

Global ELT coursebooks: A comparative study to examine if there has been any shift in proportion of cultural content in a 1st and 4th edition of English File

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Abstract: In the context of English as a global language, more and more people are learning it for the purposes of L2 to L2 communication. Criticism of global coursebooks is that they still operate within an ESL, native-speaker model. This article explores the arguments that these textbooks are culturally biased in favour of the target culture. The literature and studies show that publishers have not reacted to the changes that have happened to the international nature of English, nor have they made any amendments to the content of global coursebooks in reaction to criticism. A comparative content analysis was conducted on a first edition of English file (Latham-Koenig and Oxenden 1996) and a fourth edition of the same publication (Latham-Koenig et al. 2020) to examine what changes have been made with regard to the proportion of cultural content contained. The findings agreed with previous related studies; however, there was observation of a shift from the proportion of British target culture in favour of neutral, universality of culture. This article goes on to advocate the inclusion of more localised content or at least activities which encourage the inclusion of L2 culture.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Global coursebooks, English as a *Lingua Franca* (ELF), English File, Cultural content.

1. Introduction

The coursebook is a central feature of the ELT classroom. It is invaluable to a busy teacher and contains pre-planned lesson content which is both attractive in design and systematic in terms of pedagogical framework. Global coursebooks are internationally

marketed textbooks which are produced for worldwide distribution. This article will examine the use of such materials, particularly with regard to cultural content. Their value as a teaching resource cannot be discounted, however, they have been criticised over the years; mainly in terms of appropriacy, cultural sensitivity and relevance when distributed internationally. This is due to the fact that a book produced in the UK, for example, containing Western cultural content and based on Western-style pedagogy risks being irrelevant, sometimes inappropriate and/or even difficult to implement in a foreign culture. There are now more people who speak English outside native-speaking countries as a lingua franca than Anglophone native speakers (Graddol 2006 :87). They increasingly do not need the language specifically to communicate with native speakers or live in an Anglophone country. They therefore may not consider it necessary to learn English within an Anglophone-centric context status quo. Has this aspect been addressed in global textbooks? These factors will be elaborated upon and discussed along with relevant research which has been previously conducted on the subject. Furthermore, publishers are no doubt aware of the various criticisms. Have they taken notice of them and amended their content accordingly over subsequent years? A comparative study of content analysis was carried out on a first edition of English File Upper Intermediate (Latham-Koenig and Oxenden 1996) and the current fourth edition English File Upper Intermediate (Latham-Koenig et al. 2020), in order to examine what if any changes have occurred with regard to the proportion of cultural content included in them over the 24-year period. The findings will be discussed along with publishers' motivations for their actions. Finally, some proposals will be offered as to a way forward in providing learners more contextualised content that would represent the target culture

more accurately, employ more localised topics and recognise L2 to L2 communication as genuine in its own right.

2. Global coursebooks

Global ELT coursebooks are generally attractively designed materials in a magazine format which is appealing to students both in look and feel. They are written in English which means the teacher does not have to be local, the class may be multilingual and they may be used in any country. These textbooks are organised into unit form and contain a sufficient pedagogical mix to fill an entire lesson. They are also systematically planned to cover a wide range of vocabulary, listening, reading, writing and grammar exercises in a variety of situational contexts. The accompanying teacher's book contains answer keys, step-by-step advice on how to conduct the lesson, listening scripts, as well as extra resource activities and testing materials. The full set also includes audio tracks and more recently, video and multimedia content, website resources and mobile phone/device applications. Top publishers include: Cambridge University Press, Cengage Learning, McMillan English, Oxford University Press, PearsonELT. For these publishers and others, global coursebooks and related content represent a multimillion dollar industry. It is difficult to find exact financial details, however, Hadley (2013:206) describes them as a 1 billion pound industry which makes up to 50% of Cambridge University's profits.

