Cultural and linguistic imperialism and the EIL movement: Evidence from a textbook analysis

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The perspective of English as an International Language (EIL) has been proposed mainly to alleviate the tenets of language and cultural imperialism and, of course, to facilitate communication through different varieties of English. Hence, English language classrooms are the preliminary venue for the inception of such a rudimentary movement. Bearing this in mind, in this study, we evaluated a number of recently published English textbooks, *World English, Top Notch* and *American English File* as supplementary resources in language teaching and learning. In so doing, adopting a schema-based viewpoint, computer files of the reading texts of the books were created, and their single and phrasal words or schemata were categorised into the three domains, semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic. In order to investigate the cultural load of each single schema and to find to what extent the EIL paradigm has been framed within the textbooks, Kachru's (1992) division of inner, outer, and expanding circles was employed. The overall results revealed that, although these textbooks aimed to address the language learners anywhere in the world, their references to the inner circle countries and native speakers of English still surpass the outer and expanding circle countries.

Introduction

It used to be a commonly held belief that English was the exclusive property of native speakers and that their idiosyncratic standards had to be followed by individual learners. Therefore, the varieties and uses of English which deviated from these norms were perceived as deficient rather than different (Matsuda, 2002). However, today English is being widely used as an international language by non-native speakers to satisfy various communicative needs. In basic terms, the new status of *English as an International Language* (EIL), has severely confronted the conventional hegemony of American and British native speakers' norms in the field of English language teaching (Modiano, 2001). Teaching inner circle varieties, using Kachru's (1992) term, corroborates the premise of native authority and in accordance, looks down on the position of other circles (Matsuda, 2003). Regardless of having adequate information concerning the potential power associated with EIL, learners may adopt a colonialistic view toward the world (Pennycook, 1998) which finally leads them to depreciate their national status and put up with their peripheral position (Phillipson, 1992).

The tie between language education and textbooks is not a new topic popped up recently. Textbooks, as "the visible heart of any ELT [English language teaching] program" (Sheldon, 1988, p. 237), make up the major source of inputs learners receive in any language classroom. As Richards (2001) further added, within different contexts, textbooks may define the content of the lessons, specify the mode of language practice learners are required to undertake, or even complement the teachers' instruction by mitigating their occupational overload. In fact, textbooks are not only the sole conveyers

of subject knowledge, but also the tools of ideological reproduction (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). In retrospect, as Shin, Eslami and Chen (2011) believed, textbooks should integrate learners' miscellaneous ideological and cultural backgrounds and make them acquainted with diverse voices and perspectives.

Meanwhile, in order to optimise learning potential, it is significant to evaluate teaching materials in general, and textbooks in particular. From an empirical perspective, Morgan (2003) scrutinised IELTS preparation materials and concluded that, the books, as a disadvantage, have actually neglected to include motivating elements, relying on the fact that the candidates are expected to be highly motivated. From a different point of view, Vellenga (2004) inspected the weight and quality of pragmatic information applied in eight ESL/EFL textbooks. She found that learning pragmatics was, in fact, improbable since the books lacked meta-pragmatic information and the teachers did not provide the learners with pertinent supplementary materials. Quite in line with this study, a number of scholars (e.g., Renner, 1993) unanimously consent that the widely-used ELT textbooks chiefly take the Western culture into account. Investigations of multiple ELT textbooks have revealed that, the books were replete with features of British and American cultures rather than globally-oriented materials (Ndura, 2004). Matsuda (2002) reported that English textbooks used in Japan have been oriented largely toward English as spoken by native speakers. In addition, Shin et al. (2011) concluded that inner circle cultural content dominated in all the books they examined in their sample.

Overall, examination of multiple ELT textbooks in terms of linguistic and cultural hegemony revealed that English is still being taught as an inner circle language (Matsuda, 2002). Hence, the major objective of this paper is to investigate to what extent the EIL paradigm is framed within several more recently published ELT textbooks namely: *World English* (Milner, Johannsen & Chase, 2010), *Top Notch* (Ascher & Saslow, 2011), and *American English File* (Oxenden & Latham-Koenig, 2008). These popular ELT books have been investigated previously from numerous viewpoints (e.g., Kelishadi & Sharifzadeh, 2013; Razmjoo & Jozaghi, 2010; Shahrokhi & Moradmand, 2014), but not with respect to the EIL paradigm which is today's fundamental concern. In particular, we intend to adopt a totally different approach and schematically compare and contrast these three textbooks which have been published during different years under different titles by different publishers, so as to uncover the probable hidden agendas and power structures. To explicate, we expected that the book *World English* ordered by National Geographic and published by Heinle Cengage Learning in 2010 represents fewer features of inner circle language, taking the title into account, in comparison with *American English File* published in 2008 by Oxford University Press, for which the term 'American' in the title unconsciously reminds us of American culture and language, or *Top Notch*, the leader in global communication, which was exclusively published in the United States of America by Pearson Longman in 2011.

