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Representation of National Identity and Culture in the Saudi EFL Textbook Series *Mega Goal*: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract. National identity and culture are crucial concerns in the context of second language acquisition. This is because language plays a vital role in the formation of the same. Previous studies have shown that studying English encourages learners to adopt Anglo-American culture, as textbooks have prioritized the target culture at the expense of the local/source culture in language learning in which a balanced approach could have been instrumental in the context of international and multicultural interaction. In the Saudi English as a foreign language (EFL) context, the cultural investigation of textbooks is a necessity as they are designed by educators from the target culture. Hence, the present study investigates the nature and extent of national identity and cultural representation in the *Mega Goal* textbook series. The investigation follows Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Data are analyzed using Byram's model of the textual evaluation of cultural contents and further categorized using Chao's model of analysing cultural identity. The results and discussion are divided into three segments: description, interpretation, and explication. The study finds that the *Mega Goal* series underrepresents the local/source culture by excluding the cultural components necessary for the awareness and representation of national identity in the context of international and multicultural interaction.

Keywords: *Mega Goal*; EFL textbooks; Critical Discourse Analysis; National Identity

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1. Introduction

Language is an essential formative component of a nation in which nation-states attain legitimacy (Lee & Wang, 2023) and are conceived as “imagined communities” (Anderson, 2006). A citizen’s relationship with the nation is reflected in the identity (Barrett & Davis, 2007) that he or she, as an individual, shares with particular social groups based on common historical and cultural values, norms, and beliefs (Hodgins et al., 2016). According to Edensor (2020), national identity is the production of an enormous cultural set which provides innumerable elements of connection such as language, culture, history, and economy. Because it forms national identity, culture is the principal constituent of the modern nation-state (Zubrzycki, 2018). The nation, national identity, and national culture are represented through symbols and objects (Elgenius, 2005). For the integrity of a country, these symbols and objects should be expressed through its language. This is because the language–culture interface fosters a sense of solidarity and feeling of belonging to the social group of the nation (Ennaji, 2021).

Learning a foreign language should be treated with caution because it exposes learners to foreign culture (Abid, 2021). This is inevitable because language and culture are inseparable (Fairclough, 2014). At the semiotic level, language is profoundly social and cultural (van Lier, 2004) because the usage of words is specific to the cultural context (Otto, 2008). To master a language, students need to learn both linguistic and cultural norms and develop culturally-appropriate behavior (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003). However, foreign language textbooks have an ideological background that upholds certain aspects of the interest, understanding, and reality of some social groups (Curdt-Christiansen & Weninger, 2015). The curriculum incorporates cultural issues pertinent to a specific foreign language to render language learning more effective (Peterson & Coltrane, 2003).

English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks are designed to teach the English language to non-native language users. At present, English has established its dominance as a global language (Crystal, 2003), indicating linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2013). EFL textbooks often promote the target culture to non-native speakers as knowledge of the target culture plays a strategic role in boosting their learning of the target language. The target cultures are British and American (Arslan, 2016) and this Anglo-American culture is idealized in English-language programs (Alghamdi, 2018). The promotion of Western cultures as an effect of globalization and the popularity of the English language in the media and education systems has also affected the local culture in Turkey (Acar, 2004). In Oman, EFL learning has been driven by a national policy of “Omanization” but has also motivated the youth to listen to English pop songs and follow British and American pop stars (Al-Issa, 2005). In Indonesia, enthusiasm to learn English has drawn learners to Western culture because the cultural contents of EFL textbooks are dominated by the target culture (Amalia, 2014).

Hence, there is a need to evaluate the representation of national identity and culture in Saudi EFL textbooks. It must be ascertained whether the selected textbook series, *Mega Goal*, adequately represents the national source culture. The source culture refers to the culture of the learners while the target culture stands for the culture embodied in the target language (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). The textbooks must not idealize and emphasize the target culture (Agustina & Kencana 2023). While cultural awareness is required to learn the usage of a particular word, there should be a moderation of the enthusiasm for and emphasis on the cultural contents that do not belong to the source culture. According to Byram (2006), language use constitutes national identity by developing a sense of belonging in the social group made up of the users of a particular language. Hence, the present study seeks to investigate which culture (target or source) is emphasized in learning a foreign language. Many studies suggest that EFL learning can be conducted in the source culture by reducing the content from the target culture and presenting it in the national and local context (Hall, 2019). Another way is to emphasize the cultural components of other nations in addition to Britain and the United States (Lopriore, 2020).

2. Literature Review

Numerous studies on national identity and culture have been conducted in Indonesian (Kultsum, 2022; Yonata, 2021), Chinese (Aoumeur & Ziani, 2022; Hua et al., 2021), Vietnamese (Phuong, 2022), Iranian (Gheitasi et al., 2022; Taki, 2008), and Malaysian (Hua et al., 2021; James & Aziz, 2020) contexts. However, in the Saudi context, only Karimah (2022) has analyzed national identity and culture.

Most studies in a Saudi context have focused on analyzing the cultural contents of textbooks (Alrashidi, 2021; Al-khresheh, 2020). National identity is discussed as a cultural resource of the source language (Alrashidi, 2021).

In a survey conducted at the College of Languages and Translation at King Khalid University, Mekheimer and Aldosari (2011) considered nationality as an independent variable to analyze how EFL programs teach the target culture. The researchers recommended teaching the target culture to enhance EFL learning. Alfahadi (2012) considered nationality as a form of cultural variety among native English speakers around the world. El-Beheri (2013) argued that Saudi EFL learning may not affect national identity if it is framed in terms of Islamic and Arabic social traditions. Mahboob and Elyas (2014) discovered a Saudi version of English, with many grammatical innovations, forming a cultural variety of EFL speakers.

EFL texts serve the purpose of inculcating certain neoconservative ideologies to preserve Islamic national identity and the homogenous cultural values of Saudi society (Al Jumiah, 2016). In representing the target culture, the Saudi EFL texts refer to the British nationality to construct the archetype of native English speakers (Alshammri, 2017). EFL texts should focus on the local source culture (Almujaiwel, 2018). However, the representation of the target Anglo-American culture is idealized in preparatory-year (PY) English-language programs

(Alghamdi, 2018). Source culture content makes up a small percentage of the *Flying High* series of EFL textbooks (Hawiti et al., 2019). Likewise, in the secondary-level EFL *Traveller* series of textbooks, the target culture is dominant (Alrashidi, 2021).

In the aforementioned studies, the Saudi textbook series *Mega Goal* has not been analyzed. Only four studies have either partially or fully focused on the series. Alsawat (2022) compared the models of hybrid and virtual learning among Saudi secondary school students but did not investigate the cultural contents of the textbooks. Al-Alyani (2017) mentioned the series only twice in reference to the Language Development Project of the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE). Al-Shihri's (2019) investigation of learning strategies dealt with *Mega Goal 2* to concentrate on secondary learners. Similarly, Alwehebi and Ghareeb's (2021) content analysis explored the reading and writing strategies implied in the language activities and instructions in the textbooks. None of the studies evaluated the national identity and culture represented in the text material of the series. Hence, the present study is not only unique but also unprecedented in the scope and context of existing research on Saudi EFL textbooks.

3. Methodology

The study conducts critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the textbook series entitled *Mega Goal*, which is intended for 10th- to 12th-grade students in Saudi Arabia. The *Mega Goal* series has been prepared under the English Language Development Project (ELDP) facilitated by the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE) in collaboration with McGraw-Hill (Al-Alyani, 2017). Since the books are designed specifically for the Saudi students, each page of the books contains the following logo indicating the tutelage of the Saudi Arabian Government.



There are two books for each grade, one theoretical and the other practical. All six books in the series are prepared by McGraw-Hill Education (UK). The editors of the books are Ana Laura Martínez Vázquez and Janet Battiste. The photo coordinator is Kevin Sharp. In addition, the publisher is Jorge Rodríguez Hernández and the editorial director of the series is Anita Raducanu. Notably, the series is approved by the Saudi Arabia MOE. Since the series introduces EFL to Arab students and is prepared by non-Arab educators, there is a need to evaluate the cultural contents of the textbooks to ascertain whether national identity is represented well. Hence, the present study measures the *Mega Goal* series books against the purposes of English education in Saudi Arabia as identified by the Saudi MOE which, according to Al-Hajailan (2003), include the acquisition of necessary language proficiencies, realization of English language as global lingua franca, development of the linguistic eligibility, promotion of

the Islamic concepts and matters, and importing the scientific and technological improvements.

CDA is a commonly-used framework for analyzing English language learning and teaching. There are 131,000 studies that have used CDA to investigate various aspects of EFL including reading, learning, classroom interaction, intercultural competence, lecture, and learners' identities (Derin et al., 2020). In research on the cultural contents and intercultural elements of a text, CDA serves as a useful methodology because it allows one to study the linguistic forms of social interactions and reveals the relationship between language and society (Wodak, 1997). As a critical theory of language, CDA looks into the social practices of language use in a given historical context and reveals the interests of language users (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). In the epistemology of CDA, linguistic discourse is socially constructed. Therefore, CDA aims to disclose the social, economic, and cultural processes embedded in linguistic discourse (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

In the present study, CDA provides the analytical tool of investigation. The study follows Fairclough's (1995) model, comprising three interconnected processes of analysis. These three processes address the three dimensions: description, interpretation, and explanation. In the description process, the analysis is concerned with the representation of objects in various media, including textual and visual media. Human subjects make sense of objects when reading, writing, speaking, and viewing; the process of interpretation reveals the manner in which they produce and receive them. In the production and reception of objects, social and historical conditions play deterministic roles; the process of explanation conducts social analysis and reveals the role of socio-historic conditions in forming discourse and language use.

3.1 Procedure

The study uses Byram's (1993) model to evaluate the cultural contents of a text. The model comprises eight points that should be analyzed. They include "social identity and social groups [social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities], social interaction [differing levels of formality: as outsider and insider], belief and behavior [moral and religious beliefs; daily routines], social and political institutions [state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government], socialization and the life cycle [families, schools, employment, rites of passage], national history [historical and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity], national geography [geographic factors seen as being significant by members], stereotype and national identity [symbols of national stereotypes]" (as cited in Cortazzi & Jin, 1999, p. 203). In addition, the study further categorizes the cultural identity of the contents using Chao's (2011) model of five cultural categories: Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), and Universality Across Culture (UC). The representation of these cultural categories is then turned into percentages by considering the frequency with which each occurs.


The research follows a step-by-step procedure of identifying, analyzing, and then categorizing the cultural contents. First, the research analyzes the contents by category of media, which are textual and visual; second, it uses Byram's model to categorize the cultural contents in the abovementioned eight points; and finally, it further categories the cultural contents by Chao's (2011) model of five cultural categories. For each category, one frequency rate has been assigned.

In the following picture, the first page of *Mega Goal 1* (Student's book) has been analyzed.


Intro

1 Listen and Discuss


Read the texts below and identify the sentence or words that express a fact or an opinion.




A space probe's lander, touched down on Comet 67P, 510 million km from Earth; an unprecedented achievement in space exploration!




Flying cars used to be a feature of science fiction and comic strips. But recent developments indicate that they are going to become a reality very soon. One of the most successful hybrid flying cars is due to go into production this year.



Lifelong learning is the self-motivated pursuit of knowledge, for personal or professional reasons, throughout life, in a range of situations. It is not confined to the classroom nor restricted by age. Open, online sources have made this type of learning accessible to a greater number of people.



Accidents at home are more common than anywhere else. Falling and tripping accidents cause injuries to thousands of people.



Teenagers who enjoy exercise and form healthy eating habits, stay fit throughout their lives.

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On this page, there are five textual and five visual representations. So, one frequency rate is assigned for each representation.

Frequency of textual and visual media

Media	Frequency
Textual	5
Visual	5
Total	10

The total number of frequency rates is 10. Among the frequency rates, the textual and the visual representations of the cultural contents are categorized further on the basis of Byram's eight check points.

The five textual representations are categorized according to the following check points.

Check Points	Frequency
Social Identity and Social Groups	0
Social Interaction	0
Belief and Behavior	2*
Social and Political Institutions	0
Socialization and Life Cycle	3**
National History	0
National Geography	0
Stereotype and National Identity	0

* The following textual representations belong to the check point of Belief and Behavior.

Lifelong learning is the self-motivated pursuit of knowledge, for personal or professional reasons, throughout life, in a range of situations. It is not confined to the classroom nor restricted by age. Open, online sources have made this type of learning accessible to a greater number of people.

Teenagers who enjoy exercise and form healthy eating habits, stay fit throughout their lives.

