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An Analysis of Developing Intercultural Competence in English Language Textbooks through Iranian EFL Teachers: The Case of New English File versus Vision Series

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Abstract

This study made an attempt to investigate and analyze the teachers' perceptions of cultural elements of New English File and Vision series. To do so, fifty language teachers from different private language institutes and schools, participated in this study. Twenty-five teachers taught the vision series and the rest of the teachers taught the New English File series. An intercultural competence questionnaire was applied to gather the data. The necessary statistics were done using SPSS version 24 after the data had been gathered. In order to compare the gathered data, an independent samples t-test was performed. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two textbook series—New English File and Vision—in terms of how language teachers perceived their IC. The New English File textbook was found to follow more cultural items and IC than the Vision textbook series. In order to highlight the culture significance in designing textbooks in ELT, this study offered various implications for educators, students, and even curriculum developers.

Keywords: Intercultural competence, new English file, textbook, vision

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1. Introduction

English is considered as a universal language and according to Siegel, Menon, Sinha, Promyod, Wissehr, and Halverson (2014) through this language, people are able to communicate in various fields such as business, education, politics, and so on. Regarding this issue, a large number of language learning textbooks have been written and published, and it shows the prominence of using textbooks. Kim, Lee, and Sohn (2014) believe that textbooks doubtlessly play a significant tool in transferring knowledge. The transfer of knowledge should be dealt with learners' educational needs. Accordingly, Tomlinson (2011) believed that textbooks are considered as unavoidable teaching tools for both language teachers and learners regarding their educational needs.

In fact, EFL textbooks are taken into account as one of the most fundamental dimensions in many language programs. According to Tomlinson (2011), a textbook conventionally means print materials that made of words. They should be analyzed and evaluated to have appropriate materials to improve the level of learners in language learning. Furthermore, Shatery (2012) states textbook evaluation is mandatory since it causes teacher's professional growth. Ellis (1997) asserts that the use of textbook evaluation as a technique can assist teachers in going beyond impressionistic evaluation and in offering practical, methodical, specific, and contextual insights into the nature of textbook content (Jahangard, 2007). In order to evaluate the textbooks, diverse factors related to the learner, the teacher, and content have to be considered. Some examples of diverse reasons are as educational decisions, teaching methods, learners' aims, culture and needs.

Given the importance of textbook analysis, this analysis can be discussed from various aspects such as educational, cultural, religious, etc., each of which can play a key role in the structure of a textbook. Language and culture are two important and inseparable concepts. Language is a means of communication embedded in the culture of its speakers. As Kramsch (2000) stated, people view language as a symbol of their cultural identity and use it to express the facts and reflect their ideas. Therefore, in the process of language learning, we inevitably learn about its underlying culture. Culture influences language teaching linguistically and pedagogically (Weninger & Kiss, 2013). From a linguistic perspective, culture has an impact on language's semantic and pragmatic levels. While from a pedagogical standpoint, it influences the selection of language teaching materials (McKay, 2003).

Recalling the inseparability of language and culture, teaching and learning a language should subsume teaching and learning about its cultural bases. Nonetheless, there exist two conflicting views regarding the integration of teaching culture into the language teaching programs (Marsella & Yamada, 2010). One is that, considering the interdependence of language and culture, language should be taught along with the culture underlying it. The other one deals with the belief that teaching culture may result in the feeling of alienation in the learners because they have to express their ideas through a culture of which they have no experience (Alptekin, 1993; Prodromou, 1988). Hence, the claim for the latter camp is that language should be taught independently of its cultural context. The point to be considered is that both of the views highlight the interconnection between language and culture. However, a moot question is to what extent and which culture should be integrated in Foreign Language/Second Language (FL/SL) teaching courses.

Given that language and culture are closely related and with the coming of English as a universal language, *English Language Teaching* (ELT) pedagogy has shifted its focus toward improving learners' *Intercultural Competence* (IC). According to Wiseman and Koester (1993), IC is the knowledge, motivation, and skill to connect with people from diverse cultures in a productive and appropriate way. Byram and Kramsch (2008) stated that IC deals with the circulation of identities and values across cultures. They also claimed that IC familiarizes teachers and learners with the cultural differences and similarities in order to help them think critically about different cultures.

