# English Language Teaching and Culture
# A Look into Vietnamese English Textbook

by

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# Abstract

This research talks about the use of cultural materials in English language textbook in Vietnam. While the trend of using English heads toward a more international approach, teaching the English language in Vietnam is still in a stagnation. To see how cultural element can help learners in acquiring language, the study first looks at the cultural elements and how they are delivered in this textbook. With content analysis method, the cultural elements and skills are divided into Vietnamese cultures, inner-circle countries cultures, international cultures, and comparison of cultures. By using the ICC (Intercultural Communication Competence) framework, this study wants to see if these cultural elements answer to intercultural competence. Plurilingualism, learners' cognitive and behaviour in using language in different situations, is another concept used in this study to see if the textbook provide learners with skills and know-how to adapt with globalization world. The latter part of the study is some points that local educator and policymakers should remember when using cultural materials in lesson and learning materials.

Keywords: ESL/EFL, language education, plurilingualism, intercultural competence, cultures, international English, World Englishes

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# List of Abbreviations

| Abbreviations | Full words |
|---|---|
| EFL | English as a foreign language |
| ESL | English as a second language |
| EIL | English as an International Language |
| ELF | English as a Lingua Franca |
| ELT | English Language Teaching |
| CLT | Communicative Language Teaching |
| CEFR | Common European Framework of Reference |
| MOET | Ministry of Education and Training |
| L1 | First language |
| L2 | Second language |
| ICC | Intercultural Communication Competence |

# Certification Page

I, <u>LE Anh Phuong</u> (Student ID 51116600) hereby declare that the contents of this Master's Thesis / Research Report are original and true, and have not been submitted at any other university or educational institution for the award of degree or diploma.

All the information derived from other published or unpublished sources has been cited and acknowledged appropriately.

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LE, Phuong Anh

2018/07/24

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Research background

The interrelation between culture and language is not a new topic for social science academic research. In fact, it is unarguable that culture often shapes how language should be. "…language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determine the texture of our lives" (Sapir, 1970, p. 207). Language exists within a culture like the Japanese language in Japanese culture or Vietnamese language to Vietnamese culture. However, in the English language, when we think of culture in English teaching, we tend to bring up British or American life, daily conversation or events. How cultural materials in textbooks being introduced are also based on the assumption of the English language only contains two main cultures, the UK and the US. However, English is now not only restricted to its own territories, rather it is travelling all over the world as a global language (Graddol, 1997).

To be able to communicate internationally, people need a lingua franca[1]. In the globalizing society, we meet foreigners constantly, go outside the country, or make connections through the internet. Not only limited to adults, children begin to meet with people outside of the country more through popular social media such as Facebook. Maybe it is the time to consider teaching intercultural skills in ESL/ EFL classroom to prepare them for the adult world.

Contrary to common belief, knowing two or more languages is not rare even in countries with only one first language (L1), including Vietnam. English is an important second language (L2) in Vietnam, in which most schools teach English

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[1] A common language that people with different languages used to communicate with each other.

as a second language subject. Textbook in the main device of teaching and learning English in the country. With the current examination system, what the textbooks provide is only the surface of the cultures, without a deep understanding of cultures, cultural sensitivity, and cultural skills. With learners of young ages, cultural skills are considered not that important. Instead, the curriculum only focuses on four main skills: listening, reading, writing and reading. In language learning class, especially in the globalizing society, we should start to consider cultural skills as a requirement for language teachers.

The capability to use English in a globalizing world is crucial. In order to achieve this, learners should become fluent in the language. Acquiring a language repertoire requires linguistic abilities and general knowledge. Some might think that if one learned the language, one automatically understands the culture. However, the cultural sensitivity and awareness cannot be understood through vocabulary or grammar. Understanding cultural teaches learners how to react to a certain cultural situation, the mindset to recognise, accept and appreciate the differences in values that are different than the culture that learners are used to. This is where intercultural competence comes to its importance in EFL/ESL classroom. This competence does not limit itself to simply using language fluently, it also includes a set of skills that includes cognitive, affective, and behavioural processes (Liu, 2014). Without this competence, learners of a new language could have difficulties in accepting, understanding a new culture. The interaction between cultures is not static, and students need more than pure knowledge. Skill and ability to keep an open-minded mind is even more important in intercultural interaction in recent years.

Although the concept of teaching cultural skills in language teaching is widely accepted, educators are still having trouble finding a good method to apply

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this to the curriculum or textbooks. Especially in the English language, which is widely spoken around the world and the first language of many cultures, it is hard to find a common ground to satisfy the needs of learners. In the case of Vietnam, students from elementary to high school has gone through the latest change of textbook since 2002, and it has been 16 years since then. While the English language world is changing fast, Vietnamese English program seems to be in a stagnation. In the midst of changing, can the textbook itself keep up with the change in term of cultural content and help students with intercultural competence?

## 1.2.    Research objectives

This research's objective is first to understand the importance of teaching cultural contents in ESL/ EFL classes. The second objective is to recognise the problems with using culture in teaching ESL/ EFL and how to solve some of these problems. This research hopes to be a help for local educational policymakers to start considering which and how cultures should be put in the curriculum or textbooks. Educators who want to apply culture to their teaching should be able to find some useful perceptions to help their students with cultural knowledge eventually assist their language learning understanding from an ESL/ EFL classroom.

## 1.3.    Research questions

Considering the agreement among English teachers of using culture in teaching ESL/ EFL and the lack of uniformity in incorporating, with the method of analyzing the content of English language textbook in Vietnam high school, this research will answer this question:

What should be the focus of using cultural elements in designing a textbook that is able to help English language learners with intercultural competence?

Sub-questions:

- What kinds of cultural elements are embedded and emphasized in the high school English textbook?

- How are these cultural elements displayed in the high school English textbook?

# 2. Literature review

## 2.1. Language and Culture: The reflection of one another

Language and culture are intertwined. To understand the connection between culture and language, we first need to examine the definition of culture.

There are several ways to define culture. Culture, in general, is the way of life. In David Matsumoto's term, culture is '... the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.' (1996: 16) . According to the compilation about a culture by Spencer-Oatey, one of the core concepts of culture is that it can be learnt. 'Culture is learned from the people you interact with as you are socialized' and 'Culture is also taught by the explanations people receive for the natural and human events around them.' (Spencer-Oatey, 2012: 12). Therefore, one from another culture can also learn a new culture. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) defines cultures in "Three Ps": Perspectives, Products, and Practices.

"Products—Both Tangible and Intangible Items: required or justified by the underlying beliefs and values of that culture. Examples include books, arts and crafts, tools, foods, laws, dress, types of dwellings, music, dances, and games.

Practices—"What to Do When and Where": Patterns of social interactions or behaviours accepted by a society, such as rites of passage, use of forms of discourse, social "pecking order," and use of space.

Perspectives: Representing that culture's view of the world, including meanings, attitudes, values, and ideas"

(As cited in Sandy, 2012).

"Language is a guide to "social reality". … it powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes… No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached." (Sapir, 1921). The link between language and culture has always been out there. Like Sapir said in his work, language and culture do not exist apart from each other. It embedded in our belief and practices in daily life. Edward Sapir concluded that it is not possible to understand or appreciate language and culture without one and another. For educators to recognise and understand the existence of the connection between language and culture is significant to consider the application of culture to teaching language and the English language is not an exception.

Language reflects culture or acts as a vehicle to carry culture. In fact, the forms and usages of a language reflect the cultural values, cultural conventions and pragmatic strategies of a society. In the relationship between culture and social communication, Samovar, Porter, & Jain (1981) describe the intertwine between culture and communication. As they cannot be separated, culture indicates how an individual communicates in a social communicative environment, how they interpret the speech and meaning in a specific context with a specific counterpart. Therefore, "Culture...is the foundation of communication." For instance, under the influence of a hierarchy culture, addressing forms/personal pronouns in Vietnamese are not fixed but dependent on a particular context, while those of English are unchanged regardless of situational contexts. Moreover, Thanasoulas (2011) discovers that culture has the grammar of its own. He explains the idea by giving

an example: "When an American sees a bus coming, he almost always uses the present progressive (" the bus is coming"), but a Japanese uses the present perfect ("the bus has come")". He concludes that "the difference between the two cultures lies in the conceptual organization of experience which they choose, or rather are conditioned, to adhere to"(Thanasoulas, 2011, p.9).

Because there is a relationship between language and culture, teaching a language is also a mean of teaching culture.

## 2.2. Culture in ESL/EFL

Culture in ESL/EFL is hard to define. Culture can be the content of teaching materials. This is quite straightforward, for example, how to behave interculturally, how different are cultures, etc. Other cultural materials are almost not obvious, a reading about one countries or about a book can also be culture. How does one decide what culture is in ESL/EFL will be the main focus of this part.

To say teaching culture as a fifth skill is not comprehensive enough. Culture is considered a bigger picture and cover language as a whole. Therefore, it is not completed to study a language without its culture (Genc & Bada, 2005). In fact, "culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one… challenging (learners') ability to make sense of the world around them" (Kramsch, 1993).

This research considers the following view as the complete view to understand the learning of culture in ESL/EFL. Levy (2007) suggests to look at culture as elemental, relative, evident in group membership, contested, and individual. Culture is elemental because it is so embedded in our life that it is

sometimes difficult to see the foundation of our belief, value systems, attitude, and emotion. Teaching cultures is also using learners' own cultures as a framework to learn about other cultures. Even study cultures in relation to others cultures are helpful. Levy also suggests looking at culture in a group relationship, how members of the group maintaining their position through the speech community. Lastly, in order to minimise the conflict in understanding and interaction between cultures, teachers need to raise awareness of point of contesting, and be selective of what and how to deliver cultural knowledge to learners.

