throughout her study, the researcher used both her own field notes which were totally unstructured (i.e. writing down in a notebook whatever she noticed or questions to ask teachers later) whenever it was necessary and she had a pre-prepared (which is a predicted version based on the researcher’s teaching experience) observation checklist if anything fell into what she expected to see (such as students using phones in the classroom or chatting

without paying any attention to the lesson). Some of the questions from the field notes have been asked in the retrospective (unstructured) interviews.

3.11 Interviews

As for this study, the researcher believes that interviewing individuals “face to face” (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996, p.232; David and Sutton, 2011, p.119) is one of the best methods to apply, for this can be “a way of seeking knowledge” (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012, p.239) , and “it gives the opportunity to do in-depth research” (Fredriksson and Olsson, 2006, p.15). Similarly, Duff (1995, quoted in Duff, 2008, p.61) states that interviews can reveal the perspectives of teachers, and Rubin and Rubin (2005, p.3) note that “through qualitative interviews you can understand experiences.”

Yin (2009) argues that interviews are one of the most important sources of information, for they are “transparent windows into the truths” (Alvesson and Ashcraft, 2012, p.240). Therefore, the researcher contends that having a conversation in person (i.e. interview) is a superior method of understanding participants’ moods than ticking little boxes on questionnaire papers. In the latter, it has been shown that some participants are sometimes not patient enough to answer the questions and they may tend to put a tick or circle any number randomly without paying attention to the questions, which makes the data invalid and unreliable. By combining these two methods (using a pre-task questionnaire and observing lessons, followed by interviews), the researcher believed that she could fulfil the objectives of the study.

3.11.1 The attempt to use unstructured interviews

The researcher wanted to begin with unstructured interviews (also called “unstandardized interviews” by Berg, 2009, p.106) which would help her to choose the retrospective interviews for this study. All the interviews with teachers were planned to be done in this way so that the researcher would be able to develop more questions: “adapt and generate questions and follow-up probes appropriate to each given situation and the central purpose of the investigation” (Berg, *ibid.*).

3.11.2 Interview Questions

Having been given prior information that they would be asked about their perceptions and experiences of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks, the participants (i.e. teachers) would conduct retrospective interviews after observing their class and answering “open-ended questions” (Cohen et al., 2011, p.416). This technique enables the researcher to weigh their experiences, their common difficulties and their perceptions of teaching culture through coursebooks in the language classroom. Furthermore, Kerlinger (1970, quoted in Cohen et al., 2011) states that this type of open-ended questioning not only allows the interviewer to examine the limits of the respondent’s knowledge, but also enables a truer assessment of what the respondent really believes. For example: the researcher asked “so when you are preparing for your lesson, ... what kind of criteria do you apply and how do you find your material?”; and then followed up with “then you use your own material or you only just use class books in the classroom?”

In order to facilitate precise answers from respondents, the researcher only asked one question at a time, because asking too many questions at once or asking continuously before the participant has finished can overwhelm or annoy an interviewee (Saldana, 2011 and Mayan, 2009). However, the researcher used “why?” many times following their answers so as to be able to get a deeper understanding of their responses as it was completely unstructured and sometimes said: “could you share with me your experiences of teaching cultural elements?” or “could you explain more about it...?”

3.11.3 The stimulated recalls and retrospective interviews

After observing classes, the researcher planned to interview teachers by recalling their cognitive processes of why they used their own materials and whether or not they felt uncomfortable teaching cultures in the class. The “video stimulated recall is an effective technique for identifying and examining teachers’ thoughts and decisions, and reasons for acting as they do” (Reitano, internet accessed 2012). However, the researcher would only try to record voices rather than make teachers and students feel uncomfortable by recording the interview with a camera. Parmeggiani (2011, p.119) explains that “stimulated recall is a method in which participants are prompted to recall thoughts they entertained while taking part in certain events or carrying out certain behaviours.” Since the stimulated recalls are recalling memory, they should occur as soon as possible after the task is completed (Fox-Turnbull, web accessed 2012).

3.12 Language use in interview

This study was implemented in the UK where English is spoken officially as a first language of the country and the researcher would like to “avoid giving any signs of annoyance” (Cohen et al., 2011, p.422) and make all participants feel they are having a normal conversation. Thus, she decided to use general basic English language during the interview sessions in order to provide clarity. As Patton (1980, p.225, noted in Cohen et al., 2011, p.423) states: “the language of the interviewer must be understandable to interviewees, but it must be part of their frame of reference, such that they feel comfortable with it.”

3.13 Video-taping as the method of data collection

Video-taping can help to see the actual classroom setting --- “the real- time coding” (Dornyei, 2007, p.183) --- at any point of time after the period of data collection, and “it allows researchers to better attend to nonverbal aspects of language interaction” (Duff, 2008, p.139). However, this is not allowed by many schools, and the video-taping can also make learners’ and teachers’ motivation and actual classroom setting hidden, since they know that they are being watched. The researcher experienced while she was recruiting schools to participate in her study that many were unwilling to participate because they felt that it was an intrusive method of data collection. Therefore, the researcher decided against using it and has instead taken a participant-observer role. In this way, participants would only have to teach their cultural lessons and act as normal when schools allowed her to enter the class. This method was initially

tested in the pilot study with two teachers who were happy to have only their voice recorded by facing the camera to the wall.

3.14 Selecting coursebooks for this study

The researcher needed to look at an actual school where classes take place as her research field. There are many schools which run language courses (one-to-one, group classes and regular sessions, etc.). Although they all teach English, they use different coursebooks and she wanted to acquire some knowledge about coursebooks used by language schools. Therefore, the researcher explored what coursebooks are most well-known/most popularly used by visiting schools by contacting schools directly over the phone and by asking students who are currently registered for English courses. It was discovered that the New Cutting Edge series for adult courses (elementary to advanced levels) published in 2005 is mostly used (3 out of 5) in schools, including schools from the UK, Myanmar and Thailand during 2011-2012.

However, while visiting schools, the researcher had been told by two or three language schools in London that there is no particular coursebook on the syllabus for teaching English at their schools, since materials are only generated by teachers randomly. The researcher is seeking to examine how teachers teach cultures through language coursebooks, and the coursebooks which were currently used at the school where the researcher piloted in 2012 were the New Cutting Edge series (from upper-intermediate to advanced levels). In consequence, she picked some cultural lessons pages to study and contacted participants to ask their permission to perform observations.

3.15 The Pilot Study

After choosing the methods, the researcher needed to test whether or not her plan of data collection could be carried out for this study as it is “a prelude to the main study” (Basit, 2010, p.71). The pilot study, also known as “a pre-test” by Kurma (2011, p.158), is a small scale study as a trial preparation for the main study to see whether the questions can be easily understood by the respondents (Kurma, 2011; van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001, noted in Nogami, 2011). Basit (2010, p.72) explained that all researchers should pilot the study because it “will give us a taster of what will be involved in the actual study and help us to scale down our objectives.” Therefore, the researcher started her pilot study by using all her designed methods at School 2 in Liverpool in late 2012. The details of the pilot study of this research can be found in the next section.

3.15.1 Participating school’s profile

The other reason why the researcher decided to place her pilot study at LSE is that it is a recognised and accredited school by the British Council in England, and it is a member of English UK, which is the “world’s leading language teaching association” (www.englishuk.com, web accessed 13/11/2012), thereby enabling it to become established as an academic body in England. Furthermore, the school receives international students from many countries (for example, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Korean and many Arabic students) and it is busy with students and classes in every term. The school also only employs teachers who are native speakers of English and who are well-qualified in teaching as they have earned appropriate teacher’s training

and teaching certificates (e.g. CELTA, TESOL, TEFL) before they take up their positions. Many of them also have a lot of EFL teaching experience both locally and abroad, such as teaching in Japan or teaching private lessons.

3.15.2 The research instruments used in this pilot study

The pre-task open-ended questionnaires, the observation form, and classroom retrospective recall interviews were initially designed for the pilot study. Questions were composed and organised based on the teacher's (researcher's own) point of view such as what courses teachers are leading, what coursebooks are used and whether they are suitable for their classes, what impacts they would think to gain, and their perception of teaching and learning cultures. Thus, the researcher endeavoured to track and collect every piece of information that she could, and she was able to rewind and question in interview if anything was unclear.

The forty questions in the questionnaires were designed as open-ended because the researcher wished to get richer data from the respondents and it was felt that respondents would feel more at ease if they could write anything that was of relevance to them. The observation and the observation form (see in Appendix 2) were designed to catch every moment of the lessons, such as activity, materials and other issues from the classrooms. It was initially planned to use video-taping to record voices from the actual language classrooms which could provide richer data when the researcher came to review and analyse the material. The reason why the retrospective interview was taken into account was that it could help the researcher to learn more from

teachers about why they encounter problems (e.g. why they have chosen certain kinds of materials for particular lessons when teaching cultural elements, and so forth).

3.16 The implementation of the pilot study

The researcher firstly visited the school and had an informal meeting with one of the school directors three months before she started her actual pilot study. The pilot study was conducted at the Liverpool School of English in 2012 with pre-task open-ended questionnaires, classroom observations with an observation form and audio-taping with a tape-recorder of classroom voices to prevent students' and teachers' unease, then followed by retrospective interviews with teachers. Although video-taping in the classroom was also considered as an additional method of data collection earlier and participants (teachers) had agreed to be video-taped, the classroom location and its setting made it quite difficult to station the camera firmly in the actual classroom (for example, it was not possible to raise the camera high enough to be able to scope the whole classroom or there was no extra chair/desk to place the camera). Moreover, some adult students seemed unhappy when the researcher announced that the classroom was to be recorded for the purposes of data collection and analysis. Therefore, classroom observation with video-taping was removed from the research instruments list, and the method of audio-taping the classroom voices was subsequently adopted.

Although the board of school directors allowed the researcher to use the school as her research field, she still needed to engage teachers to participate

in this study. Teachers were recruited following the researcher's arrival at the school. Many of them declined to take part once they had seen the questionnaire pack. The major problems with some teachers were being unable to make the commitment which was required to participate in all procedures, such as spending time completing the open-ended questionnaires as there were forty open-ended questions to answer; being observed in their teaching of cultural elements; and having an interview with the researcher (i.e. retrospective) after the class rather than going home straight away.

To pilot the research instruments, the researcher recruited five teachers who were willing to participate in all procedures of this pilot study. They were currently teaching elementary to advanced level courses at the Liverpool School of English. However, in the middle of the pilot study, one teacher withdrew, although she returned the questionnaire. The reason she gave to the researcher was that the pre-task questionnaires took a lot of her time; therefore, another teacher was recruited. All participants were native speakers of English and who had been teaching English for a minimum of two years. Some of them had worked overseas, teaching ESL/EFL for between six months and two years. As mentioned above, all teachers had finished their teachers' training, and they held either TEFL, Trinity TESOL or CELTA, which are internationally recognised teachers' training certificates. Of the five participants, only one had been awarded an MA. TESOL. However, there was no one who had earned a diploma in English language teaching (e.g. DELTA or Dip in TESOL/TEFL).

Before the classroom observations started, all questionnaire packs were sent out to the teachers and collected the following week. For the questionnaires, there were seven respondents including an academic coordinator (who sometimes covered teaching classes when a teacher was absent) of that school. The researcher also believed that she could learn about his teaching experiences (i.e. problems that he has encountered and his coping strategies) and his perception of teaching cultural elements. Therefore, she invited him to participate in this study and he joined by answering the questionnaire and by giving information at the interview about why the New Cutting Edge is currently used and how he directs courses and teachers, and so forth. However, the classroom observations and the retrospective interviews could only be performed with four teachers who currently taught pre-intermediate up to advanced class, using New Cutting Edge course books published by Longman ELT. The researcher did not take any elementary class in her study, as the coursebook is Total English (rather than New Cutting Edge).

Among all the procedures of research method design, the classroom observation was the most difficult to organise. The teaching of cultural elements was not a recurrent theme, because this lesson was only given when the coursebook presented it and there was sometimes a time clash between two teacher participants (for example, they were doing the same lesson at the same time but in a different room as the school runs 3-4 intermediate level classes in the mornings; therefore, the researcher could only observe one class). In consequence, the researcher had to discuss with teachers to find out when they were about to teach these elements and how they would plan for their lessons,

although the course coordinator had already designed the book schedule for each course.

Before the researcher started her classroom observations and retrospective interviews with teachers, she conducted an open-ended interview with the academic coordinator to acquire knowledge of why New Cutting Edge was chosen for pre-intermediate until advanced classes and to identify any particular reasons why he chose to use it as a series of books for the curriculum at that time. The researcher then received her pre-task questionnaires from the respondents. One of the respondents mentioned that he preferred typing on a soft copy Microsoft format instead of answering the questionnaires on a hardcopy version. The researcher accepted his request and he returned the questionnaire via the internet. After completing this first step of collecting the questionnaires, she double-checked for classroom observation with teachers in order not to miss specific cultural elements in the lessons.

During the pilot study, the researcher could only observe four classrooms with one classroom observation in each level: pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. The classroom voices were all recorded. Moreover, the researcher's field notes were used instead of using her own classroom observation form: the latter was unsuitable because it had too many categories (i.e. it was overwritten in some parts and the spaces were too small to note down the researcher's thoughts, comments and questions on the spot). Therefore, the researcher felt her classroom observation form was not necessarily applicable for classroom work and she shifted to field notes after

her first classroom observation because it became clear that noting down by hand was much easier than ticking marks and writing small notes on her pre-prepared observation sheet. For the first field note, she opened two mirror pages in her note book and noted down the teacher's movements, the lesson's process, the duration for each unit, and thoughts and questions which she wanted to ask teachers in the following retrospective interview. This method of observing the classroom (i.e. using field notes) was used throughout her pilot study.

In the class, while observing the lesson, the researcher adopted the role purely of an observer (i.e. "complete observer as well as non-participant/observant as participant": Gold, 1958, cited in Scott, 1997, p.166; Mayan, 2009, p.78; Cohen et al., 2011, p.457; Creswell, 2013, p.167) in order not to obstruct the teacher and students and to be able to note down every moment of the teacher's actions and lesson process. Therefore, the researcher sat in a corner of the room, where students' seats were arranged in a "U" shape, and the teacher's desk was placed at the left end of the class, which was close to the whiteboard, digital smart media board, cassette and other teaching aid materials. The instruments used during observation of the class were a voice recorder, a graded coursebook for each classroom, a pen and the researcher's book (i.e. fieldnote) which is an essential or useful tool when observing, as Mason (2002) suggested.

The retrospective interviews were conducted with four teachers (from pre-intermediate up to advanced levels as presented above) immediately after their

class had finished. They were asked to relate their teaching experiences, their rationale for the choices of materials used and their perception of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks. Some questions were raised based on notes that were taken in field notes (e.g. why did you choose that video clip for this particular lesson? How did you find it? Did you browse the internet? Did some of your colleagues recommend it?). Although the researcher had originally intended to spend more time in the interviews with the respondents, each interview could take only 10 to 15 minutes due to time constraints from the teachers as they had to prepare for their next lessons or other matters.

All retrospective interviews were recorded by digital voice recorder. All the retrospective interviews happened in their classroom, where there was less noise than in other parts of the school. A relaxed atmosphere was created by having a warm conversation with general topics (e.g. the weather) and then moved on to an open-ended retrospective interview by recalling their memories about the lesson which had recently been conducted. Most of the questions were based on the researcher's field notes (for example, "why did you ask that question to students?") as she observed the classes and to clarify the reasons for teachers' actions. The researcher also followed the respondents' responses by asking "why?" (for example, why do you think so?) so as to develop more depth and detail.

3.17 Modification of the research instruments after the pilot study

After the pilot study and the experience which the researcher gained from the actual research field, she made some changes to her research design, particularly with the pre-questionnaires (i.e. adding two questions into one) as it seemed to take a long time for respondents to complete these. Some participants commented upon the time-consuming element of this questionnaire and some questions were quite similar. The details of what questions were reformed will be explained in the next paragraph.

Oslen (2012, p.119) explains that “the worst questionnaires offer huge blocks of similarly worded questions or are too long overall in a self-evident way.” Therefore, after the pilot study, the researcher scrutinized those questions that seemed similar and subsequently removed some of them. Among the 40 questions, numbers 8, 15, 19, and 31 were permanently removed as they had similar wording. Question number 9 was given with an example to provide hints to respondents. Question 15 was deleted and added to question 14. Questions numbers 20 and 21 and 23 and 24 were combined, subsequently becoming questions 17 and 19 respectively in the main study survey. The final pre-task questionnaire for the main study thus became thirty-four questions instead of forty.

As mentioned above, it was also found that the classroom observation form did not work well in the language classroom setting due to containing a number of unnecessary categories such as time column. Therefore, the researcher took field notes instead where she could freely write down whatever she wished to note, because she felt that she could catch every

moment and movement in this way. While she was in the classroom, she wrote down every change that the teacher made and noted questions to be asked in the following retrospective interview sessions. The major modification after the pilot study was the researcher's instruments, principally in terms of writing field notes and recording classroom voices, as well as changes to the questionnaire, rather than by means of observation alone.

3.18 The second implementation with changes made in research methods

After her pilot study, the researcher started the main study, for it seemed clear that the research designs had worked well. Again, however, there were problems with the long open-ended questionnaires (34 questions) and her research procedures of doing classroom observations and interviews, which many teachers did not wish to do. Nevertheless, the researcher endeavoured to reach her target, and thus she kept distributing the questionnaires. However, many teachers were not happy to be observed or thought they would be taking too much time for this voluntary work. Clearly, this was observation which most teachers could not / did not wish to do, and also the questionnaire was consuming a lot of their time.

Therefore, she reviewed the questionnaire again and endeavoured to reduce the number of questions or combine two questions which were related to each other into one. The edited version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2. Following discussion with her supervisor, it was decided to remove the observation method, since many teachers were not happy to be observed and they did not wish to give an extra hour for retrospective

interviews. This was the main problem that the researcher had faced over 6 months of data collection: i.e. that teachers did not have time for the interview. Moreover, cultural elements lessons were very infrequent during the term. Therefore, she removed this method and continued the study with an open-ended questionnaire which was slightly changed, followed by semi-structured interviews. The questions asked during the interviews depended largely on participants' answers given on the questionnaire and also by their replies in interviews. For example, when a respondent said in the questionnaire about not using a coursebook, it was followed up with "And I have noticed that you said you don't use a coursebook."

3.19 The revised version of the questionnaire (The Final Version)

Although there were a few changes made in the questionnaire, such as combining two questions into one, its layout remained essentially the same. All the questions were composed comprehensively, but were simply structured with the use of basic English vocabulary, for as Olsen (2012) suggests: "The layout of the questionnaire should be attractive and easy to read." The revised questionnaire which was used throughout the rest of the study added a brief terminology of cultural elements, since a questionnaire should be "brief and easy to understand" (Munn and Drever, 2004). For example, cultural elements terminology was defined, in particular the small 'c' cultures such as tradition, customs and food, and so forth. (The details of the terminology can be found in Appendix 2).

To be “reasonably quick to complete” (Munn and Drever, 2004: *ibid.*) the researcher removed some questions (e.g. Q2, Q3, and Q4) which did not contribute any noticeable value, since they only asked how many students are in one class, how many hours teachers are giving lectures per week and how long each class lasts. These could vary in any week or any term and would not therefore produce any meaningful results for this study. Question 5 was made more specific by adding ‘EFL classes’ at the end, and a few more words and examples were added to questions 6, 7, 10, 11 and 13 so that the respondents might be able to recall their experiences as quickly as possible and thus would save their own time. The old Q31 was combined with Q32 and revised in composition, and Q33 was removed, for it seemed to ask for the same information as Q32. All the questions were renumbered and the revised questionnaire was now composed of 29 questions. Thus, this revised version became shorter than the original by 5 questions.

The personal detail section still remained at the end of the questionnaire, as Munn and Drever (2004, p.26) strongly recommend by saying: “Questions about personal circumstances are better towards the end.” However, there were some changes made so that the section was shorter, for some questions were not really adding much useful information and the researcher also wanted to ensure that respondents did not take more than 2 minutes to complete this part. All the questions were put together under Part 2 in the revised version. Questions 3 and 4 (“at what levels are you presently teaching?” and “at what levels have you taught before?”) were omitted. Furthermore, Q5 (“what coursebooks are you presently using?”) was removed because some schools do

not have any specific coursebooks or teachers randomly pick materials from several resources. The remainder of the questions were renumbered in order.

Although the researcher did not want to remove the classroom observation method, this was necessary for the success of the project, since it made potential teachers feel more comfortable. Since the interview was connected with the observation, this also had to be changed, and the researcher connected the semi-structured interviews with the questionnaires for her second version of the data collection procedure by doing analysis on the questionnaires before the interviews were conducted. The number of questions were reduced and combined to shorten the questionnaire (i.e. some questions could be answered together and were joined as one question).

The researcher then contacted School 5 from Brighton again, which had requested her to shorten the questionnaire so as not to consume a lot of teachers' time. The Academic Director of that school was happy to allow the study to go ahead with this second version as he thought it could save teachers' time and not to seem too much of a burden on teachers by taking part in the research. However, only 6 of the teachers from that school participated and were recruited through the Academic Director.

3.20 The use of semi-structured interviews

In the second attempt to collect data, the questionnaire was followed by a semi-structured interview method. Olsen (2012, p.34) generally recommends that “the semi-structured interview is a more systematic and slightly more

pre-planned method than the unstructured interview.” Drever (2003, p.1) explains that a researcher can get three of the following areas from one semi-structured interview. These are:

- gather factual information about people’s circumstances
- collect statements of their preferences and opinions
- explore in some depth their experiences, motivations and reasoning.

According to Olsen (2012: *ibid.*), an interview can be called semi-structured when “the basic scaffolding that fills out the allotted time is set up in advance.” This suggests that the researcher needed to shorten the interview time to 20-40 minutes per participant so that many more teachers could be persuaded to take part in this research.

3.20.1 Questions in the semi-structured interviews

With regards to interview questions, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.135-136) explain that there are 9 types of interview questions:

1. Introductory Questions
2. Follow-up Questions
3. Probing Questions
4. Specifying Questions
5. Direct Questions
6. Indirect Questions
7. Structuring Questions
8. Silence
9. Interpreting Questions

As the second version was shorter, the questions in the semi-structured interviews were “extended through the curious, persistent, and critical attitude of the interviewer” (*ibid.*). Thus, questions were designed to “follow up with more operationalizing questions” (*ibid.*); sometimes Probing questions were

used with some respondents to “pursue the answers”; and Direct questions were also employed to “directly introduce topics and dimensions” (ibid.) when the researcher needed to get the relevant answers of concern to this research. After the questionnaires were returned and coded manually, the researcher was able to generate a few questions to follow up with respondents (e.g. you said you had to use a coursebook; so how long do you spend on lesson planning?). The interview transcripts can be found in Appendix 4.

As Denscombe (2010, p.175) has said, “the interviewer still has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered”, and this is where the researcher had to conduct semi-structured interviews. For example, if there was any question that a respondent omitted, the researcher asked in the interview by paraphrasing “could you explain/ share your experience.....?” Similarly, “have you ever taught any cultural elements?”; and if the participant said “Yes”, then the researcher followed up with “could you explain to me how you plan the lesson, what materials do you use and how you do get them?”

3.21 Transcribing the interviews for coding

All interviews were recorded with an audio-voice recorder, as “audio recordings offer a permanent record and one that is fairly complete in terms of the speech that occurs” (Denscombe, 2010, p.187) and it helps the researcher to be able to replay recordings whenever it is necessary. After all the interviews were completed, the researcher needed to transcribe the sound file

onto the computer (i.e. “typing out the text of an interview” (Olsen, 2012, p.39)) by using Microsoft Word 2008 to be able to perform data analysis.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.178) define from a linguistic point of view that “the transcriptions are translations from an oral language to a written language, where the constructions on the way involve a series of judgments and decisions.” In regard to the process of transcribing, Gibson and Brown (2009, p.109), on the other hand, state that “transcription is a form of *representation* and must be considered as such”, and that “transcription is the process of rendering that data into a new representational form.” These transcripts had the benefit of “saving researchers a lot of time” (Gibson and Brown, 2009, p.111). Moreover, the transcript “allows insight into mechanisms, process, reasons for actions, and social structures as well as many other phenomena” (Olsen, 2012, p.35).

3.22 Qualitative Coding for Analysis

Coding is “the translation of question responses and respondent information to specific categories for the purpose of analysis” (Kerlinger, 1970, cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p.559). Hennink et al. (2011, p.217) explain the purpose of identifying codes and its advantages which applies to all qualitative researchers:

“First, it allows you (*the researcher*) to identify the range of issues raised in the data, and understand the meaning attached to these issues by the participants. Second, codes are used as topical markers to index your (*the researcher’s*) entire data set so that you (*the researcher*) can easily locate every place in the data where a specific issue is discussed.”

To proceed to the next step of data analysis, the researcher nevertheless needed to code systematically all raw data (i.e. questionnaires and interviews in this research) which she collected from participants, as “coding enables the researcher to identify similar information” (Cohen et al., 2011, p.559). Similarly, Gibson and Brown (2009, p.130) note that “To **code** is to create a category that is used to describe a general feature of data; a category that pertains to a range of data examples”, and they add that “in this respect, a code draws attention to a commonality within a data set.” In other views, “Coding is an analytic procedure to fracture, conceptualize and integrate data as a means of building theory” (Strauss and Corbin, 1988, noted in Good, 2003, p.88). Moreover, Glaser and Strauss (1967, cited in Taylor and Bodgan, 1998 and Good, 2003) note that qualitative analysis as a process of inductive reasoning is dynamic and creative thinking that may not be reduced to a mechanical or technical process. Considering that the core method of this study is qualitative, the coding was applied by the researcher when the collected data was ready for analysis.

Above all, “coding is giving a label or categorization for a fairly small chunk of data” (Heigham and Sakui, 2009, p.102), which the researcher collected with questionnaires and interview transcripts; and “a code is a summary term which helps you to recover or retrieve some of the data in a highly purposeful way” (Olsen, 2012). Therefore, the researcher started with line-by-line, manual coding (also known as “microanalysis” by Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.57), direct open coding which is the stage of segmenting words on raw collected data (i.e. extracting or “clarifying expression of single words, short

sequence of words” (Flick, 2006, p.297)), and the “descriptive coding” which summarizes the primary topic of the excerpt (Saldana, 2009, p.3) was also applied in order not to miss even a single meaning of what respondents mentioned.

In this research, both questionnaires (written answers) and interview transcripts were coded; therefore, this process can be named as “content analysis” which “involves an examination of spoken or written communication” (Basit, 2010, p.194). She continued by explaining “it reports textual data in a summarized form by examining the frequency of occurrences in the text”, and this is how the researcher proceeded when coding, interpreting and tallying respondents’ answers for her findings.

3.23 Coding and Analysis for questionnaires

After collecting all the questionnaires from participants from all participating schools, they were analyzed and saved in a Microsoft excel file. In the early stage of coding, she was aided by her supervisor of this study with clear instructions on using Microsoft Excel. Coding in this research was manually done before participants were scheduled for the interviews. After the first cycle of coding (i.e. the draft coding), the researcher ran a second cycle, which is a way of “reorganizing and reanalyzing data coded through First Cycle methods” (Saldana, 2013, p.207). This enables the researcher to categorize and put in relevant categories that she was looking to study. In the following stage, the researcher searched the main coding, giving suitable names to every code: e.g. “CA” stood for “cultural activity” and “CA-diss”

referred to discussion activity. All the process and detail can be found in the following Findings Chapter.

3.24 Coding and the interviews

Before coding, interviews were transcribed as explained above. The researcher adopted the NVivo 9 and 10 software to aid her in looking for data closely on the computer. Since this coding was done with N Vivo coding, it took a little while of the researcher's time. However, she was able to read, re-read thoroughly and review what she had coded in every answer that respondents had given her. The researcher then analyzed her data by applying a coding method for the interview transcripts. The detail on how she proceeded and its sample can be found in the Findings Chapter.

3.25 Anonymity and the study

This study firmly adheres to the principles of anonymity and confidentiality, and this is the reason why none of the participants needed to write their name down on the questionnaire. This can also help the researcher to get more valid answers since it can avoid the feelings of shamefulness or dishonesty. The researcher informed them officially that none of them would be quoted and that synonyms such as P1, P2 would be used instead. The researcher signed the consent forms and then saved all the original documents in her supervisor's office until the study was completed.

3.26 Conclusion

After designing the methods which were most suitable for this research, they were all applied for data collection. The implementation of the pilot study and the reasons why the research methods were chosen and used has been explained in this chapter.

Carrying out the Study (Data Collection)

4.1 The Study

This chapter will present how this research was carried out, what happened and the reasons for it, the barriers that the researcher had to overcome and how she managed to recruit more participants so that the results could have more validity and generalisability.

4.1.1 The beginning of this study

The process of data collection began at the end of January 2013 at one of the language schools (School 1) while the researcher was trying to get in touch again with the Liverpool school where the pilot study was done. This approach was welcomed by the academic coordinator and school's director, and so the researcher distributed her questionnaires to all teachers (7). Only a few questionnaires (4) were returned and only two classroom observations were conducted (30 minutes each class), for only two teachers were happy to take the researcher into their classes. Many teachers were unhappy to participate in the long procedure of this research (i.e. completing open-ended questionnaires, being observed during their teaching and being unwilling to spend a few hours for retrospective interviews, because they were quite busy with students and classes). Moreover, one teacher left the school, and the researcher did not therefore have a chance to observe this class. In consequence, the researcher came to the decision of discounting this school for further data collection.

The researcher then started her study with the school which participated in her pilot study, School 2. Firstly, the researcher gave questionnaires to some of the teachers (6 teachers in total at the first attempt) whom she recruited in person, and the rest were passed on via the Academic Coordinator of that school. She followed up until all questionnaires were returned to her. Most commonly, participants returned the questionnaires to the Academic Coordinator and the researcher then collected them from him. Only one was returned by email.

Many teachers declined to participate in this research for a variety of reasons (the main reasons given were that they were not happy to be observed, they were busy with lesson planning and marking, they did not have enough time to sit down and have interviews with the researcher after classroom observations, and were unwilling to participate unless assigned to do so by the school). Initially, only 6 teachers agreed to participate, but 3 more teachers later joined the study. The researcher arranged classroom observations and set specific times for retrospective interviews. However, only two observations could be completed by the end of March 2013, since there were not many cultural elements lessons: here, the researcher defines culture as traditions, food, customs and behaviours occurring with the New Total English coursebook which they used throughout the term. In addition, some participants were not teaching at that level at that period of time.

Moreover, during the data collection, one of the participants had to drop out as his teaching was stopped unexpectedly and he had to work as an administrator.

In addition, the researcher had to remove one of the other participants from her study as that participant left the school after she completed the questionnaire. The researcher carried on her study, recruited more participants in that school, and also sent out more invitation letters to other schools to join in her research. Unfortunately, she only recruited 2 more participants from the Liverpool School by the end of May, but one failed to return the survey, giving the reason that she was about to leave the job. The researcher still continued to speak to teachers to participate in her research, but she could only get 14 teachers at that period of time. As mentioned in the Research Method chapter, many potential participants were unwilling to engage with the research because of the long open-ended questionnaires and the procedures of doing classroom observations and interviews. The other problem was, at that time in the school, teachers were employed with a temporary contract. This caused them to leave immediately after their contracts ended and therefore prevented them from participating.

The researcher waited to do more classroom observations, but there were no cultural elements lessons from April until June. Over the summer (July until August 2013), the researcher kept distributing her questionnaire packs, but came up against the same excuses that the potential participants were not happy to be observed or thought they would be taking too much time for this voluntary work. At the end of the summer, the researcher had only got 2 more participants, but one never returned the questionnaire and she lost touch with her. The difficulties of this research were becoming apparent. Clearly, this was

observation which most teachers did not wish to do, and also the questionnaire was consuming a lot of their time.

4.2 Changes made with research methods

As explained in the previous chapter, the researcher needed to review the questionnaire and endeavoured to reduce the numbers of questions. The two versions of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2. After having discussions with her supervisor, as said earlier, the revised questionnaire was used to see how it worked. If it was suitable, she would decide to use it throughout the rest of the study. There were no significant changes, but a few questions were amended to make the questionnaire easier and shorter and thereby encourage potential teachers to complete the questionnaire. Two versions of old and new questionnaires were used in this study and analysed as some participants were recruited with the old version questionnaire and it was impossible to ask them to complete it again.

4.3 Participating and carrying out the study

As mentioned earlier, the researcher contacted many schools and used the snowball sampling method in order to get more participants for her qualitative study. Her belief was that more participants would give more valid results, and participant recruitment was therefore open throughout the study until February 2014. The researcher actually spent a year (from January 2013 until January 2014) recruiting and collecting data. During that time, the researcher distributed as many questionnaires as she could. Some people took the questionnaire but failed to return it and some dropped out in the middle of

completing it. In the end, a total of 85 completed questionnaires were collected by the end of February.

The researcher had aimed to interview all participants, but ultimately agreed with Munn and Drever (2004: 10) who said “many fewer people could be interviewed face-to-face than surveyed by questionnaire.” Only a few participants of this study responded to emails and text messaging for interview arrangements and some gave their own excuses for not being able to be interviewed (such as going on holiday or time constraints due to heavy workload). It is also true that “interviewing has limitations”, as Marshall and Rossman have said (2006: 102). To be precise, the major limitation that the researcher faced in this study was time limitation: she had been warned by a few respondents that they only had about 30 minutes for interviews as their next classes started in a couple of hours. Luckily, the two “elite” persons (Marshall and Rossman, 2006: 105; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009: 174) who were taking positions at their schools and universities as Head of Teaching and Learning, Academic Counselling and Director of Studies participated in all research procedures: both questionnaire and interview. They kindly had reserved some time from their busy daily routine for the interviews.

Unfortunately, the other elite person, a Director of Studies from one London School, could only give her time for the survey and refused to be interviewed. Therefore, in the end, only 28 face-to-face interviews were conducted for this study, but three were interviewed via emailing (“the internet survey” (Denscombe, 2007: 9), also termed as “computer-assisted

interviewing" (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009: 149)). In this interview procedure, she sent out questions based on the survey response that participants had given. They were returned to the researcher by email within 24 hours. Only 22 interviews were successfully transcribed for analysis, since some of the interviews' sound quality was very poor and some had loud background noise (such as the sound of engineering works and building maintenance), making it harder for transcription. Moreover, one was not really helpful enough for this research since the respondent was talking about other things which were out of this study frame, and this interview was therefore eliminated.

4.4 Conducting semi-structured Interviews

Rubin and Rubin (2005: 4) state that "Qualitative interviews are conversations in which a researcher gently guides a conversational partner in an extended discussion." Olsen (2012) suggested that questions for the interviews should be planned in advance and "they tend to be open-ended questions such as why, what, who, where, or even less-structured questions." In this process, the researcher read the respondents' questionnaires before the interviews were conducted, then underlined their answers and circled those question numbers that the researcher wanted to discuss with interviewees. For example, if the question was "Do you use coursebooks for your teaching of EFL classes?" and the respondent answer in the questionnaire was "Yes", the researcher asked the question in the interview "Why do you use them?", and this prompted an extended discussion between the researcher and the respondent.

Similarly, if a participant said she used outside materials for her cultural elements lessons, she would be asked why she used these outside materials so that the researcher would have a chance to see the teacher's own thoughts on their use. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 1) explain that a qualitative research interview can attempt "to unfold the meaning of their experiences." The researcher expanded upon these answers and asked further questions to elicit their experiences, to clarify their thoughts and to go far more deeply into their own experiences, as qualitative interviews are meant to put the spotlight on finding participants' "*meaning and experience*" and also focus on their "perceptions" (King and Horrocks, 2010: 26). In addition, the researcher used "Probing questions" (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009: 135) by asking them "Could you share with me other experiences of teaching cultures?" so that she could get richer data and more validation of their experiences and the difficulties that they have encountered.

Basit (2010: 104) explained one of the outstanding features of semi-structured interviews thus: "unlike a questionnaire or a structured interview, there is no need for equivalence or asking the same questions of all participants", and this was exactly what happened throughout the interview stage. Therefore, different follow-up questions were needed based on interviewees' responses (for example: "Ah ok. So do you use outside... adapted material?" and then, "So why do you use your own material?"), but it certainly helped the researcher to explore their cultural teaching experiences in greater depth.

Interviews were held at their schools and universities. The researcher was provided with one classroom to use while interviewing teachers, except for those participants from School 9, who were interviewed in the Social Space, Department of Language and Linguistics and in a PhD student office. To create a pleasant environment, all interviews started with normal conversation, such as talking about the current weather and situations, asking about their class(es), how busy they were and whether they had something to do afterwards, and so forth. This tactic was designed to reduce stress and the tension of being recorded, since “being relaxed creates an environment for a thoughtful, rich interview” (Rubin and Rubin, 2005: 80). The researcher then reminded them that voices would be recorded on her Olympus recorder and also on her smart phone in case the technology went wrong. In the transcripts, the general conversations (e.g. talking about weather) were not transcribed as the researcher thought they were unnecessary.

As mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was followed by a semi-structured interview which was formed with questions based on participants’ answers to the questionnaire. This was designed to validate their answers and learn why they had given these responses; or, as Rubin and Rubin (2005: 175) have said “to get more depth and understanding.” However, only 25% of the participants were able to be interviewed for the reasons mentioned above. Half of them were contacted and some of the participants who had more experience in ELT (as evidenced by their responses to the questionnaires) were selected by the researcher for interview. As stated earlier, many participants could not find the time for these interviews and there were also difficulties in finding

mutually convenient times between the researcher and participants. One interview was stopped in the middle, since the respondent needed to catch a train. Other people lost touch with the researcher and never replied, although she emailed and sent texts to them.

4.4.1 Electronic (email) interview

Interviewing and arranging time with participants was the most difficult part since many of them did not want to spare time for this research. As interviews needed to be done, the researcher subsequently tried to persuade participants to engage in an electronic (email) interview, where “the interviewees reply to the question by email” (Basit, 2010: 107). However, only three participants agreed to respond and sent back their short answers.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the researcher’s choices of research methods, reasons for amending those methods, recruiting participants and sharing her experiences that were gained throughout the stage of collecting data. The following chapter will present how data were handled to answer all research questions.

Interpreting Data and Analysis

5.1 Analyzing and Data Interpretation

Following the data collection, the researcher obtained a wealth of information and her lack of confidence in dealing with this compelled her to seek advice from her research supervisor about how to code, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Charmaz (2006: 43) says that “coding means naming segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorizes, summarizes, and accounts for each piece of data.” Saldana (2013: 3) defines a code as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data.” In the initial stage of coding, the researcher started by highlighting and extracting respondents’ answers on the questionnaires and interview transcripts, and then labelled them as needed.

As Cohen et al. (2011: 561) have said, all of the code names for this study are defined and derived by the researcher’s own creation and also the spoken words by participants which are related to the core of this research. For example, in this study, if a respondent said “acting out in the class”, this phrase should be placed under the code of “role-play” as a speaking activity of the class, and all the sorts of activities are gathered under the main coding of CA (i.e. cultural activity/ies). The details are presented in the following sections.

5.2 Questionnaire Coding

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), coding can take several forms depending upon the researcher's desire; for example, it can be the abbreviation of key words, coloured dots or numbers. To begin coding the questionnaire manually, the researcher made copies of the respondents' completed questionnaires, looked through them, underlined the respondents' answers, and then assigned codes which are "abbreviations of key words" (Marshall and Rossman, 2006: 160) to these answers. Thus, using a coursebook (uCB), using outside materials for cultural elements lessons (OMC) and impact on own materials (IOM) are termed "a priori codes" by Gibson and Brown (2009: 130), for they are "defined prior to the examination of data."