** The following textual representations belong to the check point of Socialization and Life Cycle

A space probe's lander, touched down on Comet 67P, 510 million km from Earth; an unprecedented achievement in space exploration!

Flying cars used to be a feature of science fiction and comic strips. But recent developments indicate that they are going to become a reality very soon. One of the most successful hybrid flying cars is due to go into production this year.

Accidents at home are more common than anywhere else. Falling and tripping accidents cause injuries to thousands of people.

The five visual representations are categorized according to the following check points:

Check Points	Frequency
Social Identity and Social Groups	0
Social Interaction	0
Belief and Behavior	0
Social and Political Institutions	0
Socialization and Life Cycle	5
National History	0
National Geography	0
Stereotype and National Identity	0

Notably, the frequency rates of the visual and the textual representations in the check points are not the same. Among the five, two textual representations belong to the 'Belief and Behavior' category because they mention beliefs such as "learning is the...pursuit of knowledge", and "exercise and... healthy eating... [let one] stay fit throughout...lives". The rest of the textual representations belong to the check point of Socialization and Life Cycle because they refer to the events associated with lifestyle. But all of the visual representations refer to the events of lifestyle that include scientific experiments and inventions aiming to enrich the human life, work, activity at home, and sports. The textual representations of the two visual representations* don't belong to the identical check point of Belief and Behavior because the connotations of the beliefs are added to the visuals of the lifestyle activities such as working online and playing football.

Furthermore, these visual and textual representations are evaluated with Chao's (2011) model of five cultural categories to understand the nature of cultural contents.

	Textual	Visual
Source/Local Culture (SC)	0	1
Target Culture (TC)	0	0
International Culture (IC)	0	0
Intercultural Interaction (ICI)	0	0
Universality across Culture (UC)	5	4

The frequency of representations is also analyzed in the similar fashion in each check point and the media of representation to find out which media is used to impart what category of cultural content at which check point. Since the research aims to discover the frequency of representation of national culture, it compares such data with those of other cultural categories.

4. Results and Discussion

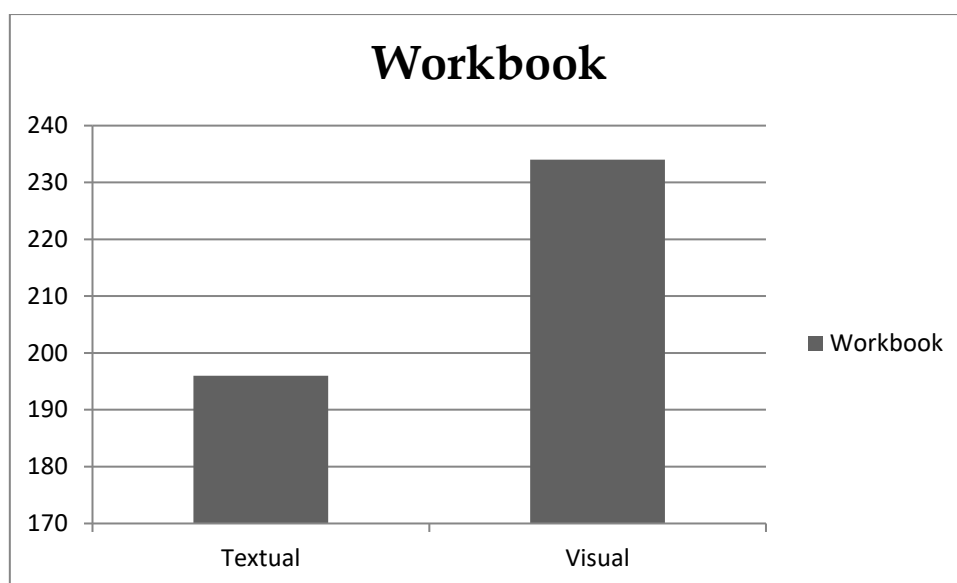
4.1 Description

In the description phase, the analysis is concerned with the representation of objects in various media. The *Mega Goal* series utilizes both textual and visual media. Visual representations are more frequent than textual ones (see Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency of textual and visual media

Media	Frequency
Textual	540
Visual	578
Total	1118

The workbooks use visual representations more often than textual ones (see Fig. 1). In a few cases, there are multiple illustrations for one textual representation.

**Figure 1: Textual and visual representation**

The frequency of textual representation is 196 and that of visual one is 234.

In the following picture of page no. 37 from Workbook of *Mega Goal 2*, there are five visual representations for the four textual representations.

4 I Wonder What Happened

A Complete the sentences. Use the words in the box.

volcano **crater** **bulls** **tornado** **meteorite** **debris**

1. We stayed near an awesome lake on our vacation.

A _____ had made a _____ thousands of years ago. Then the huge hole filled with water and made the lake.



2. Mount St. Helens looks like half of a mountain. Actually it is a _____. When it erupted in 1980, it destroyed the trees that had grown around it for hundreds of years.



3. I had never been to the state of Texas before I went there with my family. We rented a car and drove across the state. We had been in the car for about thirty minutes when we saw a very strange sign. It was yellow and had the image of a black _____ on it. We later learned that there are a lot of them in Texas. These powerful windstorms can destroy trees and buildings and leave a lot of _____ to clean up.



4. During our vacation in Texas, we also went to a rodeo. Rodeos are very popular and a lot of fun. We saw cowboys, horses, _____, and even clowns. After the rodeo, we met one of the clowns we had seen in one of the events.



In the student books, the frequency rates of visual and textual representations are identical (see Fig. 2).

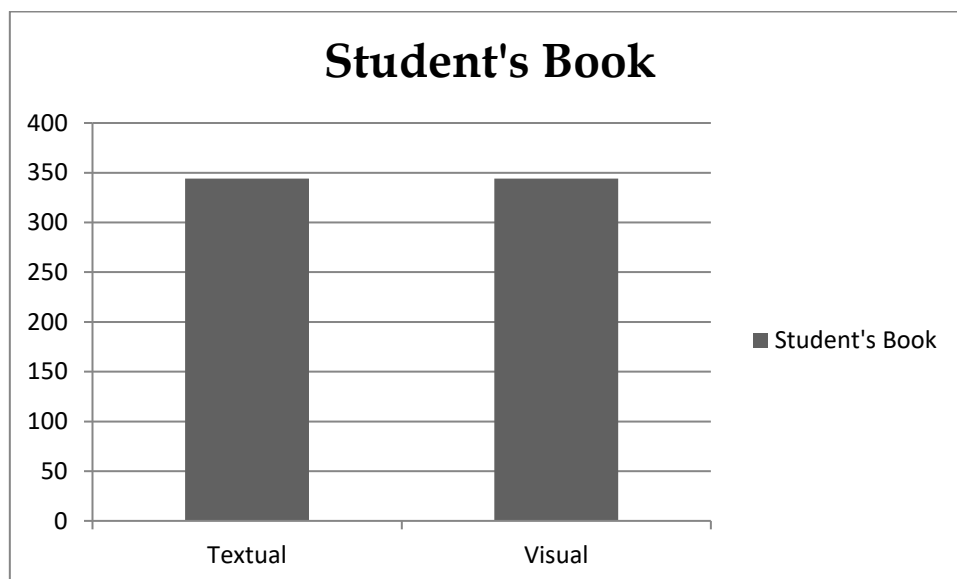


Figure 2: Frequency rates of visual and textual representations

In the Student's Book, the frequency of textual and visual representation is the same, that is, 344. However, the frequency rate is not the same in all of the books (see Fig. 3).

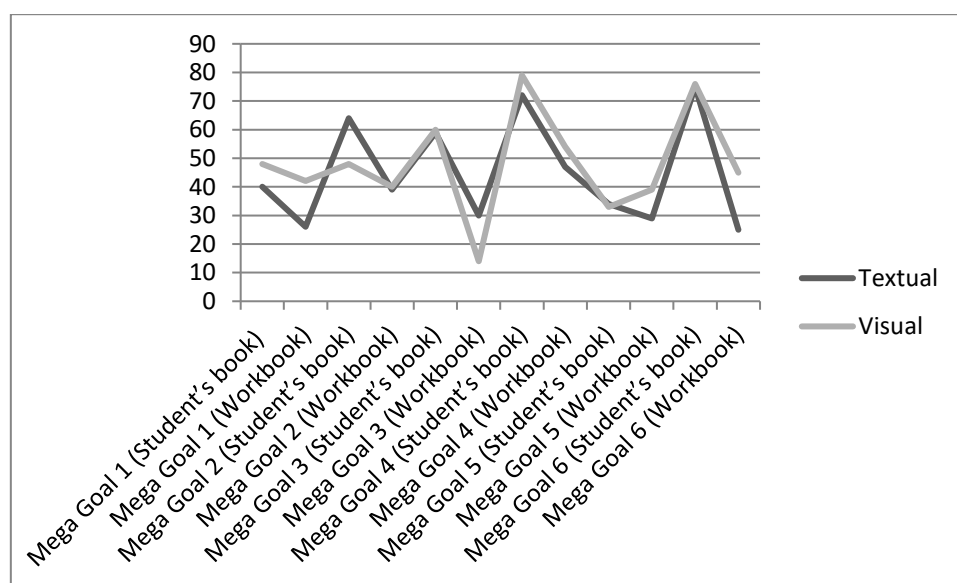


Figure 3

In *Mega Goal 1* (Student's book), the frequency of textual representation is 40 and visual one is 48; In *Mega Goal 1* (Workbook), the frequency of textual representation is 26 and visual one is 42; In *Mega Goal 2* (Student's book), the frequency of textual representation is 64 and visual one is 48; In *Mega Goal 2* (Workbook), the frequency of textual representation is 39 and visual one is 40; In *Mega Goal 3* (Student's book), the frequency of textual representation is 59 and visual one is 69; In *Mega Goal 3* (Workbook), the frequency of textual representation is 30 and visual one is 14; In *Mega Goal 4* (Student's book), the frequency of textual representation is 72 and visual one is 79; In *Mega Goal 4*

(Workbook), the frequency of textual representation is 47 and visual one is 54; In *Mega Goal 5* (Student's book), the frequency of textual representation is 34 and visual one is 33; In *Mega Goal 5* (Workbook), the frequency of textual representation is 29 and visual one is 39; In *Mega Goal 6* (Student's book), the frequency of textual representation is 75 and visual one is 76; In *Mega Goal 6* (Workbook), the frequency of textual representation is 25 and visual one is 45.

Among the eight points on the checklist, the frequency of representation (including textual and visual) is higher for Socialization and Life Cycle than any other points (see Table 2 and Fig. 4 below).

Table 2: Frequency of Representation

Check Points	Frequency
Social Identity and Social Groups	7
Social Interaction	3
Belief and Behavior	12
Social and Political Institutions	0
Socialization and Life Cycle	1019
National History	38
National Geography	30
Stereotype and National Identity	9

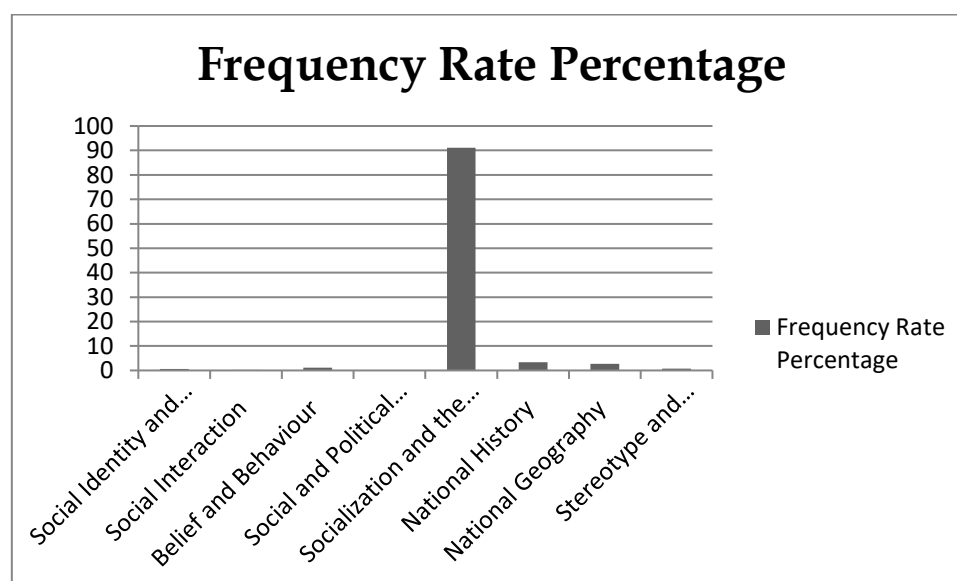


Figure 4

The percentage of frequency rate of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Social and Political Institutions, Socialization and the Life Cycle, National History, National Geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are as follows: 0.6%, 0.2%, 1.07%, 91.14%, 3.39%, 2.68%, and 0.80%.