Thanasoulas (2011) remarks on culture in language learning: "On a practical note, culture teaching should allow learners to increase their knowledge of the target culture in terms of people's way of life, values, attitudes, and beliefs, and how these manifests themselves or are couched in linguistic categories and forms. More specifically, the teaching of culture should make learner aware of speech acts, connotations, etiquette, that is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour, as well as provide them with the opportunity to act out being a member of the target culture" (p.17).

Therefore, so far, a Japanese language learner learn about Japanese culture, and so on, an English learner will have to learn about native countries culture. However, there is one more point to examine. Culture is diverse, and so is language. Language is diverse because, within only one language, there seems to have a wide range of variation: accents among social classes, countries, communities, etc.(Beacco et al., 2016). The variation of language, in this case, English, causes difficulties for language teachers from their mindset to their clarification to learners. The English language is now playing its role as an international language. The following section will explain more clearly about the variety of English.

### 2.3.    The transformation of English as an international language

The terms World Englishes[2], or English as a lingua franca [3]or English as an international language[4] was proposed with slightly different meaning but with the same innotation that English is now being used across the border without any restriction inside any countries. Kachru's Three Circles of English is important to this research, as it is to prove that the English language does not only belong to limited countries like before.
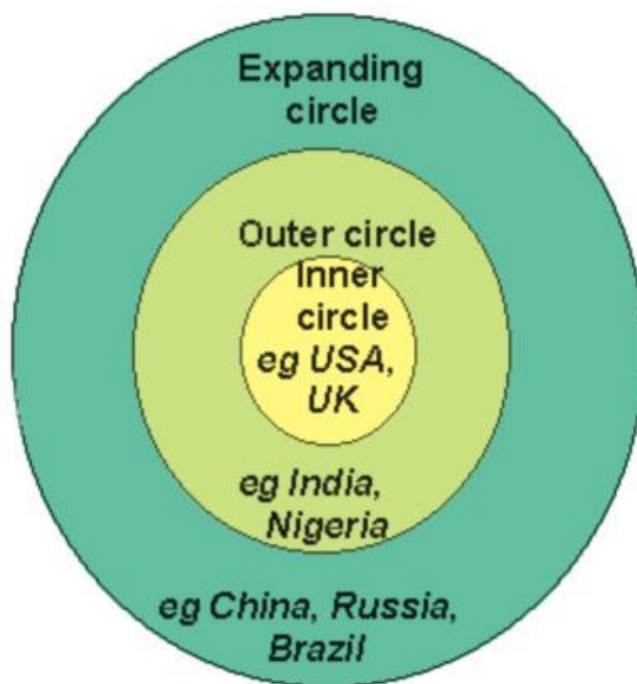


**Fig. 1: Kachru's Three Circles of English (Kachru, 1992)**

Kachru's three concentric circles include (1) The Inner circle: countries with English as a primary language. These countries considered the creator and originator of norms in the English language. Some countries are where English spread to during the first diaspora, such as North America, Australia, New Zealand,

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[2] English with different varieties across the world
[3] English used in business, diploma, trading, activities that involves countries without the same language
[4] This term will be discussed more detailed later

etc. (2) The Outer circle: was produced during the second diaspora, with imperialism on the rise. The British Empire expanded its colonies in Asia and Africa along with the language. In these countries, English is used as a lingua franca in politic, business, schooling systems, etc. but not considered as a native tongue. This circle plays the role of norms developing. Finally, (3) The Expanding circle: countries in which English plays no role in politic, business, or schooling, etc. English is only used as a medium in international communication. These countries include Holland, Japan, Italy, Vietnam, etc. The final circle is actually most difficult to estimate the number of users. However, the number estimated is the highest among the three circles, as shown in the Fig.2.
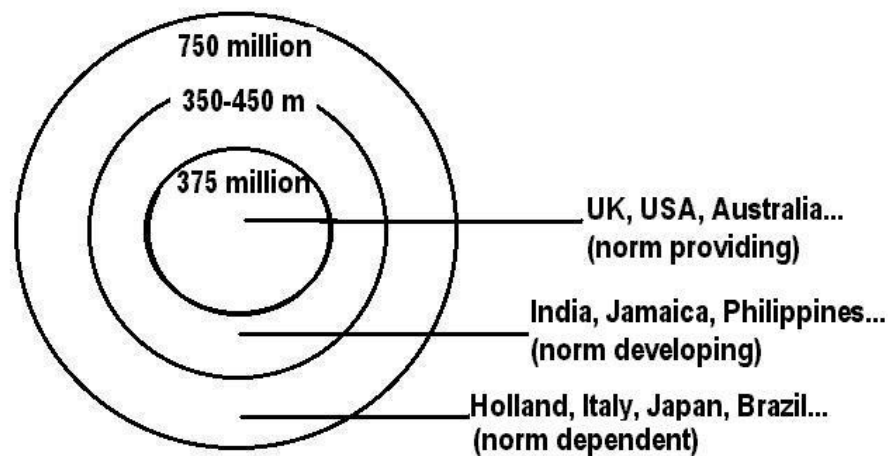


**Fig. 2: Kachru's Three Circles of English with the number of users according to Crystal (1997)**

Graddol (1997) has argued that Kachru's circles were useful in the development of English through history. The inner circle, the norm providing, spread English through migration to other parts of the world and developing their

own national identities. The Outer Circle was spread due to the colonization by English-speaking countries. This circle is developing their own norms in English along with their native tongue. Singapore is a good example of the Outer Circle developing English norm with Singlish (Singaporean and English combined) as a result. In the Expanding Circle, English is used as a more foreign language (EFL). However, Graddol (1997) also notices that this model places a more important role in the Inner Circle. The Inner Circle is the centre of English and the correct model of using English. And only the product, service from those from the Inner Circle can be consumed in the context of English. Therefore, in his book, Graddol has suggested another model on how to look at the shift of the use or role of English in the 21st century.
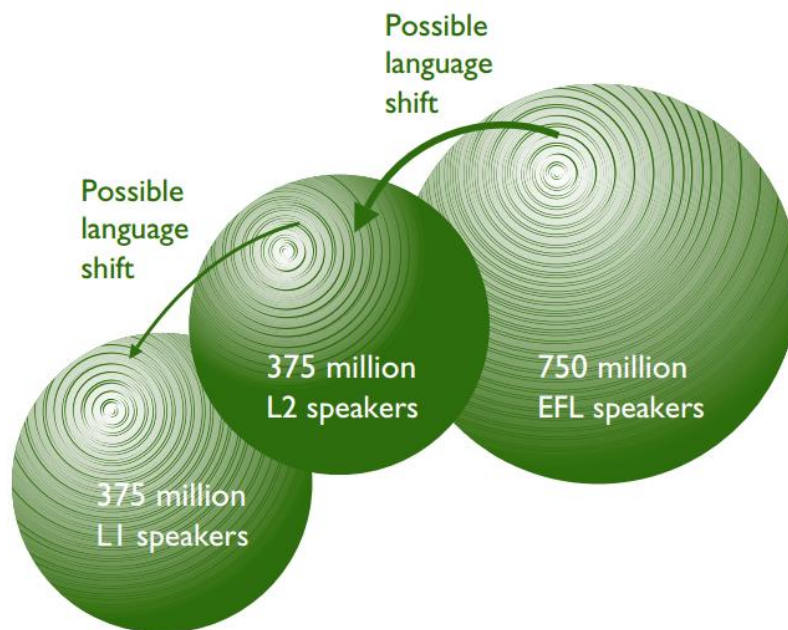


**Fig. 3: The new language shift with overlapping circles (Graddol, 1997)**

The new language shift model suggests that the outnumbered EFL users will "decide the global future of language use." The number of EFL users will grow

exceedingly and the imbalance in number will be much bigger (Graddol, 1999). In fact, "English has developed into local varieties by adopting and adapting to local languages and cultures in its process of inevitable localization and internalization" (Yano, 2006), or in another word "is being shaped, in its international uses, at least as much by its non-native speakers as its native speakers" (Seidlhofer, 2004) . Understandably, if the world once witnessed the emergence of "New Englishes" in Outer Circle countries, then, in the not too distant future it is sure to welcome the appearance of more and more "New Englishes" in the Expanding Circle countries (Görlach, 2002, as cited in Seidlhofer, 2004). The adjective "new" and the plural "es" act as evidence that English today is "a heterogeneous language with multiple norms and diverse grammars" (Canagarajah & Said, 2010) and cultures. Consequently, in the scene of this variety of English, there is a need to identify a way to help learners in the acquisition of this New Englishes.

## 2.4. Using cultures in teaching ESL/ EFL

This research has already discussed the connection between language and culture and the evolution of English as New Englishes. In this section, the research explores more specifically about how culture is being used in teaching ESL/EFL at the present.

