

Towards Intercultural Competence in EFL Textbook: the Case of ‘New Prospects’

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Abstract : The promotion of intercultural competence plays an important role in foreign language education. The outcome of intercultural educationalists' studies was the adoption of intercultural language learning and a modified version of the Communicative Competence that encompasses an intercultural component enabling language learners to communicate successfully interculturally. Intercultural Competence has an even more central role in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) since efforts are critical to preparing learners for intercultural communication in our global world. In these efforts, EFL learning materials are a crucial stimulus for developing learners' intercultural competence. There has been a continuous interest in the analysis of EFL textbooks by researcher all over the world. One specific area that has received prominent attention in recent years is a focus on how the cultural content of EFL materials promote intercultural competence. In the Algerian context, research on the locally produced EFL textbooks tend to focus on investigating the linguistic and communicative competence. The cultural content of the materials has not yet been systematically researched. Therefore, this study contributes to filling this gap by evaluating the locally published EFL textbook ‘New Prospects’ used at the high school level as well as investigating teachers' views and attitudes on the cultural content of ‘New Prospects’ alongside two others locally produced EFL textbooks ‘Getting Through’ and ‘At the Crossroad’ used at high school level. To estimate the textbook's potential of developing intercultural competence, mixed methods, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection, was used in the material evaluation analysed via content analysis and in the survey questionnaire and interview with teachers. Data collection and analysis were supported by the frameworks developed by the researcher for analysing the textbook, questionnaire, and interview. Indeed, based on the literature, three frameworks/ models are developed in this study to analyse, on one hand, the cultural contexts and themes discussed in the material that play an important role in fostering learners' intercultural awareness. On the other hand, to evaluate the promotion of developing intercultural competence.

Keywords : intercultural communication, intercultural communicative competence, intercultural competence, EFL materials

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