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Table of contents

Articles

Inter-American cultural relations in foreign language textbooks: The cases of English and French 1-22

Maximiliano Eduardo Orlando

Investigating the use and perception of West African Pidgin English among West African university students in Northern Cyprus 23-38

Adeola Abdulateed Elegu

The dialectics between language and culture 39-51

Lotte Dam

Review Section

Emilie L'Hôte. *Identity, Narrative and Metaphor. A Corpus-Based Cognitive Analysis of New Labour Discourse* 52-56

Ievgeniia Valeriivna Bondarenko

Eli Hinkel (ed.): *Teaching English Grammar to Speakers of Other Languages* 57-58

Marie Møller Jensen

Inter-American cultural relations in foreign language textbooks: The cases of English and French

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Abstract: International English as a foreign language (EFL) and French as a foreign language (FFL) textbooks may be used in EFL and in FFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal for reasons such as those suggested in this paper with cultural content that is specific to the Americas. However, based on previous research findings, one would not expect these textbooks to treat this content in depth. These textbooks may, therefore, need to be supplemented when used in EFL and in FFL programmes that include cultural content that focuses on the Americas, and to this end their content has to be inspected. Consequently, analysing the explicit and implicit presence of inter-American cultural relations, i.e. of the connection and comparison of human activity and the natural environment existing in different American countries, in reading and listening text obtained from a sample of international EFL textbooks and from a sample of international FFL textbooks which are available on markets of different American countries was thought to be an interesting endeavour. The present paper explores several variables that may be useful for this purpose. For example, it compares the frequencies of the texts that reflect inter-American cultural relations and those of the texts reflecting cultural relations of American countries with geographical places which are in other continents. Based on the data of the present study, it could be argued that, as expected, the extent of the presence of inter-American cultural content in the target text obtained from the EFL and FFL textbook samples is not significant. As a result, the present study provides notions to consider when finding out if, and how, international EFL and FFL textbooks that are used in the EFL and FFL programmes in question need to be supplemented where inter-American cultural content is concerned.

Keywords: Inter-American cultural relations, EFL textbooks, FFL textbooks, intercultural competence, instrumental and integrative orientations.

1. Introduction

Textbook researchers have referred to the presence and/or depiction of some American countries and/or of inter-American cultural content in English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks and in English as a second language (ESL) textbooks while analysing international textbooks (Cottle 2009; Varón Páez 2009; Hamiloğlu & Mendi 2010; Gómez Rodríguez 2015), textbooks produced for local markets (Basabe 2009; Lappalainen 2011; Varis 2012; Shah et al. 2014), and both international textbooks and textbooks produced for local markets (Basabe 2006; Mahmood et al. 2012). However, the analysis and quantification of the extent of the presence and description of each American country and/or of inter-American cultural content does not seem to be the main purpose of the literature reviewed. For example, this sometimes refers to these countries and to this content to illustrate and to analyse different concepts. Thus, further research on this issue appears to be necessary in connection with EFL/ESL textbooks used in the Americas. This consideration lies in the belief that the findings of this research may be useful to EFL professionals who conceive EFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal with cultural content that is specific to the Americas. This belief stems from the arguments that follow.

Some of the above-mentioned studies have found that the content of EFL/ESL textbooks may revolve around a small number of countries where English is spoken as a first language. A case in point is Basabe's (2006) analyses of international, locally produced and adapted EFL textbooks that have been used in Argentina. As a result, the need to use EFL/ESL textbooks in which EFL/ESL learners' cultural background plays a central role has been pointed out (Mahmood et al. 2012; Shah et al. 2014).

It could be argued that, geographically speaking, the cultural content of foreign language programmes could be classified into five dimensions: a local dimension, i.e. human activity and the natural environment in foreign language learners' area of residence/origin, a national dimension, i.e. human activity and the natural environment in foreign language learners' country of residence/origin, a regional dimension, i.e. human activity and the natural environment in neighbouring countries of foreign language learners' country of residence/origin, a continental dimension, i.e. human activity and the natural environment in foreign language learners' continent of residence/origin and a world dimension, i.e. human activity and the natural environment throughout the world.

It could also be argued that the content of some EFL programmes aimed at learners living in the Americas would deal with the American dimension of cultural content for various reasons.¹ Two of these reasons are, first, the importance of the acquisition of intercultural competence in the apparent consolidation of globalisation in the Americas, which has crystallised, for example, into trading and political blocs such as Mercosur, Unasur, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Alianza del Pacifico and the Organization of American States, and, second, the fact that knowledge of one's country and the countries of others' is one of the components that are required to acquire this competence (Byram 1997; Byram et al. 2002). Another reason is the possibility of EFL learners being "[...] instrumentally oriented [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) and/or "[...] integratively oriented [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) to learning the English language in American contexts. Finally, school, regional and national curricula could determine this.

In EFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal with the American dimension of cultural content in order that these learners may acquire intercultural competence in the context of American cultural integration, EFL textbooks which look into cultural aspects of American countries and the relation of these cultural aspects to those of the learners' area and country of residence are expected to be used. It is believed that finding these types of EFL textbooks should be feasible if EFL textbooks which were produced in the country where learners live or EFL textbooks which were adapted to this country's market were available. However, if this were not the case or international EFL textbooks were used for any reason (research has shown that these have been used in American countries, e.g. Basabe 2006; Varón Páez 2009; Gómez Rodríguez 2015), there would be a clash between the decision to deal with the American dimension of cultural content of the EFL programmes in question and the actual content of these textbooks. Basically, there are two reasons to believe this. First, since international EFL textbooks are supposed to be sold in different countries and/or continents, their content is expected to include information about human activity and the natural environment existing all over the world. Consequently, they would not treat these two factors in American contexts in depth. Second, based on the findings of some of the above-mentioned studies, these textbooks are not expected to contain detailed information on the relation between cultural aspects of a wide range of American countries. Therefore, if these textbooks were used in the EFL programmes in question, it is supposed that EFL teaching professionals would have to supplement them.

With this end in view, it was thought that data concerning the extent of the presence of cultural relations between American countries in international EFL textbooks which have been brought out by European publishers and which have been available on American markets would come in useful. Nonetheless, since the present issue may concern professionals that deal with teaching other foreign languages in the Americas as well, it was decided to look into the extent of the presence of cultural relations between American countries in a sample of international foreign-language textbooks brought out by European publishers, that are also available on American

1 In this paper, the term *American* makes reference to any feature that belongs to the *Americas*.

markets and that teach a language other than English.²

It was decided, for comparative purposes, that the first language of the learners who study this language could be any of the first languages of the learners who study EFL in the Americas, i.e. it could not be English but it could be French, Spanish, Portuguese, etc. In other words, the target international foreign-language textbooks were expected to be aimed at a readership which was similar to the readership of the international EFL textbooks as far as their first language was concerned. Owing to two facts, that speakers of Spanish as a first language comprise the largest group of first language speakers in the Americas and that the largest group of countries whose population has the same first language in the Americas is that of Spanish speaking countries, and owing to the intention that the results of this study be useful to foreign language teaching professionals working in the largest number of countries and with the largest language populations in the Americas, it was decided to select French instead of other major languages, such as Spanish or Portuguese. By comparing the results obtained from the analysis of the EFL textbook sample and of the international French as a foreign language (FFL) one (research has shown that international FFL textbooks have also been used in American countries, e.g. Benatti Rochebois 2010; Pasquale 2013; Klett 2015), this paper means to achieve its two objectives. The first objective is to establish the extent of the presence of inter-American content in reading and listening text obtained from the target international EFL textbooks and from the FFL ones. Second, it intends to observe whether there are examples of situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language or the French language in this text. Furthermore, the pedagogical implications of the findings related to these two research objectives will be dealt with.

This article is structured as follows. In Section 2, the theoretical background will be presented. Research that has dealt directly or indirectly with the presence and depiction of American countries and/or of inter-American cultural content in EFL and in FFL textbooks will be reviewed in Section 3. Section 4 presents the methodological framework applied in this paper. Section 5 presents the findings of the study in this paper, while Section 6 offers a discussion of the findings.

2. Theoretical background

Based on the issues that concern the present paper, there are four concepts that need to be defined. These are *culture*, *the intercultural*, *intercultural competence* and *inter-American cultural relations*.

In order to define *culture*, a concept that is associated with that of culture in Gaiotti's (2013) study of the intercultural will be adopted: culture is "[...] human activity in the world where we live" (Gaiotti 2013: 12).³ Nonetheless, it could also be added that the natural environment of this world is an important determinant of human activity and, as a result, of culture. An example that illustrates this assertion is the sometimes stereotyped association of features of this environment with one of the products of human activity, American countries, and with aspects of the lifestyle and character of the people who come from or live in them. Another example that reflects this assertion is that the natural environment may influence human activity, and conversely, human activity may mould the natural environment. Therefore, it is thought that knowing about the natural environment of a given American country may help to understand aspects of the culture of this country.

Over the last decades, there have been several instances of human activity which involve different American countries, e.g. the trading and political blocs which were referred to in the introduction, and which seem to reflect growing inter-American cultural integration. This

2 In this paper, international foreign-language textbooks are those that are produced to be sold in two or more countries.

3 "[...] l'action de l'homme dans le monde où nous vivons" (Gaiotti 2013: 12). It should be explained that, in the view adopted in the present study, human activity is not equal to physical activity. Human activity entails the physical and mental dimensions involved in human beings' interaction with the world in which they live.

integration is supposed to require an increasing number of instances of interaction between people coming from or living in different American countries. In this interaction, the *intercultural* would emerge and the need for *intercultural competence* would arise.

According to UNESCO (2013), “Intercultural describes what occurs when members of two or more different cultural groups (of whatever size, at whatever level) interact or influence one another in some fashion, whether in person or through various mediated forms” (UNESCO 2013: 11).⁴ Following Gaiotti’s (2013: 19) definition of the intercultural, what would occur is the “[...] shared construction” (Gaiotti 2013: 19) of this interaction.⁵ It is believed that foreign language learners would need to become *intercultural speakers* (Byram et al. 2002) to construct these interactions successfully as “It is the hope that language learners who thus become ‘intercultural speakers’ will be successful not only in communicating information but also in developing a human relationship with people of other languages and cultures” (Byram et al. 2002: 7). Following Byram et al.’s (2002) reasoning, foreign language learners would become intercultural speakers if they were interculturally competent. The authors define *intercultural competence* as the “[...] ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality” (Byram et al. 2002: 10), and argue that two of the components of intercultural competence are knowledge and skills (Byram et al. 2002: 11).

Byram (1997) says that, when people from different countries interact, they bring, among other elements, “[...] knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one’s own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor’s country [...]” (Byram 1997: 35), and Byram et al. (2002) argue that “If it can be anticipated with whom one will interact, then knowledge of that person’s world is useful” (Byram et al. 2002: 12). In addition, Byram (1997) explains that the latter is “[...] usually ‘relational’ [...]” (Byram, 1997: 36) since it is acquired in relation to the former. There is also a relational aspect in skills, as one of the two categories of skills is that “[...] of interpretation and establishing relationships between aspects of the two cultures [...]” (Byram 1997: 33), which Byram et al. (2002) call “[...] *skills of comparison, of interpreting and relating* [...]” (Byram et al. 2002: 12 [italics in original]).

It is thought that *inter-American cultural relations* should be addressed in EFL and in FFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal, geographically speaking, with the American dimension of cultural content for the following four reasons in addition to eventual curricular policies. First, because of the strengthening of American integration alluded to above. Second, because it is believed that dealing with these relations in the programmes in question may contribute to learners’ acquisition of knowledge that is necessary to develop the three types of skills that were cited in the paragraph above and, as a result, to the acquisition of intercultural competence that is supposed to be required in more integrated American countries. Third, the presence of *inter-American cultural relations* in the cultural content of the EFL and of the FFL programmes in question together with the acquisition of the above-mentioned three types of skills in the context of these relations could match learners’ instrumental and integrative orientations (Gardner 2010) to learning the target language. Based on Gardner’s (2010) definition of instrumental orientation, in this study, this would stem from learners’ awareness of the “[...] practical benefits [...]” (Gardner 2010: 17) of being “[...] closer to another language community [...]” (Gardner 2010: 17) living in an American country.⁶ According to Gardner’s (2010) definition of integrative orientation, in this research, this would derive from learners’ “[...] desire, willingness,

4 It should be said that, due to advancements in technology, faster *mediated forms* and, as a result, prompt exchanges of communication are expected to be contributing to growing inter-American integration.

5 “[...] construction commune” (Gaiotti 2013: 19).

6 Even though Gardner (2010) refers to ESL backgrounds (Fernández Orío 2013), it is believed that his concept of instrumental and integrative orientation applies to the context of this paper.

or ability to become psychologically closer to another language community [...]” (Gardner 2010: 17) living in an American country. Fourth, because, as it is explained in a study of teachers’ cultural representations conducted by Lussier et al. (2003), “Owing to its nature, teaching and learning a modern language incarnate the presence of the other’s culture and the contact with otherness [...]” (Lussier et al. 2003: 192).⁷

In the present study, *inter-American cultural relations* may include, firstly, activity involving people coming from and/or living in different American countries and who may act in different social contexts, e.g. communication between speakers, states, enterprises, etc. or activity which not only involves people coming from and/or living in one American country and who may act in different social contexts but which is also related to other American countries. Secondly, they may include features of the natural environment affecting two or more American countries. Finally they may include comparisons and connections of human activity happening in different American countries, of the features of the natural environment existing in different American countries, and of American countries based on features of human activity and of the natural environment.

It is thought that, because of all the factors involved in inter-American cultural relations, these could be quite complex and, as a result, that they should be divided into different categories to facilitate their analyses. With a view to categorising inter-American cultural relations, the classification of cultural approaches provided by Risager (1998) was adopted. Indeed, three types of inter-American cultural relations could be identified: *intercultural inter-American relations*, *multicultural inter-American relations* and *transcultural inter-American relations*.