### 2.4.1. Culture as content

In the trend of using culture in ELT, cultures of L1 countries have been the model for most English classrooms. From the cultures that use English as L1, pop cultures are not excluded in the teaching of language. Students from younger generations are already absorbed themselves in those cultures, we as teachers might as well as taking advantage of it (Duff, 2002; Pesce, 2015). An example of using

series *The Simpsons* in teaching proposes that may improve vocabulary recognition and enjoyment of learning. Pop music and Hollywood movies can also be a very good source of cultural materials (David, n.d.; Haghverdi, 2015). Some classes use scenes from movies, the conversation among the characters that use the same context or topic or grammar points of the lesson. There are reasons why using pop culture is very popular in teaching ESL/EFL. First, it is easy to engage the students in the lesson using pop culture that goes viral all over the world, especially young generations. Second, social problems and anticipated cultural shock can be experienced through the materials (Rucynski, 2011). In the case of using The Simpsons, slang and idiom are frequently used, which can widen the range of vocabulary and use of words for students. Social problems such as racism and sexism can also be found within the series (Rucynski, 2011). While there are still debates about how teachers should apply this in the classroom. One idea is that as the range of materials is huge, the teachers cannot control what the learners will pick up in the lessons. Swear words and insults are intense in pop culture materials, especially in pop music (Duff & Sandra, 2012). Learners might pick up the words and use them without a full understanding of the meanings. The results of misunderstanding without correction can be very dangerous for learners in the future. Therefore, the use of pop culture in the lesson have to meet two criteria: to meet students' interest and educational goals.

However, New Englishes cannot be fully learnt if the only culture is Inner Circle countries' cultures. Cortazzi & Jin (1999) identify three cultural materials that can be used in the English classroom. The first is source cultural material or learners' own culture. The second source is the cultural materials from the cultures where English is used as L1. The third source is international materials. Not only

limited to the source culture or native culture, this source draws materials from a variety of cultures around the world. This kind of materials corresponds well to the ICC (Intercultural Communicative Competence) framework, which will later be explained in chapter 3. Some scholars consider culture as just a tool to explore the intercultural differences and not the actual content of English teaching (Agnieszka, 2011; Corbett, 2003, p. 19). Culture in this sense is part of the structure of the lesson. On the whole, it can be concluded that the basis of cultural content in materials for New Englishes teaching in all circles should be a combination of both inner-circle countries' cultures and outer- and expanding circle countries culture. The model will give students chance to establish a sphere of interculturality, get familiarized with a diversity of cultures, reflect on their own culture, compare and contrast cultures, thus developing their critical cultural awareness (Coperías-Aguilar, 2007) and intercultural competence: the sensitivity to other cultural norms and the ability to adapt and function appropriately when interacting with people from other cultures (Alptekin, 1993).

### 2.4.2. Problems with using cultures in teaching ESL/ EFL

For native language teachers, the pre-assumption that native speakers could provide a good model of cultural and language skills has a strong effect on learners. However, Kachru (1986) suggested that the norms of inner-circle are not necessarily appropriate for English as an international language or lingua franca. Therefore, native-speakers' frame of cultural understanding and assumption are not put in the correct place. Even though learners learn a new language with the hope of fluency and understanding level that of a native speaker, but learners of L2 will not and never be a native speaker of L2. "By definition, a second language user is not a monolingual and will never be, just as women and men are incapable of

changing places. (...) L2 users have to be looked at in their own right as genuine L2 users, not as imitation native speakers. (...) The L2 user is (...) a type all of its own: bilingualism is not double monolingualism but a different state" (Cook, 1997). Students have the right to learn English at their own pace, so that their production of the language can be something from their own, not simply the strange and foreign speech from imitation of native speakers.

With the rise of new economies of traditionally non-English-dominant countries such as, Singapore, India, etc. which are now having their own kind of English (Hinglish, Singlish, etc.), English can be no longer viewed as connected to the culture of the traditional English-dominant countries (Baker, 2009). Although language and culture have some connections, for the case of English as an international language, it can have more cultural meaning, or in other word, languacultures. For English, ESL/EFL teachers can separate between language and its inner circles. (Risager, 2006)

With non-native language teachers, some problems with using culture in teaching ESL/ EFL mentioned are: the choices of topics and stereotyping; and the changing role of English and motivation to learn the language (Agnieszka, 2011).

# 3. Methodology

## 3.1. Overall national curriculum in ELT in Vietnam

English language in Vietnamese educational context is considered to be one of the major subjects in the curriculum along with Literature and Mathematics (MOET, 2017). Therefore, English language education receives a lot of attention from not only educators but students and parents. English language teaching in Vietnam, especially public school relies heavily on the textbook. The main reason is that of the University Entrance Exam held every school year. However, the exam focuses heavily on reading skills, vocabulary and grammar knowledge without a test on speaking or listening skills. The teaching and studying method are, therefore, following this pattern. This research, however, does not concern itself with skills and knowledge of linguistic content, rather with the cultural factors that are shown through the content and instructions of activities and information students receive through the textbook.

English textbook in Vietnam was designed with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as a model. It considers forming and developing communicative skills such as listening, reading, speaking, writing the final objective of the teaching progress (Savignon, 1997). Language knowledge such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar is considered means, or conditions to form and develop communicative skills. The content of the book is topic-based. This approach is to choose and arrange teaching content. MOET has published a list of actions that teachers should follow in teaching English.

- Consider students as the subject of the teaching process. Students can actively, positively, creatively in the process of forming and developing

communicative skills. Teachers only play the role of moderator controlling this process.

- Use suitable English teaching methodologies in order to innovate teaching method, at the same time, help students form their own learning method.

- Help orientate the change of testing and assessing method to encourage learners to learn more actively and more effectively.

- Manage teaching process, assessing language knowledge and communicative skills and effectively evaluate teaching and learning quality.

Moreover, for the target of learning language, specifically in the subject of English language, the list of goals which was introduced in the curriculum for English learning is shown below:

- Use English as a tool for basic communication in the form of listening, speaking, reading, writing.

- Have basic knowledge, relatively systematic and complete about English that is suitable for level and psychological characteristics of the ages.

- Have a general idea about the country, human, and culture of some English-speaking countries. From that, students will have affection and a good attitude for the country, human, and culture of some English-speaking countries. Be proud, love and respect culture and language of the Vietnamese nation.

(Ministry of Education and Training, 2005)

This lists the goals of what students would gain in English proficiency after using the textbook. In these goals, the focus is more on linguistic abilities side than

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cultural knowledge side. Cultural knowledge is considered to be important in this process of obtaining the English language.

The curriculum of English language in Vietnam adopts the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) standard for language education. Therefore, this explains the choice of using European framework in the case of Vietnam later for this research.

The testing system in Vietnam is also one important point to consider. One of the most significant examinations in Vietnam is the University Entrance Examination, which is conducted every year. This examination happens after students finish their 12-year education in order to be qualified or a university. The most recent change in this examination put high focus on the English subject as it becomes the required subject to be tested. In the language test, the content is said to be about everything in the textbook from high school. In the actual test, the structure of the multiple-choice-test includes pronunciation, intonation and stress, vocabulary, grammar and reading. There is no test on speaking, listening, and writing skill. Although, in the textbook, communications skills are theoretically put in equal height with other skills. Therefore, students and teacher alike, do not have to pay much attention to the skills that are not covered in the examination. This problem of testing causes an imbalance in Vietnamese students' skill in English. Researchers show that although Vietnamese students have great knowledge and skill in reading and complicated grammar problems, however, they cannot communicate well using English.

Base on the Vietnamese curriculum for English subject alone, communication skills useful for expressing thought and ideas are put in high

importance. In the national examination for English, most of those skills are neglected. This puts the question of whether the textbook follows the curriculum or the examination? Additionally, English-speaking countries' cultures were mentioned in the curriculum. The extent of "English-speaking countries" is unknown. This study has talked about the extension circles of English in groups of countries. In the context of Vietnam, "English-speaking countries" mostly refer to mainly the inner circle and part of outer circle countries. Vietnamese culture is also part of the curriculum. There is no mention of cultural knowledge of non-English-speaking countries. However, the actual distribution is analysed in the later chapter.

## 3.2. Content analysis

Content analysis refers to "a method used for analyzing and tabulating the frequency of occurrence of topics, ideas, opinions and other aspects of the content of written or spoken communication" (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 2002). "Content analysis is a research method for studying documents and communication artefacts, which might be texts of various formats, pictures, audio or video. Social scientists use content analysis to examine patterns in communication in a replicable and systematic manner. One of the key advantages of using content analysis is its unobtrusive nature as this method usually involves systematic reading and observing of texts or any artefacts and is considered safe for examining any social messages (Maier, 2017). With the systematic reading, researchers can put labels or codes to a set of text. By choice, researchers can analyse patterns by using a quantitative method or qualitative method to analyse the meaning behind the text (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Krippendorff, 2004).

The qualitative approach to content analysis is to preserve the advantages of a quantitative research of a more systematic categorization. One of the

advantages of qualitative content analysis is that it put categorization in the centre of analysis. "The aspects of text interpretation, following the research questions, are put into categories, which were carefully founded and revised within the process of analysis (feedback loops)"(Mayring, 2000).

In order to answer the research questions about what cultural content appears in the textbook, this research uses the content analysis method with both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data is only used to see the frequency of each cultural context and act as a small part of the analysis. Most of the data are qualitative data, using text in the textbook as the main focus of the analysis.

### 3.3. Conceptual approaches for the data analysis

The concept of intercultural competence and plurilingualism are used to interpret the collected data, to see if the English 12 textbook can meet the CEFR standards. The reason for using 12th-grade textbook is explained in later part.