Following this, a few more (about 6) new codes were created, and these are technically called "empirical codes - which are generated through the examination of data itself" (Gibson and Brown, *ibid.*). They are dependent on the researcher's findings and respondents' answers which are nuances, but they are within the boundary of this study. The details of the definitions of codes are presented in the table below. The codes were then transferred onto Microsoft Excel 2008 and a table was structured with 4 columns for the names of the codes, participants' answers, tally and the questions. In this file, all the answers with their associated codes were loaded, and the sample of the draft of coding can be found in the table below (pages 188-189).

Whilst coding, to have nearly 100 percent precise and accurate data when analyzing, all responses (including similar meanings with different

vocabularies mentioned in the answers) were tallied, although Rubin and Rubin (2005: 203) say that “Qualitative analysis is not about mere counting or providing numeric summaries.” However, the researcher believed that she could generalize the results and validate them by counting what was most commonly said or happened and their reasons. A large number of responses can obviously identify the main problems and experiences encountered by teachers. In this study, for example, the researcher was able to discover how many respondents are “anti-textbook teacher” (Grammatosi and Harwood, 2014: 18): i.e. those who do not like coursebooks and who never use them.

In the table, the questions were also written in short form to be able to recall what had been asked and why participants gave these answers. Later, after the basic draft coding (as seen in the table below) had been done, it was developed by labelling the data (“Descriptive Coding”) which is one of the elemental methods of coding that allocates basic labels to data to provide a record of the topic (Saldana, 2013: 83). It was subsequently combined by adding codes together under one code: for example, “stimulation, exciting/excitement pass for both teachers and students” were put under one code of Stimulation, then re-structured and labelled for the main coding, such as Positive Impact, Speaking Activities or Printed Media, etc. (as shown in the italic letter in the second cycle coding stage).

There are occasional nuances between two answers. For example, “TCEN+” means “ Yes - Teaching Cultural Elements is necessary”, (L + C) denotes “Language and Culture are inseparable”, and TCEN+ (L ~ C) is for “language

is also part of a culture”; these were finally put under the code of “TCEN+ (L + C)”, which are under a “code family”, defined as “the collection of codes that can be regarded as belonging together in some way” (Gibson and Brown, 2009). This happened to some codes which could be counted so that they all belonged to one code; hence, they have slightly similar meanings which were given by the respondents. The detail of how codes were developed will be explained in the next section.

5.2.1 Stages of coding

The following example represents how codes (i.e. written in bold letters) were categorized and sorted, then imported to an excel file:

Question 26: *What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concerns lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation/discussion, etc.)?*

P29’s answer: Discussion, Creation of flags, Presentation Festivals, etc.

CA- Diss, CA- Creative, CA-Pres (CA stands for cultural Activity)

P30’s answer: Debate / comparing discussion / research + present

CA- Debate, CA- Diss, CA-Pres

All the respondents’ answers were tallied one by one. The researcher created an excel file to import data with the questions from the questionnaire accordingly. The first column is for the code such as CA (for cultural activities), then the second column is for participants’ answers. The third column is used to tally if answers were given similarly. If there was a slightly different answer, it would be given a new attached code in the stage of first cycle coding: for example, “TCEN+” is for “Yes - Teaching Cultural Elements is necessary”, but a new code was created as (L + C) for the answer of

“Language and Culture are inseparable”, and TCEN+ (L ~ C) is for “language is also part of a culture.” The following table is the sample of the coding data for the questionnaire and how they were saved in the excel file:

Codes	Participants' answers	Tally (based on the 85 participants' answers)	Questions
uCB	YES NO	 	Coursebook use or not?
CA (Dis)	Discussions (Paired/ group)		What activities?
CA (Rol)	Role-play/acting out		
OMC (Newsp)	Newspapers		What outside materials?
OMC (Mag)	Magazines, Guardian, Times		
IOM (Sti)	Stimulation		Impact on using own materials?
IOM (Ext)	Exciting/ Excitement pass to both teachers and students		
IOM (M)	Motivation		
TCEN +	Yes.		Are cultural elements necessary to teach through a coursebook?
TCEN +(L+ C)	Yes. Language and Culture are inseparable		
TCEN + (L ~ C)	Yes. Language is also part of a Culture		
TCEN -	No		Are cultural elements necessary to teach through a coursebook?

Figure 3: First Cycle Coding

After codes were created, stored and saved, they were put together and categorized to find the specific meaning which is alternatively called second coding. The second cycle coding table represents how codes were added

together under one code, and were named after combining some codes together and labelled the main codes. The bold *italics* words are the main coding which was generated after the first cycle coding. The tally represented the number of respondents who answered the specific questions.

	Main Coding	Codes	Answers	Tally	Questions (short form)
<i>Using coursebook</i>	CB	uCB	YES		Coursebook use or not?
			N		
<i>Speaking Activities</i>	CA	CA (Dis)	Discussions (Paired/ group)		What activities?
		CA (Rol)	Role-play/acting out		
<i>Printed media</i>	OMC	OMC (Newsp)	Newspapers		What outside materials?
		OMC (Mag)	Magazines, Guardian, Times		
<i>Positive Impact</i>	IOM	IOM (S)	Stimulation/ Exciting/ Excitement pass to both teachers and students	+	Impact on using own materials?
		IOM (M)	Motivation	+ 	
		IOM (relv)	Relevance		
<i>Necessity of Teaching Culture</i>	TCEN + (L + C)	TCEN+ (L+ C)	Yes. Language and Culture are inseparable		Are cultural elements necessary to teach through a coursebook?
		TCEN + (L ~ C)	Yes. Language is also part of a Culture		

Figure 4: Second Cycle stage for Main Coding

All codes and their definitions which are mentioned below were discovered and used for questionnaire analysis while searching teachers' use of coursebooks, their experiences and their perceptions on teaching cultural

elements through coursebooks. A short abbreviation and definitions of codes was created while coding and interpreting data as shown below.

Codes	Definitions
CB	Coursebook
uCB	Use Coursebook
uCB (S) / (O)	Use Coursebook – sometimes, Often
nCB -	No use Coursebook
dCBA-	Dropped Coursebook Activity/ies
	Teachers’ feelings towards dealing with cultural elements
C (+) / (-)	
CB- infoC (+) /(-)	Cultural Information given by Coursebook
CBC	Cultural Elements Materials
ScM	School Provided Materials
Scc	School Provided Materials for Cultural lessons
LA (+) / (-)	Learners’ Attention
NAM	Why need to adapt materials
AM	Advantage of adapting materials
CBD-	Disadvantage of using coursebook alone
LPDc (+) / (-)	Problems with lesson planning
TCD (+) / (-)	Difficulties with Teaching Cultures
TCPM	Problem Management in classroom
OMC	Outside Materials for Cultural Elements Lesson
OMCS	Outside Materials Sources
IOM	Impact on using own materials
CA	Cultural Activities
Omt -	Omitted Topics
	Are cultural elements necessary to teach through coursebook
TCEN (+) / (-)	Should students learn these cultural elements
LCS (+) / (-)	

5.3 Transcribing interviews

“Transcription is the process of converting recorded material into text” (King and Horrocks, 2010: 142). To provide confidentiality whilst transcribing, the researcher represented herself with the pseudonym “R” and the respondents were “P1, P2, etc...” which stands for participant. A total of 22 out of 28 interviews were transcribed in order to perform data analysis as some of them were recorded poorly (largely as a result of the noise of building construction and maintenance) and a teacher left in the middle of an interview session to

catch his train. They were transcribed within 48 hours after the interviews were conducted. There were, however, a few words which could not be transcribed due to unclear voices. All transcripts were read twice while re-listening to sound files before coding. Selected extracts of the participants' words that were felt to carry high value in explaining their meanings and feelings were taken, interpreted and coded from all the in-depth interviews. All data were saved in NVivo 10 software until all the transcripts were coded, and the codes were then exported to a Microsoft file for analysis. The common and similar answers were counted so that it could easily be seen which were the most frequently used or which were less mentioned by interviewees.

5.4 Coding interviews

As mentioned above, while coding the interviews, the researcher applied NVivo 10 software, which was the latest version at that point of time and quite systematic and easy to use. The method she used was the same as that for the questionnaire (i.e. descriptive coding), as she put words or short phrases for themes arising from the search for this study and then examined what and why these were particularly mentioned in the respondents' answers. To undertake the process of coding, the researcher first imported all interview transcripts into NVivo and saved them under an Internal box. Nodes for coding were then created (under Nodes), and all interviews were subsequently coded individually in NVivo.

To be able to go through the codes as easily and quickly as possible, she named nodes with short questions written in a small description box, and then

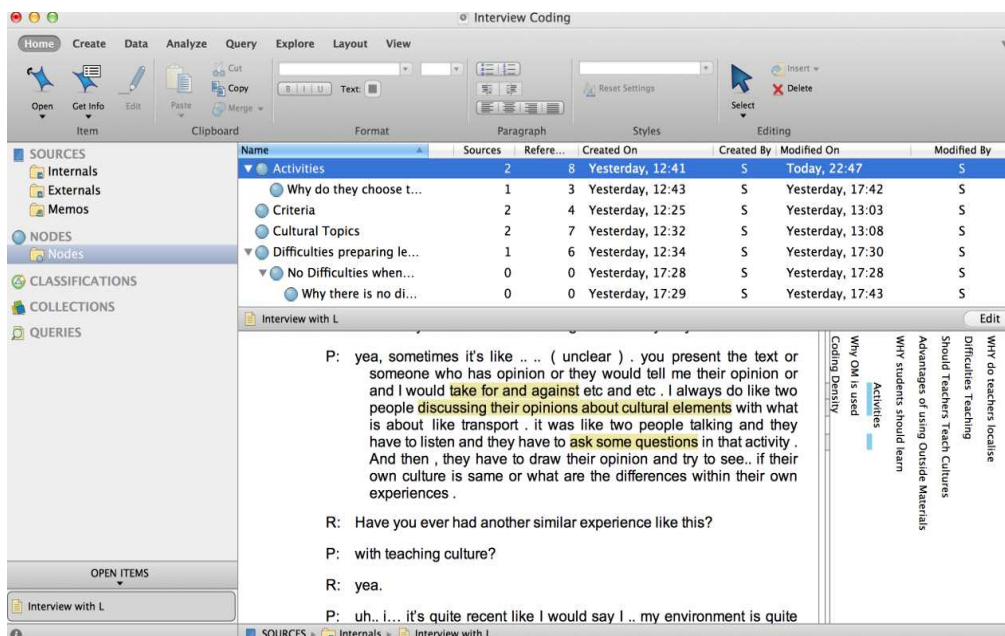
dragged and dropped pieces of information which she wanted to code. The “Value Coding” (Saldana, 2013: 110) applies to codes for the respondents’ perceptions, attitudes and beliefs which reveal participants’ perceptions on teaching and learning cultures through coursebooks in the classroom for this study, for this can help coding “intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences” (ibid: p.111). The “Narrative Coding” (Saldana, 2013: 132) explores participants’ experiences of their successes and failures in teaching cultural elements through coursebooks.

All of these codes were elaborated after the first stage of coding. Initially, some codes which were typically apropos to this study (e.g. activities, criteria for lesson planning and choosing materials) were created in Nvivo software. Some of the participants’ words were extracted and put under relevant codes. The codes were branched when respondents gave reasons for doing particular things. For example, the code of “activities” collects what sorts of task are given and the branch of “why do they choose them?” accepts respondents’ reasons why these specific activities were selected.

As aforementioned, the purpose of coding is to examine closely the data that the participants gave, and the researcher therefore interpreted all the material gained from both questionnaires and interviews. To be able to present her findings and answer the research questions clearly, she tallied the most common answers and put them under one main code. If there was a slightly different meaning, she created a new code and interpreted this in the second stage of coding, then tallied the other answers and put them into the closest

main coding. For example, “compare and contrast” was said commonly, so it was tallied and counted; then, “sharing ideas” was added on and they were all coded under “cultural activity of communicative skill.” In particular, the reasons, the feelings towards coursebooks, the activities that teachers use in classrooms for cultural elements lessons, and the impact of using their own adapted outside materials along with coursebooks were coded and analysed, for these are the main focus of this study. All of the findings are presented in the following chapter.

The following screenshots help to illustrate how the researcher went through this process, such as how the interviews were coded in NVivo software and how things were manually coded, stored and sorted by using Microsoft excel on the researcher’s personal computer.



The screenshot above shows some codes that were extracted and coded in NVivo while coding and analysing the data which is similar to questionnaire coding. The screenshot below presents how data were

portrayed in Microsoft excel after the second coding was done. This represents the final coding stage. In this stage, the code “CA- Cultural Activities” is put under the main coding of “Speaking” and dictation and other similar tasks were stored under “Vocabulary”. For example, *CA (Activities)* stands for cultural activities: thus, under the umbrella of Speaking Skills, the sorts of activities such as discussions, debates and presentations are tallied and added to the same category as seen below, in order to answer one of the research questions of this study. The Q&A and Talk for and Against are added to the discussion later as they bring similar meanings and this is highlighted to make it visible to readers of this thesis.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
9	CA (Activities)		DONE			
10	Speaking	role plays	IIII			
11		sort of speaking activities	I			
12		discussion(group/pair/class)	IIIIII			
13		debates	IIII			
14		presentations	IIIII			
15		powerpoint	II			
16		Compare and Contrast	III			
17		a communicative approach	I			
18		Interview	I			
19		start off with what do you in your country . what are... these elements	I			
20		sharing ideas	II			
21		news about their countries	I			
22		poster carousel	I			
23		Talk about similarities and share info / Talk about festivals in their countries	IIII			
24		Talk for and against	I			
25		Q & A	IIII			
27	Vocabulary	dictation	III			
28		finding errors in text	I			
29		learning new vocab	III			

As explained, all codes were exported to a computer after the coding was done to evaluate and analyze what was commonly said: for example, “discussion” belongs to the coding name of “CA- Diss”. The activities such as discussion and role-plays were put under “speaking skills” in the main coding. It was interpreted as typical activities when there were many tallies counted among other activities that participants favoured using as seen in the screenshot above.

Some other main codes were also gathered (in particular, on using outside materials, the reasons and their impact). Moreover, teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning cultures were examined, and the findings will be outlined in the next chapter.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented how data were processed, stored, analysed and interpreted. The next chapter will reveal the main findings of this study.

Findings

6.1 Introduction

Following the data collection, transcribing processes, and analysis, this chapter outlines the findings and endeavours to answer the research questions proposed in the literature review. With regard to the nature of the qualitative research method, Harding (2013: 105) mentions that “the researcher will, on occasions, need to choose between the words ‘some, many or few’ to give an indication of the number of respondents whom codes applied to.”

The researcher believes that she ought to report the findings as accurately as possible, and thus she has tallied the respondents’ common or similar answers while coding for analysis to enhance precision. Undeniably, though, she presents some answers with words, and the results will therefore be presented in both words and figures, whichever is best suited for the presentation of the data. In addition, the researcher will cite a few respondents’ answers as quotations, since “Quotations remind people of your (my) evidence” (Drever, 2003: 84), but they will be given pseudonyms (e.g. participant 1, or one participant said) whenever it becomes suitable to represent participants’ beliefs, opinions and feelings while reporting the findings. Moreover, Morgan (2010, cited in Harding, 2013: 177) suggested adding a few quotations in the reporting of data as:

“quotations provide valuable evidence for the credibility of the analysis, because they generate a direct link between the more abstract contents of the result and the actual data; they are also the strongest connection between the reader and the voices of the original participants.”

In a similar vein, Hennink et al. (2011: 280) say:

“The use of Quotations is often seen as a means of validating the issues reported, to show that they were indeed evident in the data in the way the researcher described. Using quotations can therefore seem like an effective tool to demonstrate validity.”

All the findings presented in this chapter are based on the 85 teachers’ responses from the questionnaire and the 25 interviews (including three emailing interviews). The researcher framed questions in the questionnaire openly to let participants disclose their perceptions and experiences, but unfortunately, some questions were ignored by some participants (mentioning N/A or x or -), and the sample of returned questionnaires can be found in Appendix 3. Moreover, sample answers were given with some questions to save participants time and so that they could understand the rationale of questions rapidly while answering the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the positive thing about the questionnaire was that it was structured in a completely open-ended format --- for example:

Q: How often do you use coursebook(s) in class(es)?

The details of the format can be seen in the appendix of a sample questionnaire that was used throughout the study, and this helped the researcher to get richer data, for some teacher-participants gave more than one answer to certain questions as seen below:

Participant 1

Example Q: Why do you use a coursebook?

(e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.).

A : Requirement of school, convenient to have structure including practice (though grammar often a little disappointing).

6.2 Data presentation and Anonymity

All presented data (i.e. findings, words and quotes of participants) are attached with a pseudonym such as P1, P2, P3 to preserve confidentiality which means “the identity of the participants is not disclosed to anyone by the researcher” (Basit, 2010: 61) and it was officially agreed and signed by both parties (researcher and participants) on the ethics forms which were distributed before they started participating in this research.

6.3 Teacher-participants’ backgrounds and their participation

Of the 85 participants, 26 were non-native speakers of English who have taught English in their countries; some are currently teaching in the UK and a few of them are currently teaching in Myanmar, employed by private language schools. Some participants of this study have also done a few years of overseas teaching (e.g. have taught in Thailand, Japan and other countries where English is taught as an EFL). This has given them a broader experience of teaching English in a variety of different settings, such as a group of monolingual students or a mix of bilingual students or mixed varieties of

nationalities studying English in one class (what we commonly call a multi-cultural classroom). Their teaching experience ranged from novice (beginner level in teaching) up to professional level. Teachers who have less than 2 years of teaching at the time they participated in this research have been classified as novice teachers, whereas those who have already been teaching English for more than 10 years are put under the professional category. Teachers are considered experienced if they have between 2 years and less than 20 years of teaching.

The following table shows the number of teacher participants, both native and non-native teachers of English, and their years of teaching experience.

	0-2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	More than 10 years
Native speaker Teachers	8	16	16	19
Non-native speaker Teachers	5	8	13	

Table 3: Teacher-participants' years of English language teaching experience

All teachers who participated in this study have some years of teaching experiences as shown in the table above and they have had to learn by themselves about cultures. To be precise, all of the participants stated that they have learnt some elements of cultures through their daily lives (especially teachers who have taught abroad such as in Asia or in the Middle Eastern countries), by living abroad for certain periods, by doing overseas teaching for some years, and by reading news and traveller guides such as Lonely Planet and websites (e.g. tourism websites, language teaching websites).

Some participants confirmed that this learning and their cultural experiences have helped to promote their cultural teaching. Many of them would share their cultural experiences with students: for example, on things that had happened when they lived in countries, or what they think they should let students know so as not to make the same mistake (such as showing one's bare feet towards hosts while sitting on the floor when he was invited for a meal, which is considered as inappropriate manners in some cultures, while the same practice is considered appropriate in others).

Some teacher-participants explained that many students are interested in these kinds of cultural topics conversations, and that bringing their experiences into the classroom and sharing with their teachers and classmates is really helpful for students. This strongly suggests that teachers sharing their own personal experiences which they have encountered really motivates students; and teachers also believe it helps students to improve their speaking skills because it encourages them to converse in English by combining their own experiences and their personal interests which can broaden their horizons. They feel more relaxed and build up more understanding towards different people and different ways of doing things. Notably, some participants said sharing personal experiences can also help to improve better communication between teachers and students.

6.4 The analysis of teachers' use of coursebooks

It is worth noting that 96% of the teachers who participated in this study used a coursebook for their lessons, although their use of it varied depending upon their purposes. Therefore, it is possible to agree with Akrian (2008, noted in Humphries et al., 2014: 44) that “more than three - quarters of teachers use a textbook for over half of their teaching.” Three out of 85 participants mentioned that they did not use coursebooks and their reasons were explored in the interviews.

They mentioned that the coursebook contents were sometimes irrelevant for the students they taught, and the coursebook was unable to capture students' attention entirely, especially when it presented profiles of celebrities who had been famous 5 or 10 years ago. This therefore led the teachers, in their eyes, to believe that the coursebook was already outdated for the current students they have in their classroom; and, in consequence, the role of material adaptation (i.e. using outside materials which are updated to draw students' interest and conjunct with coursebooks' linguistics, grammar perspectives and activities which are selected by coursebooks' writers) became essential for them, for showing realia (such as P26's showing a hat of Father Christmas) to students was the most effective way of learning.

Some teachers who participated in this study wanted to give a more authentic touch and to expose the students to current issues, rather than using printed coursebooks which were already old (having been printed and published 3 to 5 years previously). They therefore combined their coursebook with their own

materials which were collected from somewhere else (e.g. extracting some photos from current newspapers or downloading pictures or texts from the internet websites or introducing local cuisine) and which were more relevant and helped to improve the students' language skills.

One participant tried to make her students feel the real sense of Christmas and another said:

“...under the influence of outside western cultures and mainland China culture and.. more and more young Tibetans like to eat modern food. They neglect their traditional food, so I will start introduction about traditional Tibet food.”

The detail of the common sources from which they obtained materials will be presented in the following paragraph. The following chart represents the current study's results of the teachers' frequency of the actual use of a coursebook.

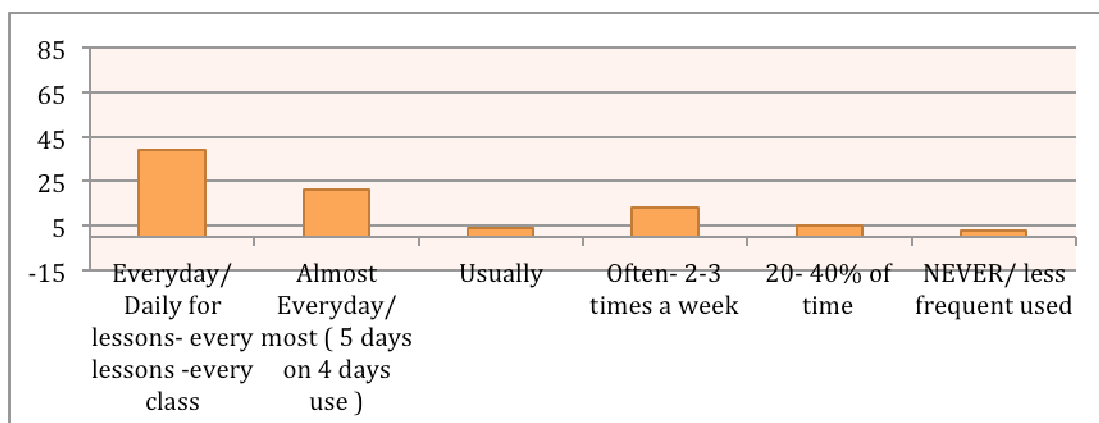


Figure 5: The Frequency of Teachers' Use of a Coursebook based for EFL teaching classes

6.5 The reasons for using coursebooks in relation to culture

Following this, the research evaluated the criteria and the reasons why teachers needed to use a coursebook, and these are presented in the pie chart

below on page 206. The majority of them used a coursebook to meet school/programme requirements (for example: P14, P19, P25, P30, P34, P43, P44 and P57) since it is part of the school curriculum and they have to follow the syllabus, although they do adapt some outside materials for their lessons. P29 answered in his questionnaire:

“... the institutions I have worked for asked me to work with special coursebooks, and they provide a well-structured plan.”

Some other teachers relied on coursebooks simply as material or as a reference for their classes (i.e. a useful tool), for they thought it was already a ready-made resource for students, it provided a structure, and it was a material which connected teachers and students. Others made more use of them due to time constraints, for they reduced preparation time. For example, some respondents said:

“ready made material.” (P32)

“We use coursebook as a reference for the students.” (P10)

“We don’t have time to create new materials for every class.” (P6)

“Because they save my time to plan the class.” (P16)

“Coursebooks helps me save my time.” (P9)

Thus, teachers are saving their own time rather than exploring the topic in detail and creating their own materials; but again, some of the participants mentioned that they were pressured to finish the course on time and needed to focus on exams for language perspectives which students were due to do at the end of the term. Therefore, these teachers placed more focus on the coursebooks’ content and had more consideration of time constraints rather

than giving rich knowledge with their own adapted materials. This seems one of the drawbacks for some teachers who work towards the specific aims of passing exams: it prevents teachers from producing more suitable and more interesting materials, and students are only learning English (and teachers are teaching English) simply because it is prescribed under the school's curriculum as a course to do. Similarly, the coursebook is basically a book (i.e. a material) for those who want to learn a foreign language and is considered a quick and easily accessible method for specific students to follow. Therefore, some teachers use coursebooks regularly in class and give homework so that students will have a chance to do their own studies in their own time.

Teachers consequently adapted the coursebook as a language source of material. For example, P11 said "I use coursebooks for my classes to refer language structure and topics"; P18 said "To teach grammar, vocabulary, and some cultural aspects"; and P 22 said "I use coursebooks for the language elements and other materials for more details for cultural information." P3 had two reasons for using coursebooks: first, he was given no choice for the morning class, and second "On the other occasion it's usually about being able to find reading and listening text that I know will work." They also used it to deal with a language area, for topic structure, for vocabulary, reading texts, and writing, listening, and speaking activities, by referring to www.oneenglish.com, newspapers, BBC news and other kinds of materials such as postcards that suited their lessons. Again, however, they often had to adapt or simplify reading texts depending upon the students' level of English.

Only two teachers mentioned that they used a coursebook to keep the class standardized, and some said that it contains a consistency within it which they thought was very comprehensive, easy and useful for students, so that the latter can follow up the progression of learning English (for example, P26: “It is structured and detailed, and it is specific for students to follow. All the school exams will follow the content in the textbook.” Similarly, P27 said “Both students and teachers will have clear direction of what they should be doing in the course.”).

The reason with the lowest percentage for using a coursebook was to stimulate students, which could mean anything that teachers needed as a visual material (such as pictorial illustrations) that can be classified as “authentic materials” or something with which they were familiar. Many teachers experienced (and hence, mentioned) that bringing outside materials such as using youtube videos together with coursebooks was more stimulating and engaging, and made the lessons in the classroom more enjoyable. There is one other reason for using a coursebook, as P31 said, namely that her school sells coursebooks to students when they register for courses as these books are prescribed by schools for such specific courses.

The pie chart below makes it clear that some teachers used a coursebook for EFL lessons as it gave them the topics and ideas for activities, as well as how to find other outside relevant materials. In the following section, the researcher will outline whether teachers adapt other materials for their lessons and what

materials are used for their lessons on cultural aspects. These considerations form the major part of the analysis of this study.

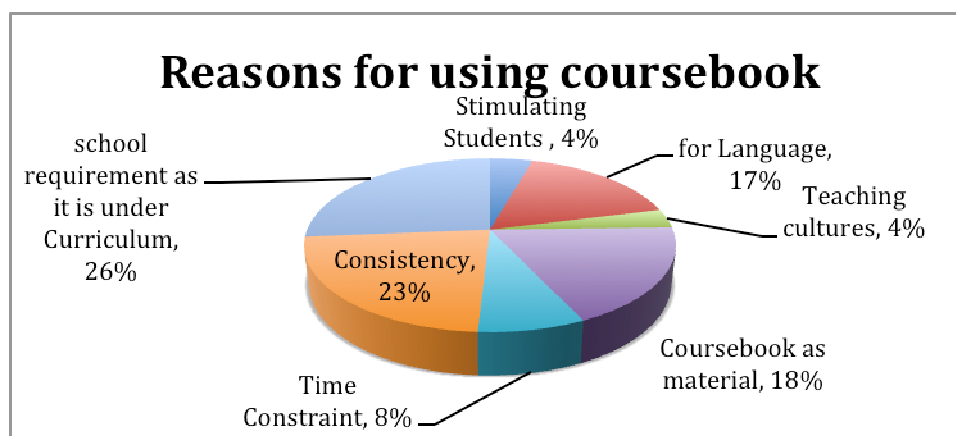


Figure 6: Reasons for using a coursebook for EFL lessons

6.6 The Contrast: Dropping coursebooks and their activities in relation to culture

Frequently, coursebooks are mentioned as having very outdated materials (e.g. P40 said, “Most coursebooks are out-dated”) and irrelevant content (e.g. celebrities mentioned in coursebooks are not known by some young students nowadays as they had been famous only at the time when the coursebook was first published, or activities do not seem to be applicable to the students). P8, for example, said: “My opinion is that teachers sometimes drop coursebook activities for they want to adjust the language activities according to the students’ language needs”, and P9 explained:

“First, it depends on the students’ character. Some students seem to be too quiet to take part in the activities and some are active to participate that they influence the quiet students. So, as the teacher, I have to change the activities and use the other materials. Second, it depends on students’ interest and level.”

Teachers have to manage when topics are not related to the students’ ages (such as some adult students who are 45-50 years old do not like talking about

going out, or some groups of students do not like talking about music, magazines, etc.) and P44 mentioned this as follows:

“sometimes you got a group of 20 years old. It’s fantastic but if you have 20 years old and one person is 60, you kind of ... have to change the way you teach. Yeah.. what you’re presenting....”

She continued giving another relevant example when the researcher asked her to share her experiences:

“.... it was a closed group of women and they were very traditional I say and so they told me they don’t want to talk about music, magazines, fashion. They are not interested in that. Their religion is kind of prohibited, so they will not be.. they don’t want to talk about it.”

Looking at these teacher’s comments, the researcher can see that some students make the teacher facilitate their wants and needs and therefore avoid topics and activities that they do not want to do. In addition, the constraint of time has been one of the reasons for dropping some of the coursebooks’ activities for some teachers. One other respondent said “they are too general and are poorly presented, such as sometimes grammar explanation is more needed or their lack of effective teaching of grammar concepts or instructions are unclear”; and another participant (P5) explained why he needed to change topics to inspire students’ interest in lessons:

“My... I instantly roll my eyes when I see food in a course book. Umm. Most of the students have done some learning in their own country before they have come here and they have already studied food. Long before they have come to England. So when I see a course book and it’s got ‘British Food’, I..I instantly switch off because I know they have done it and I if I give it to my students I see them responding in exactly in the same way. Like, ugh, food... They are hardly interested at all, unless it is something, a new angle on food entirely (Unclear).”

Teaching English to many students who bring different cultures, different religions, beliefs and other backgrounds to the class therefore compels teachers to either drop coursebooks completely or change topics and swap activities so that the lessons are made more suitable for their students. P1 said “The content might not be appropriate for cultural (religious reasons).” One other respondent (P19) explained in the interview as follows:

“a topic in the textbook about going out around the world, so I have to kind of like trying to define all this thing...all the things that association to going out, either to go clubbing, drinking, dancing, or going out for restaurant, eating, so going on a date.... So... I try to kind of like how to work out all this in terms of language and in terms of how make them adaptable to the culture and context I teach there, in which I teach.”

These alternative strategies (such as “going out” becomes changed to the nearest local context of going out to a restaurant or adapting / replacing with other materials) help to put the lessons into a situation with which students are familiar and help the classes become more enjoyable. P19 continued to explain regarding the use of his own materials as “...yeah... because sometimes in the book and I try to add more and elaborate more examples and.. I relate some of the local elements.” In this regard, teachers can have a good atmosphere in the classroom by adapting suitable materials and localizing the context where students are culturally allowed to fit in (i.e. using materials or cultural examples that students are familiar with, and allowing them to have more motivation to use more words in English). One participant (P9) said: “..sometimes I have to compare to our culture which are similar to theirs. For example, in explaining the word “parade”, I have to compare the way our people do in ‘Shin Pyu’ ...”

Moreover, half (40) of teacher-participants wanted a variety to avoid boredom in the classroom. In consequence, they have dropped coursebooks. P35 said they were “boring”, P29 said “some activities may be dull.....”, and P21 said “When the coursebook activities are boring which cannot rise students’ interest....”. P67 mentioned “‘head down’- there’s a need to ‘head up’” for presentations, visuals, interactions (pairs, mingles), and therefore, he was in favour of more interesting activities such as showing a video clip and using more visual materials; or teachers sometimes used authentic materials such as showing videos which seemed to “supplement authentic material” (P4); and “supplementing with real life materials” as one participant (P44) said to engage students with lessons in the actual language classroom settings, although she did not precisely mention what sorts of materials she used.

Another reason for dropping coursebooks was that activities were rather impractical (because of the mismatching with students’ levels, different target students’ backgrounds, different classroom settings and the number of students in the classroom). Some participants reported that they occasionally have to think about students’ ages when they use coursebooks. If students are very young, they cannot bring sufficient background knowledge to participate in the lessons, and teachers therefore have to create a balance by dropping the coursebook and seeking to adapt relevant and suitable materials accordingly. P59 explained “some tasks seem ‘childish’- i.e. aimed at young learners..” P16 said “They’re not suitable for the class English level. Or I feel the students have difficulty learning from the textbooks.”

P39 explained that she may have to redesign: “If it’s not practical to apply those activities, I will skip them.” Similarly, P37 mentioned that she will drop a coursebook and gave a reason as “sometimes I’ll skip a lesson because it doesn’t make sense or it’s boring.” Although she did mention it briefly in her questionnaire, she did not give any reasons for doing such things and she did not participate in the interviewing sessions; therefore, the researcher did not have any chance to explore this in more detail.

Moreover, some were unsuitable or culturally inappropriate, particularly with regard to students’ religions and cultures, such as talking about sex, drugs or alcohol; or criticizing someone, which is not openly permitted in some cultures. Thus, P20 said: “Sometimes the activities or lesson in the course book may be culturally inappropriate or bland”; and P63 mentioned: “Unsuitability for that particular class.” He was teaching in-session support classes, Academic Oracy, Development Studies and Research Methods at one University in London while participating in this research, and therefore, it cannot be presumed to which class he was referring.

6.7 Teachers’ perspectives of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks

Two-thirds of the teacher-participants felt positive about teaching cultural elements through coursebooks as these help students with the language and broaden their knowledge. P16 said, “Knowing the culture of the language is a great way to inspire the students and to broaden their horizon.” Similarly, P23 explained, “Culture can help the learner understand the language better.” Many participants said that every language has been embedded in culture, and

thus it has been said that a language cannot be learnt without learning culture. Some said “language and culture are inseparable / cannot be separated” (P60, P66), and P28 expressed her thoughts as “Not necessary, but useful”. P29 explained:

“All depends on the culture, the teacher and the course. It is important for students to know different realities.”

P35 felt positive towards teaching cultures and thought that teachers can teach cultures with other materials:

“I think teachers need to teach cultural elements but not necessarily through coursebooks. Teachers can use other materials to support their teaching.”

One other participant (P57) gave the example of saying “Please and thank you” in English, which is a necessary cultural thing, and she had to explain this to her students whenever she came across that point. They agreed that cultural elements can help students to understand more and to use language better, as such teaching can motivate them to speak, listen and practise their speaking skills. Cultural elements can also create a room for students to present their own cultures and share their cultural experiences with their classmates. One said that teaching cultures could inspire “students’ motivation” and it is “an opportunity for students to explain themselves.” Having included cultural elements lessons and topics, teachers will be able to build a dynamic classroom and this is seen by some participants as a “powerful aid” and a “powerful method of teaching the language.” One other participant (P21) mentioned that she was not familiar with all cultures that are presented by coursebooks and it took her a lot more time to prepare the lessons than other language lessons, for she needed to develop knowledge herself first

and find the relevant documents and references for lesson planning before she delivered the sessions.

Many (80) teachers said it was good to have cultural elements in coursebooks, and had positive attitudes towards having them in coursebooks where students can widen their knowledge, can learn new vocabulary and grammar and where students are given more room to practise their skills. In addition, it is “exciting” (P1 and P8) to know cultures across the globe and it gives students the chance to understand more about other cultures, for it can “promote discussion” as one participant said. P9 mentioned that “Dealing with cultural elements in the coursebooks is my favourite part. It is interesting, knowledgeable and worth sharing to my students.” P12 said similarly, “It is very interesting and can make students get to experience new things.” P29 voiced “It’s interesting because most students don’t know much about other cultures, so it’s an opportunity for them to discover the world.”

This is despite the fact that teachers needed to work harder to ensure that the sessions were planned well and that they had to spend more time in the preparation stage because they needed to know the potential pros and cons or arguments that could happen during the activities, such as one might be offended due to his/her own cultural restrictions that do not allow discussion of some specific topics. Thus, P17 expressed: “.. feel sensitive but it’s better to strike a balance”, and P24 shared:

“I feel both excited and worried. Cultural elements are interesting to students, compared with other grammar drills; however, I myself need to investigate more on those elements so that I can be capable of delivering those cultural elements in class.”

However, there are some teachers who teach monocultural students through coursebooks and who are worried about cultural sensitivity issues (e.g. talking about relationships and drinking alcohol) as some are limited to the students' own cultures. Some cultural elements are not fully accepted or are inappropriate in some cultures to which students belong. P20 explained "Coursebook can be a rich source of information on cultural elements but they have to be used creatively and adapted to suit the class, the context, as well as the students." One participant said in the interview about the school's restrictions: "Sometimes they don't like you talking about certain issues" (P22) and explained the meaning of different cultural aspects thus:

"if there is anything culturally that's offensive, it can be adapted to be funny. For example, some cultures think this is offensive (showing behaviour). It's OK ('O') sign to teach in that yes, it's offensive in some culture but not in others. You might get in America. You go to another countries and it's doing that is offensive. You know when you teach it, it can be funny as well.. just a .. thing to avoid."

By seeing those words, some teachers understood, though, that it is their job to develop their knowledge, prepare suitable materials and conduct appropriate lessons for students.

6.8 Teachers' perceptions on teaching cultures: is it necessary to have cultural elements as a lesson?

After assessing teachers' attitudes on whether they think cultural elements should be presented in coursebooks, the researcher raised a question about whether or not they think cultural elements should necessarily be taught by teachers in the class. Seventy two of the 85 participants answered that it is important and necessary to teach them in the class and the major reason was that culture is part of a language; it is therefore impossible to learn a language

properly without knowing about the culture. Many said that cultures can help learners to understand the language better, and one participant (P5) answered in the questionnaire:

“I think it’s very necessary to teach cultural elements. On a purely human level but also because it helps to put the language into context and to explain some of the peculiarities of English.”

Another participant (P52) also explained:

“I think it’s useful in order to give students a better knowledge of the culture of the country they are living in and it also helps to build a good dynamic in the classroom as students learn about each other and build a rapport.”

Teachers had experienced that it creates a good classroom atmosphere, where students can learn something new and it encourages motivation, as many students are proud to present their own cultures to their classmates, although they did not mention whether they tried with mono- or multicultural classes. Through discussion, particularly in multicultural classroom settings, teachers believed that they can give them better knowledge and educate them more effectively. A couple of participants explained that it is important to teach and share important parts of cultures and experiences, such as greeting, politeness and customs, for these would be useful for students and could help to avoid misunderstandings in different settings.

However, they made a few comments that the coursebook alone has never provided an adequate amount of material for cultural teaching, and one (P22) said: “The school asked teachers to use that, so I tried to stick to that but the coursebook doesn’t have everything, I will plan extra materials.” In the following question, he explained: “if coursebook doesn’t have everything”, “normally as the questionnaire said culture . . . its .. kind of elements are not ...

um.. not so detail in the book, so I can add more to it.” When the researcher probed this response by asking “You have given an interesting answer that you use coursebook for language elements and also other materials for the details, so could you explain more about it?”, he responded as follows:

“well, I get them from what they are (unclear).. well. For example, for culture things, festivals and.. what you should and should not do in certain countries .. umm.. a little bit about food and yeah.. customs.”

In their experience, they all said that they needed outside suitable materials and to make use of students’ own cultural experiences to fill the gap between students’ knowledge and coursebooks’ presentation.

Using pictures such as family pictures (P56) and other visual materials such as video clips were the best tools when filling the gaps, and these allowed students to see the actuality of cultures and the way people behave in different cultures.

