

## **Teaching Source, Target, and International Cultures: A Case Study of the Books of English Prescribed by the Sindh Textbook Board**

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### **Abstract**

*This study analyses the representation of three cultural materials in books of English published and prescribed by the Sindh Textbook Board for students of grades one to ten, to determine if the books include materials from different cultures and promote intercultural competence. This study is conducted from the vantage point of Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) model of inclusion of three types of cultural material, i.e., source, target, and international cultures in EFL curriculum for developing intercultural competence. The Process Model of Intercultural Competence by Deardorff (2006) has been employed to analyse how an in-depth understanding of various cultures produces informed, enlightened, progressive, and moderate individuals with global insight, diversified outlook, multicultural understanding, and transnational demeanour. The content analysis of the qualitative data reviewed from the English Books of grades one to ten focuses on identifying the inclusion of material representing the three levels of cultures and the promotion of intercultural competence. The study finds that the prescribed books do not gradually, systematically, and consistently present material on the three types of cultures to develop cross-cultural awareness among learners. As a result, the books remain inadequate in promoting intercultural competence, co-existential prevalence, and global outlook.*

**Keywords:** English as a Foreign Language, English Language Teaching, Intercultural Competence, International Culture, L2, Source Culture, Target Culture

## Introduction

Mandarin Chinese is the most spoken L1 language in the world, whereas English has the distinction of being the most spoken L2 language in the world. Initially, English was used as the language of the powerful colonizer or centre to control the colonized subjects or periphery, however, the phase of appropriation, subversion, hostility, and antagonism subsided to place the English language as a medium to convey academic content and scientific knowledge to learners. English Language Teaching (ELT) has evolved from the traditional to humanistic approaches. The traditional approach employed the Grammar-Translation Method, The Direct Method, and The Audio-Lingual Method, whereas the humanistic approach prioritized designer methods such as Suggestopedia, The Silent Way, Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching, and Task-Based Learning. However, the post-method era is more flexible, reflective, fluid, and versatile, and transcends beyond the compulsory use of any single method.

Nowadays, the Eclectic Method is widely used, which suggests ELT teachers choose either a single or combined-methods approach and design the material according to the needs of learners and the context of teaching. In addition, the pedagogical approaches have also evolved from the teacher-centric, book-centric approach to a learner-centric approach. The learner-centric approach requires teaching to be collaborative, integrative, interactive, and inclusive. In this pursuit, various cultural shades can be employed as a significant means to engage learners in English language acquisition and cultivate intercultural competence to promote global peace, harmony, pluralism, multiculturalism, and respect for diversity and differences.

McKay (2004) establishes that culture can be used to teach the English language from linguistic and pedagogical perspectives. The linguistic aspect includes semantics, pragmatics, and rhetoric, whereas the pedagogical level of culture comprises the selection of content from target, source and international cultures, teaching cultural values and teaching methodology. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) posit that textbooks and materials designed for the teaching of the English language can include three types of cultural information:

1. Target culture materials that use the culture of a country where English is spoken as a first language.

2. Source culture materials that draw on the learners' own cultures as content; and
3. International target culture materials that use a great variety of cultures in English and non-English-speaking countries around the world (McKay, 2004, p. 9).

However, the contemporary world needs individuals with a more global outlook, pluralistic demeanour, co-existential approach, and respect for difference and diversity. An in-depth understanding of the target, source, and international cultures develops intercultural competence. Deardorff (2011) maintains that intercultural competence can produce informed, enlightened, progressive, and moderate individuals who not only take pride in their source culture and identity but also respect the differences and diversity prevailing across the globe.

In the globalized world, intercultural competence has become significantly important in terms of education, trade, international diplomatic relations, and global peace. A wide array of studies from the USA, China and Canada testify and promote intercultural competence. From the USA, the *Pyramid Model* of intercultural competence by Deardorff (2006) is based on attitude, knowledge, skills, and internal outcome based on empathy and adaptability. Byram (1997) focuses on the critical understanding of other cultures along with linguistic, sociolinguistic and intercultural awareness to promote intercultural competence.

From China, Gu (2011) establishes that the student who joined the international exchange program significantly acquired global awareness and skills to adapt to different and new cultural settings. From Canada, Fantini (2000) finds that Canadian books, teacher training programs, and general educational curriculum promote intercultural competence. From Australia, Marginson and Sawir (2011) posit that Australian universities are playing key roles in promoting intercultural competence by integrating international students.

All above cited studies emphasize and establish the significance of the inclusion of material from various cultures in ELT; however, in Pakistan and especially Sindh, not much research work has been done to explore the presentation of the materials from various cultures promoting intercultural peace and harmony,

which makes this study very relevant and significant.

In Pakistan, English is taught as a Second language (L2), from grade one onwards. It is essential to analyse whether the English language, as an L2, is used to present cultural materials and promote intercultural competence among learners of Sindh, Pakistan. In Pakistan, like many other countries, it is imperative to employ English Language Teaching (ELT) as a source of intercultural awareness, followed by intercultural competence to promote peace, harmony and co-existential understanding among learners.

Sindh Textbook Board is a public sector institute, and its main job is to publish books for ELT from level one and onwards. The English books published by STBB are the only recommended source of ELT for the public sector schools in Sindh province; therefore, this study chooses the books for English language teaching published by STBB to analyse whether they include the three types of cultural material and ensure cultural awareness followed by intercultural competence.

### **Problem Statement**

We live in a diversified world. People have different cultures, norms, beliefs, and practices which shape their behaviour, attitudes, perceptions, understandings, and worldviews. Some norms and practices in one culture may not be acceptable in other cultures; moreover, sometimes they turn out to be illegitimate and unlawful. It is altogether implausible to eliminate cultural diversity and differences; however, it can be adapted, assimilated, accommodated, understood, or respectfully tolerated or omitted. For this effect, intercultural competence is the essential requisite, which can produce individuals having the skills to negotiate, contextualize, and interpret the meaning of values, customs, social behaviour, cultural attitudes, and emotional reactions of other cultures with care, respect, tolerance, and enlightened difference.

### **Research Objective**

To analyse the intercultural competence represented in the Sindh Textbook Board's books for English grades 1-10, with the inclusion of material from the source, target, and international cultures.

## Research Question

How do the English books by the Sindh Textbook Board for grades one to ten promote intercultural competence by including materials from the target, source, and international culture?