There are a considerable number of EFL textbooks that are published and distributed worldwide. However, the selection of an appropriate textbook is a challenging job and it must be done with careful evaluation of the existing textbooks (Kelishadi & Sharifzadeh, 2013). In the process of evaluation, EFL researchers should evaluate not only linguistic content but also cultural load of the EFL textbooks to understand whether they represent sufficient cultural information for teachers' IC accomplishments (Cunningsworth & Kuse, 1991; Hinkel, 1999).

EFL academics have recently paid increasing attention to analysing textbooks in terms of cultural aspects in a variety of learning situations (Hinkel, 1999; Klçkaya, 2004; Liu, 2013; McGrath, 2006; Skierso, 1991). But given the variety

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of EFL textbooks on the market, more research should be done to determine which ones are best and whether they accurately portray the cultural aspects of the target language to better prepare EFL students for discussions about culture. Several studies have focused on the evaluation of textbooks in the Iranian EFL context (Birjandi & Alizadeh, 2013; Mosalaejad & Riazi, 2010). However, very few studies, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, focused on comparing the cultural themes presented in the EFL textbooks (Alemi & Jafari, 2012).

Such researches have been mostly conducted in Asian as well as European countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Taiwan, Hungary, and so on. A recent study indicates that although a number of Asian countries (e.g., Pakistan, and Iran) greatly emphasizes IC in their EFL curricula, yet there appears to be a noticeable gap between curricular goals and intercultural content represented in ELT textbooks (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018).

Furthermore, the perceptions' role in language and culture learning has led many researchers to carry out research in this area. However, the findings of the studies revealed that teachers have different perceptions on learning culture and education in different fields. Hence, there is still a need for further studies in this area to help material authors to be aware of teachers' perspectives towards cultural elements of ELT materials. Given the cultural differences in a country like Iran, an important part of which originates from the religion of the people of this society, as well as differences in the cultural context of language teaching books, teachers' perceptions as a very important component of language learning can provide a new perspective in the process of language learning. In this regard, scare studies have been conducted on Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions toward cultural elements on EFL materials. Thus, the researcher regarded it as a gap and attempted to analyze the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of cultural elements of two textbooks.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Language and culture are intrinsically linked to one another. Prominent figures such as Byram (2013), Halliday (2007), and Kramsch (2000), have pointed out the existence of a close relationship between language and culture. Kramsch (2013) put forward that culture is a way of making meaning that is mediated by language and other symbolic systems. The interdependence of language and culture has been highlighted by Peterson and Coltarne (2003). Kramsch (2000) and Lund (2006) assumed that language is a cultural means that influences speakers' understanding of the world. Also, Kramesh (2000) in connection with the issue of language and culture believed that language is a means to express, reflect ideas, attitudes and facts.

To highlight the inseparable relationship between language and culture, Paulston (1992) noted that language is an integral part of a specific culture from which it cannot be separated. As Fantini (1995) put forward, a symbiotic relationship exists between language and culture in that language affects and reflects culture and vice-versa. In line with Fantini, Brown (2000) believed that the two principles of language and culture were intertwined and could not be separated.

In the same vein, Wardhaugh (2010) asserted that the structure of a language determines its speakers' view of the world. As Sapir and Whorf suggested in their hypothesis on the relationship among language, thought, and behavior, the way people view the world is determined by the language that they use. In Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, it is assumed that speakers' perceptions, attitudes and behavior are affected by the elements of the language like vocabulary or grammar (cited in Kay & Kempton, 1984).

2.2 Textbook Evaluation

In applied linguistics, numerous scholars have defined evaluation differently. A textbook's evaluation is a judgment on its actual performance. According to Lynch (1996), evaluation is defined as the systematic process of gathering information for the purpose of judging or making decisions. Harmer (2001) distinguished between assessment and evaluation. He stated that evaluating a textbook entails making an assessment of how effectively a new book will function outside of the classroom.