“OK. Umm.. when talking about cultural things, I found a lot of videos online about students who took the exams and then living overseas ... out there.. umm.. their reactions to the culture shock; so, videos, powerpoints, presentations, umm.. kind of like questionnaires printed out and you can get students to think about differences in culture and the coursebook.” (P22)

There were a few (12) teachers who did not think culture needed to be taught in the classroom through coursebooks, and gave the answer “It’s not essential but interesting.” According to them, the coursebook information was too general and outdated as some of the content/news or celebrities that were mentioned could not be recognised by the students and they were unable to learn much from it. P29 shared his experience during the interview session as follows:

“..you know because you’re using the coursebook written 3-4 years or even 5 years ago ... only can say that a piece of news in the coursebook that was in 5 years ago, and so, it’s very difficult to teach through those elements...”

In addition, some teachers believed that the language classroom should deliver the linguistic points and facilitate students to be able to use the language well. Some wanted to encourage students to learn from realia⁴ through experiences, saying “Coursebook is not enough” and “need outside materials (realia)”. But again, some had a neutral answer, stating that it would depend upon students’ preferences or interests. One (P55) answered “sometimes, depending on class interest, need and motivation”, and “it is necessary to teach it if students show an interest in it.”

6.9 Teachers’ perceptions on being given sufficient information on cultural elements by coursebooks

Some teachers said that coursebooks gave a good mix of places and cultures, so that learners were provided with accurate details which were short but easy to understand. Moreover, a few teachers felt that the content of the coursebook was suitable for lower level⁵ students; for example, P30 said “generally yes for lower levels.” However, in some teachers’ eyes, there were not enough materials and information, and one of the respondents said in the interview:

“I think they give you the basics but they are helpful... uhhh... especially when you are using a book for the first time you know how its arranged; teachers’ books⁶ are basic to prepare in class but there’s not enough material in those books; you need more books to find for more examples or for different activities.” (P18)

⁴ Respondent did not give an example of what is meant by realia

⁵ Lower level - respondent did not specify the exact levels

⁶ Teacher’s Book - respondent did not clearly say the names of books

Many other teachers in this study reported that they felt they were not given enough information and sufficient materials to deliver these cultural elements lessons well. P35 said “Not enough”, P43 voiced “Sometimes is not enough”, and P5 said “.. they rarely provide any links to real world material.” The other thoughts were that the coursebooks were too general, old and outdated, and that there was not enough detail given or it was oversimplified by the coursebook writer. P25 said “..when I come across cultural elements, I have to rely on my own background knowledge about the subject or research it.”

P60 pinpointed that coursebooks do not provide sufficient information, and said vaguely in the questionnaire that:

“.. they just provide topics/guidelines; this is why it is important that teachers interpret those to students and provide examples from personal experience.”

Furthermore, some are difficult for students to understand, as there is no connection between their own cultures and the cultures presented in coursebooks. P19 explained:

“... the guidelines actually only help with the lesson planning and stuff like that but they don't tell anything as to how you deal with the teaching of the cultural elements that might not be relevant in the context of your teaching. This sometimes makes me feel that these textbooks' authors don't recognise or are not aware of the differences in the EFL teaching contexts and they are kind of assuming that there is some sort of cultural homogeneity or universality!”

More to the point, it is clearly shown that some elements are not culturally accepted in some countries, such as alcohol, dating and going to clubs; and thus, the teacher must adapt these sessions by bringing in other up-to-date or suitable materials and adjusting to the local context so that the lessons could be accepted by the students' own cultures. For example, P19 explained how he

localized the context: “for instance, so... trying ‘going out’ instead of like ‘going to club and drink’, you kind of saying.. yeah.. ‘you go out and have dinner with a friend’, ‘you go out...’ you see, these kind of things....”

6.10 Teachers’ omitted topics

In some schools, teachers have to go through every page as they are instructed to finish all the content from the coursebooks. On the other hand, teachers from some other schools and universities can make choices. In such circumstances, whether or not to omit cultural topics is completely up to the teachers’ choice and decision. For example, one participant (P66) shared her experience in the interview that making any disrespectful comments about the royal family in some countries is prohibited:

“..well, of course, obviously Royal Family is quite revered and I remember we were doing a general English and showing Mr. Bean is very well and very good because its mine but we never ever show the one where he met the queen of our country (UK). We were advised students would find too perplexing.. umm.. haven’t been to this country (UK). They don’t know how much we are more open here about this... so .. that was we didn’t show that.”

The teachers (such as P66 and P19) from this study also reported that when they had to remove material, it was always culturally sensitive topics (e.g. drinking alcohol or criticizing someone in public) relating to their students’ cultures as some things are culturally not allowed to be discussed. They often left out things which they thought were irrelevant to the levels of students’ knowledge, or pictures and topics which looked unsuitable because the students’ cultures prohibit them or because of school policies. Participants said to the researcher such things as “I would probably drop a specific political

topic that seem to be guilt towards one particular country or nation” (P66). She continued as follows:

“so you know for example, during the Iraq war and I had Iraqi students in the class. I wouldn’t probably have gone into that specific but I might talk about it generally in this country. Overseas, umm.. it.. it depends on the country...sometimes you are not allowed to talk about Royal Family or you are not allowed to talk about politics such certain kind of things. You have to follow what the country says.”

P24 also said “..political issues are forbidden in class, so we usually don’t do that”; P4 explained “...you know, something come up about abortion, ah, anything that is overtly sexual, anything that is .. ummm...” Furthermore, another participant (P53) emphasized his experience with sensitive topics thus:

“there was a thing in one of the books that wanted to talk about abortion and there was quite a few like liberal French and Spanish and quite a few conservative older people from Japan and Korea, and I didn't think it would mix too well. So you know ... like... there’s an example of some kind of cultural element that is going to clash, so I have avoided that topic.”

As mentioned above, many teachers explained that they usually omit controversial issues and topics, taboos, politics, violence, sexual issues and religions which will dissuade some students from participating in the lessons. They sometimes avoid talking about other sensitive issues such as alcohol, drugs and arranged marriage, which are unfamiliar topics to some students and which make them feel uncomfortable during discussions in the class.

According to this survey’s results, teachers also worry about the impact: the dull atmosphere for students who do not like learning other people’s cultures, and the conflicts which can lead to misunderstanding each other and feelings of discomfort being in the class, although some topics are only allowed to be

discussed in England such as talking about the Royal Family and would lead them to open up their minds and broaden their horizons. Teachers admitted that they dropped some cultural topics and adapted other topics, because they have a sense that these are boring topics that are unlikely to stimulate learners' interest; and when the researcher asked him "So what kind of culture do you normally teach?", he continued to explain:

"there's a book I like to use sometimes, umm.. and it's photographed from inner-city, inner-city's Britain ... it's the exact opposite to the glossy brochures... umm... deprived areas umm... poverty... umm some things that are very humorous like umm.. and.... charity shops and car boot sales and things that I recognise as British cultures. And.... the students instantly see that Britain is much more like their own country, umm.. it's not a separate thing. Umm.. they relate to it quicker because it's... that....is part of their own culture. Not necessarily boot sales, that is very British. Umm.. But, the cultures that the course book focuses on is very much about difference and I think it is really easier for students to understand when they see some cultural similarities between our countries." (P5)

Furthermore, some teachers from this study confessed that they ignore cultural concern topics whenever they have time constraints. Therefore, cultural elements seem not to be brought by teachers to students in some instances as P18 explained: "the school was always setting times like there was deadline and we had to cover articles like grammar and topics." Some other cultural elements topics are taken out due to teachers' deficiency in knowledge and they had some difficulties, as P16 said:

"... the difficulties lay in the fact that I'm often not sure if in the students' real culture .. they're actually doing what it says on textbook."

Therefore, they only briefly taught those specific things that they thought should be taught according to the coursebooks. One respondent (P26 from Taiwan) said to the researcher that:

“actually sometimes because our schedule in our school is quite tight, we don’t have much time to focus on the culture; so if I have time or it is a big festival, for example Christmas, because our students enjoy have a Christmas activity so if ..ahhh.....that is an important festival. We will spend much time on the class maybe the whole 45 minutes are focused on the Christmas, but sometimes if that it is just eastern is not very popular in Taiwan so maybe only 10 minutes and talk something about text book.”

By looking at the above participants’ words, teachers typically avoid political topics, controversial issues or any kinds of topics that students would not want to do in the class. They therefore want to be as safe as possible so that they can maintain a good atmosphere in the classroom, meet the deadlines, and follow the schools’ instructions if any are given.

6.11 The common cultural topics used by teachers in the classroom

According to this research, many cultural elements are taught in class, but food, British table manners, festivals such as Christmas and Boxing Day, Easter, and St. Patrick’s Day, and any other particular festivals from students’ own cultures are the most popular topics among teachers. The reasons why teachers select these topics is that they are interesting to discuss and give students an opportunity to present themselves, thereby providing the stimulation and motivation that is the key to carrying out good engaging lessons. Teachers believe that if students can see common issues and cultural similarities between their countries, this can help them to be more productive in speaking English in the class. Moreover, learning the differences between cultures enhances communication between students and teachers (both native and non-native speakers).

6.12 Teachers' difficulties and their use of criteria while lesson planning

While lesson planning and teaching, teachers need to take a lot of factors into consideration and this can prove difficult.

The first criterion which teachers have to consider is cultural sensitivity, such as those topics that are not allowed to be discussed (e.g. drinking alcohol or talking about the future) and the appropriateness of other topics for their students. Teachers explained that they need to think about a topic's sensitivity where there can be culturally stereotypical things which can cause misunderstanding, because different students with different nationalities bring special cultural backgrounds and knowledge to the class (such as some female students are willing to discuss any topics -- for instance, dating or abortion which would be the cause of a gender issue and a cultural issue that is not appropriate to talk openly about -- whereas others are more reluctant to talk about these things). Therefore, teachers have to explore the sensitivity of these issues.

Their degree of familiarity with other cultures is an important factor to consider, as is their ability to personalize and localize the context according to their students' cultures. They experienced that there are some religion and gender issues that have arisen in the class such as talking about alcohol or sex (i.e. gender bias as some women from sensitive cultures do not like discussing them) which have simply led to arguments or some students being culturally offended. Thus, teachers tended to avoid such issues (e.g. political crises) and chose other topics and materials instead so that all students could participate

and so that a good atmosphere was maintained in the class throughout the lesson.

Having appropriacy is a critical matter for teachers too, since irrelevant materials or unsuitable topics for students' levels, cultural backgrounds and ages make the lessons less effective. Many teachers mentioned that age differences sometimes create problems in the class as some older students do not like learning cultures, and therefore one of the respondents (P44) shared her experience thus:

“I think 60 is the eldest. He tried not to talk about you know.. like sex and stupid things which are still relevant but it is depends, of course. But I did have people who are like.. you know..., so you try to make everyone happy .”

All of this suggests that ensuring appropriacy for students, along with relevant materials and content designed especially for a suitable age range, is the most important factor for teachers. One respondent said:

“If they are adults or teenagers, they would present cultural elements in terms of tradition more than something related to either religion or something... for other students you can present some of the topics as long as you understand that there is or.. there can cause problem like a big discussion around .. it's gonna be ...to present the cultural point that you encourage them to have an open-mind, so they can understand 'oh! This is different and so and so...'” (P29)

The second criterion is students' need: fulfilling the gap between the coursebook and students. P55 said that choosing materials for the lesson depends upon students' preferences:

“...Their sort of profiles and their language goals, what they are hoping to do in future or how that might help them.”

He also mentioned that preparing a lesson plan depended upon students' requests: "I would like to do something about transport or food or current affairs ...". One other participant (P3) said that he did not feel that certain topics should be imposed upon the students and that they should be comfortable with what he chooses to teach. He said that some elements could be taken either positively or negatively by students and he mentioned as follows:

"...I am very conscious to try and present things.. as neutrally as possible. Ummm... and not to colour things with my.. my own view of it. I just.. with those elements I like to give them to them and I like to create a space where they can be positive or negative about it as much as they want. But, I think the key thing is that I want the students to feel, ah, to feel, to feel, comfortable and not to feel, they're, umm, being imposed upon in any way."

He also explained that it is worth having some topics that students would take an interest in and having some relevant materials:

"How can you possibly have .. have one book that can be appropriate for thousands and thousands of different students. So it's about meeting the needs of my students. And it's about being.. it's about being aware about things that they are interested in and umm, trying to find materials that are sort of in line with that."

Another common issue is the level of challenge (i.e. whether it is too easy or too difficult), for teachers often get different levels of students with different strengths and weaknesses in one classroom. P3 explained:

"I believe quite strongly in sort of the idea and that students need to feel relaxed and if you give them things that are too challenging then,.. then they will kind of shut down in a way and make it more difficult to learn. So the teacher has the difficulty to take that material and make it accessible to the students so that might involve grading it somehow, for example."

The level of students, and whether or not they can cope with lessons and tasks, is the most difficult issue for some teachers. When planning lessons, they also

need to think about those areas that students need to develop and what they want to improve. Some teachers take into account the students' purposes of learning English: i.e. by considering why they are learning English (e.g. for work, or for further study in English medium universities) and what they might expect to learn in the classroom from teachers, such as language proficiency.

The third criterion is simply looking at the linguistic point of view, such as how they can help students learn the language: for example, the language points in the vocabulary, grammar and fluency through tasks, and usages in colloquial, functional or formal activities. All of these can be delivered through cultural elements: for example, attending a British cultural wedding which might be different from the students' cultures and customs, but it can help students to expand on the knowledge of specific lexis and expressions.

P56 explained one lesson that she had done as follows:

“I did a lesson on funeral and wedding last week ... umm.. I use an image of wedding, a bride and a groom and image of coffin putting into grave, then put a list of .. umm... I put a mixture of words on board related to common related to funeral related to wedding and then students had to separate them into two columns.”

In some teachers' eyes, teaching vocabulary is a big struggle due to the mixed levels of students in the classrooms. However, it can be eased by showing appropriate and relevant pictures for students to visualize. P56 continued to explain about the advantages of images and visualizing: “...the images helped a lot for work that students about like coffin, grave and in the case different...” and these helped to get messages across through pictures.

The fourth and the fifth criteria are flexibility and keeping students' interest in their lessons. Some students lack awareness of some cultural elements such as historical and sociolinguistics implications which make them bored. P30 explained when the researcher asked what he thought about students' needs and how he balanced them with the lesson's aims:

“When it comes to things like cultural in readings and listening. It's students interest, almost more than needs. Because that's what can .. um.. kind of start the lessons when they are interested. Um.. getting them engaged, getting them interested and getting them wanting to talk about it. That's more important than anything. If they are not interested, then they are not gonna be interested in vocabulary, grammar or anything afterwards.”

Moreover, some students are more focused on vocabulary than others, as one participant answered in the questionnaire: “students only focus on vocab than tradition itself.” With regards to materials, teachers are keen to choose those that will encourage students' interest. Many teachers felt let down by not being given enough information and materials by the coursebooks and by the overgeneralization of the coursebooks' writers. For example, P6 answered why he dropped coursebooks: “they can be inaccurate, facile, confusing, corny and dull”; and P68 said “... language not sufficiently in context.” In addition, the re-use of old or outdated materials caused boredom and automatically withdrew students' interest and attention from the class. One participant (P68) said “boring materials”, while others said “old materials give boring” and “lack of topical authentic texts.” Teachers therefore think more about students' interest and it seems that bringing authentic materials to the class is a way of captivating their attention. In consequence, teachers are very careful with lesson planning to maintain interest in the lessons.

The sixth criterion is the choice of activities which are relevant and enjoyable to do that all students are able to participate in. Teachers are more attentive in selecting tasks and activities that should have flexibility and adaptability to ensure a balance between students' capabilities (students' strengths and weaknesses) and the lessons' targets of delivering the language. They also need to consider the number of students who are going to do these tasks in the classroom (such as 10 or 60 students in the class), how they will do them, and whether they should be done in pairs/groups or whether individual tasks should be given to them.

The last criterion is using teachers' time for lesson preparation. Teachers mentioned that creating their own materials and finding relevant information consumes a lot of their time in the preparation stage and there are time constraints for some teachers, for they are not given a sufficient amount of time because of overloaded teaching hours and the focus on examinations. Some teachers worried that their lack of knowledge on cultures, and especially their unfamiliarity with western culture and the meaning of celebrating festivals where they need to understand and make lessons appropriate to the local context, meant that researching a couple of examples from students' countries to engage their attention took more time than other lessons. One participant (P20) explained how long he spent on the planning stage:

“it's normally one day before, so I can make sure I can prepare myself, note, mental notes, written notes.....”

Similarly, P44 voiced how long she would spend in preparation for cultural lessons:

“For example, I want to do something new and I didn’t know about and I ask do I want to do proper lesson on Dawali or guide/Aïd...(unclear) coz we only talk about it. We don’t really have lessons but if I wanted to prepare lesson probably takes me like umm.. 3 days to search something interesting and yeah.. maybe half an hour to.. to get it, you know..., so generally half an hour to prepare it ..”

In terms of preparation, teachers said “.... so preparation could be 10 minutes umm.. 20 minutes umm.. but I mean if it is 10 minutes.... preparation is based on the fact that I’ve been teaching for 15 years...” (P6); “I’d go for like a morning lesson like an hour and a half, I don’t know maybe fifteen minutes to prepare....” (P3); and P74 answered “About 20 minutes for a 90 minute class.”

P55 explained more detail on how he used his time:

“for cultural element lessons .. umm.. I guess probably 15. 10 or 15 minutes with.. umm.. in terms of cultural lesson, they are sort of topics generally seem to be quite much more relaxed to British culture .. umm.. so, in that sense, quite sort of a lot easier to prepare for .. so, I probably say about 10 minutes or 15 minutes. umm.. but... depending on what sort of... what sort of culture it might be .. but usually I am familiar with the coursebooks, so it takes me less time really.”

These teachers spent from 10-15 minutes, 30 minutes to 1 hour, and even up to 2 or 3 days whenever they were planning in advance, and depending upon the kinds of cultures and lessons; but some experienced teachers who had enough relevant materials and knowledge only spent between 15 and 20 minutes in preparation for their lessons.

6.12.1 No difficulties with lesson planning

Participants such as P1, P28, P60 and P62 felt that they faced no problems in this regard and P1 said “so far I have not come across any issue with this.”

However, a non-native speaking teacher of English from China (P17) said in the questionnaire that grammar makes it difficult to plan lessons as it is hard to explain for foreign language speakers. P27 who is also from China had some difficulty:

“.. sometimes I can only find very little information related to the certain culture, or as a foreigner, I might have some misunderstanding.”

Another non-native speaker of Portuguese (P43) explained why there is a difficulty in lesson planning:

“The information provided is not enough and sometimes there isn’t a context (background). Therefore you need to do some research and create materials yourself.”

P33 said it happened because the coursebooks are outdated and limited information is presented: “often not enough or out of date.” The other non-native speaker of English from Romania who was teaching in London during the data collection also had some difficulties:

“The difficulty is in finding updated materials with updated information so for this the teacher has to do online research.” (P40)

P32 reasoned:

“There are not necessarily enough materials on British culture in coursebooks, so if I want to teach that kind of topic I go online/create my own materials.”

Looking at these participants’ words, teachers face a struggle between finding appropriate materials and the information that coursebooks have provided.

6.13 Schools’ Provided Materials

To assist teachers when preparing lessons, schools often provided a variety of materials. For example, old and recent coursebooks, teachers’ guides, and

government-issued textbooks (at some schools) are frequently provided. To be able to give selections of language practice, schools supply language skills books, vocabulary and grammar books, activities and workbooks which are copyable materials, other published resources such as graded-readers books, academic books and examination preparation books such as IELTS books, Cambridge IELTS, and dictionaries which are printed by Oxford and Longman.

There are books for taboos and issues⁷, festivals and celebrations books, and cross-cultural communication for role plays, which are especially used for cultural teaching by teachers. Schools also made available some media teaching-aids materials, such as CD and DVD players and soft technology materials: CDs, DVDs, videos which are relevant to the topics that teachers want to teach, and some visual materials such as pictures, flashcards, magazines and other printed and in-house materials collected by a number of the teaching staff. Computers are available for teachers, and some schools provided internet access so that teachers can track any information they need to know or anything they want the students to know.

6.14 Difficulties in teaching cultural elements lessons

Many teachers face difficulties with teaching cultural elements in the classrooms and the following outlines those that they commonly encounter when they are planning lessons. Teaching a multi-cultural classroom allows teachers to meet different students from different cultural backgrounds who

⁷ The respondent mentioned there is a book but he did not specify it clearly.

bring different behaviours and different learning styles into the class. One respondent explained, “in terms of.. how people meet and greet, that’s always highlight quite extreme differences and they always intrigue themselves. For example, South Americans are very much like to touch, whereas the Japanese don’t touch each other, just bow... They often quite intrigue and ask each other more questions and sometimes, South Americans are kind of totally .. (unclear) shout by the fact that umm.. some of them are ... um.. country doesn’t touch, then they worry oh! What if I touch you? How do you feel? Umm...” (P56). Thus, one of the most difficult things teachers encountered was balancing the students’ cultural backgrounds and meeting with students’ satisfaction by having appropriate topics and contexts with which they were familiar, thereby preventing any cultural issues, arguments or feelings of offence.

In any teaching setting, both multi- and mono-cultural classrooms, students’ lack of knowledge on foreign cultures and their unfamiliarity with other cultures can cause misunderstanding of the topic that the teacher brings into the class or can take much more time than other lessons. One respondent explained: “Sometimes, if there is too much gap between the students’ own culture and the cultures that are being taught, they encounter a few difficulties in understanding the cultural differences and thus, more time has to be taken for that particular lesson....” (P8).

Another participant shared his experience: “I told them about customs and cultures about Han nation. They seem a bit confused...” (P67). Moreover,

another participant said that if some students do not possess a good level of English fluency, it can be difficult to teach cultural elements in the class. Some students occasionally feel they do not need to learn those cultures, as one participant (P18) from Mexico said: “some students want just to learn the language and do not care about the culture since they don’t see themselves living abroad.” Other students only focus on learning the language and give their attention purely to grammar and vocabulary. For example, P15 shared his experience in the questionnaire: “students still focus on the vocabulary rather than tradition itself.”

Teachers reported that they sometimes faced gender and sexuality issues between western cultures and other students’ cultures. One respondent (P4) said:

“You know gender issues between western cultures and .. I don’t know let’s say Middle Eastern, ah, Middle Eastern culture. So one problem I may have, so you know occasionally there might be a lack of sensitivity there, I mean it is not something I see very often. I mean now and then I have had that issue over maybe gender and different attitudes toward gender.”

When students bring their own cultural backgrounds into a multicultural EFL classroom, they may bring their own attitudes towards genders in the class, and these may be less favoured or culturally unacceptable in certain contexts. Therefore, one participant said, “...it can be difficult with different cultures having different standard...different ideas...” In addition, some teachers have met many students’ with negative attitudes towards learning other people’s cultures which reflect as students’ lack of knowledge and lack of attention on the lesson in the class.

Students who have stereotypical perceptions never recognize other people's cultures, for as one participant mentioned: "They just think that what other cultures do is weird or unusual. They never.. they never recognize that their culture in the eyes of others could be similarly seen as being weird or unusual. They take their own cultures being the norm or some students take their culture being norm. That's the problem." (P6)

The students' age is one of the critical points for teachers on how they control and manage their lessons. Some older students have topics which they do not want to do because they think they are a bit stupid and not relevant such as taking about sex which makes it very difficult for teachers to carry out these lessons. Furthermore, there are problems between lessons and learners who have less experience with learning cultures and who do not understand what the lesson is about. In such circumstances, the teacher had to manage the situation by substitution with other materials.

P44 explained:

"Sometimes they just don't understand why we are doing it then I explain and sometimes they just find it boring and they are really unhappy with it. Then you kinda either drop it and do it again in a different way or try to adapt at the same time, so basically you drop something and add something else, use youtube or browse something else for more interesting things."

From the teachers' side, they have their own deficiencies in explaining foreign cultures with which they are not familiar, and this can create difficulties when students ask questions that they are unable to answer precisely. For example,

P11 said:

“One of the difficulties that I often encounter is to answer some unexpected questions of the students about these cultural elements. As a teacher I should know more than a coursebook expresses.”

P11 continued to explain the reason why she had that problem as “Because I am not familiar with these cultural elements.” A few teachers mentioned that they sometimes felt uncomfortable teaching cultural elements lessons with which they are unfamiliar and especially when such elements were taboo in students’ cultures. P68 answered in the questionnaire about his difficulties when teaching cultural elements: “When the behaviour is taboo in their own country / subject / it may be difficult.” He also explained his opinions about why this happens (“cultural sensitivities / religious beliefs” (P68)), although he did not mention any specific groups of students. The students were often bored when doing a lesson through a coursebook, and teachers needed other materials to support learning and keeping students’ interest on the subject.

6.14.1 Managing the problems

Since there are a few problems and difficulties that arise when teaching cultures through coursebooks (mainly due to cultural differences), teachers need to manage the issues and structure the lessons in their own way. To reduce the risk, many teachers avoid any sensitive issues being brought into the class such as religious topics or abuses. Many participants in this study said that they only try to bring relevant appropriate materials and topics which are both practical and which are as neutral as possible. As P3 explained:

“...if I can sort of pick out examples from things that we do in the UK that are a bit strange, that people find... find unusual. Just to try and sort of, you know, highlight that we are bound to have a lot of differences, different cultures and things. So, umm, I think it is really important for a

teacher to be as neutral as possible in these cases, you can't, you know, we all got our own values and.... and ideas about how we do things, but very much I don't.. it is certainly not the teachers' position to say what is right and wrong.”

P56 also shared her technique when things seem to go wrong:

“..um.. sometimes I change subject. Sometimes like said, ok.. we leave those comments at the door; we are not having any personal comment; we leave at the door and we continue, so yeah.”

Another participant (P55) avoided some sorts of topics (e.g. political topics, violence, abuse, etc.) and explained further:

“I tend to avoid topics which are (paused for a while)... I don't know.. which can cause controversy I guess. You know.. I have got a lot of Russian students. I tend to avoid going to discussion about Russian politics and things like that. I tend to avoid that. I tend to avoid going into political discussion .. umm.. and... yeah.. I find it, yeah.. can make students feel uncomfortable and you know... issues that you might involve kind of violence or abuse or sexual issues that kind of... avoid as well .. don't know .. you might cover the class what their experiences are .. might be, so I tend to avoid that as well.”

However, P60 shared her reasons for choosing sensitive topics to promote not only students' critical thinking but also their speaking skills and to become intercultural persons:

“I like to choose the topic. For example, last term, we had a topic gay couple should not be allowed to have children and then .. those people who come from Turkey, they say ‘oh, no. They should not be allowed coz it might not be good for children bcoz children need both male and female together in the family.’ And I had the other student saying ‘yes but children do not have to have father in their home. They can have different role models like teachers, uncles’; so you can see all of them are biased by their own cultures and traditions. They were quite happy to talk about that and again I use as a tool to improve their discussion, arguments, counter-arguments.”

Moreover, personalizing the lessons is the key for teachers, since this can overcome the barrier of culture block and incorporate things that are recognized by students and students' cultures. This is why many teachers

adapt materials and personalize the lessons to avoid possible problems. One participant who is bilingual and teaches mono-cultural classes said, “I take more time to make them see what it is and sometimes I have to compare to our culture which are similar to theirs.” Teachers also think that using visual aid materials such as youtube and pictures are the best tools to inform students, correct their misunderstandings and widen their knowledge by having more discussion before the end of the lessons or giving additional extensive reading.

Some participants added that they always keep extra materials to do something else in case lessons do not work with students as they expected. Teachers plan to do more activities such as having role-plays, quizzes and games to ease students’ tension and to retain a good classroom atmosphere. Some teachers engage in the discussion, explaining differences in cultures and the causes of cultural conflict, but also open it up for students to learn the differences and to widen their knowledge. Teachers ask students to share their cultures, especially letting them state the differences and make comparisons between cultures to have a better understanding. Some teachers explained that seating management is important; therefore, during activities or discussions, some teachers relocate students to sit in pairs or in groups mixed with students from different countries and mixed students’ levels to inspire students and to share with each other rather than sitting one culture in one group when reading about one country. P56 explained:

“...Usually they are not just one from another country but there will be a couple from one country and a group from another country. They may be dominated, so, I might put them into two groups but I will try to mix them at least one student from different culture...”

On the other hand, some teachers simply stop and move on the lessons by changing the topic, especially when talking about such subjects as sex and dating with which they struggle and with which students seem unhappy to continue. When it happens in the class, one teacher said, “..um.. sometimes I change subject.”

6.14.2 Positive aspects of teaching cultures in the classroom

While many teachers have faced a few problems with teaching cultures in the classroom, there are others who feel positive and have never considered that it is much of a burden to them. They mentioned that cultural elements lessons are engaging as students have a chance to learn about traditions, customs and cultures, and they have an opportunity to explore their classmates’ cultures or the cultures of the target language more deeply if the class is multicultural. Even if lessons are taught in mono-cultural classrooms, there is potential for discussion where students can widen their knowledge. Some participants experienced that most students are interested in learning other people’s cultures and they like to talk about and share their own cultures (such as traditions, customs, festivals and other things) which they think would be interesting for foreigners. Students are happy to learn and P18 shared her experience with the researcher during the interview session: “I noticed students were happy to learn more, well most of them.” P27 said: “...teaching cultures takes little part in my teaching, so usually students get excited and relaxed.” Therefore, teachers think that cultural elements really help students to practise their language skills. They are also happy, relaxed, excited and more motivated to do well in the lessons as the examples above illustrate.

6.15 Learners' attention towards teachers and cultural elements

The majority of the participants said that they get the learners' attention most of the time that they teach lessons on cultural concerns and students are especially engaged when authentic materials which are brought by teachers are used in combination with the coursebook. Teachers experienced that many students have more interest in doing cultural concerns lessons than grammar lessons, and that they appreciate having these sorts of lessons and are willing to participate in all activities. P21 said in the questionnaire that "Yes, actually. They are more interested in culture, festival and food than the dull things like grammar." In addition, P22 said, "cultural lessons can be fun." P26 who is an Asian non-native speaker of English explained how she gains students' attention when teaching cultures: "Yes, most of them are curious about what the westerners do, what they eat, what they wear, or something different from our culture."

However, there were times when students lost attention, especially when some cultural elements were irrelevant to their cultures or they thought the topic was boring and that the materials did not match their level of English. P15 suggested in the questionnaire that the subject "Maybe too difficult for them to understand", and P25 shared his thoughts: "They don't understand, are not interested in the subject or don't see the benefit of learning about this in class." P36 also said "it's not relevant to their studies or they are not interested in cultural elements."

Students often lost attention due to their limited background of cultures, and thus some teachers said, "it's too difficult for students to understand..";

“..topics are not related to learners' experiences”; “..lack of students' background knowledge..” Moreover, students' lack of knowledge about cultures is a problem. Having prior background experience of other cultures during their earlier years of teaching (which could also be seen as personal experiences outside the classroom) is a predictor of whether or not they would be engaged in lessons, because students sometimes thought these kinds of cultural elements were unnecessary to learn and that they would not be assessed in examinations. One respondent shared her experience that:

“..because is only most of them will focus on the grammar and also parents hope them their children can get high scores on the exam but the exam is seldom related to culture ...” (P26).

Mismatching students' ages and the materials and topics lost students' attention in some cases. For example, if some students were too young, they did not have sufficient background knowledge to cope with the lessons or they did not like the old-fashioned version (such as they would not be interested in celebrities who were famous ten years ago), and they subsequently paid less attention in the lessons.

6.16 Assessing teachers' use of outside materials, their advantages, the activities, and teachers' perceptions of learning cultures

After carefully looking at the criteria used for teaching cultural concerns lessons, the teachers' time for preparation, their thoughts and the problems which they encounter in both the preparation and teaching stages, the researcher examined teachers' use of outside materials and how they make their lessons more enjoyable for their students. The teachers' use of teaching

outside materials, the activities and their perceptions of learning cultures will be presented in the following section by answering the research questions.

6.17 Answering Research Questions

The following section seeks to answer the main research questions in the light of the findings from the questionnaires and interviews.

Research Question 1

“Do teachers use outside materials for teaching cultural elements? If so, what are they?”

The use of outside materials –

The answer is yes, since 64 out of 85 participants gave an affirmative answer to this question, but another 17 participants said they often use the outside materials. A few (4) participants said that they rarely use outside materials for the purpose of cultural elements teaching, but as shown in the numbers, the vast majority of EFL teachers do so.

According to the survey for this research, teachers use a variety of outside materials, and these could be anything apart from coursebooks such as newspapers (e.g. The Sun, The Metro) which are in the syllabus for general EFL / ESL classes. For example, P35 said “I showed my students the mask I bought in Venice to explain the Mask Festival”, and P41 explained “newspapers and magazines. They (unclear) are articles on food, people’s habits, trends and current events.” Some adopt other coursebooks as outside materials which are provided by schools if there is something relevant therein:

for example, P15 said “I will choose some which are appropriate for classes that I will teach.” Teachers adapt a variety of materials, and especially look for those that they think will help the students to understand more easily.

For example, P23 used such authentic materials and said:

“Normally, I use powerpoint. For example, there is something about Korea. First I will find video clip, may be a map and population and their food .. and.. something about their habits ..so .. something like that .. also more pictures about their food or culture or traditional clothes and compare with different countries related to the textbook or I add more other countries... maybe students are familiar with.”

These materials can be divided into two main types: authentic and non-authentic materials. A number of teachers bring materials into the classroom to enhance authenticity as much as possible. Some said they have used a Mask from Venice to explain the Mask Festival, preparing a Christmas tree, dressing up Father Christmas (also known as Santa Claus) to present the theme of Christmas, other traditional dresses, and assorted realia.

Others believe that media can also bring authenticity, which is why they use printed materials, audio-visual media and electronic mass media. Newspapers such as The Metro, or journals such as The Economist, leaflets, tourist information brochures, advertisements, other current newspapers and articles from old and current newspapers, articles from the BBC, plus a variety of magazines and novels are commonly used by teachers. They also use visual materials such as flashcards, any sort of cards, cartoons, pictures, films, videos, movies and their own presentations and slideshows. They often support audio materials with songs and other kinds of music depending on the lessons that they need to provide. In respect of electronic mass media, the BBC (including BBC news, BBC i-player and BBC radio), youtube and blogs are frequently

produced as outside adapted materials along with the coursebook for cultural concerns lessons. One of the participants, P30, explained in the interview why he needed visualization and visual materials:

“In one class, there are .. umm.. 16 years old, 18 years old and 20 years old .. umm.. they just need visual and something different to engage them, that’s the key thing.”

Due to the current trend of using technology, teachers use the internet more than they used to. They cannot ignore websites such as the British Council website, www.film-english.com, www.ted.com, www.vimeo.com and www.onestopenglish.com, and it was mentioned by most teachers that their schools will subscribe to them to get extra teaching and learning materials. P43 said, “I use internet a lot” and continued, “I do my own research about that topic and try to find pictures and news about them. It is more contemporary. Students like to know what is happening now.” The researcher gathered all information from the respondents and categorised them. The following diagram which the researcher designed presents all the materials used by teachers as authentic materials.

Media as Authenticity

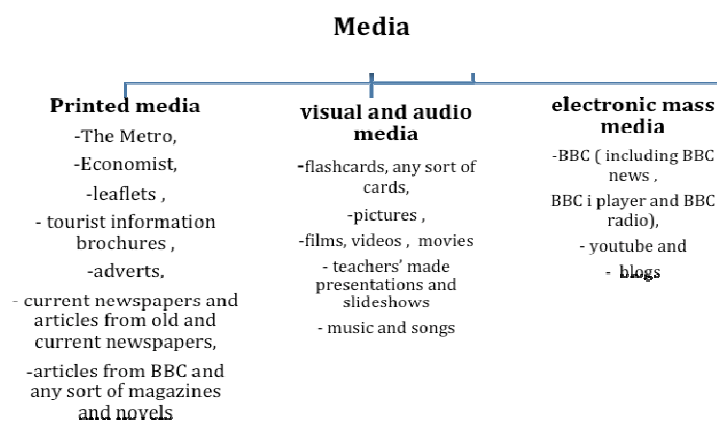


Figure 7: Using media as authentic materials

On the other hand, lessons are still delivered with other printed materials, which teachers feel are as good and useful as authentic materials. Depending on their class aims and students' needs, some teachers use academic journals and articles are used. Others use graded readers' books and story books⁸ which are locally produced in their own countries or regions. Some use IELTS materials, other EFL language books, and other sorts of ELT materials and a variety of books if necessary, in order to make their lessons more relevant and to facilitate students' needs such as reading or listening skills.

Different choices of additional materials between native and non-native speaking teachers

There are similarities and differences among choices of materials. Many non-native teachers of English who participated in this study and have taught in EFL/ESL settings (such as Chile, Myanmar and China) chose magazines and newspapers more than native speaking teachers of English (e.g. P1, P11, P16, P17, P20, P27, P29). However, pictures are used by both parties (e.g. P8, P9, P11, P34). In terms of visualizing materials, native speaking teachers (such as P37, P46, P63) use youtube, video/video clips and news clips. In this day and age, technology means everything in every field of study; therefore, the use of internet as a tool for searching materials is a common factor between native and non-native speaking teachers (e.g. P12, P19, P22, P27, P36, P43, P47, P54, P58, P66).

Does the choice of difference depend upon the contexts of teachers?

The common experience is that teachers add some extra materials, but native speaking teachers who teach in the UK (such as P4, P6, P54, P63), where

⁸ The respondent did not mention the name of local story books

English is taught to students as EFL in language schools, choose more authentic materials such as radio, video/news clips, and articles from the BBC website. Teachers such as P9 and P23 who are non-native speaking teachers have used *Wikipedia* as it can provide some information or a translated version of a text. P9 and P21 who are also non-native speaking English teachers used books such as novels, IELTS reference and practice books and other skills sets books. Other participants have used materials from the internet and one (P19, who is also a non-native speaker) said:

“I also use some clips or footages from BBC, British Council websites, etc. to teach authentic language, especially for speaking activities.”

P18 who is non-native also explained her use of materials as:

“Of course! Every time I teach cultural elements in the classroom. I use realia, since it’s what my students love the most, videos and newspapers.”

Seeing the above evidence, the choice of materials and the sources that teachers track are solely based upon their choice and knowledge of what they think is more reliable and suitable for specific classes. It cannot be assumed that only native speakers who teach in EFL contexts use authentic visualized materials, although they formed the highest percentage at the time of this study.

The Sources

Many teachers rely on technology, especially the internet such as google and youtube where they can track all the information that they are seeking rather than finding locally produced materials. On the internet, teachers can download pictures, charts, short stories, articles, news and so forth. *Wikipedia* is one of the more easily accessible tools for some teachers, and some non-

native EFL teachers use it for their students, since it can be read in several languages. One respondent (P23) explained why he uses it:

“They have English version, Chinese and many other different languages, so really .. umm.. I would first look into Chinese version and pick some information. I think it’s interesting to share with students and then translate into English or use both languages because you know... junior students, their English is not that good, so I have to.... umm.. really need to mix Chinese and English.”

The advanced technology provided for modern classrooms (e.g. websites such as www.onestopenglish.com, www.flim-english.com, and www.vimeo.com) are also commonly used by teachers to obtain short videos on learning English which teachers think are useful for practice. The sources are varied, but TV, BBC and youtube, plus newspapers, journals and magazines are the most popular teaching materials used by teachers for listening, speaking and reading tasks. Some teacher-respondents used libraries and resources from their schools to find suitable materials for their classes. They may be provided with a share-drive internally, which is a computer software system, by their schools so that they can upload teaching materials for their lessons and can then share these with their colleagues. Nonetheless, other teachers have produced their own materials and have brought realia to the classes such as family photographs and travelling photographs. Some teacher-respondents mentioned that they sometimes share with their colleagues and they also seek other teachers’ advice and opinions on choosing materials.

Research Question 2

“Why do teachers adapt coursebooks with other materials?”

The reasons why teachers adapt

Thinking and making decisions on what materials are to be used is critical for teachers when planning lessons. There are many reasons why teachers need to

adapt, and one of the most important was that coursebooks and their materials are old; thus, they need to keep updated with more modern materials (for example, removing old celebrities or old black and white photographs that are presented in coursebooks and replacing them with current popular celebrities or something which the students will find easy to recognize such as Coca Cola).