## Literature Review

### Teaching Culture in ELT

A vast array of studies recommends the integration of culture in the teaching of ELT. Cruz (2010) maintains that “Culture offers ELT a vast landscape of perspectives that can be employed to enhance the dynamics of a class” (p.6); and Thanasoulas (2001) pinpointed two perspectives that rationalize the integration of culture in ELT i.e. “transmission of factual, cultural information” and “target civilization” (p.3). However, Alptekin (1993) disregarded the inclusion of the target culture based on cultural differences or the suppression of the source culture.

The students in Saudi Arabia felt estranged from the concept of petting animals (Alptekin, 1993), whereas in Morocco the inclusion of the target was considered tantamount to the suppression of the source culture by cultivating inferiority among students (Adaskou et al., 1990) moreover, Argungu (2002) considers it “cultural onslaught” of the source culture and willful endeavour for assimilation into the target culture, and to avoid it, he suggests the inclusion of Islamic English. However, Fredricks (2007) establishes that Tajik students showed great enthusiasm in learning the target language with the contents taken from the source/local culture.

Shafaei and Nejati (2008) argue that if ELT excludes source/local culture, it will fail to produce the desired result and negatively impact language learning. Ariza (2007) posits that ELT teaching and policy must not disregard the source/local culture of the learners. Philipson (1992) is also consistent with incorporating local/source culture in textbooks and ELT content of target language teaching. It also adds to the self-integrity of the learner (Modiano, 2001). ELT teachers are advised to contextualize the target language in the source culture to better transform the learning experience of nativeness/localness in the target language (Robatjazi & Mohanlal, 2007).

In addition, Dueñas (2002) recommends the de-culturalization of language teaching with equal focus on all types of cultures, whereas Ariffin (2006) posits that both local and target cultures may be amalgamated in EFL classes. However, the increasing global interaction and growing challenges have prompted ELT to impart intercultural competence for producing an individual with a global outlook, transnational and transcultural demeanour, pluralistic and enlightened stance and diversified co-existential prevalence.

### **Intercultural Competence**

In the modern globalised world, intercultural competence has become a key goal of ELT. Intercultural competence is a canopy term which includes intercultural sensitivity, cross-cultural adaptation, multiculturalism, transcultural communication, cultural intelligence, global competence, cross-cultural awareness, global citizenship, and international communication (Deardorff, 2011; Fantin, 2009). It enables learners to understand and effectively interact with diverse cultures. Schmidt (2000) suggests that by introducing fundamental cultural differences, patterns, and behaviours of different cultures in ELT material, we can instil intercultural competence.

Some dressing, eating, dating, liquoring, and petting habits in one culture become illegitimate or unacceptable in another culture. This results in abhorrence, detest, hatred, fanaticism, and bigotry. Deardorff (2011) establishes that intercultural competence is a continuous process that develops understanding, knowledge, and attitude to better interact, communicate, and co-exist in a diversified global cultural context. Hence, intercultural competence helps to produce enlightened, tolerant, and pluralistic individuals.

### **Models of Intercultural Competence**

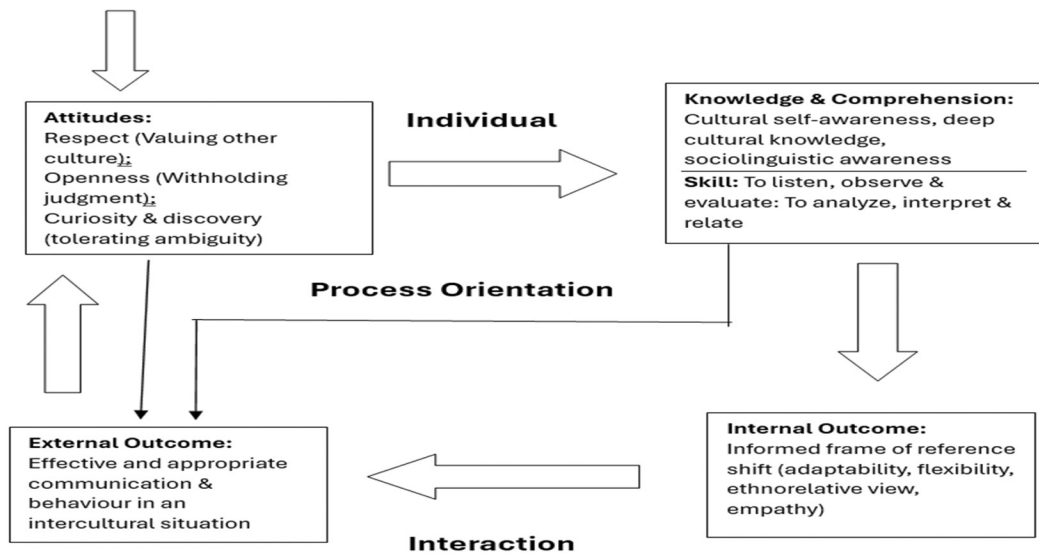
Deardorff (2011) maintains that several models have been developed to define intercultural competence. Cross's cross-cultural continuum (1988) is a developmental model in which a learner is exposed to different stages, such as cultural understanding, awareness and reflection. Bennett's six-staged Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1993) is based on three ethnocentric stages of oppositions, i.e. denial, defense of denial or opposition, and minimization of other culture, followed by three ethnorelative stages of acceptance, adaptation and

integration. King and Magolda's three-dimensional intercultural maturity model (2005) is based on the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal growth of an individual from initial, intermediate and mature intercultural perspectives. This developmental model is suitable for higher education levels. These models were developmental in nature, whereas the other models can also be traced but were not research-based (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

However, the Process Model of Intercultural Competence by Deardorff (2006) is widely cited because it is based on an ongoing, continuous process. It has four characteristic key stages: attitude, knowledge and comprehension, internal outcome, and finally, external outcome. The model proposes that intercultural competence is a continuous process, and such competence can be developed in formal education settings. Learners should be provided with opportunities to learn, understand, analyse, evaluate, and reflect upon the various aspects of other cultures so they can develop respect and openness for other cultures. Besides, they gain self-awareness and deep cultural knowledge, which develops skills to evaluate and interpret the social and sociolinguistic sense of the given content of any culture.

## Figure 1

*Process Model of Intercultural Competence by Deardorff, 2006*



Liu et al. (2023) maintain that the inclusion of culturally nuanced material significantly adds to the learning of the target language and culture. Perez and Chen (2024) establish that exposure to diversified cultural content cultivates intercultural sensitivity and effective interaction. Pereira (2023) affirms that the inclusion of cultural understanding enhances learners' ability to effectively navigate through various cultures. Many current studies are consistent with the pursuit of ELT incorporating ICC in ELT (Baker & Fang, 2022; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2020; Pereira, 2023).

