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without saying that foreign language teachers should be foreign culture teachers, having the ability to experience and analyze both the home and target cultures (Byram et al., 2002, p. 35).

Furthermore, instead of providing facts about other cultures, textbooks must give learners "the means of accessing and analyzing any cultural practices and meanings they encounter". Culture teaching therefore becomes much more than a simple presentation of cultural facts (Byram, 1997, cited in Byram et al., 2002). ELT textbooks and curricula should provide a lens through which learners expand their cultural awareness to include global and multicultural perspectives. The main goal of cultural teaching is finding understanding to develop responsive action (Menard-Warwick, 2009).

All in all, the results of this study could be of great benefit for those who have a role in providing the foundation and basis for learning English as a foreign language. They can think of developing textbooks in which a mixture of both native and target culture are depicted so that a balance between the two are maintained. Moreover, textbook writers, practitioners as well as curriculum developers should bear in mind the crucial role textbooks play in an EFL teaching learning context. Careful attention and awareness is also deemed necessary on the part of EFL teachers as the ones who have the responsibility of carrying over the linguistic as well as nonlinguistic and cultural features of a textbook.

## Recommendations

1. Textbook developers should take into consideration the cultural differences between the target language culture and that of the learners in order to avoid the negative effects of teaching culture.
2. Further, textbook developers can provide more authentic and meaningful oral and written texts offering greater multicultural knowledge and understanding. In other words, the textbook should reflect a world view with a well-balanced cultural system.
3. The socio-cultural content of a foreign language syllabus should be up-to-date because out-of-date content neither contribute to real understanding, nor is it an adequate guide to genuine communication in the foreign language taught.
4. The majority of teachers in the context of Iran have no prior culture training (Aliakbari, 2004). For in-service teachers, it is necessary to provide such training programs to assist teachers in attaining the ability to tackle cultural content while teaching language.
5. Teachers can be provided with print sources and a website wherein teachers can discuss and share information, materials, and teaching experiences.
6. Most teachers need specific cultural activities and methods from the teaching guide. Clear instruction tells teachers how to achieve the teaching goals.

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senior highschool), yet the education they receive neither enables them to attain full competence in using the English language nor helps them to interact with confidence.

### Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to get insights into the situation of culture teaching in English classes in Iranian high schools. The findings in the studies reviewed in this paper offered convincing evidence that the English language textbooks that are currently taught at high schools in Iran do not meet the expectations and restrict students' horizon of the role of English. Today, there exists a widespread consensus among scholars (Byram, 1993; Kramsch, 1993; Chastain, 1988; Seelye, 1993) that language and culture should not be treated as separate entities and culture should be integrated into the language classroom. Language is seen as part of culture and culture as part of language, which is why they cannot be separated and should be taught together (Brown 2007:177). As, in Iran, textbooks serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice that takes place in the classroom they play a very important role in the teaching of English as a foreign language. As a result, an extensive modification and revision of the current textbooks is deemed necessary.

The cultural focus or of Iranian textbooks is the local culture or the 'localized culture'. However, while the cultural orientation of these textbooks is based on the source culture, there is no direct and explicit inclusion of local culture through passages dealing with cultural values and local cultural events. Moreover, there are no traces of the target culture or the international culture of English as an international language.

Textbooks are expected not only to use local characters, places, and issues as the content for textbooks by using learners' experiences, but they should also be subtly interspersed with intercultural communication contexts and settings. The teaching of culture should become an integral part of foreign language instruction. Culture teaching should aim to foster 'empathy with the cultural norms of the target language community' and 'an increased awareness of one's own 'cultural logic' in relation to others' (Byram et al., 2002, p. 30). In other words, the main goals of teaching culture should be developing intercultural understanding and communication. To achieve such goals textbook developers should consider an appropriate approach as well as suitable techniques and activities for teaching culture. The choice of the latter depends on several factors, such as the situation in which the language is taught, the age and language level of learners and, lastly, the teacher and his preparation to teach culture.