Hutchinson (1987) defined evaluation as the subject of judging the appropriateness of something for a particular purpose. With regard to the issue of evaluation in language teaching, initial analyses are made as to whether the object

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selection textbook is consistent with the curriculum or language program. Tomlinson (2011) mentioned that textbook evaluation is an effort to assess the textbooks potential value. This includes judging the textbook effects on the people (students, teachers, and administrators) who apply them. The effects of the textbook can be assessed in different ways such as flexibility, validity, credibility, and so on.

2.3 Intercultural Competence (IC)

One important mission of teaching English as a universal language is to facilitate the process of students transferring their ideas and cultural understanding in the English media. IC is one of the most important language goals and this goal will not be achieved if the textbooks focus only on the native language of the learners. Accordingly, Victor (1999) and Majdzadeh (2002) believed that textbooks should be a combination of different cultures of home, purpose and world. When language learners learn, think differently, learn to behave differently, they actually cross language boundaries to communicate. It can be concluded that adherence to a culture cannot be helpful. It is quite clear that the process of language learning and language culture are completely interdependent and cannot be separated (Kramsch, 2000). A major factor in raising learners' understanding of the target culture is the inclusion of the target culture alongside the culture of their first language in the textbook. According to Byram (1997), effective IC requires that students acquire the essential information, abilities, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness. Knowledge of both one's own culture and the culture of the L2 is referred to as intercultural knowledge. It is quite clear that the students have to acquire the knowledge of the various countries that speak the target language and the culture of those countries (Kramsch, 2013).

2.4 Empirical Studies on Culture in Textbooks

Based on the importance of attitudes in language and culture learning, a number of investigators conducted studies to shed light on teachers' perception of language and culture learning in EFL contexts. For example, in order to choose encouraging teaching materials, Richards (1995) surveyed Japanese learners' attitudes on life and their interests. The results revealed that learners were enthusiastic to acquire about school life in the United States, American food, American music, and American film.

In a similar vein, Zhang and Ma (2004) investigated Chinese university English teaching materials and teachers' attitudes towards cultural content. The findings showed that the English culture in teaching textbooks did not meet the needs of Chinese learners. Additionally, most participants said that in addition to the target culture, the instructional materials should also contain the source culture and other international cultures. The textbooks, however, were discovered to be focused on the target culture.

Ghafari, Kuhi, and Aslrasouli (2022) investigated how Iranian high school teachers and students felt about critical cultural awareness in a separate study. The findings demonstrated that cultural factors must be equally covered in ELT resources such as textbooks. Moreover, they had positive perceptions toward using ELT materials. Karabinar's (2012) research was designed to depict attitudes of English teachers on teaching culture in Turkish universities. The investigator noted that the participants believed in the significance of cultural knowledge in successful communication. In addition, it was stated that language instructors used a variety of techniques to incorporate culture instruction into their sessions. Zainol Abiddin, Pour Mohammadi, and Alzwari (2012) explored Libyan secondary school learners' perceptions toward learning English. The findings illustrated that most of the participants had a negative attitude toward English materials. It was proposed that such a negative attitude might be a reaction to the instructional and traditional materials used by teachers.

Regarding the connection between language and culture as well as the significance of IC in successful communication, culture teaching and learning should be integrated in EFL pedagogy. To this end, textbooks as the main resources of instructional material both for teachers and learners should be examined to enlighten the way culture is treated in EFL textbooks and to ensure the appropriateness and effectiveness of textbooks for promoting teachers' IC. Considering the cultural differences in a country like Iran, an important part of which originates from the religion of the people of this society, as well as the difference in the cultural context of language teaching books, teachers' perception is one of the most important components of language learning to accelerate this process. Regarding this matter, the following research question attempted to fulfil the purpose:

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RQ: Is there any difference between the teachers' perceptions toward EFL New English File and Vision series textbook based on cultural elements?

3. Methodology

3.1 Design of the Study

The present research was conducted in a quantitative method. In this method, statistical procedures were used in order to see to what extent Iranian EFL teachers could perceive the role of culture in their teaching practice.