Theoretical framework

Linguistic and cultural imperialism

Phillipson (1992) declared that English is a vehicle of cultural and linguistic domination. As he further explicated, linguistic imperialism is a theoretical construct which deals with linguistic hierarchisation targeting at why some languages are used more and others less. This concept is a sub-category of linguicism, a term coined by Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (1988), which draws a linkage between race (racism), gender (sexism), and language (linguicism). During some years, studies of linguicism led to the investigation of how language may legitimise linguistic hierarchies and asymmetrical social power. Linguistic imperialism "takes place within an overarching structure of asymmetrical North/South relations, where language interlocks with other dimensions, cultural (particularly in education, science and the media), economic, and political" (Phillipson, 2010, p. 239). With respect to these inequalities, countries are likewise characterised into core (oppressor) and periphery (oppressed). Periphery countries, deemed as "dominated poor ones", generally endeavour to follow the norms of core English speaking countries including USA and Great Britain (Phillipson, 1992, p. 17).

Linguistic imperialism is in fact a constituent of cultural imperialism with media, scientific, and educational imperialism as its other components. This brings about linguistic and cultural discriminations between English and other languages (Phillipson, 1992). Since a long time ago, language experts have focused their attention on learning the culture of English-speaking countries along with the language itself (Shin et al., 2011). Seemingly, as the concept indicates, inner circle cultures are valued to a greater extent compared with those of outer or expanding circles (Shin et al., 2011), although the number of non-native speakers have immensely surpassed the native ones. It has thus been argued that because English is an international language, the culture presented particularly in ELT materials should cover the world rather than being limited to native speaker cultures (McKay, 2002). Phillipson (1992) reckoned that "ELT reconstitutes cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (p. 47). As a solution to this issue, researchers have proposed that textbooks, besides being localised, are required to include an amalgam of both target and global cultures to cultivate learners' sense of intercultural competence. Practically speaking, Toh (1999) verified the cultural bias of a number of textbooks exercised in Singapore. He argued that the textbooks have been built upon the Western visions of the world which is incompatible with the world's common realities in general and social norms of Singapore in particular. Singaporeans, as mentioned by Chew (1999), give priority to the materials and values which English brings along and view learning English as a means of economic survival, although, at the same time, they are concerned about losing their ethnic identity. In another study, Bisong (1995), asserted that many Nigerian parents send their children to international schools to learn English for pragmatic reasons.

The EIL paradigm

The most proper norms provided by the core countries have been severely challenged by the pluralistic standards of EIL (Lowenberg, 2002). EIL is not a property of the native

speakers, but an exclusive topic of study, composed of distinct indigenous languages, used as the medium of international communication through nativisation (Kachru, 1992). Apart from its linguistic aspects, EIL has similarly contributed to economic, cultural, and intellectual disciplines as well (Jenkins, 2005; Xu, 2013). Inevitably, ELT has not stayed far from the EIL impacts (Shin et al., 2011). Quite along with the EIL movement, and the paradigm shift in ELT, predominance of native speakers and their cultures gave its way to the norms of English language learners set by EIL (Phillipson, 1997) with reference to English as a *lingua franca* and language of intercultural communication (Seidlhofer, 2003). In the same vein, Jerkins (2006) put forth the idea of pluricentric approaches toward EIL, which mainly focuses on the uniqueness of varieties of English and their language rights in the international context of communication.

Indeed, there exist different varieties and speakers of English. To characterise English varieties, Kachru (1985) described 'inner', 'outer' and 'expanding' circles. English, spoken in 'inner' circle countries (USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) is defined as the language of the native speakers. In truth, the tendency toward teaching inner circle English may be beneficial for ESL (English as a second language) programs and the learners who intend to join the core countries, but, it is not suitable for the learners who aim to use English as a *lingua franca* (Modiana, 2001). Some countries including India, Philippines, and Nigeria that use English as their official or second language, are located within the 'outer' circle. Yet, other countries such as Japan, China, and Iran in which English is their foreign language are a part of his 'expanding' circle. According to McKay (2002), the English varieties spoken in the inner and outer circle countries, relying on Kachru's model, form the EIL. As Seidlhofer (2003) believed, the swift extension of English may move the countries in the expanding circle to crawl into the mainstream circle also. From the very beginning, Kachru's (1985) model has been implemented and of course criticised by a number of scholars (e.g., Bruthiaux, 2003). As an alternative, Modiano (2001) shifted the focus from native speakers to international non-native speakers and presented a further model that considers the fluent international English speakers, regardless of being native or non-native, as the centre of this circle.