### **Methodology**

This study, based on content analysis, explores the representation of source, target, and international cultures in English textbooks prescribed by the Sindh Textbook Board (STBB) for grades 1 through 10. The focus is on how these textbooks promote intercultural competence, which fosters respect, harmony, tolerance, and peace across various cultures. The data have been reviewed from the prescribed books with the help of Cortazzi and Jin (1999) framework, referring to the inclusion of three categories of cultures i.e. source, target, and international cultures into the ELT. A fourth culturally neutral category, referring to the data of global impact and not necessarily associated with any specific culture, has been added to provide insight into cultural inclusiveness represented in the books.

The study employs two types of content analysis to review the data. The quantitative content analysis is used to quantify the frequency of source, target and international, and the newly added global or culturally neutral category. The quantified results are presented in graphs and tables to provide a clear visual understanding of the proportional representation. Besides, the qualitative content analysis is conducted to assess the depth and diversity of various cultural categories. The data reviewed from the texts, stories, poems, dialogues, visuals, semantics, and exercises referring to various cultural themes have been coded and categorized into various cultural categories and themes represented in the books.

The qualitative content analysis of the reviewed data has been conducted within the theoretical framework of Deardorff's (2006) intercultural competence based on knowledge acquisition, attitude formation, and critical cultural understanding. By analysing the quality and the depth of cultural content represented in the books, it has been assessed how well they promote intercultural competence.

It further explores how various categories support knowledge acquisition, attitude formation and internalization of cultural awareness from Deardorff's perspective to produce enlightened, tolerant, pluralistic individuals who can operate in diversified regional, national, international and global contexts with prudence, tolerance, harmony, and co-existential considerations.

## **Results**

### **My English Book 1**

The English book prescribed for Grade I has twenty-nine units. Most units refer to the source culture, whereas a few concepts have been added referring to the target and international cultures. The introduction to people, names of animals, birds, vegetables, numbers, sounds, action words, professions, friendship, country, seasons, and days of the week has been included to develop the cognitive domains of learners. For spatial learners, visual aids and pictures have been added to make the text live and animated. Most of the content is from the source culture; however, some items referring to the target and international cultures have been included.

Even in the source culture, there are various strands and shades which need equitable treatment and representation. Unit sixteen comprises various action words such as “think, eat, walk, sit and laugh” animated with pictures of boys and girls wearing pants and shirts and shalwar and kameez. In Sindh, the children from the privileged class mostly wear pants and shirts; however, in the countryside, wearing a shalwar and kameez is very common. Thus, it represents both strands and shades of the source culture with a balanced approach.

There are some aspects of cultural representation which may either hinder learning or cause stereotypes and biases. Unit seventeen describes various words with the help of pictures, in which “tall, thin, old” people have been shown wearing clothes belonging to the source culture, but the “fat” man is shown wearing pants and shirts, which adds a tinge of possible bias perception and is tantamount to stereotypes at source, target and international levels. The same stereotyping is obvious in unit eighteen, in which the farmer, carpenter and nurse are wearing clothes belonging to the source culture, whereas the doctor is in pants and a shirt. This disparity will have a psychological impact on the learners and will condition them with a certain mindset.

It is important to align the pictorial representation deeply rooted in the routine observation of the learners. The picture of a cook used in unit fourteen is with the formal dress of a chef, but most children from Sindh may not identify the role properly because their daily life observation does not match such a dress code. In the same vein, unit eighteen includes the picture of a driver in the formal dress of a chauffeur, which is not a commonplace phenomenon for many students. Its appearance bears great affinity with a pilot or prestigious personnel working in the armed forces, which is likely to be attractive to children, and they may aspire to opt for such careers.

The English book for Grade 1 is predominantly rich with the source culture; however, the target and international cultures have partial representation. Unit one includes an “introduction” based on the norms of the source culture, and the characters introducing themselves are also wearing the attire representing the source culture; however, the subsequent section of greetings refers to the target culture and the international culture. Most words in the alphabet are taken from the source culture, but “balloon, ice cream, jacket, kettle, queue, umpire, urn, yacht” are taken from both the target and international cultures.

The picture of the “igloo” used in unit nine refers to an international culture, which induces curiosity and information among young learners about the people living in the colder part of the world. Children playing with cubes and a walking Negro boy qualify for the international culture. Most importantly, the title cover of the book has a picture of an adorable cat, which not only refers to the international culture of petting animals but also induces students to empathise, love, and care for animals.

## **My English Book 2**

The English book prescribed for Grade II consists of eight units related to the source culture; however, there are some content or pictures which refer to the target and international culture. The eight units include self-introduction, social awareness, taking care of pets, cultural parties, social and Pakistan studies, Islamic events, and games.

Unit one commences with the source culture greetings such as “Assalam-u-Alaikum” followed by the target and international cultural greetings “Good

Morning”. The pictures of children in unit 1.2 appear in the target and international cultural dress code, except for the girl who is wearing a dress belonging to the source culture. This disparity stipulates gender-fixation and in addition, it also overlooks the vast majority of source culture, which otherwise will instil the concept of diversity in the learners. In the same unit, the name of the boy is misspelt: Abdul Rehman is written as “Abdur Rehman”, which is incorrect. The noun Abdul Rehman is from the international culture, i.e., Arabic, and it is pronounced “ar” but is written with ‘al’. It has an affinity with the word “walk” in which the “l” is elided while pronounced but remains part of spelling.

The picture of a cycling girl in unit two promotes gender equality and undermines taboo perceptions regarding the cycling or biking of girls. The picture used in unit 2.4 shows a remarkable example of diversity in which boys and girls from different races and colours have been shown celebrating their success. This not only acquaints learners with cultural variety but also promotes understanding and respect for diversity.

Unit three deals with the concept of rearing pet animals. Unit four is about cricket, which belongs to the target and international cultures but currently it has permeated globally. The praiseworthy aspect is delineated through a picture in which boys and girls are shown playing cricket together on the same ground. It shuns stereotypes. In unit 5.2, Doctor Vijay provides first aid to a child brought by his sister. The name of the doctor positively represents a minority community. At the end of the unit, the parents appreciate their daughter for bringing her younger brother to the hospital in the time of emergency, but they do not thank the doctor for his services and care, which is discourteous.

Such value-added content should have been included in the text because gratitude and thanksgiving are cardinal values of every culture, and such values must be instilled among learners. Unit 8.2 refers to zoo keeping, in which animals belonging to the source culture are available except “zebra” and “rhinoceros” which belong to the international culture. In unit 1.2, the picture of the black bear also refers to the international culture. This develops curiosity, interest and understanding of interculturalism among learners.