In this paper, intercultural inter-American relations may include, firstly, activity involving people coming from and/or living in two American countries and who may act in different social contexts, or activity which not only involves people coming from and/or living in one American country and who may act in different social contexts but which is also related to another American country. Secondly, they may include features of the natural environment affecting two American countries. Finally, they may include comparisons and connections of human activity happening in two American countries, of the features of the natural environment existing in two American countries, and of two American countries based on features of human activity and of the natural environment.

Multicultural inter-American relations may include, firstly, activity involving, people coming from an American country and living in a different American country. Secondly, they may include features of the natural environment of the latter country that affect these people. As for transcultural inter-American relations, they may comprise, firstly, activity involving people coming from and/or living in an American country and who may act in different social contexts and people coming from and/or living in geographical areas existing in the rest of the Americas and who may also act in different social contexts. They may also comprise activity which not only involves people coming from and/or living in one American country and who may act in different social contexts but which is also related to geographical areas existing in the rest of the Americas, and vice versa. Secondly, they may comprise features of the natural environment affecting an American country and geographical areas existing in the rest of the Americas. Finally, they may include comparisons and connections of human activity happening in a given American country and in areas existing in the rest of the Americas, of the features of the natural environment existing in a given American country and in areas existing in the rest of the Americas and comparisons and connections of this country and of these areas based on features of human activity and of the natural environment.

⁷ “De par sa nature, l’enseignement/apprentissage d’une langue vivante incarne la présence de l’autre culture et le contact avec l’altérité [...]” (Lussier et al. 2003: 192).

3. Previous studies

As advanced in the introduction, references to the presence and/or depiction of American countries and/or of inter-American cultural content in EFL textbooks were made from three different perspectives according to the geographical location of the readership at which the scrutinised textbooks were targeted: in the context of international textbooks, of textbooks produced for local markets and of both. A literature review that links the findings of some of these studies to the two research objectives of the present paper will follow.

Within the first group of studies, Varón Páez (2009), for example, uses a system of dichotomies, e.g. essentialism and non-essentialism, *Big C Culture* and *little c culture*, monocultural knowledge and intercultural knowledge, to look into the cultural content of six international EFL textbooks that have been used in Colombia and illustrates these dichotomies with examples of cultural features of geographical places, such as the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. A case in point is the reference to aspects of life in the United States, to Canadian writers, geography and society, and to Caribbean writers to exemplify Pusch & La Brack's (2003) *Big C Culture*, which is "[...] everything that we can see, everything that is visible concerning a society [...]" (Varón Páez 2009: 111),⁸ as against Pusch & La Brack's (2003) *little c culture*, which is defined as "[...] everything that is hidden, what is subjective, that which to be described requires the search for mechanisms which are much more complex than mere sight [...]" (Varón Páez 2009: 112).⁹ In the study of culture as presented in three international EFL textbooks that have also been used in Colombia, Gómez Rodríguez (2015) carries out his research from a similar angle as he also applies a dichotomy, surface culture versus deep culture, to his analyses. The author explains that elements that belong to the former are "[...] the easily observable (Hinkel, 2001) and static elements that represent a nation" (Gómez Rodríguez 2015: 168), whereas deep culture "[...] embraces invisible meanings associated with a region, a group of people, or subcultures that reflect their own particular sociocultural norms, lifestyles, beliefs, and values" (Gómez Rodríguez 2015: 168). The prevalence of surface culture is discussed in the introduction of aspects of the United States (geographical sites, celebrations, history and legends), Brazil (geographical places, celebrations and music), Venezuela (history), Costa Rica (geography), Peru (geography), Argentina (music) and of the Atacama Desert amongst the target textbooks. However, neither Varón Páez (2009) nor Gómez Rodríguez (2015) makes reference to the extent of the presence of American countries or of cultural relations between American countries in EFL textbooks explicitly as these issues seem to be outside the scope of their research objectives. Nevertheless, some of these relations may be assumed to exist based on the authors' findings. For example, there is an instance of transcultural inter-American relation in the target EFL textbooks in Varón Páez' (2009) study. This is the comparison between Canada and a geographical area existing in the rest of the Americas, the Caribbean, based on activity involving people coming from and/or living in these geographical places: famous Canadian and Caribbean writers produce literature written in the English language. In addition, examples of intercultural inter-American relations may be observed in the EFL textbooks analysed by Gómez Rodríguez (2015). One of them is the fact that the United States and Costa Rica may be compared based on their natural environments: both countries are reported to have places that are "Tourist places/geographical sites" (Gómez Rodríguez 2015: 174).

On the other hand, Hamiloğlu & Mendi (2010) study interculturalism in a set of five EFL textbooks and provide some very interesting insights both into the presence of American countries and into cultural relations between them. For example, as for the former, it may be observed that the textbooks under scrutiny refer to Brazil more often than to Jamaica, which would suggest the need for international EFL textbooks to be inspected to determine the extent to which their content deals

8 "[...] todo lo que podemos ver, todo lo visible de una sociedad [...]" (Varón Páez 2009: 111).

9 "[...] todo lo que está oculto, lo subjetivo, lo que para ser descrito exige buscar mecanismos mucho más complejos que la simple vista [...]" (Varón Páez 2009: 112).

with the cultural aspects of specific American countries. As for the latter, it is shown that these textbooks indicate that famous people come from Canada, Brazil and Cuba. Nonetheless, quantification of the presence of all American countries and of inter-American cultural relations is not the main goal of this research and this is reflected in the fact that references to the United States have been omitted. In contrast, Cottle (2009) tackles the presence of two of the following cultural aspects of the Americas (amongst other places) in a corpus of eight international EFL textbooks which have been used in Japan: character ethnicity and character background. Nevertheless, references to individual American countries or to inter-American cultural relations are not made when these two variables are discussed. This is because the textbook characters who spoke with an American English accent were grouped together and so were the characters who spoke with a Latin American accent. Similarly, characters were classified into groups where ethnicity was concerned, e.g. Latin Americans.

Within the studies that belong to the second group, those that have analysed EFL textbooks produced for local markets, Lappalainen (2011), for example, examines instances of culture from the United States and of inter-American cultural relations introduced in five Finnish EFL textbooks. To illustrate the former, descriptions of festivals may be cited, whereas to refer to the latter, references to Mexican immigrants' life in the United States or to the growth of the population from Mexico, Puerto Rico and Cuba in the same country may be mentioned. However, no references to culture of other American English speaking countries are made, and, consequently, inter-American cultural relations always revolve around the United States. Varis (2012), in contrast, looks into references to the culture of the United States and of Canada in one Finnish foreign language textbook. However, the author finds out that there is only one text that refers to Canada as compared to eleven that deal with the United States. As a consequence, issues that entail American foreign-culture features, e.g. politics and national symbols, and inter-American ones, e.g. a Mexican immigrant family, centre on the United States as in Lappalainen's (2011) study. In order to get more background on the objectives of the present paper, it was thought that it was necessary to read research on the cultural content of EFL textbooks produced for local American markets as these textbooks are expected to give EFL learners more detailed information concerning the country or countries belonging in these markets and inter-American cultural relations involving them.

Basabe's analyses belong in the second and in the third groups that have been defined in this paper since they deal with EFL textbooks produced for South American markets (Basabe 2009) and with both international EFL textbooks and EFL textbooks produced for South American markets (Basabe 2006). In the latter study, the author compares the representation of cultural aspects of English speaking countries in international EFL textbooks produced in the United Kingdom, in EFL textbooks produced in Argentina and in EFL textbooks used in Argentina but adapted from British and Mexican ones. In addition, he quantifies how many texts treat target culture, source culture and international culture as well as relationships between them. However, the texts that deal with target culture encompass that of different English speaking countries, even though it is pointed out that references to culture in the United Kingdom and in the United States are the most frequent ones, whereas references to that in Canada are sporadic. As a result, examples of references that concern the United States and that sometimes involve inter-American cultural relations are discussed in the research while those that address Canada are not. In the former study, Basabe (2009) looks into relationships between target culture, source culture and international culture while addressing the representation of Argentina, Chile and Latin America in two books produced for local markets: an EFL textbook and activity book adapted for the Argentinian market and an EFL textbook modified for the Chilean one. The author discusses instances of inter-American cultural relations. In addition, as in the previous study, aspects of culture of the United States which are treated in the textbooks are discussed.

Based on the literature review, it was thought that a quantitative study that dealt with the

presence of inter-American cultural relations involving any American country in a set of comparable international EFL textbooks that are available on markets of different American countries would be an interesting contribution to this research area. Indeed, this type of study would analyse the extent to which these textbooks provide information related to the American dimension of the cultural content of EFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas as far as inter-American cultural relations are concerned. As a result, it would also look into their contribution to the acquisition of knowledge that is required, as discussed in the previous section, to develop skills that are needed to acquire intercultural competence (Byram et al. 2002) in American contexts. Furthermore, this study would also indicate whether there are examples of situations in which the English language is used to establish inter-American cultural relations in the target textbooks. It is supposed that these examples would be useful to American EFL learners who are “[...] instrumentally oriented [...]” (Gardner 2010: 17) and/or “[...] integratively oriented [...]” (Gardner 2010: 17) to learning the English language as they could show the extent to which being a user of English may effect these learners’ orientations. Moreover, it was decided to take a step further and to deal with the same issue in a set of international textbooks that teach another foreign language.

Interest in knowing whether the above-mentioned notions may apply to FFL learning as well stems from the reasons that were referred to in the introduction, from the fact that FFL is also widely learnt in the Americas and from the finding that international EFL and FFL textbooks that have been brought out by European publishers appear to be ubiquitous in some American markets and seem to be comparable in their aims and format. As for their aims, the websites of the textbooks that have been selected and that will be introduced in the next section, for example, show that they foster communicative competence, which is reflected in the use of tasks and/or in the development of skills. As for their format, division into topic based sections, such as units or lessons, and into subsections which focus on the development of specific language skills in context witnesses to the communicative orientation of the selected textbooks. What is more, none of the studies that have tackled cultural content and/or the approach to teaching this content in FFL textbooks and that have been reviewed for this paper have focused only on the examination of the presence of cultural elements that belong to American countries and/or of inter-American cultural relations in these textbooks (Debenat 2005; Bouguerra 2008; Clouet & Sánchez 2008; Dervin & Keihäs 2008; Kridech 2008; Benatti Rochebois 2010; Boudjadi 2012; Gaiotti 2013; Pasquale 2013; Klett 2015). As a result, herein also lies the importance of the findings of this paper. Nonetheless, it was decided to discuss references to the presence and depiction of American countries and/or of inter-American cultural content in FFL textbooks as it was done in relation to the EFL ones.

As regards research focusing only on FFL textbooks produced for local markets, Debenat (2005) analyses teaching of culture in a Chinese FFL textbook. The description of the topics of the texts which were written in French in a section devoted to civilisation shows that the only reference to an American country consists in a person from the United States who is in China. As in the textbook inspected by Debenat (2005), the presence of cultural features of American countries seems to be scarce in eight FFL textbooks edited in Finland and analysed by Dervin & Keihäs (2008). This is because, in the authors’ examination of the way in which aspects of “[...] former French colonies, French-speaking countries and immigrants in France” (Dervin & Keihäs 2008: 57)¹⁰ are dealt with in these textbooks, no American features are discussed except for some references to the Antilles and to Canada.

In relation to research that belongs to the group of studies that have referred to the presence and depiction of American countries and/or of inter-American cultural content in international FFL textbooks and in FFL textbooks produced for local markets, Clouet & Sánchez’ (2008) analyses of

10 “[...] anciennes colonies françaises, des pays francophones et des immigrants en France” (Dervin & Keihäs 2008: 57).

the sociocultural content of two international FFL textbooks produced in France and of five FFL textbooks produced and used in Spain may be cited. The authors find out that “[...] the analysed books generally reflect the aspects of only one language and of only one country: France [...]” (Clouet & Sánchez 2008: 94).¹¹ As a consequence, few references to the Americas are discussed. These are about Canada and the Caribbean in the textbooks produced in Spain, e.g. a map of Canada, a film festival in Canada and an instance of transcultural inter-American relation. This instance consists in the comparison of Canada and the Caribbean based on activity involving people coming from and/or living in these geographical places: in both places they have built French-speaking cities. As for the international textbooks, only aspects of Canada, e.g. its writers, are discussed as far as the Americas are concerned.

The little information about the presence of inter-American cultural relations involving any American country in international FFL textbooks in the literature reviewed adds to the reasons why a quantitative study of this subject should be an interesting contribution to this research area. Indeed, the research interests of the present study led to the following two research objectives, as advanced in the introduction.

The first objective is to establish the extent of the presence of inter-American content in reading and listening text obtained from the target international EFL textbooks and from the FFL ones. Second, it intends to observe whether there are examples of situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language or the French language in this text. In addition, the pedagogical implications deriving from the findings related to these two research objectives will be discussed.