The context of teaching and the level of teachers' cultural understanding are important due to the fact that first language programs often concentrate on developing the four language skills, or rather the skills that are assessed at the national examinations. The conclusion is that "there is a mismatch between what the curriculum prescribes and what the examination tests" (Johnson 1989). The inclusion of culture-related issues in the examinations might give weight to teaching culture in language classes. Second the fact is that teachers are not aware of appropriate techniques. It goes

### A Need for a Change

In general, the overall conclusion from the studies done is that the locally produced ELT textbooks in Iran appear to be short of the aim of broadening students' worldview or cultural understanding (Aliakbari, 2004). In other words, changes should be made if we want to prepare the students to communicate in the multicultural world of English and if we want to use the locally produced textbooks for optimal results. English textbooks seldom include the international target culture. Besides, national identity and history of Iran has not properly been taken into account in high school textbooks either. The goal of culture teaching is to develop students' international view and respect for different cultures alongside the local culture, not easy to gauge with paper-and-pencil tests. Textbook designers have not come with explicit suggestions for the assessment of teaching culture. Textbooks scarcely provide any cultural learning worksheets; teachers need more of these to help students solidify their knowledge and to evaluate their achievements.

According to Parvan (2011) the concept of culture has changed and therefore the teaching of culture needs to be transformed and adjusted to the way we understand and experience culture, identity and nationality. The current English Textbooks, which are taught at the Iranian high schools, do not conform with the developments resulting from applied linguistic debates of the last two decades. The books have not been properly revised since they were introduced. Therefore, there is an urgent need

for evaluating and possibly updating the materials according to the recent findings in applied linguistics and curriculum design. The way language textbooks have dealt with the concept of culture has failed to live up to the newly-established expectations. In Iran, English is taught as a foreign language and is practiced within a context-restricted environment, in which the textbook and classroom teacher play the main role. Moreover, if we agree that education is a means to the end of preparing learners for life, we should make our EFL textbooks full of beneficial and useful social and cultural constructs that explicitly and implicitly teach learners necessary life skills.

There should be balanced proportions of local and non-local cultural content in the textbooks. The cultural information presented in the current textbooks in Iran lacks the depth it needs to become functional in communication. The culture elements as they are dealt with remain at a shallow level. The underlying concepts and value systems of local and non-local cultures have not been well introduced. Consequently, this might hamper students' understanding of their own and other cultures. This fact might call for more efforts to integrate deeper levels of various cultural aspects that may support the promotion of local culture as well as students' intercultural awareness. If it happens, the students will more likely be able to introduce their culture in English and understand foreign cultures at the same time. In Iran, apart from the input provided by the teacher, textbooks serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice that takes place in the classroom. Iranian students study English for nearly six years (3 years in junior highschool, 3 years in

enable students to read and get ready for tests and exams. The curriculum in general, thus, is aimed at promoting students' grammar knowledge, reading and translation. Consequently, high school English teachers have to use methods to some extent similar to grammar translation to meet the expectations of the national curriculum (Aslanabadi & Aslanabadi, 2013). With the advent of the new curriculum for high school English education which puts some emphasis on communicative competence, the current focus on language elements may not work as the development of communicative competence requires attention to pragmatic aspects of language which are linked to culture.

**In Iran, there is a case for adopting pro-active strategies in ELT to protect the national culture. Though the adopted policy might seem consistent with the pro-active strategy of protecting the local culture, the way it is managed seems to be counterproductive in the sense that it detracts from the development of communicative competence**

Having carried out a thorough analysis of Iranian ELT textbooks at high school level, Aliakbari (2004) uncovered the fact that the cultural elements in the four course books for high school students is underrepresented. The findings showed that the cultural elements are presented poorly and superficially in

the ELT textbooks in Iranian high schools. They, as he suggested, are unable to assist learners to reinforce their intercultural communication and understanding. The significance of the results lied in the fact that the textbooks were found inadequate in supplying specific elements of culture. Similarly, Majdzadeh (2002) analyzed the content of Iranian high school textbooks. He concluded that the lack of the elements of the target culture can create a barrier for students seeking to improve their intercultural competence and target language skills.