For Socialization and Life Cycle, the frequency rate of source/local culture is less than 30% (see Fig. 5).

For example, the following ten pictures, which are of the first ten pages of the Student's books from *Mega Goal 2*, illustrate how the frequency of representation (including textual and visual) is higher in the check point of Socialization and Life Cycle.

All of these textual and the visual representations in the ten pictures refer to the check point of the socialization and lifecycle. It is because they relate to the common place events and habits.

In Picture 1 below, there are four textual and four visual representations. The four visuals represent a self-driving car, a marine animal, a flight simulator, and a yogurt store. These things talk about lifestyle as indicated by the companion texts. The first text invites the students to imagine travelling in a driverless car and anticipate the benefits of predetermined determination without human intervention by focusing exclusively on enjoyment and relaxation. The second text encourages the students to experience a sleepless night in the desert away from the concerns and noise of the city with complete sensory awareness of the natural surrounding spread across an infinite territory where events are unpredictable and incomprehensible. The accompanying visual of a marine animal with semi-open eyes suggests the necessity of caution and awareness of the surrounding in the natural world. The third text deals with the educational and entertaining values of flight simulators. It asks the students to guess the object with a visual of a pilot flying an aircraft at a high altitude. The text indicates the benefits of flight simulators in training before the actual missions. The flight simulators are helpful to the employees and executives of aviation industries, research and military programs. Both the visual and the text refer to the specific lifestyle of the people associated with aviation technology. The fourth text discusses the use of biodegradable wrappers as an edible complement with yogurt. The visual of a bright blue colored spelling of frozen yogurt is printed on the cover of the yogurt packet. Eating both the content and the package refers to an advanced way of consumption which doesn't produce wastage. The text urges the students to look for environment friendly lifestyle where plastic as an environmental hazard can be avoided in packaging the food items.

Intro

1 Listen and Discuss

Read and say what you think each text is about.



As you drive along a busy road, you notice a car without a driver! You blink to clear your eyes, and wonder whether you're losing your mind! It's the driverless car, a robotic vehicle that can travel to a predetermined destination without human intervention. All you would need to do is sit in the car and enjoy the ride! Would you do it? Would you travel in a driverless car? Is it science fiction or reality?

You are spending the night in the desert. Everyone else is sound asleep but you are still awake, enjoying the starlit sky. It's a cold but peaceful night. None of the usual city sounds echo in the background. So you snuggle in your sleeping bag and close your eyes. All of a sudden you are startled by a high pitched sound! Someone or something is whistling! You sit up, look around but don't see anyone. Then you hear the sound again, along with a soft patter of something landing in the sand. What do you think it is? Is it a dream or reality?



They are very real and highly popular in entertainment, but they are also used in education. They are used by many colleges and institutions for educational purposes. Many businesses and industries use them to train their employees and executives. They are used



Can you guess what they are? What is your

opinion about them?

for military strategy and flight training. Astronauts train on them for a long time before they participate in real missions.

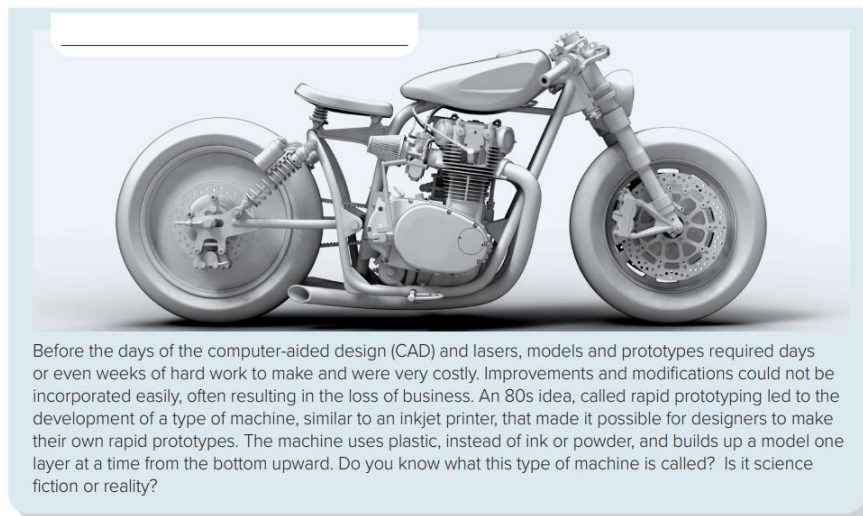


You walk into a food store to buy some yogurt and cheese. You notice that the packaging is different from what you are used to. It's very attractive with bright wrapping. A customer has just bought some frozen yogurt in a biodegradable bag. He takes out one of the round, pearl-like shapes and bites into it as you're about to warn him not to eat the wrapping! He seems to be enjoying it. He then uses a small spoon to dip into the shell, eat the rest of the contents as well as the wrapper! Is the wrapping edible, or does the customer suffer from a condition that urges him to eat things that would normally be considered inedible? What do you think? Is it science fiction or reality?

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In Picture 2 below, there are two textual representations and one visual representation. The visual represents a 3D-printed image of a motorbike. The accompanying text describes the 3D printing technology, not the motorbike. However, both of the representations infer the things that improve the lifestyle of people associated with designing and creating prototypes and models. The 3D-printed model of the motorbike helps in manufacturing flawless motorbikes for sale. The text about the 3D technology informs the students how the

technology has increased the extent of convenience in producing successful business models. The second text is a collection of inquiries of the students' opinions about the impact on their life of the technological and cultural things described in Pictures 1 and 2.



2 Pair Work

A. Match each text with a heading. Compare with your partner.

3D Printing

The Whistling Rain Frog

Simulators

Tasty Wrappers

The Autonomous Car

B. Compare your ideas/guesses about each text with your partner. Decide if the unusual things that are described are science fiction or reality. Give reasons for your answers. Use some of these phrases.

Expressing, Confirming Opinion/ Giving Reasons/ Agreeing/ Disagreeing

It could be real, couldn't it? I mean, it would be possible to

I wouldn't feel comfortable/ safe. Would you?

They claim that autonomous vehicles will be safer because human error will no longer be an issue.

So, according to this, you could print out any object on a 3D printer. Is this a fact?

I'm not sure how useful this type of thing would be.

I think it's a great idea. If wrappers were edible there would be less waste and litter.

They are certainly useful but they cannot replace the real thing, can they?

I think they can to some extent, or they wouldn't be used for pilot training.

It's a fact. Some countries have already decided to allow them on the road.

I can't see myself crunching on a wrapper. Can you?

In Picture 3 below, there is one visual and one textual representation. Beside the text, there are two sub-texts which are not a textual content but instructions on how to utilize the main text subsequently. The visual is of a credit card which

the text mentions. The text is a transcript of conversation between the shoppers Yasmin and Amal, and the shop assistant. The conversation, later, shifts from choosing a gown to using the mode of payment for it. Both of the concerns, deciding an item to buy and the mode of payment, are related to the lifestyle.

Intro

3 Conversation

Listen and practice reading the conversation in pairs.

Yasmin is in Jeddah, visiting relatives. She and her cousin, Amal, are invited to a wedding reception at the end of the week.

- Yasmin:** Amal, look at that beautiful, silk gown in the window!
- Amal:** I agree. It's very elegant. Would you like to go in and have a look?
- Yasmin:** Can we? I'd love to try it on. We don't have much time, shops will close in less than an hour, so let's hurry!
- Assistant:** Good morning ladies. How can I help you?
- Amal:** We'd like to see that gown, please.
- Assistant:** Is it for you?
- Yasmin:** It's for me, actually. But I need a larger size, don't I?
- Assistant:** I'm not sure you do. I think you should try a smaller one.
- Yasmin:** Isn't this small enough?
- Assistant:** I'm afraid not. It's an XL. Small is the right size for you. Would you like to try it on?
- Yasmin:** Yes, please.
-
- Yasmin:** What do you think? It's the right size isn't it?
- Amal:** Yes, it's a perfect fit. It looks great on you. You might need to have the hem taken up a little.
- Assistant:** We'd be happy to do that for you.
- Yasmin:** Right! We'll take it! Do you accept this type of credit card?
- Assistant:** Actually, we'd prefer cash.
- Yasmin:** Oh, I'm sorry. In that case, we'll have to go to the bank and get some cash. Could you tell us how to get to the nearest bank?
- Assistant:** Yes, of course. Walk out the door and turn right. You'll see some elevators on your right. Go down to the ground floor. The bank is between the elevators and a large sports store. You can't miss it.
(*In the elevator...*)
- Amal:** By the way, I noticed you were reading the book that we bought the other day. Are you enjoying it?
- Yasmin:** I can't put it down. It has an incredible plot. It's full of suspense and events are totally unpredictable. It's not like many boring detective novels where you know what's going to happen next without reading. It's a good, well-written book. You should read it.



Size – Quantity

We don't have much time, shops will close in less than an hour, so let's hurry!

There are too many people waiting in line. We'd better come back later!

I need a larger size, don't I? / You need a smaller size.

This is large enough for him.

Directions

Walk out the door and turn right. You'll see some elevators on your right.

Go down to the ground floor. The bank is between the elevators and a large sports store. You can't miss it.

Go straight and take the second turning on the left/right.

Turn right and right again.

Talking about a book/plot

It has an incredible plot.

I can't put it down.

It's full of suspense/surprises.

You don't know what's going to happen next.

It's unpredictable.

It's an interesting story, based on real facts.

Your Turn

Role-play a conversation like the one above with a partner.

Decide about the following first:

- which city/town you are in
- what you are interested in buying
- what kind of store you are in
- who is with you

In Picture 4 below, there are two visual and one textual representation. Besides, the three sub-texts are instructions to the students on the subsequent use of the text. The visuals refer to the counting and exchange of the cash, a mode of

payment, which the shop assistant would accept for the purchase of a gown by Yasmin and Amal mentioned in Picture 3. The text is the transcript of the conversation of Yasmin and Amal with the Bank Clerk regarding the withdrawal of cash, an event proceeding from the occasion of shopping for a gown for Yasmin described in Picture 3. Again, using credits card and opening accounts to withdraw cash from the bank are related to the lifestyle.

4 Listening

A. Listen and check *true* or *false*.

	<i>true</i>	<i>false</i>
1. Yasmin can't use this type of credit card because she doesn't have an account.		
2. Yasmin is interested in opening an account.		
3. Amal can use the ATM.		
4. Yasmin will pick up her new gown today.		

Bank clerk: Good morning. Can I help you?

Amal: 3

Bank clerk: _____

Yasmin: No, I'm sorry, I don't. Is that a problem?

Bank clerk: No, not at all. _____

Yasmin: Oh, I see. What do you think Amal? _____ I'll be back here, every few months. It would make sense, wouldn't it?

Amal: Whatever you think is best.

Yasmin: _____

Bank clerk: Of course. _____

Yasmin: Thank you.

Amal: Oh, excuse me. _____

Yasmin: _____

Amal: Yes, I do. It's just that I don't use it often enough to remember! Sorry!

Yasmin: That's fine! I'm glad we'll both be using the same bank.

Amal: Oh, look at the number of people waiting at the counter. _____ I forgot to take it this morning.

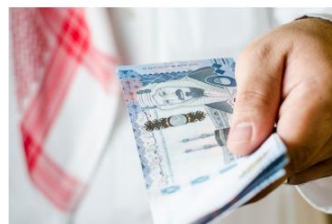
Yasmin: Please don't worry! I'll wait for you.

Amal: I'm not sure that's a good idea Yasmin. Stores are about to close for the afternoon. You'd better hurry and pick up your gown.

Yasmin: You're probably right. Actually, I won't pick it up today. I'd like them to take the hem up. You'll be alright, won't you?

Amal: Yes, of course. Give me a ring on my cell phone when you're ready.

Yasmin: I'll do that. OK. See you soon.



B. Listen again and write the number of the correct expression in the blank.

1. Just checking; there is no service charge for account holders.
2. In that case, I'd like to open an account please.
3. Yes, please. We'd like to withdraw some cash from this credit card.
4. Do you have an account with us?
5. Would you like to come this way and fill out some documents?
6. I'd like to withdraw some money from my account.
7. I wish I had the card for my cash card account. I could use the ATM.
8. Wouldn't it be a good idea to open an account?
9. I didn't realize you had an account at this bank!

5 About You


Role-play a conversation like the one above with a partner. Use expressions from B.

Decide about the following first:

- which city you are in
- what you would like to do at the bank, e.g. open an account, deposit money into your account, etc.