Textbook evaluation

Owing to the widespread status of English, the ELT textbook publication industry has been progressively branching out (Naji & Pishghadam, 2013). It goes without saying that, today, knowing English has turned to a survival skill. Within countries of outer and expanding circles, ELT classes, where learners are abundantly exposed to the target language, are one of the most cogent sources of influence on the learners' perception of English (Matsuda, 2002). As Ndura (2004) posited, "the content of instructional materials significantly affects students' attitudes and dispositions towards themselves, other people, and society" (p. 143). That is to say, in addition to the indisputable pedagogical roles, textbooks may equally function as an influential means of linguistic and cultural dispatch. In particular, looking through the lenses of EIL, the cultural and linguistic content of the ELT textbooks should not be confined to the culture of the native speakers only. Topics in textbooks should also include and accentuate the cultures of non-native English

speakers (Hino, 1988). Thus, shedding more light on the learners' own culture gains significance as a path to better understand other people's cultures (McKay, 2002).

Given the undeniable role of textbooks in language teaching programs, attempts must be made to boost their quality. One of the best ways could be via a scrupulous evaluation. According to Baik and Shim (1995), it is absolutely essential to review the language textbooks with a more critical eye. The idea of evaluating textbooks is viewed as akin to the vital deed of selecting the books. As Hutchinson (1987) declared: "materials evaluation can and should be a two-way process which enables teachers not just to select a textbook, but also to develop their awareness of their own teaching/learning situation" (p. 37).

ELT textbook evaluation studies have recently gained increased attention. For instance, Shahrokhi and Moradmand (2014) compared and contrasted the *American English File* series with Iranian high school textbooks in terms of frequency and type of collocation. The educational load of the *American English File* series was probed also by Haghverdi and Ghasemi (2013). Razmjoo and Jozaghi (2010) evaluated the *Top Notch* series with reference to multiple intelligences principles, and reported that the textbooks are rich in addressing some intelligences. In another study, Kelishadi and Sharifzadeh (2013) discussed the merits and demerits of the *Top Notch* series. Rather differently, Hamigloglu and Karliova (2009) performed a content analysis on the vocabulary items of a set of ELT textbooks including *Top Notch*. Last but not least, Soozandefar and Sahragard (2011) adopted a pragmatic outlook and scrutinised the language functions and speech acts of *Top Notch* series.

Schema-based approach

Numerous schemes and checklists for the purpose of textbook evaluation have been presented by professionals in the field (e.g., Littlejohn, 1998; Miekley, 2005). However, to the researchers' best knowledge, a schema-based approach has not been applied to our targeted ELT textbooks. Schemata are abstract mental structures which systematically organise stored knowledge in memory (Melendez & Pritchard, 1985). Relying upon Khodadady (1997), schemata constitute all semantic words (i.e., adjectives and verbs) together with syntactic words (e.g., pronouns and prepositions) and para-syntactic words (e.g., numerals and para-adverbs) which constitute texts produced for specific purposes.

Schema theory looks at texts from two perspectives: macro structure and micro structure. While the first view focuses on texts with reference to broad and subjective terms such as genre, e.g., materials written in humanities and sciences, and styles, i.e., narrative and descriptive prose, the second view considers words as the main units whose meanings in isolation as well as in combination with each other create texts (Khodadady, 1997). While the existence of macro schemata has not been established objectively, microschemata, the concepts which are represented by the words, can be explored empirically by analysing and parsing them to various hierarchical categories to be studied empirically (Khodadady, 1999).

The micro structural approach of schema theory not only encodes a word into its internal semantic format (Just & Carpenter, 1987) as an abstract entity such as lexis (Taylor,

Harris, & Pearson, 1988) but also defines it in terms of individuals' personal experiences with the word. For example, when students read the definition of "farmhand" in *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995), they create the image of "someone who works on a farm" (p. 502). The word "farmhand" thus becomes a schema whose constituting features of "someone", "working" and "farm" combine with each other via "who" to create their knowledge or concept of a general pattern or "scheme" (Smith, 2004, p. 21). The concept stored in their mind as a schema, however, gets modified and enriched continuously as they read texts (Bransford & Johnson, 1973).