Ashraf, Motallebzadeh, and Kafi (2013) investigated the EFL learners' attitudes towards using localized textbooks instead of international ones. The results indicated that EFL learners preferred using international English textbooks instead of the localized ones. The interesting point is that, the results showed that the learners' cultural attitudes had been affected by the international textbooks. Tabatabaei (2006) explored the representation of national identity and civic values in Iranian EFL textbooks. The study concluded that textbooks relatively demonstrate an emphasis on the importance of Persian language and culture. The textbooks present recognition of Islamic behaviors and values. Although the studies reviewed show an orientation toward the Islamic-Iranian cultural values none of them dealt with the issue of the effectiveness of this strategy in helping learners in acquiring a certain level of intercultural understanding necessary for intercultural communication.

to the second category usually focus on one or two target cultures (e.g., the United Kingdom, United States). Though widely used all over the world, they are often criticized for their commercial nature and seen as publishers' promotional materials.

The third category involves those textbooks which include a wide variety of cultures from both English-speaking countries and countries where English is not the first or second language, but is used as an international language. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) claim that the rationale for this category is that speakers who do not speak it as their first language frequently use English in international situations. Textbooks of this kind seem more appropriate for the global classroom, although other types could be used if the teacher brings wider awareness to the classroom and compensates for what is not actually in the book. Alptekin (1993) believes that there should be a balance between the target culture and students' native culture. Based on Alptekin (1993), "teaching culture in EFL textbooks should move from familiar to unfamiliar and in this case unfamiliar could even be the international culture and not necessarily American or British culture" (p. 31).

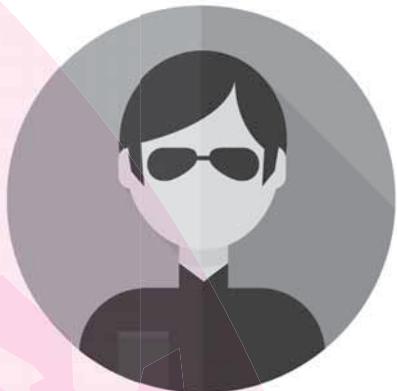
### **ELT and Culture Teaching in Iran**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries English has become an indispensable part of educational curriculum in Iranian schools. Currently English has dominated the context of foreign language learning and teaching in Iran. As a required course, teaching English starts at the age of 11, first grade in

junior high schools, and it continues up to university levels. So far, as Talebinejhad and Aliakbari (2001) stated, English seems to have found its way smoothly right to the heart of Iranian society, proving itself to be a necessity, rather than a mere school subject. Learning and teaching English is totally different in different socio-cultural contexts. The same is true in Iran's social context where the Islamic values are prevalent in the education system. After the Islamic revolution, an urgent need was felt for the Islamic values to constitute the core of values of the education system (Farhady, Sajadi, Hedayati, 2010).

While Chastain (1988), McGrath (2002) and many others strongly support the idea of teaching the culture of a foreign language that is taught, the English textbooks in Iran are devoid of the target culture. For instance, almost all the names or situations that are presented in the textbooks are Iranian. The reason might be the fact that the cultural values of the Islamic Iranian culture are too different from those of the target culture (Dahmardeh, 2009). In Iran, there is a case for adopting pro-active strategies in ELT to protect the national culture. Though the adopted policy might seem consistent with the pro-active strategy of protecting the local culture, the way it is managed seems to be counterproductive in the sense that it detracts from the development of communicative competence.