Moreover, teachers complained that the coursebooks have never given enough information or no information, or have only given a brief introduction to cultures rather than given detailed information (one participant mentioned that “coursebooks only give few information of the topic”). Teachers believe that having a variety of materials at their disposal can help them to avoid losing students’ attention in the class and ensure that the lesson becomes more enjoyable and more effective.

As mentioned above, due to different students’ cultural backgrounds, teachers need to localize the context and create personalized materials such as learning students’ cultures so that the lesson becomes more relevant and accepted by all students. For example, one participant (P73) explained:

“It’s necessary to give an appropriate context for the language taught and it can also be engaging.”

Another participant (P70) explained the reason why teachers need to adapt/modify materials for teaching cultures as follows:

“I think you have to modify most cultural aspect of teaching cultural issues.... Need to be discussed in class, stu’s need.. an opportunity to talk about their experiences and not to be dictated to by a textbook.”

Accessing the most relevant materials to meet students' needs is one of the most important considerations for teachers to achieve successful lessons, and teachers therefore look for them in a variety of places. When some materials look superficial or inaccurate to teachers, P6 answered why he dropped coursebooks: "they can be inaccurate, facile, confusing, corny and dull". They may make minor or major changes such as adding some photographs or using video clips from youtube to make them more real (one participant said "make it real") and adjusted to the needs of the students (many respondents said they need "to suit their students' needs"). Some participants in this study also thought that the use of authentic language and authenticity can mean a lot to students, since they are learning a foreign language in a foreign language classroom. Therefore, they adapt authentic things such as pictures and other local products as materials or magazine articles as external materials which are lacking in coursebooks, but which are more vivid and which can open students' eyes. Thus, P29 said in the questionnaire: "I sometimes do it, esp. with magazine articles which can contribute to change minds about a specific culture".

As mentioned earlier, there are some aspects that teachers consider inappropriate, either because of students' different cultures and cultural sensitivity or because they are irrelevant to their students' backgrounds or levels. Some pictures and topics are culturally sensitive for some students such as going to the club at night. Therefore, to balance this, teachers have to replace coursebook materials with other outside materials to make the lessons more relevant, to suit their students' needs, and to facilitate student

understanding. In this way, teachers are responding to the unique characteristics of the class that they are teaching. Bringing extra adapted outside materials into the class can encourage students' interest and their motivation and stimulate them to learn.

A few teachers had negative feelings about coursebooks, for they described them as being boring with dull materials; hence their perceived need to change materials to keep students' interest and to invite students to participate in the lessons. Some respondents pointed out that coursebooks lack sufficient information about the topic and they look too general, whereas they need richer information to ensure students have a better understanding of what they have learnt in the lessons. Others also said that there are insufficient materials for the lessons, but other more optimistic teachers said it is a teacher's job to ensure the lessons are valuable. Thus, some said there is a need for flexibility so that students have an opportunity to introduce their cultures and to share and learn other peoples' cultures.

The disadvantages of using a coursebook alone

There are some disadvantages of using a coursebook without adapting any outside materials. What teachers complained of most was that the coursebook was uninteresting and lacked creativity for students: many participants said "no creativity", "boring", "dull", "discouraging", and "uninteresting." According to them, it seems there are no relevant materials for students which teachers can apply by using the coursebook alone. They therefore need to have flexibility for their lessons by adding a variety of materials to make those

lessons more successful and effective. Some participants said if there is only one coursebook used, it simply leads to “demotivation” and they will soon find a “lack of students' attention.”

A few participants said that the content of some coursebooks was inappropriate and irrelevant to certain cultures in some countries of EFL classrooms (such as drinking alcohol) and teachers therefore struggle to use them in different contexts when they are teaching: “irrelevant due to a different context...”; “..a different context between the country where CB is produced and used”; and “CBs don't meet expectations of one particular classroom.” Due to the different contexts of where the coursebook was produced, some students are unable to relate to what it says and thus withdraw their attention from the lessons.

As for the presentation of the validity of coursebooks' content, one participant commented that “some topics are only covered in a superficial way.” In terms of information given in the coursebooks, participants responded that there was “lack of information”, “little info given”, and “limited info”. By seeing those comments, coursebooks are not very appealing to teachers to use without having other materials for lessons, and there is a further limitation as one participant said: “lessons are limited to what they talk about.”

The advantages of using adapted materials while delivering lessons

Many respondents believed that there are several advantages of using adapted materials which can impact on the lessons. The majority of them said that

lessons become more relevant and more appropriate to all: students' cultures and context, what they want to teach, what they think they should teach, and how they can facilitate students' needs. Therefore, teachers gain students' interest and are able to prevent problems and issues in the class. One participant (P26) said that with the adapted materials, they "can relate to students' background knowledge." Most especially, adapted materials encourage students' motivation and incite them to put more effort into learning the language. Some other participants said it can promote the level of interest and P38 said "People are more engaged in discussion about more interesting topics." Similarly, P39 explained "I can get involved and have better understanding of materials and students are more motivated to learn them."

Some respondents highlighted the flexibility that adapted materials can bring (i.e. it would encourage all students to participate in the lessons and can provide students' needs within the lesson's target and aims), and they consequently help teachers to manage the class without trouble. As designers and leaders of their lessons and class, they are able to predict certain situations such as whether students would argue or be offended. For example, a teacher can avoid topics if things look as though they are going wrong. Thus, there can be a place for students to be exposed to authentic materials / realia such as a mask from Italy. "The reality of youtube videos, photos, magazine articles, realia brings these to life" was said by one respondent (P31), whereas the coursebook is unable to achieve this. Many teachers reported that using updated materials related to current trends and issues encourages students to become more involved in tasks as these materials deliver modern information,

look more contemporary and are more useful for students. Consequently, they would promote more discussions in the class where students are openly allowed to practise their skills and other language proficiency areas that they need to develop (“...able to focus on a particular skill” was said by one participant).

Meeting the students’ needs (especially language proficiency) is essential for teachers, and many will make great efforts to achieve this. As the lesson is personalized to meet students’ requirements, there can be more practice of communicative skills if teachers think this is necessary.

Having one’s own adapted materials can ensure that they are up-to-date, and this can encourage students’ attention in lessons. This is one of the most important advantages of having adapted materials according to this survey, for nearly half of the respondents said that lessons become more interesting and boredom is thereby avoided. To have a successful lesson, engagement of the students is important for teachers, and they can gain this when using their own adapted materials. A few of the teacher-participants also said that these materials can help them with building their confidence in delivering lessons (by saying “teacher feels more comfortable”), since they know that the lesson is well-structured and they consequently feel more comfortable in the class.

Research Question 3

“What activity (ies) do teachers use when they teach cultural concern lessons in the classrooms?”

Activities for class -

When delivering EFL lessons, teachers use a variety of activities in the class. The participants share with other colleagues what they use with their lessons in their day-to-day teaching lives and the reasons why they have chosen such activities. They focus on general communicative skills, so that they cover four language skills (reading, speaking, writing and listening) and the grammatical function of the language and sub-skills of pronunciation and vocabulary.

The skills of speaking and listening are the most favoured as they are more essential for communication, and these are taught by means of discussions in class (in pairs and groups), acting out (which we call “role-play”), having presentations, powerpoints and seminars, group interviews, having debates and doing compare and contrast activities such as “comparing the target culture with the students’ own culture or debriefing on different cultures.”

As for reading, teachers use articles, some use contextualized reading texts that are extracted from newspapers such as the Metro, and from websites such as google and www.bbc.co.uk, while others do questionnaires and other reading activities to improve reading skills. Teachers sometimes need to teach grammar through cultural concerns lessons as it can bring more attention, and some do brainstorming activities on vocabulary as well. Some teachers run

dictations and finding errors in the texts⁹ to help improve students' vocabulary. One participant said that he read a piece of text, and then asked the students to brainstorm on what the festival could be and where it is from: the students found this both interesting and engaging. Many teachers seek media aids, basically to enhance listening skills and to give students greater authenticity. Therefore, DVDs, short film clips and songs on Youtube¹⁰ are used for listening. Writing is least favoured by teachers, since only a few have such tasks about their own countries or comparisons about how things are different and similar in their own countries. A few teachers also have workshops such as creating flags, making crafts in the class and making food.

Why have they been chosen? –

Many participants answered that having a variety of activities is the best way to capture learners' attention. It helps them to reduce boredom in the classroom since students are engaged with the lesson and allowed to practise the language using all communicative skills. Many teachers believed that having debates, discussions, doing compare and contrast activities, and talking about similarities and differences between countries are the best tools to produce enjoyable discussion and allow students to learn each other's cultures, thereby widening their knowledge and improving listening and speaking skills.

One participant said:

“this is a very good opportunity for comparison; I mean what people say about specific cultures or people and what people say about you, so you can compare so that's... that's a very good thing because that will generate more debate and discussion which is enhancing the fluency and the speaking aspect of the students” (P19).

⁹ Respondent did not mention specifically

¹⁰ Respondents vaguely said

Moreover, being able to link back to their lives helps them to retain motivation and stimulates them to participate in activities. Some teachers reported that giving open opportunities for students to share knowledge, drawing out their opinions, and seeing and discussing authentic incidences such as things that they have experienced by themselves all helped the learning process and promoted their confidence in English speaking. For example, P36 said “I will ask students to present and provide some topics for them to discuss”, and P38 said “sometimes started by a personal story as an opening of discussion.”

Research Question 4

“Do teachers think students should learn culture through coursebooks?”

There are two factors which need to be considered when answering this question; but before this, it is worth mentioning teachers’ beliefs that teaching cultures is necessary. Teachers are more positive than negative towards teaching cultures through coursebooks. In many teachers’ eyes, teaching culture should happen in the EFL classrooms and students should be taught it as they see it as essential when learning a foreign language.

Some participants of this study said knowing the culture can help students to broaden their horizons (P67, P16) and P1 explained: “If the course is a language course then there is a necessity for the teacher to teach the cultural elements as well because language is part of culture.” P23 agreed that students should learn cultural elements through a coursebook and said, “Yes, because this can help them know a country or a language better.”

P39 highlighted that:

“They could learn cultures based on coursebooks because if they are not included in the textbook, some students will not take it seriously.”

One participant (P37) explained why it is needed to teach cultures through a coursebook as “.. It’s necessary and fun. It’s great to expose people to culture and how different people are around the world.” P72 shared the thought as:

“I think teachers do inevitably, so I think they need to do so with knowledge and sensitivity.”

P70 voiced the necessity of teaching cultures in the ELT classroom as:

“We are citizens of the world and the ELT classroom represents an ideal place to learn about other cultures and accept differences...”

P50 noted that “it makes them more culturally aware”; and P52 answered why cultures should be taught by teachers:

“I think it’s useful to order to give students a better knowledge of the country they’re living in and it also helps to build a good dynamic in the classroom as students learn about each other and build a rapport.”

A similar answer about teaching cultures through coursebooks was mentioned by P62:

“Most learning happens through contact with students of other nationalities. The coursebook may be a good starting point for learning to happen.”

Another participant (P60) said “coursebooks are good guidelines: a good starting point.” P49 answered:

“I believe they should, as learning a new language is in itself a cultural exchange of sorts and culture is also a significant part of our own.”

P38 mentioned that it was “important to teach behaviours (politeness, friendliness, state an opinion)” and another participant similarly said that some cultural elements are needed to teach such as “social conventions”, and saying “thank you and please, etc., otherwise you can appear rude.” One other

participant mentioned: “They should understand the cultures before they learn to respect and appreciate them”; and P2 said “an awareness of other cultures is important.” P12 shared the necessity of teaching cultures “...since it can benefit students who have plans to study abroad.” In addition, the connection of language and culture was mentioned, as they were “inextricably bound together” (P72), “language and culture are inseparable” (P68).

Others felt that “culture can help learners understand the language better”, while it was commonly held that it can enhance students’ motivation, since students can relate it to their lives and the lessons make more sense for them. These cultural elements can prompt discussions and debates, where learners can discover the similarities and differences between their own culture and other cultures. It therefore provides an opportunity for learners to learn more about other cultures and its specific usage (such as “sit on the floor”, “saying sorry” are commonly heard in England) which can help them to expand their views and lexical acquisition. Moreover, by talking to each other, their speaking skills can be improved more quickly. Cultural teaching was even described as a powerful method / aid by some participants in this study and some participants explained that “it helps to put the language through context”; “it can be a support when teaching a language”; and “it is definitely related to student's life.” However, there were a few teachers who think it is unnecessary to have it in their lessons. They believe learning from experiences and realia such as using local crafts or real wedding pictures on a smart board are much better than learning cultures in the classrooms through coursebooks. The researcher then moved on to ask whether or not teachers believe students

should learn these kinds of cultural elements through coursebooks. Two-thirds of the participants said they should be learnt and they gave many reasons for this opinion. The main reason was that learning culture helped students to know and understand cultural differences such as the target English culture and students' cultures (e.g. between English culture and Myanmar or Chinese cultures such as using a spoon and fork or hands or chopsticks when having food, etc.). P10 shared his thoughts as follows:

“I think so because students should pay respect to the others' cultures and should love their culture too. Students should accept the differences of each culture. The lessons would support them when they go abroad and study in other countries.”

A similar response was given by P12:

“Yes, it can help them know the other country's culture and tradition, and that will make them knowledge about culture, and they will also learn to love other people's culture.”

P24 continued:

“Yes, I think the coursebooks provide an organized and systematic way to make students familiar with those cultural elements.”

One other participant thought that using a coursebook could help them to remember, and P9 said in the questionnaire:

“In my opinion, the teachers should teach both from the course book if possible. Because course books provide some relevant activities in learning culture which could help the students remember.”

Since these cultural topics can encourage discussions, problem solving and sharing experiences, students can practise their speaking skills; and one participant said “the knowledge gained in class will assist them in dealing with different situations in the real world.” Yet, some teacher participants still recommended learning from realia and they believed that bringing authentic

materials to their students was their job. P5 thought “Not necessarily through coursebooks but I welcome publishers’ attempts to present cultural issues into their books.”

On the other hand, 16 out of 85 participants said that students do not need to learn through coursebooks, because some are written with stereotypical views and some are inadequate as they can give wrong information. For example, P45 said “...lots of angles and viewpoints are needed to stop students getting stereotypical views from coursebooks.” Thus, learning from people or from personal cultural experiences was a lot better than learning through coursebooks and one participant (P3) firmly said “learners should learn cultures through people (teachers and classmates).” Additionally, P13 answered “I think experience, role-play or discussion is better.”

6.18 Conclusion

As presented earlier, this research is particularly focused on the teachers’ use of outside materials, their reasons, their limitations (which happens in certain circumstances) and how they modify, personalize and localize these materials to create successful lessons alongside the school-provided materials. Teachers’ reasons for using such materials and the impact of using them are also taken into account while assessing the level and role of adaptation for cultural elements lessons which were revealed throughout the questionnaires and interviews. It was also necessary to learn whether or not teachers think that students should learn these cultural elements through coursebooks and this has been answered in the section above.

Discussion and Implications

7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss the findings (gained from the collected data: open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews) and relate these to the relevant literature. Some potential issues which were revealed by the participants are presented and a few suggestions to overcome these difficulties are made.

7.2 Maintaining students' interest and their motivation in lessons

According to the findings of this research, teachers replace or modify materials with things that students know better so that language is taught through content and localizing the context through the use of local materials (e.g. telling stories based on local geographical locations, using local arts and crafts, etc.) or setting local cultural themes (such as choosing the cultural themes and things that students belong to). All of these are commonly done for students to avoid having inattentive and uninteresting lessons, particularly when those lessons are based on somewhere students have never been to or which are difficult to imagine.

Some teacher-participants have already done these kinds of adaptations for their students, such as asking them to bring handcrafts materials or changing a theme from pub to restaurant or adapting and modifying materials. Thus, they are able to respect cultural restrictions by adopting a restaurant theme and going out with friends for lunch or tea in lieu of dating, drinking alcohol and going to the pub every night. As P66 said:

“being in the Middle East where with children, we had imported books for primary school and the little girls are with swing and short skirts shouldn’t be seen, so we had to go through the book and colour them in, so they come right down to the ankle and arms as well.”

One participant (P20) shared his opinion that localized/familiarized materials help teachers and students to be able to relate to lessons, and the reasons why he had chosen localized materials were as follows:

“I try and get as much as possible, and especially localized items, things that are very local and home-grown materials. And umm....students tend to.. umm.. it is something the students can relate to, umm.. you know, something they can relate to quite easily and so on.”

Duarte and Escobar (2008, p.74), when mentioning the use of local adapted materials, experienced that: “it had a direct impact on students’ motivation because it really touched and involved them cognitively and emotionally, making them feel motivated to participate in the proposed activities”. Of course, personalizing and localizing materials is the key in some contexts to persuade students to get involved in lessons comfortably, and it makes them see logically what things are meant to say. Teachers must, therefore, know how to use published coursebooks’ content materials, learn students’ cultures and then adapt them to their students’ situations. If a teacher has a multilingual/multicultural class, it would be more difficult to deal with, but s/he can observe students’ cultures and motivational factors (such as learning English to get a better job, needing English to study at English-medium universities, etc.) by speaking to them individually or allowing group discussions at the beginning to be able to get a rough idea of what students’ cultures are like.

Moreover, one respondent (P20) explained in the interview that he has used “student-generated materials”, such as students’ handcraft materials. Epstein and Orminston (2007), discussed in the literature review on page 90, asked students to tell their own stories and be creative, for this makes them more motivated and more engaged with the lessons. One participant said in the interview that, when he asked students to bring any handcraft materials, they also brought their own stories and it made them more motivated to practise speaking as they had something to talk about to teachers and their classmates:

“Well, sometimes they might bring a wood carving, its been carved, which, um.. you know... it relates a particular story. They might... they sometimes can bring a picture from somewhere, or sometimes they just come with a story, Oh! My grandma made this story and... I think it is very interesting. So, they get all kinds of things and umm.. they get excited about this and they feel part of the process. And, in this way, they are really motivated and enthused to be part of the whole thing” (P20).

These sorts of activities will be more familiar to them, more reflective of their lives and their surrounding environment, and will make the lessons more engaging in a mono- or multi-cultural class. Therefore, the researcher would recommend that teachers simplify texts, elicit more students’ experiences and stories, and allow them to practise speaking. Moreover, activities that are particularly personalized for cultural elements lessons which are already matched with the levels of students’ proficiency help them to learn more quickly. Teachers will know their students’ level of proficiency, and they can therefore adjust the teaching content and materials accordingly so that students’ interest and attention are maximised. Cullen and Sato (2000) suggested that:

“Only by personalizing activities and content can we hope to lead students to better cultural understanding. We can start off by talking

about a distant country, but this will only result in stereotyping if we do not allow students to relate the same issues to their own lives.”

If a teacher teaches in the students’ own country or has a mono-lingual group of students in the classroom, he/she would be able to start talking about students’ target language culture (such as the British or American cultures), which is talking about a distant country as Cullen and Sato have said. However, they should ensure balance and make comparisons between the target cultures and the students’ cultures to erase stereotypical thoughts. In addition, they may add their own personal experiences of other people’s cultures such as how Chinese, Thai or Japanese people are the way they are, what are the “do’s and don’ts” (for example: how do they introduce the bride to guests, what colours are desirable to wear (such as red or white), what are the most valuable things at their wedding, and what are their attires for such specific occasions? --- wearing a black tie is typically reserved for funeral events in English culture) and what practices are not culturally appropriate and acceptable. If students have internet access in the country, teachers should not hesitate to ask them to browse for further reading, then ask them to write or prepare a short presentation as homework about the major differences and similarities of wedding receptions, the ritual of visiting someone’s home, the way they greet and their attire in both formal and informal settings.

7.3 Teachers’ preference for authentic materials

Having authentic materials could help learners to understand as they are more visual, they hold the value of meanings (such as what is called a ‘watermelon’ in English by showing realia or a photo of it), and are more realistic to learners.

As stated in the last chapter, the participants of this study also preferred using authentic materials such as youtube and TV channels; and Purba (2011: 51) stated “photographs, magazines, restaurant menus and travel brochures” are also included in terms of authentic materials. Wang (2008) also explained that “the use of visual images can increase students’ memory and comprehension of new words and promote learning interest.”

Authentic materials such as photographs are used by participants and one participant (P57) explained the reasons why she used them: “it appears...umm... sort of visual learners. They need to see images, so I just think it’s more stimulating than only discussion.” One other participant (P18) explained why she thought these work better than printed non-authentic materials:

“I mean class books, worksheets they are good but to use realias and umm.... at the beginning of the activity.... I think.... it was already worked for me a lot because they like “*oh! this is so..*” (Unclear – 05:01) and they would ask where did you get this from? Is it expensive, can I get this?”

Thus, it seems that this participant could encourage her students’ interest and attention in the lesson with authentic (realia) materials. Therefore, any materials that teachers think suitable for lessons should be used effectively. In fact, based on the researcher’s own teaching experience, allowing students to see other people’s cultures through pictures, videos, magazines and DVDs helps them to accept how other people are the ways they are and would definitely be a good way to acquire more knowledge and gain social/interpersonal skills (i.e. having better communication with people from different cultures). This is one of the most important skills for communicating

with people, especially with those who come from different cultures. Therefore, building these interpersonal skills through learning cultural elements will have great benefit for learners.

Other sorts of authentic materials such as magazines and newspapers are used in both the UK and other countries in EFL classes. P40, who was teaching in the UK while participating in this research, also explained the reasons why she chooses newspapers:

“I use newspapers for the simple fact of proving to the students the importance of reading the local paper, not for the language side of it but also an insight into the cultural aspect of living in Britain. Reading the paper gives the students the chance to talk to others about interesting local news.”

Nicholson (2008) held a workshop in Canada about sharing experiences of using newspapers in ESL classrooms and some of the observations were as follows: “students become more familiar with the language and conventions of newspapers because of repeated use...”; “newspaper also helps learners to improve their reading and writing skills...”; and “a page for every age” (P24). Seeing this and the current research participants’ words as mentioned above, newspapers are widely used in both ESL and EFL classrooms and there is much benefit to students and teachers. Therefore, the practical benefits of using newspapers are clearly evident, and the researcher would suggest that this method should be used with students.

7.3.1 Participants’ views on using authentic materials

Participants talked about the impact and reasons why they use such authentic materials. P20 shared his experience as:

“That is very important for a class and....umm, having this really helps students who..um...especially students who are slow thinkers, slow at grasping ideas and things they can easily see, and they will be able to really work it out and not those who can think in the abstract....”

P3 also voiced about using articles from newspapers as an authentic material that can motivate students:

“Why not take an article from a similar subject that actually comes from a newspaper that they could read and find for themselves online? So, I think it’s about.. it comes to motivation as well, just sort of them.. umm.. it can motivate them to.. to see that they understand and they can use and work with authentic materials that they will find outside the classroom, like all around them.”

P57 explained:

“..it’s the real world material, so if you’re just doing .. umm.. I have lots of students who .. umm..., for example, they do... umm.. they find readings from a coursebook like Intermediate or Upper-Intermediate coursebook easy, so they think their reading skills are good and they need to practise them but then again, if you use newspaper articles or get them a book or.... novel, writing styles are completely different because the coursebook is written with students in mind and the other materials that use to get the message across, so they play with words ... in a really natural way that is... coursebooks can’t provide.”

P53 also shared his points of view:

“...the ones in textbook are... because they are graded .. OK.. may be .. they match specific skills or specific levels or the challenge for students who you have but I don’t feel they are normally interesting or motivating as getting a... BBC news article authentic material because it’s really rewarding for them that they can see they could do it but at the same time, the level of challenge could be different.....”

All of this suggests that the participants believed that having extra authentic materials is more beneficial in the language learning process. What is more, “Activities involving the direct use and handling of products of a culture (such as postcards, photographs, symbols, and images in song lyrics) can be very effective in the classroom” (Oura, online accessed 2015: p75). A key message from this research, therefore, is that teachers should practise having more

authentic materials for English language learners. Authentic materials can be good to use for contextualizing or to support any personalised lessons.

7.3.2 Practical examples of teaching English through authentic materials and local cultures

Two Taiwanese teachers, Huang and Wang (2008), have taught a task-based lesson in their Chinese English language classroom with their own cultural element: Dragon Boat Festival and Rice Dumplings. During the lessons, they used photos with powerpoint, they demonstrated how to cook rice dumplings with authentic cooking materials and did two recalling vocabulary tasks with photos. They found positive results in their experiment of using those materials, such as their students were actively involved in their cooking activity and conversed in English with teachers and their classmates throughout the activity. This suggests that teaching English through local cultures and authentic materials promotes the enhancement of active English-learning in the EFL classroom.

One participant (P26: a non-native teacher of English from Taiwan) said in interview about using authentic materials. She shared her experience of using this theme with the researcher:

“sometimes our principal in our school they will dress as Santa Claus before Christmas. The day before Christmas and..... they also go to each classroom and say Merry Christmas to students and.....umm... give them candies...just like that ...hahahah...”

Thus, teachers have applied authentic materials in their classrooms along with contextualizing and creating themes for students. This is clearly good engagement with the students and they have thereby gained the result of

“active learning English” (Huang and Wang, 2008). Day (2003: 2) also said that authentic texts should be “interesting, engaging, culturally enlightening, relevant, motivating and the best preparation for reading authentic texts and understanding authentic speech.”

Achievement of these criteria will be more useful for beginner and intermediate level students (such as a short article about a celebrity that could be extracted from a magazine or an advertisement from an English newspaper). To have success in every lesson and to create an interesting learning atmosphere, the researcher would like to recommend that suitable authentic materials such as those used for Christmas-themed lessons should be employed in the teaching. Kilickaya (2004) supported the idea of using authentic materials and said, “it may not be wrong to say that at any level authentic materials should be used to complete the gap between the competency and performance of the language learners, which is a common problem among the non-native speakers.” As P26 said, using authentic material in an Asian EFL classroom such as Father Christmas’s hat and contextualizing students by being given sweets by a dressed-up Father Christmas can help them absorb the lesson and get inspiration to learn its language usage as they can create a picture in their minds.

7.3.3 Authentic or Inauthentic materials

Although many EFL teachers prefer to use more authentic materials, they could still see the value of inauthentic materials such as graded readers’ books for beginner level students and some kinds of literacy books such as

encyclopaedias for intermediate and advanced level students, because students can see the composition of language (such as grammar patterns and the use of direct/indirect objects) which enhance their academic and formal writing skills. William Shakespeare's plays or novels set in 18-19th Centuries (e.g. Emma, Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen) would also be suitable for advanced learners to digest the lexis and grammar that they have acquired and move towards advanced native-like level speakers of English. Moreover, the researcher wants to quote Tomlinson's words (2003: 13) again: "a storybook can provide all the information about language which a coursebook does and it can provide it in ways which match what we know the best ways to learn a language." He went on to say "in my view the best coursebook for most learners is a storybook" (p.14). In any event, "materials should be flexible" (Saraceni, 2013: 57) to provide students' needs and to meet lessons' aims. As read above, many teachers favoured authentic materials, yet text "from literature, from songs, from newspapers and magazines, from non-fiction books, from radio and television programmes and from films" (Tomlinson, 2013: 100) would also provide teachers with material for their lessons that helped to engage the students. Therefore, the teacher's job is to try and meet all targets (i.e. students' needs, students' preferences) and the criteria of the lessons.

7.4 Teachers' beliefs that coursebooks have outdated and irrelevant materials

Chandran (2003) found in his study conducted in a Malaysian school that many of his participants complained that textbooks' illustrations (and layout) did not attract learners and coursebooks were considered out-dated and old-

fashioned. Duarte and Escobar (2008, p.64) said in their study that “Many students find course books somehow boring even if that material is intended to be attractive by using colors and illustrations.” In this study, when the researcher accessed teachers’ points of view on coursebooks, many respondents mentioned that there are times that they do not use them because they are outdated and uninteresting.

One (P44) said: “Language is not well-presented, materials are outdated”; P46 mentioned that “sometimes they are outdated, boring and the topics have no relation to the students’ life”; P9 said “Sometimes there are situations that the level of students are not suited with the course book”; P43 also explained “...most of them are crap. Either the layout or the content, how the task and language are graded”; P37 said “Sometimes I’ll skip a lesson because it doesn’t make sense or it’s boring”; P38 said “I feel like readings and listenings are often boring and impersonal”; P14 mentioned “Grammar sections inadequate (sometimes over simplistic)”; and P53 said “level of challenge too high or low, not engaging, not effective/accurate teaching grammar concepts.” Similarly, Speck has explained: “ESOL students, on the other hand, may not know or care who Brad Pitt is. Make sure your material is right for them” (web accessed 11/10/2014). This is one of the reasons why teachers ought to look for those things that need to be updated and meet current students’ requirements. In a similar vein, one respondent (P24) answered in the questionnaire: “If I cannot find a suitable coursebook for my students, I will not use coursebooks and will design handouts on my own.”

Bolster (2015, p.19) mentioned that “the most commonly cited reasons for adapting materials in this study [her study] were limited time, wanting to personalize the topic, possible boredom caused by repetitive exercises and out-of-date topics.” By looking at her findings, the researcher and readers can now imagine that many teachers think coursebooks and their topics are already outdated and do not maintain students’ interest. One other participant of this study (P26) said: “Sometimes the topic is not interesting for my students”, although she did not go into detail about the reasons why it was uninteresting. This inevitably leads them to adapt their own materials.

7.5 Teachers’ forms of materials’ adaptation for cultural elements lessons

After analyzing the collected data, it has become clear that these teacher-participants do localization (i.e. making things more suitable for students by using contexts which are familiar or relevant to students’ cultures), modernization (i.e. updating with current affairs, such as replacing Madonna who was famous a decade ago with someone who is popular at the times the lessons are taught), personalization (i.e. redesigning lessons by using students’ familiar materials, balancing students’ cultures and coursebooks’ given cultures, adjusting their needs or meeting their aims of learning, etc.), and simplification (i.e. rewriting texts when the actual text from coursebooks looks too difficult).

All teachers should consider doing these things to meet their students’ needs and requirements in addition to avoiding any offence occurring in their classrooms due to some cultural sensitivities. As mentioned in the Findings chapter, one of the respondents explained how he contextualized for students:

“a topic in the textbook about going out around the world, so I have to kind of like trying to define all this thing...all the things that association to going out, either to go clubbing, drinking, dancing, or going out for restaurant, eating, so going on a date.... So... I try to kind of like how to work out all this in terms of language and in terms of how make them adaptable to the culture and context I teach there, in which I teach” (P19).

As explained above, changing the textbook’s context into a local context has more benefits for learning English through cultural elements for some learners, such as going out to a restaurant which is more familiar to students. Furthermore, delivering lessons with authentic materials such as having Chinese New Year or Tomato Festival from Spain or Halloween themes or using a real mask could encourage students to visualize and learn the language more efficiently as they can see what things are called in English and also help them remember when revising their lessons. P18 explained why she used such kinds of authentic materials:

“Oh because when I (Unclear – 02:57) into the classroom they would see it’s real. It might be obvious that it is real but not all of them have been, have travelled aboard or have cable TV in their houses so they are not in touch with the language so bringing that is like oh it does exist, its real and that way they are more engaged to do the activity later on.”

By seeing these participants’ techniques, other teachers should find it easy to adapt and fit into their students’ cultures or the cultures that they want to teach in order to create more successful lessons and a more welcoming atmosphere.

However, based on the researcher’s own teaching experience, novice teachers are advised to ask about students’ cultures (i.e. whether there are any sensitive topics such as talking about dating, as one of the participants explained in this study). Thus, they need to give more time to lesson planning, and reading

the topic and content of the lesson thoroughly (at least twice) to see what language point is being delivered and whether or not it meets the students' needs or their cultural knowledge before they start thinking about materials adaptation. It is also suggested that they think of their own experiences of learning a foreign language (i.e. how one will learn if the teacher is using such adapted materials, such as a piece of text from a coursebook and more pictures or when the teacher turns on a video clip) to have an awareness of students' learning styles, which is similar to what Bolster (2015, p.16) said:

“My view is that having learned a language other than your own is another element of experience which can allow teachers to empathize with their students. Teachers who have also been language students themselves should have an awareness of their own learning style. This might, in turn, have an impact on their teaching style and the use of material.”

It is clear that many respondents of this study gave careful consideration to students' cultures, their cultural backgrounds, and their levels of English to meet all the aspects of learning a language through cultural elements and to be able to have an easy and effective learning atmosphere; and one participant (P4) said:

“you consider your student background, but you also consider the atmosphere in the class. You know the atmosphere in the class. You want it reasonably light-hearted. You don't want to bring the atmosphere down and you don't want students. You don't want students to feel uncomfortable. You don't want to feel uncomfortable. To feel uncomfortable, there is not need, there are loads of other things to talk about, so adapting or... why does one adapt or omit problematic cultural elements.”

Some teachers tend to show and share the similarities and differences between cultures. One respondent (P6) said:

“The fact that I have done this job for such a long time, so I can prompt students and I can list information for students from students because I heard it before from Korean students or Japanese students or Russian students or whatever, so I am aware of something cultural differences

and sometimes the students are...., sometimes...students are unaware of even the similarities and differences of the respected culture. Because.... I have been counting them before, prompt them and pass them and that's a coursebook can't. They can't do that because coursebooks can't predict what nationality you will get in the class..."

However, he had also experienced that some students do not accept other people's cultures and believe only that their culture is the norm:

"They just think that what other cultures do is weird or unusual. They never.. they never recognise that their culture in the eyes of others could be similar seen as being weird or unusual. They take their own cultures being the norm or some students take their culture being norm. That's the problem."

Although it is impossible to force students to recognise other people's cultures (i.e. accepting or not is part of their mentality, how they have been raised and how they were taught in their families, etc.), it is worth trying to give much more information about similarities and differences and deliver the message why they should know and accept them so that they become more flexible persons. If a teacher is leading a monolingual class or a group of monolingual students, s/he should first try to highlight the similarities in students' cultures, then allow students to experience either target cultures or the culture that the teacher is planning to teach. The teacher should also add personal experiences that s/he has come across (for example, many English people are punctual and, therefore, I have never had to wait whenever I make an appointment with an English person). By using this as an example, teachers should anticipate problems, prepare strategies to overcome them and make lessons go smoothly without offending anyone, although it is hard to predict what would be the potential issues with students.

As Tomlinson (2003: 23-25) explained, pre-use evaluation can help teachers to predict potential problems, such as cultural and linguistic issues; and post-evaluation can help to avoid making the same mistakes in future lessons as “it can measure the short-term effect as regards motivation, impact, achievability, instant learning, etc.” By looking at both strengths and weaknesses in the post-evaluation stage, it could help the teacher to design more interesting lessons and materials and to anticipate potential problems such as cultural mismatching, to invite all students to participate in all activities and to avoid anyone feeling uncomfortable, including teachers. As one participant said, “This is the problem”.

7.6 Applicable activities for cultural concerns lessons

Following the findings from this study, there are a number of activities that could be done for students without having to worry about different cultural backgrounds. Using students as materials’ providers in classrooms, especially in multicultural classrooms settings (i.e. to represent their cultures, allowing them to share their own stories), would increase their motivation and attention to lessons, as they know that they need to participate in the activities and they might be proud of being a representative of their country. The other activities that teacher-participants used are, as explained in the Findings chapter, presentation, role-play, discussion (paired/group), reading texts and writing, signing, playing games, and so forth.

Comparing Cullen and Sato’s (2000) suggestion of activities and the findings of this research, quizzes, True/False, prediction, games, role-play, reading

activities, listening, writing activities, discussion and singing are commonly used among teachers. Blatchford (1973) explained “the discussion of cultural differences practices speaking”, and this is why readers are advised to open cultural topics discussions in order to give students a chance to share their own and explore other cultures within their language classrooms. For example, one participant who participated via electronic emailing interview explained:

“When we discuss a topic in the textbook or during a fluency class I will often ask the students “is it the same in your country” and they are normally happy to explain the differences. For example, we had a discussion on relationships and a Korean student told me that it is considered rude to kiss in public there.”

This is exactly how learners can learn other cultures through language learning in the class. Moreover, “students can act out instances of breakdowns that result from misunderstandings of cultural differences” through role-play activities (Jerrold, 2013, p.8) so that students can avoid misunderstanding, misjudgement or confusion between cultures. Chastain (1988) recommends using role-plays by saying “The use of role-play in EFL classrooms can help students to overcome cultural “fatigue” and it promotes the process of cross-cultural dialogues while at the same time providing opportunities for oral communication” (cited in Çakir, online accessed, 2015, p4-5).

Çelik (2005) studied American and Turkish EFL teachers’ experiences of different cultural personal distances, especially when having a conversation, where it was quite easy to cause unwitting offence. He suggested, therefore, that EFL students should know the differences between American and Turkish cultures in relation to the social distance: “in case they might come into contact with the target language community or its members and they might

need this survival kit to adapt their spatial relationships to the American style for day-to-day survival...”

The researcher believes that there would be no disadvantage of knowing other people’s cultures, plus this knowledge could help to avoid cultural misunderstanding and create better understanding of cultural etiquette, and so forth. Çelik (2005) went on to suggest that one of the most suitable activities was role-play: “Role-plays can help students see the reactions of inappropriate distance behaviors in different cultures” (p21); and he mentioned that “Turkish EFL teachers should adjust adopting or developing texts and using extra materials (pictures, discussion sessions, videos of people interacting, etc.)” (p22).

To gain students’ attention and allow them to practise authentic language use with role-play activities, Oura (online accessed website needed, 2015: p77) also gives the following guidance:

“set up a simulation of some real-world scenarios in which students familiarize themselves with the details through interaction with authentic materials. Then the students have to play a certain role in the scenario and communicate with others in a realistic manner while attempting to accomplish certain tasks.”

This is why teachers should try having more role-playing activities with specific themes (such as ordering foods at a café or restaurant to allow students to practise their speaking skills and also fit into the more appropriate cultural norms). Kilickaya (2004) explained that there are many activities available to bring interest towards the target language by using cultural content, but she also points out and reminds us that:

“The key point is that we should create a relaxing environment where our students can discuss their own culture together with the target culture in meaningful and communicative tasks and activities. This will ensure that students are doing something with a purpose in their mind.”

Oura has also shared her positive experience of using role-play activities by utilising authentic materials and has mainly focused on practical language skills: “Students often report gaining greater confidence in using the language during such activities. It’s a way to bring real world experiences into the classroom by focusing on practical language skills” (online accessed website needed, 2015: p79). The results in this study also show that many EFL teachers use presentations and role-play activities to facilitate the acquisition of language. Teachers should therefore take this into consideration when thinking about language activities and it would be interesting to apply and test it with their own students to see the outcomes.

7.7 The gaps between students’ cultures and coursebooks’ presented cultures and contents

It is clear that a gap exists between (global) coursebooks’ (e.g. New Cutting Edge, 2005) presentations of cultures, contents and learners; for example, Duarte and Escobar (2008, p.70) noted:

“a textbook may use, as part of its contents, the habits and customs of the English Royalty in order to work on simple present and enable the learner to express routines. The learner is likely to learn and achieve the objective of identifying and using the grammar item. However, the context that exemplifies the grammatical aspect could not have been the best since, for many people in Colombia, English Royalty is only seen on TV news.”

Looking at this, many teachers have experienced a cultural gap between coursebooks' presented cultures and students' cultures, which is why some participants of this study said they localize either contexts or substitute with familiar materials for their lessons or find more suitable materials which can be downloaded from the internet. One participant (P24) explained some topics are used to bridge the gap and advance students' knowledge, while she was asked what topics are omitted from coursebooks:

“There are some other issues like family, because in Chinese culture and in western, I think people have different concepts about their family or about their social activities like they have different concepts about making friends. I will introduce that too, but still with some carefulness because is sometimes controversial. I don't want students to have stereotype about certain cultures, and also international issues.”

