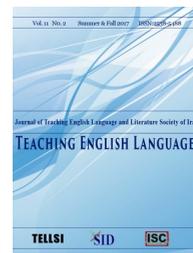


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**Research Paper**

## **Evaluating the Cultural Appropriacy of Commercial English Language Teaching Textbooks in the Iranian Context**

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### **Abstract**

The global spread of English and its role as a lingua franca has created a great demand for learning English worldwide. Up to the present time, this demand has been mostly met by major international publishers of English-speaking countries. However, the promotion of Anglo-American cultural content and ideology through international coursebooks has long been criticized in the EFL settings in which they are used. The current study investigated the cultural appropriacy of these coursebooks for the Iranian context. The main instruments were four researcher-made questionnaires. The questionnaires were first piloted and then administered among 197 teachers and 186 students who were selected based on availability and willingness to cooperate. Next, a one-sample *t*-test was run on the data and the results showed that the coursebooks spread the hegemony of English. Also, it was found that the coursebooks promote a concept of gender equality which is in contrast with the Iranian concept that assumes equal rights for both sexes in *primary rights* and not in *secondary rights*. The findings also suggest that the international teaching materials do not promote nonIslamic western values. Suggestions for developing localized language teaching materials have been put forward.

**Keywords:** Materials Development, Linguistic Imperialism, Hegemonic Practices, Intercultural Communicative Competence, Culture

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### 1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, English is considered as the major tool for international communication and transnational communication without it would be difficult. As a result, the demand for learning English is increasing on a daily basis. According to the British Council's *The English Effect Report* (2015), by 2020, about two billion people will be using English for communication for different purposes. Most of the demand for learning English is satisfied in classrooms and inner-circle countries (Kachru, 1985) develop and distribute the bulk of English Language Teaching (ELT) course books. Actually, the coursebooks published by these inner-circle international publishing firms (e.g., Oxford, Cambridge, Pearson, etc.) have their own cultural and ideological agenda which are not necessarily appropriate for the local contexts in which they are used. Si (2020) reports that most cultural references in three commercial English coursebooks in his study were related to inner-circle countries.

Some researchers (Canagarajah, 1999; Gray, 2010; Pennycook, 1995; Philipson, 1992; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011) believe that *linguistic imperialism* and *globalization* are closely linked to the spread of English as a global language and its present global status. Other researchers (Alidou, 2004; Bergen, 2019; Çelik, 2005; Gray, 2010; Jannejad & Ghoabdi, 2017; Karimi & Marandi, 2019; Khodadady & Shayesteh, 2016; Sergeant, 2008; Shin, 2011), hold that this spread hurts the host countries norms, values, and languages.

On the other hand, there are researchers who disagree with the claims stated in support of linguistic imperialism and even with the concept itself (Holborrow, 1993; Jenkins, 2007). Linguistic imperialism has been criticized for viewing the members of developing countries as incompetent in decision making for themselves and being merely victims against their will (Bisong,

1995; Davies, 1996; Pennycook, 1994; Widdowson, 1998). Spolsky (1995) also claims that the linguistic imperialism theory is short of empirical data that could test the hypothesis. Smokotin, Petrova, and Gural (2019) argue that claims for linguistic imperialism are not valid because they do not consider the instrumentality of language. Thus, it can be concluded that the proponents of linguistic imperialism consider language-related decisions as externally imposed whereas its critics believe that they are locally driven (Davies, 1998).

Iran is considered as one of the expanding circle countries in Karchru's concentric circles of the distribution of English language use (Monfared & Khatib, 2018). Much like other countries belonging to the expanding circle, voices in Iran have warned of the unwanted imposition of western ideology and cultural norms. This study investigated the cultural appropriacy of international ELT textbooks used in the Iranian context. The results of this study can help those who are interested in developing localized materials to develop materials that can better compensate for the possible cultural shortcomings of international ELT coursebooks.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Culture in the Language Classroom**

As Gray (2010) points out, the incorporation of culture into language classrooms can be attributed to the concepts of linguistic relativism and communicative competence, and the communicative language movement. Asif (2012) explains that culture teaching is a necessity because effective and appropriate communication in the target language is not possible without cultural knowledge. He also adds that teaching culture can create more motivation in learners. The development of intercultural competence (Byram & Zarate, 1994) and a better understanding of one's own culture are also byproducts of teaching culture in the classroom (Kramersch, 1993).

## 2.2 Intercultural Competence

Byram (1997) criticizes the notion of communication as a way of bridging information gaps and transferring messages because it includes the projection of social and cultural identities. Moreover, he states that "this view fails to grasp the emancipatory potential and reflexivity that language learning can entail" (Gray, 2010, p. 30). Byram (1997) criticizes the traditional emphasis on culture teaching in the class where it mostly involves transmitting decontextualized factual information with minimal connection to the language focus of the class. For this reason, Byram and Zarate (1994) introduced the notion of *Intercultural Communicative Competence* which consists of five *saviors* or knowledges for the achievement of better language learning outcomes.

The implication of Byram's proposal is that teaching culture can strengthen learners' cultural identity and their self-confidence in dealing with their uncertainties and self-denial in the process of learning the new language. In addition, learning about the culture of the target language can motivate them by giving them the necessary encouragement they need to face the challenges of learning the new language.

## 2.3 Empirical Studies

A number of studies have studied cultural issues in international ELT coursebooks. Birjandi and Meshkat (2003) conducted a survey study on the cultural impact of international and local EFL textbooks on Iranian language learners. They focused on nine cultural values among language learners who studied the *Headway series* and those who studied English using Iranian high school textbooks. Their results indicated that a specific textbook does not shape the value system of the students. In addition, Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010) studied the *Spectrum* and *True to Life* series to understand what kinds of ideologies are promoted by them. Their results showed that

although hegemony of English, sexism, consumerism, and cultural stereotypes were strongly promoted in the abovementioned textbooks, no change was found in the attitude of learners regarding cultural values rooted in their society such as the relationship between different genders and Islamic values. Asgari (2011) also critically analyzed the cultural values that were present in the *New Interchange series*, and concluded that the textbook alone cannot have a major influence on the value system of the learners who are using them.

Ghosn (2013) reported a project for developing a new localized coursebook for Palestinian refugee children in Lebanon. The results indicated that teachers and students showed a highly positive response and students demonstrated improvement in their achievement. In a similar vein, Mahabadi (2013) compared students' comprehension using two stories, one being an original French story and the other being a Persian story translated into French. The results showed that the students responded better to comprehension questions of the translated story. She explains the result by arguing that the students' better performance can be attributed to their familiarity with the atmosphere and characters of the translated story. Hassannejad et al. (2020) also report similar findings in their study on the impacts of locally produced materials on receptive and the productive performance of Iranian EAP students.