3.2 Participants of the Study

Fifty language teachers from different private language institutes and schools in Babol, participated in this study to achieve the purpose of this research. The study initiated with a questionnaire with participants who were willing to share their views and experience with the researcher. The teachers were both males (N = 15) and females (N = 35) who had different ranges of teaching experience from three to ten years in teaching English. They were selected based on a purposive sampling technique. Twenty-five teachers taught vision series and the rest of the teachers taught New English Files.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Intercultural Competence Questionnaire

The questionnaire which was distributed among EFL instructors at Institutes and schools in Babol was the one designed based on Deardorff's model for IC. This questionnaire was designed in order to assess the amount of cultural information the two textbooks, "New English File" and "Vision", contain. The first section of the checklist included questions on whether the two books were rich on their rationale and objectives in terms of promoting culture and IC. This section is devoted to the questions that each lesson in the book has clearly stated goals from a cultural point of view, whether or not its cultural content is consistent with the overall goals stated in each book, whether the cultural content of the books increases the level, whether or not the cultural material includes cross-cultural projects that require students to interact and communicate with locals or use community resources, whether or not the thematic content fosters cultural awareness by assisting students in comprehending the dynamic nature of the target culture(s).

The next set of questions specifically focused on the cultural materials covered and conveyed by the "New English File" and "Vision" series. These questions covered whether the textbook encourages student participation in order to communicate different values (such as punctuality, neatness, manners, and courtesy both in the source and target cultures), whether the cultural content includes generalizations about the target culture(s), and whether the thematic material raises the students' awareness and understanding of intercultural awareness. If the language materials in the book's context reflect the cultural diversity of the target language speakers, whether the book contains information about significant cultural, political, religious, or other types of events or festivals of the target language speakers, and whether the book makes any mention of cultural material related to the target language.

The next section of the questionnaire assessing the amount of IC elements included in the material in the "New English File" and "Vision" series focused on the language features and language skills that each book contained. This section asked the teachers to indicate whether the books contain new vocabularies repeated in subsequent units for reinforcing the meaning of the cultural content and whether they developed the students' four language skills based on the themes of cultural content.

Another important element that can convey IC to foreign learners of the English language is class and cultural activities. In order to evaluate these activities, the questionnaire examined whether the content demonstrates cross-cultural understanding and communication in both cultures (i.e., knowing the meaning of those words and fitting them into established patterns of class activities), and whether they give students practice using their oral skills to communicate the meaning of various forms rather than simply learning about them.

Exercises and/or homework assignments were only scrutinized in terms of the chances they gave students to express the meaning of cultural topics in significant contexts using their own internal language systems. Teaching aids were separated into two groups in the following two sections of the questionnaire: 1) illustrations, and 2) teacher's book and

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tape scripts of audio CDs or any films. In terms of illustrations, it was determined if the characters represented various nationalities, countries, and the local society. It was also determined if the illustrations revealed the values of the social groups that adopted them and if the way the people in the images were dressed suggested a stereotype that always referred to the same group.

It was evaluated whether the instructor Guide helped the instructor comprehend the justification, objectives, and methodology of the textbooks as well as how social values can be taught in relation to the teacher's book and the tape scripts of the audio CDs or any movies. On the basis of the unit and lesson layout of the book, it was also evaluated in terms of the quantity of exposure to films where L2 was used in a genuine context to transmit cultural information about the target language. Finding out whether a book was supported by any form of culturally relevant materials, such as other books, movies, etc., was the final part of the audio visual aspects of the books and the Teacher Guide that was examined.

In terms of assessment tools and error treatment teachers were asked to assess whether the Teacher Guide and/or book series contain any culture specific assessment instruments for diagnosis, whether the textbook recommends a treatment in terms of errors in the use of culture-specific language elements that are useful, whether it uses culturally-normed evaluation or error treatment approaches, and finally whether the books assess the level of acculturation/assimilation that the learners might attain. The final section of the questionnaire assessing IC focused on lesson planning and syllabus design. It also assessed whether the Teacher Guide specifically considers culture in the design of lesson plans and whether the book uses cultural strengths and culturally-based resources in lesson planning. The reliability of the modified questionnaire was also estimated via Cronbach Alpha analysis by the researcher, which was found to be 0.81 which was shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire reliability coefficient