4. Methodology

Three international EFL textbook series written by European publishers and three FFL ones also written by European publishers which are available on American markets were randomly selected from EFL and FFL textbook series that shared the following features. They had to be European and they had to have been on the market since 2000. It was thought that these two parameters would increase the chances of selecting, firstly, textbook series that followed similar approaches to teaching EFL and FFL and, secondly, textbook series that had a strong presence on the market. Indeed, as for the latter, it was found that some of the textbook series in question were available in American book stores and, based on some of the studies already discussed, that they had been used in several American educational institutions. Regarding their approaches to teaching EFL and FFL, as explained in the section above, it was observed that these series seemed to have an important communicative component, which showed in the way tasks were organised, and that they aimed to develop learners’ listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. However, not all the textbook series taught all the levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and, owing to this, only the textbooks that dealt with the levels that were taught across all the selected series were to be examined. It was found that A1, A2 and B1 levels were taught in all the target series. The selected EFL textbooks are *New Cutting Edge Elementary*, *New Cutting Edge Pre-Intermediate*, *New Cutting Edge Intermediate*, *New Inside Out Elementary*, *New Inside Out Pre-Intermediate*, *New Inside Out Intermediate* and the fourth edition of *New Headway Elementary*, *New Headway Pre-Intermediate* and *New Headway Intermediate*. The selected FFL textbooks are *Le nouveau taxi! 1*, *Le nouveau taxi! 2*, *Le nouveau taxi! 3*, *Tout va bien! 1*, *Tout va bien! 2*, *Tout va bien! 3*, *Forum Méthode de français 1*, *Forum Méthode de français 2* and *Forum Méthode de français 3*. Therefore, the findings of this paper result from the analyses of a total of eighteen textbooks.

¹¹ “[...] les ouvrages analysés ne reflètent généralement l’aspect que d’une seule langue et d’un seul pays: la France [...]” (Clouet & Sánchez 2008: 94).

As regards the selection of the texts from which data was to be collected, the following criteria were adopted. First, they had to be accessible in the body of the students' textbooks as these were expected to be used the most often in EFL and FFL courses as compared to other components of the textbook series, such as activity books and handouts. Second, it was decided to analyse both reading and listening text that was available in written form. Third, this text appeared to provide information that was in context and that was required mostly to do further activities as these types of texts were assumed to centre on comprehension mainly rather than on form or accuracy. For example, a text written for learners to circle suitable grammar forms or for learners to correct spelling mistakes would not be analysed. Fourth, they had to contain words that referred to American geographical places and to American geographical origins. It has to be clarified that only words that referred to administrative divisions in contemporary countries, e.g. names of provinces, states, cities, etc., were searched for as these were expected to occur in both textbook samples and, as a result, to make results comparable. Finally, texts of different lengths were considered: from one-sentence slogans, for example, to long articles. Consequently, a wide range of text types was included in the analyses.

In order to attain the first objective, i.e. to establish the extent of the presence of inter-American content in reading and listening text obtained from the target international EFL textbooks and from the FFL ones, instances of inter-American cultural relations were identified in this text and the number of texts in which these instances appeared per country was calculated. As explained in the literature review, with a view to categorising inter-American cultural relations, Risager's (1998) classification of cultural approaches was adopted, and three types of inter-American cultural relations were searched for: intercultural inter-American relations, multicultural inter-American relations and transcultural inter-American relations. Byram et al. (2002) assert that "Textbooks can be written in an intercultural and critical perspective or in a way that suggests that the materials are authoritative" (Byram et al. 2002: 23). It is believed that, in EFL and FFL language textbooks which are written in the former way, instances of the three types of inter-American cultural relations would tend to be presented implicitly and, as a result, learners would be encouraged to discover and to interpret these relations. In contrast, in EFL and FFL language textbooks which are written in the latter way, the three kinds of inter-American cultural relations would tend to be presented explicitly and, consequently, there would not be much room for learners to discover them or to interpret them. Instances of both ways of presenting inter-American cultural relations that the author of this paper has identified were considered in this study. For example, it has been found that there are nine texts in the EFL sample that contain inter-American cultural relations involving Mexico. Mexico participates in intercultural inter-American relations in eight of these texts and, in seven of them, Mexico is related to the USA, in three of them, it is related to Brazil, in two of them, to Argentina and, in one of them, to Canada.

Furthermore, the number of texts that contained intercultural, multicultural and transcultural relations of American countries with non-American geographical places was also reckoned for comparative purposes. For example, as explained, Mexico participates in intercultural inter-American relations in eight texts in the EFL sample, whereas it is involved in intercultural relations with non-American countries in twelve. A case in point is the comparison of the size of the population of Mexico City with the size of the population of the largest cities in China, India and Japan in one of the texts of *New Headway Elementary*.

As regards the steps for the accomplishment of the second objective, i.e. to observe whether there are examples of situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language or the French language in the text sample obtained from the target textbooks, each instance of intercultural inter-American relation, multicultural inter-American relation and transcultural inter-American relation was inspected and the number of texts in which this happened was worked out.

Before moving onto the presentation of the results of this study in the next section, the limitations of this paper will be addressed. Owing to the fact that, as explained above, only the texts appearing in the body of the students' textbooks were included in the analyses, texts which may contain information that could be relevant to this research but which are present in other components of the textbook series were omitted. Moreover, as clarified above, since this research looked into the content of those texts that appeared mainly to be used to do further activities in context, other texts that might also introduce content that could be connected with the aims of this paper were left out. Finally, even though the number of the target texts that were found to contain inter-American cultural relations in each textbook series and the number of these texts that refer to individual American countries will be provided to show the distribution of the texts in question across the textbook series and, consequently, to have a more complete panorama of the research data, it is to be noted that the intention of the present study is to find out trends within the scope of its research objectives and not to discuss the content of any of the textbooks or textbook series in particular.

5. Findings

5.1. Background information

The number of the target texts where inter-American cultural relations were observed in each textbook series is shown in Table 1. Table 2 shows the number of these texts containing references to each American country in each textbook series.

Table 1: Number of target texts containing inter-American cultural relations in each textbook series

EFL textbooks			FFL textbooks		
EFLA	EFLB	EFLC	FFLA	FFLB	FFLC
15	7	19	5	7	5

Table 2: Target texts containing inter-American cultural relations and references to each American country in each textbook series

Country	EFL textbooks			FFL textbooks		
	EFLA	EFLB	EFLC	FFLA	FFLB	FFLC
Argentina	1	4	8			
Bahamas		1				
Barbados	1					
Bolivia	1		1			
Brazil	3	3	9	2		1
Canada	6		5	1	6	3
Chile		2	2			
Colombia	2					1
Cuba			1	2		
Ecuador		1		1		
Haiti					1	
Mexico	3	1	5			
Peru	3	1	2	1		
USA	11	3	16	3	3	3
Uruguay	1					
Venezuela			1			1

The rest of the results of this paper will be presented by objectives: to establish the extent of the presence of inter-American content in reading and listening text obtained from the target international EFL textbooks and from the FFL ones firstly, and to observe whether there are examples of situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language or the French language in this text secondly.

5.2. Objective 1

As stated above, the first objective is to establish the extent of the presence of inter-American content in reading and listening text obtained from the target international EFL textbooks and from the FFL ones.

Table 3 shows the total number of target texts that contain inter-American cultural relations and references to each American country in all the EFL textbooks and in all the FFL ones.

Table 3: Number of target texts containing inter-American cultural relations and references to each American country in all the EFL textbooks and in all the FFL ones

EFL textbooks		FFL textbooks	
Country	Number of texts	Country	Number of texts
USA	30	Canada	10
Brazil	15	USA	9
Argentina	13	Brazil	3
Canada	11	Cuba	2
Mexico	9	Colombia	1
Peru	6	Ecuador	1
Chile	4	Haiti	1
Bolivia	2	Peru	1
Colombia	2	Venezuela	1
Bahamas	1		
Barbados	1		
Cuba	1		
Ecuador	1		
Uruguay	1		
Venezuela	1		
Total	41	Total	17

However, as explained in the methodology section, three types of inter-American cultural relations have been searched for. In the FFL textbooks, for example, whereas 10 texts carry inter-American cultural relations in which Canada takes part, seven of them include intercultural inter-American relations, three of them convey transcultural inter-American relations but none of them present multicultural inter-American relations involving this country. As for the EFL textbooks, for example, whereas 30 texts carry inter-American cultural relations in which the USA takes part, 28 of them include intercultural inter-American relations, five of them convey transcultural inter-American relations and one of them presents multicultural inter-American relations involving this country. At this point, it should be noted that some of the target texts contain more than one type of inter-American cultural relation. Therefore, if a target text contains, for example, one or more instances of intercultural inter-American relations involving Argentina and one or more instances of transcultural inter-American relations engaging Argentina, this text is then counted twice in Table 4

(see page 14) as a text in TRAP intercultural Argentina and as a text in TRAP transcultural Argentina. In addition, if one of the instances of intercultural relations in a text refers, for instance, to the USA and to Mexico, and another instance of intercultural relations in the same text refers, for example, to the USA and to Brazil, this text is counted as follows in Table 4: as a text in TRAP intercultural USA, as a text in TRAP intercultural Brazil and as a text in TRAP intercultural Mexico.

Table 4 (see page 14) presents the number of target texts in which American countries participate in intercultural inter-American relations, multicultural inter-American relations and transcultural inter-American relations. Moreover, it compares these frequencies with the number of target texts in which American countries are involved in intercultural, multicultural and transcultural relations with non-American places. Canada, for instance, establishes intercultural relations with non-American countries in 32 texts in the FFL textbooks as compared to the above-mentioned seven texts. In the EFL textbooks, the USA, for example, establishes intercultural relations with non-American countries in 107 texts as compared to the above-mentioned 28 texts. Table 4 reports only those frequencies that are equal to or higher than three at least in one of the two types of relations: inter-American cultural relations and cultural relations of American countries with non-American places.

In order to obtain a more complete description of inter-American cultural relations, it was thought that figures showing the countries participating in instances of inter-American cultural relation in three or more texts also needed to be presented in this section. For example, as explained above, Canada is involved in intercultural inter-American relations in seven texts in the FFL textbooks. Nevertheless, in all of these texts, Canada is related to the USA. Table 5 (see page 15) shows which pairs are involved in each type of inter-American cultural relation in three or more texts. It has to be pointed out that those administrative divisions that exist in the Americas and that belong to countries that are in other continents have not been considered in the data, e.g. French Guiana, Bermuda, Guadeloupe, etc.

Two points regarding Table 5 need to be clarified. The first one is that there are no figures that refer to multicultural inter-American relations because no instances of these types of relations were found in the target texts belonging to the FFL textbooks and because the frequency of either of the pairs that was observed in the target texts that were obtained from the EFL textbooks is one. The second point is that the terms North America, South America and Latin America do not reflect any kind of country grouping belonging in this research but that they are the ones that are used in the texts under scrutiny.

5.3. *Objective 2*

As stated above, the second objective is to observe whether there are examples of situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language or the French language in the target text. As for this objective, there is only one text in which there is a situation in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language in the EFL textbooks. This situation is an instance of intercultural inter-American relation which consists in a conversation involving a person coming from the USA and another person coming from Mexico.

Table 4: Number of target texts that contain inter-American cultural relations (TRAP*) and cultural relations of American countries with non-American places (TRNAP**)

Intercultural relations					
EFL textbooks			FFL textbooks		
Countries	TRAP	TRNAP	Countries	TRAP	TRNAP
USA	28	107	USA	9	52
Brazil	14	15	Canada	7	32
Canada	11	13	Brazil	3	7
Argentina	11	12	Cuba	2	3
Mexico	8	12			
Peru	6	5			
Chile	4	2			
Barbados	1	4			
Colombia	2	3			
Bolivia	1	3			
Multicultural relations					
EFL textbooks			FFL textbooks		
Countries	TRAP	TRNAP	Countries	TRAP	TRNAP
USA	1	22	Canada		4
Canada	2	3	USA		3
Transcultural relations					
EFL textbooks			FFL textbooks		
Countries	TRAP	TRNAP	Countries	TRAP	TRNAP
USA	5	63	USA		28
Brazil	4	11	Canada	3	17
Argentina	7	7	Brazil		3
Canada	1	11			
Mexico	2	10			
Peru	2	4			
Chile	3	1			
Colombia		3			

*Texts containing relations with American places)

**TRNAP (Texts containing relations with non-American places)

Table 5: Pairs participating in inter-American cultural relations

Intercultural relations			
EFL textbooks		FFL textbooks	
Countries	Texts	Countries	Texts
Canada - USA	11	Canada - USA	7
Brazil - USA	10		
Mexico - USA	7		
Argentina - USA	7		
Argentina - Brazil	5		
Argentina - Chile	4		
Argentina - Canada	3		
Brazil - Peru	3		
Brazil - Mexico	3		
Brazil - Canada	3		
Peru - USA	3		
Transcultural Relations			
EFL textbooks		FFL textbooks	
Countries	Texts	Countries	Texts
Argentina - NA*/SA**/LA***	7		
USA - NA/SA	5		
Brazil - NA/SA	4		
Chile - SA	3		

*North America

**South America

***Latin America

6. Discussion

The data introduced in Table 1 shows that there are more target texts containing inter-American cultural relations in each EFL textbook series than in each FFL textbook series except for EFLB and FFLB, where frequencies are the same: $n = 7$. Table 3 adds that there are 41 target texts containing inter-American cultural relations in all the EFL textbooks and 17 in all the FFL ones. This would indicate that the extent of the presence of inter-American content in the target international EFL textbook series would be larger than the extent of the presence of inter-American content in the target international FFL ones as far as the number of target texts in which instances of inter-American cultural relations have been observed is concerned. Differences in the extent of the presence of inter-American content between the EFL textbook series and the FFL ones may also be noticed when looking at the figures showing the range of countries to which the target texts that contain inter-American cultural relations refer to. Table 3 shows that there are references to more American countries in all the EFL textbooks ($n = 15$) than in all the FFL ones ($n = 9$). Moreover, Table 2 indicates that there are texts containing inter-American cultural relations and references to any of eight countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru, the USA) in two or three of the EFL textbook series and that there are texts containing inter-American cultural relations and references to any of three countries (Brazil, Canada, the USA) in two or three of the FFL textbook series. However, considering all the data regarding the first objective and presented in the section above, it could be argued that the extent of the presence of inter-American content in the reading and listening text obtained from both the target international EFL textbook series and the FFL ones is not significant for several reasons.