Taking the existing literature on the culture teaching into consideration, this study aimed to investigate the cultural appropriacy of international ELT textbooks for the Iranian context, and the following research questions were posed:

1. What is the perception of Iranian EFL teachers about the cultural content of commercial ELT materials currently used in the Iranian language institutes?

2. What is the perception of Iranian EFL learners about the cultural content of commercial ELT materials currently used in the Iranian language institutes?
3. What is the perception of Iranian teachers about the cultural content of the locally produced materials currently used in high schools?
4. What is the perception of Iranian students about the cultural content of the locally produced materials currently used in high schools?
5. To what extent Iranian high school textbooks address the cultural/ideological problems posed by commercial ELT materials in Iran?
6. To what extent the intercultural framework is reflected in the textbooks from the teachers' and students' perspectives?

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Participants**

The first groups of participants were 20 teachers (7 males and 14 females) and 30 students (15 males and 15 females) who took part in the pilot testing phase of the study. The other four groups were the participants of the main study which were 396 people in total. Their demographic information can be seen in Table 1. The participants were not randomly selected, and their participation was based on accessibility and willingness to cooperate. The participants in the last two groups were all students residing and studying in Hamedan, Iran. However, the majority of the participants in groups one and two completed the online version of the questionnaires and were from different provinces of Iran (e.g., the provinces of Hamedan, Tehran, Khuzestan, and Azerbaijan). From this point onward, the Language Institute Teachers will be referred to as LIT, the High School Teachers as HST, the Language Institute Learners as LIL, and the High School Students as HSS.

Table 1  
*Demographic Information of the Participants*

Participants	Gender			Age (Mean)	Education					Teaching Experience in years (Mean)
	Male	Female	Unspecified		High School Student	Undergraduate Student	B.A.	M.A.	Ph.D.	
LITs	29	82	1	31.15	5	50	42	12	3	8.25
HSTs	21	65	7	40.3		44	36	5	8	17.54
LILs	33	38	2	15.41	73					
HSS	45	70	3	16.32	118					

### 3.2 Instruments

Because the existing questionnaires could not sufficiently address the purposes of this study, the researchers developed and validated four questionnaires tailored to their research purposes. All items were Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and an extra column was included for the comments of the respondents to any specific item(s). The questionnaires consisted of eight dimensions: The hegemony of English, consumerism, entertainment, material manifestations of civilization and culture, gender equality and gender roles, nonIslamic values, personal values, and intercultural understanding. These dimensions were determined based on cases of cultural problems of commercial ELT coursebooks reported in Ahour and Zaferani (2016), Asghari (2011), Bahreini (2014), Kousha et al. (2005), and Sadeghy (2008) The language of the questionnaires was Persian.

To ensure validity and reliability the questionnaires were subjected to pilot testing. Next, a printed version and an online version of each questionnaire was prepared for administration. To administer the HST and HSS questionnaires, relevant permits were obtained from the Department of Education of Hamedan. The majority of LIT questionnaires were submitted

online and about half of the HST questionnaires were also collected online. The remaining questionnaires were administered by the third researcher. During the administrative sessions, the researcher was present to discuss about the items posed by the participants. The translated versions of the questionnaires have been provided in the Appendix (A, B, C, and D).

### **3.2.1 LIT Questionnaire**

This questionnaire (Appendix A) has 30 items. To ensure the normality of data and justify the use of parametric statistical tests on them the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test was run. The eight dimensions of the questionnaire had a significance level higher than 0.05, hence confirming the normal distribution of data. Next, The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were employed to show whether the chosen sample was adequate for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). KMO values higher than 0.7 and Bartlett values lower than 0.05 indicate suitability for CFA. For the LIT questionnaire, the KMO and Bartlett values were 0.746 and 0.001, respectively. In addition, the factors could show 68 percent of total variance which indicates high content validity.

After ensuring suitability for CFA, the factor loading for each item was obtained. The results showed that items number 5 and 26 had to be excluded because they had a factor loading lower than 0.4, and reliability tests (i.e., Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Spearman's rho) were run on the corrected version that did not include these two items. Cronbach's Alpha measures internal consistency, and Spearman's rho checks the internal consistency of the items in one dimension, and CR investigates to what extent each questionnaire item can be generalized from one model to another. Accepted values for Cronbach's Alpha and Spearman's rho are higher than 0.7, and values above 0.5 are acceptable CR measures. Because

values obtained for all dimensions in all the tests were higher than the required figures, the reliability of the questionnaire could be confirmed. The quality of the measurement model estimated using Commuality Cros Vality (CV com) was 0.311 which is considered strong.

### **3.2.2 LIL Questionnaire**

This questionnaire (Appendix B) has 21 items. This was because the researchers thought that the items related to the domains of the hegemony of English, and gender equality and roles required more abstract thinking and for this reason a number of items related to these dimensions which were included in the LIT and HST questionnaires were not included in the student questionnaires. In addition, a number of items included in the nonIslamic values domain were not included in the students' questionnaires because the researchers assumed that the content of the items was not age appropriate. To ease the answering process for the students, the wording of the items in their questionnaires was simpler and more concrete. For the LIL questionnaire, the KMO and Bartlett values were 0.769 and 0.001, respectively. In addition, the factors showed 66 percent of total variance which indicates high content validity.

After ensuring suitability for CFA, the factor loading for each item was obtained. The results showed that all items could be kept because they had a factor loading higher than 0.4, and reliability tests (i.e., Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Spearman's rho) were run on this intact version. Because values obtained for all dimensions in the tests were higher than the required figures, the reliability of the questionnaire could be confirmed. The quality of the measurement model estimated using CV com was 0.199 which is considered strong.

### **3.2.3 HST questionnaire**

This questionnaire (Appendix C) has 28 items. For this questionnaire, the KMO and Bartlett values were 0.72 and 0.001, respectively. In addition, the factors could show 70% of total variance which can be considered as high content validity.

After ensuring suitability for CFA, the factor loading for each item was obtained. The results showed that all items could be kept because they had a factor loading higher than 0.4, and reliability tests (i.e., Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Spearman's rho) were run on this intact version. Because values obtained for all dimensions in all the tests were higher than the required values, the reliability of the questionnaire could be confirmed. The quality of the measurement model estimated using CV com was 0.423 which is considered very strong.

### **3.2.4 HSS questionnaire**

For the same reasons stated for the LIT questionnaire, the HSS questionnaire (Appendix D) consists of 20 items. For this questionnaire, the KMO and Bartlett values were 0.752 and 0.001, respectively. In addition, the factors showed 63 percent of total variance which indicates high content validity.