Tomlinson (2007) also explained a possible way to effect a balance between students and distant cultures: “You can think of ways in which a readiness activity can stimulate locally focused mental activity that could make relevant a text set in a distant country.” It can be done by changing the context and using appropriate materials. Therefore, teachers are advised not to rely so much on using coursebooks alone, although it saves a huge amount of time and avoids having to find other such materials. Essentially, relevant materials such as a video clip from youtube (e.g. how to use chopsticks) or any materials that they can recognise will bring good engagement between the teacher, the lessons and the students in the classroom. Furthermore, contextualizing and localizing (i.e. using a student's familiar culture) could make lessons smoother and work more effectively. Tomlinson's (2007) experience of contextualizing is shown as follows:

“For example, I once had to use a text about how the Inuit build igloos with a group of Nigerian students. I started the lesson by asking them about where they lived and how they built their houses. Soon they were telling me about how they used locally available materials to make huts and how they could quite easily rebuild them when they began to deteriorate. I then told them they were going to read a passage about people building houses in an area where there were no trees, only ice and snow. I asked them to predict how these people built their homes and then told them to read the passage and to think as they were reading about the similarities between their culture and that of the Inuit.”

One of the participants of this study, P20, asked students to bring local handcraft materials made by themselves or the members of their families, and then invited them to tell stories about these things so that they could practise speaking in English. Therefore, asking students to bring local materials or explaining context as Tomlinson has done can help students to understand better, and this is much more efficient than asking them to read out loud the paragraphs from a text without having any background knowledge.

7.7.1 Is designing material a necessary job for teachers?

Duarte and Escobar (2008, p.64) pointed out that “materials design is a field that is not explored enough by teachers for reasons such as the lack of investment of time, money and support from educational authorities.” Some participants of this current study also admitted that they could not do a lot of adaptation due to time constraints and/or exam target orientation. However, Duarte and Escobar (2008, p.74) found that “the adapted material turned out to be more successful because it was designed for that group of students and thus, increased their interest and motivation.” Respondents in this study explained that they have experienced gaining more students’ attention and interest if they have relevant adapted materials such as simplifying texts or bringing suitable

pictures or video links. Therefore, the researcher would like to suggest it is necessary to do this for every lesson and teachers are advised to design materials that are more relevant for specific groups of students.

Benjamin (2015) undertook a study about materials adaptation (see Literature Review, p.115) and rewrote some parts, replacing them with local things which were from natural wonders that were closer to students' recognition. Instead of Patagonia, the Everglades and the Victoria Falls that were presented in original texts, he substituted new texts written about the Dead Sea in Jordan, the Jabal Qarah Caves in Saudi Arabia, and the Cedars of God in Lebanon which were more familiar to his learners. Moreover, he added some relevant and effective tasks, transforming the original speaking task into writing a leaflet for tourist information in groups. By doing this, he appears to have achieved his goal, since he stated in his conclusion: "The result has been the development of materials that complement the culture of the classroom by tapping into the existing world knowledge the members of the class share and adapting the materials to tie in with that knowledge." He continued: "These adaptations have allowed a blend between the needs of the learners and course aims, as well as the culture of the classroom" (p34). Some of the participants in this study had done some simplifying of texts to meet the levels of students or changing themes that worked well in lessons. Therefore, readers are advised to try adapting or changing the global context to a local context with which students will be more familiar, for this will give them more knowledge in the aspects of language.

As mentioned in the Literature Review, Çakir (online accessed, 2015) highlighted that:

“the topics to be used to teach the target language should be presented in the contexts accompanying the native ones. That is to say, while teaching a culture specific topic first language equivalent can also be given in order to enhance learning” (p6).

This is the evidence that localized adapted materials which come from the students’ context can enhance their language learning. The researcher personally believes that localising helps a lot of students to become motivated and to be able to acquire both grammar and lexis, and it would also inspire their interest to share their knowledge or experience and allow them to use the language patterns in English when they have to write or speak, either in the class or as homework.

7.8 Implications for materials developers/course writers and teachers

As the results in the Findings chapter demonstrate, teachers prefer using authentic materials such as newspapers, photographs or current news and have struggled to find the right materials for their target groups of students. Some teachers think that coursebooks do not provide sufficient information and they also feel that they are left with irrelevant materials. Although materials are meant to be adapted, modified and chosen depending upon specific groups of students, the researcher would advise materials developers that adding some more information (e.g. adding a picture/s along with background information of such topics) would reduce the burden of searching for materials, especially for those who have a lower level of internet access in schools. The related additional information can be given in teachers’ books, and teachers are therefore also advised to look at these and read the guidance rather than ignoring them.

It is generally assumed that coursebooks should be a safe material so that anyone from any culture would not feel offended. However, they would become more interesting and useful material if they provided the pros and cons, and similarities and differences between many cultures. Nevertheless, teachers still need to adapt or add additional localised materials to make the lessons more suitable for learners.

To achieve successful and enjoyable lessons, teachers need to commit a certain amount of time for lesson preparation. If the topic is unfamiliar, teachers may need to acquire knowledge and then choose the most interesting and useful things that students need to know/ learn from those specific lessons. As an example, bowing is a custom for greeting in Japanese culture. Teachers must therefore know why such a custom is in practice and its value and meanings before it is shown to students. Moreover, teachers ought to research students' cultures in greeting to expand the speaking activity by asking "how do you greet and why do you do so?", and so on.

7.9 With coursebook or without coursebook is best for teaching

Referring to the current research findings, the readers can see there is only a small number (3) of teachers who do not use coursebooks among the 85 participants. Those who do use them believe that they provide a strong syllabus structure (P2), plus language structure and topics (P11). They also use the coursebooks to teach grammar, vocabulary, and some cultural aspects (P18) to follow the syllabus and to have some sort of grammar orientation (P40). It may be suggested that, while reviewing her own experience of being

a student of foreign language learning, the researcher can acknowledge that she likes having a coursebook as it is one of the references for her and enables her to keep in touch with language learning whenever she needs it. Thanasolous (1999, online accessed 21/02/2015) can see the link between students and the coursebook, as “a textbook provides them with the opportunity to go back and revise.” He continued: “They can also use the textbook for self-study and as a reference tool.”

Moreover, it is suggested that teachers can expand their knowledge based on the information given in coursebooks (for example, extract “Thanks” and “Thank you”, whichever is mentioned in the coursebook, and then write these on the board and open a discussion with students, because saying “Thank you” is more polite (as a formality) than saying “Thanks” in British culture (Good, 2015, personal email contact)). Thus, the researcher believes this sort of thing should be learnt by students to understand the function of the language. Çakir (online accessed website needed, 2015: 1) also points out that:

“Since every culture has its own cultural norms for conversation and these norms differ from one culture to another, some of the norms can be completely different and conflict with other cultures’ norms. Consequently, communication problems may arise among speakers who do not know or share the norms of other cultures.”

By doing such kinds of discussions, students will have a chance to compare the degree of politeness to thank someone in their own cultures. It might be difficult to know the target cultures such as British or American cultures for non-native speaking teachers of English, but they can find references to get relevant information. It might take more preparation time, but students will have more interest in the lesson if they can see that their teacher is expanding

their knowledge in language use under the specific cultural norms. For example, P2 did a lesson about equal rights which is under cultural norms in such a way that made students more engaged:

“I just taught a class now where we did .. umm.. British men and women are equal right and that kind of thing and they had to listen and complete some gaps, so by doing that they learn a little bit about famous people in the UK. And then, they had... at the end of the lesson, they had to discuss is it the same in their countries or is it similar or is it very different. What do they think about it and equal rights and kind of things? So, they are very extremely engaged.”

Also, as already mentioned, P19’s lesson of using ‘going out’ in many other different contexts (i.e. using the word that was mentioned in the coursebook and replacing with specific students’ cultural norms) is beneficial for students to expand their language usage in their own contexts.

Therefore, it may be suggested that teachers should not ignore coursebooks but spend more time on the lesson planning stage (to read the content of the lesson thoroughly, to find relevant materials if necessary, to have effective activities for all students, etc.), since there can be some positive effects which can psychologically support learners. For example, they might be able to review lessons, have more practice in their own time, or they might even think it is worth buying coursebooks when they have registered at schools. However, the researcher is also in line with Thanasoulas (1999), who said: “No textbook is good enough.” Tomlinson (2003: 162) also experienced coursebooks “...which have needed humanizing because they didn’t engage the learners I was using them with and because they didn’t manage to connect with the learners’ lives.” Therefore, teachers are advised to draw a balance between the use of a coursebook and fulfilling the needs of students (such as understanding

their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, aiming to hit learners' goals of learning English and then finding more practical effective materials and activities, and so forth).

Moreover, teachers such as P57 have experienced that there can be arguments due to some students' backgrounds and strong thoughts. She explained thus:

“...if you have that the class dynamic starts to break down, so you want as a teacher makes sure that everybody feels equal. Everyone feels happy and yeah.. some of the comment .. umm.. people come up with .. you want to leave them at the door and not many people .. yeah... there are some racial stereotype that something you talk about .. will create.. and I don't want my class to feel.. umm.. I don't like to feel .. I don't like students feel embarrassed or feel offended but then again its more made comments and umm.. the rest of the class .. umm.. that's not what you want to have a good educational nice experience within the classroom.”

It is hard to predict what sort of sensitive topics will come up in the class and how students' cultures would respond. If the coursebook is irrelevant or appears unsuitable for the current situation, teachers may have to think about doing something else. This is consequently referred to as “humanizing the coursebook” (Tomlinson, 2003) by localizing and personalizing or modifying/replacing/deleting some parts which are irrelevant; to be able to maintain learners' attention on language learning if this is needed for certain groups of learners.

Tomlinson (2003: 163) also explained: “by humanizing the coursebook I mean adding activities which help to make the language learning process a more effective experience and finding ways of helping the learners to connect what is in the book to what is in their minds.” Therefore, choosing the doable

activities based on students' levels and their backgrounds is more important than being stuck on uninteresting topics and activities that students may be unable to do because of lack of knowledge. As seen above, it is clear that many participants of this study have edited lessons' contents, have chosen the most suitable activities with relevant materials, and make an effort to ensure that there are as few arguments in the classroom as possible so that nobody is embarrassed.

In this case, the researcher would like to note that "adaptation" is the key and gathering suitable materials and having appropriate familiar contexts which will not upset any students. Thus, this is similar to what Benjamin (2015) adapted with students' local knowledge and P19 who created his lesson about teaching the term of "going out" in his students' context. These strategies facilitated understanding while giving respect to their cultures and will go a long way to achieving successful lessons.

Moreover, some teachers such as P31 use coursebooks because her school sells them to students. Gray (2013: 7) noted that "textbooks are more than educational tools and cultural objects - they are more commodities to be bought and sold." In any event, whether teachers use a coursebook or not, they should be prepared to adapt their teaching to effect a balance between students' needs, their cultures and lessons' aims as a coursebook cannot facilitate every student's needs.

7.9.1 The Technology aid

Motteram (2013, web accessed 5/11/2015) said that “Technology is very much part of language learning throughout the world at all different levels.” Similarly, Kilickaya (2004) noted: “Today, with the help of technological developments, we have access to many sources easily and quickly.” It is clear that many teachers use the internet and rely on websites for materials (e.g. BBC news, youtube or www.onestopenglish.com). P6 said “I use the BBC quite a lot”, and P53 added “I gain from bbc.co.uk and see something else is interesting.” P24 explained when asked what websites she would use to be able get up-to-date materials:

“I will choose BBC or CNN or ABC (Australian Based Broadcast Company) or some prestigious broadcasting company.”

There are many other teacher-participants who use the internet a lot (e.g. P15, P22, P36, P37, P43 and P47) to find suitable materials. Thus, “the Internet is a great source of information”, as Jerrold (2013, p.4) said. On the positive side of advanced technology, many teachers can get up-to-date materials by using the internet and online media and it helps students to visualise and see the real world. Thus, they can become more motivated, engaged and understand better what things mean in English through visual materials.

7.10 Researcher and teacher-participants’ perceptions of teaching cultures through coursebooks

The researcher questioned teacher-participants about their opinions of teaching cultures through coursebooks. As shown in the Findings chapter, many of them think cultures should be taught and students should learn them, because

they bring a lot of benefits, including breaking the barrier of cultural misunderstanding. One participant (P8) said: “....students need to have the knowledge on different cultures supposing they will study or work in foreign countries.” P16 explained: “...knowing the culture of the language is a great way to inspire the students and to broaden their horizon...” Another participant (P10) said:

“.. students should pay respect to other’s cultures and should love their culture too. Students should accept the differences of each culture. The lessons would support them when they go abroad and study in other countries.”

Yet another participant (P12) mentioned: “..Since it can benefit students who have plans to study abroad.” Morain (1978, p.71) pointed out that “Gestures associated with greeting and leave-taking are critical, since it is difficult to function courteously within any culture without participating actively in these rituals”, and he gave an example of using the O.K. sign: “The ‘O.K.’ gesture so familiar to North Americans is considered obscene in several Latin American cultures” (Morain, 1978, p.72). In a similar vein, one participant (P22) mentioned in the interview: “For example, some cultures think this is offensive (showing behaviour). It’s OK (‘OK’) sign to teach in that yes, it’s offensive in some culture but not in others. You might get in America. You go to another countries and it’s doing that is offensive.” Thus, students will be enabled to break such cultural barriers if teachers can teach those things to them or contribute some customs that they have known or belonged to. Teachers are therefore advised not to ignore cultural concerns lessons of this sort if there are any in (assigned) coursebooks.

In addition, Çakir (online accessed, 2015, p.3) said: “If language learners are to communicate at a personal level with individuals from other cultural backgrounds, they will need not only to understand the cultural influences at work in the behavior of others, but also to recognize the profound influence patterns of their own culture exert over their thoughts, their activities, and their forms of linguistic expression.” As P57 said, saying “Thank you” a lot is an English cultural thing and thus it should be taught. Similarly, Sarigul and Ashton-Hay (2005: 6) stated:

“As teachers of English our aim is to make our students both linguistically and communicatively competent since linguistic competence alone is not enough for learners of a language to be competent in that language.”

The researcher personally agrees with those authors who have said that usage, meanings, grammar and linguistic patterns of the language are not the only essential points in learning, but also that acquiring knowledge of culture is necessary to have smoother communication and relationships with people from other cultures. They also make a suggestion to learners, saying “Language learners need to be aware of the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests and agree or disagree with someone” (p6). To make learners fully aware of cultural differences, teachers could be the bridge which can connect with other cultures by sharing their own experiences or any knowledge that they have gained through reading, etc.

7.11 Implications and recommendations for novice teachers

This research was intended to be directed to those who enter into the EFL profession so that they can see the common issues when teaching cultures and

learn how to prevent or avoid untoward occurrences in their day-to-day teaching. Its purpose was also to share knowledge with other EFL researchers, teachers and ELT practitioners.

Since each culture is a rich resource, it is always difficult to define and adjust: i.e. what students will think or assume, and what they will actually want to learn from lessons. However, if teachers can find the most suitable and appropriate materials, lessons will be more enjoyable and students will feel that they learn both language and cultures through coursebooks. Adding and replacing such experiences (e.g. travelling and other personal experiences of the typical customs of one country) and designing their own reading materials to deliver knowledge to students helps to engage them as they can become involved in every segment of the lesson and it is more helpful for them to improve their speaking and listening skills.

Tomlinson (2013: 140) called this “humanizing a coursebook”: that is, replacing its content with “more humanistic materials which involve the learners in gaining and reflecting on experience.” Quappe and Cantatore (2005) highlighted that “Cultural Awareness is the foundation of communication.” Therefore, to ensure that there is less misunderstanding, teachers should encourage students to give some attention to learning cultures. Having shared personal cultural experiences (such as taking off shoes at some places is a must-do in some cultures, or saying “thank you” to appreciate someone’s effort) could help students understand better and let them see the real world experiences. As Jedynek (2011: 64) noted, “Undoubtedly, learning

a foreign language is inseparably connected with some reflection on learners' native and foreign culture." Teachers should not therefore ignore cultural elements and should instead encourage students to learn other people's cultures. By balancing this knowledge with their own cultures, they may become more flexible and more knowledgeable persons.

7.12 Balancing the different variety of cultural backgrounds and cultures in the coursebooks

Due to different cultural backgrounds and beliefs, participants reported that cultural sensitivity is an issue to consider when writing lesson plans and during teaching in the class so that students are not offended. For example, there may be an extreme cultural bias in the teaching or misunderstandings may be caused due to different social cultural backgrounds, and it is important to have a good atmosphere in the classroom. Moreover, they mentioned that coursebooks' materials are sometimes outdated and mismatched with the students' levels. Therefore, they need to be personalized to adjust to the level of the students, meet students' requirements and suit their cultures and backgrounds.

As seen in the findings, many teacher-participants raised concerns about students' cultural sensitivities. It is an unavoidable issue from which none of the teachers can escape; therefore, having a good balance (i.e. omitting some parts or replacing them with some personalized materials) and meeting students' needs or adapting to their cultures is a key task for teachers. Having a good knowledge about students' cultures (i.e. cultural restrictions and sensitivities) will help teachers to find suitable materials and create more

flexibility in the classrooms. With the use of appropriate activities, none of the students will hesitate to participate, talk freely, or discuss openly with the teacher and other classmates. Learning students' cultures would be greatly facilitated, therefore, if teachers can produce better lessons.

7.13 Thinking forward to teaching cultures is beneficial

The researcher personally thinks that having cultural elements teaching through coursebooks is a good start for learners, since it can open their eyes, it helps them to have a more international outlook, and it provides insights into what other people from different parts of the world do. Knowledge of other's beliefs and customs can correct misunderstandings and avoid culture shocks. Moreover, allowing students to learn the English language through culture can also show the differences with their own and other cultures. Therefore, teaching culture through coursebooks has a number of benefits for students; in particular, it can break down language barriers and increase their cultural knowledge.

7.14 Developing materials for students

“Materials Development” is the key if a teacher wants to produce good and appropriate lessons. This is because the coursebook stands as a reference for learning and teaching English; but, due to the different cultural backgrounds of people, teachers are the ones who need to adjust in order to meet the aim of learning English, while balancing students' needs, wants and cultural backgrounds. In the researcher's eyes, anything could be a material, but it must also be borne in mind that picking the right materials can promote

students' motivation. For example, one participant of this study said in the interview that he had asked his students to bring any handcraft materials and then asked them to share the reasons and stories of them to practise speaking; he found that this worked very well as they were proud to tell stories to their classmates.

7.15 Learning cultures is a skill and sharing cultural experiences is key

In this day and age, people are not only working locally but also sharing work globally; and the English language has become a medium language among people who do not have the same first native language. They may have to share some aspects of cultures, and the word “culture” is therefore seen as plural “cultureS” (Argar, 2006: 7). People continue to celebrate their own cultures and traditions such as Christmas and New Year's Day in many different ways after office hours in their countries. Students from the classroom might be hosting a party tomorrow or attending some ceremonies, in which case they will need to know at least the basic cultural aspects of the “do's and don'ts”, etc.

To be flexible and have an international outlook which helps them to have better and smoother communication, learning cultures can be seen to be a skill. Evidently, some participants of this study used to share their travels or cultural experiences to show that it really helps students to see things from different angles. Therefore, reading more about people's cultures and sharing one's own cultural personal experiences with the students could enhance their level of learning and skills, as teachers are one of the sources of delivering knowledge.

7.16 Conclusion

There is a small similarity between Duarte and Escobar's (2008) study and this current study as they studied the use of adapted materials and their impact on University students and teachers' experience. The difference with this study is that they accessed both teachers' and students' attitudes towards their materials and coursebooks. However, there was a similar finding. Based on their questionnaire, after analysis, those researchers came to say: "they (teachers) all agree that the current and global materials did not have a good condition with the students' social and cultural context" (2008: 70). Although they accessed five teachers for their study, they have found similar results to one of this current study's findings.

Findings similar to Hui (2010) are that most English language teachers were interested in teaching culture and had positive attitudes towards it. Interestingly, her teachers (participants) preferred small "c" culture topics such as daily life, food and drinks, customs and festivals, but this current research did not examine what sorts of cultural elements were preferred by EFL teachers. This research only accessed how teachers dealt with cultural elements that are presented in coursebooks and the bridges they use to connect with EFL students by using other outside materials, and so forth.

Many researchers, as presented above, have shown that adaptation encourages students' knowledge, interest and their attention in lessons, and teachers should therefore not forget to try adapting some materials to have a more successful lesson. Çakir (online accessed, 2015, p.4) explained that:

“Learning to understand a foreign culture should help students of another language to use words and expressions more skilfully and authentically; to understand levels of language and situationally appropriate; to act naturally with persons of the other culture, while recognizing and accepting their different reactions, and to help speakers of other tongues feel at home in the students’ own culture.”

Therefore, teachers should encourage students to participate in all aspects of cultural concerns lessons, and have more appropriate materials and open discussions with students between their own cultures and the coursebooks’ presented cultures, as students could gain the benefits that Çakir stated above. Encouraging students to learn people’s cultures will help them to gain intercultural competence, which “can be defined as the ability to interact with people from other cultures” (Nault, 2006, p.138). This will thereby avoid misunderstandings due to the different cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the main findings of the study and discusses the perceived links between EFL coursebooks and the experiences gained throughout the study (most especially in teachers' use of materials for cultural elements lessons and their perspectives of teaching cultures in EFL classrooms). The limitations of the study and some suggestions for further study will also be discussed later in this chapter.

8.1 The highlights of this study

Kilickaya (2004) has stressed that “Most of the teachers throughout the world agree that authentic texts or materials are beneficial to the language learning process, but what is less agreed is when authentic materials should be introduced and how they should be used in an EFL classroom.” This study, however, identified the most common reasons why teachers use external authentic materials (based on 85 native and non-native speakers of English who were participants), how teachers have used them and what sort of external authentic materials are commonly used for cultural concerns lessons in practical English language classrooms.

Lessard-Clouston (1997) pointed out that “One area that needs to be addressed from the start concerns both teacher and student perceptions of the importance of culture learning in various L2 and FL programs and contexts”; and this current research has identified EFL teachers' perceptions of whether or not cultures should be taught and whether students ought to learn through coursebooks or through the use of external materials in English language

classrooms. Participants were questioned on their use of external materials for those cultural lessons: their reasons, their choices and their backgrounds that make them select such materials.

8.2 The summary of this study and its main findings

This study was carried out using a qualitative research method which accessed 85 teachers and explored their use of outside materials for cultural elements lessons through EFL coursebooks. The difficulties (major issues) that they commonly encountered were also examined, as were their perspectives of teaching cultures in EFL classrooms. The part of the research involving data collection was carried out over one year (January 2013 - February 2014) and made use of qualitative open-ended questionnaires followed by semi-structured interviews. The classroom observation was piloted, but it was not possible to incorporate this in the main study due to several reasons (such as time constraints, some participants were not happy to be observed, etc.).

To summarize, the main aims of the study were to learn what materials are commonly used along with EFL coursebooks, teachers' experiences and their difficulties of teaching cultures within the actual EFL teaching environments, and their perceptions of teaching cultures through coursebooks in EFL classrooms. The summary of the findings is thus:

Teachers use other materials than coursebooks – 64 out of 85 participants used external materials whenever it was necessary, while another 17 participants said they often use them; however, 4 said they rarely use them. Their main reason was to make lessons more suitable, to supply their needs to

meet their aims of learning a language, to make lessons more easily understandable, to be suitable for students' cultures and to avoid causing offence.

What materials are used? – Many teachers use authentic external materials (such as video clips from youtube, BBC news, postcards where language classrooms are equipped with smart technological teaching aids materials (i.e. installed internet and smart board or computers)). As explained in the Findings chapter, teachers rely more on advanced technology than in-house/local materials.

Why they adapt - Due to insufficient material provided by coursebooks, teachers explore more widely to make a lesson complete with relevant sufficient information. When they do search and adapt/modify some parts, lessons become more relevant, more appropriate and meet with these aspects: students' cultures and context, what they want to teach, what they think they should teach, and how they can facilitate students' needs.

Where do they retrieve? - Their sources are varied, but TV, BBC and youtube, plus newspapers, journals and magazines are the most popular teaching materials and which are more commonly used than libraries and resources from their schools by teachers for listening, speaking and reading tasks.

What activities are used? - As teachers are focusing on communicative skills, discussions, role-play activities, debates or presentations are commonly used.

Their common reasons are to reduce boredom in the classroom, since every student has to participate and they allow for practice of the language with the teacher and their classmates.

Teachers think students should learn cultural elements - They are more positive than negative towards those lessons. They think that the more students know about other people's cultures, the better opportunities to become intercultural people themselves as they can open their eyes and broaden their horizons.

Apart from the above mentioned results, the findings also revealed that more than half of the teacher-participants use coursebooks for their day-to-day English language classes, and this is mainly because these coursebooks are part of the curriculum for many participating schools of this study. Thus, it is true that "Textbooks remain a staple within school curricula worldwide" (Wen-Cheng et al., 2011, p.92). They need to use a coursebook as it is a material which liaises between teacher and students. Moreover, some teachers do not commit a sufficient amount of time on lesson planning or they simply do not have enough time to create new materials for every class: due to the exam-focused system, teachers tend to finish the content first and then review to tackle the exam.

8.3 Limitations of this study

Although this study was conducted with 85 native and non-native teachers, there are some limitations of this study. Having abandoned the classroom

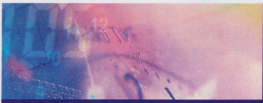
observations on teaching cultural elements (due to a variety of restrictions and constraints such as not being allowed to video-tape participants' classes, or schools did not allow the researcher to do the recording process in order not to frustrate students), the researcher was unable to see how teachers are actually dealing with these cultural elements in the classrooms and whether or not their chosen materials are really applicable for their specific context/classrooms. Moreover, it was not possible to discern how students reacted to those chosen materials, nor how they interacted with teachers or how teachers carried out their lessons. The researcher could have asked students' perceptions by distributing questionnaires, or persuaded students to allow interviews to be conducted with them and observing their classes. However, time constraints prevented this, and the initial plan for such was therefore dropped for this study.

8.4 Suggestions for further study

This current study has only focused on teachers' use of materials, common difficulties and their perceptions of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks and external materials, although the researcher also wanted to explore whether course writers are given some guidelines of what to include about cultures in language coursebooks. The researcher did not find the answer to this question, and there could therefore be another study conducted about exploring the guidance upon the percentage of cultural elements to be included by coursebooks' writers.

Within this study, the number of teachers who were native speakers of English was more than the non-native teachers who have taught English at local schools and abroad. The researcher has generalized and brought together the common issues and the most experiential knowledge on teaching cultures in EFL classrooms, but it may be a good idea to do a comparative study between native and non-native teachers who have been teaching in the same country so that any differences in their perspectives can be identified. Another comparative study could be done with two non-native speaking teacher groups from two different language schools or Universities or different types of institutions, such as private schools and state schools or experienced/trained teachers and inexperienced or ill-trained/untrained teachers (informally termed the ‘mickey mouse’ teachers in British English). In addition, doing a case study with a substantial amount of classroom observation on a group of native or non-native teachers teaching cultural elements and their students’ perspectives on learning cultures through coursebooks and external materials could produce more in-depth results.

Appendix 1
Cultural elements from published coursebooks



Clockwise

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This energetic course develops fluency, refreshes key grammar areas, and extends active vocabulary. Clear communicative pay-offs in every lesson provide measurable, focused progress, and a sense of achievement. Dynamic materials include controlled oral practice, timed activities, and performance tips / checklists to build confidence and provide personal challenge. Each level offers a coherent course of study, but is structured so that lessons can be used in any order.

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- effective reading tips
- end-of-lesson checklists
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5 In pairs, read Part 2 of the text. Find out about the British and the Americans. B find out about the Germans and the Japanese. Make notes about the nationalities.

Part 2

The Germans were the only group to send back a bottle of wine. The British did not mind when people jumped the queue, and the Japanese were so shocked when an actor began showering in the bar that they turned their backs on him. The most Americans was finding someone had turned their flag.

GERMANS

The Germans had a bottle of alcohol. The Germans were by far the most understanding and did not want to make a fuss in case they drove out his job.

When the bar had a free football in the evening, the Japanese had a free smoking thermos.

All ten nationalities were as accepting as possible. The programme makers agreed that the Germans were the most serious group. During a big evening they reluctantly took part only when they were given clean sheets. Hotel staff respect the Japanese as the most fawning.



There were also surprising reactions to a 'star' coach driver. The British were the least accepting and refused to get on the bus. The Japanese were concerned with maintaining harmony and said nothing.

6 What do you think of the tests? How would you have reacted?

Comparatives and superlatives

Grammar revisited

- 1 Find examples of different types of comparative and superlative forms in the text. Match them to similar examples in the Summary on p.53.
- 2 Complete the sentences using a modifier and a comparative / superlative form.
 - 1 The Japanese are _____ polite than the other nationalities.
 - 2 The British drink _____ the Americans.
 - 3 The Americans are _____ patients.
 - 4 The Germans are _____ honest than the British and Americans.

- 3 Make comparisons of your own between the four different nationalities using the adjectives from the circle on p.51.

Grammar plus

- Use comparatives to give a sense of progression. It got worse and worse as the night went on.
- Use superlatives and the present perfect to talk about your most memorable experiences. It's the worst place I've ever stayed in.

4 Make true sentences about these topics.

- 1 City centres ...
- 2 Crime ...
- 3 Houses / flats ...
- 4 The weather ...
- 5 Public transport ...

5 Make questions from these prompts.

- 1 good meal / ever eat
- 2 what's the best meal you've ever eaten?
- 2 bad hotel / ever stay in
- 3 frightening experience / ever have
- 4 big mistake / ever make
- 5 bad journey / ever go on

6 Against the clock!

Set a time limit. In pairs, decide on three more questions for ex.5. Ask and answer the questions and make notes about as many experiences as you can.

Listening

Following a narrative

- 1 Listen to Tamin telling Marina about her experiences in a hotel. What problems did she have with ...?
 - 1 the bed
 - 2 the bathroom
 - 3 noise
- 2 What action did she take?



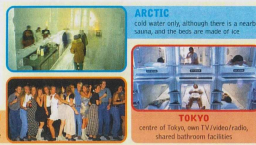
Speak out

Hotel

- 1 In small groups, invent a story based around one of these hotels, or tell a story that really happened to one of you. Include ...
 - something funny/frightening/embarrassing/strange that happened.
 - an incident that happened while you were travelling to or leaving the hotel.
 - some nice/awful people you met.

Think before you speak

- Practice different comparative and superlative forms.
- Include a comparative to give a sense of progression, e.g. louder and louder.
- Include a superlative with ever, e.g. the worst place I've ever stayed in.



BENEDORM very hot, discs still late, lots of young people

ARCTIC cold water only, although there is a nearby stream, and the beds are made of ice

TOKYO center of Tokyo, own TV (video/radio), shared bathroom facilities

- 2 In new groups, tell each other your stories.

SUMMARY

Comparative adjectives

- Stereos are cheaper than they used to be.
- Rome is usually much hotter than London.
- This book is more interesting than the last one I read.
- I'm feeling worse than I did yesterday.

Superlative adjectives

- Yesterday was the hottest day of the year so far.
- That's probably the most expensive restaurant in town.
- That's the best ice cream I've ever tasted.

OS ... OS

- Tom is almost as tall as his brother now.
- Our holiday wasn't quite as expensive as I thought it would be.

Quantifiers

- With plural countable nouns use fewer. The lobby has fewer rooms than the Altona.
- He stays tennis far much better than his younger brother.
- With uncountable nouns use less. I'm trying to drink less coffee than I used to.

Modifiers

- Miranda's sight is slightly a little bit worse than Andrea's.
- He stays tennis far much better than his younger brother.
- Her cooking is even worse than mine!
- Make it by for the best cancer fence.

Comparative adverbs

- He drives more slowly than his wife.
- He has to work a lot harder now than he used to.
- All my colleagues can type much faster than me.

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STUDENTS' BOOK
sarah cunningham peter moor

International Academy
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Vocabulary and speaking
Social behaviour

1 Work individually. Check the words and phrases in bold in your mini-dictionary. Then answer the questions. (You can choose more than one answer.)

- 1 You go out to a restaurant for dinner. Do you:
 - a dress up?**
 - wear **smart casual** clothes?
 - wear the traditional dress of your country?
 - wear whatever you feel like?
- 2 Which of these things should you normally do in a restaurant in your country?
 - a book in advance**
 - order your starter and main course at the same time
 - tip the waiter about 10%
 - go somewhere else for coffee
- 3 If a man and woman go out on a date, which of these things is not necessary?
 - The man should **pick her up** from her house.
 - He should **pay** for her dinner.
 - They should **split the bill**.
 - He should **give her a lift home**.
- 4 You've been invited to dinner at a friend or colleague's house. Which of these should you do?
 - take something, e.g. flowers, a dessert
 - refuse food that you are offered
 - offer to wash up** after dinner
 - send a card or e-mail afterwards to say thank you
- 5 While you are out, you meet some friends in the street. Do you:
 - shake hands?**
 - kiss each other on both cheeks?**
 - bow to each other?
 - just say hello?

2 Compare your answers in groups. Do any of these things depend on the circumstances? Explain why.

I think it depends on the restaurant. If it's a really smart one, you should ...

But if it's just an ordinary restaurant, you can ...

Listening
Social customs in Thailand

1 What do you know about Thailand? Do you know anything about the food or the social customs?

2 Read the extract from a travel guide to Thailand giving tips on social customs. Can you guess which alternative is correct for any of the tips?

3 a Nikam Nipotam is half Thai. One of his colleagues is going to visit Thailand, and has asked him about social customs there. Listen to their conversation and choose the correct alternatives in the guide.



Nikam Nipotam

b What things are the same and different for your culture?

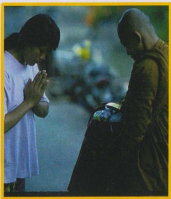


Tips for visitors to Thailand

Thailand is famous for its hospitality, and the average visitor will have no difficulty in adapting to local customs. The following tips are mostly common sense, but to avoid giving offence foreign visitors may find them useful.

- When addressing a Thai person it is polite to use just their **first name / surname**.
- In more formal situations you should use the word 'Khan'. This is like 'Mr' and is used for addressing **men / both men and women**.
- It is **not** usual to shake hands when you meet a Thai person - instead you do a **wai** - you put your hands together as if you are saying a prayer, and bow your head slightly. You should always do this when you meet **older people / your friends**.
- Couples should be careful how they behave. Thai couples tend not to hold hands in public and it is **acceptable / not acceptable** for couples to kiss in public.
- The head is very important in Thai culture. It is **not respectful / acceptable** to touch another person's head.
- Remember, if you are invited to someone's home it is important to take your shoes off / keep your shoes on.
- In Thailand, people tend to serve food in large bowls in the centre of the table. Everyone helps themselves, using chopsticks / a spoon and fork.

Finally remember that it is very important to show respect to the Thai royal family. Thai people always do this, and expect visitors to do the same.



Language focus 3
Making generalisations

Analysis

- The following generalisations about Thai culture come from the travel guide. Notice how we use it to introduce generalisations.
 - It is **important** to take your shoes off.
 - It is **not usual** to shake hands.
 - It is **not acceptable** for couples to kiss in public.
 Underline three more generalisations introduced by it in the travel guide. Think of some more adjectives you can use in this way.
- Tend to** - verb is also used to make generalisations. People tend to serve food in large bowls in the middle of the table. Thai couples tend not to hold hands.

▶ Read Language summary C on pages 149-150.

Practice

1 Choose adjectives from the box to make true sentences about your country, starting with it's.

(not) acceptable (not) important (perfectly) normal (not) okay (not) respectful rude/polite (not) usual

- keep your shoes on in people's houses
- treat old people with respect
- friends shake hands when they meet
- strangers call you by your first name
- use 'Mr' and 'Mrs' when you address people
- say rude things about royalty or politicians
- men bow to women
- serve food in large bowls in the middle of the table
- touch people on the head
- couples hold hands in public

2 Tick the sentences that are true about your country. If they are not true, change them.

- People in offices tend to wear casual clothes to work.
- People don't tend to dress up when they go out.
- Women tend to wear a lot of make-up and jewellery.
- Young women don't tend to go out in groups.
- Parents tend to be strict with their daughters about going out.

3 Compare your answers to exercises 1 and 2 in groups. Do you disagree about anything?

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Liz & John Soars
Oxford University Press

Reading

Look at the title of the article. Do you think the article will be serious or light-hearted? Why?
First read the article quite quickly. All the nationalities on page 39 are mentioned.

A World Guide to Good Manners

How *not* to behave badly abroad

by Norman Ramshaw

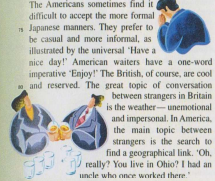
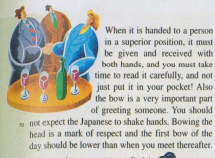
Travelling to all corners of the world gets easier and easier. We live in a global village, but how well do we know and understand each other? Here is a simple test. Imagine you have arranged a meeting at four o'clock. What time should you expect your foreign business colleagues to arrive? If they're German, they'll be bang on time. If they're American, they'll probably be 15 minutes early. If they're British, they'll be 15 minutes late, and you should allow up to an hour for the Italians.

When the European Community began to increase in size, several guidebooks appeared giving advice on international etiquette. At first many people thought this was a joke, especially the British, who seemed to assume that the widespread understanding of their language meant a corresponding understanding of English customs. Very soon they had to change their ideas, as they realized that they had a lot to learn about how to behave with their foreign business friends.

For example:

- The British are happy to have a business lunch and discuss business matters with a drink during the meal; the Japanese prefer not to work while eating. Lunch is a time to relax and get to know one another, and they rarely drink at lunchtime.

- Write down one thing about each nationality that you can remember.
 - Share what you have written with other students in the class.
- The Germans like to talk business before dinner; the French like to eat first and talk afterwards. They have to be well fed and watered before they discuss anything.
 - Taking off your jacket and rolling up your sleeves is a sign of getting down to work in Britain and Holland, but in Germany people regard it as taking it easy.
 - American executives sometimes signal their feelings of ease and importance in their offices by putting their feet on the desk whilst on the telephone. In Japan, people would be shocked. Showing the soles of your feet is the height of bad manners. It is a social insult only exceeded by blowing your nose in public.
 - The Japanese have perhaps the strictest rules of social and business behaviour. Seniority is very important, and a younger man should never be seen to complete a business deal with an older Japanese man. The Japanese business card almost needs a rulebook of its own. You must exchange business cards immediately on meeting because it is essential to establish everyone's status and position.



When it is handed to a person in a superior position, it must be given and received with both hands, and you must take time to read it carefully, and not just put it in your pocket! Also the bow is a very important part of greeting someone. You should not expect the Japanese to shake hands. Bowing the head is a mark of respect and the first bow of the day should be lower than when you meet thereafter.

The Americans sometimes find it difficult to accept the more formal Japanese manners. They prefer to be casual and more informal, as illustrated by the universal 'Have a nice day!' American waiters have a one-word imperative 'Enjoy!' The British, of course, are cool and reserved. The great topic of conversation between strangers in Britain is the weather - unemotional and impersonal. In America, the main topic between strangers is the search to find a geographical link. 'Oh, really? You live in Ohio? I had an uncle who once worked there.'

'When in Rome, do as the Romans do.'
Here are some final tips for travellers.

- In France you shouldn't sit down in a café until you've shaken hands with everyone you know.
- In Afghanistan you should spend at least five minutes saying hello.
- In Pakistan you mustn't wink. It is offensive.
- In the Middle East you must never use the left hand for greeting, eating, drinking, or smoking. Also, you should take care not to admire anything in your hosts' home. They will feel that they have to give it to you.
- In Russia you must match your hosts drink for drink or they will think you are unfriendly.
- In Thailand you should clasp your hands together and lower your head and your eyes when you greet someone.
- In America you should eat your hamburger with both hands and as quickly as possible. You shouldn't try to have a conversation until it is eaten.