### **My English Book 3**

Unit one is based on a story, *Treasure*, with a moral lesson for work-shy children to work hard. It also includes a family going for a picnic on a farm in a car with a skipping rope, a football, a camera, and a radio. Unit two is about healthy eating habits. It makes students aware of eating healthy and hygienic, and avoiding fast and unhygienic food. It includes foods from the source and international cultures, but its message is global in its impact. Unit three refers to traffic rules and taking safety measures while crossing the road. Its context is deeply rooted in the source culture but has a global demeanour as well.

There is also a poem which adds to the general understanding of students regarding handling traffic on roads. Unit four is a significant example of multiculturalism and pluralism. It is based on the festivals in Pakistan, which include [Divali] Diwali, Nauroz, Eid and Christmas. It represents the variety at the source level and also informs about the diversity at the target and international levels. Unit five is from the source culture, it narrates the story of a national hero, Rashid Minhas Shaheed, who rendered his life for the safety of Pakistan and was awarded *Nishan-e-Haider* – the highest national award of Pakistan. In the exercise section, the morning routine is from the source culture, whereas the story about a greedy dog adds global understanding. Unit six refers to the concepts of time, months, and agreeing and disagreeing.

### **My English Book 4**

Unit one refers to health and cleanliness. It commences with the method of boiling an egg, followed by a text in which a girl falls sick because of eating unhygienic food. In the exercise section, a writing activity includes information regarding healthy food items, from fruits, meat, vegetables, and dry fruit. In the grammar section, there is a conversation between two girls from Japan and Turkey. Unit two is very important regarding the safety measures children should take for their protection. It is very crucial for children's protection. In addition, the poem about crossing the road makes students aware of what safety measures they should take while crossing the road.

Unit three is about the source culture, referring to the children of Pakistan, who meet at a national sports gala and share their information and biodata. It is

a wonderful example of representing the ethnic diversity living in Pakistan. Unit four is about land reform, which discusses mountains, water, rivers, and seaports. It includes information about the highest peaks of K2 and Mount Everest and the longest river in Egypt. Besides, the story of a lion and a mouse and artwork and painting refer to global or culturally neutral zones.

Unit five is about taking care of the family. The roles of mother, father, and children have been discussed, but the textual focus lies on the mother, which is contextualized in the source culture. The poem about good deeds such as helping, smiling, and planting, a story showing the importance of hands over money and a short poem about taking care of traffic while crossing the road are of general appeal.

### **My English Book 5**

Unit one is based on a short fable about the concept of helping others. A wolf warns a lamb that it will devour it in the evening; as a result, a cat, a dog, and a horse come forward to help and rescue the lamb from the malicious and harmful intention of the wolf. The description of the making of the *rillee* – a cultural artefact – is about the source culture, whereas the concept of a zoo includes animals from different parts of the world. Unit two predominantly belongs to the source culture. The text about pottery making and a day from the life of a farmer is loaded with the source culture.

Unit three is about female education, which narrates the story of a girl who completes primary education in her village, and after long efforts, goes to a nearby village to study in a boys' middle school. The villagers raise objections to her going to school; however, she successfully continues her education. This unit dispels common misperceptions in the rural part of the country regarding the education of females. The exercise section includes information about the Arabian Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, K2, Mount Everest, oceans, mountains, and the highest peaks.

A poem based on the wish of a child who wants to grow up fast is of a general outlook. The text of unit four is about a pet bird - a peacock, which is killed by a neighbouring farmer. The farmer confesses to the killing of the bird and promises not to kill such birds in future. In the exercise section, students from Pakistan participate in the Karl Popper Debating Championship, in which students from Mexico and Korea also join them. The text promotes international exposure,

and a poem about pretending to be different animals and birds provides a general outlook.

Unit five is about floods and how they made barren lands fertile. This text needs serious reconsideration because it is high time to analyse the factors and reasons for the floods. Moreover, dubbing them blessings in disguise seems insane. In addition, the description of the national flag is about the source culture, however, the poem about a wish is of a neutral outlook.

### **My English Book 6**

Unit one discusses the importance of cleanliness. Two friends visit a park and discuss the importance of cleanliness. It refers to the norms of source culture. In picture writing, the names of “Beena, John, Kumar and Sita” include the variety and diversity of the source culture. In the paragraph writing the topic of “Eid Milan Party” refers to the ritualistic celebration of the source culture.

Unit two is based on a dream in which a young boy is forbidden to go to a picnic in the hilly areas given his poor health, as a result, he has a serious realisation which gets translated into a strong conviction that he would not eat unhealthy, unhygienic and junk food and instead would prefer to eat homemade food. In the exercise section, students are asked to write about the blurb of books belonging to the international culture. Overall, it refers to the source culture.

Unit three refers to the importance of patience and struggle. It is a poem written by W.E. Hickson. The theme is of a universal approach and applies to every part of the world. Hence, it falls into the domain of cultural neutrality or global appeal. In the exercise section, students are asked to discuss international, national, and local news, which adds to their understanding of multifaceted cultural levels.

Unit four emphasises the importance of labour, in which a boy works part-time at a milk shop to support his family. He not only understands the significance and value of earning but also acquires skills to make yoghurt for his family.

Unit five is highly international in its outlook and content. It deals with children from other nations, such as Brazil, Ghana, Africa, and Thailand. The details of how they study and celebrate their holidays, and cultural events give exposure to

the children of Sindh to interact with the world of diversity and multiculturalism. It is a remarkable instance of the juxtaposition of diversified international shades of cultures.

Unit six discusses various interests, abilities, aptitudes, and hobbies to broaden the horizons of students' understanding. It refers to the source culture; however, the laudable pictorial representation of girls doing exercise/ exercising, and playing cricket will promote gender equality, autonomy, and adaptability. It dispels biased stereotypes associated with females and enlightens young minds about gender equality.

### **My English Book 7**

Unit one instils awareness among children regarding pollution. It not only sensitizes the global issue of pollution but also encourages students to participate in campaigns and events to stop and control it. Notwithstanding its local context and names, it does not refer to any particular culture.

Unit two refers to social etiquette and manners. Some children, being unhappy, disturbed, penalized, annoyed and frustrated, write letters to their elder brothers who advise them on how to treat elders, vacate a seat for elderly and handicapped passengers in public transport, have dining table etiquettes, and argue with friends politely and accept and respect the differences and diversity. It refers to the source culture, but its impact can be extended to the global level.