For one thing, Table 3 reveals not only that there are references to a limited number of American countries, but also that few of these countries have relatively high frequencies. Indeed, six American countries, i.e. the USA, Brazil, Argentina, Canada, Mexico and Peru (in this order), participate in inter-American cultural relations in 5 or more texts out of 15 American countries in the EFL textbooks, whereas only Canada and the USA do so out of nine in the FFL ones. In addition, it is to be pointed out that there is a wide gap between the frequency of the USA ($n = 30$) and that of the second most frequent country, Brazil, ($n = 15$) in the EFL textbooks and between the frequencies of Canada and of the USA ($n = 10$ and $n = 9$ respectively) and that of the next most frequent country, Brazil, ($n = 3$) in the FFL textbooks. The concentration of a small number of countries in inter-American cultural relations is also visible in the pairs that compose them. Indeed, Table 5 adds that Canada - USA, Brazil - USA, Mexico - USA, Argentina - USA and Argentina - Brazil are the five intercultural pairs that occur in five or more texts in the EFL textbooks, while Canada - USA is the only one in the FFL ones. It is interesting to mention that the countries that make up these pairs are the largest American countries, had the largest gross domestic products in the Americas in 2014 and are projected to be amongst the countries with the largest populations in the same geographical place.¹² It is believed that some of these factors may have a bearing on the influence of these countries on the historical, geographical, political, cultural, social and economic dimensions of the present globalised world. It is also believed that the significance of the participation of these countries in these spheres would, consequently, have an effect on their relatively prominent presence in the cultural content of international EFL and FFL textbooks. What is more, this relative prominence seems to result in a situation that is similar to the one that was mentioned in the introduction. In that section, it was explained that, in some of the cited studies, it had been observed that the content of EFL/ESL textbooks could centre on a small number of countries where English is spoken as a first language. The data that has just been discussed indicates that the selection of few countries in textbook content may also be present in the contribution of textbooks to the continental dimension of foreign language programmes which has been defined in this paper. However, it is thought that excluding the country where American learners come from or live in from the inter-American cultural content of EFL and of FFL programmes that deal with the American dimension of cultural content would not contribute to these learners' acquisition of extensive knowledge of relations between "[...] social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country [...]" (Byram et al. 2002: 12). Furthermore, it has to be pointed out that this knowledge is required to develop these learners' "[...] *skills of comparison, of interpreting and relating* [...]" (Byram et al. 2002: 12 [italics in original]) in American contexts and, at the same time, to acquire intercultural competence (Byram's 1997; Byram et al. 2002) in the same context.

Another reason why it could be argued that the extent of the presence of inter-American content in the reading and listening text obtained from both the target international EFL textbooks and the FFL ones is not significant is the fact that, as shown in Table 5, there are pairs of intercultural and transcultural relations with frequencies equal to or higher than three in the EFL textbooks but only pairs of the former in the FFL textbooks, whereas there are no pairs of multicultural relations with these frequencies in either sample. A reason for the absence of pairs of multicultural relations in three or more texts could be the fact that the target textbooks have been produced by European publishers and, consequently, that they are expected to contain texts which refer to aspects of the life of foreign students and/or of immigrants, for example, in European English and French speaking countries. Furthermore, regarding transcultural relations, the target textbooks would also be expected to involve European English and French speaking countries. However, as explained above, one of the reasons for dealing with the American dimension of the

12 This information was obtained from the World Statistics Pocketbook 2016 edition (United Nations 2016).

cultural content of EFL programmes aimed at learners living in the Americas and, at this stage, of similar FFL programmes as well, lies in the possibility of these learners' being "[...] instrumentally oriented [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) and/or "[...] integratively oriented [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) to learning EFL and FFL owing to the "[...] practical benefits [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) of being "[...] closer to another language community [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) living in an American country and to learners' "[...] desire, willingness, or ability to become psychologically closer to another language community [...]" (Gardner 2010: 17) living in an American country as well. Therefore, it is supposed that providing real examples of multicultural inter-American relations and of transcultural inter-American relations could be useful for these instrumentally and integratively oriented learners' interests when these learners learn EFL and FFL. Indeed, real examples of multicultural inter-American relations would deal not only with the practical benefits of being an English or French speaker while living in an American English or French speaking country, but also with the process of becoming a member of its communities. As regards real examples of transcultural inter-American relations, they would deal with the benefits of being an English or French speaker in the Americas in general, e.g. the possibility of getting a job in English or French multinational companies operating throughout the Americas.

Finally, it has been decided to compare the extent of the presence of inter-American cultural relations with that of the presence of relations of American countries with non-American places (see Table 4) using a non-parametric test as the total frequencies of TRAP and of TRNAP in the EFL sample and in the FFL one proved not to be normally distributed. The Mann-Whitney Test indicates that, in the EFL sample, the values of TRNAP are significantly higher than those of TRAP ($p \leq .05$), and so are the values of TRNAP as compared to those of TRAP in the FFL sample ($p \leq .01$). These results suggest that there is a significant trend in the targeted EFL and FFL textbook samples to portray American countries in relation with non-American places rather than with American ones. By looking at Table 4, it may be observed that this is noticeable, for example, in the intercultural relations of the USA (TRAP = 28; TRNAP = 107), in the multicultural relations of the USA (TRAP = 1; TRNAP = 22) and in the transcultural relations of the USA (TRAP = 5; TRNAP = 63), Brazil (TRAP = 4; TRNAP = 11), Canada (TRAP = 1; TRNAP = 11) and Mexico (TRAP = 2; TRNAP = 10) in the EFL textbooks. The same applies, for example, to the intercultural relations of the USA (TRAP = 9; TRNAP = 52), Canada (TRAP = 7; TRNAP = 32), Brazil (TRAP = 3; TRNAP = 7), to the multicultural relations of the USA (TRAP = 0; TRNAP = 3), Canada (TRAP = 0; TRNAP = 4) and to the transcultural relations of the USA (TRAP = 0; TRNAP = 28) and of Canada (TRAP = 3; TRNAP = 17) in the FFL textbooks. There are several reasons that could explain these differences. One of them is that the target textbooks are international and, because of this, that they are expected to address relations of human activity and of the natural environment existing not only in American countries but also in geographical places throughout the world. In addition, since these textbooks have been published by European publishers, they are also expected to contain an important number of instances of intercultural, multicultural and transcultural relations revolving around European countries. Some of these instances are supposed to involve European countries and their overseas territories and European countries and their former colonial territories. The latter could perhaps explain the big differences between TRAP and TRNAP in the figures referring to Canada and to the USA.

Based on the findings discussed above, the following pedagogical implication will be put forward. When willing to use international EFL and FFL textbooks to teach EFL and FFL in programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal with the American dimension of cultural content, EFL and FFL teaching professionals would need to analyse, first, the amount of inter-American cultural content in these textbooks, second, the types of this content and, third, its complexity. As explained in the introduction, some of the reasons for dealing with this dimension in these programs were globalisation in the Americas, the content of curricula, the

acquisition of knowledge that is needed to develop intercultural competence and the need to cater for learners' instrumental and integrative orientations. It is believed that examining, firstly, the amount of inter-American cultural content of the textbooks in question would make it possible to see whether these textbooks have sufficient content to address issues concerning these reasons, or if they need to be carefully supplemented. Inspecting, secondly, the types of inter-American cultural content in the same textbooks would indicate which types of inter-American cultural relations would need to be added in case these textbooks needed to be supplemented: whether intercultural, multicultural, transcultural or more than one of them. Finally, analysing the complexity of this content would provide, firstly, information about the intensity of its presence in listening and reading texts. Indeed, as explained in the findings section, some of the texts under scrutiny may contain more than one type of inter-American cultural relation. Secondly, it would make it possible to identify which countries participate in the three types of inter-American cultural relations. This identification is considered to be important owing to the following reason.

When considering the need to supplement international EFL and FFL textbooks which are used in the EFL and the FFL programmes in question, it would be necessary to find out whether the learners' country of residence is involved in inter-American cultural relations. One of the reasons for this was presented in the second paragraph of this section. Another reason stems from Byram's (1997) *relational* aspect of knowledge of an interlocutor's country that was cited in the theoretical background and from the belief that knowledge of someone else's country would be relational even outside a communicative situation. Therefore, it would be interesting to see if this relational aspect of knowledge is present in instances of intercultural inter-American relations, multicultural inter-American relations and transcultural inter-American relations involving the learners' country of residence. An example of intercultural inter-American relations containing this relational element in an EFL context could be the comparison of recipes of popular food in the learners' country of residence with those of popular food in the USA, whereas in an FFL context this comparison could involve recipes of popular food in Haiti instead. An instance of multicultural inter-American relations including this relational element could consist in the comparison between the everyday life of people coming from the learners' country of residence in Ontario, Canada, in an EFL context or in Québec, Canada, in an FFL context and the learners' everyday life in their country of residence. An example of transcultural inter-American relations considering this relational element could involve the performance of the athletes coming from the learners' country of residence in the Pan American games that have recently taken place in Toronto in an EFL context or the comparison of cultural activities conducted in French in the learners' country of residence and in the rest of the Americas in an FFL context.

In relation to the second objective of this research, to observe whether there are examples of situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language or the French language in the target text, as shown in the findings section, there is one target text in which this happens in the EFL textbooks but none in the FFL textbooks. Nonetheless, it is considered that the inclusion of these situations in EFL and FFL programmes which deal with the American dimension of cultural content would be very useful as they would illustrate some of the reasons why this dimension could be included in these programmes: globalisation in the Americas, learners' instrumental and integrative orientation to learn the target language and the acquisition of intercultural competence. It could be argued, therefore, that the finding of the second objective reinforces the above-mentioned pedagogical implication: that EFL and FFL teaching professionals would need to analyse the amount, types and complexity of inter-American cultural content in international EFL and FFL textbooks when using these textbooks in EFL and in FFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal with the American dimension of cultural content with a view to finding out if, and how, these textbooks need to be supplemented.

7. Conclusion

This study concludes that the extent of the presence of inter-American content in the reading and listening text obtained from the target international EFL textbooks and from the FFL ones is not significant owing to the following reasons. First, some American countries are not present in these relations, some are but in fewer than five texts, and six American countries participate in inter-American cultural relations in five or more texts. Second, uneven distributions also apply to the types of inter-American cultural relations that occur in the texts under scrutiny: the number of texts that contain instances of multicultural inter-American relations is lower than the number of texts that have instances that reflect intercultural and transcultural ones. Third, the frequencies of the texts that contain inter-American cultural relations per country have proved to be statistically low in comparison with the frequencies of the texts that express relations involving American countries and non-American places per country. This paper has also revealed that one target text contains a situation in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the English language in the EFL textbooks but no texts contain situations in which subjects coming from or living in different American countries communicate using the French language in the FFL textbooks.

Considering all these findings, it was suggested that EFL and FFL teaching professionals analyse the amount, types and complexity of inter-American cultural content in international EFL and FFL textbooks when choosing to use these textbooks in EFL and in FFL programmes which are aimed at learners living in the Americas and which deal with the American dimension of cultural content to find out if, and how, these textbooks need to be supplemented.

As regards further research possibilities, the following will be suggested. It would be interesting to analyse the amount of inter-American cultural content in American EFL and FFL textbooks and in international textbooks and textbooks produced for local markets which are used to teach other foreign languages in the Americas. Indeed, it should be expected that comparing the findings of these studies with those of this paper would provide useful data to be considered in the process of conceiving foreign language teaching programmes that deal with the American dimension of cultural content.

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Investigating the use and perception of West African Pidgin English among West African university students in Northern Cyprus

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Abstract: This study sought to establish the usage of Pidgin English among University students from three West African countries studying in Eastern Mediterranean University, North Cyprus. A sample of 129 students from Nigeria, Cameroon, and Ghana was selected and surveyed to determine the use, importance, perception and attitude towards Pidgin English. Findings show that most respondents watch Pidgin English comedy video clips. They speak Pidgin English while conversing on mobile phones and they chat with Pidgin English. In addition, respondents' perception of Pidgin English was generally positive and a slew of respondents accedes that Pidgin English is important because it is a language with less grammatical rules and it connects West African students together abroad. Furthermore, we found that majority of them agreed that the language is underrated but easy to learn and it is worthy of international recognition.

Keywords: West Africa, West African Pidgin English, West African international students, North Cyprus

1. Introduction

West African Pidgin English has become a phenomenon over the years among different categories of West Africans (literate, non-literate, semi-literate). In addition, it has become a very important medium of communication and it has helped blur the multilingual and multiethnic lines among West African communities in and out of the geographical area. Meanwhile, West African students travel all over the world for educational purposes and the use of Pidgin English is irrefutable but how they use the language and their perception towards it remains something that requires explanation.

Over the years, studies across West Africa have tried to investigate the use, influence, function, perception and the attitudes of students towards Pidgin English especially in institutions of higher learning; (Abdullahi-Idiagbon 2010; Akande & Salami 2010; Amao 2012) in Nigeria, (Rupp 2013) in Ghana and (Neba et al. 2006) in Cameroon. All contributors to the use of Pidgin English among students in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, Cameroon and Ghana have emphasized the strength of the language especially for social interaction. Considering the aforesaid, it is ultimately important to make a collective investigation on a broader scale on the use of Pidgin English among West African students schooling abroad.

Report shows that there has been a massive influx of African students to universities abroad over the years. Only in UK, 66,000 African students (mostly West Africans) enrolled in various higher institution of learning in 2002 (Umar et al. 2013). Reports also show that one out of every 15 international students in the UK comes from Africa (Maringe & Carter 2007). In addition, it was also reported that aside China and Japan, the second largest continent (Africa) has more students schooling abroad at the undergraduate and post graduate level more than any other region (Dzvimbo 2003).