After ensuring suitability for CFA, the factor loading for each item was obtained. The results showed that item number 10 should be discarded because it had a factor loading lower than 0.4, and reliability tests (i.e., Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Spearman's rho) were run on the corrected version that did not include this item. Because values obtained for all dimensions in the tests were higher than the required figures, the reliability of the questionnaire could be confirmed. The quality of the measurement model estimated using CV com was 0.198 which is considered strong.

## **4. Results**

In this section, the participants' answers to the questionnaire items will be presented. For each item, the mean was compared with the numerical value of having no idea (3) by the use of a one-sample *t*-test to determine meaningfulness.

#### 4.1 Responses to the LIT Questionnaire

The first research question sought to investigate the perception of language institute teachers about the cultural content of commercial ELT coursebooks, and the sixth research question investigated the degree to which the intercultural framework was reflected in them. To this end, a one-sample *t*-test was run on the results of the LIT questionnaire (Table 2).

Table 2

##### *One-Sample t-test of LIT Questionnaire*

	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig	
1	3.26	65.20	0.755	3.645	111	.000	16	2.1	42.00	0.811	-11.757	111	.000
2	2.4	48.00	0.871	-7.341	111	.000	17	3.93	78.60	0.786	12.528	111	.000
3	2.35	47.00	0.93	-7.351	111	.000	18	4.18	83.60	0.764	16.321	111	.000
4	2.62	52.40	1.066	-3.797	111	.000	19	3.27	65.40	0.964	2.913	111	.004
5	3.71	71.00	0.781	9.963	111	.000	20	3.68	73.60	0.848	8.490	111	.000
6	2	40.00	0.87	-12.166	111	.000	21	3.75	75.00	0.791	9.974	111	.000
7	2.72	54.40	1.099	-2.723	111	.008	22	1.95	39.00	0.715	-15.526	111	.000
8	2.14	42.80	0.795	-11.491	111	.000	23	2.56	51.20	1.055	-4.387	111	.000
9	<b>3.16</b>	<b>63.20</b>	<b>0.857</b>	<b>1.977</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>.051</b>	24	2.02	40.40	0.939	-11.038	111	.000
10	2.52	50.40	1.011	-5.029	111	.000	25	1.72	34.40	0.724	-18.714	111	.000
11	<b>3.12</b>	<b>62.40</b>	<b>1.051</b>	<b>1.246</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>.215</b>	26	<b>3.82</b>	<b>65.00</b>	<b>0.942</b>	<b>1.639</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>.109</b>
12	<b>3.15</b>	<b>63.00</b>	<b>0.939</b>	<b>1.643</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>.103</b>	27	1.88	37.60	0.883	-13.407	111	.000
13	2.54	50.80	0.995	-4.876	111	.000	28	2.12	42.40	0.952	-9.797	111	.000
14	3.88	77.60	0.883	10.533	111	.000	29	2.37	47.40	0.898	-7.471	111	.000
15	2.83	56.60	0.866	-2.080	111	.040	30	3.43	68.60	0.859	5.337	111	.000

As shown in Table 2, responses to items number 9, 11, 12, and 26 were not significant at 0.05. The wording for each of the items can be found in Appendix A. Table 3 presents the respondents' answers to the questionnaire in percentages. The items can be found in Appendix A.

Table 3

##### *Respondents' Answers to the LIT Questionnaire*

## Evaluating the Cultural ...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1	1.96	11.76	43.14	36.27	2.94	16	20.79	59.41	8.91	9.9	0
2	10.58	53.85	18.27	12.5	1.92	17	0.99	8.91	3.96	65.35	18.81
3	18.45	40.78	16.5	16.5	0	18	1.98	1.98	6.93	54.46	34.65
4	15.38	37.5	17.31	25	2.88	19	1.96	28.43	14.71	44.12	6.86
5	0	9.71	20.39	55.34	10.68	20	0	13.86	18.81	51.49	14.85
6	28.43	49.02	8.82	5.88	1.96	21	1.96	4.9	23.53	55.88	13.73
7	17.65	27.45	19.61	29.41	2.94	22	27.45	51.96	19.61	0	0.98
8	18.63	56.86	18.63	3.92	1.96	23	27.72	25.74	17.82	3.96	4.95
9	3.96	16.83	42.57	30.69	4.95	24	34.31	37.25	16.67	6.86	1.96
10	16.5	38.83	21.36	20.39	1.94	25	44.12	39.22	12.75	1.96	0
11	9.9	15.84	31.68	27.72	9.9	26	2.97	23.76	33.66	24.75	9.9
12	4.9	21.57	27.45	33.33	5.88	27	42.16	33.33	16.67	6.86	0
13	10.68	47.57	13.59	15.53	4.85	28	29.41	42.16	14.71	11.76	0.98
14	2.97	6.93	10.89	55.45	21.78	29	18.81	39.6	27.72	13.86	0
15	4.9	30.39	34.31	17.65	3.92	30	2.97	11.88	29.7	43.56	7.92

As can be seen in Table 3, teachers (39%) thought that commercial ELT coursebooks were in service of globalization, and they disagreed (64%) that financial gains were the first priority for international ELT publishers. They believed (59%) that the coursebooks did not pursue political objectives, and they disagreed (53%) that the coursebooks highlight western achievements. Most participants (77%) disagreed that the coursebooks harmed Iranian culture, and similarly disagreed (45%) that coursebooks promoted Anglo-American values.

Regarding consumerism, most teachers (75%) disagreed that the coursebooks encouraged students to consume more, and more than half of them (55%) thought that commercial ELT coursebooks did not encourage students to buy certain types of goods.

The teachers (77%) believed that the British and Americans take up the entertainment activities mentioned in the coursebooks in their free time and not the Iranians. The majority of the respondents (80%) disagreed that the coursebooks encouraged extreme attention to appearance and fashion, and most teachers were familiar with the examples given for food (84%), clothing items (89%), and national and religious ceremonies (51%).

The images of men and women depicted in the coursebooks conformed to the mental image of the teachers (66%), and they maintained that the coursebooks decreased (69%) gender inequality and did not increase it (79%).

The majority of teachers said that the coursebooks did not encourage outside marriage relationships (71%), or finding a girl/boyfriend (53%). In addition, they disagreed (83%) that the coursebooks promoted prostitution and indulgence and they did not think (75%) that the coursebooks tried to eliminate God from the students' individual and social lives, and distanced them from religiosity.

The teachers (71%) did not think that the coursebooks tried to westernize Iranian socialization, and they disagreed (58%) that the coursebooks are trying to stereotype certain beliefs and viewpoints. Finally, the language teachers (51%) agreed that the coursebooks created inter/intracultural understanding.