During the past two decades, many researchers (Aliakbari, 2004; Majdzadeh, 2002; Tabatabaei, 2006; Taki, 2008) have tried to investigate the effectiveness of English textbooks used in Iranian schools. There seems to be a general consensus on the ineffectiveness of such textbooks. The main focus of foreign language teaching and English textbooks is to



### Different Types of Textbooks

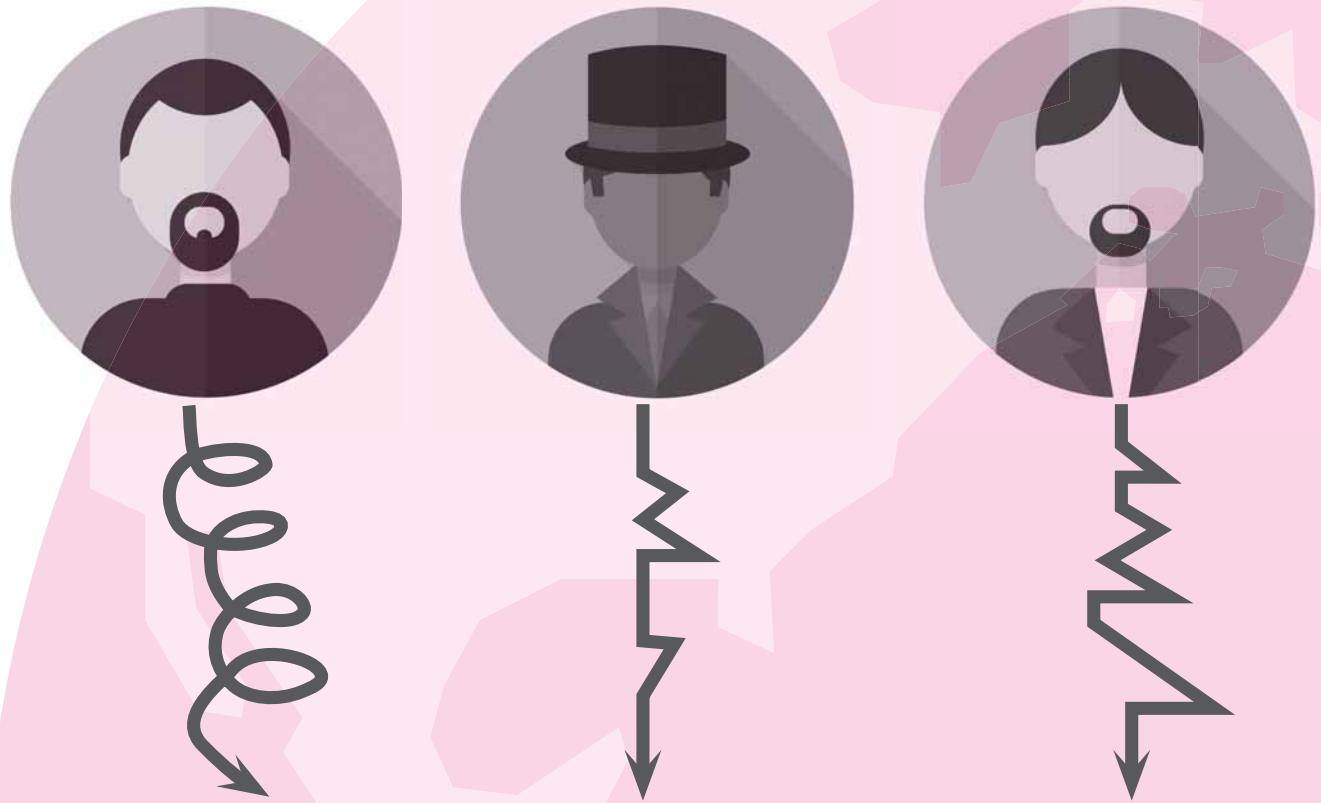
Textbooks can vary in terms of the amount and nature of culture they are loaded with. Some may highlight the source culture more in comparison with the target or other cultures while a group of them are developed to feed the content with a balance of cultural representation of both the source and target cultures as well as elements of culture originated in other cultures. Content of culture in the textbook could be categorized into three parts. The first is the target culture, where people's target language is English. The second is the source culture, the learners' own culture. The third includes international target cultures in which people talk English as a second/foreign tongue (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999, cited in Aliakbari, 2004).