In Council of Europe's view, plurilingual education and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) are put together parallelly. While plurilingual competence acts on a smaller scale (language focused), the ICC consists of a combination of intercultural skills and does not limit to language skills. However, both concepts consider "languages are the expression of different cultures and of differences within the same culture", and can "provides a basis for an identity open to linguistic and cultural plurality and diversity." (Cavalli, Coste, Crişan, & Ven, 2009)

#### 3.3.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

In order to communicate interculturally, language learners need various kinds of cultural knowledge, skill, and critical cultural awareness. Byram (1997)

lists a number of ICC's savoirs, including 1) savoir (knowledge), 2) savoir-comprendre (the ability to interpret), 3) savoir-apprendre/faire (skill of discovery and interaction), 4) savoir s'engager (critical cultural awareness/ political education), and 5) savoir-être (curiosity and openness). These savoirs were adopted by the Council of Europe in CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference). Communicative competences which have relations to cultural knowledge are considered general competences. CEFR takes into account that only linguistic competence is not enough for communicative competence as human knowledge is also a big part of successful communication. The general competences are composed of the abovementioned five savoirs, which are described as follows:

- Declarative knowledge (savoir): knowledge of the world, sociocultural knowledge, and intercultural awareness. These knowledge are common knowledge that language learners need to know prior to, during, and after the process of learning language. Knowledge and understanding of their own culture and other cultures, and awareness of similarity and differences among cultures are some factors needed for learners to develop cultural competences.

- Skills and know-how (savoir-faire): Practical skills and intercultural skills are considered important as they require learners to behave in a certain way in a particular culture. Moreover, learners of a language need to be the mediation between two cultures.

- 'Existential' competence (savoir-être): Understanding of learners own personalities and attitude are believed to help learners with the development of awareness and correct attitude towards intercultural communication.

-       Ability to learn (savoir-apprendre): "In its most general sense, savoir-apprendre is the ability to observe and participate in new experiences and to incorporate new knowledge into existing knowledge, modifying the latter where necessary. Language learning abilities are developed in the course of the experience of learning. They enable the learner to deal more effectively and independently with new language learning challenges, to see what options exist and to make better use of opportunities. Ability to learn has several components, such as language and communication awareness; general phonetic skills; study skills; and heuristic skills."

(Council of Europe, 2011)

Deardorff (2009) introduced another model for intercultural communicative competence. It is identified through cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills in communication across cultures. Three characteristics of intercultural competence are described through five skills that can be obtained through learning or experience:

**Mindfulness:** the ability to be cognitively aware of how the communication and interaction with others are developed. It is important to focus more on the process of the interaction than its outcome while maintaining in perspective the desired communication goals.

**Cognitive flexibility**: the ability to create a new form of information base on old information. This skill opens to the possibility of newness and understanding perspective.

**Tolerance for ambiguity**: the ability to maintain composure in a situation where information is ambiguous. It also helps students to systematically determine the best approach to uncertainty.

**Behavioural flexibility:** the ability to adjust and accommodate behaviours to a different culture. Knowing a second language is not enough, the individual must also be willing to change according to the culture.

**Cross-cultural empathy:** the ability to understand and empathize in an emotional way with other cultures. This skill connects people in with emotions, compassion and train students to be understanding and think with more than one perspective.

The two models have suggested the sets of skills required in intercultural competence. However, the basic model should go back to be three factors: attitude, skill, and knowledge (Howard-Hamilton, Richardson, & Shuford, 1998). This research tries to investigate the basis of ICC through two detailed models.

### 3.3.2. Plurilingualism

Intercultural competence is the combination of learners' linguistic skills and behaviours to understand, interpret and accept cultures that are not their own. This competence does not only limit itself to only language ability but also includes the basis of understanding among human. Plurilingual competence has to do with "capacity to successively acquire and use different competences in different languages, at different levels of proficiency and for different functions"(Cavalli et al., 2009). Plurilingualism "highlights the plurality of cultures one may identify and is familiar with" (Lenz & Berthele, 2010)

There are differences between multilingualism and plurilingualism though these concepts are often linked. Bilingualism or multilingualism is considered the ability to use two or more languages and is the opposite of monolingualism, to be put more exactly, this ability happens in the same geographical area. People in this

area feel the need to learn another language in order to live and work, therefore, they are considered multilingualism. For the multilingual concept in teaching language, translation and code-switching can be seen as negative as different languages are considered to be different entities. Mixing language is seen as "a corruption of their mother tongue and an indication of the language deficiency of the speaker" (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995).

For plurilingual education, code-switching is regarded as common practice and have a positive effect in understanding a new language (Corcoll López & González-Davies, 2016). As the core of plurilingual education is the plurality of cultures, and sequentially, languages. Plurilingualism is the repertoire of two or more languages of an individual, besides his or her mother tongue or native language. A person who possesses plurilingualism can switch between languages according to the situation, which is the ability affiliated with cultural knowledge.

Plurilingual education promotes:

"(1) an awareness of why and how one learns the languages one has chosen

(2) an awareness of and the ability to use transferable skills in language learning

(3) a respect for the plurilingualism of others and the value of languages and varieties irrespective of their perceived status in society

(4) a respect for the cultures embodied in languages and the cultural identities of others

(5) an ability to perceive and mediate the relationships which exist among languages and cultures

(6) a global integrated approach to language education in the curriculum"

(Council of Europe language education policy)

Plurilingual is a more liberal step of language education as it does not require learners to become "native speaker" or act like one. Moreover, it uses the learner's own repertoire to build upon. The focus is more on cognitive and behaviours abilities of learners. The combination of "plurilingual and intercultural competence is the ability to use a plural repertoire of linguistic and cultural resources to meet communication needs or interact with people from other backgrounds and contexts, and enrich that repertoire while doing so" (Beacco et al., 2016). Therefore, this research sees these competences to be important in building language skill of learners.

Language education in Vietnam, especially in English language education, has been saying it would adopt the language standard system of Europe. As the Council of Europe has been trying to implement this new concept into its language education, language education in Vietnam might have to consider in using this concept in designing the new textbook.

## 3.4. Material for analysis

The textbook chosen for this paper is twelfth grade English textbook, basic version. The reason for choosing this level is because the twelfth grade is the highest level in Vietnam public school educational system. According to the new framework for foreign language proficiency, after completing twelfth grade, or high school, learners' level of English should be around level 3, or the pre-intermediate level. In general, at this level, the student should be able to:

- Understand the main idea of a proper and clear paragraph or speech about familiar topics, such as jobs, school, entertainment, etc.

- Handle almost all situations happens in the target language.

- Write a simple paragraph about familiar topics or learners' own interest.

- Describe experience, event, dream, hope, ambition, and explain briefly reason, ideas and plans.

   (Ministry of Education and Training, 2005)

The requirement of the twelfth-grade textbook is quite vague. However, they are divided into two sets of skills: linguistic skills (understanding paragraph, write, explain, handle) and cultural knowledge (familiar topics, conversational situations, learners' own interest, ideas and thought).

In twelfth grade, students have already had a basic knowledge of the language and the world outside. They have an interest in interacting with the outside world and actively trying to reach out. Moreover, twelfth grade is the time before they go to college, where English does not have to be mandatory to have a more official system anymore. With the official textbook published by the Ministry of Education in Vietnam, it can reflect the trend in teaching ESL/EFL in the country.

Textbook in Vietnam is designed by the Ministry of Education and closely reflects the curriculum. In the Vietnamese context, where the curriculum and textbook are monopolized by only the MOET, it makes sense to examine the materials that almost every student in Vietnam has to study. Moreover, this textbook reflects the view of language education of MOET clearly as this is the only textbook used in Vietnamese public schools. The result extracted from this research might shine a light on where and how the curriculum can change toward a more realistic, and intercultural way.

**3.5. Analysis procedure**

The analysis in the twelfth-grade textbook is to identify which cultural elements are shown and how they are shown in the textbook in reference to the ICC framework and with the new proposal for the guidelines. It takes the following two steps.

(1) Cultural activities and content: For the analysis, the number of cultural material is divided into four categories:

- Vietnamese culture-oriented activities and content
- English-speaking-countries culture-oriented activities and content
- International oriented activities and content
- Activities to compare and contrast cultural items

The total number of activities in the textbook is counted and each category has its percentage of appearance. This step can answer the question of the distribution of cultural contents and activities.

(2) In the divided section, this research analyses how cultural items are displayed and explained in the book. By using ICC and plurilingual models, the research hopes to see the problems behind the cultural items.

**3.5.1. Analysed content**

The textbook is divided into 16 units. Below is the list of topics in the book.

| Unit | Name |
|------|------|
| 1 | Home Life |
| 2 | Cultural Diversity |
| 3 | Ways of Socialising |

| 4 | School Educational System |
|---|---|
| 5 | Higher Education |
| 6 | Future Jobs |
| 7 | Economics Reform |
| 8 | Life in the Future |
| 9 | Deserts |
| 10 | Endangered Species |
| 11 | Books |
| 12 | Water Sports |
| 13 | The 22nd Sea Games |
| 14 | International Organizations |
| 15 | Women in Society |
| 16 | The Association of Southeast Asian Nations |

Each unit has 5 parts: Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing, and Language Focus (Pronunciation and Grammar). Each part has its own activities and requirement after each activity. Since the Language Focus part is only about the linguistic knowledge, which is not the centre of this paper, it is omitted from the analysis.

Each part of the unit has three stages: Before…, While…, and After…. These stages response to the PPP Approach (Presentation, Practice, Production) to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

### 3.5.2. Analysis device and useful concepts

In the analysis, by using Cortazzi & Jin (1999) as a suggestion on how this research should divide the cultural contents, source cultural materials, English-speaking-countries' cultural materials, and international materials will be taken note and considered. Moreover, as the book claimed to be a focus on communicative competence of the users, how intercultural knowledge and know-how happen in the textbook also play a big role in the analysis.

In order to have quantitative data for the analysis, this study uses a table of analysis (See appendix) as a device to note and count the number of cultural content. Each activity in the book is noted down as number in their section name and unit. By using the coding scheme explained in later part, characters are be written down to classify each activity. The number of each category is counted and analysed using two concepts of ICC and plurilingualism.