#### **4.2 Responses to the LIL Questionnaire**

The second research question sought to investigate the perception of language institute students about the cultural content of commercial ELT coursebooks. In addition, the sixth research question was formulated to examine the extent the intercultural framework was reflected in the coursebooks. To this end, a one-sample *t*-test was run on the results of the LIL questionnaire (Table 4).

Table 4  
*One-Sample t-test of LIL Questionnaire*

	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig	
1	3.66	73.20	0.853	6.583	72	.000	16	3.43	68.60	1.14	3.225	72	.002
2	3.86	77.20	0.932	7.856	72	.000	17	2.42	48.40	1.115	-4.470	72	.000
3	<b>3.25</b>	<b>65.00</b>	<b>1.127</b>	<b>1.895</b>	72	<b>.062</b>	18	2.52	50.40	1.141	-3.586	72	.001
4	3.85	77.00	1.089	6.650	72	.000	19	2.72	<b>54.40</b>	<b>1.293</b>	<b>-1.861</b>	72	<b>.067</b>
5	2.15	43.00	1.138	-6.358	72	.000	20	3.96	79.20	0.978	8.372	72	.000
6	2.67	53.40	1.042	-2.697	72	.009	21	3.71	74.20	1.172	5.164	72	.000
7	2.39	47.80	1.125	-4.642	72	.000							
8	2.54	50.80	1.224	-3.199	72	.002							
9	2.68	53.60	1.311	-2.053	72	.044							
10	3.31	66.20	1.209	2.159	72	.034							
11	3.89	77.80	1.087	6.997	72	.000							
12	2.77	<b>55.40</b>	<b>1.297</b>	<b>-1.535</b>	72	<b>.129</b>							
13	2.67	53.40	1.259	-2.231	72	.029							
14	3.93	78.60	0.887	8.963	72	.000							
15	3.97	79.40	1.054	7.883	72	.000							

As shown in Table 4, responses to items number 3, 12, and 19 were not significant at 0.05. The wording for each of the items can be found in Appendix B of this study. Table 5 presents the respondents' answers to the questionnaire in percentages. The items can be found in Appendix B.

Table 5  
*Respondents' Answers to the LIL Questionnaire*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1	1.73	6.85	21.92	58.9	9.59	16	4.17	31.26	13.89	41.67	16.67
2	0	10	18.57	42.86	27.14	17	26.39	25	33.33	11.11	4.17
3	6.94	16.67	37.5	22.22	16.67	18	22.54	26.76	33.8	9.86	7
4	5.56	5.56	18	40.28	30.56	19	23.61	18	31.94	12.5	6.94
5	36.99	27.4	19.18	12.33	2.74	20	1.39	8.33	16.67	40.28	33.33
6	17.81	19.18	43.84	16.44	2.74	21	8.33	4.17	25	33.33	29.17
7	26.39	27.78	34.91	8.33	5.56						
8	26.39	20.83	33.33	11.11	8.33						
9	27.4	15.07	27.4	21.92	8.22						
10	9.72	18	19.44	37.5	15.28						
11	4.11	6.85	19.18	35.62	32.88						
12	19.18	28.77	19.18	21.92	10.96						
13	20.55	26.03	31.51	9.59	12.33						
14	2.78	4.17	13.89	55.56	23.61						
15	4.17	5.56	15.28	38.89	36.11						

The students (68%) believed that the coursebooks familiarized them with the Anglo-American achievements and discoveries, and most (70%) trusted the general information presented in the coursebooks' readings and audio tracks. In addition, they agreed (70%) that the coursebooks familiarized them with the lifestyle and thinking of Americans and the British.

Most students (64%) said that the coursebooks did not encourage consumerism. They also disagreed (54%) with the idea that the coursebooks motivated them to buy certain goods.

The students (47%) believed that the music tracks were suitable for the Iranian context. The students believed that the leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks were the normal ones that the Americans and British (68%) and Iranians (52%) chose to do in their free time.

Participants disagreed (46%) that the coursebooks encouraged them to pay attention to their appearance and clothing. However, the examples given for food (79%), clothing items (75%), and national and religious ceremonies/events (58%) were familiar to most of them.

The students (51%) said the men and women illustrated in the coursebooks were different from those they saw outside their classroom. For nonIslamic values, they disagreed (49%) that the pictures and illustrations were against Islamic-Iranian norms. In the end, they confirmed (73%) that the coursebooks created better inter/intracultural understanding.

### **4.3 Responses to the HST Questionnaire**

The third research question sought to investigate the perception of high school teachers about the cultural content of high school textbooks. Besides, the researchers sought to investigate the degree to which these textbooks had compensated for the cultural/ideological shortcomings of commercial ELT coursebooks by formulating research question five. In addition, the presence of the intercultural framework in the high school textbooks was assessed by the sixth research question. To these ends, a one-sample *t*-test was run on the results of the HST questionnaire, the results of which are presented in Table 6.

Table 6  
*One-Sample t-test of HST Questionnaire*

	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig.		Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig.
1	3.22	64.40	1.078	1.954	92	.054	16	3.91	78.20	0.775	11.345	92	.000
2	3.01	60.20	1.166	.093	92	.926	17	4	80.00	0.722	13.351	92	.000
3	3.37	67.40	1.039	3.468	92	.001	18	3.3	66.00	1.061	2.767	92	.007
4	2.9	58.00	0.933	-1.045	92	.299	19	2.82	56.40	1.089	-1.556	92	.123
5	3.55	71.00	0.999	5.265	92	.000	20	2.57	51.40	1.034	-3.999	92	.000
6	1.92	38.40	0.726	-14.322	92	.000	21	2.76	55.20	0.88	-2.578	92	.012
7	2.09	41.80	0.775	-11.345	92	.000	22	2.8	56.00	1.034	-1.865	92	.065
8	2.85	57.00	0.988	-1.485	92	.141	23	2.81	56.20	1.016	-1.786	92	.077
9	2.37	47.40	0.906	-6.714	92	.000	24	4.05	81.00	0.812	12.522	92	.000
10	3.51	70.20	0.79	6.242	92	.000	25	3.67	73.40	0.781	8.278	92	.000
11	3.57	71.40	0.851	6.406	92	.000	26	3.46	69.20	0.967	4.592	92	.000
12	2.62	52.40	1.017	-3.582	92	.001	27	3.16	63.20	0.92	1.631	92	.106
13	3.84	76.80	0.647	12.446	92	.000	28	3.16	63.20	1.02	1.487	92	.141
14	2.58	51.60	0.945	-4.262	92	.000							
15	3.95	79.00	0.766	12.313	92	.000							

As shown in Table 6, responses to items number 1, 2, 4, 8, 19, 22, 23, 27, and 28 were not significant at 0.05. The wording for each of the items can be found in Appendix C of this study. Table 7 presents the respondents' answers to the questionnaire in percentages. The items can be found in Appendix C.