The main goal of the current study is to closely examine the use of West African Pidgin English¹ among West African students studying in North Cyprus. This study emanated from the observation that Pidgin English is spoken among West African students; mostly Nigerians and Cameroonians in North Cyprus. The author thinks that it is important to empirically investigate the use and perception of the language because in a multilingual milieu like North Cyprus where they find themselves, English and Turkish language dominates. However, a couple of reasons can be

1 West African Pidgin English is the combination of the varieties of Pidgin English language spoken in different regions in West Africa (Nigerian Pidgin English, Cameroonian Pidgin English, Ghanaian Pidgin English).

traced to why West African students speak Pidgin English. Like Alzayed has rightly said while discussing the preservation of student's native language in a multilingual society, he accedes that the language we speak in our home country is our identity therefore, people are generally appreciative of where they come from and they want to be seen different from others. What defines them are their ideas, traditions and practices. So, while they want to learn new ways of life, they also want to keep the original (Alzayed 2015).

This study is ultimately important because it is the first to investigate the use and perception of Pidgin English among West Africans Abroad. In this regard, this study will help stimulate and open up new discussions and generate significant scholarly attention to the use of the language abroad. Central to this study is the concentration on three countries; Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon. Peter & Wolf (2007) asserts that; "Pidgin English is not spoken by a sizeable portion of the population in any other West African country except those three" (Peter & Wolf 2007: 4). But most importantly, the three countries were chosen because of the context of the study. The study was conducted at Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus and as at the time it was conducted; international students from Nigeria, Cameroon and Ghana were more than other West African countries who are Pidgin English speakers. The main thrust and motivation of this study is the entirety of Amao's study on the use of Pidgin English among Osun State University Students and also what he highlighted about the strength of Pidgin English which is the ability to have all speakers of different languages communicate with a common language aside the lingua franca (Amao 2012).

The present study seeks to investigate and answer four research questions:

- RQ1: In respect to everyday activities in North Cyprus, how do West African students use Pidgin English language?
- RQ2: How important is Pidgin English to West African students studying in North Cyprus?
- RQ3: What are the perceptions of West African students studying in North Cyprus towards Pidgin English?
- RQ4: What are the attitudes of West African students studying in North Cyprus towards Pidgin English?

2. Overview of West African Pidgin English

West African Pidgin English emerged from the fusion of various African and European languages (English, French, German, and Portuguese) and it has presented itself as a unique language because it has mutually merged languages from two extremes (Bandia 1994; Dada 2007). Pidgin English originated during the West African Atlantic trade with Britain as one of the major players. Prior to that, as early as the 15th Century, British traders had already visited different parts of West Africa and in 17th century, African slaves were moved to the American and Caribbean coasts from West Africa to be used in the rum and sugarcane trades. Pidgin English was therein initiated because there was need for the hundreds of languages (African and European languages) to find a common ground for the exchange of information with a shared meaning. Consequently, West African countries such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Gambia and Ghana later adopted English language as their lingua franca (Vicente 2007).

The emergence of Pidgin English may have some other narratives but the dominant narrative, point of contact and the beginning of West African Pidgin English for many is the Atlantic slave trade in the 17th century. West African Scholars from each of the countries studied (Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana), have explicitly shared their point of contact. For Nigeria, the Nigerian Pidgin is believed to be the combination of a larger part of English and Nigerian local languages. The language is said to have emerged from the trade contact between the Portuguese and Nigerian

natives; hence the earlier version of the language contained some Portuguese words. The contemporary version of the Pidgin language is a fusion of the standard Nigerian English and other indigenous Nigerian languages (Chiluwa 2013; Abdullahi-Idiagbon 2010). In a recent study, Mensah asserts that there are two forms of Pidgin English in Nigeria; the Nigerian Pidgin (NP) and Pidgin English (PE). According to him, the Nigerian Pidgin has developed and overtime and it has undergone some linguistics refinement. Some of them are those spoken in Warri, Ajegunle, Ikom, Calabar, Port-Harcourt and Onitsha among others while Pidgin English is the kind spoken by Nigerians who can't read or write. It is mostly an attempt to manipulate the standard English language (Mensah 2011).

Ghanaian Pidgin English is considered to have emerged from the coming of immigrants from Nigeria (AbongoBrofo [Barracks Pidgin]), Liberia (Km Brofo [Km English]) and the people of the water (Nsumfo). The dominant narrative of the point of contact with Pidgin English for the Ghana people is the Nigerian trade that lasted up until 1969 in Ghana. Most of these traders were from the seaside particularly the Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo area. Another major contact with Pidgin English was in 1982 when millions of Ghanaians who were forced to leave Nigeria (Dako 2002). Huber posits that contrary to what scholars like Amaoko and Dako have said about the Ghanaian origin of Pidgin English (the Nigerian contact) which is dated around 1980's, the Ghanaian contact with Pidgin dates back to 1920's (Huber 1999).

Cameroon Pidgin English is believed to be traceable to 1472 when the riverine people of Cameroon had a close interaction with Europeans who were exploring West Africa at the time, the Portuguese came to Cameroon and they established a base in the riverine area. Thereafter, there was need for a common language between Cameroonians and the Portuguese settlers. Hence, the first Pidgin (Portuguese-based Pidgin) emerged in Cameroon as acclaimed by (Chumbow & Simo-Bobda 1995). Neba et al further expatiated on this, they said;

This pidginisation [sic] process continued with the coming of the Germans in 1884. The interaction of the Germans with the local population in the large plantations, coupled with the constant visits of British nationals, who were the main trade partners of the Germans, gradually led to the birth of Pidgin English (Neba, Chibaka, & Atindogbe 2006: 48-49).

Pidgin English in Cameroon became stable because as at the time Pidgin English emerged, the British were already in Nigeria and obviously the two countries share land borders. At the time, Germans employed a lot of British people to work in the plantations with Africans and this rapidly caused the reduction of Portuguese oriented Pidgin to an English-German oriented Pidgin. The Germans left Cameroon after the First World War and it led to the full development of English-based Pidgin. Pidgin English became readily stable because the only language spoken by foremen in the plantations was English. At the other end, Pidgin English was the only way natives could closely interact with their British masters. Today, Pidgin English has become remarkably diverse in major cities in the North, South and West regions of Cameroon (Neba et al. 2006; Abongdia 2014).

The perception and attitudes of people towards West African Pidgin English is one of the major points of interest of this study. On a global scale, Holm mentioned that Pidgin English was called broken English, nigger French, bastard Portuguese, Iskula (colic language) and Kombuistaaltje (cookhouse lingo) by the early generations because it was viewed as an adulteration of the original European languages. Holm further mentioned that in recent times, it has been revised by linguists that Pidgin English and creole languages are not the debased version of any international language but a new language that is formed by taking a larger part of an older language (Holm 2000). Holm's idea best explains Balogun's (2007) assertion in defense of Nigerian Pidgin English. Balogun states that overtime, Nigerian Pidgin English has been labeled irrelevant and it is has heightened the negative perception of the language by people. In his words, he posits that

[s]uch perceptions have culminated in a string of derogatory definition of Nigerian pidgin [sic] as a mark of bastardization of English. Nigerian pidgin [sic] has come to be understood as: ‘adulterated language’, ‘an inferior language’, ‘substandard and lesser language’, ‘a deviated language form’, ‘a marginal language’, ‘a bad language’, ‘a language with no history and no native’, among others (Balogun 2013: 91).

Akande & Salami (2010) also added that Pidgin English in Nigeria used to be seen as a language of the uneducated people but newer studies show that there is a growing population of speakers of Pidgin English among university students (Akande & Salami 2010). Nigerian Pidgin English exists among other over 500 languages in Nigeria and it is exceptionally widely received and used by a large number of Nigerian. The language is commonly used in higher institutions of learning mostly outside serious academic environment like classes, laboratory etc. It is however mostly used in the common room, kiosks, relaxation and gossips centers (Abdullahi-Idiagbon 2010).

Nigerian Pidgin English has gained more prominence and has been thoroughly studied more than any other West African Pidgin English language. To buttress this assertion, Faraclas (2004) accedes that Pidgin English is spoken fluently by half of the population. He added that with the increase among younger generations, there is every possibility that the speaking proportion would rise up to 70% to 80% among younger Nigerians when they become adults. On a larger scale, Faraclas also claims that there is no creole that has so many speakers like Nigerian Pidgin English in the whole wide world (Faraclas 2004).

In Ghana, perception and attitudes towards Pidgin English is quite different from that of Nigeria. Ghanaian Pidgin English has been rated low and has been relegated to an outer edge because it has been associated with illiterates and the less privileged. It exists in the midst of the 250 languages and dialects that are spoken in Ghana and in recent times, Twi is believed to be taking the place of Ghanaian lingua franca. In terms of widespread, Ghanaian Pidgin English is not as substantial as the Nigerian and Cameroonian Pidgin English. It has also been less studied unlike the others and its first comprehensive study was conducted by Huber Magnus in 1999 (Dako 2002).

Ghanaian Pidgin English has been categorized into two parts by Huber based on the social, economic and educational status of speakers. The two categories are uneducated Ghanaian Pidgin English or basilectal and educated/student Ghanaian Pidgin English or mesolectal/acrolectal (Huber 1995). The uneducated Ghanaian Pidgin English is mostly spoken among the uneducated and the student Pidgin English is spoken among students in secondary schools and higher institutions of learning where Standard English, Twi and Ga are also shared among them.

Student Pidgin English can be traced down to 1960's and 1970's particularly among students in multiethnic male secondary schools. The language emerged through the resistance of the prevalent nature of English language in the Ghanaian school system. The trend moved from secondary schools to universities (Stoller 1979). Ghanaian Student Pidgin English have been labeled a manly/masculine language or the language of the educated male elite because as earlier mentioned, it started in coastal male secondary schools where most of the students were from the upper middle class. It emerged at the time where Ghana was under the military rule and soldiers acted audaciously and in a hostile manner by speaking Pidgin English (Dako 2002). Interestingly, nothing much has changed after many years because according to Mahama & Adika in their recent study on Ghanaian English, Pidgin English is still being spoken by many young school leavers (Mahama 2012; Adika 2012).

Cameroon Pidgin English happens to exist among other 280 languages with two official languages (French and English). It is influential and it is believed to be a general language among people of different social classes, beliefs system, tribes and background. It is mostly spoken in social gatherings such as churches, marketplaces, railway stations, motor parks and streets. The language is active and present in everyday lives of the Cameroonian people and contrary to the

perception of Pidgin English in other West African countries, Cameroon Pidgin English is not labeled as a language of the uneducated. It is spoken and perceived to be the language of everyone, both the literates and non-literates (Abongdia 2014; Echu 2004; Mbangwana 1983).

2.1. West African Pidgin English and its derivations

As aforementioned, West African Pidgin English emerged from the fusion of African and European languages as attested to by many scholars (Özüorçun 2014; Bandia 1994; Vicente 2007; Rickford 2011). Languages like English, dialectic English language, French, Portuguese, West African languages (Twi, Yoruba, Itsekiri etc), Cariban chigoe are major players in West African Pidgin English. A good number of West African Pidgin English derivations have been labeled with a lot of uncertainties. According to Huber, the likeliest source for the word “*enty*” (negative question particle) is English; “*aint it?*” which may be used in asking questions (Huber 1999). The table below shows the historical origins of 10 West African Pidgin English words or phrase. They are used in at least two of the countries studied, e.g. *bra* (brother), a word used in Cameroon and Ghana for a male with the same parents as someone or a close friend.

Table 1: West African Pidgin English and its derivations*

SN	West African Pidgin English	Meaning	Derivation
1	Fufu	Starch food; boiled and pounded	West African languages, Twi, Yoruba et.c
2	Chigger	Chigoe	Cariban chigoe
3	Dash	Gratuity, to present	Portuguese
4	Chop	Eat; food	West African
5	Bubby-	Breast	Dialectic English language
6	Bra-	Brother; term of respect for elder male	Dialectic English language
7	Bobo	little boy	Vai
8	Boku	abundant/many	French (beaucoup)
9	Enty	Negative question particle	English (aint it?)
10	Chuck	Sharp, piece, thorn	Dialectic English language

*Adapted from (Huber 1999)

3. Data and methodology

This research focuses on the use of Pidgin English among West African students studying in Northern Cyprus. A university milieu was preferred because earlier studies have highlighted the prevalent use of Pidgin English among students in higher institutions of learning (Akande & Salami 2010; Stoller 1979; Amao 2012). Furthermore, this study was conducted in Eastern Mediterranean University, the biggest university in Northern Cyprus. It was deemed appropriate for this study because it has the highest number of international students among the ten other universities in North Cyprus. In 2015/2016 session, it had 20000 students from 106 different countries.

3.1. Participants and sample

For the present study, 129 West African students enrolled in Eastern Mediterranean University, participated in the study. For the careful selection of the sample, disproportionate stratification was employed because the sampling fractions of Nigerian and Cameroonian students were far more than the number of Ghanaian students chosen based on the availability in the institution. The sample is almost equally distributed between the sexes: 49.6% (64 men) and 50.4% (65 female). For

participants age group, 39.5% are between age group 20-24, 33.3% are between 25-29, 12.4% are between 15-19, 10.9% are between age group 30-34 and 3.9% are 35 and above. For respondents' nationality, 54.3% are Nigerians (70 students), 38.8% are Cameroonians (50 students) and 7.0% are Ghanaians (9 students). The summary of the demographic profile of study respondents shows that male and females were equally distributed, participants between the age group 20-24 were the highest and Nigerian participants were more than students of other nationalities.