Comprehension check

Read the article again and answer the questions. Discuss the questions in pairs.

- Which nationalities are the most and least punctual?
- Why did the British think that everyone understood their customs?
- Which nationalities do *not* like to eat and do business at the same time?
- They (the French) have to be well fed and watered. What or who do you normally have to feed and water?
- Look at the pictures. What nationality are they? How do you know?
- An American friend of yours is going to work in Japan. Give some advice about how he/she should and shouldn't behave.
- Imagine you are at a party in (a) England (b) America. How could you begin a conversation with a stranger? Continue the conversations with your partner.
- Which nationalities have rules of behaviour about hands? What are the rules?
- Why is it not a good idea to ...
... say that you absolutely love your Egyptian friend's vase ...
... go to Russia if you don't drink alcohol ...
... say 'Hi! See you later!' when you're introduced to someone in Afghanistan ...
... discuss politics with your American friend in a McDonald's.

Discussion

- Do you agree with the saying 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do'? Do you have a similar saying in your language?
- What are the 'rules' about greeting people in your country? When do you shake hands? When do you kiss? What about when you say goodbye?
- Think of one or two examples of bad manners. For example, in Britain it is considered impolite to ask people how much they earn.
- What advice would you give somebody coming to live and work in your country?

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NEW Headway Intermediate

Liz & John Soars
Oxford University Press

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Reading

The questions in the Pre-reading task were all sent in to a science magazine. Read the answers to the questions. How much of the information did your class already know?

You ask . . . we answer!

Q Why do women live longer than men?

A Women generally live about six years longer than men. Evidence suggests that boys are the weaker sex at birth, which means that more die in infancy. Also women do not have as much heart disease as men. In terms of lifestyle, men smoke more than women and thus more die of smoking-related diseases. They drink more and are more aggressive in behaviour, particularly when driving cars, so they are more likely to die in accidents. Also, they generally have more dangerous occupations, such as building work.

Historically, women died in childbirth and men in wars. Hence nuns and philosophers often lived to great ages. Now, childbearing is less risky and there are fewer wars. The country with the highest life expectancy is Japan, where the average age for men is 76 and for women 82.



Adventures, the oldest living man in the world (1977-)

Q What man-made things on Earth can be seen from space?

A When men first flew in space, they were amazed to discover that the only man-made object visible from orbit was the Great Wall of China. This is a nice idea, but it's not true. The Great Wall is mostly grey stone in a grey landscape and, in fact, is very difficult to see even from an aeroplane flying at a mere 15 kilometres above. What can be seen when orbiting the earth from about 200 kilometres up are the fires of African desert people, and the lights of fishing boats off Japan; also, a very long wire fence in Western Australia which marks farmland on one side and desert on the other.

Q Why is walking under ladders believed to be unlucky?

A There are a few explanations for this. The most common is that someone on the ladder might drop on you if you walked underneath. Another explanation relates to the Ythurn criminals who climbed a ladder to the gallows with a rope round their neck and this was then kicked from under them. The belief grew that walking under a ladder invited death.

Q Why is the expression 'Mayday' used as a distress call?

A The term 'Mayday' is the internationally recognized radio telephone signal of distress. It is only used when a ship is in great danger and needs help immediately. The signal is transmitted on a wavelength of 2.182 MHz, which is permanently monitored by rescue services on the shore. The use of the expression has a very straightforward explanation. It simply came from the French phrase 'm'aider', which means 'help me'. It was officially adopted internationally in 1927.

Q How many new words enter the English language every year?

A Unfortunately no list is kept. In France there is the Academie Française which approves new words but in England there are only dictionaries. The most authoritative of these is the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) which has 20 volumes, but this does not make rules about the language. It simply records the development of English worldwide as best it can. It accepts about 4000 new words for new meanings every year. The OED has readers in all English-speaking parts of the world, who record repeated uses of new words, including numerous technical terms. Some words take a surprisingly long time to enter the OED. For example 'acid rain' was first used in 1859, but its usage was rare for over 100 years and it didn't appear in the dictionary until the 1980s.

Q What is the world's biggest office?

A The Pentagon is the largest office in the world. This famous five-sided building, which is the US Department of Defense, was built in just 16 months during World War II. It is designed to hold up to 40,000 people. It has 28 kilometres of corridors, 7,734 windows, 294 bathrooms, and parking space for 8,770 cars. 17,000 meals a day are served in its restaurants.

Q Why are horseshoes believed to be lucky?

A In 1700, Henri Meson, a Frenchman visiting Britain, asked villagers why they had horseshoes nailed above their doors. They said that it was to keep witches away. Horseshoes are made of iron and the strength of the iron was thought to protect from evil. Still today they are thought to bring good luck and many brides carry silver ones at their wedding. The position of the horseshoe is very important. It must point upwards like a cup so that the luck cannot fall out.



Q Why do they drive on the left in Britain and on the right in other countries?

A The reason for this goes back to the days when people travelled by horse. Most people are right-handed, and thus the left is the natural side to ride on if you are on horseback and need your right hand to hold a sword in case of trouble. So why didn't the rest of the world do the same? Because of Napoleon Bonaparte. He insisted that his armies marched on the right, and so he marched through Europe.

Q How clever are dolphins?

A Dolphins do have fairly large brains. There are many stories, ancient and modern, about dolphins saving sailors from drowning. Ever since the film *Flipper*, we have all seen how clever they are at learning how to do tricks. However, the truth is that dolphins are no more intelligent than rats, which can also be trained to do tricks. The stories about them rescuing people are true, but they automatically rescue anything which is about the same size as themselves. Sometimes they kill sharks and then immediately try to rescue them.



Comprehension check

Work in groups

- Here are nine questions, one for each text. Which question goes with which text? What do the words underlined refer to?
 - When was it built?
 - What is a nice idea but not true?
 - Do they rescue people because they are highly intelligent?
 - Why is its position important?
 - Why don't the majority of countries do this like the British?
 - What is the most common explanation for this superstition?
 - Why isn't it possible to provide an exact list of these?
 - Where did the expression come from? Why are they more likely to have accidents?

Now answer the questions a-i.

2 Find the following numbers in the text. What do they refer to? Make a sentence about each number.

4.000 40.000 50 200 1783
1927 1700 17.000 82 76 16

Producing a class poster

- Work in small groups
- Make a list of some questions about the world that you would like to ask. Think of such things as places (countries, cities, buildings), people (Ghana's people, languages, customs, superstitions), plants and animals, or things (machines, transport, etc.).
 - Check round the class to see if anyone can answer your questions.
 - Choose at least two questions and research the answers. You could go to an encyclopaedia. Write the answers in a similar style to the ones in the article.
 - Compile them into a poster for your classroom wall.

Tell me about it! Unit 11 113

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The front cover shows Chinua Achebe (1924-7) by Howard Hodgkin. Hodgkin won the Turner prize in 1985 and was knighted in 1992. He is represented by the City gallery in London.

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To see an example of grammar work, look at pages 5 and 6.

To see an example of a personalised speaking task, look at page 7.

To see an example of work on lexis, look at pages 8 and 9.

To see an example of exercises based on a pop song, look at page 11.

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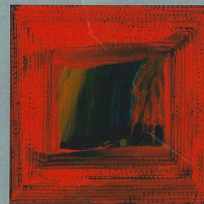
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with Jon Hird

Inside Out

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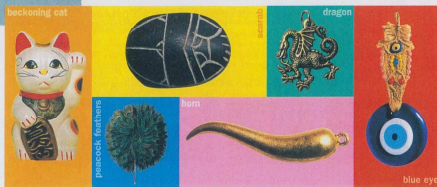


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5

Luck

1 Lucky charms vary from country to country. Match the lucky charms with the countries in the box.



Turkey Egypt Italy China Japan India

2 Listen and check your answers.

3 Work with a partner and answer these questions:

- What are considered lucky charms in your country? What is considered unlucky?
- Have you got a lucky charm? Are you lucky? Have you ever won anything? If so, what?
- Do you play your country's national lottery? If you do, how do you choose your numbers? What's the most you've ever won? If you don't play, why not?
- What would you do if you won the Big One?

Winning the big one

1 Read the article by Carinthia West which was published in *Tatler* magazine, and answer these questions:

- How does the writer usually choose her lottery numbers?
- Where is Carinthia from? Where had she been for the weekend?
- Which do you think is the best subtitle for the article? *Life's a bitch*, *Dreams can come true*, *Hitting the jackpot*

2 Compare your answers with a partner.



Tatler
Carinthia West is a British magazine which contains articles on high society which encourages its readers to do the right things to meet, and the most fashionable clothes to be wearing.

HOW I WON THE LOTTERY

(and also managed to top up the money by selling my story to the *Tatler*)



Winning the lottery is one of those things that only happens to other people. That's what I thought all I wanted to do was to win the lottery when I realised how easy it would be for me to go overseas – I could see the headlines. Mysterious drawing of Portsmouth ferry, I've never drawn the lottery since.

Suddenly, perfectly ordinary people turned into a waiting pack of wolves. We were always going out and I had to pretend that I had something important to do in the newspaper (this is rather hard when you are reading *The Mail* or *Guardian*) and I finally transferred the lotteries by your business to my head (I've never been in a position of safety under my bottom).

I was still 20 minutes from port, and you know how what might happen. It's amazing what the mind can do. Five minutes earlier I was your regular law-abiding citizen. I had been playing like a hardened criminal, prepared to protect that piece of paper and already planning spending sprees in Rome, Paris, down south in Greece, and Gucci, and Gucci, and Gucci, and Gucci.

But you know what girls do like. I had a hot summer, and I knew exactly who my mobile phone, amazing, was in the middle of the Street and all High Park Corner, so I rang my friend M. Evans in Rome. I wanted to know how much I'd won, and he told me the lottery was actually a little bit better than I thought. The paper and I had won my amazing news. Five numbers, in it. Can't be said in this listing.

Match note, cash a million, were I look it up.

Spain Girl and her new clothing 'brand', I turned to the page with the numbers published on it. Cue the age whoop.

Twenty passengers in aviators and baseball caps turned to stare. I was about to shout 'I've won the Lottery' when I realised how easy it would be for me to go overseas – I could see the headlines. Mysterious drawing of Portsmouth ferry, I've never drawn the lottery since.

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He was gone long enough for me to realise to fit through my mind. I was in it, and top-of-the-range Mercedes and summer homes in Santhia. My you doing down? He was when he returned, sounding super-ecstatic. 'You lucky girl, you've won £1,700. Think what you can do with that. He went on to explain that because the bonus ball was included in my winning line I'd also missed the £1 million jackpot, but he was.

When I lived in Los Angeles in the Eighties and people talked about the Big One, they meant the grand entrance that was in it. I had an if I'd been hit by it as I switched off the mobile phone and started the engine, I was in it. I had the green eyebrows stopped burning and began to feel like an unrecognisable, changed bump in the road. I was in it, and the other passengers started reaching for their bags and giving me a wide berth.

My ship was coming in, all right, but I had been beneath the waterline, covered in barnacles, and with the rigging looking like something out of a knock-ropes. I had a bit of a shy. My shiny hair was gone, my coat had turned into a patchwork, and although £1,700 is not to be sneezed at, there will be no BMW for me – more like a BMW and the chance to travel to the States for a while.

Oh, well. It's still the only person I know who ever won the Lottery. And anyway, spending-spree spent Carinthia just doesn't sound quite right.

Carinthia West © Peter / The Cooks' Nest Publications Ltd

3 Work with a partner. Discuss these questions:

- How did she feel when she found out that she had won? And when she found out how much she had won?
- What would she have spent the money on if she had won the jackpot? Would you have bought the same things?
- What do you think she will buy with the money she did win? What would you do with that amount of money?
- What do you think Carinthia is like? What social class do you think she belongs to? Why?

Appendix 2
The sample of questionnaire and research tools that are used for this study

Classroom Observation Form

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The observation checklist form

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am conducting a research study to assess the difficulties that teachers face, the materials that they use and their experience of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks in language classrooms.

I would like to ask you to participate in this project by sharing the experiences that you have gained from practical language classrooms. It is hoped that your participation will ultimately help novice teachers learn about the common problems, how to cope with them, how to resolve them with students, and how to create successful lessons in ELT classrooms.

If you are willing to be involved, please complete the pre-task questionnaires which should take about 30-45 minutes of your time. I would also like to observe a class(es) that you deliver, and I wish to conduct a post-teaching interview with you to explore your perceptions, difficulties and experiences of teaching cultural elements. This interview should also take about 45-60 minutes.

Confidentiality and anonymity of this study are guaranteed, and so, it is not necessary for you to write your name on the questionnaire. However, you may have to mention any degrees you possess and your teaching experience. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without giving a reason.

I very much hope that you will be happy to participate. May I thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Saw ThandaSwe

PhD student

University of Essex

Department of Language and Linguistics

Colchester Campus, UK

The Invitation Letter

Participant's Consent Form

	Yes	No
Project: Evaluating of teaching cultural elements and teachers' difficulties of teaching cultural elements through coursebooks in language classrooms.		
I have read and understood the project information given.		
What is the project about? The project is about the finding of teachers' difficulties and their experiences of teaching cultural elements in language classrooms.		
What does participating involve? It involves filling in a qualitative open-ended questionnaires, classroom observation and retrospective interviews.		
Use of the information I provide for this project only.		
I allow researcher to use as data for further publications: journals or Conference papers and other research outputs.		
I understand my personal details such as name, email address and phone number will not be revealed to people outside the project and participants will be anonymized when describing data.		
I agree for the data I provide to be archived at the UK Data Archive.		
I understand that researcher is able to contact me anytime after data collection until the project is completed.		
<p>Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Researcher Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Contact details for further information:</p> <p>Researcher's Name – Mrs. Thirath Sae-ang</p> <p>Supervisor's Name – Dr. Jitnan J. P. Chaiyaprasit</p> <p>Department – Language and Linguistics</p> <p>University Affiliation – University of Hull</p> <p>Contact – 01482 465200 ext. 200</p>		

The Participant's Consent Form

Please tick the appropriate boxes Yes/ No

	Yes	No
<p>Taking Part</p> <p>I have read and understood the project information .</p> <p>I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.</p> <p>I agree to take part in the project. Taking part in the project will include being interviewed and audio and video –recorded.</p> <p>I understand that my taking part is voluntary; I can withdraw from the study at any time and I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part.</p> <p>Use of the information I provide for this project only</p> <p>I allow researcher to use as data for further publications journals or Conference papers and other research outputs</p> <p>I understand my personal details such as name, email address and phone number will not be revealed to people outside the project and pseudonyms will be replaced when describing data.</p> <p>I agree for the data I provide to be archived at the UK Data Archive.</p> <p>I understand that researcher is able to contact me anytime after data collection until the project is published.</p>		

Participant's Signature Date

Researcher Signature Date

Contact details for further information:

Researcher's Name – Saw Thanda Swe

Supervisor's Name – Dr. Julian R.P Good

Department – Language and Linguistics

University Affiliation – University of Essex

Contact : stswe@essex.ac.uk

The Participant's Consent Form

Terminology

Cultural elements in this study are

- **Behaviours, beliefs, traditions, customs , festivals and food.**

Please answers all of the questions in as much detail as you can.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?

.....

2. How many students do you have in a class?

.....

3. How many classes do you teach per week?

.....

4. How long does each class take?

.....

5. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching?

.....

6. Why do you use coursebooks?

.....

7. How often do you use coursebooks?

.....

8. If applicable, what are your reasons for **not** using coursebooks?

.....

9. In your opinion, what are the **reasons** for dropping coursebook activity (eg. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?

.....

.....

.....

The edited version of questionnaire

10. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks ?

11. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guide give you sufficient information about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures) ?

12. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guide offer appropriate materials for teaching cultural elements?

13. Do you use/adapt **outside materials** to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they?

14. How / where do you find them (e.g yourself/other teachers advice, etc.)?

15. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

16. Does your school provide appropriate materials for **teaching cultures** ?

17. Do you experience any **difficulties** when **lesson planning** for cultural elements (eg. tradition, festivals, food ,etc) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties?

18. Why do you encounter these difficulties?

19. Do you experience any difficulties **with your students when you are teaching cultures** and cultural elements through coursebooks **in class**? If so, What are these problems? (eg. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)

20. In your opinion, why these happens in the class?

21. How do you manage these problems?

22. Do you feel you get the **learners' attention** when you are teaching cultural elements (eg. tradition, festival, food, etc.) **within your own adapted/modified lessons** ?

23. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is?

24. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is **sufficient** for teaching cultural elements? If No, please go to question no. 26. (if Yes, give details of your reasons)

25. Why do you think teachers **need** to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

26. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your **own adapted materials** for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

27. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures? (Continue on page 5 if necessary .)

28. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (eg. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)?

29. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

30. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

31. Do you think teachers **need** to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom?

32. What do you understand about the necessity of teaching culture in the ELT classroom? (Continue on page 5 if necessary.)

33. Is it necessary to teach cultural elements to learners? If so, why? (Continue on page 5 if necessary.)

34. Should **learners** learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Continue on page 5 if necessary.)

Please refer question number (s) when you use this page.

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?
2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?
3. What degrees do you have?
4. What teaching qualifications do you have ? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA , TEFL , etc)
5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?
6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?
7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts , etc.)

Part I

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British , American , Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food , etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England , taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain , carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days , cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude , etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?
2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?
3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e. g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?
4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?
5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?
6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?
7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good , exciting lesson, interesting, etc.) ?
8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?

The final version of questionnaire

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food ,etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for **teaching cultural elements**? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).
22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?
23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?
24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?
25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?
27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?
28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so , please explain here why you think it is necessary.)
29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?

2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?

3. What degrees do you have?

4. What teaching qualifications do you have ? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA , TEFL , etc)

5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?

6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?

7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts , etc.)

Appendix 3
The returned questionnaire from respondents

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British , American , Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food , etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture) , customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England , taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.) , festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain , carnival in England, etc.) , food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days , cooking pasta for dinner, etc.) , language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude , etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?
Revised Primary English
2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?
Yes.
3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e. g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?
It is more convenient to prepare a lesson instead of teaching lessons from random books.
4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?
Whenever possible.
5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?
-
6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?
It can change the usual atmosphere of a classroom.
7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good , exciting lesson, interesting, etc.) ?
It is very interesting and can make students get to experience new things.
8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?
More or less, yes. But additional information should be obtained from other sources if possible.

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes.

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes. Newspaper cuttings, internet news.

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

Mostly, myself.

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

No.

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

No.

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food ,etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes. If for tradition and food, it takes a lot of effort to make cultural costumes or make food to taste exactly like the one's culture, to show students.

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Because some of them is totally different from our culture and sometimes, even difficult to adapt with.

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

Some students can get bored if it is their culture that we are teaching. And maybe when our teaching aids are not that interesting.

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

It can be the teacher's incompetency on the lesson and when the choice of teaching aids is not appropriate with the lesson.

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Change another interesting if possible or just have the students talk about their own culture as it might make them a little bit motivated.

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

More or less, yes.

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Maybe the lesson is a bit boring or the teacher herself is making the lesson boring.

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for **teaching cultural elements**? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

No.

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?
Culture can be different from one another and that is exactly the point we have to consider when we are planning materials for teaching cultures. We can make different materials base on the cultures and try to choose the theme that would attract students more.
23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?
Low cost, and since we know our material very well, we can change the flow of a classroom into a livelier one even if it gets bored.
24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?
Students can easily get bored. Even a good lesson can become the most boring one.
25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
Motivation.
26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?
Discussion, demonstrating (acting out).
27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?
No.
28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so , please explain here why you think it is necessary.)
Yes. Since it can benefit students who have plans to study abroad.
29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
Yes. It can help them know the other country's culture and tradition, and that will make them knowledgeable about culture, and they will also learn to love other people's culture.

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?
1 year.
2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?
Non-native.
3. What degrees do you have?
B.Ed, Dip in English(SEAMEO), Dip in TESOL(LTTC,UK)
4. What teaching qualifications do you have ? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA , TEFL , etc)
TESOL
5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?
6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?
No.
7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts , etc.)
Yes. I am very interested in learning about them, since my dream is to travel around the world someday & learn their culture, get to know them, their food, their everyday life, share my country's culture and so forth.

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?
General English - Intermediate
& IELTS
2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?
Yes
3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?
It gives the class (especially long stay students) a physical/visual representation of progression in a structured way.
4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?
60% of the time.
5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?
- when a topic doesn't appeal to the class
- if a short-stay student/group of students have needs which aren't addressed in the coursebook for a
6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using while coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?
* If an activity is practicing smth the students are all more than capable of or if it is particularly challenging and other areas need to be addressed first
7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.) ?
→ this often works well as most students are interested in learning about each other and their differences
8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures)) ?
Sometimes.

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

They are not always very up-to-date

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes. → I often bring in newspapers & photographs.

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

Myself.

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

→ They provide a ^{wide} range of coursebooks for each level as well as supplementary activities / grammar & vocab books.

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

- Yes

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food, etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Not really - I sometimes research a couple of examples from students' countries to get them started. Usually the students are forthcoming with information about cultural elements in their country.

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

• with lower

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention, etc.)?

With lower levels it is occasionally difficult to get attention

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

→ if the lesson is not comparing their own country with the U.K. (as they need it to be personalised)

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

With lower levels I make sure it is personalised so students can recognise smth from their own culture & compare it.

↳ With higher levels (if they have already spoken about their country a lot) - I might get some unusual examples to read about and present to the class.

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

~~This~~ It depends on how interested the students are in each other and or if they feel this is relevant for them in their future daily experience.

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

- If they don't think it is relevant/~~to~~ useful for their daily needs. (Lessons should be modified depending on levels for this purpose)

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

No

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

→ To make sure the information is up-to-date ~~X~~ or relevant to the students in the class.

23. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

- they can be more specifically directed/aimed at the students' ^{specific} needs.

- they can engage the student more (as working purely from a book can feel dry)

24. In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

it can seem abstract / out-dated

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

There is ~~always~~ always more interest stimulated when you use pictures from outside the book to engage ss. This is also the case if the lesson is

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the ^{personalised} classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

• discussion

• vocab - e.g. if teaching weddings/funerals - vocab that ss can compare & describe this event in their culture.

• sometimes functional language related to things to say in specific situations ^{in the U.K.}

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

Yes • If students are short-stay students (e.g. 1-2 weeks) and have specific areas to cover in this time.

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

- certainly it is important to teach what is considered appropriate. e.g. 'please & thank you' is necessary to use in England otherwise you can appear rude

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

• If ~~active~~ good to include this within the coursebook in order for teachers to adapt as appropriate.

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

21. Do you think that using textbooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If no, please refer to question no. 22 (If Yes, give details of your reasons)

22. Why do you think teachers need to study locally available materials for teaching culture?

23. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own edited materials for use with textbook units for teaching cultural elements through content-based approach?

24. In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using textbooks for teaching culture?

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural content before in the classroom (e.g. presentation, observation, etc.)?

27. Have you ever omitted from cultural content topics and moved onto other things? If so, why?

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through content-based approach in the classroom? If so, please explain how you think it is necessary?

29. Should teachers learn culture through content-based approach? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?

3 years

2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?

native

3. What degrees do you have?

BA - History of Art & fine Art practice

4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc)

Trinity TESOL

5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?

Yes → there was a materials assignment where we were asked to adapt material.

6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?

No

7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)

Yes (more informally than formally)

e.g. my brother's wife is Ecuadorian so visiting Ecuador I learnt a lot there about cultural tradition / customs etc.

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British , American , Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food , etc.), beliefs/superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England , taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain , carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days , cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude , etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?

General English

2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?

New Total English and Cutting Edge

3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e. g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?

Provides a ready-made syllabus provides balanced of skills + grammar input. Gives a clear scheme.

4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?

Everyday

5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?

n/a

6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?

If the activity doesn't suit learners' needs, doesn't provide level of challenge or I feel is not beneficial

7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good , exciting lesson, interesting, etc.)?

They can provide useful discussion points and offer opportunities for authentic discussion.

8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?

Some coursebooks do have this although most don't.

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

No.

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Manners, cultural etiquette

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

Newspapers and magazines

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

Teachers' books understanding British culture

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

~~no~~ no

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food ,etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

No

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

No

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes - depending on the cultural make up of the class.

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

No.

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

often coursebooks provide more of a language focus and are less culturally specific.

23. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

Relevant issues in the news - responding to students' own requests - personalized learning.

24. In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

often not a lot of cultural input.

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Generates interest - more personalized.

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

Vocabulary, presentation - visuals - extracts from newspapers.

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

No.

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

Sometimes, depending on class interest, need + motivation.

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Not necessarily as coursebooks are used throughout the world and not necessarily used for one culture, and are more 'social' / communicative focused not cultural.

3

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

Do you think that the current textbooks show sufficient cultural diversity? If not, please refer to question no. 12 (if you think so) or 13 (if you don't).

If they don't, why do you think that is? Please refer to question no. 14 (if you think so).

Do you think that the current textbooks show sufficient cultural diversity? If not, please refer to question no. 12 (if you think so) or 13 (if you don't).

Why do you think teachers need to adapt their materials for teaching culture?

In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own adapted materials for use with textbooks for teaching cultural content through textbooks?

In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using textbooks for teaching culture?

What impact does it have when you use your own materials in a multicultural classroom?

What activities do you normally use when you teach cultural content (songs in the classroom, e.g. presentation, discussion, etc.)?

Have you ever omitted these cultural content topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach)? If so, please explain how you think it is necessary.

Should teachers learn culture through textbooks? If so, why? Please refer to question no. 14 (if you think so) or 15 (if you don't).

How do you think we can improve the way we teach culture in the classroom?

What are the most important factors for a successful cultural education in the classroom?

What are the most important factors for a successful cultural education in the classroom?

What are the most important factors for a successful cultural education in the classroom?

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?
I have been an English language teacher since ~~1997~~ 2007.
2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?
I am a native English speaker.
3. What degrees do you have?
I have a Bachelor of Arts in drama.
4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc)
I have a Trinity Certificate in TESOL and a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education (English/ESL)
5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?
Yes
6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?
Yes. I lived in Japan for one year and I lived in Australia for three years.
7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)
Yes through reading guide books such as the Lonely Planet and internet websites and books.

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?
IELTS, PCE, Advanced, Elem
2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?
20-40% roughly Don't stick to ^{just} one book.
3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?
for the readings + listengs mainly. Also for and for some guided structure
4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?
20-40%
5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks? \rightarrow Level of challenge to high or low
not engaging, not effective/accurate teachy of grammar concepts.
6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping coursebook activity(ies) (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?
Not relevant to the class and ~~many~~ often not engaging.
7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.) ?
normally I find them interesting so a lot of this in "life" books
8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures)) ?
Somewhat life does the best job at this

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

yes they provide accurate details
and a good mix of places

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

No Not often → cultural sections are usually
engaging and useful enough.

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

Resource room in our school

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

yes - text books
- Full day Skills books
- Activity books

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

Not really.

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food ,etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

NO

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

maybe just sometimes they could use some
more detail students want to add more

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

The book is limited

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

give additional questions

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

YES

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for **teaching cultural elements**? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

YES

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

more motivation & able to ^{more} directly control what is discovered/learned.

24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

The need to prepare longer

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

more motivation

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

Role plays and debates

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

YES bc it was going to cause a fight.

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

don't need to but already there and prepared.

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

yes - it's easier for teachers and is already graded loosely to your classes' level.

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

20. Do you think that using textbooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If not, please go to question no. 22 (If Yes, give details of why not.)

21. Why do you think teachers need to adapt locally available materials for teaching cultural elements?

22. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own selected materials for the teaching of cultural elements in high schools/colleges?

23. What report does it give when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, attendance, etc.)? (Please explain on page 4 if you need to.)

24. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural elements in the classroom? (e.g. presentation, discussion, etc.)

25. Have you ever modified those cultural content topics and moved into other topics? If so, why?

26. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through content topics in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, it is necessary to teach? If so, please explain how why you think it is necessary.)

27. Should teachers teach culture through content topics? If so, why? (Please explain on page 4 if you need to.)

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20. Yes

21. More motivation and attendance
Content which is a contextualized

22. This is a very good strategy

23. More motivation

24. Role play and debates

25. Yes the 3 were good to learn a little

26. Yes, need to be already there and prepared

27. Yes - the context for teachers
and is already available
to help the young classes
level.

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher? 6 years
2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?
3. What degrees do you have? B.S. Info Tech
4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc)
5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?
yes
6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long? yes
Canada 14yrs
USA 10 yrs
S. Korea 1 yr
Turkey 9 mo
Hungary - 3 mo
7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)
yes

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?
/
2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?
Yes
3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)? I use coursebooks for the language elements and other materials for more details and cultural information.
4. How often do you use coursebooks in class(es)?
50% - 70% of the time
5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?
/
6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?
They should not be 'dropped' they are useful teaching aids but they must be used in conjunction with other methods
7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.)?
I think it's interesting to explore other cultures and I like to elaborate more by creating a powerpoint presentation with more information whilst creating a discussion with the students about what sounds good/bad and what's the same/different
8. Do you think that coursebooks / teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?
Text books give the basics and it's a platform for the teacher to then expand upon. Personal experiences related to cultural issues can also help.

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer appropriate materials for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes. Sometimes I use handouts / presentations I have found online and use or adapt them to the class

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself / other teachers' advice, etc.)?

The Internet has a lot of teaching resources and templates to work from

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

Cambridge IELTS & other IELTS books

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

Yes but not enough

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food, etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

From the books I have used the biggest issue is just not enough information/details

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.) *Yes, cultural lessons can be fun*
20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for **teaching cultural elements**? If No please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).
22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?
Adapting can keep the information up to date and can be personalised
23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?
Can make it more engaging / fun making it more memorable
24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?
boring / not enough information
25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)
26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation / discussion , etc.)?
Both
27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?
Sensitive topics Governments don't like teachers talking about are avoided
28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)
If the students plan on going overseas then it is necessary if not then it's useful not necessary
29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.) *Half, half*

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?
2009 + (4 years active teaching)
2. Are you a native non-native speaker of English?
3. What degrees do you have?
ND, FdA
on a BA now
4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc.)
/
5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?
/
6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?
Yes, 4-5 years
7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)
Yes

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?
2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?
yes, I do. The one assigned by the school.
3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)? To teach grammar, vocabulary, and some cultural aspects
4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?
4 days per week
5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?
Ss get bored from using the coursebook everyday
6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?
Because sometimes those activities do not match our students intelligences. e.g. our students are kinesthetic and the ...
7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.)?
I feel excited since most of my coursebook is based on the four skills.
8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?
Teachers' guides give you basic information about culture but not in depth information. Most of the books I have used do not prioritize culture.

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

I do not think that teachers' guides offer appropriate materials for teaching cultural elements. Usually they give you a hint on how to introduce culture.

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines, newspapers, realia, etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Of course! Everytime I teach cultural elements in the classroom. I use realia, since it's what my SS love the most, videos, and newspapers.

11. How/where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

I use realia from my trips to English speaking countries. The videos I look for are online and the newspapers, in my city they sell a newspaper in English.

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

yes they do. Students use students book and workbook. I have the teachers guide, student book, workbook and resource book.

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures?

No they don't.

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food, etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

I usually need to adapt what the coursebook proposes to meet my SS needs.

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

They are not suitable for my SS preferences.

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention, etc.)?

When teaching culture some students regard the class as relaxing or some even consider culture as something not too important.

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Because some students want just to learn the language and do not care about the culture since they don't see themselves living abroad.

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Letting them know how useful is to know culture and letting them know different scenarios where they will encounter the target language culture in the future.

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

I do, usually when I adapt the lesson is when I get their attention, because I do it ^{suiting} their needs and preferences.

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

As I said before, because they don't find it useful to know how ppl behave in England if they live in Mexico, etc.

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

To engage learners in the topic and also because the book doesn't know how do my ss are, behave.

23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

I know how to draw my learners attention & I know what they like, that is why I adapt the material.

24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

Students will always know the process the teacher follows to teach it.

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

They see the foreign culture as something real, they feel motivated, they are engaged.

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

Presentation, role play, discussion, listening, singing, reading, etc.

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

Yes, when I'm running out of time.

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

Culture is basic when learning a foreign language, but unless there is not much time then it should be omitted.

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

I like that my book at the end of the chapter contains cultural information, so if there is enough time I can go over it.

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

6. exercise is designed for interpersonal SS.

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?

For 2.5 years

2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?

non-native

3. What degrees do you have?

My B.A is in TEFL

4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc)

TEFL

5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?

yes, one module was related to that topic

6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?

yes, I lived in Ohio, USA for 1.5 years

7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)

yes . I have and it is very easy when you live abroad, because it is a natural process.

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?

General English / EAP / Foundation course Study Skills

2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?

Yes

3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)? Mainly because it is a programme requirement, but also to cover

the range of skills required by the students

4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?

2-3 lessons a week

5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?

N/A

6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping coursebook activity(ies) (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?

To expose students to a wider range of materials (e.g. authentic), or if a more interesting / challenging / appropriate task can be found elsewhere

7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.) ?

Generally good

8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures)) ?

It depends on the book

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Some do , some don't

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Sometimes

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)?

Myself or from colleagues

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

Yes- reading, writing, research skills, seminar skills and presentation skills materials

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

Sometimes

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food ,etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Some materials can be quite stereotypical of particular cultures , and may be perceived as offensive by people from those cultures , (students)

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Due to cont. the content of certain published materials

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

Not really

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

N/A

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

N/A

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

It depends

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

It could be for a number of reasons - they could not find the topic interesting / be tired / have other things on their minds

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

~~No~~ It depends on the level of the class. For a beginner / elementary level student, the coursebook may be sufficient

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

For higher level students, adaptation / modification could draw learners' attention to different aspects - e.g. Vocabulary, text structure, reading skills

23. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

To draw learners' attention to different features of the text, to meet the group's interests, to expose learners to authentic materials

24. In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

May cover a limited range of topics / skills

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

It completely depends on the topic / tasks / difficulty level / mood of students. It can stimulate interest and be motivating, but not always.

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

Listening, reading, writing, discussion tasks, vocabulary tasks

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

Not generally - students tend to enjoy them.

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

Teaching any language involves dealing with culture to a certain extent

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

As above

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

20. Do you think that using textbooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If not, please explain how you think it is necessary to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom (e.g. in your opinion, it is necessary to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom if you think it is necessary).
Teaching and language involves dealing with culture in a certain extent.
21. Should learners learn culture through textbooks? If so, why? (Please explain on page 4 if you need to.)
As about
22. Do you think textbooks need to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom (e.g. in your opinion, it is necessary to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom if you think it is necessary)?
Not generally - students tend to enjoy them.
23. Have you ever noticed that cultural content topics are moved into other topics? If so, why?
Listening, reading, writing, discussion tasks, vocabulary tasks
24. What activities do you normally see when you are teaching cultural content lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation/discussion, etc.)?
25. What impact does it have when you use real materials (e.g. newspaper, simulated context, etc.)? (Please explain on page 4 if you need to.)
It completely depends on the topic / tasks / different level / needs of students. It can stimulate interest and be motivating, but not always.
26. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own selected materials in use with textbooks for teaching cultural elements for the classroom?
To draw learners' attention to different features of the text, to meet the group's interests, to expose learners to authentic materials
27. In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using textbooks alone for teaching culture?
May cover a limited range of topics / skills
28. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using textbooks alone for teaching culture?
For higher level students, adaptation / modification could draw learners' attention to different aspects - e.g. vocabulary, task structure, reading skills
29. Why do you think teachers need to select modify materials for teaching culture?
Level students, the course work may be sufficient
30. Do you think that using textbooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If not, please explain how you think it is necessary to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom (e.g. in your opinion, it is necessary to teach cultural elements through textbooks in the classroom if you think it is necessary).
It could be for a number of reasons - they could not find the topics interesting / be tired / have other things on their minds
31. If they don't say anything, why do you think this is? (Please explain on page 4 if you need to.)
It depends

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?
11 years
2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?
native speaker
3. What degrees do you have?
BA English Literature and French
4. What teaching qualifications do you have ? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA , TEFL , etc)
Cert Tesol / DELTA
5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?
yes
6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?
Canada - 1 year
France - 1 year
7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts , etc.)
yes - from living in a different country and from learning about culture from my students in the UK.

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?

General English - ~~Pre-Int~~ / Int

2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?

Yes

3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?

It's set for the class, but also - Structure / syllabus
- article sources

4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es)?

Mon, Wed, Fri

5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?

Tues / Thurs are non-coursebook days in school

6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping coursebook activity(ies) (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?

bad grammar explanations
too easy - texts + materials

7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.)?

Some are, really - as long as they're up to date

8. Do you think that coursebooks / teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?

generally yes for lower levels

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

generally yes - although sometimes they refer to some ppl not relevant to all SS

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers, realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Youtube vids / BBC iplayer - if there's a prog. on the same topic for higher levels possibly a newspaper article

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself / other teachers' advice, etc.)?

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

a range of new + old coursebooks / grammar refs

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

generally coursebook stuff but nothing specific

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food, etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

usually no, as most students are interested in integrating into British culture - sometimes you have to think about sensitive topics + not ask same questions

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

~~Some~~ A diverse mix of cultures + political opinions, as well as some nationalities being more vocal than others

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention, etc.)?

If they can't relate it to their ~~own~~ experiences, it can be boring for them - you have to get them to compare

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

They are generally young, and so you have to make it relevant to young people - they often don't care about some issues in society

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

always make it relevant + simplify it
make it fun

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

generally yes as they enjoy British culture

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

My students are young, so things they perceive as 'old fashioned' can be boring - and it can't be too intellectual

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural elements? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

Generally yes.

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

In London, you need to find more things about London

23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

- Relevant to what SS want in London
- They can choose what they wanna learn about

24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

- They can be irrelevant to current London life
- They don't appeal to 13-15 year olds - The discussion questions can be dull

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

- More interesting for me & them
- It's about SS' lives now - and what they see in London

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion, etc.)?

Debate / comparing discussion / research + present

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

Some political issues - I can see different nationalities could fall out
food - I don't do it during Ramadan

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

I think it helps in mixed nationality classes, as it encourages SS to find out about other nationalities

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes, but not only. The teacher should find out their interests

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

20. It may be that you are not sure why you think this is so. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

21. Do you think that using textbooks alone is sufficient for teaching cultural concepts? If not, please give details in your answer.

22. Why do you think teachers need to select specific materials for teaching culture?

23. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own selected materials for use with textbooks for teaching cultural concepts and the disadvantages?

24. In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using textbooks alone for teaching culture?

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials for a particular educational purpose?

26. What activities do you use when you are teaching cultural concepts based in the classroom? Please describe in detail.

27. Have you ever tried to teach cultural concepts using any novel and/or topic? If so, why?

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural concepts through textbooks in the classroom? (a) If your answer is necessary to teach, if so, please explain how you think it is necessary. (b) If not, please explain how you think it is not necessary.

29. Would you like to teach cultural concepts through textbooks? If so, why? Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?

3½ years

2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?

native

3. What degrees do you have?

BA French w. Maths

4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc)

CELTA & Dip TESOL

5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?

not really - except adapting ~~class~~ for lesson observations

6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?

France for 8 months

7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)

+ a bit from my students

Part 1

Please answer all of the questions in as much detail as you can. Please continue on page 4 if you need to.

Terminology

1. Teaching cultural elements means

- Cultural elements include British, American, Asian and any other cultures of traditions, behaviours (i.e. greetings and facial expression, ways of cooking/having food, etc.), beliefs / superstitions (e.g. opening up an umbrella in a house or office is believed to bring bad luck in British culture), customs (e.g. saying "thank you" to bus drivers in England, taking off your shoes when you visit an Asian family house, etc.), festivals (e.g. tomato festival in Spain, carnival in England, etc.), food (e.g. making Christmas pudding on special occasions, having fish and chips on certain days, cooking pasta for dinner, etc.), language usage (e.g. greetings in different settings, gratitude, etc.) and others which are presented in course books that you (teachers) often see there.