### 3.5.3. Coding Scheme

In this study, four main coding schemes are used to classify each activity that appears in the textbook. These codes are used as a label to identify and count the number of frequency. The process and criteria for coding are described as follow:

| Code | Explanation |
|------|-------------|
| **VC** | Vietnamese culture. Activities which provide students with the chance to talk about their countries, their selves, or something that is familiar to them in their everyday life, belong to Vietnamese culture-oriented activities. |

| EC | English-speaking countries' cultures. Activities that provide opportunities for students to learn about target culture (cultures of Inner Circle countries: USA, Britain, Canada, Australia, etc). |
|---|---|
| IC | International cultural activities. Activities that provide activities and content for students to learn about international culture including cultures of countries in the region and around the world. |
| CC | About learning cultures on a deeper level and developing advanced intercultural competence. Activities that provide opportunities for students to examine, compare and contrast cultures. |

Establishing such coding schemes makes it easier to classify the data and discuss the result.

### 3.5.4. Criteria for classification

This research sets up its own criteria for classification for each category, according to Jin & Cozart's division of cultural content in English teaching. Below are the steps for setting up criteria for analysis.

(1) The first step is to understand what is **cultural content and activities**. For this, I divide them into knowledge and skill. Knowledge includes the content of any country's culture, general knowledge of the world, everyday life activities. Skill includes communication skills, compare and contrast concepts, expression of ideas and thought. These criteria exclude items that only focus on linguistic skills (sentence forms, vocabulary, etc.).

(2) The criteria for choosing an activity or content as **Vietnamese cultural content** is the mention or involvement of Vietnamese context, everyday life, special events, traditions, etc. The most production process involves students talking about

themselves or introducing something that is close to them such as family, famous attractions and hobbies. If the instruction of production involves students' selves in the Vietnamese context, it would be classified in this category. (VC)

(3) For **English-speaking-countries' cultural activities and content**, students have the chance to explore Anglo-Saxon cultures (British and American). (EC)

(4) The criteria **for International cultural content** is any non-Anglo-Saxon cultures except Vietnamese culture. One more point to consider is global issues such as environment, organizations, etc. These issues are mentioned without any given context, therefore, will be classified as an international culture. (IC)

(5) The last criteria are chances for students to develop awareness of the differences and similarities between cultures. (CC)

# 4. Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents the result of the analysis, the analysis of the findings and discussion on the results. The answer to the research questions is presented throughout two parts of the analysis.

## 4.1. Cultural content and activity

Every task in each section (excluding Language Focus section) of the units included in the book is considered as the unit for analysis, the counted number is 222 activities. Thus, a part of examining the main research question is to reflect on the score of the entire cultural activities in comparison to the general activities included in the textbook.

A detailed examination of all the activities in the textbook reveals a noticeable score of 63.1 per cent for the activities that contain cultural reference out of all the activities included in the book. This suggests that the textbook does provide students with the good amount of cultural knowledge and understanding.

|  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 222 | 100 |
| **Cultural activities and contents** | 140 | 63.1 |

**Fig. 5: Number and percentage of cultural activities and contents in the textbook.**

For the cultural distribution, the percentage is counted on the number of cultural activities and content but not the total number of activities. The amount of frequency does not add up to the total number of cultural activities and content as in some activities, they can duplicate. One speaking activities can involve both American culture and Vietnamese culture.

The overall division of cultural content and activities are shown in the graph below. In general, Vietnamese culture takes most of the content and activities in this textbook. Next is English-speaking countries or inner circle countries. International cultural context takes the least portion. This research goes deep into each section of culture appearing in the next part. Considering the portion, the rate of appearance and some special examples are given and analyzed by using the framework from the Council of Europe for language learning.

|  | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| **VC** | 67 | 47.9 |
| **EC** | 40 | 28.6 |
| **IC** | 63 | 45 |
| **CC** | 6 | 4.3 |

**Fig. 6: Number and percentage of the distribution of cultural activities and content.**

### 4.1.1.  Vietnamese culture oriented

|  | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| **VC** | 67 | 47.9 |

**Fig. 7: Number and percentage of the distribution of Vietnamese cultural activities and content.**

The purpose of teaching an international language is to facilitate the communication of learners' ideas and culture in an English medium, materials for EIL teaching, therefore, should include the home culture of learners. The analysis has shown that Vietnamese culture takes 45 per cent of the cultural materials in this textbook. By this, Vietnamese culture rank first in term of cultural content. This

number proves that this textbook does provide students with many opportunities to talk about their own countries. This allocation of Vietnamese culture is a step up to make English "embedded in the culture of the country in which it is used" (McKay, 2002). This part of the cultural content answers to the 'Existential' competence according to the ICC framework. This helps learners to develop their own awareness of their nationality, personality, and social reality. Learners not only can appreciate their own culture but also use learnt English "skills and know-how" to express their feeling.

Units that focus mostly on Vietnamese culture are 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 16. Unit 1 focuses on home life of the students. Students have many opportunities to talk about their selves. In the speaking section, students are required to talk about their own families. The flow of the lesson matches the requirement for a speaking lesson. Students first have to work alone. Then, work with some partners for the question and answer segment. Finally, students present their result with their original partner. This section mainly focuses on the students' real life and experience. Something that students are familiar and used to motivate students to speak more. Unit 2 talks about cultures more than other units. Especially in the listening and speaking section, they have a chance to discuss Vietnamese traditional wedding and "nón lá", which is a Vietnamese symbolic traditional hat. Although unit 3 focuses more on English-speaking culture, it does provide one interesting activity for students to explain "the meaning of whistling and hand-clapping in Vietnamese culture". Unit 4, 5, 6 talk about schooling for high school and university and jobs, which help students to express their own feeling for school and the future. The reading lesson in unit 7 is devoted to "Doi Moi" (Renovation) initiated in Vietnam in the late 1980s. In Unit 16, the writing section, students learn how to

write a letter to a foreign friend to introduce famous locations in Vietnam. Throughout the remaining part of the book, although the topics are not explicitly Vietnamese, however, book writers were managed to put Vietnamese cultures as follow-up activities. For example, for one unit on the SEA Game, which is an international event, there is an activity where students have to talk about their favourite Vietnamese football player. This activity both get students to talk about their selves and use Vietnamese context at the same time.

### 4.1.2. English-speaking-countries culture oriented

|  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **EC** | 40 | 28.6 |

**Fig. 8: Number and percentage of the distribution of English-speaking-countries cultural activities and content.**

Inner-circle countries' cultures are presented with the least privilege in this textbook. This category accounted for 28.6 per cent of the cultural content and activities. This category partly contributes to the "Declarative knowledge", which help learners to understand other cultures. Most of this category's materials is a reading text and listening speech. The chance for students to actively work in this category is evidently less than Vietnamese category. This can be inferred that Inner-circle countries' cultures stay as general knowledge rather than practical skills.

The modest proportion of inner-circle countries culture seems to be a step up in diverting new English from English used in native countries. The culture of Inner Circle countries no longer predominates. However, it is not necessarily to be completely abandoned. Twelfth grade English textbook is careful not to entirely turn back to the culture of Inner Circle communities and there are good reasons for

this cautiousness. First, students in Vietnam, like in many other expanding circle countries still need native norms to pursue academic purposes. Second, native communities still take up a portion in global communication. Therefore, it is by no means a waste for Vietnamese learners to learn about the culture of Inner Circle communities provided that such a culture is not the only one they learn about.

English-speaking-countries culture-oriented products, practices, and perspectives appear most in units 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12. In unit 2, American perspective on love is in comparison with the Asian way of thinking. Unit 3 provides students with non-verbal communication skills in English. Mirrored with the "cognitive flexibility" and "behavioural flexibility" proposed in the ICC, this acts as a chance for students to learn how to understand and act in a different culture than their own. Unit 4 is about the school education system in England. Changes in the American workforce are mirrored in unit 6. In the reading lesson of unit 9 students learn about deserts in Australia and in unit 11, listening lesson, they listen to a report on the novel "The Incredible Journey" by Sheila Burnford, a Canadian writer. Unit 12 tells students about how synchronized swimming was invented and developed by Americans.

### 4.1.3. International oriented

| | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **IC** | 63 | 45 |

**Fig. 9: Number and percentage of the distribution of international cultural activities and content.**

Taken the second amount of appearance, International cultural content and activities appear in 60 activities, equal to about 45 per cent. This shows the book

authors conception of new English, that it is necessary for English to become a medium to expand learners' concept of the world. Same as English-speaking-countries cultural content, this category partly contributes to the "Declarative knowledge" of learners.