3.2. *Data collection instrument*

The data collection instrument for the study was a 45 questions in-house questionnaire that was organized into six different categories to answer the four research questions. The first part of the questionnaire contained the demographic characteristics (sex, age and nationality). The second group of questions consists of background information on the use of West African Pidgin English. The third part of the questionnaire contained questions on the use of West African Pidgin English. The items in this section was based on personal usage of Pidgin English, traditional media inclined usage of Pidgin English and computer mediated communication inclined use of West African Pidgin English. All 15 statements were measured with five point Likert scale. The fourth part of the questionnaire contained questions on the importance of Pidgin English to West African students studying in North Cyprus. All five items were presented in five point Likert scale.

The fifth part of the questionnaire measured the perception of West African students towards Pidgin and all nine items were presented in five point Likert scale. Final part of the questionnaire contained questions on the attitudes of West African students towards Pidgin English. All nine items were also presented on five point Likert scale.

3.3. *Research Procedure*

Based on the data obtained from the survey of 129 West African students studying in Eastern Mediterranean university. Data was presented through a descriptive design. Frequencies and percentages was presented for the first and second section of the analysis. The third and fourth sections were presented in mean and standard deviation and finally, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there are any significant differences in respect to participants' perception and attitude towards Pidgin English between three groups (participants' nationality). All statistical analysis was carried out on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software 18.00.

4. **Findings**

A total of 129 West African students took part in this study. Table 2 shows the use of West African Pidgin English in everyday activities in North Cyprus.

Findings shown in Table 3 indicate three categories: personal Pidgin English usage, traditional media inclined usage and computer mediated communication inclined usage of West African Pidgin English. Likert scale was used at two point scales (Yes, No). Findings show that in the first category, 58.1% of respondents agree that they speak Pidgin English excellently. For the second category, 60.5% of the respondents agree that they watch Pidgin English Films. For the third category, respondents who watch Pidgin English comedy video clips were 74.4%. Those who speak Pidgin English when they converse on mobile phones were 66.7%. Respondents that read social media posts that are written in Pidgin English were 80.6% and finally, 65.9%. of the respondents' chat with Pidgin English on social media.

Table 2: Use of West African Pidgin English in North Cyprus

Statements	Frequency	%	Statements	Frequency	%
I always speak Pidgin English	55	42.6	I watch Pidgin English comedy video clips online	96	74.4
	74	57.4		33	25.6
I express myself better with Pidgin English	34	26.4	I stream Pidgin English based Television programs	33	25.6
	95	73.6		96	74.4
I speak Pidgin English excellently	75	58.1	I speak Pidgin English when I make phone calls	86	66.7
	54	41.9		43	33.3
I take notes in class with Pidgin English	13	10.1	I post on social media with Pidgin English	49	38.0
	116	89.9		80	62.0
I read online newspapers in Pidgin English	16	12.4	I read social media posts that are written in Pidgin English	104	80.6
	113	87.6		25	19.4
I read books online in Pidgin English	14	10.9	I chat with Pidgin English on social media e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram etc.	85	65.9
	115	89.1		44	34.1
I listen to online radio programs in Pidgin English	58	45.0	I read Pidgin English oriented websites	30	23.3
	71	55.0		99	76.7
I watch Pidgin English Films online	78	60.5	n=129		
	51	39.5			

Table 3: Importance of Pidgin English to West African students in North Cyprus

Statements	Frequency	%	Statements	Frequency	%
Pidgin English is very important to me because it helps me to communicate with other West Africans with another language other than English language	28	21.7	I prefer to speak Pidgin English at social gatherings instead of other sharable languages like standard English language, French or Turkish language.	21	16.3
	48	37.2		25	19.4
	21	16.3		28	21.7
	21	16.3		36	27.9
	11	8.5		19	14.7
Pidgin English is of extreme importance to me because it connects the hundreds of West African ethnic groups together	24	18.6	Pidgin English is of extreme importance to me because I can easily code switch to another language	19	14.7
	48	37.2		47	36.4
	29	22.5		31	24.0
	19	14.7		24	18.6
Pidgin English is of extreme importance to me because of less grammatical rules	9	7.0	8	6.2	n=129
	20	15.5			
	45	34.9			
	28	21.7			
	24	18.6			
	12	9.3			

Findings in Table 3 above indicate the importance of Pidgin English as language of social interaction among respondents. Likert was used at five-point scales ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Findings show that 37.2% agreed that Pidgin English is very important to them because it helps to communicate with other West Africans with another language other than English language. Respondents who agreed that Pidgin English is of extreme importance to them because it connects the hundreds of West African ethnic groups together were 37.2%. Those respondents agreed that Pidgin English is of extreme importance to them because of less grammatical rules were 34.9% and finally 36.4% of the respondents agreed that Pidgin English is of extreme importance to them because they can easily code switch to another language. The result shows that the responses that comes to the fore in respect to the importance of the language are because the language connects West African students together, it has less grammatical rules and it allows for easy code switching.

4.1. Respondents attitude and perception of West African Pidgin English

Perception and attitudes are two interconnected concepts apropos human behavior. However, there is a substantial difference between them. Perception is knowledge gained based on the formation of a concept while attitude which is an offshoot of perception, is basically a person's feelings, beliefs and bias to act in a certain way towards an issue or person. Considering the aforesaid, perception is measured in this study, based on respondents' viewpoint of Pidgin English while attitude is operationalized to measure respondents take on the adoption of more Pidgin English in their everyday lives.

Table 4: Perception of West African students studying in North Cyprus towards Pidgin English

Statements	Mean	Attitudes	Statements	Mean	Attitudes
Pidgin English is underrated	2.41	A	There are some persons that one shouldn't speak Pidgin English to	2.10	A
Pidgin English is easy to learn	2.21	A	Pidgin English makes my standard English bad	2.30	A
West African Pidgin English is worth to be recognized internationally	2.62	A	I feel offended when people speak to me at formal gatherings e.g. classroom	2.94	U
Pidgin English is a good language and it should be incorporated into the curriculum of pre-college schools in my country	3.29	U	Pidgin English is the language of the non-literates	3.26	U

n=129

Results shown in Table 4 indicate the means and attitudes of participants' perception of West African Pidgin English. Likert was used at five-point scales ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" to ascertain perception of respondents towards Pidgin English. Balci (2004) posits that values scale division is: 1=strongly agree, (1-1.79 SD) 2=agree, (1.80-2.59 D) 3=undecided, (2.60-3.39 U) 4=disagree (3.40-4.19 A) and 5= strongly disagree (4.20-5 SA) (Balci 2004). Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents agree that Pidgin English is easy to learn, it is underrated and the language is worth to be recognized internationally. They also agreed that Pidgin English makes their standard English weak and that there are some persons one should not speak Pidgin English to. In respect to respondents score on average, respondents who agreed that West African Pidgin English is worth to be recognized internationally scored higher than those who said Pidgin English is underrated. Participants who agreed that Pidgin English makes their standard English bad scored higher than those who agreed that the language is easy to learn and those who agreed that there are some persons that one shouldn't speak Pidgin English to.

Results shown in Table 5 below indicate the attitudes of the respondents towards Pidgin English. According to descriptive statistics, the last four items on the table shows the statements with the highest scores. This demonstrates that most of the participants accedes that they will like Pidgin English to be adopted as an official language in their respective countries (M= 3.23, SD=1.30). Participants who would like to read more Pidgin English-oriented websites were next, (M= 3.13, SD= 1.14). Those who would like to see more online newspapers in Pidgin English followed with (M= 2.99, SD=1.26) and finally those who would like to see more online books in Pidgin English with (M=3.05, SD= 1.18). Therefore, these four items come to the fore of

respondents' attitude to West African Pidgin English. Furthermore, participants who would like Pidgin English to be adopted as an official language in their country scored better on average than those who would like to read more Pidgin English oriented websites. Those who would like to see more online books in Pidgin English scored higher on average than those who would like to see more online newspapers in Pidgin English.

Table 5: Attitudes of West African students studying in North Cyprus towards Pidgin English

Statement	M	Std. Dev	Statement	M	Std. Dev.
I will like to see more Pidgin English Comedy Video clips	2.17	1.05	I will use Pidgin English based Facebook if launched	2.91	1.19
I will like to see more Pidgin English Films	2.60	1.11	I will like to see more online newspapers in Pidgin English	2.99	1.26
I will like more radio programs in Pidgin English	2.65	1.21	I will like to see more online books in Pidgin English	3.05	1.18
I will like to see more online television programs in Pidgin English	2.74	1.18	I will like to read more Pidgin English oriented websites	3.13	1.14
I think the quality of Pidgin English is bad compared to other languages e.g. English, French, Twi	2.81	1.19	I will like Pidgin English to be adopted as an official language in my country	3.23	1.30

n=129

4.2. Differentiations of respondents perception and attitude towards Pidgin English

One-way ANOVA was employed to assess the nationality differentiation of respondents perception of Pidgin English (see Table 6).

Table 6 shows the degrees of freedom, mean square, f value and most importantly the p value. The p value is typically proven to be significant if the colown sig. is less than or equal to 0.05. Result shows that "Pidgin English is the language of the non-literates" was found to be significant, $p = .021$. To determine the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups, mean graph was plotted and Ghanaian students recorded the lowest as Cameroonian students recorded the highest. This shows that the mean values were assessed higher for Cameroonian students more than others in respect to the viewpoint that Pidgin English is the language of the non-literates.

One-way ANOVA was also conducted to determine the nationality differentiation of respondents attitude towards Pidgin English. The table shows degrees of freedom, mean square, f value and most importantly the p value and the goal is to established as significant if the colown sig. is less than or equal to 0.05. Results shows that "I will like Pidgin English to be adopted as an official language in my country" was found to be significant, $p = .021$. To compare the mean scores for the different groups, means graph was plotted and result shows that Ghanaian students recorded the lowest as Cameroonian students recorded the highest. This proves that mean values were assessed higher for Cameroonian students more than others in respect to the adoption of Pidgin English as an official language in their different countries.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA for the differentiation of respondents perception of Pidgin English

	df	Mean square	f	p
Pidgin English is underrated	2	1.425	1.377	.256
	126	1.035		
	128			
Pidgin English is easy to learn	2	.143	.142	.868
	126	1.008		
	128			
West African pidgin is worth to be recognized internationally	2	1.730	1.407	.249
	126	1.230		
	128			
Pidgin English is a good language and it should be incorporated into the curriculum of pre college schools in my country	2	3.950	2.580	.080
	126	1.531		
	128			
There are some persons that one shouldnt speak Pidgin English to	2	.285	.244	.784
	126	1.168		
	128			
Pidgin English makes my standard English bad	2	.231	.150	.861
	126	1.546		
	128			
I feel offended when people speak to me at formal gatherings e.g classroom	2	2.521	1.569	.212
	126	1.607		
	128			
Pidgin English is the language of the non-literates	2	6.402	3.998	.021
	126	1.601		
	128			
The quality of pidgin English is bad when compared to other languages e.g English, French, Twi	2	.947	.669	.514
	126	1.415		
	128			

p < 0.05; p < 0.01

Table 7: One-way ANOVA for the differentiations of respondents attitudes towards Pidgin English

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I will like to see more online newspapers in Pidgin English	2 126 128	3.909 1.438	2.718	.070
I will like to see more online books in Pidgin English	2 126 128	2.165 1.392	1.555	.215
I will like more radio programs in Pidgin English	2 126 128	.798 1.474	.542	.583
I will like to see more online television programs in Pidgin English	2 126 128	1.533 1.381	1.110	.333
I will like to read more Pidgin English oriented websites	2 126 128	1.010 1.307	.772	.464
I will use Pidgin English based Facebook if launched	2 126 128	3.295 1.383	2.382	.097
I will like Pidgin English to be adopted as an official language in my country	2 126 128	6.380 1.605	3.975	.021
I will like to see more Pidgin English Films	2 126 128	.372 1.239	.300	.741
I will like to see more Pidgin English Comedy Video clips	2 126 128	2.560 1.088	2.352	.099

p < 0.05; p < 0.01

5. Conclusion and discussion of findings

The present study investigated the use of West African Pidgin English among West African students studying in North Cyprus. West African Pidgin English has a strong connection with student environment and a number of studies have highlighted these connections at different levels (Akande & Salami 2010; Rupp 2013; Neba, Chibaka, & Atindogbe 2006; Amao 2012).

Just as some of the findings of this study have shown, West African students use of Pidgin English in their everyday activities in North Cyprus. Most participants agreed that they speak Pidgin English excellently. In the effort to situate the results of this study to the context of the relevant literature, we found out that some of the findings of this study are consistent with earlier

studies that has inquired into university students use of Pidgin English in West African higher institutions of learning.

According to Amao in a study conducted on the use of Pidgin English as a medium of social discourse in two campuses at Osun State University (College of Science and Engineering Technology, Osogbo Campus and the College of Humanities and Culture, Ikire Campus), findings show that only a few respondents claim that they do not speak Pidgin English at all. He further mentioned that out of the significant population of Nigerian Pidgin English speakers in the university campuses, 28% and 30% respectively don't speak Nigerian Pidgin English fully. 56% and 52% are regular speakers of Nigerian Pidgin in both campuses (Amao 2012).

In the evaluation of the usage of West African Pidgin English, traditional media inclined usage of West African Pidgin English category reveals that most of the respondents watch Pidgin English Films online. For computer mediated communication inclined usage of West African Pidgin, most participants agree that they watch comedy video clips online, they speak Pidgin English when they make phone calls, they read social media posts that are written in Pidgin English and they chat with Pidgin English on social media e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram etc. When all uses of West African Pidgin English was evaluated, result shows that statements related to Internet-based social networking came to the fore of respondents use of Pidgin English. This is however the case because with the intervention of the new media, Internet-based communication has become an integral part of our everyday lives and people want to express themselves with the most suitable language while using these technologies.