1. What course(s) are you presently teaching?

EUT and Applied Linguistics

2. Do you use coursebooks for your teaching EFL classes?

Yes

3. Why do you use coursebooks for your classes (e.g. language, linguistic and grammar are well-structured in coursebooks; the materials for language and cultural pictures are good enough for classes, etc.)?

Both students and teachers will have clear direction

4. How often do you use coursebooks in class (es) ?

Almost always

of what should be doing in the course.

5. If applicable, what are your reasons for not using coursebooks?

When there's some supplement to fits the course better

6. In your opinion, what are the reasons for dropping **coursebook activity(ies)** (i.e. not using coursebooks and applying other teaching materials) in the lesson itself?

when the activities ~~do~~ don't seem to be applicable

than coursebooks

to the students (with certain personality / culture / background)

7. How do you feel when you have to deal with cultural elements (such as tradition, festivals, food, etc.) in coursebooks (e.g. good, exciting lesson, interesting, etc.) ?

Interesting

8. Do you think that coursebooks /teachers' guides give you sufficient information (e.g. related activities or themes about teaching cultures (i.e. the target culture and other cultures))?

When it comes to "cultures", I think ~~the~~ the information is not enough.

1 given

9. Do you feel coursebooks / teachers' guides offer **appropriate materials** for teaching cultural elements? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

to some extent, but most of time they're outdated

10. Do you use/adapt outside materials (e.g. magazines , newspapers , realia , etc.) to help you use the coursebooks' cultural units? If so, what are they? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes. magazines / newspapers and online resources/

11. How / where do you find them (e.g. yourself/other teachers' advice, etc.)? *dramas/ movies*

both myself and other teachers advice

12. Does your school provide teaching/course materials? If so, what are they?

Yes, textbooks / handouts with plenty of

13. Does your school provide appropriate materials for teaching cultures ?

activities (designed by different teachers) magazines

Yes

14. Do you experience any difficulties when lesson planning for cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festivals, food, etc.) through coursebooks? If so, what are these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes, Sometimes I can only find very little information related to the certain culture,

15. Why do you encounter these difficulties? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Sometimes ~~the~~ coursebooks don't provide enough information.

or as a foreigner, I might have

16. Do you experience any **difficulties** with your students when you are teaching cultures and cultural elements through coursebooks in class? If so, what are these problems (e.g. difficult to get learners' attention , etc.)?

Some ~~mistrust~~ misunderstanding

Not really cuz teaching culture takes very little parts in my teaching,

17. In your opinion, why do these difficulties happen in the class? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

so usually students get excited and relaxed.

Usually what

18. How do you manage these problems? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

I prepared would be enough for class.

19. Do you feel you get the learners' attention when you are teaching cultural elements (e.g. traditions, festival, food, etc.) within your own adapted/modified lessons ? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Yes

20. If they don't pay attention, why do you think this is? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

21. Do you think that using coursebooks alone is sufficient for **teaching cultural elements**? If No, please go to question no. 22 (if Yes, give details of your reasons).

No

22. Why do you think teachers need to adapt/ modify materials for teaching cultures ?

As I said before, most coursebooks are outdated.

23. In your opinion, what are the **advantages** of using your own adapted materials for use with coursebook units for teaching cultural elements through coursebooks?

Information is updated and more complete.

24. In your opinion, what are the **disadvantages** of using coursebooks alone for teaching cultures?

Not enough coverage

25. What impact does it have when you use your own materials (e.g. motivation, stimulating interest, etc.)? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

Stimulating learners' interest for sure

26. What activities do you normally use when you are teaching cultural concern lessons in the classroom (e.g. presentation /discussion , etc.)?

discussion / role play

27. Have you ever omitted those cultural concern topics and moved onto other topics? If so, why?

Yes, if it seems boring or not likely to

28. Do you think teachers need to teach cultural elements through coursebooks in the classroom? (e.g. raise in your opinion, is it necessary to teach? If so, please explain here why you think it is necessary.)

Yes, but not necessarily ~~to~~ teach through coursebooks. Culture influences language in learners' interest.

29. Should learners learn cultures through coursebooks? If so, why? (Please continue on page 4 if you need to.)

It can be the start point, but hopefully always leads to self-learning after class. ₃

Please refer to the question number (s) when you use this page.

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Part 2

Personal Information

1. How long you have been an English language teacher?

over 5 years

2. Are you a native/ non-native speaker of English?

non-native

3. What degrees do you have?

bachelor

4. What teaching qualifications do you have? (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, TEFL, etc)

I was major in English and minor in Education

5. Has your teacher training included the aspect of material evaluation / adaptation?

Yes

6. Have you ever lived in another country? If so, how long?

Yes / around 8 months

7. Have you ever learnt about other people's cultures (e.g. everyday ways of life / how people think about things / do's and don'ts, etc.)

Yes, but barely in class, usually
get it when hanging out with foreign friends.

Appendix 4
The Interview Transcripts

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- 1 R: I have analysed your questionnaire, and I have a few more questions to ask you. You
2 say that have taught some general English courses in your country. How long do you
3 take to prepare when you prepare for cultural elements lessons?
- 4 P: it's actually part of the (I'll speak slowly so I can handle the transcription) part of the
5 lesson planning cause I normally as I mentioned in the questionnaire I taught
6 ummm... the series of Cutting Edge and Headway at some point and there is another
7 one like kind of three series. Umm.. I normally try to read before myself, prepare the
8 lesson, and I check if I find any ummm... cultural elements any words, anything **that**
9 I feel, even to me before the students, ummm .. alien, is not relevant to the context
10 something new that has to do with another culture, umm.... I try to make some search,
11 and try to define, to know the keywords, key cultural definitions, stuff about this, so
12 that I can explain it better in the classroom and make it more accessible and
13 understandable to the students.
- 14 R: So roughly how long do you take per day?
- 15 P: uh timing? Uh normally before the lesson I normally prepare one day before the
16 lesson, like evening, and the lesson is gonna be the next morning or something. So it's
17 normally one day before, so I can make sure I can prepare myself, note, mental notes,
18 written notes, so planning is, I do planning different.
- 19 R: When you are preparing your lesson, what criteria do you apply?
- 20 P: I always think of the linguistic aspect of this culture, the language aspect of this
21 culture element to be honest uhhhh... because I always use it as a vehicle to help
22 learning uuuummm... yes, I'm not saying that downgrading or I'm not considering the
23 cultural value in itself, but I always use it as a... as a, as a, primarily as a vehicle to
24 learn new vocabulary and new words of things, new names, and then there is also
25 cultural teaching going on at the same time, but is still, to be honest, my primar...my
26 primary focus is the language.
- 27 R: Because it's language through culture?
- 28 P: That's why, that's why I'm always; I always think of that..
- 29 R: You mentioned that you always use course books and teach all the chapters that you
30 have and sometimes you add your own material whilst dropping others. So do you
31 have any specific reason why you add your own material?
- 32 P: oh right, sometimes just to avoid the lesson being like boring, or something, and then
33 to elaborate more because I use this material specifically to enhance communication
34 skills because like in a debate style way I sometimes bring a topic, an issue, I got a
35 textbook about 'Topics for debate' I sometimes copy some handouts when it is
36 relevant to the lesson in a sense, that is more like at the end of a lesson to elaborate, to
37 enhance ummm... the component, the language components being taught, to put them
38 in a more communicative way. That, that's my philosophy about adding more but I
39 still abide by the curriculum, which is the textbook normally, they call it the whole
40 curriculum, because you have to finish it like...during the 10 or so
- 41 R: When you adapt your material, what materials do you normally use (e.g. magazine or
42 internet)?

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- 43 P: uh yeah, actually various different, sometimes from the web, describing... sometimes
44 from other textbooks, additional textbooks, as I told you 'Topic for debates' stuff or
45 sometimes from newspapers, mostly the web, and some printed materials.
- 46 R: Why do you use them?
- 47 P: yeah, I mean it depends on... because at this point I'm not aware of the like...it might
48 be as far as the cultural issues concern, I might use them, and they might contain still
49 cultural issues of course cause debate...or something... cause I remember there was
50 an example, for instance a topic in the textbook about going out around the world, so I
51 have to kind of like trying to define all this thing...all the things that association to
52 going out, either to go clubbing, drinking, dancing, or going out for restaurant, eating,
53 so going on a date. So I try to kind of like how to work out all this in terms of
54 language and in terms of how make them adaptable to the culture and context I teach
55 there, in which I teach.
- 56 R: So you get your own materials for the topic?
- 57 P: yeah. because sometimes in the book and I try to add more and elaborate more
58 examples and.. I relate some of the local elements .
- 59 R: When you are preparing your lesson, because you are teaching non- native
60 students...
- 61 P: Yes.
- 62 R: ...do you have any difficulties such as language barriers or experience cultural
63 problems?
- 64 P: yeah I always have in mind when I prepare the lesson, I have in mind the students,
65 whether this thing is clear, shall I put it in that way when I discuss it, and then I try to
66 work out the vocabulary and get the definition ready. And... I always try to attend
67 because the level I was teaching is like intermediate so this is range. So it could false,
68 intermediate to false pre-upper intermediate, something like this. Between upper and
69 intermediate. So it's kind of like... and some of them maybe advance or like just 1 or
70 2. So I try to kind of have all this in mind to attend these levels and try to be more
71 clear and try to get everything defined, explained, this kind of things, even if I
72 provide additional materials I still need to do some work, and the textbooks always
73 the main the basic, cause they have a copy of the textbook and they just follow, and
74 then add some material and you make sure that everything, the lesson, 4-5 pages, that
75 all the components will be covered properly all the aspects.
- 76 R: In Cutting Edge, you have seen some bits and pieces of cultural elements ..
- 77 P: yeah of course.
- 78 R: so you know that you are going to teach cultural elements, for instance tomorrow or in
79 the next class, and you already have your materials. When you are teaching the
80 lesson in class, do you find any problems or difficulties with the materials?
- 81 P: umm, as I told you, these things are new to me as well. Before I came to another
82 country , I was taught in that context and I taught in that context, both. So I'm a
83 product of that context. So I still...yeah kind of... that's why I do the planning by
84 searching myself and try to define and understand what that meaning before I .. I
85 provide it to students. In this kind of thing, we are almost the same, me and the

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86 students , like everything is foreign to us. So I try to search and try to umm...and
87 that's why maybe on of the strategies just to make it more towards the language rather
88 than tackling the cultural issue in itself. Although it is important but it still.. they are
89 much linked I mean you cannot dissociate the language from the cultural carrier it
90 comes in. so you still you kind of like try to work it out. Put it more, more usefully in
91 the primary stuff is a language issue, and then you try to understand it yourself the
92 cultural issue and then there is a job of adapting maybe some stuff like taboo, some
93 stuff not heard of in that context, you try to make metaphor for, try to mix
94 similarities, compare and contrast with what is there and stuff like that. Like dating,
95 'going out', is an in an Islamic country most of the students I'm teaching are muslims
96 for instance, so trying 'going out' instead of like 'going to club and drink', you kind
97 of saying yeah 'you go out and have dinner with a friend', 'you go out...' you see,
98 these kind of things....

99 R: So you change your context a little bit ...

100 P: yeah (chuckle) ..you change, you adapt to the context. This is an example, I
101 remember that very vividly, this example of how to explain the going out around the
102 world, people go umm.. doing drink, what times they go to clubs, so you try to see...
103 you go to the cinema, you go to the restaurant, going out means all that

104 R: ...giving more information...and make the meanings of language.

105 P: ...and not just to restrict the meaning, yeah if you go to the the meaning of going out,
106 is just go clubbing, or go dancing, music, concerts, stuff like that

107 R: Can you share with me your experience of teaching cultural elements?

108 P: yeah this topic was really funny, this topic of going out and stuff. You try to
109 understand the topic on your own as a teacher to prepare a lesson and then you try to
110 adapt it. Uhhh you have to say for some similarities. Maybe go out and going out on a
111 date, all that should be used as how a phrasal verb should be used and all these kind of
112 things. And then the cultural element: so people in Spain in the UK...going out, doing
113 what blah blah blah .. And there are pictures in the books, of clubbing and dancing,
114 because international version is not modified in the context. In some other countries
115 maybe it is modified. So you have to adapt and try to explain this, what that mean
116 uhhmmm ... it's kind of...because there are people you might see they are...they
117 don't accept that, they feel kind of embarrassed or something you have to kind of a...
118 find a way to teach the lesson with a content, but to still try to adapt that to the context
119 by making some comparison going out, what time you going out for a dinner, and
120 then you go for a club, those compare and contrast but still tie it to the language and
121 at the same time the cultural element is taught but in a more adaptable way.

122 R: When you are doing that lesson, what activities did you use?

123 P: It's normally group discussion normally. I ask a student 'what do you do?', 'what do
124 you do... do you go out? What do you do when you go out?', 'what activities you do'.
125 Sometimes 'I visit my family, I go and have tea with my friends, I go and have dinner,
126 I go to the cinema..' stuff like that.

127 R: So you do discussion.

128 P: It's mostly discussion

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- 129 R: Did you have any presentations or writing or any other activities?
- 130 P: It depends on the lesson sometimes, because the book itself, because I follow the
131 structure of the book, sometime just giving you brainstorming and then the text,
132 reading, comprehension, and then listening and then discussion. So it is the structure
133 of the book govern the way I present the materials but I try to deviate by adding this
134 additional materials that I talk to you about.
- 135 R: Did your school ask you to follow their course textbook as well?
- 136 P: Normally, because this is the book because in the school they expect you to finish the
137 book or maybe half of the book in the first term and the other half in the second term,
138 so the whole year, one book, for instance. So you have to follow the structure. And
139 that's why here comes the role of the additional material if you feel some aspects
140 because are boring... Because the students themselves feel like secure and have the
141 sense of finishing when the lesson is covered so they feel they are progressing when
142 finishing the chapter, finishing the unit.
- 143 R: In your opinion, what is the advantage of using your own materials for teaching
144 cultural language elements in the classroom?
- 145 P: Just to help me explain more and elaborate. That's the basic... just to help you explain
146 and elaborate and give you more uhhhh....room for more communicative activities.
147 That's mostly.
- 148 R: Can you be more specific? For example, you said 'to help you more', but in what
149 way?
- 150 P: To help you more is explaining the relevant material (unclear) in the book.
151 Because when there is aspect in the book, because there are some cultural elements in
152 the book of course, so you kind of like ... just use this to support, to add, to elaborate
153 on the materials
- 154 R: Do you think all teachers should have adapted materials for a lesson?
- 155 P: I mean...My basic thing is to cover the lesson, that's always happened.. you know to
156 stick to the lesson in the book but again then try to provide some more materials to
157 make the lesson more...I mean...to explain more, to make it more accessible to the
158 students. That's my strategy: that is always you stick, according to the policy of my
159 school, you stick to teaching the book. But you still try to provide. And the students
160 like it. They like when you cover the book, but you still go out as well. They need
161 some more. They need to follow the book systematically, but still they are open to
162 have more. And that's why I felt it and I just keep doing that. Not all of my colleagues
163 obviously doing that, it's all like individual choice. That's at least my experience.
- 164 R: Do you believe that you get more motivation?
- 165 P: Kind of... some of the students to be honest. It depends on the learning style. Some of
166 them just think that the book is enough, others need more. Yeah...it works with some
167 people, to be honest, especially those who are eager and a bit advanced. As I told,
168 between intermediate and upper intermediate but still there people who are open to
169 more.
- 170 R: You said that you have never omitted any kinds of cultural elements.

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- 171 P: No, no I always try to keep it but how? That's the old question: How to modify, how
172 to present it in a very accessible, acceptable way to the students given their cultural
173 context which is different, and this is the role of adding some materials to elaborate.
174 You cover it anyway, but still try to focus on the linguistic element and still try to
175 work it out how to be presentable. It's very tricky to the context. It depends, some
176 times, some people accept additives, the eager, the just curious to understand.
177 Some people just got a mix, because our classes are a mix, girls and guys, so it's kind
178 try of work it out in a way that is accessible and understandable to the students and
179 acceptable in the first place as well, cause they feel into it, not something alien,
180 irrelevant because that's why you... you always put it in a way that it's a vehicle of
181 language elements.
- 182 R: Have you ever omitted any sensitive topics?
- 183 P: yeah.. kind of...that's why I told you, you don't talk about taboos, stuff like that. You
184 try to modify. That's why when you add the materials, you are just trying to work out
185 all that. But students still have the book, so they might work it out themselves, they
186 might look it up on the dictionary, they might check it. So you don't cover...The book
187 is there, you don't change it, but you still try to work out around.
- 188 R: What kind of topics did you avoid?
- 189 P: yeah for instance, come to like...obvious sexual issues for instance. Maybe there are
190 some girls feeling shy or something. You see....girlfriend, boyfriend, stuff maybe
191 they don't know about that, what does it mean, they just understand being a girlfriend,
192 boyfriend together, a wife or a husband. That's why...so you try to kind of... taboos
193 normally. But there are not many. Maybe the ...think of changing but it's
194 international version anyway of the book. So you kind of finding some...but it's not
195 normally... there are not provided in the book in a very obvious..., there are not many
196 of these taboos in the book. But it's ... when the discussion bring up this issues
197 maybe try to...some people are open minded, people are different trying to discuss
198 and to learn and to be curious...
- 199 R: So, for example, you are teaching a cultural element topic in the classroom, and you
200 think that the class has gone quiet...
- 201 P: You feel it! Because you feel the dynamics of the class. Maybe people are just talking
202 to anyone, shying away, stuff like that. You use kind of changing the topic, adapt it.
203 But the book is there, they can see it, they can read it. But there is no way to
204 erase...maybe to skip it, or just to modify it. But you can't change the book. This is
205 the book anyway. In some countries, some cases, I heard, in some other countries,
206 similar countries maybe, editors modify...the publishers modify like Headway
207 modified in some Islamic countries to suit the context. But in Sudan we didn't do that.
208 We accept whatever, but it is still the role of the teacher, so maybe they are a bit
209 challenging for us to adapt and...yeah.
- 210 R: In your opinion, do you think that teachers should teach all kinds of cultural
211 elements?
- 212 P: I think they should be selective in the kind of things..., they should be selective but
213 they always, they should put the primary focus, especially for EFL students, the

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214 primary focus is the language for them. But they can have access to cultural issues
215 through films, movies, whatever, but still in the textbook and in the classroom, the
216 focus should be most on the language, and they should be tackled, I believe in that
217 they should be tackled this cultural element should not be eliminated, because they are
218 part of the language: learning the culture, learning the language. So and then you
219 think that in the future those people might go and live in the countries where these
220 cultures are there, so at least they are familiar, they learn not just the language but is
221 still cultural elements are both good in themselves and they are carrier for language
222 elements. So, associate language cultural aspects, festivals, going out, this kind of
223 vocabulary and still understand that if they happen to live in the English first speaking
224 countries that they still want to understand at least these cultural elements. They
225 should not be eliminated, but people should know how to handle them. And the
226 adaptation is one of the strategies and the supporting, supplementing materials to
227 elaborate is one of the issues, or maybe take them out and discuss them separately in
228 debate, in society, in classroom as discussion activities or something like that.

229 R: Do you recommend student to learn all these cultural elements through coursebooks?

230 P: That's a tricky question. I mean the course books, they might give them something
231 but they can still search for more. That's a good question. Maybe it's not...At least
232 this is the book, which is prescribed by the school. They have to learn everything in it -
233 at least. But I believe that would give them more scope to do further search for their
234 own, but I don't think that the book will give everything, it would not cover
235 everything..

236 R: yeah...

237 P: But at least it will open up their minds. There are some elements like that they can
238 follow up. And there are other stuff I movies, watching movies, reading the magazines
239 of the English first speaking countries, that kind of things...

240 R: I think learning these kinds of cultural elements through coursebooks is quite useful
241 for students.

242 P: the learning (unclear) of them yeah I mean that is what I said. Partly language
243 carriers and partly they'll be aware of it because there is some lots of jokes stuff that
244 is culture specific. To understand a joke in English maybe you need to understand the
245 historical stuff. Some of these cultural elements might be historical, uh...
246 traditional food, related to a lot of things. You might explain if they need an idiom or
247 a proverb, an English proverb, or something including this kind of culture specific
248 issues, so to appreciate, to understand that, I think you have to learn this.

249 R: And you have mentioned (referring to questionnaire) that you have learned about
250 stereotypes and other things for yourself; so could this be used in your teaching?

251 P: yeah I mean, that's because this is a very good opportunity for comparison I mean
252 what people say about specific cultures or people and what people say about you, so
253 can you compare so that's... that's a very good thing because that will generate more
254 debate and discussion which is enhancing the fluency and the speaking aspect of the
255 students. That's really good, yeah, I always put it as like kind of comparison what
256 people say about Japanese, German machines working hard, English lazy, stuff like

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- 257 that. How do you feel it, how do you... I ask them in a question how do you relate
258 yourself.... how do you think of yourself, what you comment on it, do you think
259 people are...this kind of things. So it's mostly discussion.
- 260 R: Have you ever shared your personal experiences with your students when you are
261 teaching?
- 262 P: Yeah...not in a sense of what happened, or maybe I...but you could refer sometimes I
263 made a Japanese friend or a teacher or some friend and then they normally say that
264 this is stereotypes, I'm not true, so you have to be there to understand, that kind of
265 things , yeah...sometime I reflect on that just to make things easy, to get involved in
266 the discussion...
- 267 R: Is there anything that you would like to add?
- 268 P: yeah I just mentioned the issue of...the question of how, whether editors or publishers
269 of this textbook really take for instance feedback of teachers from different corners of
270 the world. Do they really design these books specifically the cultural elements on the
271 book and distribution on the book? Is it based on their assumptions just their
272 intuitions, do they take feedback ummm...so it seems to be very interesting to track
273 down to see how publishers of Headway...Cutting Edge, all these, how the editors,
274 publishers, or writers of these book, when they think of, when they put these
275 elements, do they believe in them? Do they put them for their language values, for the
276 whatever value? It seems to me that asking publishers and editors of these textbooks
277 could give more insight to how they think about these cultural and why they put them
278 in the books, what's the purpose of that? The distribution of this. It's sort of this when
279 I read the questionnaire...
- 280 R: There's another issue.
- 281 P: of course, yeah
- 282 R: OK --- thank you very much.
- 283 P: Hope that can help.
- 284 R: Yep. Thank you.
- 285 R = Researcher P = Participant

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1 R: Shall we start now? I have analysed your questionnaire and I have seen that you have
2 used course books almost all the time. I believe that you might have seen some kinds
3 of cultural elements present in the course books? So, when you prepare a lesson
4 especially on these cultural elements, how long do you take to prepare it?

5 P: Well it all depends on exactly, umm... it depends on what I want to teach and the, it
6 depends on exactly what cultural item umm the nature of the cultural item. Umm,
7 some things might take longer to prepare umm and some things usually umm ... don't
8 require that much. The textbook as a lot of information sometimes, which can draw on.
9 But, many times, umm.. you know.. using your own materials and so on wouldn't take
10 that long to prepare. It just depends on the cultural item that you want to present and
11 also umm.. depends on umm.. umm.. depends on the timing as well. How, how much
12 you have for the lesson as well, to, to present it.

13 R: How do you prepare and how long do you take? What criteria do you apply when you
14 prepare for a lesson?

15 P: Umm, I get a lot of input as well from students, umm.. and usually when, umm, for
16 example when I festivity is coming up umm, especially when I was teaching back in
17 Senegal, when we have a big occasion coming up, like Aid/Eid (unclear) for
18 example, this is a Muslim festival, umm.. I get the students very much involved and I
19 ask a lot of questions. And from their answers, and idea I can gather how I can go
20 about the lesson. Umm, probably what I need to zoom on. Umm.. sometimes it takes
21 umm... sometimes it can take a couple of hours and sometimes it can take a whole
22 day to just try and get the materials together, umm and so on. Umm, but getting the
23 students involved is very very important because umm, you get to learn a lot from
24 them. Especially from their backgrounds, the way that they prepare for the Eid, umm
25 for example and umm... and they give you some idea and hopefully you can use
26 those idea and build up on them, and umm.... able to prepare ah, come up with a
27 good lesson.

28 R: How do you persuade them to try and become involved in your lesson?

29 P: (Clears throat), well my approaching is always student- centred and I always try to get
30 students involved as much as possible. I think about an exciting something, you know
31 umm, a project for example. And I would get the students to umm.. to play roles and
32 so on in the project. Umm... and they get very excited about this. Umm... and
33 sometimes it can be a debate and umm.. about a particular festival and so on. So umm,
34 one of the things for example we did one time was to do with female circumcision. In
35 my country, it very very common for umm.. young girls to be circumcised and so on.
36 And now it is a very big political umm.. topic umm in the country. Umm.. so we bring
37 this up and divide the class. You know it get very excited, students get very excited
38 and you know sometimes I have the students go and do some research about it and
39 come and write something. Umm, so, they are usually very excited when it comes to
40 this. So, I also come up with ideas and so on, that I can inject into the lesson. To make
41 it exciting, to make it fun, and to make it motivating as well for them and interesting
42 for them to be involved in.

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43 R: When you have an idea and you think it's a good thing to teach and get knowledge for
44 them, do you get any other materials? For example, outside materials, such as
45 newspapers or other relevant materials for the students.

46 P: Oh, yeah, and sometimes talking to other teachers as well you know, umm.. talking to
47 them and bouncing my ideas on them. I tend to get quite a lot of input and ah,
48 sometimes they direct me to sou.. something that I never thought about. And I say, oh
49 ya, that is a good idea, let me go and check that out. You know, go and pick up
50 materials from everywhere. I try and get as much as possible, and especially localised
51 items, things that are very local and home-grown materials. And umm.. students tend
52 to.. umm.. it is something the students can relate to, umm.. you know, something they
53 can relate to quite easily and so on. And umm.. as much umm really as possible to
54 help bring about the umm, the topic and the lesson. Make it fun and umm, as I said
55 get the students involved in the whole process just preparing and presenting and so on
56 and be very very exciting for them.

57 R: Why do you use this realia/ authentic material? Is it to motivate students?

58 P: Umm, well, in a class you have different kind of learners. You have global learners
59 and global thinkers and those who are leaner (unclear) thinkers, people that are very
60 good at seeing the smaller things and there are those who have to see the bigger
61 picture. And sometimes I think it is very in a classroom to try and get as many
62 material, visual aids as available. That is very important for a class and umm, having
63 this really helps students who um, especially students who are slow thinkers slow at
64 grasping ideas and things they can easily see and they will be able to really work it
65 out and not those who can think in the abstract. Not all students are good at that. So in
66 Africa the way most people are brought up they're.. they are global thinkers, they
67 want to see the big picture. So it is good to, ya know, bring out pictures and even
68 (unclear) stories, they are very good at stories as well, bringing out, we use the stories
69 to bring out the message.

70 R: How do you find stories? Do you just let them speak their own story or do you find
71 similar stories for them?

72 P: Well sometimes I make-up stories. I think one of the things about ... one of the
73 qualities of a good teacher is creativity, being able to creative and you know
74 sometimes, it is good to just sit down and think about a funny stories something that
75 students can find interesting, enjoyable and funny. And I am very good at that. I come
76 from all kind of stories, some of them are real stories, perhaps I (unclear) read about
77 somewhere and some of them are stories that I just made up myself and umm .. most
78 of them very well.

79 R: You know that, although there are some cultural elements in the course books, we
80 teachers need to adapt more materials as you have mentioned in order to get more
81 motivation and a good environment in the classroom. So why do you think that we
82 should have other adapted materials for students?

83 P: Umm, yeah, most of the text books as I said in the questionnaire. Most of the text
84 books are used outside the context in which you teach are produced by people who
85 are not familiar with the context of the students you are teaching. I think it is good to

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86 sometimes... they are good textbooks and.. can be very very helpful there you can get
87 a lot of resources from them, but umm, it is good sometimes to add them, and not to
88 just take them as this package, that this is it this is how it is done. Because for
89 example, what works in London or Senegal or Thailand and so on. So things have
90 always got to be contextualised. I believe that most of the material that we have in
91 textbooks they are great, but they need to fit in the context and be appropriate and
92 relevant to the students that we teach. So that is why, many times, I umm, I have
93 added , taking stuff from the textbooks , adapted , modified, add some things to it and
94 or take things out of it and just make it appropriate and relevant to the students.

95 R: When you prepare your lesson, do you find any difficulties or any other experiences
96 before you teach?

97 P: (silent for a while)

98 R: I mean when you are preparing lesson do you experience difficulties with materials
99 or time constraints or what you think is going to be a big issue when you teach?

100 P: Umm, the only difficulty sometimes is finding appropriate material and so on. And
101 this is why it is umm, good to sometimes delegate some of the students to be part of
102 the process and material and bring something in to the class and so on. So once you
103 get the students involved, it can actually be quite helpful in looking out for things so
104 you do not have to go all over the place looking for things. They can actually look out
105 for things for you and bring them over to the class. So, I did not have much problems
106 at all because I try and get the students as much involved as possible. And that has
107 been very helpful and they sometimes bring things that I probably didn't think about
108 at all or didn't expect.

109 R: What materials do they normally bring?

110 P: Umm. Well sometimes they might bring a wood carving, its been carved, which, um..
111 you know relates a particular story. They might, they sometimes can bring a picture
112 from somewhere, or sometimes they just come with a story. Oh! My grandama make
113 this story and I think it is very interesting. So, they get all kinds of things and umm..
114 they get excited about this and they feel part of the process. And in this way they are
115 really motivated and enthused to be part of the whole thing.

116 R: Have you ever taught some kinds of cultural elements in the classroom, like weddings
117 or food?

118 P: Oh yeah. Oh yes, you cannot separate language from culture or culture from language.
119 They are entwined and culture is very very important it is what identifies people and
120 people are very proud, many people actually are proud of their culture and their
121 traditions as well. And I try as much as possible to.. to bring cultural stuff. You know..
122 Things that are relevant to the people from their backgrounds as part of the lesson.
123 Because I think it is very very important that they just don't learn form other people's
124 culture but it is also good to be able to know something. Because there are lots of
125 people who are, who know very little about their cultures and so on. So, it is good to
126 bring something from the culture in the context with their, so they know , they will
127 relate as well. Many students in Africa when they come to read about, snow for
128 example, I have never seen snow before, and you know, think about something that

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129 they can easily relate to and understand, they can internalise and so on. So I try and
130 substitute if you want or adapt certain notions or certain... yeah probably certain
131 things that are familiar to them.

132 R: Localised?

133 R: For example, you are going to teach about tradition, like British food, or British
134 weddings, and you are already in the classroom about to teach, but the students are
135 not really giving you their attention. Have you ever had that kind of situation happen
136 in your teaching life?

137 P: Yeah, well its not to do with cultural elements, but many times when we come to class
138 you can find the students not interested. Or they might find the lesson boring and I
139 think a lot sometimes has to do with the teacher. So that is why creativity is very very
140 important. If you find that you are trying to teach a particulars.. thing and the students
141 are not really showing any interest at all, it is good to just dump it and think on your
142 feet about something that can really really, you know, excite them and you know
143 something that they are really interested in. Presentation is another thing just like you
144 go to a restaurant and you are presented with this plate.. menu and so on and the food
145 itself has been prepared and even before you eat it you look at the presentation and
146 you say wow!. Presentation is very very important and I think the way we present a
147 lesson is very very important. If it is not presented well, you will be sure that the
148 students will not be interested and they will start to make noise in the class and if it is
149 presented well and with a lot of enthusiasm and interest then obviously you will get
150 the students involved and in everything we do it is always good to have the students at
151 the centre of what we do as teachers. I think that is really helped me a lot to make sure
152 that I get the class under control

153 R: Can you share one of your experiences of teaching cultural elements in a classroom?

154

155 P: Yeah, for example, yeah when we started looking at this who.. female circumcision
156 for example I first started with general questions about how people feel about it and
157 there were obviously people who feel very very strongly against it but there were also
158 people that I have found in the class that this is part of our culture and tradition and it
159 part of the way of life for the people here and it is good to keep it up. So I did start to
160 divide the class in to two and I asked them to raise their hands and I picked from this
161 and five from there. And organise a kind of debate for them and also for the rest of the
162 students they were there, just listening, and after they can questions as well and at the
163 end of it we asked the rest of the students which group they thought did the best, or
164 won the debate and they raised their hands and the ones that won we gave them some
165 chocolates and so on.. I say small prize to (unclear). So it was very very interesting, so
166 yeah, that is how we dealt wit that cultural element.

167 R: What activities do you normally use in the classroom?

168 P: Activities? yeah, as I said. We use debates a lot, stories a lot, pictures as well.
169 Sometimes too it is good to just take on a film or DVD or something and just put it on.
170 But, first of all make sure you have had a good look at it and look at the content and

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- 171 so on and appropriacy and so on.. just make sure that is not something that would get
172 the students to sleep and so on. Yeah.
- 173 R: Do you find it by yourself?
- 174 P: Well, sometimes by talking to other people or talking to your students and so on.
- 175 R: They bring in material for you?
- 176 P: Yeah, just get some kind of brainstorm and you get what really excites and what they
177 are really interested in and so on, and in that way it helps you to..
- 178 R: So, let me clarify: you use the Discussion and Q&A. Why do you do these kinds of
179 activities?
- 180 P: Why, variety, it is just very very important to inject some kind of variety into the
181 whole classroom setup because it is very monotonous. Every time you come to class,
182 stand up there and just give the lesson and sometimes I think it is good to have a
183 variety in your lessons. That is one of the key, main reasons to ensure that there is as
184 much variety as possible to get the students interested. Not to get them bored, the, Oh
185 we know what is coming up and so on. It is a surprise, every day is a surprise for them
186 expecting something new something fresh and something motivating.
- 187 R: What impact do you think you get?
- 188 P: Well, that is to capture their interest. It is very very important to make sure that we
189 can keep their interest. Keep them interested keep them motivated keep them learning
190 because otherwise the whole purpose is to teach them something and whatever means
191 you can use to get your message across I think is very very important.
- 192 R: Have you ever omitted some cultural elements? For example, you might think this is
193 not suitable for students or this is a very sensitive topic like sexism.
- 194 P: Yeah. Not omitted, not completely taken it out, but adapting or modifying or changing
195 it to something else. Yes, I have done that quite a lot and you know sometimes there
196 might be the book might be teaching about something that the people are just about..
197 first of all they may not know anything about it at all its completely new or it is taboo
198 within the culture they just don't .: it's not nice not nice to talk about it. And what
199 you d is, you look at it and it's a good learning thing and you decide well you can
200 change this thing you can modify it you can add to it or you can take away form it and
201 so on. Just to make it relevant and appropriate for the students. Yeah, so it is not
202 completely taking it out because you know I find that every thing in there is useful
203 and you can always do something about it.
- 204 R: Nowadays, the course books contain more and more cultural elements. Do you think
205 you as a teacher should teach these cultural elements?
- 206 P: Yeah, cultural elements are very very important and should not be overlooked, but I
207 think it is very Important you make sure that they are appropriate for the class, for the
208 level and for the context teaching which you are teaching that is the very very most
209 important thing. And you know, and it is left to you as a teacher to just to just take it
210 and see what you can do with it. And not soemthing just take it out of the book and
211 teach it as it is. What happens many times is, if you just read it out of the book and
212 just present it, it might not it depends, it might not have the impact of what you

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213 wanted. So sometimes it is good to inject some.. a bit of activities or something to
214 make it more relevant or something the students really enjoy doing.

215 R: So, we teachers should support some kind of outside realia to get a more authentic
216 classroom?

217 P: Yeah, I think it is always very important to rely on textbooks, but to try as much as
218 possible to look outside try as much as possible and look around you well for things
219 that can make your lessons interesting and exciting.

220 R: In your opinion, do you think that authentic materials such as T.V., films, pictures,
221 etc. are more useful than non-authentic materials like course books?

222 P: No, they are all useful actually, it is just supplementing. Each one is not just good in
223 itself. It always has to be accompanied by something else to make it better, to make it
224 more authentic to make it more relevant and to make it more appropriate. So, it is
225 good to not just have one particular thing like, using a TV. Using a TV and having
226 some kind of group discussion after and so on. And in that way you are doing many
227 things using one particular thing.

228 R: So, as a student, do you think he or she should learn these kinds of cultural elements
229 through course books?

230 P: Well, they can.. they can learn from the course book, but unfortunately the course
231 book does not touch on every cultural element because culture is so diverse and so
232 varied and so that is why it is so important to supplement textbook with stuff from the
233 outside. Because textbooks just do not teach everything about the culture. Because
234 cultures are varied, cultures are diverse and just like people, so it is very important
235 that you make sure that you get some more stuff to supplement what the course book
236 has, and most of the course books are quite good, they do have some cultural elements
237 in them, but some of them are very very poor when it comes to that.

238 R: In your opinion, do you think that these kinds of cultural elements are to help students
239 understand and use the language?

240 P: Well, yes, they do, because as I said, language and culture are always together, you
241 just cannot separate them. If I want to learn English, then I have to learn something
242 about the British culture and the British people and their way of life. You can know
243 all the English in your head, but there are certain cultural things that if you do not
244 know about them, then the English people .. they still .. something like it. So it is very
245 very important and in English for example it is good to know some English culture
246 the English way of life and what makes the English people different from other people.

247 R: I believe you have learned some cultural elements in your day-to-day life. Do you
248 think your personal experiences could be used in your teaching?

249 P: Yeah, sometimes it is good to use your own experience as well. Your own cultural
250 experiences and your experience of other cultures as well. And bringing them into
251 your teaching as well. I think it is very very helpful. I have travelled quite a lot, I have
252 been to many many countries, I have seen many different cultures and so on, and
253 sometimes it is good to give.. (unclear) your students ... (unclear) other cultures,
254 why they do things certain themselves. It just helps as well.