A noticeable point is that most international culture belongs to ASEAN countries in unit 13, 16. This priority of ASEAN countries reflects the focus of Vietnam's interaction of regional politics at the time. For unit 13, which is about the 22nd SEA Games which was held in Vietnam in 2003, the focus is mostly on the game and how each country took part in it. Units 16 talks about the Association of Southeast Asia nations. In this unit, the discussion is about the special features of each country in this association. This creates a great chance for students to learn about neighbouring countries, especially about the languages, religions, and human of the countries. A significant number of reading and listening text about common topics such as jobs, life in the future, endangered species, a woman in society, and water sports appear sequentially in unit 6, 8, 10, 12, 15. These topics cover information that can be seen, used and fit nearly everywhere in the world, thus, labelled as an international culture. In unit 15 on women in society, the unit provides not only information about general women's rights movement but also a typical day for African women. This piece of information delivers more than just culture in Africa, it concerns with the topic of feminism that is attracting attention as a big global issue. The density of international culture in the textbook can be seen as an evidence of the global use of English as McKay (2002) remarks: "it [English] is central to a growing global economy, and it is the major language of a developing mass culture" (p.15)

### 4.1.4. Intercultural communication competence activities

Although the above sections prove that the textbook indeed provides students with sufficient cultural materials from varieties of contexts, for learners of twelfth grade, which is the highest level of mandatory education in Vietnam, critical thinking and cognitive mind are in order. There is more to intercultural communication competence than simply "understanding cultures", analysis of cultures on a deeper level is a more advanced step in the study of cultures. The textbook should provide learners with the opportunity to compare and contrast cultures.

|  | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| **CC** | 6 | 4.3 |

**Fig. 10: Number and percentage of the distribution of comparing and contrasting activities and content**.

These activities are regrettably limited just to only 6, equal to about 4.3 per cent of the cultural activities and content. In unit 2, they are exposed to cultural perspectives of Americans and Asians on love and marriage, thus gaining some comparison and contrast of these cultures. Then, the only chance for them to compare and contrast the school system in Vietnam and in England is found in unit 4. In the listening lesson of unit 15, they compare a typical day of an African village woman with that of a woman in their family. Encouragingly, they have some chances to talk about diversity within their home culture in units 1, when they compare the family in the reading text with their own and talk about differences between a traditional Vietnamese family and a modern Vietnamese family. Nonetheless, the chances are few in the textbook. Unfortunately, this modest

comparison and contrast of cultures clearly restricts students' reflection on their own culture, their awareness of the relativity of cultural values, and their intercultural competence development

In order to see how the textbook makes communicative competence possible for learners, this study sees deeper into the chosen unit, that is both satisfied the conditions of multicultural interaction knowledge and intercultural skill. Unit 2, "Cultural Diversity", discuss the differences between different cultures, at the same time, encourage students to speak about this matter using the medium of the English language. That is why unit 2 is deemed appropriate for the analysis.

For the reading section of unit 2, students are first asked about their opinion of a happy life then led to a reading text about "the idea of love and marriage" of America and Asia. Finally, it is a group discussion on "the differences between a traditional Vietnamese family and a modern Vietnamese family". The reading section first provides students with the "Declarative knowledge" and that there is a recognition of differences between cultures, in this case, American and Asain cultures. While Asian culture is something that Vietnamese students are used to, American culture can be new and exciting information to students. To add new information to understanding in more than one perspective is one of the focus of plurilingual education. The target of the topic is not to the state for or against an idea or belief, simple statement of the differences between two cultures. Therefore, this activity can motivate the cross-cultural empathy, which helps learners to develop an emotional connection with another culture. The group discussion can be quite diverted from the main reading, however, this is still a chance for students to contrast and compare things that are both familiar to them.

For the speaking section, there are three tasks involved in this section. The first part is mainly to provide students with an expression that help them describe their points of view. Following closely to the PPP model, the first step is a presentation, to provide students with necessary expressions to discuss the differences between Vietnamese and American culture. Task 2 responses to the practice stage, where students are given a list of typical American culture and work in pair to discuss the corresponding features of Vietnamese culture. In this stage, students can practice using the expressions in task 1 to add more content to the comparison. Task 3 is the combination of expressions and content of preceding tasks. Group discussion is on the similarity and differences between Vietnamese and American culture. This section can evoke students to work actively. Expression of cultural similarity and differences support students to express their respect and understanding of a culture. Moreover, English in this sense has become the mediation of cultures.

Listening and writing sections do not follow the pattern of previous sections which this study deems regrettable. Both sections' topic is about Vietnamese cultures. Listening section discusses Vietnamese traditional wedding. Writing section requires students to write a paragraph about Vietnamese "conical hat" with the given information. Although it is good that students can learn and talk about their own culture, however, in the unit about "Cultural Diversity", students should be asked more on the "diversity" and not only the "cultural".

On this chapter of "Cultural diversity", the book presents the differences and similarities of cultures, and that students should have an open mind to perceive other cultures. This is a good effort to expand learners' perception of cultural differences. The content of this unit only appears in the factual level and does not

actually help learners with behaviours or skills needed in an intercultural situation. However, the "diversity" of cultures only exist within America and Asia in this unit. With the aim of plurilingualism, this unit needs a significant change to provide learners with intercultural competence.

**Summary of the analysis:**

With the highest percentage of Vietnamese culture in the textbook, this research can safely say that the book can mirror the "Existential competence" from the ICC framework. With International culture coming in second place, and English-speaking-countries culture in third place, this textbook does try to overcome the domination of the natives. 'Declarative knowledge' is definitely evident in the book. However, intercultural skill and ability are lacking. This proves through the insufficiency of activities that promote the differences and similarities between cultures. The content of cultures is satisfied. Then again there are still problems with this content than its imbalance. The following part discusses more on the problems of cultural contents emerging in this textbook.

### 4.2. Problems of cultural content and activities

The preceding part only presents the rate of appearance for each cultural context. In this section, problems with the cultural content are identified and discussed.

#### 4.2.1. Problems of presentation and authenticity

Identifying cultural contents in the textbook can be complicated. The reason for this problem is the exact classification of cultures. This problem mostly surfaces in reading and listening section, in which characters and contents are not labelled as any nationality and sometimes even anonymous. This poses not only a difficulty

for this research. More than that, learners are being forced to learn about "not only imaginary ... but vacuous, empty of life" (Prodromou, 1988). The way the textbook is designed with fake and made-up contents might demotivate students in the ELT classroom. Without an authentic cultural information, students receive no real knowledge of life and left confused about what they have just learnt. This research lists some noticeable proof of this problem and what future book authors can do to improve on this point.

1. Unit1 - Reading text

The problem is the subject of the reading text, only "I" without name or nationality. Students are reading about a text without any context, what ways of life are they learning about? The study had found some clues for it to be fit in Vietnamese culture: working hours (8 a.m to 5 p.m), eel soup, a division of labour (women as household caretaker), men do not like to cook. Any indications about the writer's nationality, or some more specific facts about Vietnamese culture could help students to see the culture of this reading text.

2. Unit 1- Listening text, Unit 3 - Listening text, Unit 4 - Listening text, Unit 5 - Reading text, Unit 5 - Listening text, Unit 5 - Listening text

The problem here again is characters with no nationality. However, the indication is their names: Paul, Linda, Jenny, John, David, etc. which are names in English-speaking countries. Nevertheless, this is not enough proof to consider this activity of any specific countries. Some texts include clues such as university name (St. John's College), activities that appear more in

the inner-circle countries (a large proportion of international students, social workers, write essays, long reading lists, etc.)

Supposing that learners can obtain some information that is from other countries, they have no clues to know which specific countries that piece of information belongs to. This raises the question of this problems can cause the overgeneralization of cultures. As authors in this book have the tendency to group similar together and discuss as if they are all the same.

The textbook includes made-up countries names such as Fantasia and Tango in unit 7 and unit 15. There is no information on Fantasia except for their economic reform in the 1970s in the speaking section of unit 7. Fantasia appears again in unit 15, the writing section, where students have to write about the housework division between two genders. Another fake country is Tango, which is described to be a South Atlantic country which went through the problem of exporting drugs in the Listening section of unit 7. In the same unit, writing section, students are asked to write the report about before and after the economic reforms in the 1980s in Tango. The question here is why students should learn anything about a made-up country. If the answer is to help students with speaking and writing skill, to practice in comparing and describing table and graphs, then it might be good to use this kind of information. However, to stimulate learners' intercultural competence, this kind of information is not any help for students as it is not real, therefore, learners gain no actual cultural content. The best way to do justice to this problem is using real information from real countries, this way, learners can achieve the skills and knowledge of a different culture.

On the topic of authenticity, there is an uncertainty about whether the information provided in the textbook is real or not real. From the reading text in unit 2, the author mentions about "a survey was conducted among American, Chinese, and Indian students to determine their attitude toward love and marriage" (Extracted from reading text, unit 2, textbook English 12). There is no reference to the survey or how, when and where the survey was conducted. Same things with the reading text in unit 5, there are interviews with three students on "their first impression of university life" (Extracted from reading text, unit 5, textbook English 12). Some texts with real information such as unit 8 (Deserts), unit 10 (Endangered Species), unit 12 (Watersports), unit 14 (International Organizations), etc. with fact-based content, graphs, and tables in this book does not have their source stated as references. This problem is not only about the genuineness of these contents but also the copyright or plagiarism.

Vietnamese textbook is following a 10-year pattern. The content of textbook will be changed after 10 years. The books this study is using to analyze is the 9th edition, which means students have to study with the content date back to 10 years (or more). Most students can find some of the content are not relevant to their current life. The chosen topics are safe as they are quite common (books, future jobs, sport games, etc.).  There is no topic on recent events, trends, or new technology. The big event described in the book is the 22nd SEA Games sport event, which was held in 2003. One of the reason this topic was chosen in this book is that it was a new and first international event held in Vietnam, at that time. However, as for now, there is a question of whether students are excited to talk about a sports event happened more than 10 years ago. For young adults, things that they can be eager to talk about is social media, new technologies, etc.(Lenhart, Purcell, Smith,

& Zickuhr, 2010). It is sensible to choose safe topics, but it is not a good mindset to keep the same content for more than 10 years. Learners of every generation change and need more cultural materials in the scene of globalization.

### 4.2.2. Problems of overgeneralizing and unculturally cultured

Diversity within cultures is not ensured in the textbook. For example, the cultures of ethnic minority students in rural areas in Vietnam are not presented. The textbook portrays the images of urbanized and rich people. The life described in the textbook may be alien to students that live in rural areas or come from a poor family; therefore, it is difficult for them to relate what they learn in the textbook to their own real life's experience. Therefore, teachers in charge with the textbook should prepare supplementary materials which are suitable for this particular group of students, such materials that could narrow the gaps in terms of cultural information that the textbook leaves for them.