There are many good reasons for an educator to use textbooks in general in the ELT classroom. The main advantage to the teacher is that lesson materials are pre-prepared which saves on planning time. Teachers may be confident that they have been developed

by experts in their field who have had the time to research and source appropriate learning material. To independently formulate a lesson including such a diverse range of multimedia and activities would require huge amounts of planning time, not to mention expertise on behalf of the teacher. In textbooks there is continuity from lesson to lesson and students have all their main materials in one unit (the book). Global coursebooks also familiarise learners with the target culture, an important aspect to the learning of a language (Byram 1986). Garton and Graves (2014) provide the following advantages:

- They give structure to lessons and to the course.
- They save time.
- They give a sense of security to the teacher
- They promote autonomy in learners (they can be used outside the classroom).
- They are reliable – written by experts and well-known publishers.
- They give a sense of professionalism
- They offer different perspectives (different cultures, places, etc.)

Garton and Graves (2014)

While this article focuses on particular criticisms of global coursebooks with regard to their cultural representation when marketed globally, it does not criticise them as a concept in itself because of the above attributes. In fact, Hadley (2013:230), in a study involving 700 learners over a 6 year period found that overall they helped rather than hindered learning.

3. Criticisms

Criticisms arise mainly with regard to the contemporary status of English as an international language. There are now more non-

native speakers of the language than native speakers (Ethnologue 2021 in Wikipedia.org), a fact which has changed the nature of ELT. ELT in the past was more focussed on an ESL context - a learner who needs the language to live and work amongst native speakers. Nowadays, it is more likely to be conducted within an EFL context (in their L1 country) and/or practised as ELF (Seidlhofer 2004; Jenkins 2007), whereby it is used as a lingua franca in L2 to L2 contact in the countries Kachru (1985) describes as outer and expanding-circle countries. The native-speaker model of the past is no longer realistic (Graddol 2003). This also has the effect of reducing the need for the target culture (Jenkins 2000) as learners may not need to live in Anglophone countries or develop deep L2 sociolinguistic competence.

Globalisation and neoliberal content

In the era of globalisation, Hadley (2013:208) refers to the “corporatization of universities” whereby such institutions are required to conduct themselves as businesses would; employing efficiency, fiscal management and monetisation of activities. Block (2002) coined the term “the Mcdonaldization of language teaching” which has become “pre-packaged, predictable and controllable.” Gray and Block (2014) point to the growth of the global textbook industry as having arisen in parallel with the start of the neoliberal era from the late 1970s. This is associated with financial markets that were deregulated and the reduction of trade barriers. The global coursebook fits into this broader context in its ready-made format by which the teacher may simply follow the rubric. The delivery and format of the lesson will not vary if the teacher is substituted; a form of standardisation which is common in business methods. Furthermore, Gray and Block (2014:3) criticise the global textbook as “little more than a celebration of

neoliberal ideology.” Vettorel and Lopriore (2013:487) refer to the content itself as most often globalised in nature. Coursebook topics incorporating areas such as success, foreign holidays, getting on the career ladder, consumerism. Titles including “Confessions of a cyberchondriac”, “Act your age” (Latham-Koenig et al. 2020), at the expense of ‘real-life’ issues such as unemployment, access to healthcare, being able to afford a home, etc. reflect the aspirations of this neoliberal ideology. Furthermore, this subject matter very much identifies with a western, Anglophone culture which a learner from another society might not identify with.

Culture contained in global textbooks

With regard to the culture content in global textbooks, it has been criticised as being predominantly target culture related; this effectively disregards the L1 culture. McKay (2004) argues that culture needs a different approach in EIL (English as an International Language) than in ESL (English as a second language) because there is less of a need to learn the cultural norms of an Anglophone country. Mishan (2021) refers to the coursebooks as those that have been written in an Anglophone country, by native speakers, intended for an international market. This relates to the point that Alptekin (1993) makes; textbook writers inevitably write materials within and reflective of their own cultural worldview. When a learner starts to learn a new language there is a conflict cognitively between cultural aspects of the L1 culture and that of the new target language. Gray (2002:152) adds that ELT coursebooks are “cultural constructs and carriers of cultural message” in parallel to their intended purpose of the teaching of the language. This has the effect of taking learners out of their local contexts (Hadley 2013). Vettorel

and Lopriore (2013:496) criticise often-used topics such as English breakfast, the royal family and the British parliament which are exclusively target culture. These subjects may be irrelevant or even objectionable on the grounds of cultural imperialism in other cultures. They found that global English and the legitimacy of L2 to L2 in its own right are rarely referred to except in sections which are sometimes included on cultural and intercultural communication. Additionally, they observed that when foreigners are represented it is often with a fake accent by a native-speaker actor.