Table 7  
*Respondents' Answers to the HST Questionnaire*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	6.74	21.35	23.6	34.83	10.11	16	1.1	5.49	12	63.74	17.58
2	10	28.89	20	30	10	17	1.1	3.3	9.89	65.93	19.78
3	1.1	27.47	15.38	42.86	12.09	18	7.61	18.48	14.13	55.43	4.35
4	3.26	39.13	18.48	35.87	0	19	13	27.17	26	29.35	3.26
5	2.25	17.98	13.48	50.56	13.48	20	14.13	36.96	29.35	14.13	4.35
6	27.17	54.35	13.04	3.26	0	21	9.89	16.48	52.75	9.89	3.3
7	18.48	59.78	15.22	4.35	1.09	22	9.78	18.48	42.39	18.48	4.35
8	6.52	31.52	32.61	25	3.26	23	15.73	13.48	42.7	20.22	3.37
9	11.96	53.26	20.65	10.78	2.17	24	2.2	2.2	10.99	57.14	27.47
10	0	12.36	30.34	46.07	7.87	25	0	9.89	19.78	60.44	8.79
11	3.26	10.87	15.22	67.39	3.26	26	5.56	14.44	12.22	62.22	4.44
12	10.99	42.86	19.78	21.98	2.2	27	1.11	26.67	34.44	31.11	6.67
13	0	4.35	17.39	67.39	9.78	28	5.49	20.88	26.37	38.46	5.49
14	9.78	41.3	31.52	13	3.26						
15	1.11	5.56	7.78	65.56	20						

As indicated in Table 7, most teachers (54%) agreed that the textbooks highlight Iranian achievements and successes, and the majority (64%) said the coursebooks reinforced Iranian culture. The teachers (78%) did not believe that the coursebooks promoted Anglo-American culture.

The respondents disagreed (78%) that the coursebooks encouraged students to consume more. They also disagreed (65%) that the coursebooks encouraged students to buy certain types of goods.

Most teachers (53%) agreed that limited music tracks are in compliance with Islamic-Iranian values. The language instructors (70%) thought that the leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks were the ones Iranians choose to do in their free time and not the British and Americans. In addition, participants believed (77%) that the leisure activities mentioned were appropriate for the Iranian context.

The teachers (51%) disagreed that the textbooks discouraged excessive attention to appearance or fashion. In addition, they were familiar with the examples given for food (85%), clothes (81%), and national and religious ceremonies/events (85%). Most teachers (59%) agreed that the coursebooks' illustrations of men and women conformed to their mental image. They said that that the coursebooks did not decrease (54%) gender discrimination.

Most teachers (84%) agreed that the images and illustrations conformed to Islamic-Iranian values, and most of them (69%) believed that the coursebooks highlighted God in the students' individual and social lives. The teachers (66%) believed that the coursebooks promoted Iranian socialization. The teachers' answers relating to inter/intracultural understanding were not significant at 0.05.

#### **4.4 Responses to the HSS Questionnaire**

The fourth research question sought to investigate the perception of high school students about the cultural content of high school textbooks. In addition, the researchers sought to investigate the degree to which these textbooks had compensated for the cultural/ideological shortcomings of commercial ELT coursebooks by formulating research question five. Furthermore, the presence of the intercultural framework in the high school

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textbooks was assessed by the sixth research question. To this end, a one-sample *t*-test was run on the results of the HST questionnaire (Table 8).

Table 8

*One-Sample t-test of HSS Questionnaire*

	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig	Mean	Percent	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig	
1	2.48	49.60	1.067	-5.308	117	.000	16	2.51	50.20	1.349	-3.956	117	.000
2	<b>2.86</b>	<b>57.20</b>	<b>1.116</b>	<b>-1.354</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>.178</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>56.00</b>	<b>1.315</b>	<b>-1.637</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>.104</b>
3	2.76	55.20	1.098	-2.408	117	.018	18	2.21	44.20	1.158	-7.421	117	.000
4	2.5	50.00	1.106	-4.867	117	.000	<b>19</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>57.00</b>	<b>1.193</b>	<b>-1.334</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>.185</b>
5	1.85	37.00	0.85	-14.691	117	.000	<b>20</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>57.00</b>	<b>1.193</b>	<b>-1.334</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>.185</b>
6	2.13	42.60	1.059	-8.958	117	.000							
7	1.82	36.40	0.966	-13.260	117	.000							
8	2.69	53.80	1.178	-2.832	117	.005							
9	<b>3.2</b>	<b>64.00</b>	<b>1.228</b>	<b>1.739</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>.085</b>							
10	<b>2.82</b>	<b>56.40</b>	<b>1.195</b>	<b>-1.645</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>.103</b>							
11	2.66	53.20	1.22	-3.070	117	.003							
12	2.14	42.80	1.161	-8.064	117	.000							
13	3.78	75.60	1.148	7.376	117	.000							
14	3.72	74.40	1.098	7.161	117	.000							
15	3.85	77.00	0.966	9.513	117	.000							

As shown in Table 8, responses to items number 2, 9, 10, 17, 19, and 20 were not significant at 0.05. The wording for each of the items can be found in Appendix D of this study. Table 9 presents the respondents' answers to the questionnaire in percentages. The items can be found in Appendix D.

Table 9

*Respondents' Answers to the HSS Questionnaire*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Idea	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1	19.49	28.81	33	12.71	3.39	16	34.19	17.95	16.24	23.93	6.84
2	13	21.74	31.3	26.96	5.22	17	21.55	20.69	27.59	16.38	13.79
3	13	26.96	31.3	21.74	5.22	18	37.93	16.38	33.62	5.17	5.17
4	18.8	30.77	26.5	17	3.42	19	17.24	20.69	29.31	25	7.76
5	42.98	31.58	22.81	2.63	0	20	17.24	20.69	29.31	25	7.76
6	34.75	28.81	24.58	9.32	1.69						
7	47.86	29.91	16.24	4.27	1.71						
8	20.69	18.97	37.07	12.93	8.62						
9	16.1	8.47	24.58	38.98	10.17						
10	20.34	11.86	39.83	17.8	8.47						
11	25	16.38	33.62	18.1	6.9						
12	38.79	23.28	26.72	4.31	6						
13	6.78	6.78	17.8	38.98	29.66						
14	6	8.62	16.38	44.83	24.14						
15	5.13	2.56	17	52.99	22.22						

The students (48%) did not believe that the coursebooks familiarised them with Iranian achievements and successes, and they disagreed (42%) that the coursebooks promoted the Iranian culture. Similarly, they said (49%) that

the textbooks did not familiarize them with the ways Iranians lived and thought.