Grade one senior high school (G1SHS) students in Khodadady and Hesarzadeh's (2014) study, for example, modified their "farmhand" schema by reading a text entitled "The Funny Farmhand" (Birjandi, Soheili & Nouroozi., 2014, p. 24). It consisted of 64, 63 and 3 schema tokens belonging to semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic domains (Khodadady, Pishghadam & Fakhar, 2010), respectively. Figure 1 presents the students' oral description of what they said a "farmhand" is when their English teacher elicited their oral responses after they had read the text. She wrote the title of the text in the middle of the board and then added the acquired features of schema as the students volunteered them one by one as part of their class activity. As demonstrated, G1SHS students' schema of "farmhand" had become far more complex than what *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995) offers to its readers.
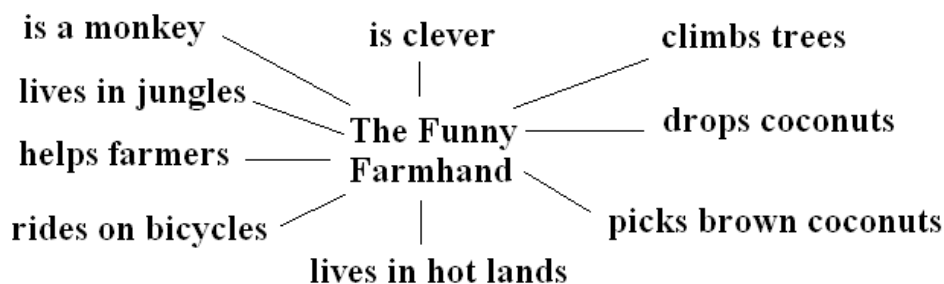

Figure 1: G1SHS students' schema of 'farmhand'
(adapted from Khodadady & Hesarzadeh, 2014, p. 148)

While semantic schemata are represented by open-class words (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1985) like nouns, closed-class words like pronouns form the syntactic ones. Some open-and-closed class words such as names and numerals constitute para-syntactic schemata (Khodadady, 2013). Semantic schemata represent independent concepts like nouns, e.g., "farmhand", and are many in type but few in frequency or tokens whereas syntactic schemata like pronouns, e.g., "he", are few in type but many in tokens. Parasyntactic schemata like abbreviations function in a way identical to syntactic ones, i.e., they depend on the nouns they abbreviate as pronouns do (Khodadady & Javadi Mehr, 2012) though they can be many in type as semantic schemata are. In sum, Table 1 presents semantic, syntactic, and parasyntactic domains along with their genera and species.

Table 1: The species and genera constituting semantic,
syntactic and parasyntactic domains

Domains	Genera	Species
Semantic	Adjective	Agentive, comparative, dative, derivational, nominal, simple, superlative
	Adverbs	Comparative, derivational, simple, superlative
	Nouns	Adjectival, complex, compound, conversion, derivational, gerund, nominal, simple
	Verbs	Complex, derivational, phrasal, simple, slang
Syntactic	Conjunctions	Phrasal, simple
	Determiners	Demonstrative, interrogative, numeral, possessive, quantifying, ranking, specifying
	Prepositions	Complex, compound, phrasal, Simple
	Pronouns	Demonstrative, emphatic, interrogative, objective, possessive, reflexive, relative, subject, unspecified, specified
	Syntactic verbs	Conditional, past, past perfect, past continuous, present continuous, present, present perfect, present perfect continuous, past model, past perfect model, present model, present perfect model, future perfect continuous, future, future perfect, past phrasal, past perfect phrasal, past perfect continuous, and present phrasal auxiliaries, and past and present models
Parasyn-tactic	Abbreviations	Abbreviation, acronym
	Interjections	Interjection
	Names	Full, labeling, organisational, single, titles
	Numerals	Alphabetic, digital, Roman, year
	Para-adverbs	Additive, contrasting, frequency, intensifying, interrogative, manner, negation/approval, prepositional, referential, time, exemplifying, location
	Particles	Complex, simple
	Symbols	Conventional, scientific

As stated previously, the chief intention of this study is to adopt the microstructural approach of schema theory (Khodadady, 1997) and investigate to what extent the representation of cultures in three widely taught English language textbooks, i.e., *World English, Top Notch*, and *American English File*, embrace the cultures of the individual learners in terms of their constituting schemata, analysed via 122 codified species outlined in Table 1 above. Our approach to the study of these textbooks has its origins in cultural and linguistic imperialism and, in particular, the work of Kachru (1992).