Arikan (2005:29) points to the visual materials too : photographs and illustrations, which can be highly representational of culture and “transmit and strengthen stereotypical thinking.” In fact, an image is what the reader’s eye will first be drawn to and images can be very powerful. Chao (2011:189) found evidence of cultural bias favouring the side of the target culture and referred to an unconscious acculturation of learners into the target culture from working with international materials. Furthermore, learners may even feel an obligation to take on the L2 culture when it is intertwined with linguistic content. Cakir (2010) criticises this approach by stating that the aim of textbooks should not be to explicitly teach the target culture, but rather increase students’ cultural awareness and experience (of both cultures). That is not to say that all learners are opposed to the target culture or feel that it is irrelevant. (Sardi 2002:102) refers to a cohort of learners who may in fact wish to become more assimilated into Anglophone culture as they become alienated from their own and/or wish to embrace the target culture which may be new and exciting. It has already been acknowledged that some culture is necessary to learn a language given their mutual inseparability. “Language is the vehicle of culture...” Hofstede (1986). The point is that global

coursebooks need to have the intercultural sensitivity to acknowledge and cater for those learners who do not consider the target culture necessary or who feel it imposes on their L1 culture. As a foreign language classroom is a multicultural context, the pedagogy used should employ Intercultural communication competence; defined by Chen and Starosta (2000: 3) as the attainment of “communication goals in intercultural interactions”. Bruton (1997) points to the need for students to “be themselves” and that learning be “genuinely contextualised”, in the sense that placing them in a foreign or even alien culture (the textbook) is not doing this but forcing them to become someone else.

Misrepresentation of target culture

Further to the above criticisms, there are claims that the target culture itself is misrepresented. Mishan (2021) observes that even though the books have a “superficial international gloss”, they are ultimately British, and criticises that what they portray is a “fictionalised Britain”. They reflect middle-class, Western values and do not portray the cultural diversity of the UK. Gray and Block (2014:1) refer to a “progressive editing out of working class characters...” Gray (2002: 159-161) points out, for example, that lesbian and gay characters are excluded from content and makes the point that genuine, authentic situations such as a student having a problem with a visa or trying to rent accommodation are rarely included in favour of middle-class, aspirational content.

Sanitised content

Moreover, Gray (2002:159) refers to the practice of sanitising the material of objectionable content when it is intended for the international market. He refers to the PARSNIP acronym

(politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, isms, pork), a list of topic areas that publishers advise their writers to avoid. This, he argues, results in an avoidance of serious topics in favour of content which is “sanitised”. Melliti (2013) adds to this list with such diverse topics ranging from Israel to AIDS. It is understandable that publishers may wish to be culturally sensitive by avoiding these issues. On the commercial side, including potentially offensive material is not good for sales and the global success of the product. However, Mishan (2021) concedes that after these exclusions, writers are left with “innocuous, inoffensive topics” which may be dull and bland. It is not hard to see how this could result in a lack of cognitive engagement in learners which could in turn reflect in learning outcomes, or lack thereof. Bruton (1997:275-283) points to the tendency of publishers to include topics that are predictable, with liberal characteristics and offer nothing new in terms of content, and refers to a “sameness” in publishing and marketing criteria which discourages innovation. Melliti (2013) found that 62% of students reported that the contents of the coursebook were not relevant to them.