The students neither agreed (74%) that the coursebooks encouraged them to consume more nor did they agree (63%) that the coursebooks encouraged frugality and efficiency in consumption. Besides, the students (77%) said that the coursebooks did not motivate them to buy particular goods. The students (39%) agreed that the music tracks conform to Islamic-Iranian values.

The students (41%) agreed that the leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks were in accordance with Islamic-Iranian norms. Most disagreed (61%) that the teaching material encouraged them to pay excessive attention to their appearance and fashion. In addition, the majority of students were familiar with the examples given for food (68%), clothes (68%), and national and religious ceremonies/events (75%). The men/women illustrated were not similar to the men and women students saw outside class (52%). The textbook content had not changed the behavior of the majority of the students (54%).

Finally, the students' answers to inter/intracultural understanding were not significant at 0.05.

## **5. Discussion**

To answer the research questions, four questionnaires were administered and the responses were analyzed quantitatively. Four patterns were witnessed in the respondents' answers across the four questionnaires: conclusive agreement/disagreement, partial agreement/disagreement, almost equal division of responses, and no idea.

### **5.1 The First and Second Research Questions**

The first research question investigated the ideas of teachers about the cultural content of commercial textbooks, and the second research question investigated the ideas of students on this issue. Language institute teachers

partially agreed that the coursebooks were consolidating the hegemony of English. However, they disagreed that the publishers prioritize economic gains, have political agendas, or highlight western successes and achievements. These responses show that from their point of view the role of the coursebooks in strengthening the hegemony of English is unintentional. On the other hand, the coursebooks have familiarized language learners with Anglo-American achievements and discoveries, and they trust the information presented in them. Such familiarity and trust can help the designers present the reality in a way preferred by the hegemonic powers of the inner circle countries, and can pave the way for the creation of mental supremacy of the West in students' minds. This finding is in line with Alidou (2004) and Philipson (1992).

The coursebooks are reinforcing globalization because teachers and learners are familiar with the material manifestations of civilization and culture mentioned in them. As for nonIslamic values, the responses show that the language instructors and language learners do not view the coursebooks as nonIslamic.

Birjandi and Meshkat (2003) state that the value system of students is not formed by a specific coursebook because societies have stable cultural values which are strengthened by its members and organizations. The researchers would like to add that in today's world, exposure to western cultural elements has increased because of advanced communication technologies such as the internet and satellite, and the ease of global transportation from one country to another. This means that the worrying cultural changes occurring in Iran is probably related to sources more powerful than commercial ELT textbooks. This point was also reflected in the teachers' comments where they said that the cultural items mentioned in the coursebooks could have an effect on the users who have prior readiness created by other sources for accepting them.

Abdollahzadeh and Baniasad (2010) also report similar conclusions in their study.

The respondents' answers to the items related to the consistency of the music, movies, and entertainment activities in the coursebooks with Iranian-Islamic values were almost equally divided. The researchers believe that this pattern is consistent with Iran's condition as a society in transition. Nisbet (1976, Cited in Nabavi, 2010, p.195) enumerates five characteristics for traditional and modern societies and states that societies in transition show traces of all these characteristics; however, none of these characteristics completely dominate. Iran is an example of such a society (Safiri & Kalani, 2016) where the main body is more traditional, but its youth are more modern. Such a situation creates a paradox between collective and individual values, and the proximity of agreement and disagreement answers to the above-stated items in the questionnaires is a reflection of such a situation.

### **5.2 The Third and Fourth Research Questions**

The third research question investigated the idea of high school teachers about the cultural content of high school textbooks, and the fourth research question investigated the idea of high school students on this issue. Only teachers believe that the coursebooks highlight Iranian achievements and discoveries and promote Iranian culture. The coursebooks do not familiarize students with how Iranians live and think, and they do not promote Anglo-American culture.

The teachers' and students' responses show that the entertainment dimension of the coursebooks and the material manifestations of civilization and culture are in accordance with the context in which they are used. Regarding Islamic values, the teachers only agreed that high school textbooks promote religiosity.

The HST and HSS questionnaires had more nonsignificant items than the LIT and LIL questionnaires. However, the patterns observable for the answers were slightly different. For the nonIslamic value dimension, the respondents' answers to items which asked whether the coursebooks condemn having boy/girlfriend, out of marriage relationships, and prostitution and indulgence were mostly no idea. Further investigation into the comments given by a number of teachers to these items showed that the coursebooks do not include any reference whatsoever to these topics and the researchers believe that the high percentage of no idea answers to these items arises from this fact. This explanation is also applicable to the items related to intercultural understanding.

The teachers' and students' answers to the item which asked about the accuracy and truthfulness of general information presented in the coursebooks were not significant and the agreement and disagreement answers were close. However, the students agreed that the general information presented in the commercial textbooks were accurate and reliable. These patterns reflect a difference in trust between information gathered and presented from Iranian governmental bodies and information presented from foreign or nongovernmental sources. Vetcovich (1999, cited in Saroukhani and Abdolmalekei, 2010, p.2) defines trust as a social feeling which involves information processing about others that directly triggers psychological processes. Trust is one of the main components of *social capital* and the extension of the *trust radius* in a society increases social capital and decreases social and mental disorders (Saroukhani and Abdolmalekei, 2010). Eisania (2018) states that the social capital of the Iranian government has decreased in the period following the Islamic revolution. Also, research done by Saroukhani and Abdolmalekei (2010) on the degree of trust of the inhabitants of Sanandaj, the capital of the Kurdistan

province of Iran, to public media sources shows that they trust the information presented from the Internet and Satellite channels more than State TV and radio. Like media content, school textbooks are also designed, published, and distributed under the government's close supervision. The researchers suggest that a decrease in social capital has resulted in this type of response pattern.

### **5.3 The Fifth Research Question**

The fifth research question investigated whether the Iranian high school textbooks have compensated for the undesirable cultural influences/practices of commercial ELT materials. The students' responses suggest that high school textbooks do not successfully resist the hegemony of English, and they do not take steps to promote and install positive consumption behavioral patterns. However, it appears that the books function adequately in the entertainment dimension, and references to the material manifestations of civilization and culture are appropriate for the Iranian context.

The textbooks do not attempt to promote gender equality in the Iranian-Islamic sense. Contrary to the western concept of gender equality which assumes equal rights for men and women in all aspects, the Islamic perspective assumes equal rights for both sexes in *primary rights* and not in *secondary rights* (Fakour & Pourghasab Amiri, 2012). Primary rights are the fundamental rights of every human being which stem from their truth of existence and secondary rights are the rights that a legal person has in relation to his/her society and family (Fakour & Pourghasab Amiri, 2012).