In the unit about "Cultural diversity", the reading text examines the differences between American and Asian cultures. Although American culture in this reading is quite specific, Asian countries mentioned is only China and India. There is no diversity within Asia in the reading. This grouping triggers the contradiction between the content and the title, whereas students are supposed to learn about diversity rather than a simple division of cultures.

Unit 15, "Women in society", again, is the problem if overgeneralizing with African countries. The listening text only provides information about how women work in Africa, no other mentions about the countries or areas. Unfortunately, this overgeneralization can make students believe there is an actual country named Africa, which happened during my high school years in Vietnam.

Although the cultural information is cultured, however, the way they are groups together to be described is not cultured in any way. That is why in this way, cultures are displayed in an uncultured manner. This is a problem because stereotyping is easily the result of this way of presenting cultural information. Textbook authors have to be careful of the way cultural content is portrayed. The first step is to use explicit information in a specific country rather than a statement of a group of countries.

### 4.2.3. Problems of cultural inapplicability

In unit 3, Ways of Socialising", the reading text introduces some ways of attracting attention by using non-verbal communication in English; the extract is a suggestion for students to use this form to attract teacher's attention. 'In most social situations where some informality is allowed, a brief raise of the hand and a small wave is fine. For instance, if you are walking across the schoolyard and see your teacher approaching you, a small friendly wave to attract his or her attention is appropriate." (Extracted from reading text, unit 3, textbook English 12). In reality, Vietnamese culture does not allow students to use "a small friendly wave" to attract their teacher. In most Vietnamese contexts, students have to approach the teacher they want to attract, wait until the teacher sees them, then, and bow their head to greet the teacher before doing anything. If the teacher in charge with the reading text does not clarify the differences between Anglo-Saxon cultural convention and Vietnamese cultural convention in using non-verbal communication to attract somebody's attention, students may be left with the impression that the English students are rude to their teachers. They may also think that their Vietnamese culture is too strict, not so "democratic" as English culture and get some feeling of

dissatisfaction with their own culture. Neither of the extremes is the outcome that we expect.

### 4.2.4. Problems of self-work

In most reading and listening lessons, students are asked to answer factual questions and discuss the reading texts. In the speaking section, they are expected to imitate the sample dialogues (fixed in structure) and use prescribed language and expressions. In writing lessons, students read samples, adopt the organization and styles of the samples and then write something similar in English. Organized in this way, the textbook only helps students to learn language in a robotic way. It does not help students realize the differences in rhetorical styles, discourse conventions between Vietnamese and British/American cultures, nor does it provide enough chances for students to reflect and make comparison and contrast between their home culture and other foreign culture.

On topics that are supposed to be familiar with students, taken from writing a section of unit 2, a table with a list of information about the conical hat (nón lá) is presented fully as cues for students to write a passage. In the speaking section, unit 15, where students are required to discuss in the group about women and work, two tables are presented. One is the expressions that are used to express their opinions, the other is statements of agreement and disagreement on the topic. In this method, students almost need not think but attaching statement together to create a sentence. One of the categories for ICC is "Tolerance for ambiguity", which users of this textbook cannot achieve easily. The information is all presented clearly (and exactly) for learners, without the need to research and explore on their own. On speaking section in unit 2, there is a table that clearly differentiates Vietnamese and

American cultures. Students are supposed to fill in the corresponding features of Vietnamese culture, which turns out to be completely opposite to American culture. This clear division is almost not good for learners of culture as they can reach a certain level of stereotyping.

It is good that students can receive information in order to accelerate the process of learning. Consider that Vietnam's class time is only limited to 45 minutes, and the requirement is to finish a whole unit in one week. Consequently, because of this strict time constraint, students cannot explore or research a problem by themselves in the classroom. This is suitable for teaching grammar, a common expression, vocabulary, etc. However, no actual development of intercultural competence is in consideration when most of the time students learn English passively.

**Summary of the findings**

This research aims to answer the question of what kind of cultures is being introduced to students in Vietnamese twelfth grade English textbook. By using the framework from CEFR of intercultural competence and plurilingual education, this research can conclude some important points:

First, the native speakers' cultures are not the sole culture that students learn about in the textbook; rather, it also includes the home culture of learners and cultures of other countries in the region and around the world, making a considerable cultural coverage and diversity of the textbook content. This diversity of cultures in the textbook helps to reflect a fact that multiculturalism characteristic of New Englishes has been taken into consideration by the authors.

Second, while the treatment is lean towards the home culture and international culture, the textbook ensures a reasonable distribution between three types of culture: the students' home culture (i.e. Vietnamese culture), the target cultures (i.e. cultures of Inner Circle countries) and the international culture. In other words, the textbook English 12 is not native speaker culturally biased. In this sense, the textbook can little by little solve the problem of native speaker myth, and promote English as an international language or lingua franca.

Third, however, the activities in the textbook more emphasize the linguistic accuracy or the development of language skills rather than the development of students' intercultural communication competence. This is evidenced in the limited activities that require students to compare and contrast cultural differences and examine the cultural content critically.

Fourth, the real problems do not lie in the distribution, but the actual content of cultural materials. Some identified problems are presentation and authentication, overgeneralizing, cultural inapplicability and the problem of students' self-work. These problems might raise as bigger difficulties for students when they want to learn about a new culture.

Overall, from the perspective of CEFR of teaching English and culture teaching with the inclusion of home culture, international culture, and target culture this textbook does satisfy the distribution of cultural content. However, it does not quite satisfy the intercultural competence and plurilingual education, students do have many opportunities to understand the cultures. Furthermore, this textbook does have a lot of problems to solve before it could help students use the World Englishes.

# 5. Discussion and recommendation

## 5.1. Discussion

In this discussion, the research would like to expand more on the topic of teaching English in Vietnam. This discussion is not only about the teaching of culture or language, rather, it is about the whole scene of language education, intercultural competence, and plurilingualism in Vietnam.

### 5.1.1. ESL/EFL in the context of Vietnamese education

In this part, this research hopes to discuss some of the influences on the choice of teaching ESL/EFL in the case of Vietnam. There are some reasons that are divided into educational systems and overall politics situation.

There are many reasons to explain why the English textbook in Vietnam has problems in introducing cultures to students. First, this research wants to mention the education system again. Teaching ESL/EFL in Vietnam is considered one of the most important subjects in recent years, alongside Mathematics and Literature. As one of the required subject for the National Examination, students have to learn English in order to graduate high school. Vietnam has a high-achievement education culture, children will bring pride to the family if they have a high score in this examination and qualified to go to a public university. This examination is highly competitive. Language subject in school also has to answer to students' requests for learning the language "efficiently" – mean to pass with flying colours. First, it is necessary to look at the major keys of the English test: pronunciation, intonations, vocabulary, grammar, conversation, reading. Listening, speaking, and writing skills are omitted. Although there is conversation skill, it is just a test to choose the correct reply in a conservational situation, and it involves no act of

speaking. In order to learn the test "efficiently", teachers in the classroom have to choose to sacrifice some skills, which usually are listening, speaking, and writing skills to focus more on the content which will be on the test. By this, even though the cultural content in the textbook is there, students might learn only about 50% of these contents. Furthermore, when most of the productive skills are left out, students rarely have the chance to practice these skills of expressing their ideas and belief, which considered one of the intercultural competence abilities. The curriculum for high school students is not laid-back. It is heavy and received a lot of criticism in recent years. For a normal high school, basic curriculum, students usually have 45-minute class, 4-6 periods for English per week. In one week, students and teachers have to rush to finish one unit, and sometimes must set aside time to include review lesson and tests. With this heavy curriculum, teachers here have to make a choice again of what to teach, what activities to use. This is why the teaching and learning process usually leave out self-work, as scarce as they are in the textbook. The importance of learning English is known to many Vietnamese people, but on how to teach and learn the language in school is still in debate.

One more reason for the lack of cultural content in teaching language is teachers themselves. According to the Ministry of Education and Training (2015), the requirement more being a high school English teacher is listed as:

- Have graduated from a pedagogical university, of teaching certificate

- Have level 5 language skills (according to Vietnam's Foreign Language Framework)

- Have basic knowledge of IT skills

In 2017, only 52.3 per cent high school English teacher have enough qualification. In fact, when this qualification just come out, many teachers have a problem with the second requirement. Level 5 in Vietnam's Language level for English is equal to the C1 level in European standard. The number was more devastating, only 2.3 per cent in 2011. However, that just talks about the qualification, the actual skills of teachers are also problematic. Most English teachers cannot listen and speak English well (Đặng Trinh, n.d.). In fact, in a small research in a high school in Ho Chi Minh City, only 14.7 per cent of teachers use only English as the language in the classroom (Phạm Anh, n.d.). This research does not consider using the students' mother tongue is bad for the lesson, on the contrary, using learners' L1 can help them process the lesson easier if used in a careful way. However, using mostly Vietnamese in English classroom as instruction and explanation could not be suitable at all. For newly graduated teachers, the university has already required a C1 level English certifications as a fulfilment to graduate. The problem is with high school teachers that have been working before this decree. A big number of teachers have a lot of problems getting the C1 qualifications (time, money, training, etc.).  "It is a race against time.", "We do not have enough time to make quality lesson plans because we have to go to English class again." (Lê Huyền, 2017). In addition to the harsh examination and overloaded curriculum, language teachers in Vietnam do not have much choice in making their lesson plans innovative, fun, or anything involving cultural knowledge.