Methodology

Culturally, the methodology used in global coursebooks may also pose a problem. Canagarajah (2002) refers to methods as “cultural and ideological constructs with politico-economic consequences.” The pedagogy widely used in Western ELT is the Communicative Approach based on the target achievement of communicative competence (Hymes 1971). It employs authentic topics and materials, collaboration, learner-centred activities and has many merits within a Western context. However, it has been criticised as a one-size-fits-all approach (Swan 1985; Hofstede 1986; Ellis

1996; Alptekin 1993; Bax 2003) when it is used in other cultures. Mishan (2021) refers to a “Communicative CLT dictatorship”, referring to a sense that the approach is imposed on those who wish to learn English by institutions and publications. The types of activities in CLT such as learner-centred lessons, students offering personal opinions in class, group work and game-like activities may run counter-current to what learners in other cultures are used to and may be ill-prepared cognitively to learn from. This applies particularly to those whose learning experience is teacher-led, where the learner is expected to be quiet in class, take notes, memorise and carry out grammar translation-type activities. It is true of China, for example (Cortazzi and Jin 2006), an aspect which has the potential to cause both practical difficulties and culture-conflict for learners which may lead to resistance. That is not to say they will never appreciate the benefits of a more communicative approach; however, at least initially they may not be open to it as it may be alien to them.

Legacy of imperialism

Returning to “politico-economic consequences” (Canagarajah 2002; Baleghizadeh and Motahed 2010) point to further reasons some educators and learners may reject the proportional over-representation of Anglophone culture in textbook content. Baleghizadeh and Motahed (2010) advise that learners should be informed as to the links English has with global balance of power and inequality. Mishan (2021) refers to the historical connection ELT has with imperialism. Linguistic Imperialism (Phillipson 1992), Linguistic genocide (Day 1981), issues of political power and dominance (Pennycook 1994), roots in the colonialism of the past (Canagarajah 1999; Kumaravadivelu 2003) all point to the nature of ELT as not always having been benign and therefore a

valid reason for some learners to reject its culture saturation in favour of localised content. In some learners' minds it may still be the language/culture of the oppressor. In fact, a confrontation of this aspect in textbook content might clear the air of the language's past to allow for its present role as a language of international communication.

4. Localised content as a possible solution

One way to overcome the previously discussed issues is to include more localised content which would tilt the cultural imbalance of content, methodology, ideology, etc. towards the source culture context. Due to economies of scale, this is generally less cost effective for the publishers than the one-size-fits-all product. It can be done either by using local ELT publications or by global coursebooks which are adapted to localised situations. Gray (2002) refers to the "glocalization" of ELT materials which is localised versions of global textbooks. Ministries of Education, particularly for pre-tertiary learning, may have stipulations with regard to the proportion of local content and choice of textbooks which may be used. Cakir (2010:182), for example, states that in Turkish elementary schools coursebooks are chosen by the ministry of education which are written by non-native speakers and therefore avoid over-representation of the target culture. There may be disadvantages to locally produced textbooks in a multicultural classroom though, particularly if elements of them have been written in the local language. Furthermore, the power, due to huge marketing budgets, and influence international publishers have over methodology often mean that even local producers publish homogenous material (Mishan 2021). Canagarajah (2002) links this to issues of power and monopoly by Western institutions that have the resources to conduct

sophisticated research, using superior technology, then using their influence to popularise the knowledge “through publishing networks and academic institutions.” He advocates that just because it is produced abroad, does not mean it is better. McKay (2004:12) expressed surprise at this exonormative view whereby in many non-Anglophone cultures educators prefer to use target culture content rather than local culture. Canagarajah (2002:136) points to “centre methods...may limit critical thinking and impose homogenous values and practices.” Vettorel and Lopriore (2013) in an Italian survey found that only one coursebook was “locally suited.” All of this illustrates that even localised content will follow centre methods (and culture), preventing innovation, if the powerful publishers are unprepared to take the lead by trying something new or taking consideration of the academic criticism.

5. Have publishers responded to criticisms?

Gray (2002) refers to an attitude of “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” on behalf of the publishers.

According to Mishan (2021), publishers have not reacted to criticism by academics over the years with regard to the content of global coursebooks. One reason for this she claims is interdisciplinarity; she points to the fact that authors are not scholars, implying that they do not necessarily follow academic criteria in their writing of textbooks. Vettorel and Lopriore (2013) came to similar negative conclusions in their article which examined whether the changes in the movement of English towards a lingua franca had been reflected in coursebooks. A logical conclusion to draw is that publishers pay more attention to book sales; these figures do not appear to indicate there is a problem. Nonetheless, there does seem to be a dichotomy between commercial success and pedagogical best practice.