In addition, the textbooks do not even touch the issue of ethical relations and opposite sex relations from the Iranian-Islamic perspective. However, the coursebooks encourage religiosity among learners. Iranian socialization is promoted by the coursebooks, though they have fallen short of triggering any behavioral changes among the learners. Also, the coursebooks are not concerned with the creation of intercultural communicative competence.

### **5.4 The Sixth Research Question**

The sixth research question investigated to what extent commercial and high school textbooks reflect the intercultural framework from the teachers' and students' perspectives. According to the responses given to the questionnaires, commercial ELT textbooks familiarize students with western achievements and discoveries, give them clues as to what leisure activities English speakers do in their free time, and familiarize them with the food, clothing, and religious and national ceremonies/events of the target cultures all of which are related to the *savoirs* component of intercultural competence. Moreover, the coursebooks are not trying to stereotype any viewpoints or beliefs and this helps the forming of *savoir-etre* because no stereotyping is promoted in the first place. Both groups, LIT and LIL, believe that the coursebooks have helped them better understand cultural differences and also better understand their own culture, and this shows that the coursebooks are generally trying to create a sense of intercultural communicative competence.

In a nutshell and according to the comments given by the teachers, Iranian high school coursebooks are not concerned with creating intercultural competence and are more focused on localization. The examples for food, clothing, and national and religious ceremonies/events are familiar to the students. This way, in terms of *savoirs*, the coursebooks mostly provide knowledge of the social groups and products and practices of the Iranians in which some are affected by globalization. This exclusive focus on local culture deprives the learners of opportunities to compare. Moreover, because the local culture is dealt with superficially, the students do not feel confident even with their own culture which is a prerequisite for the development of intercultural competence. Therefore, it can be concluded that the coursebooks do not create intercultural communicative competence and this can be one of the reasons that the coursebooks are not embraced outside the school setting

by the students and the teachers. This finding is also supported by studies done by Mozaffarzadeh and Ajideh (2019) and Goodarzi and Weisi (2020). In addition, this neglect has not enabled students to know their culture better because a basis for comparison is absent.

Prodromou (1992) mentions that most English language learners are interested in learning about the culture of English-speaking countries and those with higher levels of proficiency feel more in need of this information. In addition, Mavi (1996) reports higher motivation rates among teenage language learners who are taught about the lifestyle of the country whose language they are learning. Therefore, materials developed for the Iranian context should incorporate some examples of the Iranian culture alongside examples from the Anglo-American cultures. *Cultural representativeness* in localized ELT materials design is something that the researchers would prefer to recommend to local material developers.

## **6. Conclusions**

The findings of this study showed that concerns about the cultural appropriacy of commercial ELT textbooks are justified in relation to globalization and the hegemony of the English language. As an example, the issue of gender equality as presented in commercial ELT materials needs to be reformulated to get more consistent with the Islamic-Iranian culture. However, the researchers believe that the criticisms raised against the promotion of negative consumption behavioral patterns and the propagation of nonIslamic western values seem exaggerated and not substantiated by the participants in this study.

Even if we agree that commercial ELT textbooks are free of negative connotations toward the local culture, it is still necessary for teaching materials to include certain aspects of the local culture if intercultural competence is considered the target of culture teaching. First, learners work

better with familiar information. Cook (1997) believes that schematic knowledge is important for language teaching because it draws students' attention to the kind of background information necessary for successful construction of meaning. Studies done by Ghosn (2013), Mahababdi (2013), and Hassannejad et al. (2020) confirm this belief. Moreover, increased student motivation resulting from understanding the value of their own culture and traditions through another language may also contribute to the better performance of the learners. In brief, these benefits along with the necessity of integrating the local culture to set the ground for creation of intercultural communicative competence as explained by Byram (1997) indicates the inadequacy of the cultural content of both commercial ELT materials and locally-produced textbooks. The formation of such a competence is highly dependent on opportunities for comparison between the target (British/American) and source (Iranian) cultures. Unfortunately, the major misconception in designing localized materials is packing the textbooks with elements of the local culture and almost eliminating the target culture. This is where the concept of cultural representativeness should come into play to create ELT materials that are more balanced in the target and source cultural content.

The results of this study suggest that the best way to balance the hegemony of the English language is to integrate the local culture with the target culture. Iranian textbook developers can bring in the achievements and successes of Iranians and introduce the Iranian lifestyle alongside famous and successful figures from the West for creating a sense of pride in the learners about their own culture when studying English. Moreover, using the local cultural elements will provide a basis for cultural comparison and will help the development of critical thinking among the students. Another area of attention for Iranian materials developers is related to the use of music and

videos alongside the printed material because visual input is one of the most important tools in education. At the present time, Iranian materials developers do not and in some cases cannot make efficient use of these tools. Promotion of the gender equality concept from the Iranian-Islamic perspective should also be present in Localized ELT materials produced in Iran. Last but not least, the researchers suggest that Iranian produced materials should focus on promoting the Iranian pattern of ethical and opposite sex relations.

Like any other empirical study, this study had its own limitations. That is why it is recommended that the results be taken cautiously. The use of questionnaires employed in this study in future research with a more representative sample would provide more dependent results. Though limited in its scope and sampling, this study can be considered a step forward in the long-awaited goal of developing intercultural understanding among language learners in the expanding circle.

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#### Appendix A. LIT Questionnaire

- 1- The coursebooks' content is in service of globalization.
- 2- For the publishers (Oxford, Cambridge, Pearson, Mac-Millan), economic gains are more important than educational objectives.
- 3- The coursebooks' content has political objectives.
- 4- The coursebooks' content highlights western successes and achievements.
- 5- The general information presented in the coursebooks' texts and audios are accurate and true.
- 6- The coursebooks' content are harmful for the Iranian culture.
- 7- The coursebooks' content promote Anglo-American values.
- 8- The coursebooks' content encourages consumerism.
- 9- The coursebooks' content encourages efficiency and less consumption.
- 10- The coursebooks' content encourages learners to buy certain types of goods (cellphones, computers, clothes, etc.).
- 11- The music used in the coursebooks confirm to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 12- The coursebooks' videos confirm to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 13- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (skiing, going to the cinema/disco/gym, etc.) are the ones Iranians do in their free time.
- 14- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (skiing, going to the cinema/disco/gym, etc.) are the ones the British and Americans do in their free time.
- 15- The leisure activities mentioned in the books (skiing, going to the cinema/disco/gym, etc.) confirm to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 16- The coursebooks' content encourage excessive attention to appearance and fashion.
- 17- The examples given for food (pasta, salads, soups, stake, fruit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 18- The examples given for clothing items (jeans, T-shirt, skirt, suit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 19- The examples given for national/religious ceremonies (Valentine's Day, Mardi Gars, Christmas, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 20- The men and women depicted in the coursebooks' confirm to my mental image.
- 21- The coursebooks' content decreases gender discrimination.
- 22- The coursebooks' content increases gender discrimination.
- 23- The coursebooks' content encourages having a boy/girlfriend.
- 24- The coursebooks' content encourages unconventional relationships between men and women.
- 25- The coursebooks' content encourages indulgence and prostitution (drinking, outside marriage relationships, homosexuality)
- 26- The images used in the coursebooks confirm to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 27- The coursebooks' content distances learners from religiosity, and tries to eliminate God from the learners' social and individual lives.
- 28- The coursebooks' content tries to westernize Iranian socialization.
- 29- The coursebooks' content tries to stereotype certain beliefs and viewpoints.
- 30- The coursebooks' content highlights cultural differences, and utilizes this for the acceptance of such differences and the better understanding of the Iranian culture.