Unit three is about awareness of crises, accidents, and natural calamities. It narrates a befalling apocalypse of flood in which a young boy survives after losing his mother – the only relative. He is rescued and brought to a relief camp, where he enquires about and asks for measures to pre-empt such natural disasters or calamities. This refers to the source culture.

Unit four induces empathy and instils awareness about special children whom we do not call “disabled” but “other-way abled”. They should be given respectable treatment and consideration. The poem *Blind Boy*, written by C. Cibber, has universal appeal and impact.

Unit five refers to the historical places of Pakistan such as Bambore,

Mohenjo-Daro, Nindowari, Harapa, Taxila, Rehman Dehri and Takht-i-Bahi. These places refer to the source culture, but it is praiseworthy that all past religions of the land are referred to with due respect and consideration. This develops a sense of respect for diversity and differences.

Unit six refers to media as a source of knowledge. It is based on several news items reported in media i.e., two persons drowning in a rainwater pond near Mirpurkhas, historical names associated with rooms allocated for the event of Children's Literature Festival, a zookeeper injured by a big cat, a dengue awareness walk, and a woman and children burnt in the fire. All reported events refer to the source cultural context. However, discussion on blurbs of books refers to international books. Besides, the description of the Pakistani team for the Street Child World Cup played in Brazil in 2014 and the Pakistan Cricket Team of the Blind represent diversity.

Unit seven is about learning an organized approach through identifying, prioritizing and following schedules. Jawad's father has broken his leg. After a week, the wedding ceremony of Jawad's sister is fixed. Jawad is very upset. Hassan, his friend, comes forward and helps him in organizing the event. This refers to food items, dresses, and marriage attire from the source culture.

## **My English Book 8**

Unit one is based on the theme of sincere friendship. It narrates a story of two friends, one is sincere, cooperative, and caring, whereas the other is selfish and mean. The selfish friend abandons his friend in the jungle when they encounter a black bear. The setting of the story embodies the source culture, but the sudden appearance of the black bear adds an oddity. However, mainly it belongs to the source culture.

Unit two is the poem: *My Blessed Beautiful Land* written by an anonymous poet. It refers to natural beauty in the various parts of Pakistan, such as the snowy northern part of the Karakoram, the sands of the Kharan Desert full of mines and minerals, fertile plains, and the Indus Delta. Primarily, it talks about the source culture and its ancient heritages, natural resources, and beauty.

Unit three is based on traffic education with the slogan "Better be safe than

sorry”. It emphasizes taking preventive measures to avoid traffic accidents in our lives. It analyses various reasons for accidents and how they can be ruled out to make life safer and more secure from traffic accidents.

Unit four invites learners to explore the educational opportunities. It is very important in terms of career counselling. It opens with an educational exhibition in which students and parents explore various fields of education and subsequent careers. There are stalls of agriculture, commerce, computer science, medicine, and engineering, where experts inform students and parents about the scope and significance of different fields of study and careers.

Unit five is based on the theme of humanism [sic.] (it should have been humanitarianism), which narrates the account “*What Shaped Edhi’s Life*”. It narrates his birth in British India and subsequent migration to Pakistan, followed by his remarkable contribution and dedicated services. It also includes the data about the Edhi Foundation, and thus it is about the source culture.

Unit six is based on the spirit of sportsmanship. It narrates the story of a cricketer who becomes egoistic, rude, and impolite at the pinnacle of his career, which subsequently brings him a bad name and a ban on his inclusion in the team. A friend of his gives him a scrapbook based on various anecdotes of sportsman spirit, in which cricket players demonstrated a great deal of integrity, compassion, respect, loyalty and professionalism. They sacrificed their personal glory and success at the altar of the team’s success. After reading the scrapbook, the cricketer also realizes his folly and becomes a true sportsman. This is a fine juxtaposition of the source and international cultures; therefore, it has been included in both the source and international cultures.

Unit seven deals with the source culture, but it is very important regarding its theme of women’s representation, equality, and a gender-balanced society. It describes the multiple roles that women play to contribute at the familial, economic, domestic, and cultural levels in society. It dispels common misperceptions, stereotyping, labelling, and profiling. These texts help to provide a positive counternarrative to cope with patriarchal norms and fixed mindsets.

## **My English Book 9**

Unit one refers to the last sermon of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It describes the commencement of Islam, the migration of the Holy Prophet from Madina to Makah and a historical sermon referring to the universal brotherhood, equality, and equity. The exercise section refers to a research study about the formation of habits conducted by a psychologist in Multan which is from the source culture, whereas the description of the Sahara Desert is from the international culture. Two items of story writing belong to a culturally neutral domain.

Unit two describes the family background, life, contribution, and poetry with a universal message by Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai. In the exercise section, there is a story about two brothers, one of whom is careful, conspicuous, heedful, and thoughtful, whereas the other always works hastily. The moral of the story is to be a heedful person, which refers to cultural neutrality. Besides, the description of Mohenjo-Daro, one of the oldest cities in the world and a poem about the Thar Desert written by Shah Latif and translated into English from Sindhi by Elsa Kazi, are from the source culture.

Unit three is about education and career. It opens in a village, where a boy is worried about his further education and prospective career. The discussion between children and parents on the future, the education of children, the purpose of education, and pursuing higher education in the city are from the source culture. After twelve years, both Jameel and Sara are working as doctors in the same village and are serving poor patients. Sara's contribution to the health and hygiene of women is remarkable.

Unit four is about Pakistan and national pride. It discusses the personalities, political acumen, and contributions of two visionary leaders of Pakistan, i.e., Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal. In the exercise section, a poem by Allama Iqbal has been translated into English, which refers to the source culture. There is a story of a stork and fox based on the moral of 'tit for tat', and a poem by Allama Iqbal based on the dialogue between a mountain and a squirrel showing the significance of tiny and huge things. Both items are culturally neutral. However, the life account and inventions of Galileo Galilei belong to the international culture.

Unit five is about a healthy lifestyle. It describes the diseases caused by

mosquitoes, such as malaria, dengue, and chikungunya. It includes the signs, symptoms and causes of the three diseases. There is a letter showing two different points of view regarding the construction of new houses in various development schemes. Some favour the development, while others have reservations and criticise it. In addition, a story about avoiding criticism shows people have various opinions, and responding to their varied versions is tantamount to killing one's individuality. The letter refers to the source culture, whereas the remaining two items are from the culturally neutral domains.