According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999), EFL textbooks fall into three large categories depending on their focus on culture:

- \* textbooks based on the source culture;
- \* textbooks based on the target culture;
- \* textbooks aimed at the international target culture.

In the first category, learners are taught how to talk about their own culture to visitors to their country rather than be prepared to encounter other cultures. Although such textbooks help students to become aware of their own cultural identity, they do not develop students' intercultural awareness. In communication situations it means that interlocutors are "on different cultural wavelengths", which often causes misunderstanding. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999), Venezuelan and Turkish textbooks exemplify the first category. Venezuelan textbooks give details of the major national heroes. The settings referred to are primarily Venezuelan cities and places, with minor attention to places outside Venezuela. In general, in such textbooks, learners see members of their own culture speaking English. The contexts and the participants and sometimes the topics are usually familiar to the students.

Textbooks belonging



the teaching of culture. The most conventional sources for teaching culture include textbooks, literature or literary readings, newspapers and magazines, films or video clips, and the Internet. However, we cannot jettison the fact that the choices we make depend on various factors. For instance, the situation in which the language is being taught (EFL, ESL, or international context) determines the aims of teaching culture and the range of topics that are considered important to be taught. Furthermore, students' age, maturity, command of language and educational level has to be born in mind. As Cullen and Sato (2000) point out, teachers should present students with different kinds of information so that the target culture becomes more comprehensible. Peck (1998) also emphasizes the use of posters, pictures, maps, and showing foreign films in order to help students develop 'a mental image' of the target culture. Teachers should use authentic readings and realia for cross-cultural understanding.

### Textbooks and Culture

Textbooks play a pivotal role in the process of teaching and learning in general and in particular they are expected to cater for cultural awareness and intercultural knowledge on the part of the learners. Riazi (2003, cited in Kafi et al. 2013) considers textbooks the next important element in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher. For the EFL learners, for example, the textbook becomes the major source of contact they have with the language apart from the input provided by the teacher. The significance of textbooks is seen in the many roles textbooks play in facilitating the second language teaching and learning process in the classroom. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999, cited in Aliakbari, 2004), the textbook "can be a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, an authority, a de-skiller and an ideology." Hence, the textbook can be a major source of cultural elements besides providing linguistic and topical contents.

However, learning a foreign language does not only entail knowledge of the target culture. It also helps the learner to perceive and reflect on his own culture. The awareness of the two cultures' similarities and differences is an important factor in successful communication and intercultural understanding (Byram, 1993, cited in Byram et al., 2002).

Language is used both as a means of communication as well as a carrier of culture. Language without culture is unthinkable, so is human culture without language (Wei, 2005). Moreover, linguistic competence alone is not enough for learners of a language to be competent in that language (Krasner, 1999). Since culture and language are inseparable, English cannot be taught without the culture in which it is embedded. As Lessard-Clouston (1997) notes, students will indeed need to develop knowledge of and about the L2 or FL culture, but this receptive aspect of cultural competence is not sufficient. Learners will also need to master some skills in culturally appropriate communication and behavior for the target culture. Cultural awareness is necessary if students are to develop an understanding of the dynamic nature of the target culture, as well as their own culture. As stated earlier, one of the main aims of foreign language teaching today is to develop learners' ability to "communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Culture is the foundation of communication. It not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed or interpreted (Smith,

1981, cited in Talebinejad & Aliakbari, 2001).