Political belief and message is another noticeable trace in the textbook. Unit 7 about Economic Reforms is one proof of this movement. The content of this unit is mainly about how the Vietnamese government change the whole face of Vietnamese economic before, during and after this period. All the content and

numbers lead learners to believe this is the correct way to go and the authority of the Communist Party. The trend of this period is also shown through the priority of appearance of ASEAN countries. Taken the situation in the time around this book was made to account, Vietnam was in its way of globalization and the first step is around South East Asia cooperation. The focus on these countries is a reflection of political movement at that time. In 1995 Vietnam joined the ASEAN nations, and it was considered the first big step for Vietnam at that time. The 22nd SEA Games is another big event that marks Vietnam's first step to an international stage. The MOET tries to advocate the belief of the government in the schooling system, therefore, the choice of cultural content in the textbook.

There are some reasons for the choice of teaching ESL/EFL in the Vietnamese context. Every reason in needed to be examined. Since the long-lived belief of Vietnamese students is to learn to earn a high score, the first step to change can be the way of examination and curriculum, followed by teachers' training and students' learning method. Why is change necessary? Vietnam is step by step going out into the world. First was ASEAN nations, next was WTO in 2007, so there is no reason why ESL/EFL should stop the way it is for more than 10 years.

### 5.1.2. Difficulties in teaching intercultural competence in Vietnam

In this part, first, it is necessary to understand the image of teaching intercultural competence in Vietnam and what students can benefit from these lessons. From the ICC framework by the Council of Europe, having intercultural competence means that students can make the connections between different cultures and have the abilities to react and communicate in an appropriate way. Moreover, they can develop a system which can help they explore new thing while

connecting with what they have already known. By achieving this, students need English as a medium rather than a result of the learning process.

English in Vietnam is considered to be a result base of the fact that the score is the final result of the whole process of learning the language. One example of this is after high school graduation, university students cannot speak and listen to English at all. Moreover, they struggle to learn for another certification, which is TOEIC, to graduate from university (Chu Thanh, 2018). This repeating circle of learning English has become the standard for most young adults in Vietnam. Students are not interested in English that they can use, but the tricks and tips to pass the test. Teaching and learning methods of passing the exam take the concept of English as a medium away from its original purpose of communicating with people from different cultures.

English as a medium means that students can use English to communicate and Vietnam, which has a very mono ethnicity, cannot provide enough environment for students. To answer this problem, a lot of English centres are being opened in Vietnam. Most of the centres advertise themselves as only using native speakers (Quyên Quyên, 2018). The native speaker myth is very strong among Vietnamese people and they believe that every native speaker cannot be wrong about English and only native speaker can serve as a correct model for communication in English (Nguyen, 2013). However, the qualification and teaching methods of these native teachers are very questionable (Bích Thanh & Kim Nga, 2016). This myth harms not only the job for Vietnamese language teachers but also the concept of World Englishes. If most Vietnamese believes in this myth, then only native cultures matter in the process of learning English. Learning and teaching English in Vietnam will stray from its globalization nature, but rather Americanization or Britishization.

More difficulties are explained in the previous part as Vietnamese curriculum and teachers' inability to transfer cultures in teaching ESL/EFL.

### 5.1.3. Future change in language education in Vietnam

The stagnant of language education in Vietnam has seen some new movement. This is called "The National Project of Foreign Laguage in 2008-2020" and was later changed to "The National Project of Foreign Language in 2017-2025". There was a change in the year of action due to the fact that this project failed to deliver the result in time. The main focus of this project is to create a generation of Vietnamese people can receive an education that can help them to use a foreign language in working, studying in an intercultural environment (2008). This project includes changes in testing and evaluation system, teachers training, and textbook. From the previous part, this research has mentioned Vietnamese teachers rushed to obtain an English certificate, this is one of the impacts of this project. However, the previous project fails because most learners cannot use the language if they just finish foreign language subject in high school (Võ & Hoài, 2016). One proof of this is the devastating score of English in recent National Examination. Around 78% of test takers have under average score (less than 5 out of 10) (Nguyễn, 2018). This is a backlash on the promising Foreign Language project for not delivering enough motivation and goals for learners.

One important change in this project is the development of a new textbook. In reality, there is no official new book is in used at public school in Vietnam. However, as the plan is still in action, there is one official draft of guidelines for making a language textbook. This research has picked up some relevant points in creating a more intercultural textbook:

| 13. | The visuals used in the textbook are attractive, functional, and relevant to the age groups of the learners, as well as the culture and customs of Vietnam. |
|---|---|
| 19. | The textbook covers a variety of topics from different contexts and cultures, which helps enrich the learners' knowledge and experiences. |
| 20. | The subject and content are popular and suitable to the learners' capabilities, and educational in terms of behaviour and life skills development. |
| 22. | The content of the textbook is free from stereotypical images and information about gender, ethnic origins, religion, occupations, social groups, age groups, etc. |

(Ministry of Education and Training, 2015a)

To a generation of learners who can use language in a globalizing world, the new guidelines for textbook have indeed paid some focus on the cultural factor of language. This draft can be developed furthermore on the advance of intercultural competence for learners in Vietnam. This paper would like to suggest some recommendations in the following section.

## 5.2. Recommendation

Again, the English language is the fastest- changing language in the world. With the number of speakers grows by thousands each year and there is no limit to this growth. There seem to be many changes in the way language should be taught. Therefore, there is no reason why language education in Vietnam should stop for several years like it is now. Begin with the teacher's initiative, the understanding of the changing nature of the English language is needed. The English language is now should be considered an international language or a lingual franca with various

models rather than a singular "English". Penny Ur. (2009) suggest the concept of teaching English as a lingua franca as below:

- A change in the concept of what 'English' is: an internationally comprehensible variety of the language rather than a single 'native' model.

- A change in the goal of English teaching: to produce fully competent English knowing bilinguals rather than imitation native speakers.

- A change in the image of the English teacher: 'native-speaker-ness' less important than linguistic competence, teaching competence, intercultural competence.

- A change in the cultural background of English courses: 'home' and 'international' culture predominates.

- A change in materials and test design, relating to both content and language.

As far as the content of teaching should be changing, the materials of teaching the language should follow suit:

- Content: culture, situations, texts, characters …

- Culture: 'source' and 'international', not just that of the English-speaking peoples

- Situations: more international in character

- Characters: more likely to be 'international' or 'home'.

- Texts: more adaptations of international or local sources, fewer 'inner-circle' 'authentic texts or literature.

- Language: based on international usages rather than any particular native dialect; more acknowledgement and use of the learners' L1

For the recommendation, this research would like to suggest four recommendations for each target: teacher, student, textbook, curriculum.

**Teachers** should be aware of the need to teach cultural knowledge in the classroom. This need comes from many aspects, the changing nature of the language and the state of globalization. The content of culture should not be singular. The teacher should be a guide to help students compare, contrast, and examine cultural differences among different cultures.

**Students** should not be limited themselves to be only imitation native speakers. English should be only a medium to explore their own culture, develop the ability to open and analyze in an intercultural community and express their selves to the world. However, culture is not the final goal, intercultural competence can help them in the global community.

**The textbook** should be developed to help and guide students to be intercultural competent. The new concept of plurilingualism is important as it connects both language skills and intercultural education. The content of the books should update itself with the reality. Do students need to learn about a sports events that happened more than 10 years ago? What students learn is what they can use in real life. Furthermore, activities in the textbook should motivate students to compare and examine cultures, not only for the linguistic acquisition but also for the cognitive mind that can be useful in many situations inside and outside of school life. Interaction with different cultures helps them to be open and curious towards the subject, moreover, motivate them to explore by themselves than information laid out for them. Instruction language should help students to explore cultures but not hinder them in the way information is spoon-fed.

**The curriculum** should not focus only on the examination. Cultural knowledge is as important as linguistic skills. Now, students are only being tested on their ability to use the language on paper and no attention is put on the abilities of students to be able to express themselves. It is hard to change fast, therefore, the examination content should be changed first of all. More focus should be on students' productive skills rather than receptive skills.

## 5.3. Limitation of the research

This research does not involve itself with any teacher guidebook and actual teaching in the classroom.

The suitability of plurilingual education in Vietnamese education is questionable.

## 5.4. Recommendation for further research

This research can be used as a base to study further on teaching method in the classroom, where teachers and students actively exchanging information. Teacher book is also one of the good materials to study about the goal of activities in student's book.

Since there will be a new decree regarding the change of English education in Vietnam in 2020, it is good to start comparing the new change in the textbook with the old version.

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# Appendix

**Analysis table used to analyse cultural contents from unit 1 to unit 16**

| Unit 1: Home Life | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | 2 | |
| | | | | |

| Unit 2: Cultural Diversity | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | 2 | |
| | | | | |

| Unit 3: Ways of Socialising | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | | 2 | |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 4: School Educational System | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | | |
| | | | | |

**Unit 5: Higher Education**

| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Listening | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Writing | | | 1 | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Unit 6: Future Jobs**

| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Writing | | 1 | 2 | |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Unit 7: Economics Reforms**

| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Writing | | 1 | 2 | |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Unit 8: Life in the Future**

| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Writing | | 1 | | 2 | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

| Unit 9: Deserts | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | | 1 | | 2 | |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 10: Endangered Species | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | | 1 | | 2 | |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 11: Books | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 12: Water Sports | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |

| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | 2 | |
| | | | | |

| Unit 13: The 22nd SEA Games | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 14: International Organizations | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | | 2 | |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 15: Women in Society | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | |
| Writing | 1 | | | 2 | |
| | | | | | |

| Unit 16: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
|---|

| Reading | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking | 1 | | 2 | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| Listening | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| Writing | 1 | | 2 | | |
|  |  | | | | |