West African Pidgin English is ultimately important in blurring the multilingual lines between West African students in North Cyprus. Like Akande puts it, the language plays a slew of significant communicative functions in the social lives of Nigerian students because of the inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic communication it enables (Akande & Salami 2010). Results of the present study shows that majority of participants agree that Pidgin English is important to them because it helps them to communicate with other West African students with another language other than English language. It is important because it connects the hundreds of West African ethnic groups together and because of less grammatical rules. Finally, majority of participants said it is also important because they can easily code switch to another language while speaking Pidgin English.

Considering that West African Pidgin English has always been perceived inferior and has been called a substandard language, the evaluation of the perceptions of West African students in North Cyprus towards Pidgin English shows that respondents gained a viewpoint that was characterized by affirmation towards the language. Most respondents think Pidgin English is underrated, they think it is easy to learn and they think it is worth to be recognized internationally. Although most of them disagreed with incorporating Pidgin English into the curriculum of pre-college schools in their countries. This finding is consistent with the findings of Akande & Salami (2010).

According to Akande & Salami (2010) in a study conducted at two universities in one of the two locations with a highest speaking rate of Nigerian Pidgin English (Lagos and Benin), they accede that with respect to student's attitude towards Pidgin English, most of the participants of the two universities studied (University of Lagos and University of Benin) do not have a positive attitude to the teaching of Nigerian Pidgin English. More than 75% of students from each of the two schools disagreed to the teaching of Nigerian Pidgin English language in Nigerian schools (Akande & Salami 2010). This present study reveals that majority of the participants disagreed with the incorporation of Pidgin English into the curriculum of pre-college schools in their respective countries. An in-depth look at the descriptive statistics showing frequency and percentages of this item indicates that the sum of participants who agreed was 31.4%, undecided was 25.3% and sum of those who disagreed was 43.6%.

Results establish that West African Pidgin is widely used by West African students studying in

North Cyprus but there is specificity to what they use the language for and what they think about the language. Result also suggests that respondents are generally positive towards West African Pidgin English.

Since this study is centered on understanding the use and perception of Pidgin English among West African students North Cyprus, further studies should take a step further to investigate and assess the influence of West African Pidgin English in North Cyprus because a careful observation based on this study shows that other students from other countries who have made friends with West Africans are seen to use some of the West African Pidgin English words. The most commonly used phrase is “how far” which means hey, how are you doing, what’s new or what is happening? This investigation could provide interesting results and new insights into the power of West African Pidgin English.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. Sex a) Male b) Female
2. Age group a) 15-19 b) 20-24 c) 25-29 d) 30-34 e) others (please specify)
3. Nationality a) Nigerian b) Cameroonian c) Ghanaian
4. When did you start speaking Pidgin English?
 - a) Childhood b) primary school c) secondary school d) North Cyprus e) others (please specify)
5. Where do you mostly speak Pidgin English in North Cyprus
 - a) Classroom b) Apartment c) social gathering d) everywhere e) others (please specify)
6. What class of people do you speak Pidgin English with in North Cyprus?
 - a) Friends b) Family c) All West Africans I meet d) All of the above e) Others (please specify)
7. If you are to grade how well you use Pidgin English in North Cyprus, what will you grade it?
 - a) Excellent b) Good c) Fair d) Poor e) Very Poor

USE OF PIDGIN ENGLISH

SN		Yes	No
8	I always speak Pidgin English		
9	I express myself better with Pidgin English		
10	I speak Pidgin English excellently		
11	I take notes in class with Pidgin English		
12	I read online newspapers in Pidgin English		
13	I read books online in Pidgin English		
14	I listen to online radio programs in Pidgin English		
15	I watch Pidgin English films online		
16	I watch Pidgin English comedy video clips		
17	I stream Pidgin English based Television programs		
18	I speak Pidgin English when I make phone calls		
19	I post on social media with Pidgin English		
20	I read social media posts that are written in Pidgin English		
21	I chat with Pidgin English on social media e.g. Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram etc		
22	I read Pidgin English oriented websites		

IMPORTANCE OF PIDGIN ENGLISH

Note: Answer question 24 as it applies to you

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23	Pidgin English is very important to me because it helps me to communicate with other west Africans with another language other than English language					
24	Pidgin English is of extreme importance to me because it connects the hundreds of West African ethnic groups together.					
25	Pidgin English is of extreme importance to me because of less grammatical rules					
26	I prefer to speak Pidgin English at social gatherings instead of other sharable languages like standard English language, French or Turkish language.					
27	Pidgin English is of extreme importance to me because I can easily code switch to another language					

Note: Answer question 36 as it applies to you

PERCEPTION OF WEST AFRICAN STUDENTS TOWARDS PIDGIN ENGLISH

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28	Pidgin English is underrated					
29	Pidgin English is easy to learn					
30	West African Pidgin English is worth to be formally recognized internationally					
31	Pidgin English is a good language and it should be incorporated into the curriculum of pre-college schools in my country					
32	There are some persons that one shouldn't speak Pidgin					

	English to					
33	Pidgin English makes my standard English bad					
34	I feel offended when people speak Pidgin English to me at formal gatherings e.g. classroom					
35	Pidgin English is a language of the non-literates					
36	The quality of Pidgin English is bad when compared to other languages e.g English, French, Twi					

ATTITUDES OF WEST AFRICAN STUDENTS TOWARDS PIDGIN ENGLISH

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37	I will like to see more online newspapers in Pidgin English					
38	I will like to see more online books in Pidgin English					
39	I will like more radio programs in Pidgin English to be available					
40	I will like to see more online television programs in Pidgin English					
41	I will like to read more Pidgin English oriented websites.					
42	I will use Pidgin English based Facebook if launched					
43	I will like Pidgin English to be adopted as an official language in my country					
44	I will like to see more Pidgin English films					
45	I will like to see more Pidgin English comedy video clips					

The dialectics between language and culture

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Abstract: This paper takes point of departure in the view that “No particular language or way of speaking has a privileged view of the world as it “really” is” (Romaine 1999: 20). Neither the structure of a language nor the way people speak about the world is given by nature; they are negotiated and constructed by language users. Language and language use reflect different conceptualizations of the world and are related to the culture in different communities. When children are born, they grow up as members of a linguistic community based on earlier members' conceptualizations and negotiations over time. They integrate the constructed linguistic items and their own conceptualizations and culture are influenced by the language and language use. Gradually, they themselves become part of the negotiations of language and new conceptualizations are handed down to new members. This means that language and culture are dialectic by nature. The aim of this paper is, within a societal dimension, to discuss the dialectic interplay between language and culture; how linguistic items emerge, what they reflect and what impact they have. This is done on the basis of constructivist ideas combined with ideas from the frameworks of Cultural Linguistics and Cultural Studies.

Keywords: language, culture, cognition, conceptualizations, (social) constructions.

1. Introduction

In a sequence of *El Botón de nácar* ('The pearl button'), a special type of documentary about the meaning of water and about the original people from the Chilean part of Patagonia, the filmmaker asks descendants from this area to translate different words from Spanish to Kawésqar, the original language from the area. At some point an interviewed woman is asked about the words for POLICE and GOD. The woman explains that they do not have words for these concepts; they do not need them. The example reflects an already known fact: many languages do not have words for concepts which are completely normal in other languages. Obviously, many similarities between languages can be identified, but the various languages in the world present a large variation, not only with regard to lexicon, but also with regard to grammar. Language reflects different conceptualizations of the world and is intertwined with different communities: worldviews, understandings, practices, etc., in short: culture.¹ This, however, does not mean that there is a one-to-one relationship between one nation and one culture. Janda (2008: 49) suggests that “the architecture of each language contains culturally specific features” and that “these include both lexical and grammatical characteristics”. Nevertheless, she explains, “The lexical characteristics are often the most obvious and tend to attract more attention” (Janda 2008: 49). I suggest that this is due the fact that lexemes as content elements introduce more substantial elements in a text: they form key constituents of the output-level understanding (see Harder 2007: 23). The examples put forward in this article are also lexical elements.²

The vocabularies of languages and their grammars are not given by nature, but are negotiated and constructed by language users. When children are born, they grow up as members of a

1 Janda (2008: 49) presents various examples of so-called culturally specific features that include both lexical and grammatical characteristics. See also Wardhaugh (2006: 225 ff.) for examples of differences in languages with regard to both lexicon and grammar.

2 The paper follows the view from cognitive linguistics that both lexical and grammatical units are meaningful (see for example Janda 2007: 53). However, they do not provide meaning in the same way, as only lexemes are content elements. The grammatical – or functional – elements are “purely procedural”, i.e. they do not add substance of their own. However, we would not have access to the substantial elements if it were not for the procedural elements” (Harder 2007: 23-24).

linguistic community based on earlier members' conceptualizations and negotiations over time. They integrate the linguistic items and their own conceptualizations and culture are influenced by the language. At the same time, they themselves become participants in the negotiations of language and language use and have influence on language and culture. Language provides people with categories used for expression of thoughts, so it is therefore natural to assume that thinking, to a certain extent, is influenced by the language. However, language users are not restricted to thinking with the existing categories as if the inventory of categories were a static system. On the contrary, they can adopt new categories and change or abandon existing ones. This is illustrated by the fact that languages constantly change and evolve.

Another aspect of language is how language users utilize the language to speak about “things” in the world: objects, human groups, acts, phenomena, etc. What some people frame as “an opportunity”, other people may frame as “a problem”, and what some people characterize as “natural”, other may characterize as “uncommon”. The ways in which people speak about “things” in the world are not given by nature. They reflect different understandings and worldviews and are related to specific communities etc.

In a description of the development of the semantic development of the concept of culture, Fink (1988) refers to it as a *hypercomplex* concept. As he puts it, “[e]veryone speaks about culture; but it is not that easy to know what it is people are speaking about, when they speak about culture” (Fink 1988: 11). For this reason, every time someone discusses culture, it is necessary to explain what is meant by the concept. In the present paper the notion of culture refers to shared understandings, values, worldview and practices in a community.

Culture is often associated with communities based on nationality, but common practices and understandings might be identified in other types of communities as well, such as in communities based on ethnicity, age, kinship, professions, and workplaces. Also, there are various understandings, values and practices in a community based on nationality.³ Two well-known approaches to culture are the functionalist approach based on an essentialist view of culture, and a constructivist approach based upon a complex concept of culture. Whereas the functionalist approach focuses on people's belonging to a more or less static national culture which makes people from one country different from people from other countries, the constructivist approach conceives of culture as dynamic and not the same for entire national groups. In this paper, the view on culture is constructivist.⁴

National languages are constructed through interactions between people. This means that language is negotiated and that an element of power exists to decide what concepts will be reflected through language. A national language reflects shared meanings, understandings etc., but this does not mean that everyone in a national community share the same values. However, as they live within a community and share the language, they commonly understand the meanings. Also, there might be more than one understanding related to a word, such as different connotations.

In this paper, the language-culture interplay does not particularly refer to national languages and cultures. One of the main points in Agar (1994) is that different understandings of the world/life not only occur between different languages, but also inside the same language. Agar (1994: 13-14) presents various personal experiences of how different ways of looking at things come to life in a common language. He also suggests that “misunderstandings that we usually associate with a

3 The idea that people from the same nation have much in common is widespread. Anderson (1983, 1991) examined the creation and global spread of “imagined communities” of nationality. According to Anderson (1991: 6), “the nation is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”.

4 For a critical discussion of the two approaches and the concept of culture in in academic and public discourses, see for example Cristoffani (2012).

foreign language happen inside the same language all the time” (Agar 1994: 14).⁵

The idea that language is influenced by culture, and culture is influenced by language can be referred to as a dialectical relationship. Exploring this interplay is relevant and important in order to understand human communication. The present paper is a theoretical contribution to discussions about the interplay and dialectic relationship between linguistic items and language use on the one hand and culture on the other hand. The main idea that the article aims to put forward is that ideas from Cultural Studies and Cultural Linguistics based on an explicit social constructionist view may be able to account for the dialectical relationship between language and culture. As the purpose of the article is to contribute to a theoretical discussion, rather than to systematically examine and uncover a specific area of the social world, the examples I discuss do not belong to a specific societal-cultural area; moreover, the analyses of the examples serve primarily illustrative purposes.

Two well-known approaches to culture are the functionalist approach based on an essentialist view of culture, and a constructivist approach based upon a complex concept of culture. Whereas the functionalist approach focuses on people's belonging to a more or less static national culture which makes people from one country different from people from other countries, the constructivist approach conceives of culture as dynamic and not the same for entire national groups. In this paper, the view on culture is constructivist.⁶

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 and 3 are dedicated to the theoretical approaches whose ideas about language and culture I will use in this paper, Cultural Studies and Cultural Linguistics. Section 4 is an outline of the scientific-theoretical foundations upon which the paper is based: social constructionism. In Section 5, I bring it all together analyzing examples linguistic items from various areas to illustrate the ideas discussed in the paper.

2. Cultural Studies

Back in 2001, Chris Barker and Dariusz Galasinski suggested that, for some time, Cultural Studies had played a pivotal role in the linguistic turn in the humanities and social sciences with scholars from this paradigm arguing that language is the central means and medium by which we understand the world and construct culture (Barker & Galasinski 2001: 1). According to Barker & Galasinski (2001: 1), “it is a core case of Cultural Studies that language does not mirror an independent object world but constructs and constitutes it”. This constructivist idea is shared by discourse analysts, and in fact Barker & Galasinski (2001) is a suggestion to forge dialog between Cultural Studies and critical discourse analysis (CDA)⁷ and bringing together capabilities from the two investigating culture and language.⁸ One of the pioneers in the field of Cultural Studies who also took an interest in language was Stuart Hall, according to whom (Hall 1997c: 18) culture is about shared meanings. He suggests that people who belong to the same culture share “broadly the same conceptual maps and thus make sense of or interpret the world in roughly similar ways” (Hall: 1997c: 18). Language is considered to play an important role in relation to culture. Language allows for the construction of meanings and the sustention of the dialog between participants which enables them to build up a culture of shared understandings and interpret the world in roughly the same ways because it operates on a representational system (Hall 1997b: 1). Hall (1997c: 17) uses the term *representation*

5 This happens in everyday life, but also in other contexts, such as in politics. Lakoff (2002), for example, analyzes the unconscious worldviews of liberals and conservatives, which give rise to talking past each other with little understanding much of the time (Lakoff 2002: 12).