6. The study

It was in an effort to examine whether publishers had made any improvements with regard to the criticisms contained in this paper that it was decided to conduct a comparative content analysis on two different editions of a popular global coursebook that were published 24 years apart. The academic disapproval outlined above can all be linked to an overrepresentation of the target culture. Therefore, it was decided to examine what, if any, changes had been made over that period with regard to proportion of cultural content contained in the materials. Other related studies had looked at: shifts with regard to ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) (Vettorel and Lopriore 2013), differences in British vs. American textbooks (Baleghizadeh and Motahed 2010), social class representation (Arikan 2005), culture-specific elements (Cakir 2010), cultural bias (Chao 2011) and global content (Melliti 2013).

The coursebook

Headway Intermediate (Soars & Soars 2003) was the object of some of the previous studies due to data showing its huge sales (Mishan 2021). Sales figures are difficult to obtain. However, another prominent global textbook mentioned by Mishan was English File (Latham-Koenig et al. 2020) which is reported by her as having sold over a million copies in China alone. This popularity was the reason for choosing English File as a representative of global ELT coursebooks. The above mentioned studies had used Intermediate level and lower. In this case it was felt that an Upper-Intermediate, CEF B2 level book would contain more content density than its lower-level counterparts and therefore would make a better choice. Additionally, at this level

and age group educators are more likely to be free to choose from the open market and not be under Ministry of Education regulations, making it more widely accessible internationally. English File is written entirely in English and is aimed at adults, evidenced by the absence of children's themes.

Method

In this pilot study which may lead to a full analysis of all four editions, 50% of the content of each student's book (comprising 232 categorised items) was taken into consideration. Content Analysis was used in order to categorise the items found. In order to maintain focus on the cultural element, Moran's (2001) five dimensions of culture were employed as determiners: products, practices, perspectives, communities, persons. Culture referred to national culture, though in the case of Anglophone culture it extended to those countries in which English is spoken as an L1. A variation inspired of the categories referred to in Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and Chao (2011) whereby the content was categorised into: Source culture, Target culture (British specific), Target culture (wider Anglophone, Western), Intercultural interaction and Universality across culture was utilised.

Cultural Categories	Description
Source culture	Any content that relates to the learners' L1 culture.
Target culture (British specific)	This is British specific content. 'The Queen', 'a British pub', 'an interview with a British celebrity',

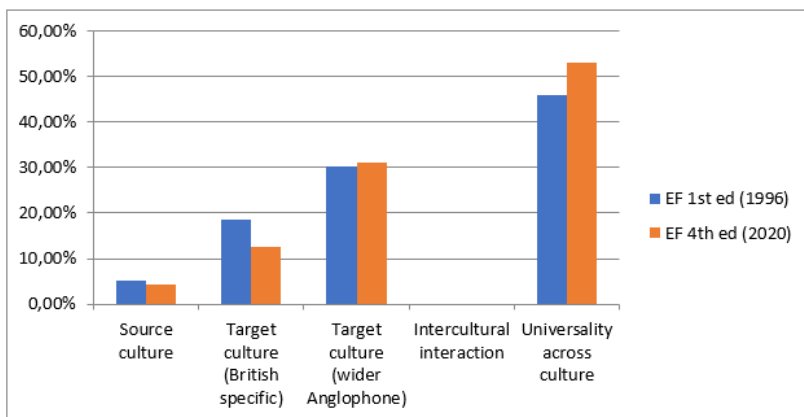
	etc.
Target culture (wider Anglophone)	Items from wider Anglophone culture extending into Western culture; neo-liberal values, consumer culture, pop culture, etc.
Intercultural interaction	This is specific L2 to L2 communication or items that examined cultural differences.
Universality across culture	These items were ones considered equally relevant, though not exclusively, in many cultures outside and including Western/Anglophone. They often comprised factual information; ‘Holidays’ is an example. While sometimes associated with consumerism, most societies accept the need of a break away from their normal routine. ‘The weather’, ‘scientific facts’, ‘cities’, ‘crime’, ‘music’, etc. are all examples.