Method

Materials

The intermediate students books of three popular ELT textbooks entitled *World English* (Milner et al., 2010), *Top Notch* (Ascher & Saslow, 2011), and *American English File* (Oxenden & Latham-Koenig, 2008) were chosen and analysed for this study. It must be mentioned that the books have been assigned to five levels of proficiency (Beginners, Pre-

intermediate, Intermediate, High-intermediate, and Advanced) by their authors. The rationale behind choosing these three textbooks was that they are considered as the major recently-published books taught extensively in different countries around the world including Iran. One of the chief claims made by *World English* and *Top Notch* books is that they have adopted a global approach toward English.

> Heinle ELT, a part of Cengage Learning, and National Geographic have partnered to create English language learning materials which bring our world and its different cultures to life. Through the new range of titles created under this initiative, we are together changing the way the world learns English (*World English 2*, 2010, p. cover page).

> Since English is the primary language of international communication, the *Top Notch* course goes beyond the traditional cultural and linguistic features of English. It prepares students to communicate with the diverse array of English language speakers around the world - more than two-thirds of whom are not native speakers of English (*Top Notch 2*, 2011, p. V).

The reading passages of the three English textbooks, i.e., *World English, Top Notch* and *American English File,* were, therefore, the main focus of this study (Table 2). They differed from each other not only in the number of passages they contained but also in the themes they covered. While 10 passages formed *Top Notch*, *American English File* contained 18 passages followed by *World English* consisting of 12. In spite of their differences in the number of passages, the three textbooks contained themes dealing specifically with the Western culture such as 'The Columbian exchange' (*World English*), 'Where to stay in New York' (*Top Notch*) and 'Leaving for Newfoundland' (*American English File*).

Procedure

The reading texts of the three textbooks described above were entered into computer files and then broken into single and phrasal schemata. Following Khodadady (2008), parsed schemata were categorised into three domains, semantic, syntactic, and parasyntactic. The genera and species of these three domains were subsequently identified and codified in Microsoft Office *Excel* (2010). The codification of the data with respect to their species generated 13290 schema tokens overall (*World English,* 4605, *Top Notch,* 3647, and *American English File,* 5040). The data was transferred to *SPSS 20* for further analysis. In order to facilitate the process of cultural investigation of the contents and examine the references to Kachru's (1992) division of inner, outer, and expanding circles, the data were assigned into four distinct, however interrelated, values (0 = no cultural load, 1 = inner circle, 2 = outer circle, and 3 = expanding circle). That is to say, the 13290 schema tokens were also individually coded as 0, 1, 2, or 3. Building upon this additional codification, the explicit and implicit cultural shades of the texts were uncovered through the procedure provided in Table 3.

Table 2: Reading titles of the three textbooks

Textbook	No.	Titles of the reading passages
World English	1	A slice of history
	2	Taking pictures of the world
	3	Megacities
	4	Tiny invaders
	5	Arctic dreams and nightmares
	6	Coming of age the Apache way
	7	Perfume: The eEssence of illusion
	8	Return of the gray wolf
	9	The Columbian exchange
	10	Tourists or trees?
	11	Maria Fadiman: Ethnobotanist
	12	Starting a new tradition
Top Notch	1	Body talk
	2	Can violent movies or TV programs harm children?
	3	Where to stay in New York
	4	Six tips for defensive driving
	5	Cosmetic surgery for everyone
	6	How can it be? Americans gain weight while the French stay thin
	7	Personality from nature to nurture
	8	Is it talent or hard work?
	9	Hackers steal 40 million credit card numbers
	10	New Delhi
American English File	1	Who knows you better, your family or your friends?
	2	In the right place but at the wrong time
	3	Who wrote imagine?
	4	Mountain climbers rescued by text message
	5	Problems with your teenage children
	6	What makes you feel good?
	7	We are living faster
	8	How much can you learn in a month?
	9	Nature's perfect killing machine
	10	The new face of chess
	11	We are all afraid
	12	A famous rebel - but was he really?
	13	The world's most experienced driver
	14	I hate weekends
	15	How old is your body?
	16	I'm Jim. So am I.
	17	Fact is always stranger than fiction
	18	The Eiffel Tower painter
	19	Leaving for Newfoundland