The aim of culture teaching is to make students aware of and accept different cultures without risking their identity and over-generalizing any culture. Teaching students about myriad cultures, ways of thinking and behavior in the world could make students realize the differences between their own and the other culture when communicating with foreigners in English (Kawano, 1999). Students today need to think globally and act locally. Teachers should promulgate the existence and understanding of dissimilar cultures by showing students the diversity of cultures and teaching them to respect that diversity, thereby not only broadening their horizons but also extend their understanding of their own culture. When the main aim of foreign language teaching is to develop students' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in various situations, the teaching of culture should facilitate intercultural communication and understanding. Seelye formulates what he himself calls a super goal for the teaching of culture: "All students will develop the cultural understanding, attitudes, and performance skills needed to function appropriately within a segment of another society and to communicate with people socialized in that culture" (Seelye 1993, cited in Lessard-Clouston, 1997).

### **Ways of Teaching culture**

Many researchers have put forward numerous sources, approaches, and techniques associated with

contemporary culture” (Chastain 1988: 303).

Often, though, culture was separated from language learning and taught on courses known as “background studies”.

All such courses suffered from similar limitations: they mostly emphasized factual knowledge and often described the structure and functions of institutions and people’s lives in a generalized and stereotypical way (Mountford & Wadham-Smith 2000, cited in Saluveer, 2004). In other words, the teaching of culture was considered to be supplementary to language teaching, not a part of it.

As Saluveer (2004,p. 33) puts it: “It is only in the 1980s that scholars began to delve into the dynamics of culture and its vital contribution to ‘successful’ language learning”. Thus, one of the main aims of foreign language teaching today is to develop learners’ ability to “communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries”. As language and

culture are closely linked, the teaching of culture is seen as an integral and organized component of language

courses (Brown 2007: 177). Teaching communication without teaching culture might be enough for “survival and routine transactions” (Byram et al., 2002, p. 27), but communicative competence is incomplete without cultural awareness and understanding.

All eminent researchers in the field of foreign language education (Byram 1993; Chastain 1988; Kramsch 1993; 1994 , Seelye 1993) agree that learning a foreign language for whatever purposes is always ‘culture-bound’. Languages cannot be learned or taught without introducing the culture of the community where they are used. According to Brown (2007, p. 177), “A language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.” Therefore, culture is taken to be related to language and the relationship between the two is so great that they are referred to as the two sides of the same coin.

### **Language and Culture: The Importance of Culture Teaching**

Foreign language learning is not seen as mere mastery of the vocabulary, grammar, and idioms of the target language. It includes other layers of language such as language use in real-life situations. Students should learn the link between language, culture, and context (Byram, 1993; Kramsch, 1993). In the process of language acquisition, a culture is internalized. The acquired culture functions as a tool for interpretation and interaction with the world. Culture is part of communicative competence, which includes cultural understanding, conversational routines, and the target society's norms and values.



enhance understanding, and respect for multiple cultures. Today, communicative skills and cultural understanding are two major goals of foreign language study. Lack of cultural understanding in communicative skills can easily result in unwanted misunderstanding. Therefore, the major purpose motivating this study is to find out, whether the available English materials used in the Iranian context provide sufficient content for students' cultural understanding and whether they make them ready for intercultural communication. To this end, it draws on the evaluation studies conducted in the past decade in the context of Iran. Further, it elaborates on the integration of culture into the curriculum, accentuates a need for a change in Iranian textbooks with regard to the presentation of culture, and provides some suggestions to improve the Iranian textbooks. Moreover, the present study paves the way for evaluation of the authentic content of foreign language syllabuses in Iran. It intends to make English teachers, supervisors, and syllabus designers conscious of the place culture has in teaching and learning a foreign language. Moreover, it reveals the relationship between culture and language. It also makes it clear that knowing the cultural differences between L1 and L2 reduces the chances of interference.