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Standardized Items	N of Items
.81	*.071*	*39*

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

After the selection of the research instrument, which was designed, based on the well-established teacher assessment questionnaire, the researcher began distributing them among the samples and collecting the data. There were 50 teachers in the sample and each was given one questionnaire. The researcher personally reached out to the participants, and personally observed the whole data collection process. Initially, the researcher briefed the teachers on the objectives of the questionnaire, and provided them with some general background; then, the researcher distributed the questionnaire through social media (WhatsApp), and made sure that all the participants would clearly and completely comprehend all the items. The researcher patiently and elaborately responded to any questions the participants asked and provided explanation whenever it was needed. The researcher emphasized to the teachers that the naturalness of the data was extremely important, and requested them to make their choices on Likert scales based on logic and the truth, rather than based on emotions.

3.5 Data Analysis

The SPSS (version 24) was applied to perform the necessary statistics after the necessary data were gathered. When describing how many teachers responded to a certain set of questionnaire items, descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviations, frequency, and percentage are utilized. Additionally, an independent samples t-test was employed to compare the data gathered.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of the Research Question

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The research question analyzed the teachers' perceptions toward EFL New English File series textbook cultural elements. The mean scores and standard deviation for all responses to questions in each category of the questionnaire was separately calculated. The obtained mean for all sections showed that the majority of teachers thought that each book should have an adequate amount of rationale and objectives, social and cultural topics, cultural materials, language skills and features, classroom and cultural activities, homework assignments, illustrations, teacher's book and the tape scripts or any Videos, assessment tools and error treatment, lesson planning, and syllabus design. The procedure of the presentation of the results is based on the questions of the questionnaire. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of rationale and objectives of two textbooks.

Table 1. The descriptive statistics of rationale and objectives in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Specific cultural goals in each textbook unit	3.51	1.03	2.46	.86
2. Matching the cultural goals with the general goals of the textbook	3.25	.99	2.33	.81
3. Investigating the increase in the level of understanding of conventional behavior in different cultural situations in the target language	3.40	1.05	2.39	.84
4. The existence of interaction and communication of the local community with cultural content in the cultural project	3.62	1.11	2.00	.79
5. Increasing cultural awareness with regard to thematic content by understanding the dynamic nature of the target culture	3.58	1.08	2.01	.79
6. Matching content with intercultural competence discussions	3.50	1.06	2.05	.80
Mean Average	3.49	1.05	2.29	.85

Table 1 presented the average mean and standard deviation of rationale and objectives of two textbooks as: New English File (M = 3.49, SD = 1.05) and Vision series (M = 2.29, SD = .85). The results showed that the perceptions of teachers towards the rationale and objectives of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of socio-cultural topics.

Table 2. The descriptive statistics of socio-cultural topics in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
7. Examining rich topics with different social dimensions	3.63	1.12	2.07	.91
8. Correspondence of social aspects with the skill level and age of the learners	3.41	1.04	2.17	.95
Mean Average	3.54	1.08	2.11	.92

Table 2 illustrated the average mean and standard deviation of socio-cultural topics of two textbooks as: New English File (M = 3.54, SD = 1.08) and Vision series (M = 2.11, SD = .92). The results showed that the perceptions of teachers towards socio-cultural topics of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of cultural materials in two textbooks.

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Table 3. The descriptive statistics of cultural materials in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
9. Improving students' intercultural understanding through textbooks	3.07	.98	2.00	.83
10. Promoting the active participation of students in the transmission of various values such as punctuality, hard work, etc. through textbooks	3.13	.99	2.18	.85
11. Creating generalizations of target cultures with cultural content	3.51	1.12	2.10	.84
12. Increasing students' awareness of their culture and target cultures through thematic content	3.47	1.11	2.17	.85
13. The textbook unit includes norms, beliefs and cultural values of the language.	3.69	1.17	2.28	.91
14. Reflecting the cultural diversity of the speakers in the content textbook language	3.45	1.09	2.05	.85
15. The book contains cultural, political or religious events in the target language.	3.41	1.08	2.74	.96
16. The book contains cultural material related to the lessons.	3.47	1.10	2.54	.94
17. The textbook contains materials that make the students feel comfortable or uncomfortable interculturally.	3.58	1.12	2.21	.89
18. Sharing cross-cultural success stories in the textbook.	3.36	1.07	2.04	.83
19. The textbook contains material that helps to learn the language and its culture.	3.41	1.08	2.31	.92
20. The book contains cultural discussions with the learners.	3.37	1.06	2.10	.85
21. The book use historical accomplishments, cultural references, etc. of learners regarding their intercultural competence.	3.17	1.01	2.00	.82
Mean Average	3.40	1.07	2.24	.89