Unit six is based on gender equity. It includes the accounts of famous Pakistani women such as Fatima Jinnah, Ra'ana Liaquat Ali, Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz, Anita Ghulam Ali, Bilquis Edhi, etc. They all belong to the source culture, whereas the details about Hellen Keller in the writing section belong to the international culture. It narrates the account of a blind girl who learned to seek education and grew as a role model for many disabled – nay, other-way-abled – students.

Unit seven includes life skills based on the story of the secret of success and a poem titled *Abou Ben Adhem*. The former establishes that the most important time is the present, the most important person is the one we are dealing with, and the most important work is the one we are doing currently. However, the poem is based on the theme that God loves those who love human beings. Both items belong to a culturally neutral domain.

Unit eight is about people and places. The text describes life in the village. The exercise section describes how we can save rainwater. There is a debate between a brother and sister about the use of soap in the present and alum, turmeric, and neem leaves in the past, which refers to the source culture; whereas the text “you are what you eat’ about eating habits is also from the source culture. A story about a deaf frog that climbs up the tower without paying heed to the pessimistic comments is from the culturally neutral domain. Two poems, *Miller of the Dee* by Charles Mackay and *The Daffodils* by William Wordsworth, are from the target culture.

## **My English Book 10**

Unit one includes the poem *The Voice of God* from the target culture. The text of the wise caliph who resolves a dispute between a rich and poor person

regarding ownership of a horse belongs to the international culture. However, in the writing section, the data about Sindh refers to the source culture.

Unit two is about labour and people's rights. It describes the dignity of work and how great personalities of the world and great nations across the globe emphasize the significance and importance of labour. It equally represents the source and international cultures.

Unit three comprises three poems: *King Bruce and The Spider*, *Little Things*, and *The Man Who Wins*. These poems are from the target culture but are equally international in outlook. In the exercise section, the details about a girl from Kenya denote the international culture. Despite challenges and hindrances, she passes primary education, goes for higher studies, earns a doctorate, and returns to establish a school in her village. Initially, the villagers oppose the idea, but her determination wins the situation; subsequently, they produce many female doctors, lawyers, and teachers. The story has a great affinity with the source culture as well. Besides, the description and details about the Khyber Pass are from the source culture.

Unit four is about media for information and reflection. The text about social media is of global relevance. Dialogue about palmistry, lavish spending on weddings and migration of people from rural to urban areas are from the source culture, whereas the high cost of medical services and information about various professions such as "herbalist, nutritionist, agronomist, physiotherapist, veterinarian, astronaut, marine biologist, anthropologist" are of global relevance.

Unit five is based on a bad dream. It is heavily loaded with supernatural elements, which is quite regrettable in this age of reason and scientific erudition. The story is based on whims and a misguided belief system, devoid of logic and reason. Such superstitions are generally commonplace among the masses without proper education, reason, wisdom, and enlightenment; however, including such content at an academic level is highly deplorable and shocking.

Unit six is about character building. It is based on a poem, *Speak Gently* by David Bates emphasizing the importance of speaking gently with children and the old. It may look simpler in appearance, but it does wonders in real life. It is from

the target culture but is global in its impact and appeal. The topics of “Importance of Sports” and “Acquiring New Skills”, given for essay-writing, are also global in their outlook. Besides, there is an adventure game with a global message. You are stranded on a deserted island, and in addition to food and water, you find eight different things in a box, such as “atlas, watch, blanket, ointment, metal-knitting needles”. You have to categorize them in order of priority and importance and also discuss how you will use them effectively.

Unit seven praises nature: *My Travel Diary: Journey to the Gorakh Hills Station*. It is based on the trip to the Gorakh Hills Station, which is a beautiful part of the source culture. In the essay section, topics such as sports, promoting speaking English at schools, and knowledge about diseases and vaccination add to the global understanding of students, whereas topics such as growing vegetables at home and educating girls refer to the source culture.

Unit eight describes civic senses and civic activity. Primarily, it includes safety measures for protecting life while driving. Wearing helmets and seatbelts can be highly protective in the case of an accident. In the debate section, topics such as ‘mobile phones are a source of problems’ and ‘how to develop study skills’ provide global information. Whereas topics like “We have a better life than our ancestors” and “Village life is better than city life” and topics in the essay-writing section such as “Wearing uniform should not be compulsory”, “Students should be promoted to the next class without exam”, “Teacher should punish students who do not do their work properly” “Students should not be allowed to bring their mobile phones to school” “Gardening should be made a compulsory subject in all schools” have source culture’s bearings. In the end, a poem, *Blind Men and the Elephant* by J. G. Saxe, has been added for the sake of fun, but it is highly profiling, labelling, and stereotypical in its content. From the postcolonial perspective, it supports the colonizers’ narratives and belittles, derides, mocks, and marginalizes the people from the subcontinent. They have been portrayed as starkly blind and having no capability, sense, understanding, wisdom, or sagacity. It is from the target culture.

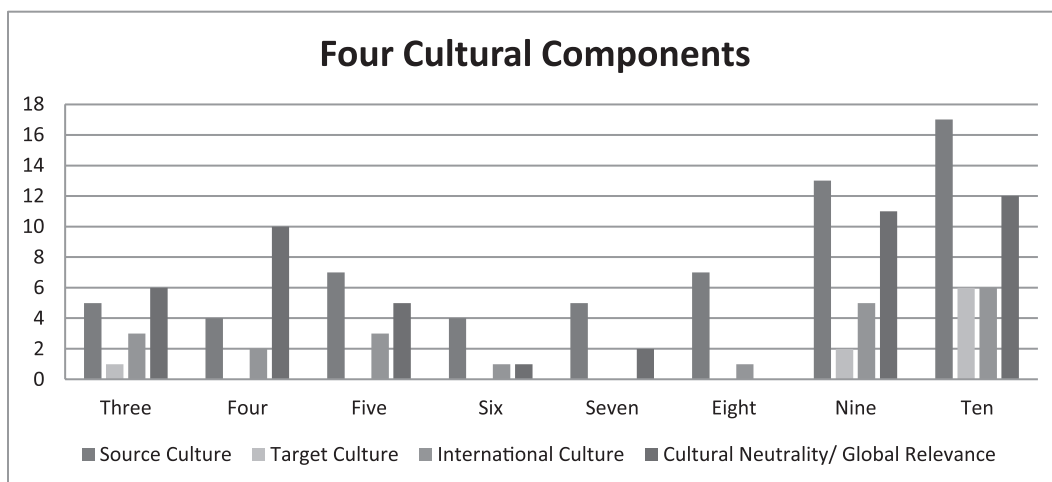
**Table 1**

*Table showing content from the source, target, international and culturally neutral domains*