Table 3: Cultural coding procedure

Type	Example	Book
A (proper) noun	*India* India -> Value=2 (outer circle)	*World English*
Pronoun replacing a noun	*It* remains the most traditional country. there refers to India -> Value=2 (outer circle)	*World English*
Noun replacing a (proper) noun	*The song* The song refers to *Imagine* (a famous song by English musician John Lennon) The -> Value=1 (inner circle) song ->Value=1 (inner circle)	*American English File*
Noun phrase	*Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* Title of an American book Drawing -> Value=1 (inner circle) on -> Value=1 (inner circle) the -> Value=1 (inner circle) right -> Value=1 (inner circle) side -> Value=1 (inner circle) of -> Value=1 (inner circle) the -> Value=1 (inner circle) brain -> Value=1 (inner circle)	*Top Notch*
Noun and the preceding adjective	*Native Americans* Native -> Value=1 (inner circle) Americans -> Value 1 (inner circle)	*Top Notch*
Article preceding a noun	*The Japanese* The -> Value 3 (expanding circle) Japanese -> Value 3 (expanding circle)	*World English*

Data analysis

In order to find out whether the three textbooks differed significantly with respect to EIL and their reference to Kachru's (1992) three concentric circles, crosstabs and chi-square tests were employed. *SPSS 20* software was utilised to run the statistical analyses. To secure interrator reliability, the present researchers had frequent meetings with each other in which the circles were discussed and their representative codes were independently assigned to a number of samples taken from the three textbooks. The codes assigned by the two researchers were then matched with each other, the differences identified and discussed till complete agreement reached between the two. All the data were then codified by the second researcher during a period of six months and then submitted to the first who checked them one by one. A few codes identified as unrepresentative by the first researcher were changed after consulting and having the agreement of the second.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 4 summarises the descriptive statistics of the domain tokens of the three selected textbooks. As can be seen, the overall percentages of semantic, syntactic, and

parasyntactic domain tokens are 46.4%, 41% and 12.6%, respectively. While the percentage of the parasyntactic domain tokens in the three books is in a similar range (12.1% to 13%), their semantic and syntactic domain tokens are rather different. In comparison with *World English* and *Top Notch* which share similar percentages of semantic (47.5% and 47.9%) and syntactic (39.5% and 40%) domain tokens, *American English File*, reduces the weight of the semantic domain (44.3%) and instead gives more weight to the syntactic domain (43.2%). That is to say, unlike *World English* and *Top Notch* whose estimates of semantic and syntactic domain tokens differ to some extent, *American English File* assigns almost a similar number of tokens to semantic and syntactic domains. The Chi-Square test also showed that, the books differ significantly with regards to their domain tokens (χ^2=18.46, df=4, *p*<.01).

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the domains tokens of the three textbooks

Textbook		Domain			Total
		Semantic	Syntactic	Parasyntactic	
World English	Count	2187	1821	597	4605
	% within paper	47.5%	39.5%	13.0%	100%
Top Notch	Count	1748	1457	441	3646
	% within paper	47.9%	40.0%	12.1%	100%
American English File	Count	2230	2176	633	5039
	% within paper	44.3%	43.2%	12.6%	100%
Total	Count	6165	5454	1671	13290
	% within paper	46.4%	41.0%	12.6%	100%

Inferential statistics

In order to find out if there was any significant difference between the books with regards to Kachru's (1992) model and calculate the reference to inner, outer, and expanding circles, Crosstabs and Chi-Square test were utilised. As Table 5 indicates, the books' references to inner, outer, and expanding circles are quite different.

Based on Table 5, the percentage of the tokens which do not carry any cultural load is rather similar in *World English* (88.8%) and *Top Notch* (89.8%), yet different in *American English File* (81.2%). That is to say, *American English File*, in comparison with the other two books, attempts to convey more cultural values through its content. Overall, the three books' references to the inner circle culture are more than the outer and expanding circles. In particular, *American English File*, as the first rank, devotes 12.1% of its content to the culture of inner circle countries but gives no reference to the culture of the expanding circle countries (0%). It means that, its reference to inner circle (12.1%) is twice as much as the combination of outer and expanding circles (6.7%+0%). *World English*'s reference to the expanding circle culture is the highest (1.3%); moreover, it considers the outer and expanding circle cultures (4.4%+1.3%= 5.8%) almost as equally as the inner circle (5.5%). *Top Notch* receives the second rank with regards to its reference to inner (7.9%) and expanding (.6%) circle cultures. From among the three books, the discrepancy between

their references to inner, outer, and expanding circles is the narrowest in *World English*. The Chi-Square test revealed that, the differences between the selected books were significant (χ^2=333.28, df=6, $p<.01$).