Table 3 presented the average mean and standard deviation of cultural materials of two textbooks as: New English File ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.07$) and Vision series ($M = 2.24$, $SD = .89$). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards cultural materials of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of language features and skills in two textbooks.

Table 4. The descriptive statistics of language features and skills in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
22. Strengthening the meaning of cultural content by new vocabulary in the textbook	3.59	1.18	2.63	.92
23. Develop the learners' four language skills with the themes of cultural content	3.43	1.15	2.39	.88

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Mean Average	3.51	1.16	2.49	.90

In Table 4, the average mean and standard deviation of language features and skills of two textbooks as: New English File (M = 3.51, SD = 1.16) and Vision series (M = 2.49, SD = .90). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards language features and skills of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of class and cultural activities in two textbooks.

Table 5. The descriptive statistics of class and cultural activities in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
24. The relationship between intercultural understanding and intercultural communication of content in textbooks	3.33	1.08	2.01	.82
25. Providing practice in oral skills to communicate the meaning of different forms rather than learning about them	3.52	1.14	2.27	.86
26. Providing cultural activities with opportunities to participate in games or entertainment representative of the foreign culture	3.49	1.13	2.19	.83
Mean Average	3.45	1.11	2.17	.84

Table 5 reported the average mean and standard deviation of class and cultural items of two textbooks as: New English File (M = 3.45, SD = 1.11) and Vision series (M = 2.17, SD = .84). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards class and cultural items of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of Exercises/or Home Assignments in two textbooks.

Table 6. The descriptive statistics of exercises/or home assignments in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
27. Giving chances to apply their interim language system to communicate the cultural themes meaning	3.25	1.08	2.12	.91
Mean Average	3.25	1.08	2.12	.91

Table 6 indicated the average mean and standard deviation of exercise/or home assignments of two textbooks as: New English File (M = 3.25, SD = 1.08) and Vision series (M = 2.12, SD = .91). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards exercise/or home assignments of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics of illustrations in two textbooks.

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Table 7. The descriptive statistics of illustrations in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
28. Representing different nationalities, countries, and the local society by characters	3.47	1.15	2.78	.98
29. Talking about Illustrations about the values of the social groups	3.15	1.07	2.69	.96
30. Do the manners in which the people in the images are dressed indicate a stereotype which always refers to the same group?	3.24	1.09	2.60	.95
Mean Average	3.31	1.12	2.68	.96

In Table 7, the average mean and standard deviation of illustrations of two textbooks are described as: New English File (M = 3.31, SD = 1.12) and Vision series (M = 2.68, SD = .96). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards illustrations of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics of Teacher's Book/Tape Scripts of the Audio CDs/Videos in two textbooks.

Table 8. The descriptive statistics of teacher's book in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
31. Does the Teacher Guide help the teacher understand the rationale objectives and methodology of the Textbooks as well as understand how social values can be taught?	3.29	1.10	2.07	.88
32. Does the book provide exposure to videos of use of L2 in an authentic context which convey cultural information about the target language?	3.57	1.16	2.01	.86
33. Is the book accompanied by any type of culturally related materials such as other books, videos, etc.?	3.49	1.15	2.06	.87
Mean Average	3.47	1.14	2.04	.87

In Table 8, the average mean and standard deviation of Teacher's Book/Tape Scripts of the Audio CDs/Videos of two textbooks are described as: New English File (M = 3.47, SD = 1.14) and Vision series (M = 2.04, SD = .87). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards Teacher's Book/Tape Scripts of the Audio CDs/Videos of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics of Assessment tools/Error treatment in two textbooks.