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6 Pronunciation

A. Listen. Note the rising  or falling  intonation.


Good morning.  Can I help you? 
No, not at all. 

B. Listen and find more examples for rising or falling intonation in the conversation.

5

In Picture 5 below, there are two visual and one textual representation. The visuals are about graduation cards: one is an advertisement for an online site that sells graduation cards; and another is a sample graduation card. The text has no relation with the visual representations because the text presents an email conversation between a Saudi businessman with an American manufacturer of shoes. The text presents how the businessman deals with the American manufacturer and lays down the plan for finalizing the deal with a face-to-face meeting. The email is part of the plan that begins with expressing a possibility of a deal and continues with an invitation to the American supplier of shoes. Both the visuals and the text relate to the lifestyle.

1 You've Got Mail!



1 Listen and Discuss

Read the four emails and decide what the purpose of each one is.

Your Shoe Source

[Reply](#) [Reply to all](#) [Forward](#) [Print](#) [Delete](#)

From: 'Saud Saleh' asaleh@finest_footwear.com
 Subject: Response to your email
 To: rogers@made_in_USA.com


Dear Mr. Rogers,


I want to apologize for not answering your email sooner. I've been traveling for the last few days, and I got back only yesterday.

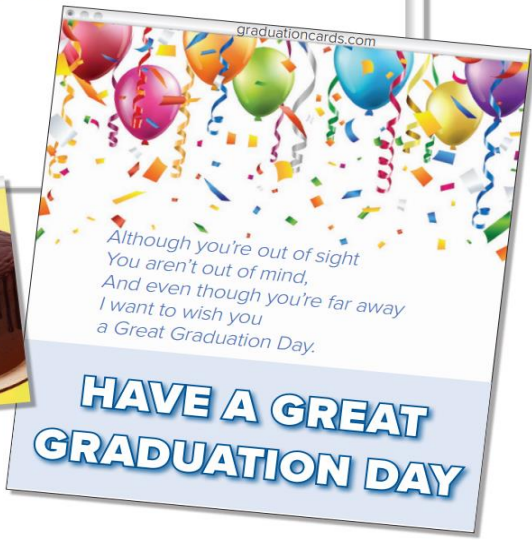
Although most of our shoes are imported directly from Asia, we are currently looking for new suppliers, such as ones in the USA. I look forward to meeting you and discussing the various possibilities. Please email me as soon as you make your final travel arrangements to Saudi Arabia so that we can set up a time for a meeting.


Best regards,

Saud Saleh
 Purchasing Manager





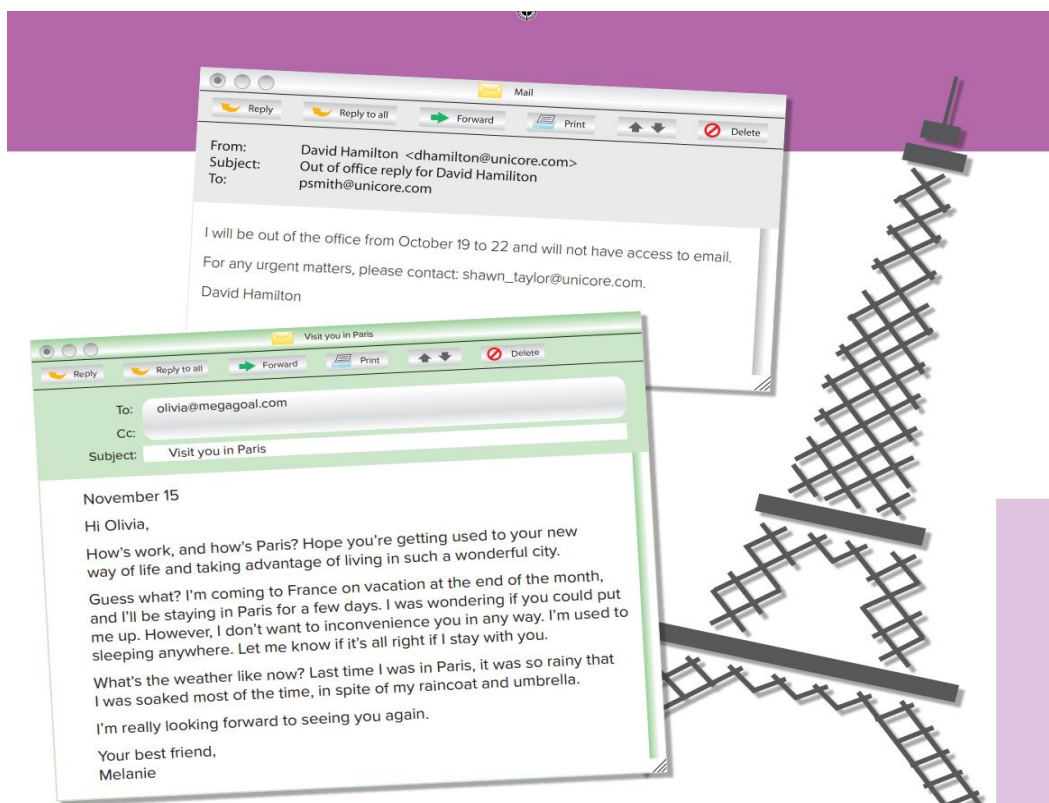




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In Picture 6 below, there are two textual and one visual representation. The visual refers to an image of the Eiffel Tower. The tower is situated in France and, hence, doesn't belong to the check point of national geography. However, the visual is an accompanying cultural content with the text mentioning Melanie's emailed request to stay with her friend Olivia during her visit to Paris. The second text is an advanced intimation by David to his colleague of his leave from 19 to 22 October and an email contact in emergency. Both of the texts deal with the concerns of commonplace affairs and including the image, all of the three representations belong to the check point of Socialization and Life Cycle. In addition, there are two sub-texts which are not additional cultural contents being instructions on the usage of the contents of both Pictures 5 & 6.



The image shows two email screenshots. The top one is from David Hamilton to Shawn Taylor, stating he will be out of the office from October 19 to 22. The bottom one is from David Hamilton to Olivia, asking if she can host him in Paris during her visit.

Quick Check ✓

A. Vocabulary. Mark the ways to start or end letters or emails.

B. Comprehension. Answer *true* or *false*.

- _____ Mr. Saleh answered the email as soon as he returned.
- _____ Mr. Saleh's company is not interested in doing business with Mr. Rogers.
- _____ Although your friend is far away, they haven't forgotten your graduation day.
- _____ David will answer all emails even though he's out of the office.
- _____ Melanie is hoping to stay with Olivia even though it'll be inconvenient.
- _____ Even though Melanie was wearing a raincoat, she got wet in Paris.

2 Pair Work 👤

A. Apologize for something.


- 🗨️ I want to apologize for not coming to your graduation ceremony.
- 🗨️ Don't worry. That's quite all right.

B. Wish someone the best on a special occasion.

- 🗨️ Congratulations. I wish you lots of success.
- 🗨️ Thanks a lot. I'm looking forward to the new job.

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In Picture 7 below, there is no cultural content as the texts are lessons on grammar.

1
You've Got Mail!


3
Grammar


Preposition + Gerund

Prepositions can be followed by nouns, pronouns, or gerunds.

I apologized to **Allison**. (*noun*) I apologized for **forgetting** her graduation day. (*gerund*)
 I apologized to **her**. (*pronoun*)

Some verbs are usually followed by certain prepositions.

I apologize for arriving late.	I decided against wearing a uniform.
I look forward to meeting you personally.	I insist on paying for our lunch.
I'm thinking of moving to a new house soon.	I succeeded in getting into college.
I'm dreaming of going on vacation.	I asked about applying for a job.

Some adjectives are followed by certain prepositions.

I'm **tired of** waiting for an answer. I'm **used to** having coffee at breakfast.

Although, Even Though, In Spite Of

Although, even though, and in spite of have similar meanings.

Although and *even though* introduce a clause that has a subject and a verb.

In spite of is followed by a noun or gerund.

<p>Although it rained, we enjoyed the vacation.</p> <p>Even though I was tired, I couldn't sleep.</p>	<p>In spite of the traffic, I arrived on time.</p> <p>He went to school in spite of being sick.</p>
---	---

As Soon As, When

These conjunctions of time are not followed by future forms of verbs even though the verbs tell us about future time. The present is used instead.

I'll tell you **as soon as** I know. I'll call you **when** I arrive.

So ... (That)

Use **so** with an adjective or with *many, much, few, or little* to express result or degree.

The noise was **so loud** (that) we could hardly hear ourselves talk.

There were **so many** cars (that) we couldn't find a place to park.

Read each example in the grammar section. Find sentences in the emails that are similar and underline them.

A. Complete the sentences with **although** or **in spite of**.

1. _____ her busy schedule, Maya always remembers her friends' events.
2. _____ Steve had all the right qualifications, he wasn't chosen for the job.
3. _____ we played much better than the other team.
4. _____ the cloudy weather.

_____ she has a Russian last name, she was actually born in Canada.



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In Picture 8 below, there are three visual and one textual representation. The three visuals refer to the inventor, device, and process of transmission of the telegraph system. The text presents a brief history of the development of the telegraph system. The issue of these contents is related to the improvement of lifestyle. The additional two sub-texts are exercises, not cultural contents.

- B. Use the following words to complete the paragraph:
although, as soon as, because, but, during, in spite of



The TELEGRAPH SYSTEM

In 1830, an American, Joseph Henry (1797-1878), demonstrated the potential of William Sturgeon's invention, the electromagnet, for long distance communication. (1) _____ it was Samuel Morse who was able to invent a telegraph system that was practical and commercially feasible.

(2) _____ 1835 Morse was a professor of arts and design at New York University, when he proved that signals could be transmitted by wire. The system was received rather indifferently in 1838, (3) _____ an impressive public demonstration.

(4) _____ Morse and his associates were eager to set up an experimental line, funding was not approved until a few years later. So, (5) _____ Congress approved a funding of \$30,000, the construction of a line started between Washington and Baltimore.

Samuel Morse and his associates managed to raise private funds and extended their line to Philadelphia and New York. Telegraph companies started functioning in different parts of the United States. (6) _____ of this, Western Union soon joined, dispatching telegraphs by train. Eventually, telegraph systems were set up all over the world. It was the beginning of a new era in communication.

- C. Match the two parts of the sentences about an outing.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. ___ There was so much traffic on the road | a. we weren't able to swim. |
| 2. ___ The picnic spot was so crowded | b. it took hours to get to the beach. |
| 3. ___ The water was so cold | c. we went straight to bed. |
| 4. ___ There were so many mosquitoes | d. I got a headache. |
| 5. ___ The beach was so noisy | e. we weren't able to find a good place to sit. |
| 6. ___ We were all so tired in the evening | f. the children were bitten all over. |

- D. Complete the sentences about yourself. Then compare with a partner.

I'm thinking of studying in a foreign country

1. I'm interested in _____.
2. I'm excited about _____.
3. I'm thinking of _____.
4. I'm looking forward to _____.
5. I'm not used to _____.
6. I'm tired of _____.
7. I apologized to my friend for _____.
8. I'm not capable of _____.
9. I'm used to _____.
10. I decided against _____.

In Picture 9 below, there are two visual representations. The first one depicts a trainer/instructor/leader interacting with students/trainees in a class/boardroom. Since such interaction is the part of job/task of a trainer/instructor/leader, it refers to lifestyle. The second visual shows an individual sitting on his bed confused about waking up early. It refers to the activity of waking up which is a part of daily routine. So, it belongs to the check

point of belief and behavior. Besides, there are three sub-texts which are exercises, not cultural contents.

1 You've Got Mail!



4 Language in Context

Make a list of things you're **used to doing** and **not used to doing** and compare with a partner.



5 Listening

Listen to the messages or conversations. Complete the sentences.

1. a. Mr. Kramer's assistant is apologizing for _____.
- b. Mr. Kramer wants to _____.
2. a. Nawal is thinking of _____.
- b. Sabah is looking forward to _____.
3. a. Omar is apologizing for not _____.
- b. At the end, Omar is thinking of _____.
4. a. Raymond is making excuses for not _____.
- b. He wants to _____.

6 Pronunciation

A. Listen to the following vowel sounds. They are sometimes called short vowels. Then practice.

/e/	/æ/	/i/
send	happy	wish
get	spam	city
letters	congratulations	interested

B. Read the emails again and underline only the words that have short **e**, **a**, and **i**. Practice reading the sentences aloud without stressing the short **e**, **a**, and **i** in the words you underlined.



7 About You

In pairs, ask the questions and have your friend answer. Then switch roles.