Sr. No.	Class	Source Culture	Target Culture	International Culture	Cultural Neutrality/ Global Relevance	Total Items
1.	Three	5	1	3	6	15
2	Four	4	-	2	10	16
3	Five	7	-	3	5	15
4	Six	4	0	1	1	6
5	Seven	5	0	0	2	7
6	Eight	7	0	1	0	8
7	Nine	13	2	5	11	31
8	Ten	17	6	6	12	41
Total	8	62	9	21	47	139

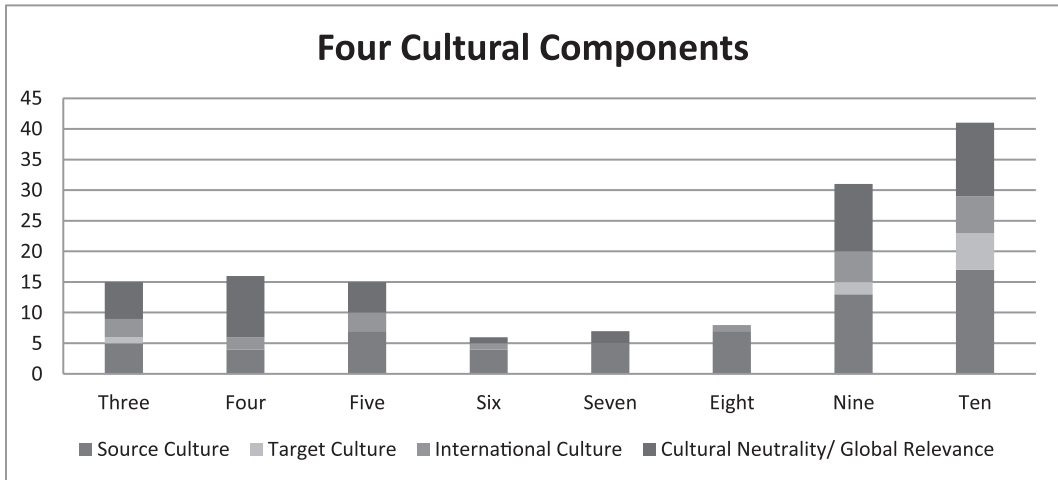
**Figure 2**

*Four Cultural Components*



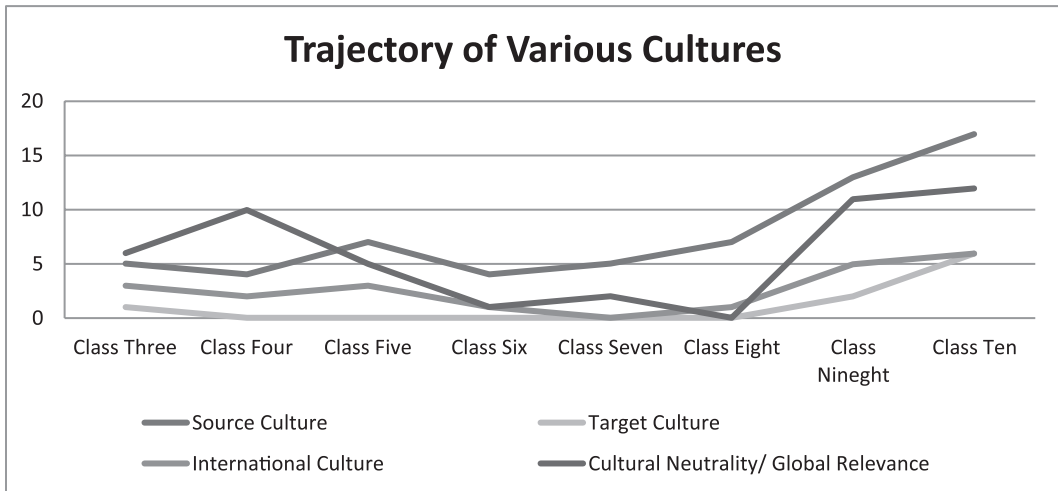
**Figure 3**

*Separate class-wise graphic representation of four cultural components*



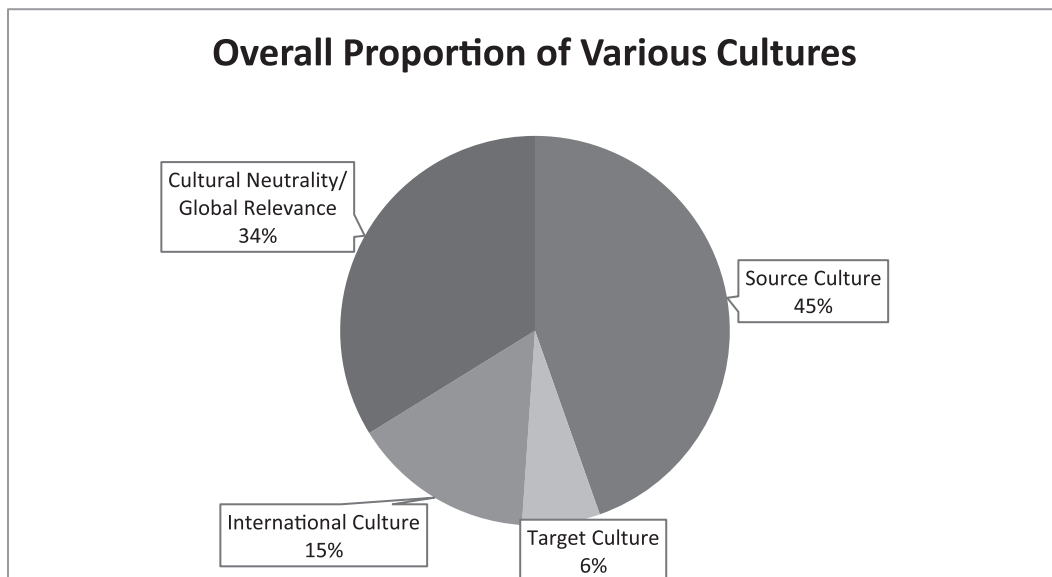
**Figure 4**

*Trajectory of Various Cultures*



**Figure 5**

*Overall Proportion of Various Cultures*



### **Discussion**

Technology and globalization have revolutionized the speed, loci, communication, and interaction at the global level, which is highly effective and beneficial (Bandura, 2001) however, this cultural crisscross has its challenges and implications. Leung et al. (2014) maintain that “intercultural conflict around the world serves as stark reminders of the malevolence of cultural misunderstandings, tensions, and intolerance” (p. 490). Intercultural competence renders a solution to this challenge. Intercultural competence is a continuous process which can be promoted in formal educational settings by giving knowledge about other cultures. It promotes respect, consideration, and openness for different cultures (Deardorff, 2011).