### **History of Teaching Culture**

As Lessard-Clouston (1997) noted, in the past, people learned a foreign language to study its literature, and this was the main medium of culture. As mentioned by Flewelling (1993, as cited in Lessard-Clouston, 1997) "it was through reading that students learned the civilization associated with the target

language". At that time, similar to Grammar-Translation Method, the aim of education in general was to educate people who were knowledgeable in history, literature and fine arts. Such people were said to have acquired culture. The culture, which focuses on the products and contributions of a society and its outstanding individuals, is often referred to as capital 'C' culture (Chastain 1988, p.303).

**At any rate, foreign language learning is foreign culture learning, and, in one form or another, culture has, even implicitly, been taught in the foreign language classroom. What is debatable, though, is what is meant by the term "culture" and how it is integrated into language learning and teaching**

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, parallel to the Grammar-Translation Method, other methods of language teaching together with a different approach to culture started to develop. They all emphasized oral language and viewed culture as a way of life (Larsen-Freeman 2000). The "way of life" culture came to be referred to as culture with a small 'c' and it was seen to contribute directly to the students' ability to "function linguistically and socially in the

also the internalized patterns for doing certain things in certain ways....not just the doing of them. Brown (2007) further likens culture to the "glue" that binds a group of people together. Culture, as Vahdany (2005) mentions, "has always been touched but not hugged dearly enough: its relevance and contribution to language teaching has grown blurred and mystic" (p.93). Although some scholars call "culture" the fifth language skill, Krampsch (1993, cited in Saluveer, 2004) goes even further by saying that: "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, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard won communicative competence, challenging the ability to make sense of the world around them" (p.1).

### Different Views on the Teaching of Culture

There have mainly existed diverse views concerning the integration of culture into the foreign language teaching. Some consider culture as inseparable from language, and thus suggest that teaching of language should proceed along with teaching of culture. All eminent researchers in the field of foreign language education (Byram 1993; Chastain 1988; Krampsch 1993; 1994 , Seelye 1993) agree that learning a foreign language for whatever purposes is always 'culture-bound'. Languages cannot be learned or taught without introducing the culture of the community where they are used.

Others (Gray, 2000; Jenkins, 2000, cited in Ashraf et al., 2013) tend to support the belief that culture has an alienating influence and should not be conveyed while teaching a foreign language. Gray (2000), for instance, states that some ELT course books focusing on the target culture have an alienating effect on students who do not want to be culturally assimilated and, as a consequence, give up learning the language. On the other hand, it is not uncommon for many students to become alienated from their own social and cultural settings as they become adjusted to the value system of the Anglo-American world.

At any rate, foreign language learning is foreign culture learning, and, in one form or another, culture has, even implicitly, been taught in the foreign language classroom. What is debatable, though, is what is meant by the term "culture" and how it is integrated into language learning and teaching. Recently, the significance of expanding the language learners' awareness of the cultural aspects of the target language has been widely recognized. Foreign language learning is considered to be "an intercultural subject matter" which "entails an increase in learners' familiarity with that language's cultural background, an expansion of the learner's cultural awareness and intercultural competence" (Sercu, García, & Prieto, 2004, p. 86). There has been a lot of discussion among scholars e.g., Chastain (1988), Byram (1993, cited in Byram et al., 2002) and many others who strongly advocate the idea that the culture of a foreign language should be taught alongside the language itself. The idea is that through the practice of integrating culture and language teaching, students can experience different cultures,



## Introduction

The teaching of English as a foreign language has recently been receiving a remarkable emphasis owing to the developments taking place in all walks of life. Most people agree that today English is a global lingua franca and it has achieved this status not because of a growth in the number of native speakers, but rather because of an increase in the number of individuals in the world today who are acquiring English as an additional language (Mckay, 2008). Foreign language learning is comprised of several components, including grammatical competence, communicative competence, as well as a change in attitudes towards one's own or other cultures. In reality, however, what most teachers and students seem to lose sight of is the fact that "knowledge of the grammatical system of a language (grammatical competence) has to be complemented with an understanding of culture-specific meanings (communicative or rather cultural competence)" (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002, p. 24). For scholars and laymen alike, cultural competence, i.e., the knowledge of the conventions, customs, beliefs, and systems of meaning of another

country, is indisputably an integral part of foreign language learning, and many teachers have seen it as their goal to incorporate the teaching of culture into the foreign language curriculum.