255 R: Have you ever shared your experiences with students?

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- 256 P: Oh yes, I have, lots of times. Lots of times. One of the jokes that I give to my students,
257 when I was in the Philippines, quite a number of years ago, I visited this family, and
258 they gave me this egg, they call BALOOT, it is the egg with the chick inside. And
259 what they do is just before the chick is hatched they will take the egg and boil it with
260 the chick inside. It is a delicacy in the Philippines it is called BALOOT. And the
261 students, wow, How can you eat that? So there you go.
- 262 R: Yeah so, personalisation, sharing your experiences?
- 263 P: Yeah, sharing my experience yeah.
- 264 R: Would you like to share any other relevant experiences?
- 265 P: Well, I just want to say many teachers shy away from teaching about cultures and so
266 on because maybe they just have very little experience or sometimes they find a topic
267 a little too sensitive also. But, I think as a teacher it is important to approach it boldly
268 and ask questions if you are not sure. Umm.. and the... using your own experience
269 and other people's experience as well.. talk to people you are bound to hear stories
270 and you are bound to learn things and it is good to bring these into your teaching to
271 (unclear) students and I think that they would find it very very exciting and interesting.
- 272 R: Could you share with me one of the cultural elements that you teach in your
273 classroom again. Like teaching British weddings or African weddings.
- 274 P: Yeah. One of them is about teaching about Christmas. Christmas is one very big event
275 here, especially in the UK, and unfortunately a lot of the students do not know what is
276 involved in this whole Christmas event. And, so.... my students wanted to know
277 exactly why, people celebrate Christmas, which means you have to have a little idea
278 about Christianity and in this case, fortunate that I as a Christian I was able to explain
279 why people celebrate Christmas. And they also wanted to know about the different
280 kinds of foods have been prepared. Thank God.. I have been in this country and I have
281 been to many Christmas dinners and so on, and I was able to explain the food and so
282 on. And some of the stories behind some of these things. And we even had the
283 opportunity to buy, well I had the opportunity to get some Christmas stuff and so on
284 like a Christmas tree, well it is not a real tree. Just to show them about the Christmas
285 tree and the way you decorate it and so on. The presents that they have just by the tree
286 there and so on. So just getting all those different things in the class and it taste like..
287 what is like. it was very very interesting .
- 288 R: So , they all were enjoying it?
- 289 P: Oh yes, they were enjoying it.
- 290 R: Oh yes, thank you. So, is there anything you would like to add?
- 291 P: Oh, no. I don't think so.
- 292 R: Yes, Thank you very much for that.
- 293 R = Researcher P = Participant

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- 1 R: OK. Do you use a coursebook when you teach?
- 2 P: yes
- 3 R: Could you tell me why you use a coursebook?
- 4 P: The school asked teachers to use that , so I tried to stick to that but the coursebook
5 doesn't have everything , I will plan extra materials.
- 6 R: You said ' if coursebook doesn't have everything' . What do you mean by that? Do
7 you mean your students' needs ?
- 8 P: I focus on speaking and listening. Another teacher will do reading and writing . so,
9 split it up and.. the.. normally as the questionnaire said culture . .. its .. kind of
10 elements are not ... um.. not so detail in the book , so I can add more to it.
- 11 R: You have stated that you use a coursebook for language elements and also other
12 materials. Could you explain more about this?
- 13 P: well, I get them from what they are (unclear).. well. For example, for culture things ,
14 festivals and.. what you should and should not do in certain countries .. umm.. a little
15 bit a bout food and yeah.. customs .
- 16 R: OK .
- 17 P: I mainly focus on America , England and Australia .
- 18 R: Why are you only focusing on those countries?
- 19 P: because I am teaching English , so .. that students want to go to those countries .
- 20 R: OK. Also, you mentioned (referring to questionnaire) that you use a coursebook 50 to
21 70% of your time. Do you mean that you use it every week, or every lesson?
- 22 P: yes, I would use it everyday but sometimes with the book that we are using . . just the
23 certain topic . I think also have a powerpoint to help um.. get the point across ..
24 because boring just going through the book .. um.. just the memorizing is not so fun ,
25 so sometimes powerpoints . sometimes I print off my own materials then we can go
26 together and ask students their opinions of things try to get discussion going .
- 27 R: So, you just use the coursebook and your own materials.
- 28 P: yes, so .. um.. I do use all of the courebook but other materials as well.
- 29 R: You also mentioned (referring to questionnaire) that you don't have any problems
30 with using a coursebook. Why is this?
- 31 P: Even if I am teaching outside of the school , those particular books that I use , I find
32 very good for taking exams and I teach for students who want to take exam , so they
33 can go overseas and study . Those books suit me quite well.
- 34 R: Regarding the outside materials, what do you normally use?
- 35 P: sorry, can you repeat that?
- 36 R: I mean materials such as powerpoints, DVDs, etc.
- 37 P: All of the materials I use
- 38 R: What materials do you normally use for your students?
- 39 P: OK. Umm.. when talking about cultural thing, I found a lot of videos online about
40 students who took the exams and then living overseas ... out there.. umm.. their
41 reactions to the culture shock . so, videos , powerpoints , presentations , umm.. kind
42 of like questionnaire printed out and you can get them students think about
43 differences in culture and the coursebook . yeah..
- 44 R: Can you explain why you use these kinds of materials?

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- 45 P: well, videos are very engaging , so that's interesting and the.. powerpoint , you can do
46 all kind of things . powerpoint, presentation , so it's more for interest and extra
47 information on the coursebook that doesn't have. But I said earlier, the coursebook
48 can be boring. You have to find out other ways to interest students .
- 49 R: When you prepare the cultural elements lesson, how long does it take to prepare one
50 lesson?
- 51 P: To prepare?
- 52 R: yeah.
- 53 P: umm.. because I teach the same classes every year . I only need to prepare once and
54 then update it , so the first time it took a long time.. umm.. it could take anywhere up
55 to an hour or more but as I said only need to do it once , so..
- 56 R: Do you have any difficulties when looking for materials while writing your lessons ?
- 57 P: umm. there was no obstacle really .. umm.. because I know about the culture that
58 country I am teaching in . I know the big differences , so I can help the students . well,
59 I ask them first but I already know the answers , so it helps . I don't find it's very
60 difficult .
- 61 R: Do you experience any difficulties or problems with your students when you're
62 teaching it in the class?
- 63 P: No. I think those kinds of lessons are fun, so they want to voice (unclear) their
64 opinions and talking about the differences , it's good or bad , funny , strange , so it's
65 quite active .. quite easy lesson.
- 66 R: What activities do you normally give them?
- 67 P: sorry .
- 68 R: Activities like presentations, discussion or games.
- 69 P: umm.. we can just talk about the differences . What they would do in their own
70 country and how it is different and may be.. umm.. I don't do it very often but I have
71 done a little bit of role-play but.. I am not very keen on role-play . It can get messy . It
72 gets loud . Sometimes I add in some games um.. do you know the game what is called
73 ' blockbuster' . it was a TV program . I adapt that into the lesson ,so you would say a
74 letter and something that connect it to about letters and then they have to work out
75 what the word is and when they get to certain amount , they go across the board and
76 they win . I would have two teams against each other . That makes it more active.
- 77 R: so what impact do you get?
- 78 P: reaction?
- 79 R: yea, the impact.
- 80 P: those kind of classes , they want more of those but you have to limit them .. umm..
81 another one we do is a .. kind of practicing the skills that they already learnt where if
82 one person turns and they have to name a country or a language . and the next person
83 names another one.. cannot repeat and that goes through the class.. umm.. you can
84 adapt that kind of game with lots of words for them to learn That's the.. a good way
85 of learning new things rather than just memorizing it from a book .
- 86 R: Do you give homework as well?

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- 87 P: not very often .. umm.. I sometimes have classes on Saturday , so there is lots of
88 lessons anyway. So , its not really needed. But even when it is , I need it, I would go
89 in the evening because the students can still/ class (unclear) until 9 pm , so they are
90 there all day 7:30 am until 9 pm , so just going in the evening .. so a bit much giving
91 homework ..and other teachers do give them homework .. its.. umm.. to be a favourite
92 teacher, you don't want to do that.
- 93 R: I guess you might have used both authentic materials such as TV programmes and
94 current issues, and non-authentic materials for your lessons. Which ones are more
95 useful? I mean what would you like to recommend?
- 96 P: umm. its difficult to answer that , I think. it's ... a balance between the two but it also
97 depends on where you are teaching as well . I think I said in the questionnaire .
98 depending on the Government of the country , if it is newspaper material , you have to
99 be careful what's in there. Sometimes they don't like you talking about certain issues ,
100 so your balance is good.
- 101 R: Have you ever omitted any topics?
- 102 P: yes , I have .. umm.. I need to talk about it. Umm.. at one time, I was going through
103 some stories , that were big on the internet at that time and on newspaper and also
104 there were also be other people comments , so we talked about that but sometimes the
105 stories and comments are .. I cant remember what exact circumstance now . I think
106 one of them was about tigers . A lot of tigers were being killed for their bones for
107 medicines and.. the question is why is that happening ? Does it matter? Should people
108 stop that? How can they government stops that? That wasn't too bad but the school
109 doesn't like me focusing on you know the Government (unclear) the Government
110 should change that , so I avoid those .
- 111 R: Do you have any other experiences or difficulties?
- 112 P: sorry.
- 113 R: I mean do you have problems or difficulties because of language barriers or different
114 cultural backgrounds? Have you lost the students' attention, or have they looked very
115 offended?
- 116 P: Personally NO. and the sometimes if there is anything culturally that's offensive , it
117 can be adapted to be funny . For example, some cultures think this is offensive
118 (showing behaviour) . its OK sign to teach in that yes, it's offensive in some culture
119 but not in others . You might get in America . You go to another countries and it's
120 doing that is offensive . You know when you teach it, it can be funny as well.. just a ..
121 thing to avoid.
- 122 R: You explain everything in detail and get them engaged with the lessons?
- 123 P: yes , yeah.
- 124 R: Do you think students should learn cultures through coursebooks?
- 125 P: Do I ?
- 126 R: Yes because these days, there are many cultural elements presented in coursebooks,
127 and i was wondering if you think students should learn them?
- 128 P: I mean coursebooks , do need them.. umm.. they can't put everything in there . you
129 know.. if it is specifically for culture and my course is not specifically for ..umm ..like

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- 130 a bonus an extra , so.. yeah.. if it is focusing on that, it needs more materials and
 131 culture is changing all the time , so it will have an update every few years .
- 132 R: Would you say this is the reason why teachers need to adapt materials?
- 133 P: yes.. umm.. the book can only cover the basic , so they need to adapt it to their culture
 134 or the culture they are teaching . And also, adapt it to their culture teaching too
 135 because if you are teaching to Indian for example, their history has had a relationship
 136 with Britain , so it might be different from .. say Japan , so you need to change it to
 137 accordingly .
- 138 R: Right. OK.
- 139 P: My class, personally , was... it's very small about 10 – 15 students , so it is easy to
 140 you know .. get the class to engaged . The way I worked may not work for a class of
 141 50 students , so .. well, it depends your teaching , too.
- 142 R: OK. Are there any other experiences?
- 143 P: There was one time I was teaching culture to older students.. um.. older than me . I am
 144 quite young . I was 21 - 22 at that time . I am 24 now.. um.. the people , the adults I
 145 was teaching to were 30- 40 and they didn't like me trying to teach them about culture.
 146 They felt I was too young. So.. That was difficult . In my school , students are
 147 younger than me, so it's easier Um.. I couldn't really control that older students which
 148 is funny you will think be (unclear) other way round . that's difficult teaching them
 149 culture.
- 150 R: My question in the questionnaire was “should learners learn cultural elements
 151 through coursebooks?”, and your answer was ‘ half- half’. Could you explain more
 152 about this?
- 153 P: Of course, the coursebook . they can do at home or anywhere. Anyone can get hold of
 154 coursebook and if it is a curriculum that they have to go through the coursebook
 155 should cover that so there are the things they need to know . Other things are just
 156 extra help them understand more , so that's why I put half- half .
- 157 R: Thank you very much for that. Is there anything you like to add?
- 158 P: I don't think so. No .
- 159 R: Thank you very much. I think I've got enough.
- 160 P: OK. Thank you.
- 161 R = Researcher P = Participant

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- 1 R: Right! OK. So.. I've done an analysis on your questionnaire and I realise that you use
2 a coursebook almost all the time.
- 3 P: uh.. uhm....
- 4 R: So, in the coursebook, I believe that you've seen some kinds of cultural elements.
5 When you prepare the lesson, especially for these cultural elements, how long does it
6 take you to prepare for it?
- 7 P: umm... it depends... like what I am preparing.. I am preparing like... personalizing
8 materials in a way.. the materials takes like more... let's say about half an hour , not
9 counting like creating materials and etc.. just like may be researching things may be
10 it takes like.. even 3 days if you're really finding something interesting , so..... but
11 actual, may be preparation or like I am gona do this.. this planning just planning may
12 be like an hour or something.
- 13 R: so, for example, you have to teach British food or some kind of cultures like tradition,
14 greeting in an English way or something. So how long do you take to prepare?
- 15 P: well.. now.. coz I've been teaching now for 4 or 5 years here, umm so I already had
16 some materials already . so, I only like.. update them in a way. For example, I want to
17 do something new and I didn't know about and I ask do I want to do proper lesson on
18 Dawalii or guide... (unclear) coz we only talk about it . We don't really have lessons
19 but if I wanted to prepare lesson probably takes me like umm.. 3 days to search
20 something interesting and yeah.. may be half an hour to.. to get it , you know.., so
21 generally half an hour to prepare it .. preparing materials , so.. .. yeah.. I don't really
22 know what is the answer you really want to hear (pause then continue), so yeah..
- 23 R: And you mentioned that you have some kinds of drawbacks such as time constraints?
- 24 P: Well.. it is... drawback.. but.. you mean preparing materials?? Like researching
25 materials?
- 26 R: because you have told me in your questionnaire....
- 27 P: it is because like... in the coursebook , there are no... like... there is no cultural
28 context and because of that I have to research that you mean like prepare...or like...
- 29 R: because you have mentioned ...
- 30 P: because there are couples of drawback . Which one you are talking about ? sorry..
- 31 R: what kinds of drawbacks do you normally have?
- 32 P: uh OK. So, Positive drawback. For example, technology, so I really like you know .. I
33 prepare nice and pretty... you know.. appealing to students , so that can take ages like
34 Saturdays I used to stay up late until 2-3 am . I love it . I just love it. So, yeah.. I just
35 stay up late and make materials but .. umm... another drawback be.. like .. yeah ...
36 Valentine's Day is coming and I have no materials for that . There is nothing for it in
37 the book . For example, Aiid and I need some chapters and you don't wanna skip and
38 yeah.. there are some books which you can use but they are not very interesting , so if
39 you are actually want to .. you know.. yeah... create something , you better research
40 that .. that would be thing because drawback would be that aren't really nice
41 materials . it can get from online or somewhere . You know we always have to
42 research something really .. (unclear voice)

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- 43 R: So, when you are preparing lessons, you find your own materials that are appealing.
44 What criteria do you apply?
- 45 P: umm.. interesting! Its gotta be interesting. Because if it is not appealing to me, no.
46 it's not gona be appealing to students like if I am reading it and bored after thirty
47 second and they are not gona get any interesting , so the first thing is .. is it nice? And
48 then , next stage is like... is it correct? Or.. are there any like... mistakes? Because it
49 happens that you got grammatical mistake (unclear, guessing) in worksheet. Is it
50 accurate? Does it actually teach them something? And then basically, if
51 (unclear...) then I am gona to use it.
- 52 R: So, everything is based on your own materials that you have prepared?
- 53 P: I mean you supplement. I mean there are something you think ... would be useful for
54 them but in a book there is no supplement or in a book it is not well-presented or like
55 the topic is useful but .. yeah.. the.. the presentation , the methodology is not good
56 then I will try to make it more.. I mean better methodologically or I don't know
57 whatever.
- 58 R: So, why do you adapt materials?
- 59 P: Why? Or..
- 60 R: why do you have own materials? I mean supplemented materials?
- 61 P: Because I love creating them. There is a need . You need to do it.
- 62 R: What do you mean "you need to do it?"
- 63 P: What do I need? because.. umm...if.. like... if there is a topic and there are no
64 materials for it , then you've got to create it.
- 65 R: so, do you mean based on your students' needs and interests? Is that your target, and
66 then you find the relevant materials for your lessons?
- 67
- 68 P: YEAH.
- 69 R: OK. When you are preparing lessons, do you have any other difficulties that you have
70 faced? I mean like you think that something is going to be a big issue in the classroom
71 or you think that something is not going to work out? I recall you mentioning that
72 Valentine's materials are sometimes difficult to find it.
- 73 P: umm... (paused for a while, thinking) ok. Simplify the question into ten words?
- 74 R: you mentioned that sometimes you cannot find relevant materials; so, do you have
75 similar / relevant experiences or difficulties when you are preparing lessons?
- 76 P: OK. Difficulties in preparing lessons basically .
- 77 R: Yes.
- 78 P: from culturally perspective or in general ...
- 79 R: cultural perspective, yes
- 80 P: OK. Any other difficulties... Let me think.. Can I think?
- 81 R: yes
- 82 P: A minute.
- 83 P: Do you wana pause?
- 84 R: No. that's fine.
- 85 P: OK. Just been thinking for 15 minutes.

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- 86 R: OK.
- 87 P: ummm... ok.. one difficulty is that things don't find relevant for their language or
88 acquisition or to learn about culture . they think basically the most important thing is
89 they don't really see why do we have to do it? , so you have to find a way to make
90 them motivated , to want to discover it you know.. culture.. well the easiest way to do
91 is basically talking about like parties and things, so there are things Dawalii, Trafaglar
92 Square.. oh yeah.. by the way.. you know.. bla.. bla... so that's how it usually goes
93 because some of them get really frustrated ' why are WE doing it?' because you need
94 it . I remember once I had a lesson with upper intermediate with New English File . I
95 think the last chapter of unit . There is a lesson about words that do not exist in
96 English and that's the very very important lesson for them because sometimes they
97 ask you "OK. Teacher , what's the word for bla.. bla..?" OK. I say we don't have that
98 work in English we should use this and this and " oh no. it exists in our language".
99 That lesson basically shows that there are many words in different languages that do
100 not exist in English... and I had one student. She was really REALLY crossed with
101 me . She came to me during the break and say " Ella, why do we waste time on ...
102 (unclear) . I don't need to know that .. I don't wana learn .. I don't want know what's
103 word in Swahili . I want to learn English" it's like yeah.. you know you've to learn the
104 idea.. like sometimes you can't translate your language into English , they don't get it.
105 They find it's unnecessary sometimes. So, that would be the drawback then. You
106 know getting them believe you. That's actually important.
- 107 R: So, you have already prepared your lesson and you teach in the classroom...
- 108 P: OK.
- 109 R: Now, you have got some experiences like the one that you told me. In that case, how
110 do you manage the problem?
- 111 P: Explain it to them clearly. I just don't want to say what's important for you , that's
112 how we are doing it. Umm.. Just like I explain it to you, I explain it to them. Just tell
113 them why it's important. What kind of problem is focused on and you know I try to
114 show them how important cultural understanding is in learning a foreign language.
115 That's basically just giving words is not enough.. like sometimes I tell them like "do
116 you have a cigarette for me ?" OK. It's kind of correct but the thing is totally wrong
117 and impolite. I mean.. you know when they can understand , they laugh and you
118 know.. tell them why it's important . I try to find like examples you know cultural
119 misunderstanding , cultural miscommunication that's why I told them why it's
120 important . that's' encouraging and explaining. OK. encouraging and explaining.
- 121 R: So, when you explain, do you support authentic materials (after browsing the internet)
122 or just give expression?
- 123 P: It depends what I am doing . I would say both. I don't know like... even songs..
124 things like that... you know their cultures in there... sometimes Oh! I don't
125 understand and you show them this and that. Help them cultural knowledge to decide
126 for meaning in English. so, yeah.. I will say all of those sometimes like if you don't
127 prepare . you just gona give example but when you know you kind of ... (unclear)

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- 128 anticipate the problem . Then you can tell them “ Ok guys, look.. that’s what it is”...
129 etc
- 130 R: So, do you think authentic materials songs, youtube or magazines ...
131 P: well..
- 132 R: so, do you think these kinds of materials are more useful than coursebooks?
133 P: Of course. You know Coursebooks sometimes the material is outdated and I .. think
134 it’s more appealing to them if you’re learning something about culture from materials .
135 There is always attitude in the book . The book is very like prescriptive and I don’t
136 know it’s like history or geography book . They have to it’s real , people actually use
137 it in real life . So, one class asked me about idiom. “ Why are we learning about idiom?
138 Do people actually use these things ?” Of course! Like .. you know the thing... for me
139 you know... I was just struck .. how can you ask this question? Obviously , people
140 use it that’s why we are doing it but for them its such a weird construction that they
141 just don’t believe you people are actually using it, so showing them like a real
142 example . there you go.. they already know it. That’s make .. oh.. yeah.. yeah... so, I
143 m gona use it now. Yeah.. it’s kind of make them more confident in to what their
144 learning.
- 145 R: Have you ever omitted any kinds of cultural topics?
146 P: YEAH. Ummm... Music. I had a.. I used to teach a group of Saudi Arabian women ,
147 so it was a closed group women and they were very traditional I say and so they told
148 me they don’t want to talk about music , magazines , fashion . They are not interested
149 in that . Their religion is kind of prohibited , so they will not be.. they don’t want to
150 talk about it. so.. I just have to .. supplement basically. Yeah.. they wouldn’t do it.
- 151 R: Do you have any other relevant examples for me?
152 P: Any other example! Sometimes .. like.. when you have elderly people like 60 -70 . I
153 think 60. OK. I think 60 is the eldest. He tried not to talk about you know.. like sex
154 and stupid things which are still relevant but it is depends of course. But I did have
155 people who are like.. you know...”, so you try to make everyone happy . sometimes
156 you got a group of 20 years old . its fantastic but if you have 20 years old and one
157 person is 60, you kind of ... have to change the way you teach. Yeah.. what you’re
158 presenting .
- 159 R: so, let’s say you have already brought some topics into the classroom and they are not
160 working. What did you do? Did you change your topic immediately?
161 P: Sometimes, I just ask them “ what’s wrong guys?” and sometimes, they say “ OK, we
162 know it .. it happens . We’ve done with other teachers. Sometimes they just don’t
163 understand why we are doing it” then I explain and sometimes they just find it boring
164 and they are really unhappy with it. Then you kinda either drop it and do it again in a
165 different way or try to adapt at the same time, so basically you drop something and
166 add something else , use youtube or browse something else for more interesting things.
- 167 R: So, what kind of activities do you normally do with your students?
168 P: what do you mean?
169 R: I mean activities like discussions, presentations ..
170 P: oh .. I got everything .

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- 171 R: So, you mean just pop up or do you plan?
- 172 P: yeah.. yeah.. everything is planned . I tried to do as many different activities to keep it
173 going , yeah... you know interesting ..
- 174 R: OK.
- 175 P: Sorry , yeah.. I try to like focusing on speaking . Obviously .. um... but we do
176 everything
- 177 R: So, presentation, discussion and everything?
- 178 P: Yeah.
- 179 R: OK. So, do you think that a teacher should teach these kinds of cultural elements
180 through coursebooks to students?
- 181 P: Oh ! I got to go now. Come to my classroom after 10 minutes . I will give writing
182 tasks , so I can talk with you. See you. (met her later in common room at school)
- 183 R: So, you were talking about omitting topics and sensitive topics. Do you have any
184 other experiences with omitting topics or difficulties in managing the classroom?
- 185 P: Not really. I mean it was difficult for me at the beginning because like love , make
186 up.. oh.. oops.. opps.. oh.. oh.. difficult to explain it to them but now.. I gained
187 experiences , so you know.. how to do.. you can actually explain it to them . You
188 know you need the language basically to keep your language real to those kind of
189 work.. Now it doesn't really .. have much .. but in the past.. I skipped those topics
190 because I didn't really feel comfortable. I would blush and that would be very
191 embarrassing but now yeah, I do feel much for comfortable. Just explain it. I am older
192 by the way. But arr.. any other topics... no.. no.. because the thing is it is slightly
193 controversial . I try not to do like politic , yeah.. and the religion . Apart from that
194 nothing else. We do talk about religion but I try to keep it very... you know.. very
195 basic .. when comes to politic, I just don't even go there. There is no .. no point for me
196 going there because I don't really know much and may be the view might be
197 offensive , so just.. yeah.. when comes to like other thing like sexuality or other
198 things , we have this chat about guyliner/eyeliner and guy liner , so some
199 Venezuelan students, they don't accept that men can wear eyeliners and they started
200 to be very like kind of offensive like " Oh! Only gays wear eyeliners". Don't say that
201 all transsexual are gays . that was kind of oopss... What are you talking about ? so,
202 we had chat and discussions about kind of topics OK. You can't say that . it's very
203 offensive in this country. You know I wouldn't really avoid it .
- 204 R: So, you just changed topic ..
- 205 P: No . No.. we talk about it . if there are some kinds of wired you know.. attitude like
206 women or gays or like whatever , then I kind of tell them how it is in this country ,
207 how you can and cannot accept your ideas and things like that . basically you know
208 you have problems bla.. bla...etc.
- 209 R: So, you share the knowledge with students...
- 210 P: Yeah. But.. you know.. I mean the only thing I avoid is I would say it's like politics
211 and religions. And apart from that .. nothing. It is interesting to see how.. how they
212 are thinking , what they would have .. (unclear) they.. they ..from their countries and
213 their cultures , so we just yeah.. we just discuss it. Its interesting for them and for me.

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- 214 R: You might have seen some kinds of cultures such as weddings or foods that are
215 commonly presented in the coursebooks. Do you think, as a teacher, they should
216 learn these kinds of cultural elements through coursebooks? And what would they get
217 if they learn?
- 218 P: Well, they know.. for example fish and chips, shepherds' pie, they've got to know it.
219 I mean you know if .. if.. if they wana live here, they just have to know and they will
220 learn eventually .so they learn it now but they don't know that it's important for them
221 to learn it. Because they have no contact with real world, so.. but there are (unclear)
222 contact with language. I know reading newspapers or whatever. They have to how to
223 understand the language in the context, so you know yeah.. it is important, of course.
224 I would never omit it.
- 225 R: So, do you think these kinds of elements can help students with their understanding
226 and the use of language?
- 227 P: Yeah. Ever since I learn that in linguistics I am a huge fan. I could.. I never thought
228 may be that's not right.. you know.. it is S ... (name mentioned). The man talks
229 about language and culture in it. Do you know? So, basically, since I read it yeah..
230 you know like something open. something happen, so I never thought like..
231 Negatively about it. So, I am from supporter. Of course. I would be the one who is
232 actually do... Sorry I am not the best person to ask this question. But I totally believe
233 in it.
- 234 R: So, I believe that you have got some personal experiences of learning other people
235 cultures. Do you think these kind of cultural personal experiences can be used in
236 your teaching?
- 237 P: yeah. Of course! because I had to learn this culture. Everything is in English. I had to
238 learn.. I .. because.. I am from Poland, so our culture is.. well.. it is kind of
239 different ... it is not like totally different from English culture, so everything I teach
240 them, I have to learn myself, so .. yeah.. of course... it helps me when they ask me. I
241 remember how I proceed it is easier for me to understand why they might find
242 something bizarre.
- 243 R: So, do you share your personal experiences with students?
- 244 P: Oh I do. Yeah. First, I started teaching, my boss was really uncomfortable about that
245 the fact that I m Polish, so he told me to say that I go Polish family but I got here, so
246 basically he told me to alive / lie (unclear, guessing) then I just thought come on! I
247 learn English. Its my second language I should be proud of it. So, now all of my
248 students, they know that I am from Poland. They know that I have to learn English. I
249 think it's even better for them coz they are learning, so oh yeah! She learnt it and we
250 can do it as well and I told them which words were difficult for me to learn. I tell
251 them which grammar rules and points were difficult for me to understand, so you
252 know everything I do tell them.
- 253 R: So, did you get motivation?
- 254 P: Yeah. I think it motivates them much more... yeah.. you know actually you show
255 them that you can do it, so yeah.. I think..

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- 256 R: Is there anything you would like to share with me about your experience or any other
257 things?
- 258 P: Oh My God! Can't think of anything... are you talking about culture?
- 259 R: Yeah, teaching cultural elements in the classroom. Your past experience.
- 260 P: Anything super interesting?? Um... the thing which are very interesting for me
261 teaching those Saudi Arabian groups because personally I learn loads about their
262 country but they weren't in really keen on learn too much English culture, so I mean
263 especially the women . mixed groups . its kind of similar to others . Women were very
264 interesting in learning about England. But here, .. um.. any weird or funny.. umm...
265 can't think of anything. Sorry.
- 266 R: so, you find difficult teaching them?
- 267 P: With Saudi Arabian?
- 268 R: Yes.
- 269 P: No. it wasn't difficult. It was really interesting because they are different . Different
270 dynamics because they are just women and you know they told me what we are not
271 gona do this and that.. but apart from that it was great.
- 272 R: So, what topics did you do with them?
- 273 P: Everything apart from that I told you music, film , etc . well... Everything else. We
274 have New English File Pre-intermediate, upper -intermediate. Yeah. Apart from that
275 everything is ok.
- 276 R: Is there anything you would like to add?
- 277 P: No.
- 278 R: OK. Thank you very much.
- 279 P: Thanks a lot.
- 280 R = Researcher P = Participant

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- 1 R: Shall we start?
- 2 P: uh..uhmm..
- 3 R: I believe that you've used coursebooks; so I presume you know there are some
4 cultural elements in those coursebooks. My question is when you prepare the lesson,
5 especially for the cultural element lessons, how long do you take to prepare?
- 6 P: Oh! Not very long. Umm.. it depends on the lesson. When I m doing some specific
7 across the culture , the lesson based on that .. then probably for the first time you
8 teach.. you see half an hour or so .. or for an hour and half.
- 9 R: so, for example like British food, weddings, festivals --- those kinds of common
10 cultures which are presented in coursebooks ...
- 11 P: well, if it is general English , yes that would probably need to research on the internet ,
12 so just looking up .. you know... more info about that .. umm.. if I m doing more
13 academic culture, then probably may be making some materials depend on whether it
14 is multi-lingual class or it is a mono-lingual class, it is different aspect to preparation ..
15 and then once you've taught it once , all is need to be adapted for those whatever
16 your class is .
- 17 R: what criteria do you apply when preparing a lesson?
- 18 P: well, like I said , basically whether it's multi-national or mono-national .. umm..
19 depends on what they need , why do they need and where they are going into the
20 country and whether teaching in their own country , because they are going to or they
21 are likely to going to another country in which case I will be quite specific to know
22 about it. If it's a question that generally , it just have in put from .. from.. umm..
23 whatever happening overseas . that does take .. or together much more general about
24 that.
- 25 R: Do you use teachers' guides or other books when preparing a lesson? I mean what
26 other references do you use?
- 27 P: yes. If there is material . share drive. I look at there or if there is a teachers' books, I
28 always go to those and then again they usually need adapting .
- 29 R: so, how do you adapt outside materials or how do you play with them?
- 30 P: yes, with outside materials , also with the materials that I used before . I mean I've
31 got a quite good bag of materials for myself , so if there is something that work well ,
32 I will use it again and slightly adaptation because it is much easier to adapt now coz
33 we've got all them on the computer and ready to use them .
- 34 R: why do you adapt materials?
- 35 P: it's got to be fit . it's got to be relevant. It's got to be accessible. They can grass you
36 got to link it to their own experience , so you've got to make it , so.. if it fits in your
37 own students , so .. um.. experience . may be they can get information from each other
38 or you are going to be the only person who give the initial input. It all depend on your
39 students .
- 40 R: In your opinion, what are the advantages of using your own materials?
- 41 P: umm.. I don't see one is better than another. I think you use both . If your institution
42 requires to use a coursebook , you've got to use the coursebook. But then you step
43 away from it , to fill in the gap that coursebook doesn't fill . Creating things

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- 44 completely from scrap and re-inventing the wheel , I don't think its very useful either
45 because there is so much stuff already , why not use it? Teachers are busy people .
- 46 R: when you're preparing the lesson, do you experience any difficulties? For example,
47 do you feel like this is very difficult, or this is not going to work out because of
48 students' cultures or background?
- 49 P: I don't know.. I obviously prepare it based on from what I know about students
50 already . If not, the first lesson would have to be very general . um.. diagnose to see
51 what are the problems. Is it the problem with vocabulary or is it fluency or is it that
52 they just don't know this culture. Or is it bit of all of them? And then , you prepare it
53 accordingly .
- 54 R: so, you try to focus on the needs and you facilitate them.
- 55 P: uh. Uhhh... Yes .
- 56 R: Do you have any difficulties when you're teaching in the class? Are there any
57 problems where you have lost the students' attention or they feel too offended or any
58 other kinds of experiences?
- 59 P: YES. Lots of time
- 60 P: Obviously, students , generally, I put in level but depending on where you were and
61 some of those levels could be tenuous .. and quite broad , so therefore you've got to
62 have things .. you know you've got to have little things , outside materials to
63 challenge those students who finish fast or easy . may be a question .. re-grouping
64 students so that stronger ones in one area, weaker in another you put them together ,
65 ok .. if you're lucky enough... long enough to know them
- 66 R: so, that's how you manage your problems?
- 67 P: yes, basically.
- 68
- 69 R: Good. Is there any other experience or difficulty? Can you share one more?
- 70 P: You want it like a general English classroom or what kind.. what sort of..
- 71 R: Like the class ESL/EFL which is a general English course and you teach cultural
72 elements lessons where the topics come from a coursebook. So do you have any
73 difficulties or experiences?
- 74 P: well, I think it depends . if I m teaching it here , in the UK , it's much easier.
75 Because they are surrounded by cultures , so I would make cultural references to what
76 they already know or ask them about their experiences . If you are teaching in their
77 own country, then it gets slightly different . Obviously , you've got to bring back the
78 culture into the classroom somehow . May be that you might start of with the idioms
79 or very short video clip to get them into.... Um.. understanding about that culture . so,
80 I think it's two very different approaches .
- 81 R: Right. When you are doing a lesson with EFL class in the UK, what activities do you
82 do with them?
- 83 P: well, I start off by seeing what they already know . by having.. like a brainstorming
84 and kind of discussions and you know give them some topics what do you know
85 about this , what words might be .. one minutes to write down as many as you know
86 about this and share it with your neighbours or it might be discussing , pictures or

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- 87 something to get them thinking about it and get the what they know already . as a
88 group or get them doing it in pairs or an d then get them giving me feedback and may
89 be me starting with vocabulary on the board and then.. umm.. moving into some kind
90 of .. well. Depend .. whether I want.. umm.. what the skill is and what want to do.. I
91 might start with a little reading for example, and then get them to discuss something
92 or I might need writing . it depends on the focus of the lesson . that's general to start
93 off .. um. You know like the warmer activity . it would be something like that .
- 94 R: why do you think these discussions and a little bit of writing are more useful for you?
95 P: because it helps me . it is not to be useful for me . it is to be useful for them but it
96 helps me to know what they already know , what they can manage , and it can inform
97 for future lessons . You got something to work from.
- 98 R: so, you encourage them..
99 P: I try to get as much from them as possible.
- 100 R: Have you ever omitted any kind of cultural topic?
101 P: yes, I have.
102 R: what kind of topics?
103 P: well, again in this country, I probably would be reluctant to drop any topic if they are
104 in this country. Umm.. because I think part our educational system is to speak about
105 anything and a lot of students come here because they had the freedom to be able to
106 do that which they might not . I may not.. I would probably drop a specific political
107 topic that seem to be guilt towards one particular country or nation , so you know for
108 example , during the Iraq war and I had Iraqi students in the class . I wouldn't
109 probably have gone into that specific but I might talk about it generally in this
110 country . Overseas, umm.. it.. it depends on the country...sometimes you are not
111 allowed to talk about Royal Family or you are not allowed to talk about politics such
112 certain kind of things . You have to follow what the country says .
- 113 R: Have you ever taught abroad?
114 P: oh yes! Most of my teaching has been overseas.
115 R: Can you share with me your experiences of teaching cultural elements in foreign ELF
116 classrooms?
117 P: OK. I can tell you a very funny one. It's in Thailand . well, of course, obviously
118 Royal Family is quite revered and I remember we were doing a general English and
119 showing Mr. Bean is very well and very good because its mine but we never ever
120 show the one where he met the queen of our country. We were advised students
121 would find too perplexing, haven't been to this country. They don't know how much
122 we are more open here about this... so . that was we didn't show that . And also,
123 being in the middle east where with children , we had imported books for primary
124 school and the little girls are with swing and short skirts shouldn't be seen , so we had
125 to go through the book and colour them in , so they come right down to the ankle and
126 arms as well.
- 127 R: So, is there any specific activity for them?
128 P: activities?
129 R: yes.

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- 130 P: in middle east, again, you cant have .. umm.. mostly you are going to get mixed
131 classes anyway. might be in primary schools but in secondary schools .. and.. in some
132 cultures it is difficult to get boys and girls in the classroom and women even to speak
133 to each other and again I think in this country they've got to get use to that . if we are
134 in their own country , we have to follow government guidelines.
- 135 R: All right. That's interesting. As you see, there are many kinds of cultural elements in
136 coursebooks and coursebooks are mostly open as a global resource, but you have to
137 localise somehow and personalise the topic. So, in your opinion as a teacher, do you
138 think students should learn these kinds of cultural elements through a coursebook?
- 139 P: Well, it... again! If it is the institution's requirement that you learn through
140 coursebook, then you have to .. but .. I think... one of the reason that people Um..
141 my argument would be.. if your are employing a westerner to teach in your culture
142 then you will have some that cultural elements coming to your classroom and..
143 language and culture are closely linked anyway , so its essential for the students to
144 learn something about the culture. So, I always do my best .. to .. make sure they get
145 some of that input.
- 146 R: Also, we say that language and culture are intertwined. They are always linked. So, do
147 you think students can benefit by learning both these elements together?
- 148 P: well....
- 149 R: Do you think these cultural elements can help students with understanding and the
150 language?
- 151 P: I think it can be supplement to an certain extent because if you are teaching .. um..
152 umm.. say for example , umm.. umm.... oral exchange shop or office or something .
153 It might be totally different. Or complaining for example. Well, because in different ..
154 in English culture and.. it is in South East Asian culture , so just by learning the
155 language , they are all automatically learning the culture in that sense. Now , It's up to
156 the individual teacher whether they want to point that out or just let it flow through
157 the dialogue or whatever.
- 158 R: Right. you said you've been abroad for many years, and you have a lot of teaching
159 experience. I can see you have learnt some cultures for yourself as well, like South
160 East Asian culture or so on. Have you ever shared your experiences with students
161 when you are teaching?
- 162 P: umm.. I m not a kind of teacher that tend to share my personal experiences . I might
163 share something funny. A little anecdote or some kind with students as a nice break
164 that kind of thing
- 165 R: Like an example for students?
- 166 P: yes.
- 167 R: you mean like something that you've seen in Thailand?
- 168 P: something that's funny , so it shows that's happen to everybody. just like that.
- 169 R: do you think could this be used in teaching?
- 170 P: umm.. I think it's a more way of .. a .. a stop being student tired as a human being
171 since some culture , you know students. Especially , they are not used to having
172 westerner teachers . It depends how many westerners can be exposed to teaching. I

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- 173 suppose. But yeah.. a little bit. That's my personal preference. I don't go great detail
174 about my personal life with students.
- 175 R: What I was trying to say is, do you think that you should share this knowledge with
176 students so that they can avoid language barriers, cultural issues, etc.?
- 177 P: Yes. Yes..
- 178 R: Like here in England, people say please and thank you to everyone but in some
179 cultures, we don't.
- 180 P: No. No.
- 181 R: that kind of thing.
- 182 P: That kind of thing.. or misunderstanding or having to use sign language to get the
183 message.. yeah.. something like that..
- 184 R: yes, that's what I was trying to say; so, could these be used in teaching?
- 185 P: well , I think.. its an introduction . as I said , nice break . you cant force it. I think it
186 has to come from the experience of the teacher. Most people , especially when they
187 are living overseas have some . you know have this to share . it's automatically there .
188 Teachers, you know wanted to put students are ease, so I think that's a good way .
189 yes. I don't think it can be prescribed in a book or anything like that because it's very
190 personal you see .
- 191 R: You know that some coursebooks mention fish and chips as English food and English
192 roast dinner as a tradition. So, when you are in the class and you are talking about fish
193 and chips, you might have referred to English roast dinner although students don't
194 know about this. You might have shared these sorts of things.
- 195 P: yes. Show the picture. It's the easiest . I always find ..
- 196 R: So, you find things on the internet?
- 197 P: Yeah. Internet nowadays
- 198 P: Do you use other materials like magazines, newspapers?
- 199 R: well, I always ... I do teach teacher training as well . I always encourage teachers to
200 make a bank of pictures, that can be shared by all the teachers. Yes, it's nice.
201 Sometimes you want , especially for young learners , you need flash cards and things
202 like that. So, collect and you want to use it . yes, I think.. it.. for adults usually the
203 screen will do but not always . yes. Good. I don't carry around pictures but I used to .
- 204 R: OK. Is there anything you would like to add?
- 205 P: No. No. in terms of what teaching culture?
- 206 R: yes.
- 207 P: No. not really. I mean I can see as a traveller , I can only think the more you learn
208 about the other culture , the better , so you know I push the boundary as far as I can
209 getting students what the culture is about .. especially it's overseas where they don't
210 know .. yeah.. role-plays sometimes . we've done role-plays with academic students
211 going to Australia, for example. You know different things in different culture from
212 England . Again, you know that's good too. So, have a role-play , get used to the
213 accent , more help.
- 214 R: OK. Thank you very much for your time.
- 215 R = Researcher P = Participant

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