Table 5: Book tokens by culture crosstabulation

Textbook		Culture				Total
		No load	Inner circle	Outer circle	Expanding circle	
World English	Count	4089	252	203	61	4605
	% within paper	88.8%	5.5%	4.4%	1.3%	100%
Top Notch	Count	3273	288	62	23	3646
	% within paper	89.8%	7.9%	1.7%	0.6%	100%
American English File	Count	4091	610	338	0	5039
	% within paper	81.2%	12.1%	6.7%	0.0%	100%
Total	Count	11453	1150	603	84	13290
	% within paper	86.2%	8.7%	4.5%	0.6%	100%

For a deeper analysis, the domains' references to each circle (i.e., inner, outer, and expanding) were investigated as well. Table 6 presents the results, showing 9.4% of the semantic domain, 13.5% of the syntactic domain, and 31.3% of the parasyntactic domain tokens are responsible to convey the intended cultural values. In other words, the greatest cultural amount of inner, outer, and expanding circle countries is conveyed through parasyntactic domain tokens. While syntactic domain receives the second rank in conveying the values of different countries, semantic domain plays the lowest position. The Chi-Square indicated a significant difference between the three domains with respect to their cultural reference (χ^2=566.22, df=6, $p<.01$).

Table 6: Semantic, syntactic, and parasyntactic domains by culture crosstabulation

Domain		Culture				Total
		No load	Inner circle	Outer circle	Expanding circle	
Semantic	Count	5588	360	185	32	6165
	% within domain	90.6%	5.8%	3.0%	0.5%	100%
Syntactic	Count	4717	464	259	14	5454
	% within domain	86.5%	8.5%	4.7%	0.3%	100%
Parasyn-tactic	Count	1148	326	159	38	1671
	% within domain	68.7%	19.5%	9.5%	2.3%	100%
Total	Count	11453	1150	603	84	13290
	% within domain	86.2%	8.7%	4.5%	0.6%	100%

Discussion and conclusions

English today is not spoken exclusively among native speakers but among non-native speakers also (Modiano, 2001). In other words, being a competent EIL user doesn't necessitate being a native speaker. In this vein, teaching materials can function as a tool to help diminish the impact of linguistic and cultural imperialism and develop the implementation of EIL through including world Englishes (Matsuda, 2003). The current study, therefore, was felt to be needed as it concentrates on linguistic and cultural inclination of the three widely-used ELT textbooks (i.e., *World English, Top Notch* and *American English File*). The major intention of the study was to analyse and compare the books on the basis of Kachru's (1992) three circle model of world Englishes and unveil the elements which bear some tones of cultural and linguistic imperialism.

The primary results manifested that from amongst the semantic, syntactic, and parasyntactic domains, parasyntactic and semantic domain tokens are respectively the least and most frequent ones used in the texts. it is quite logical to say that, since parasyntactic domain includes abbreviations, interjections, names, numerals, para-adverbs, particles, and symbols (Khodadady, 2008) (see Table 1), their frequency may be much less than the other two domains with respect to their genera and the load of meaning they are able to carry. Moreover, relying on the fact that semantic domain encompasses open set items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs (Khodadady, 1999), they are used in the texts more frequently than the least common parts of speech as indicators of the text meaning. As it was stated before, there is a difference between the frequency of semantic and syntactic domain tokens of the three targeted books. However, this difference is quite small in *American English File*. A possible line of explanation may be that syntactic domain encompasses determiners and pronouns. These genera are mainly used as implied and indirect references to a person, event, or thing. Therefore, it can be concluded that, the messages that *American English File* attempts to convey are mainly hidden and indirect in comparison with *World English* and *Top Notch*.

The cultural analysis of the books clearly showed that, between 10.2% to 18.8% of the domain tokens were responsible for transferring the cultural values of the texts. Given that the major intention of the ELT textbooks is teaching the English language, and cultural materials are the peripheral aspect (Shin et al., 2011), this range seems sensible statistically. From among the three textbooks, *Top Notch* with 10.2% appears to be the most culture neutral textbook; yet, *American English File* with 18.8%, appears to be a potent transmitter of culture. Regarding the books' adherence to the concept of EIL and their references to the culture of inner, outer, and expanding circle countries, it was revealed that, although the recent ELT textbooks have been published to target the whole language learners of the world, their reference to the inner circle countries and native speakers of English including America and England still surpasses the outer and expanding circle countries.

e.g. Before the arrival of <u>the</u> <u>English</u>, they used to grow corn. (*World English*)
He jumped onto the tracks to save a fellow passenger from <u>an</u> <u>oncoming</u> <u>New York City</u> <u>subway</u> <u>train</u>. (*Top Notch*)
<u>Two</u> <u>British</u> <u>climbers</u> were rescued yesterday. (*American English File*)