## What Is Culture?

Culture in language teaching is a very broad area and has been viewed from different perspectives. Due to its complex nature, the word culture is very difficult to define. One has to agree with Hinkel (1999: 1) that there are "as many definitions of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors and activities."

Thompson (1990) defines culture as "the pattern of meanings embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions and beliefs" (p.132). Also, culture according to Richards & Schmidt (2010, p. 138) might be defined as: "... the set of practices, codes and values that mark a particular nation or group." Not only does this concept include a group's way of thinking, feeling, and acting, but

# Integrating Culture into FL Textbooks: The Case of Iranian High School English Textbooks

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## چکیده

امروزه بسیاری از محققان بر این باورند که زبان و فرهنگ دو مقوله جدای ناپذیرند و یادگیری فرهنگ می‌بایست به عنوان بخش لاینفکی از آموزش زبان مورد توجه قرار گیرد. بنابراین، در این مقاله تلاش شده است تا تصویر واضحی از جایگاه و نقش مهمی که فرهنگ در آموزش زبان خارجی و زبان دوم دارد به تصویر کشیده شود. علاوه بر این، این مقاله به بررسی نحوه تلفیق فرهنگ در آموزش زبان و جایگاه فرهنگ در کتب آموزش زبان دوره دبیرستان در ایران می‌پردازد. این موضوع در این پژوهش با ارجاع به پیشزمینه‌های نظری مرتبط و نتایج بدست آمده از بررسی محتوای کتب درسی گذشته بررسی شده است. از یافته‌های این پژوهش برمی‌آید که کتاب‌های آموزش زبان موجود کاستی‌ها و نقص‌های فراوانی در ارتقای سطح دانش و درک و فهم فرهنگی دانش‌آموzan دارند. از این‌رو، اگر هدف از آموزش زبان ارتقا و آماده‌سازی دانش‌آموzan برای مواجهه با دنیای چندفرهنگی زبان انگلیسی باشد، تغییرات اساسی در کتب زبان موجود غیرقابل اجتناب به‌نظر می‌رسد. در پایان چند پیشنهاد عملیاتی در تلفیق فرهنگ در کتب آموزش زبان ارائه شده است. همچنین یافته‌های این تحقیق راهکارهای مناسبی را در اختیار افرادی که در برنامه‌ریزی درسی و طراحی و تدوین کتب درسی ایفاده نقش می‌کنند قرار می‌دهد.

**کلیدواژه‌ها:** رابطه زبان و فرهنگ، آموزش زبان انگلیسی در ایران، کتب درسی و فرهنگ، تلفیق فرهنگ

## Abstract

Many scholars today believe that culture and language are inseparable and culture learning must be an integral part of language learning. Thus, the present article is to give an account of the important place that culture holds in foreign and second language education. Further, it investigates the way culture is dealt with in ELT in Iran in general and the place of culture in ELT textbooks at the high school level in particular. Throughout the study, this issue was examined with reference to the relevant theoretical background, and the content analysis results of previous textbook evaluation studies carried out in the Iranian context. The research findings make it clear that the current ELT textbooks in Iran appear to be short of the goal of broadening students' cultural understanding. Hence, changes should be made in the textbooks if students are to be prepared to communicate in the multicultural world of English. Finally, some practical suggestions concerning integrating culture into second language curriculum will be presented. Findings of this study may offer insights for those involved in educational administration, syllabus design, curriculum planning, and materials development.

**Key Words:** language- culture relationship, textbooks and culture, ELT in Iran, Integration of culture