1. Are people in your country used to sending email, letters, or cards on special occasions?
2. When did you last apologize for doing something wrong? What did you do?
3. Are you the kind of person who forgives easily? Explain.
4. When you are/were absent from school, do/did your parents write notes to your teachers explaining your absence?
5. Are you used to doing favors or asking other people for favors? Explain.
6. Do you put people up when they travel? Do you ask others to put you up when you travel?



In Picture 10 below, there are three visual and one textual representation. The first visual is of a graduation certificate. The second visual is a collection of two photographs of Saudi nationals. The third visual is of a meal. The text is a conversation between two friends/acquaintances about attending a graduation event. Ahmad tries to validate the reason for not coming to the event, but Abdullah disagrees. Ahmad cannot come to the event owing to a family get-

together while Ahmad is demure at accepting the reason for the importance of the graduation event in his life. The conversation deals with the conventions of respecting family reunion and of celebrating the graduation day which requires the participation of friends/acquaintances. Since the cultural contents of the text deal with social customs including the cancellation of RSVP, the context of the conversation belongs to the checklist of lifestyle. There are also four short textual notes. But these are exercises for the students.

8 Conversation

Underline the words that have short **e**, **a**, and **i**. In pairs, read the conversation aloud without stressing the short **e**, **a**, and **i** in the words you underlined.

- Ahmed:** Abdullah, thanks for inviting me to your graduation event. I was really looking forward to next Thursday night, ...
- Abdullah:** I've been planning this event for ages! You're coming, aren't you?
- Ahmed:** Well, Abdullah, I'm calling you up to explain. Unfortunately I'm not going to be able to make it.
- Abdullah:** **No way!** I refuse to accept that. I insist on your coming.
- Ahmed:** I'm sorry, I really am. You see, it's my uncle's wedding, and they're having the whole family over for dinner. They expect me to be there, and I can't **let them down**.
- Abdullah:** So, sneak out as soon as the dinner's over.
- Ahmed:** I can't just walk out like that.
- Abdullah:** **Of course** you can.



Your Ending

What does Abdullah go on to suggest?

- 1 No one's going to notice.
- 2 Tell your uncle you're not feeling well, and you're going to lie down.
- 3 Be straight with your uncle, and tell him you have plans after dinner.
- 4 Your idea: _____

Real Talk

No way! = used to say you won't allow something
 let someone down = disappoint
 Of course = used to give someone permission or encouragement
 Be straight = be honest and frank

About the Conversation

In pairs, ask and answer the questions. Then switch roles.

1. What was Ahmed looking forward to?
2. Why can't he come to the graduation?
3. What does Abdullah want Ahmed to do?

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Your Turn

Role-play these situations with a partner.

1. You can't come to a friend's graduation ceremony. Make up a reason and apologize for not coming.
2. Call a friend and accept an invitation to a dinner, an event, or an outing.

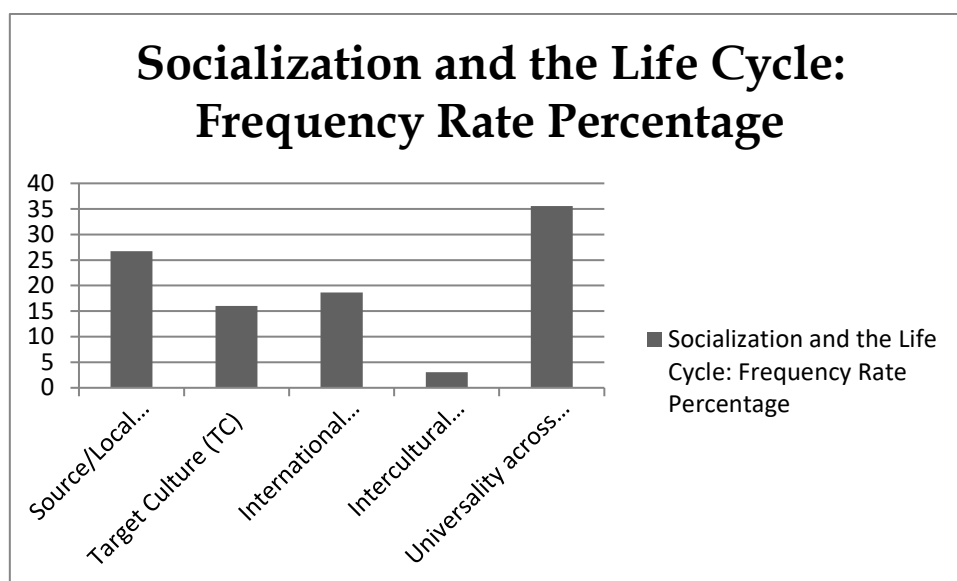


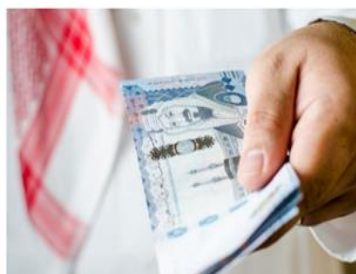
Figure 5: Frequency rate of source/local culture

Among the total representations of this category, Universality Across Culture occurs with the highest frequency. Among the textual representations, Target Culture has a higher frequency rate than Source/Local Culture and appears almost as frequently as Universality Across Culture.

For example, there is a total of 31 representations in Pictures 1-10. Among them, 4 representations are visual and belong to the source culture.



Picture 4



Picture 4

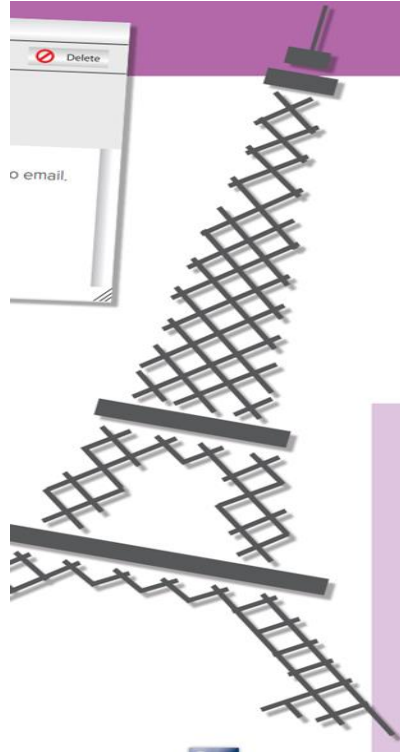


Picture 9



Picture 10

There is one visual representation that belongs to the cultural identity of International culture. The visual is a graphic illustration of the Eiffel Tower which represents the geographical identity of Paris, France.



There are two representations that belong to the target culture. The visual is of Joseph Henry, an American scientist. The text presents the early operation and development of the Telegraph system in America.



Picture 8

The TELEGRAPH SYSTEM

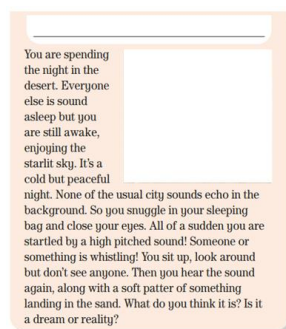
In 1830, an American, Joseph Henry (1797-1878), demonstrated the potential of William Sturgeon's invention, the electromagnet, for long distance communication. (1) _____ it was Samuel Morse who was able to invent a telegraph system that was practical and commercially feasible.

(2) _____ 1835 Morse was a professor of arts and design at New York University, when he proved that signals could be transmitted by wire. The system was received rather indifferently in 1838, (3) _____ an impressive public demonstration.

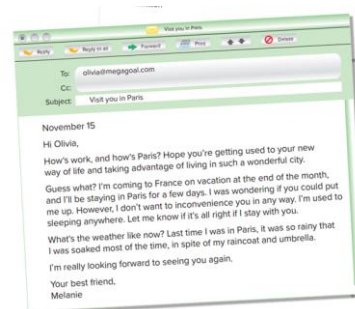
(4) _____ Morse and his associates were eager to set up an experimental line, funding was not approved until a few years later. So, (5) _____ Congress approved a funding of \$30,000, the construction of a line started between Washington and Baltimore. Samuel Morse and his associates managed to raise private funds and extended their line to Philadelphia and New York. Telegraph companies started functioning in different parts of the United States. (6) _____ of this, Western Union soon joined, dispatching telegraphs by train. Eventually, telegraph systems were set up all over the world. It was the beginning of a new era in communication.

Picture 8

The rest of the representations belongs in cultural identity to the category of Universality across Culture because none of these visuals and texts is culturally specific. For instance, the following texts talk about cultural practices, such as spending time alone and staying at a friend's place away from home, which are found universal across cultures.

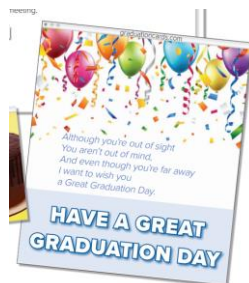


Picture 1



Picture 6

The following visuals present the events which are culturally non-specific. Giving the graduation card and feeling confused after getting up early are common experiences in life.



Picture 5



Picture 9

Among the total representations of this category, Universality across Culture occurs with the highest frequency. For example, the frequency count of the

representations of the Universality across Culture in the sample is 78%, that is, 24 out of 31 representations belong to this category.

Among the textual representations, Target Culture has a higher frequency rate than Source/Local Culture and appears almost as frequently as Universality Across Culture. In the sample too, there is no representation of the Source/Local Culture in comparison to the one textual representation of the target culture.

Among the other categories, International Culture has the third-highest number of contributions (see Fig. 6.).

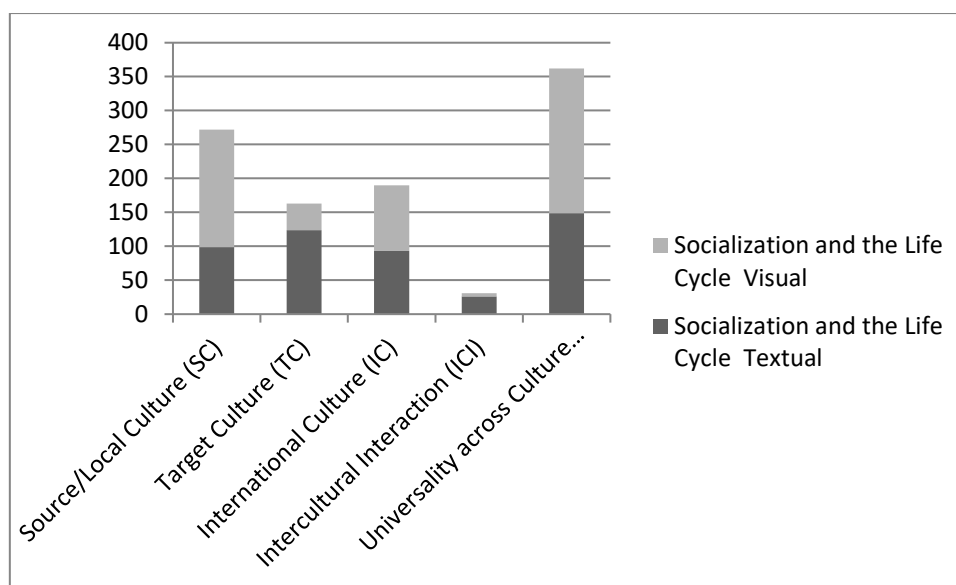


Figure 6: International culture

In the Socialization and the Life Cycle category, the textual representation of Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), Universality across Culture (UC) are as follows: 99, 124, 93, 26, and 149; the visual representation of Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), and Universality across Culture (UC) are: 173, 39, 97, 5, and 213.

In the category of Cultural Identity, Universality Across Culture appears with the highest frequency (see Fig. 7.)

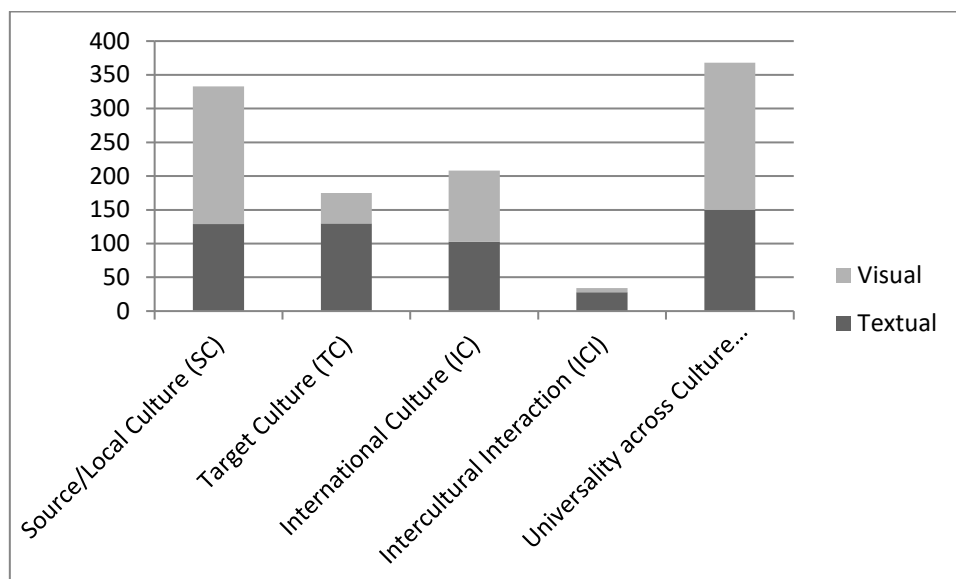


Figure 7: Cultural Identity and Universality Across Culture

The frequency rate of the textual representation of Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), Universality across Culture (UC) are 129, 130, 103, 28, and 150; the frequency rate of the visual representation of Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), Universality across Culture (UC) are 204, 45, 105, 6, and 218.