While the coursebooks were divided into units often organised around a general theme, it was decided not to focus on the unit per se, rather on the individual exercises and images contained within them. For example, A reading exercise on ‘holidays’ could be considered universal across cultures; however, an accompanying

photograph of white Anglo-Saxons on a shopping weekend to New York would be very much of a Western context. That way a sharper focus on single items was able to be achieved. Each exercise was referred to as an item and categorised. These were examined for cultural bias, characterisation and messages. A decision was made on the cultural category of each item based on its cultural origin and/or how it might be perceived as to its cultural representation by the non-Anglophone learner. Images were studied as separate and additional items from their related exercise. Deeper, implicit linguistic content contained in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and methodology in the metalinguistic sense was not examined and exercises on these topics were excluded. All items were placed within their categories on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (see appendix A), counted manually and finally the resulting data were condensed into a graph.

7. Findings

The results are indicated on the graph below.



Source culture content appeared in the form of ‘in your country’ questions exclusively. For example, “How do people spend their holidays in your country?” The above graph shows that between the 1st and 4th editions there was only a slight reduction from 6% to 4.9%. This was not considered to represent a significant change. In British specific content, however, there was a marked reduction from 19% to 12.7%. The wider target culture (Anglophone) remained generally the same from 31% to 29.4%, while there was no evidence at all of any L2 to L2 communication in either of the textbooks, both at 0%. Finally, in items that were categorised as having universality across culture, there was an increase from 44% to 52.9% which was considered significant. This is culturally neutral content and often represents the “sanitised” material discussed earlier. The changes that were regarded as significant do represent a noticeable shift in the proportion of British specific content (6.3% reduction) to universality across culture content (8.9% increase). There are fewer items such as an interview with a British personality (Toyah Wilcox) on p.33, for example, or a photo of Mr. Bean (a British character) on p.16 (Latham-Koenig and Oxenden 1996), and more of neutral themes such as “Medical Myths or First-Aid Facts” on p.16, discussion about strange experiences on p.11 or “personality test” on p.12 (Latham-Koenig et al. 2020). This may represent an acknowledgement on behalf of the publishers that international learners need more universal content and less British content. However, when it comes to Intercultural interaction, it is very clear that ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) has been disregarded entirely which agrees with previous research that not much has changed in that context.

8. Discussion

Challenges occurred when attempting to assign an item to its appropriate cultural category due to the blurred nature of ‘culture’. An example is the band, Abba. Should they be categorised as a Swedish band (source culture for Swedish students), an English-language-singing symbol of Western pop-culture (target culture), or a global institution loved across cultures who have access to their music (universal)? Additionally, Western culture could not be considered exclusively Anglophone as it encompasses outer-circle (Kachru 1985) countries too, such as Europe for example. Other content fit neatly into defined categories such as the Queen of England which was clearly target culture (British specific). Images sometimes posed problems and required a degree of interpretation. Moreover, my own cultural background had the potential to skew the data as worldviews are so ingrained that they may impede the accuracy of one’s critical evaluation of one’s own culture. Cortazzi and Jin (1999: 202) acknowledge this aspect of cultural evaluation of textbooks often “reflect their authors’ interest and awareness in culture”. Acknowledging these factors, I relied on my own substantial intercultural experience as someone who has lived among an L2 culture for many years, has learned two foreign languages and self-evaluates as having achieved a positioning on the higher end of the ethnorelative stage of Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett 1993). Furthermore, it was necessary to examine the cultural representation of the items from the perspective of my own internationally diverse students, most of whom learn the language for lingua franca purposes. Due to these considerations the analysis was consistent. Moreover, the research revealed that in examining individual items such as an exercise or an image, while some items may be blurred when it comes to cultural

category, they do form a clear picture when synthesised, rather like the pixels coming together to make an image on a computer screen.