The books contain general values which are equally relevant in the global context, and they promote cooperation, generosity, welfare, honesty, dedication, the dignity of labour, truthfulness, commitment, and traffic laws. The books also promote values such as respecting elders, helping the poor, vacating seats for women, the sick and elders in public transportation, and helping disabled or special

children. These values of humanitarianism have been incorrectly associated with the concept of humanism, which is altogether another literary and historical movement from Europe. Several anecdotes, poems, stories and texts have been included to reinforce such values of the global outlook.

The books also include various shades of the source cultures. Texts include various religions, heroes, cultural figures, politicians, poets, philanthropists and icons from the source cultures. In the national sports gala, students from diverse parts of Pakistan interact with one another. The books contain information about diversified religious and cultural festivities, such as Eids, Christmas, Diwali and Nauroz, which are celebrated by Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Zoroastrian communities living in Pakistan. It promotes the religious and cultural harmony within Pakistan and across the globe. All old religions practised in Sindh are referred to with great respect and awe. Besides, showing a member from the minority community as a professional doctor adds to their image and due representation (My English Book 2, Unit 5).

In addition, the books praiseworthily promote gender balance, gender sensitization, and gender equality. They dispel dogmas and taboos associated with women. The books show girls seeking education, playing cricket, taking exercise, and riding cycles or bikes freely and independently. This is tantamount to challenging age-old dogmas, stereotypes and roles assigned to females, where their agency remains compromised. Contrarily, the books assign multiple roles to women for contributing at familial, economic, domestic, and cultural levels in society. It dispels common misperceptions, stereotyping, labelling, and profiling of women. Such texts will help to combat the dominant views of patriarchal norms and fixed mindsets.

There are some misleading concepts regarding the source culture, which need a serious revisit, reconsideration and review. For instance, the inclusion of superstitious ideas such as a flood is a blessing (My English Book 5, Unit 5), a weird bad dream (My English Book 10, Unit 5), diseases can be cured by simply visiting a shrine (My English Book 10, Unit 7) in formal academic books is the height of insanity. Thus, these concepts will get permanently stamped in the subconscious of common people and will become an inalienable part of their cultural practices and normative behaviour.

Dress is an integral part of any culture; moreover, the type of dress also represents a specific stratum or sub-section of a society. However, associating certain dress patterns with a particular section of society can either malign or misrepresent. For instance, farmers, carpenters, and nurses are shown wearing shalwar and kameez, clothes belonging to the source culture, whereas the doctor is wearing pants and shirts from the target culture (My English Book 1). This presents the target culture better than the source culture; moreover, it will condition the learners that all important professions come from the target culture and common artisan occupations are related to the source culture. In addition, some pictures show boys in pants and shirts and girls in shalwar and kameez, which also causes a misleading disparity between the source and target cultures.

Besides, it is important to align the pictorial representation deeply rooted in the routine observation of the learners. The picture of a cook used in unit fourteen is with the formal dress of a chef, but most children from Sindh may not identify the role properly because their daily life observation does not match the dress code presented in the text. In the same vein, unit eighteen includes the picture of a formally dressed chauffeur, it is not a commonplace phenomenon for many students. Its appearance bears great affinity with a pilot or prestigious personnel working in the armed forces, which is likely to be attractive to children, and they may aspire to opt for such careers. (My English Book 1, Unit 14, 18).

Books provide some opportunities for learners to interact with international cultures, such as a conversation between two girls from Japan and Turkey (My English Book 4, Unit 1), the discussion on the blurbs of international books (My English Book 6, Unit 2; My English Book 7, Unit 6), and the Street Child World Cup played in Brazil in 2014 (My English Book 7, Unit 6). The students from different countries such as Brazil, Ghana, Africa, Thailand and Sindh, Pakistan are engaged in a dialogue to discuss various fields of study, jobs, careers and ways of celebrating holidays and other cultural events. This interaction promotes multiculturalism. Besides, the picture of an adorable cat on the title page of My English Book 1 familiarises learners with the concept of petting and also with the respect and care of animals.

The books present examples of the international culture having an affinity

with the source culture. For instance, a girl from Kenya pursues her studies despite financial challenges, cultural hindrances and social opposition. After earning her doctorate, she establishes a school at her village and produces several female doctors, lawyers and teachers. This anecdotal account can prove inspirational for many female students of Sindh, having the same cultural and social challenges (My English Book 10, Unit 3).

However, the books neither use critical and challenging aspects of the target culture in “less threatening and more accessible to the language learner” for developing intercultural competence, (Kramsch, 1993, p. 224) nor do they emphasize “the importance of culture for language learning” (Steele, 1989, p.155). The books also do not provide insight into source and target or international cultural differences and similarities for effective cross-cultural communication.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Intercultural competence helps produce enlightened, pluralistic, moderate individuals with respect, consideration, and openness for other cultures. The prescribed books of STBB from Grades 1 to 10 lack consistent, systematic and scientific representation of the source, target and international cultures. Various shades of the source culture have been represented to accommodate religious and cultural diversity; however, the implausible juxtaposition of source and target culture dress patterns needs serious revision and reconsideration.

Gender sensitisation related to the source culture is praiseworthy. Besides, the books also include general values, such as cooperation, generosity, welfare, honesty, dedication, the dignity of labour, truthfulness, commitment, the dignity of labour, and traffic laws, but the representation of these values lacks systematic and structured frameworks to instil intercultural competence among learners.

The items taken from the target and international cultures only refer to general cultural practices; however, critical, complicated, and debatable issues that require unity in diversity are not part of the texts. As a result, a deeper understanding of cultural nuances remains lacking due to the absence of analytical and comparative discussion on cross-cultural items. Besides, the books neither deal with the cultural stereotypes nor do they present students with various strategies to navigate through cultural differences in the real world.

Given globalisation, multiculturalism, and transnationalism, it is essential to acquaint the learners with the more complex, diversified, and challenging aspects of international and target cultures to produce moderate, enlightened, global, open, and accommodating citizens. The addition of content and exercises, based on the real-world interaction of the source and target cultures, will significantly enhance intercultural competence among learners to better perform in the globalized world. The textbooks should dive deep beyond the surface level of cross-cultural content and enlighten learners to deal with cultural differences with an informed outlook, empathy and adaptability.

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