Intercultural Interaction is the least frequent, with only 2.95%. Of the 33 total representations, 31 are in the category of Socialization and Life Cycle. There is one representation each in the categories of Social Interaction and Belief and Behavior. Intercultural Interaction is not represented in five of the categories on the checklist. The sample analysis also shows no representation of the intercultural interaction. However, it is represented in the Socialization and the Life Cycle category because this category has a high frequency overall (see Figs. 8, 9 & 10).

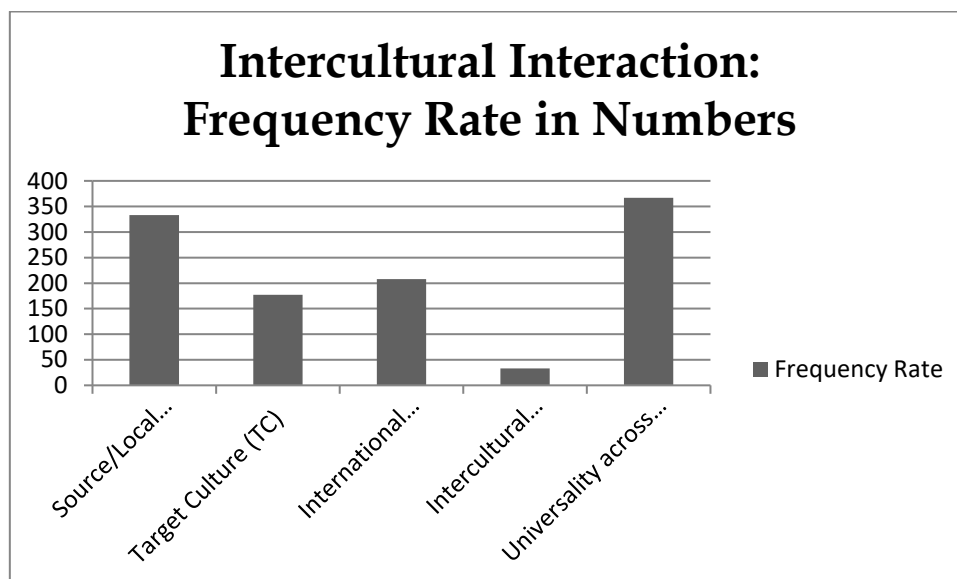


Figure 8

The frequency rate of Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), and Universality across Culture (UC) in the category of Intercultural Interaction are 333, 177, 208, 33, and 367.

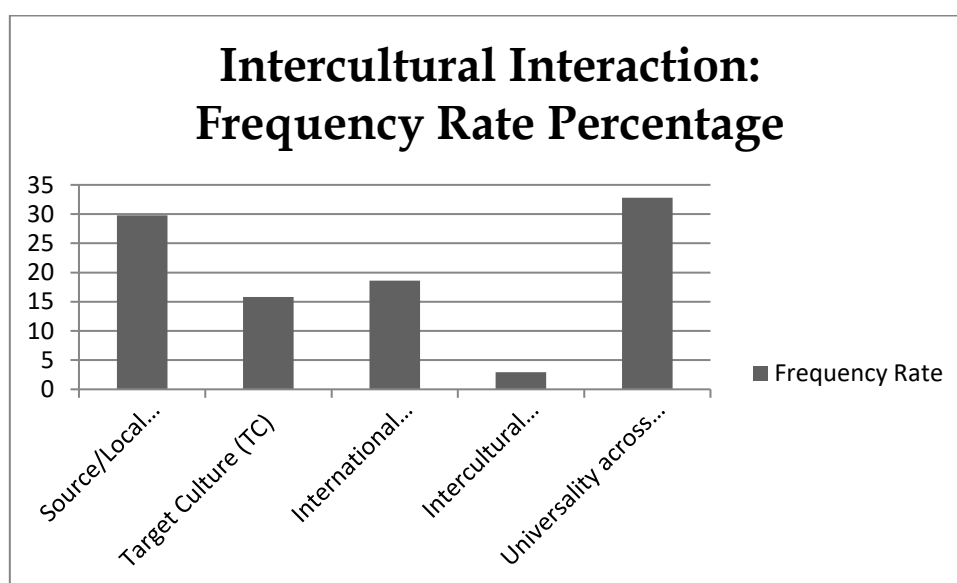


Figure 9

The Percentages of the Frequency Rates of Source/Local Culture (SC), Target Culture (TC), International Culture (IC), Intercultural Interaction (ICI), and Universality across Culture (UC) in the category of Intercultural Interaction are 29.78%, 15.83%, 18.60%, 2.95%, and 32.82%.

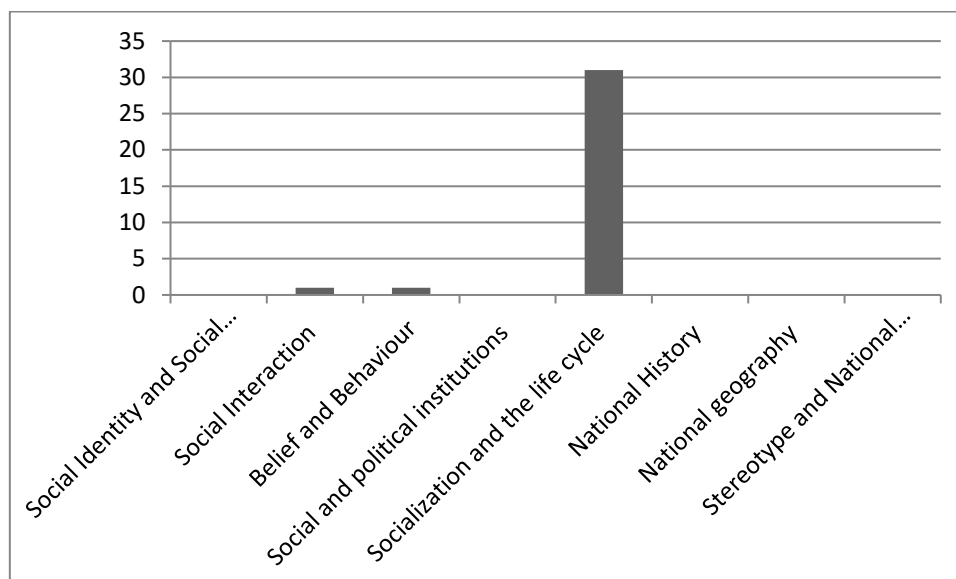


Figure 10

The frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Social and political institutions, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity in the Intercultural Interaction category are 0, 1, 1, 0, 31, 0, 0, and 0.

The frequency rate of the source culture is close to that of the target culture in textual representations (see Fig. 11).

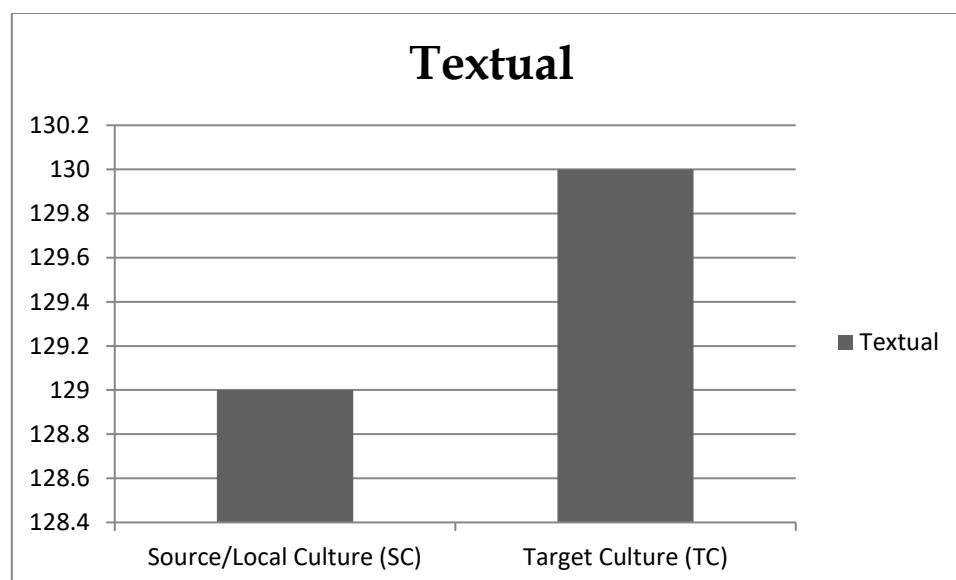


Figure 11: Textual representations of source culture and target culture

The frequency rate of the source culture in textual representations is 129 and that of the target culture is 130.

In the visual representations, the frequency rate of the source culture is higher than that of the target culture. (see Fig. 12). In the sample analysis, all of the four representations under the category of source/local culture are visuals.

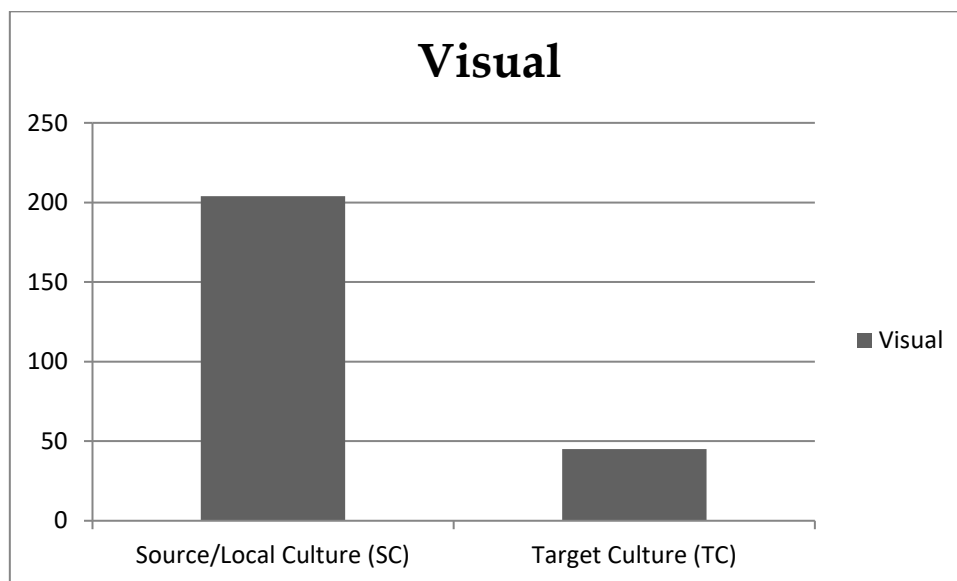


Figure 12: Frequency rate of the source culture

In the visual representations, the frequency rate of the source culture is 204 and that of the target culture is 45.

The frequency rate of the source/local culture in both visual and textual representations is less than that of non-source/local culture (see Fig. 13). The sample analysis clearly indicates a 99% count of non-source/local culture representations.