This study has found that there has been little noteworthy shift in the proportions or patterns of cultural content apart from a reduction in British specific material. It largely supports previous literature (Gray 2002; Vettorel and Lopriore 2013; Mishan 2021). Of significant note is that in both the first and the fourth edition, no content related to intercultural interaction has been included; this effectively disregards L2 to L2 communication as an authentic situation in its own right. There are few opportunities for the ELF learner to utilise localised context in order to fulfil sociolinguistic aspects of learning as their proportional need for Anglophone-specific culture is reduced. Additionally, when it comes to avoided topics, Melliti (2013) points to how discussion of controversial issues in class can improve argumentation skills. It appears that the bypassing of PARSNIPs and other issues may be depriving learners of practical and linguistic skills needed to attain communicative competence in the learner's real world. Mac Andrew and Martinez's (2002) *Taboos and Issues* is an example of a textbook which makes use of exclusively controversial content for the purposes of generating debate in the classroom. My personal experience is that when treated with sensitivity (Instead of "sensitivity" I would put "precaution" and I would put the entire syntagm between commas: "My personal experience is that, when treated with precaution, this usually-avoided...") this usually-avoided subject matter can encourage learners to critically examine both source and target cultures. It can also engage them more cognitively, increase cultural awareness, as well as practice skills and linguistic content that might not have been otherwise available in more sanitised content. Moreover, in the case of

global coursebooks, where including localised content may prove impractical, any activity which encourages learners to compare L1 and L2 cultures automatically brings localised content into the lesson. This also has the effect of simultaneously educating learners on the L2 culture in a multicultural rather than a monocultural context.

9. Conclusion

Global coursebooks are a useful tool in the ELT classroom. They are attractively designed, reduce planning time for teachers, as well as incorporate a range of multimedia activities into the lesson. In spite of this, they have been criticised due to deficiencies in their content when it comes to their proportional representation of culture. As the end user of this very successful commercial product, the contemporary learner is nowadays as likely to be a person who wishes to use English in L2 to L2 communication as one who wishes to live in an Anglophone country. For these ELF learners, the traditional high proportion of British and Anglophone culture in textbooks may not be what is needed. Furthermore, the inclusion of content which is more middle-class and aspirational than authentic and real-life, may give them a false picture of the target culture itself. The aim of this paper was to examine whether publishers had acknowledged this changing picture in ELT and reflected it in their content over a period of time. Other related studies found that they had not. A comparative content analysis was carried out on a first edition and fourth edition of a textbook to identify changes in the proportions of content contained regarding culture. The findings generally agreed with other research. However, when like-for-like was compared over the 24 year period, there was evidence of a distinct movement of proportion of content from target culture, especially

the category that was British-specific, to universality across cultures. This was interpreted as an acknowledgement by publishers that less British culture was required in favour of neutral content. It was argued that not only could publishers go even further by representing the target culture more genuinely, but that they include more content that considers the ELF learner. This could be achieved by including situational material that users would have more practical use for, as well as utilising more localised content. The latter is not always practical or cost effective in a global coursebook. However, publishers could include content that would encourage debate, argumentation and increase students' cultural awareness both of their L1 culture and the target culture.

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Appendix A.

The first 10 items (with related images) from English file (Latham-Koenig and Oxenden 1996).

Item no.	Page no.	Description	Source culture	Target culture (British specific)	Target culture (wider Anglophone, Western)	Intercultural interaction	Universality across culture	Comments
1	6	1a Names quiz			*			British and American names.
2	6	1b	*					An 'in your country question'
Image	6	Romeo and Juliet image		*				
3	7	2 Read better (reading)			*			Text based on Anglo-American first names
Image	7	3 American actors			*			
4	8	group questionnaire					*	A name questionnaire -

								generally universal in nature
Image	8	White Anglo Saxon Male (Brian)		*				
Image	8	White couple			*			
5	10	7c	*					An 'in your country question'
Image	10	Two middle-class white men talking across a garden fence			*			
6	10	9 writing	*					Write an article about ...people from your country...
7	11	1 speaking					*	Speaking activity based on music preferences
8	11	Reading					*	Abba (Swedish band) although associated with Western Culture (English language)
Image	11&12	Abba photographs					*	
9	13	1E Communication Interview with a			*			Based on Image - Western celebrity

		star						culture
Image	13	Interviewer, Interviewee (Western clothes)			*			
10	14	Writing			*			Write an article for a magazine...based on an interview with a pop singer