This actually disregards Phillipson's (1992) belief that ELT is able to remove the inequalities, but corroborates the findings of previous studies done in the same field by Renner (1993), Matsuda (2003), and Shin et al. (2011). While *World English* got the top rank in incorporating the culture of expanding circle countries, *American English File* ignored these periphery counties, using Phillipson's (1992) term, completely. This implies that, the presentation of the cultural themes of the native speakers are rather more numerous and more diverse, whereas that of the outer and expanding circle countries have remained marginalised.

e.g.   Fifty years ago <u>Khumbu</u> had thick forests (*World English*)
       It has unusual <u>Moroccan</u> theme. (*Top Notch*)

An undeniable fact might be that the majority of ELT textbooks (including our sample books) are being published in English speaking countries and it is to some extent expected, though educationally questionable, to observe their hegemony and tendency in highlighting their own culture in their books. Overall, based on the findings, it seems that, *World English* has been more successful in maintaining a better balance between the culture of native (5.5%) and non-native speakers (4.4%+1.3%=5.8%), and is thus superior in representing the EIL paradigm.

Of course, analysing the books from the chronological aspect, we understood that *American English File* which is the oldest of our sample textbooks seems to be highly biased toward the culture of the inner circle counties. After that, when moving on in time, we see that *Top Notch* and *World English*, being published a couple of years later than *American English File*, have a less biased look at highlighting the culture of inner circle countries. Moreover, the titles of the textbooks (*American* English File or *World* English) portray the extent to which they have incorporated the world cultures.

To get an enhanced schematic view of the analysis, the domains' references to each individual circle was probed as well. The findings indicated that from among the three domains (i.e., semantic, syntactic, and parasyntactic), parasyntactic domain tokens provide the most direct indicators of cultural load. Although semantic domain includes the most commonly-used parts of speech which form the general meaning of texts, it is not addressed and discussed in this paper due to space limitations. In spite of having fewer tokens than semantic ones, parasyntactic domain, however, contains genera such as nouns through which cultural elements (e.g., events, people, and things) are expressed (i.e., full names, labeling names, organisational names, single names and titles) (Khodadady, 1999; Khodadady, 2008).

e.g.   "<u>We</u> sell hope", said <u>*Charles*</u>, founder of <u>*the*</u> <u>*Revlon*</u> <u>*cosmetic*</u> <u>*company*</u>. (*World English*)
       Located in <u>noisy</u> <u>*Broadway's Theater District*</u> <u>the</u> <u>hotel</u> is peaceful and quiet inside. (*Top Notch*)
       I went on a vacation with my parents to <u>the</u> <u>*Gulf Coast*</u> in <u>*Texas*</u>. (*American English File*)

On the whole, despite living in the era of globalisation, linguistic and cultural imperialism are still conspicuous as the so-called main themes of several ELT textbooks. That is, the textbooks are giving some observers the impression that the English language is still the property of the native speakers and teaching their culture, however implicitly, to all

learners is important (Matsuda, 2002). Indeed, adopting a 'one-size fits all policy', the textbooks analysed in this study have not been as successful as expected in familiarising the language learners with the cultural diversities of the world. Quite similarly, in 2002, Matsuda, reported the Western orientation of the examined ELT books. Now today, in the world that we are dealing with rapid technological changes happening every moment, after 13 years, we are still tackling the same problem, hopefully to a lesser degree.

Although there is no earlier schema-based research findings to compare the findings with, the results of this study show that ELT textbooks are abandoning the rigid imperialistic beliefs and moving, however gradually, toward the pluralistic principles of EIL and multiculturalism (McKay, 2002). Yet, there is an urgent need for material developers to incorporate and highlight marginalised cultures and democratise the English language. The outcome of this study operates as an eye opener for teachers to look more critically at the textbooks in their hands (Baik & Shim, 1995; Hutchinson, 1987) and make up for the lack of emphasis on local cultures by providing the learners with supplementary materials along with adopting a constructivist, learner centred pedagogy in general and schema-based instruction in particular (Khodadady & Hesarzadeh, 2014).

Finally, more in-depth analysis is required to investigate the ELT textbooks from other perspectives such as social and political. In addition, since due to the limited scope of this study we encoded and analysed the reading texts only, future studies are suggested to cover other sections of the books as well. In fact, all three of the texts offer other resources besides text resources, especially audio and video resources which may lead to different conclusions about changes and the pace of change, compared with conclusions based only on reading materials. Moreover, all three of the books have new editions which may lead to changes in the conclusion. To boot, the roles of the textbook may be trending downwards to a lesser role, owing to changes in technology (e.g., online only e-texts, proliferation of free resources from media organizations such as the BBC and other organisations, etc.). The final question which may be flagged as a major topic for further research is whether EFL teachers and students regard cultural and linguistic imperialism as a significant issue in EFL.

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