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Table 9. The descriptive statistics of assessment tools/error treatment in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
34. Does the Teacher Guide and/or Book series contain any culture-specific assessment instruments for diagnosis?	3.43	1.16	2.27	.97
35. Does the textbook recommend a treatment in terms of errors in the use of culture-specific language elements that are useful?	3.18	1.06	1.98	.79
36. Does the book use culturally- normed evaluation or error treatment approaches?	3.15	1.05	1.90	.76
37. Does the book assess the level of acculturation/ assimilation?	3.39	1.15	2.02	.78
Mean Average	3.36	1.10	2.09	.83

In Table 9, the average mean and standard deviation of assessment tools/Error treatment of two textbooks are described as: New English File (M = 3.36, SD = 1.10) and Vision series (M = 2.09, SD = .83). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards Assessment tools/Error treatment of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 10 presents the descriptive statistics of lesson plan/syllabus design in two textbooks.

Table 10. The descriptive statistics of lesson plan/syllabus design in two textbooks

Items	New English File		Vision	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
38. Does the Teacher Guide specifically consider culture in the design of lesson plans?	3.50	1.18	2.23	.96
39. Does the book use cultural strengths and culturally-based resources in lesson planning?	3.59	1.22	2.26	.97
Mean Average	3.55	1.20	2.24	.96

Table 10, the average mean and standard deviation of lesson plan/syllabus design of two textbooks are described as: New English File (M = 3.55, SD = 1.20) and Vision series (M = 2.24, SD = .96). The results revealed that the perceptions of teachers towards lesson plan/syllabus design of the New English File textbook series were better than the Vision series. Table 11 presents the independent samples t-test in order to examine the difference between the perceptions of teachers in IC based on two textbooks.

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Table 11. Independent samples t-test of the teachers' perceptions in IC based on two textbooks

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.124	.001	1.103	48	.000	1.400	.214	.323	2.876
Equal variances not assumed			1.103	47.618	.000	1.400	.214	.322	2.877

Table 11 presented the independent samples t-test in order to examine the difference between the perceptions of teachers in IC based on two textbooks. As table 4.11 indicates, the sig value (2-tailed) for equal variances is .000 which is lower than the required cut-off of .05. Therefore, it can be said that there is statistically significant difference between the perceptions of language teachers in IC of two textbooks as New English File and Vision series and the New English File textbook followed more cultural items and IC than Vision textbook.

This study intended to find out the Iranian EFL teachers' perception of IC in two textbooks as New English File and Vision series. Furthermore, it was to investigate whether there is any statistically significant difference between two English textbooks based on teacher's attitudes. The results showed that there was statistically significant difference between the perceptions of language teachers in IC of two textbooks as New English File and Vision series and the New English File textbook followed more cultural items and IC than Vision textbook. The results of the present study are congruent with the results of the previous studies (e.g., Murray, 2021; Rosyidi & Purwati, 2017; Sobkowiak, 2015). The result showed that New English File consisted of more cultural items than Vision series.

5. Conclusion and Implications

In this study the literature behind the theory of intercultural competence was reviewed and this theory was observed via a questionnaire in order to determine whether it has been applied in the two textbooks under study and the teacher's language teaching methods in incorporating IC into their classrooms based on the data collected from language institutes and schools in Tehran. The results proved that there was statistically significant difference between the perceptions of language teachers in IC of two textbooks as New English File and Vision series and the New English File textbook followed more cultural items and IC than Vision textbook.

The results of this study can be used by teachers in order to integrate culture into the EFL classroom by providing a situation for discussions to take place in which the target and native culture are compared and contrasted. This would also provide the learners with an opportunity to compare and contrast the cultural aspects of their native tongue with that of the target language. Teachers in the field of EFL can choose the best method for their language classrooms and allocate a specific amount of time in each session to directly or indirectly teaching the culture of the target language

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via such tools and by comparing the cultural elements of the target language with its corresponding ones in the mother tongue.

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