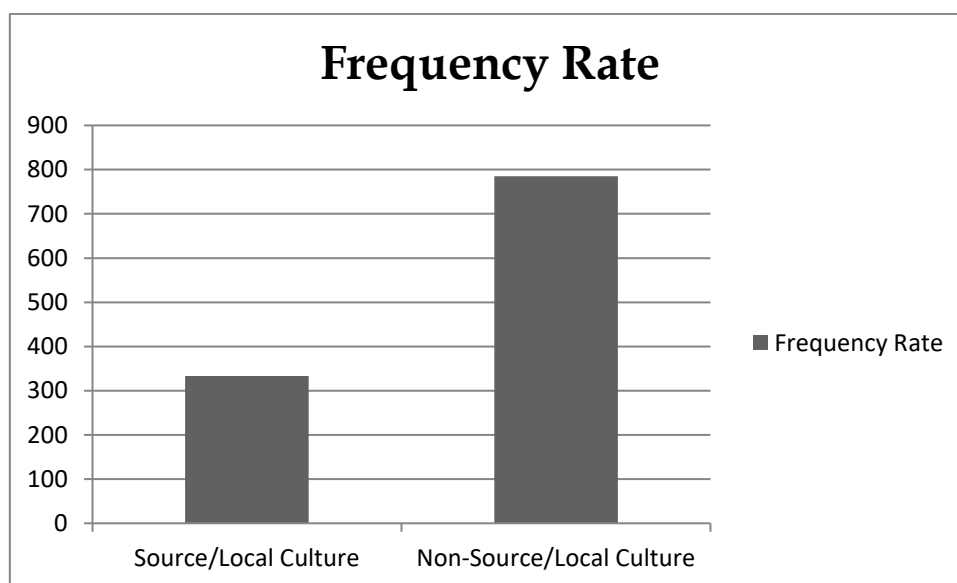


Figure 13: Frequency rate of the source and non-source cultures

The frequency rate of the source/local culture in both visual and textual representations is 333 and that of non-source/local culture is 785.

Among the representations of the source/local culture, the frequency rate of visual representation is higher than that of textual ones (see Fig. 14).

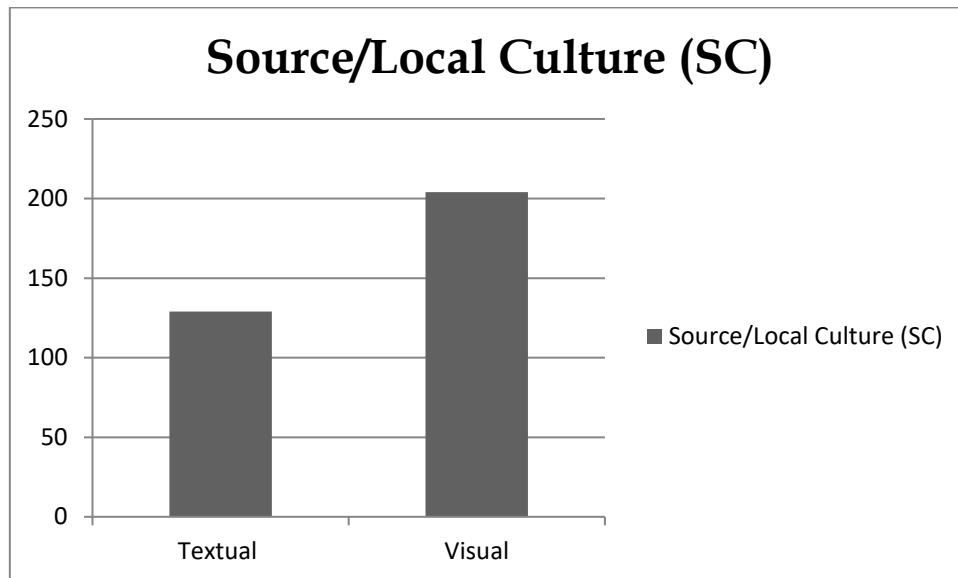


Figure 14: Visual representation of source culture

The frequency rate of textual representation is 129 and that of visual representation is 204. Of the eight categories on the checklist, the frequency rate of source/local culture is equal to or greater than 50% in National History, Belief and Behavior, and Stereotype and National Identity (see Fig. 15).

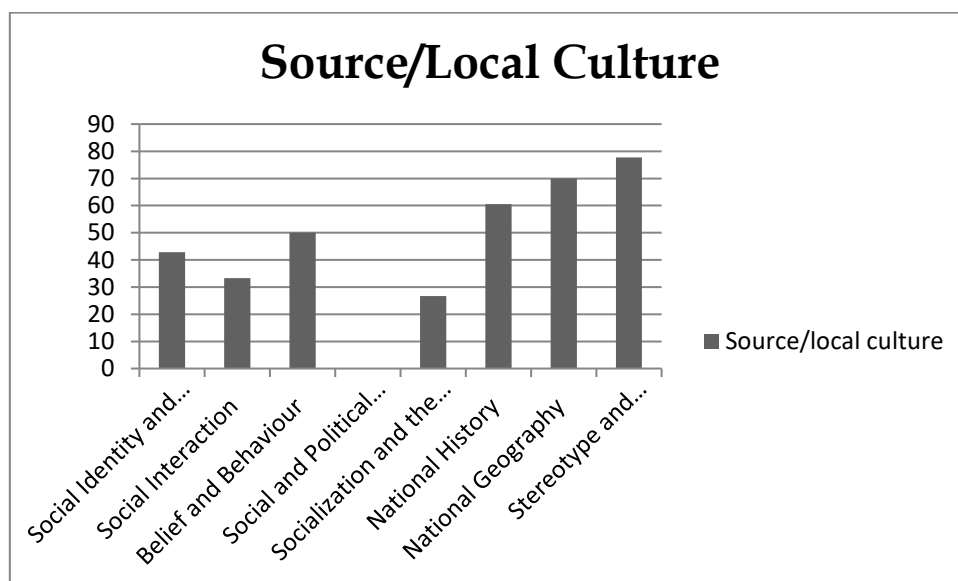


Figure 15: Frequency rate of source culture, national history, belief and behavior, and stereotype and national identity

The frequency rate of source/local culture in Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Social and Political Institutions, Socialization and the Life Cycle, National History, National Geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are as follows: 42.85%, 33.33%, 50%, 0.00%, 26.69%, 60.52%, 70%, and 77.77%.

The frequency rate of the source/local culture is the highest in the category of Socialization and the Life Cycle (see Fig. 16). However, this is less than 30% of the overall frequency rate (see Fig. 17).

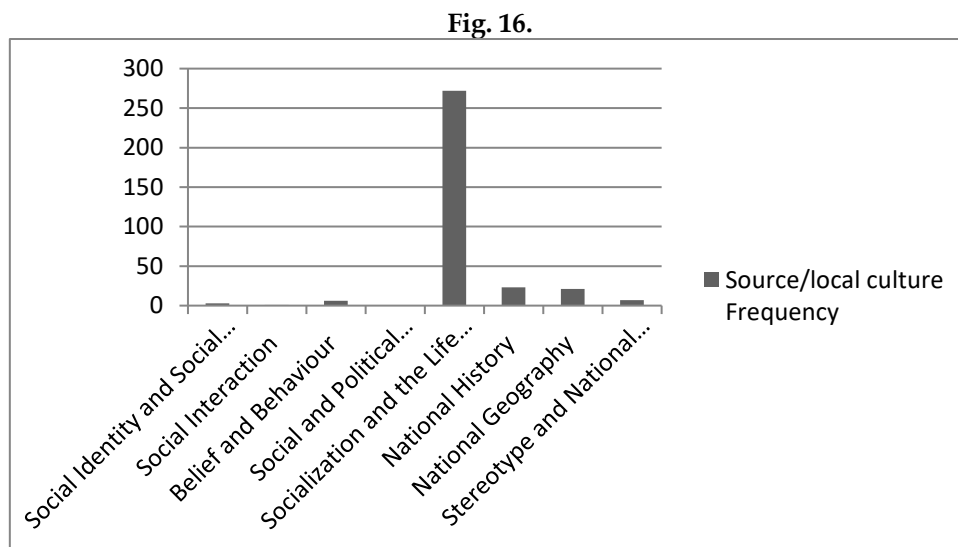


Figure 16: Frequency rate of the source culture in the category of Socialization and the Life Cycle

The frequency rates of the source/local culture in Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Social and Political Institutions, Socialization and the Life Cycle, National History, National Geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 3, 1, 6, 0, 272, 23, 21, and 7.

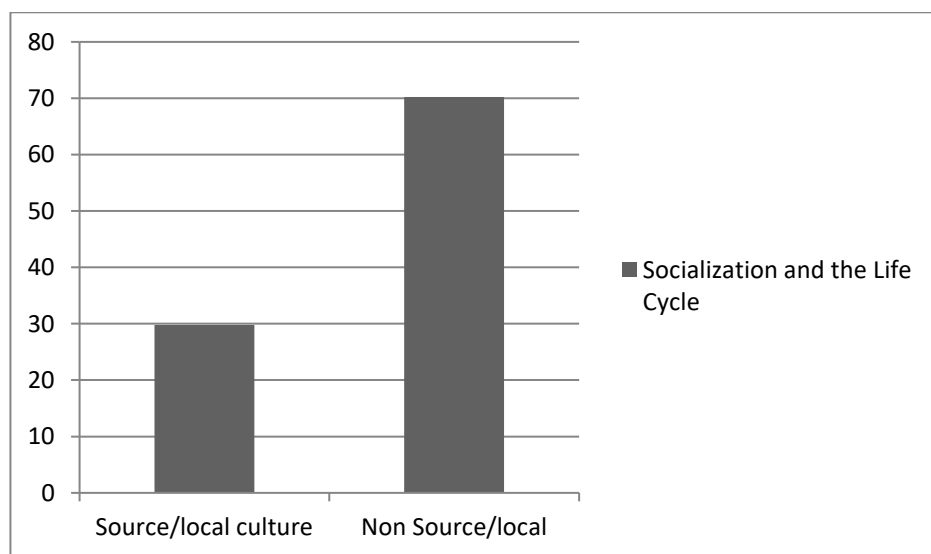


Figure 17: Frequency rates of the source/local culture

In the Socialization and the Life Cycle, the percentage of Source/local culture is 29.78% and that of Non Source/local culture is 70.21%.

The series includes no textual or visual representations of Social and Political Institutions. Similarly, the category Social Identity and Social Groups has no textual representation. Of its seven visual representations, three belong to the source/local culture. The Social Interaction category has three textual representations, of which only one refers to the source/local culture. It has no visual representations.

Among the books, *Mega Goal 1* (student book and workbook) contains representations of all seven categories (excluding Social and Political Institutions). The books for the other grades do not include Social Interaction, Belief and Behavior, and Stereotype and National Identity. *Mega Goal 3, 4, and 5* have very few representations of National History or National Geography (see Fig. 18).

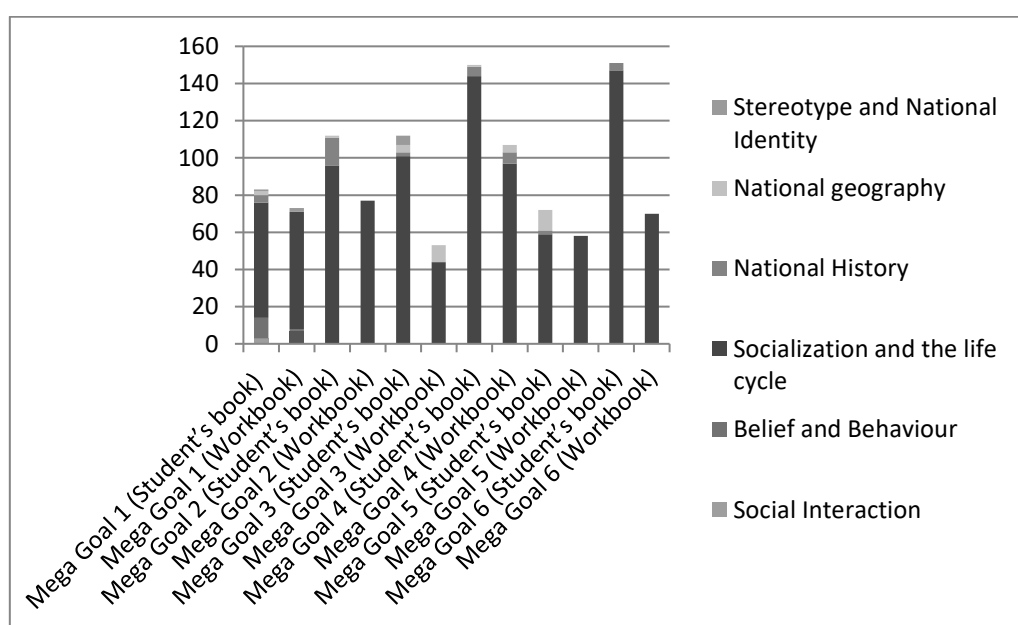


Figure 18: Representations of all seven categories

In *Mega Goal 1* (Student's book), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 3, 11, 62, 4, 2, 1, 0, and 0; In *Mega Goal 1* (Workbook), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 7, 0, 1, 63, 0, 0, 2, 0, and 0; In *Mega Goal 2* (Student's book), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 96, 1, 5, 1, 0, 0, and 0; In *Mega Goal 2* (Workbook), the frequency rates of Social

Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 77, 0, 0, 0, 0, and 0; In *Mega Goal 3* (Student's book), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 101, 2, 4, 5, 0, and 0; In *Mega Goal 3* (Workbook), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 44, 0, 9, 0, 0, and 0; ; In *Mega Goal 4* (Student's book), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 144, 5, 1, 0, 0, and 0; In *Mega Goal 4* (Workbook), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 97, 6, 4, 0, 0, and 0; ; In *Mega Goal 5* (Student's book), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 59, 2, 11, 0, 0, and 0; ; In *Mega Goal 5* (Workbook), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 58, 0, 0, 0, 0, and 0; ; In *Mega Goal 6* (Student's book), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 147, 4, 0, 0, 0, and 0; and In *Mega Goal 6* (Workbook), the frequency rates of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behaviour, Socialization and the life cycle, National History, National geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are 0, 0, 0, 70, 0, 0, 0, 0, and 0.