**Appendix B. LIL Questionnaire**

- 1- The coursebooks familiarize me with the British and American successes and achievements.
- 2- The general information presented in the coursebooks' texts and audios are accurate and true.
- 3- The coursebooks' content is appropriate for the Iranian culture.
- 4- The coursebooks' content familiarizes me with how the British and Americans live and think.
- 5- The coursebooks' content encourages me to buy more and consume more.
- 6- The coursebooks' content encourages me to buy less and be more frugal.
- 7- The coursebooks have encouraged me to buy certain goods (cellphone, computer, clothes, etc.)
- 8- The coursebooks' music tracks are against my religion and culture.
- 9- The coursebooks' videos are against my religion and culture.
- 10- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (skiing, going to the cinema/gym, etc.) are the ones Iranians do in their free time.
- 11- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (skiing, going to the cinema/gym, etc.) are the ones the British and Americans do in their free time.
- 12- The leisure activities mentioned in the books (skiing, going to the cinema/gym, etc.) are against my religion and culture.
- 13- The coursebooks encourage me to pay excessive attention to how I look and my clothing.
- 14- The examples given for food (pasta, salads, soups, stake, fruit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 15- The examples given for clothing items (jeans, T-shirt, skirt, suit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 16- The examples given for national/religious ceremonies (Valentine's Day, Mardi Gars, Christmas, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 17- The appearance and life of the men and women depicted in the books are similar to the ones I see outside class.
- 18- The coursebooks' images are against my religion and culture.
- 19- The coursebooks' content have positively/negatively changed my behavior towards others.
- 20- The coursebooks' content have improved my understanding of cultural differences.
- 21- The coursebooks' content have made me understand the differences between my own culture and the British and American cultures, and they have improved my understanding of the Iranian culture.

**Appendix C. HST Questionnaire**

- 1- The coursebooks' content is resists globalization.
- 2- The coursebooks' content has political objectives.
- 3- The coursebooks' content highlights Iranian successes and achievements.
- 4- The general information presented in the coursebooks' texts and audios are accurate and true.
- 5- The coursebooks' content strengthens the Iranian culture.
- 6- The coursebooks' content promotes Anglo-American values.
- 7- The coursebooks' content encourages consumerism.
- 8- The coursebooks' content encourages efficiency and less consumption.

- 9- The coursebooks' content encourages learners to buy certain types of goods (cellphones, computers, clothes, etc.).
- 10- The music used in the coursebooks confirms to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 11- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (skiing, going to the cinema/disco/gym, etc.) are the ones Iranians do in their free time.
- 12- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (skiing, going to the cinema/disco/gym, etc.) are the ones the British and Americans do in their free time.
- 13- The leisure activities mentioned in the books (skiing, going to the cinema/disco/gym, etc.) confirm to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 14- The coursebooks' content encourages excessive attention to appearance and fashion.
- 15- The examples given for food (salads, soups, fruit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 16- The examples given for clothing items (jeans, T-shirt, skirt, suit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 17- The examples given for national/religious ceremonies (New Year, Eids, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 18- The men and women depicted in the coursebooks' confirm to my mental image.
- 19- The coursebooks' content decreases gender discrimination.
- 20- The coursebooks' content increases gender discrimination.
- 21- The coursebooks' content condemns having a boy/girlfriend.
- 22- The coursebooks' content condemns unconventional relationships between men and women.
- 23- The coursebooks' content condemns indulgence and prostitution (drinking, outside marriage relationships, homosexuality)
- 24- The images used in the coursebooks confirm to Iranian-Islamic values.
- 25- The coursebooks' content encourages religiosity, and tries to highlight God in the learners' social and individual lives.
- 26- The coursebooks' content promotes Iranian socialization.
- 27- The coursebooks' content tries to stereotype certain beliefs and viewpoints.
- 28- The coursebooks' content highlights cultural differences, and utilizes this for the acceptance of such differences and the better understanding of the Iranian culture.

#### **Appendix D. HSS Questionnaire**

- 1- The coursebooks familiarize me with Iranian successes and achievements.
- 2- The general information presented in the coursebooks' texts and audios are accurate and true.
- 3- The coursebooks' content promotes the Iranian culture.
- 4- The coursebooks' content familiarizes me with how Iranians live and think.
- 5- The coursebooks' content encourages me to buy more and consume more.
- 6- The coursebooks' content encourages me to buy less and be more frugal.
- 7- The coursebooks have encouraged me to buy certain goods (cellphone, computer, clothes, etc.)
- 8- The coursebooks' music tracks are against my religion and culture.
- 9- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (traveling, sports, cinema, etc.) are the ones Iranians do in their free time.
- 10- The leisure activities mentioned in the coursebooks (traveling, sports, cinema, etc.) are the ones the British and Americans do in their free time.
- 11- The leisure activities mentioned in the books (traveling, sports, cinema, etc.) are against my religion and culture.

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- 12- The coursebooks encourage me to pay excessive attention to how I look and my clothing.
- 13- The examples given for food (salads, soups, fruit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 14- The examples given for clothing items (jeans, T-shirt, skirt, suit, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 15- The examples given for national/religious ceremonies (New Year, Eids, etc.) are familiar to me.
- 16- The appearance and life of the men and women depicted in the books are similar to the ones I see outside class.
- 17- The coursebooks' images are against my religion and culture.
- 18- The coursebooks' content have positively/negatively changed my behavior towards others.
- 19- The coursebooks' content have improved my understanding of cultural differences.
- 20- The coursebooks' content have made me understand the differences between my own culture and the British and American cultures, and they have improved my understanding of the Iranian culture.



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