4.2 Interpretation

The *Mega Goal* series focuses on the Socialization and Life Cycle aspect of cultural content as this category represents more than 90% of the total representations. It deals with everyday events in families, schools, employment, and rites of passage. The concern with social and life events indicates the series' tendency to address the cultural affairs of daily life.

In the total representations, the elements of local culture make up less than 30%. The representation of non-local/source culture is two times higher than that of the source/local culture. Hence, the local lifestyle is underrepresented. Moreover, in the total textual representations, the frequency rate of the local culture is similar to that of the target culture. In the portrayal of facts related to EFL learning, the local culture is forced to compete with the target culture.

In the Socialization and Life Cycle category, the textual representation of the local culture is lower than that of the target culture and the Universality Across

Culture category. On the other hand, the visual representation of local culture is 4.4 times higher than that of the target culture. This denotes that facts from the target culture are used to define visual depictions of the local lifestyle and culture. By emphasizing that the factual base of EFL learning is the target culture, the series prioritizes its knowledge.

The target cultures of America and Britain represent Western culture, which, in turn, has developed the categories of International Culture and the Universality of Culture (Mutua, 2002). Hence, the target culture plays a predominant role in defining objects from the source/local culture. The match in the number of textual representations may seem to suggest that the source/local culture and target culture are equally represented. However, the poor representation of Intercultural Interaction refutes this possibility. It forecloses the EFL learners' equal ability to understand the source/local culture and the target culture. The greater factual/textual representation of the target culture encourages the knowledge and pursuit of the target culture instead of the target language. Since EFL learners can recognize the source/local culture easily, it could be utilized to learn the target culture. However, the knowledge of the target culture is put to no use, as the scope of Intercultural Interaction is very limited owing to its poor representation.

The categories of National History, National Geography, and Stereotype and National Identity are generally ignored. This can be attributed to the poor representation of the source/local culture, which is closely associated with these cultural aspects. However, the series' overall concern with the cultural aspect of lifestyle also contributes to the low representation of these aspects. Hence, the series has ignored the national and local cultural identities of Saudi EFL learners.

The variety of cultural content is not maintained in all of the books. Except *Mega Goal 1*, the other books of the subsequent series contain either very few or no representations of Social Identity and Social Groups, Social Interaction, Belief and Behavior, Social and Political Institutions, National History, National Geography, or Stereotype and National Identity. The absence or poor representation of these categories shows the overall disregard for Saudi EFL learners' need for diverse forms of cultural understanding.

4.3 Explanation

4.3.1 De-valuing the Source/Local Culture

The *Mega Goal* series underrepresents the source/local culture. This is evident in the fact that it makes up 29% of the total representations. Consequently, the series misses out on the benefits of including the source culture in EFL learning. The learners cannot adapt to a foreign culture without a commitment to the local culture (Byram, 1994). Moreover, including content from the source/local culture provides comprehensible input, which is crucial in second language acquisition as it allows learners to understand the EFL text material through the knowledge they have acquired in the source/local language (Krashen, 1985). In addition, cultural material from the target language increases stress and burden among EFL learners (Richards, 2001). The students find the culturally different

materials unusual and irrelevant (Shahed, 2013), rendering the learning experience inconvenient and uninteresting (Thinley & Maxwell, 2013).

In fact, Thinley and Maxwell (2013) demonstrated that translated works from the source culture (Bhutanese folk literature) provide a better and more enjoyable learning environment and a greater scope of preservation and integration of the Bhutanese culture. Source culture material stimulates reading comprehension by incorporating personal and relevant information and experience (McKay, 2003). EFL students can recognize the cultural contents because they are similar to their personal experiences. Their familiarity with the cultural contents encourages easier reading and comprehension of the texts (Gürkan, 2012). Similarly, in the context of Iranian EFL learning, Mahabadi (2013) showed the importance of localized materials in providing the benefits of easy recognition and learning through fun.

Hence, the poor representation of local culture impoverishes the language learning strategies (LLS) of the *Mega Goal* series. The finding accords with those of Ghareeb, who pointed out the absence of thirteen vital strategies for vocabulary learning in the *Mega Goal* series that uses:

“pictures or visuals to guess the meanings of words and remembering them; making one’s own mental images to represent the meanings of words; connecting words to personal experience; connecting words to physical actions; using media; repeating words orally; and analyzing words by breaking them into roots and affixes” (2021, p. 1574).

Evidently, the vocabulary of the series excludes the strategies of using pictures, mental images, and media because such a cognitive exercise requires familiarity with the personal experience of Saudi EFL learners. Since the source/local culture is ignored, the series cannot incorporate these vital language-learning strategies.

4.3.2 Poor Representation of National Identity and Culture

The insufficient use of the source/local culture affects the representation of national identity and culture. National identity is represented by history (Hilton, 2005), geography (Kaplan & Herb, 2011), social and political institutions (Berg & Hjerm, 2010), in-group identification (Meeus et al., 2010), and symbols of national stereotypes (Rezende, 2008). Since the cultural aspects of Social and Political Institutions, National History, National Geography, and Stereotype and National Identity have very few representations, the *Mega Goal* series does not adequately represent national identity and culture. There is only one reference to national history, a mention of Saudi Vision 2030. There are no other historical references.

There are also no references to the diverse social groups in Saudi Arabia. The fact that they are absent from the text means that it does not contribute to students’ intra-group cultural awareness and cohesion. There are also no representations of Social Interaction outside of *Mega Goal 1* student book. Social interaction induces meaningful learning (Wenger, 1998) by engaging students in the tedious tasks of learning and practicing collocations, idioms, and phrasal

verbs by communicating with each other (Bedel, 2016). In Saudi EFL classrooms, its use has been found to be effective in advancing the progress of second language acquisition (Alsharidi, 2018). This finding is in line with the content analysis by Alwehebi and Ghareeb (2021, p. 1575), who argued that “no use is found in regard to the ‘effective strategy’... although it is really important in reducing students’ anxiety, especially in oral activities where students always feel the stress of making mistakes before peers, in developing learners’ inner motivation to learn the foreign language”. The “effective strategy” is an aspect of the social strategy of language use in the classroom, which is achieved through social interaction. Students interact well with local or familiar cultural material (Shin et al., 2011).

Since the series underrepresents the local culture, the scope of social interaction and its representation are drastically decreased. Social interaction results from communication in different cultural clusters facilitated by various social and political institutions (Zarlenga et al., 2016). The absence of social interaction content leads to the lower representation of Social and Political Institutions, Belief and Behavior, and Social Identity and Social Groups. This is because these cultural aspects provide the material that constitutes social interaction.

4.3.3 Imposition of Target Culture

In the *Mega Goal* series, disregard for the source/local culture coincides with the imposition of the target culture. This can happen when EFL textbooks are designed by educators from the target culture (Aldera, 2017). In a study on the Saudi EFL textbook series *Traveller*, Al-Alyani (2017, p. 132) observed that “the subject and content of the textbook is not pertinent to the student’s interests and needs”. This is because the text material is incomprehensible owing to the inclusion of “few topics related to Saudi Arabia” (Al-Alyani, 2017, p. 130). Here, Al-Alyani’s (2017) observations match the findings of the present study that the local culture is insufficiently represented. Like the *Traveller* series, the *Mega Goal* books are prepared by the UK-based publisher McGraw-Hill Education and contain more than 70% non-local cultural material. Apparently, the textual representation of the target culture is matched with that of the local culture. However, this is technically achieved by including international and universal cultural material. This strategy was also identified in Aliakbari’s (2004) study of Iranian ELT textbooks:

53 percent of the books dealt with general, culture-free passages . . . English-speaking countries, Islamic tradition and cross-cultural comparison formed only 3 percent of the content of each. No reference to eastern countries was found, nor was a text exclusively dealing with Iran or the national culture (Aliakbari, 2004, p. 11).

In the Saudi EFL context, the CDA of other textbook series may identify the aforementioned strategy: the imposition of the target culture. The deficiency of representation of the local culture is also present in another Saudi EFL textbook series, *Flying High*. In a descriptive-evaluative study on *Flying High*, Alharbi (2015) attributed the issue of cultural deficiency to the educators’ background in the target culture. Therefore, the present study reiterates Faruk’s (2015)

suggestion for competent educators with Saudi, Islamic, and Arabic cultural backgrounds to [re]-design Saudi EFL textbooks.

4.3.4 Ignorance of Intercultural Competence

The lack of local/source culture also decreases the potential of the series to promote intercultural competence among Saudi EFL learners. The series' emphasis on Socialization and Life Cycle, with the least frequent representations of Intercultural Interaction, undermines the primary goal of EFL learning in the present century: preparing "intercultural speakers who can deal with linguistic and cultural complexity and take part in multicultural situations" (Tran & Duong, 2018). Students cannot develop intercultural competence without a scope of intercultural interaction. The imposition of the target culture in EFL texts does not represent their local and national beliefs and stereotypes or allow them to play the role of "social actor," which would promote nationality in a bicultural or multicultural setting (Abdullah & Lulita, 2018).

Smith (2023) demonstrates that inner-circle dominant perspective and othering prevail over six units of lessons in a well-known, widely used EFL textbook. Zhang and Su (2021) compared and analyzed the cultural representation in English textbooks and discovered differences in the cultural integration of the L1 and L2 in EFL texts in inner, outer and expanding circle countries. The inner-circle countries have the majority of native English speakers in contrast to the outer circle countries where English has spread under imperialism and become an "indispensable communication tool" (Zhang et al, 2022) across various language users. But in the countries of the expanding circle, English serves as a lingua franca for international communication only. The curricula of outer and expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1985, as cited in Zhang & Su 2021) rely on international culture and tend to exclude local cultures in order to teach the L2 and its culture. Since Saudi Arabia belongs to the countries in the expanding circle, the designers of the *Mega Goal* series have ignored the local and national culture. Hence, the findings are in agreement with those of Hamiloğlu and Mendi (2010) and Taki (2008).

5. Conclusion

National identity and culture are important constituents of EFL text materials. The evaluation of these components reveals the extent to which the source culture and language are represented. Source culture plays a vital role in second language acquisition by facilitating and motivating intercultural interaction. The existing studies on Saudi EFL textbooks such as *Flying High*, *Traveller*, and *Mega Goal* have shown that the source culture is underrepresented. The present study reveals how the target culture has been given an upper hand in its ideological representation.

The CDA of the various cultural aspects and categories addressed in the visual and textual materials presents the minute and exact number and manner of imposition of the target culture. The designers of the *Mega Goal* series follow two methods. First, the series ignores cultural aspects that use more components from the source culture, such as Social Identity, Belief and Behavior, and

Cultural Stereotypes. Second, there is a greater emphasis on the knowledge of the target culture. This is achieved by including a greater number of textual representations for the visual identification of the source culture. The focus on daily lifestyle to teach the target language for daily use undermines the necessity in Saudi EFL learning of creating cultural ambassadors with intercultural competence. Since EFL learners do not encounter the source culture when reading and understanding the text materials, the series pays less regard to the category of Intercultural Interaction, which requires a more balanced approach to presenting the source and target culture in the text. The categories of International Culture and Universality of Culture are extensions of the target culture because these categories possess no determinate cultural value and understanding. Moreover, the factual base of the target culture dominates the understanding of these categories in the absence of material from the source culture. Like other Saudi EFL series, the *Mega Goal* textbooks underestimate Saudi students' need for the awareness of national identity and culture in the context of bicultural and multicultural interaction. Hence, the educators who use the series should maintain balance toward a better intercultural and multicultural communication. To compensate for the low Saudi national culture effect in the *Mega Goal* textbooks, teachers should re-create vocabulary learning and post-reading strategies in the classroom with a special focus on and reference to contemporary Saudi historical, social, cultural and national stereotypes, behaviors, and events.

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