6 For a critical discussion of the two approaches and the concept of culture in in academic and public discourses, see for example Cristoffani (2012).

7 See for example Fairclough (1989, 1992).

8 In a more recent publication, Chris Barker offers “a comprehensive account of [C]ultural [S]tudies, including summaries and discussions of its main arguments and substantive sites of intellectual enquiry” (Barker 2012: 3). Cultural Studies is a broad area, but this work stresses “that version of [C]ultural [S]tudies which places language at its heart” (Barker 2012: 4).

to refer to “the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language”. In this process, there are two systems of representation involved. The first one is the conceptualization system. Through this system all sorts of objects, people and events are correlated with a set of concepts (Hall 1997c: 17). This “enables human beings to give meaning to the world by constructing a set of correspondences between things, people, objects, events, abstract ideas, etc., and our system of concepts, our conceptual maps” (Hall 1997c: 19). According to Hall, human conceptualization is as much a cultural as it is an individual phenomenon. He argues that, although individuals interpret or make sense of the world in different ways, as individuals are unique, at the same time, groups of people that belong to the same culture broadly share the same conceptual maps and thus make sense of or interpret the world in roughly similar ways. This is why people are able to communicate (Hall 1997c: 18). Communication mainly occurs through a shared code: language. This is the second system of representation according to Hall (1997c: 18). Language represents the concepts and the conceptual relations between them and together they make up the meaning-systems of our culture (Hall 1997c: 18).⁹

3. Cultural Linguistics

Another framework with interest in the relationship between language and culture is Cultural Linguistics. This explores the relationship between language, culture and conceptualization from an explicitly cognitivist vantage point. Two pioneers of this framework are Gary Palmer and Farzad Sharifian. Palmer (1996: 4-5, Chapt. 4) describes Cultural Linguistics as a synthesis of Boasian linguistics, ethnosemantics and the ethnography of speaking. Boas (1966: 59), for example, stated that “language is one of the most important manifestations of mental life”. Cultural Linguistics has developed from Cognitive Linguistics (e.g. Langacker 1987 and Geeraerts & Cuyckens 2007) and connects culture and language to each other by means of cognition (e.g. Palmer 1996; Sharifian 2011, 2015). In recent years, Cultural Linguistics has been in a process of developing a theoretical framework that affords an integrated understanding of the notions of 'cognition' and 'culture', as these relate to language (Sharifian 2015: 476). This framework “proposes a view of cognition that has life at the level of culture, under the concept of *cultural cognition*” (Sharifian 2015: 476). The notion of cultural cognition embraces “the cultural knowledge that emerges from the interactions between members of a cultural group across time and space” (Sharifian 2015: 476). Like Stuart Hall, Sharifian (2011: 3) suggests that human conceptualization is as much a cultural as it is an individual phenomenon. Cultural Linguistics explores conceptualizations that have a cultural basis and are encoded in and communicated through features of human languages (Sharifian 2015: 473). This paper follows the idea that conceptualizations are always culturally based as they emerge throughout people's encounters with the world in their cultural environments. However, it may seem more interesting to identify and explain conceptualizations that are singular for specific communities. The idea that conceptualizations operate at a cultural level of cognition involves a description of them as being *distributed* across the minds constituting a cultural group (Sharifian 2011: 3-8, 2015: 477-479). Cultural conceptualizations are not equally shared by all the members of a group, but heterogeneously distributed. This means that essentialist and reductionist tendencies associated with the notion of culture are avoided (Sharifian 2015: 477). Sharifian (2011: 3) suggests that the members of cultural community continuously negotiate “templates” for their thought and behavior in exchanging their conceptual experiences. In the same lines, Sharifian (2015: 476) suggests that cultural cognition is dynamic as it is constantly being

⁹ I am aware that *language* to Hall and other scholars from Cultural Linguistics does not exclusively refer to the writing system and the spoken system of a language, but also to other items that express meaning. Hall (1997b: 19) speaks of for example *the language of fashion, the language of clothes* and *the language of traffic lights*. In the present paper, *language* is used in the narrow sense to refer to the writing system and the spoken system of a language and its use.

negotiated and renegotiated within and across the generations of the cultural group in question, also in response to the contact that members of that group have with other languages and cultures. This dynamic approach is in line with the constructivist approach to culture suggested earlier in the paper and elaborated in Section 4.

Sharifian (2011) addresses different types of cultural conceptualizations, such as schemas. He gives an account of various types of schemas that are often discussed in the literature (2011: 8-11), for example event schemas, role schemas and emotion schemas. The event schema is exemplified by events such as FUNERALS and WEDDING. For example, the Western-Christian schema of WEDDING usually includes subschemas of church ceremony and reception. Individuals from a different cultural background than the Western-Christian may have another schema of WEDDING. This means that the word *wedding* may evoke different schemas in individuals from different cultures. The role schema is about specific ideas of and expectations to roles, for example a mother or a teacher. The word *mother* for example evokes different schemas in different cultures, for example regarding obligations and responsibilities. In a similar vein, Holland & Quinn (1987: 4) use the term *cultural models* as “presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared by the members of a society and that play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behavior in it”. Addressing the topic of intercultural communication, Sharifian (2015: 485) suggests that individuals can have access to new conceptualizations as a result of living in a particular cultural environment or having interacted with speakers from other cultures.

Cultural Linguistics has contributed to investigations in various domains, such as World Englishes, second language learning, intercultural communication and analysis of political discourse in what is referred to as applied Cultural Linguistics. Regarding World Englishes, Cultural Linguistics approaches the exploration of varieties of English from the premise that “varieties of English may be distinct from each other when their respective cultural conceptualizations are taken into consideration” (Sharifian 2015: 483). As for second language learning, teaching a second language may require explaining cultural conceptualizations associated with features of the language to be learned (Palmer & Sharifian 2007: 3). In the field of intercultural communication, cultural conceptualizations are considered relevant in explorations of communication/miscommunication between individuals (Sharifian 2015: 485). In cultural-linguistic explorations of political discourses, such discourses are argued to be influenced by culture and entrenched in cultural conceptualizations (Sharifian 2015: 487).¹⁰

As pointed out in the introduction, it is important to remember that, in this paper the language-culture interplay does not particularly refer to national languages and cultures as different understandings of the world/life not only occur between different languages, but also inside the same language (see Agar (1994).

Another scholar who has addressed Cultural Linguistics is Laura Janda. According to Janda (2008: 49), cultural concepts are embedded in language, and all languages contain culturally specific features, both lexical and grammatical. She finds that every language meets the expressive needs of its speech community (Janda 2015: 52). This idea is also expressed in Boas (1966: 60-63), who, in relation to an earlier claim that the conciseness and clearness of thought of a people depend to a great extent upon their language, discusses the relation between language and thought. Boas (1966) does not agree that language blocks people from certain ways of thinking, but that, if certain forms of expressing do not exist in a language, this is because they are not required; however, they would develop in the moment they are needed. These ideas are in line with the constructionist view on language in the sense that linguistic items emerge through human interaction within a community.

10 For specific examples of studies in these areas, consult for example Palmer & Sharifian (2007), Sharifian (2011, 2013, 2015).

4. (Social) constructions

Conceptualizations of the world trigger categories, and the categories are labeled via lexemes. In other words, lexemes are linguistically constructed expressions for human thoughts. They are constructed socially among people, which means that language is not an objective reflection of the world.

This view on language is consistent with basic social constructivist ideas. It is well-known that social constructionism is a broad area and that it is approached in social science as well as in humanities within different areas such as political science, social psychology and education. According to Burr (1995: 2), there is no single description which would be adequate for all social constructionists. However, drawing on Gergen (1985), Burr (1995: 3-5) lists, a number of key points which are basic to social constructionism:¹¹

- 1) We have to take a critical stance towards our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world. The nature of the world cannot be revealed by observation. The categories with which we apprehend the world do not necessarily refer to real divisions.
- 2) The ways in which we commonly understand the world, the categories and concepts that we use, are historically and culturally specific.
- 3) Our understandings of the world are constructed between people in the course of social life.
- 4) Social constructions invite to social actions. Therefore, different constructions of the world bring with them different kinds of social action.¹²

There is variation within social constructionism in terms of how much attention is paid to language, depending on whether the main orientation is mainly sociological or mainly discursive.¹³ Since the aim of this paper is not to uncover a specific area in Society, but to illustrate the relation between language and culture at a more general level, our focus is specifically on language. The above-mentioned idea from Cultural Studies that “language does not mirror an independent object world but constructs and constitutes it” (Barker & Galasinski 2001: 1) is consistent with the assumptions put forward by Burr (1995). In the same lines, Hall (1997c: 25) suggest that “Things do no *mean*: we *construct* meaning, using representational systems”. He also suggests that

(...) it is not the material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. It is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to communicate about the world meaningfully to others. (Hall 1997b: 25).

This also holds for categories from nature, such as a stone, which obviously exists. Saying that STONE is socially constructed refers to the conceptualization of a stone in our mind and the subsequent construction of the word *stone*, the labeling of the category. According to Czarniawska-Joerges (1992: 34), “a stone exists independently of our cognition; but we enact it by a *cognitive bracketing*, by concentrating our attention on it. Thus 'called to life', or to our attention, the stone must be socially constructed with the help of the concept of a stone, its properties, and uses.”¹⁴

11 Both Burr (1995) and Gergen (1985) are psychologists, but these assumptions are so basic and general that they seem to be able to cover the area of social constructionism in general.

12 The reproduction of the assumption is here merely a summary.

13 A well-known example is Fairclough's discourse analysis, which emphasizes the important of language in social life (see for example Fairclough 2003).

14 Ecological psychologists call this *affordances* (see Reed 1997). Thanks to an anonymous peer reviewer for pointing this out to me.

Although the existence of some categories, such as categories that designate objects from the nature like *STONE*, may seem more obvious than others, it is not given by nature what will be conceptualized and labeled. In principle, there could be things out there that we have not called to life and thus not labeled. People also conceptualize “things” that are not physically “out there”, such as phenomena. For example, in earlier times, the concept of *RACISM* did not exist, although today it is a widespread belief that this phenomenon actually happens. Another example is the labeling of different historical periods, such as *The Renaissance*, *The Baroque* and *Romanticism*. These labels were not made during the periods, but afterwards in a categorization to describe a development in Society. That language does not mirror an independent object world is confirmed by the fact that categories are not the same in all languages. In the words of Romaine (1999: 20), “[n]o particular language or way of speaking has a privileged view of the world as it ”really” is. The world is not simply the way it is, but what we make of it through language.” Social constructionism has been accused of suggesting that “there is no reality”, but this is not the case. In the words of Gergen & Gergen (2004: 11), “[t]he important point is that whenever people define what “reality” is, they are always speaking from a cultural tradition”.

Some categories are not constructed on the basis of a previous conceptualization of something, but are direct results of people's inventions. Some very concrete examples are *CAR* or *WASHING MACHINE*. In these cases, the constructions and labels may emerge more or less simultaneously with the inventions themselves. Some of these categories exist by virtue of some constitutive rule systems, constructed socially in a society. D'Andrade (1984: 91) distinguishes between cultural categories for objects such as *TREE* and *STONE*, which exist whether or not they are labeled, and cultural categories such as *MARRIAGE* and *MONEY*, which are created by the social agreement that something counts as an entity solely by adherence to a constitutive rule systems that define them and without the ones they would not exist. Building on D'Andrade, who does not suggest a term for this type of phenomenon, I characterize categories such as *MARRIAGE* and *MONEY* as *institutionalized categories*. They are embedded directly in a part of society's system, for example the legal system.

If linguistic constructions are seen as reflections of conceptualizations of the world, it is relevant to ask the question “when does something become a linguistic category?” For something to have the possibility of being encoded linguistically, it must be conceptualized and considered important for at least a group of people that for some reason wants to be able to speak about it. This is because what someone conceives of as for example a phenomenon, others may not conceive of as such. The process is a negotiation process. The part that wants the linguistic construction of category to happen must enter a negotiation process and try to win it. Normally, the negotiations about new linguistic expressions and how to refer to things happen “naturally” among the members of a community over time, but, in some cases, such negotiations can be more “artificial” in the sense that categories can be imposed by authoritative participants in the negotiation. In Denmark, for example, in an effort to create more respect for low-status professions, it was decided to replace the titles of some of them.¹⁵ It is, however, difficult to change everyday language in this way, probably because the new words do not emerge through natural negotiation among people. It can also be questioned whether the shifting in terminology in this case is actually accompanied by a shift in the perception towards the professions.

Until now, our focus has been on the construction of categories, but the use of category labels is also relevant with regard to the relation between language and culture, as the use have consequences for people. Language and language use influence people's understanding of the world and their practices. The existence and the use of linguistic items, in this case lexical words, are

15 Examples are *renovationsmedarbejder* ('renovation employee') as a replacement for *skraldemand* ('dustman') and *rengøringsassistent* ('cleaning assistant') as a replacement for *rengøringsdame* ('cleaner')

constructed on the basis of culture, and they themselves influence people's culture: they are mutually constitutive. In the next section, I will show how a combination of the different theoretical approaches presented in this paper can be useful to account for the dialectic relation between language and culture.

5. Language and culture – conceptualization and construction

This section serves to illustrate the dialectic relationship between language and culture through ideas from Cultural Studies, Cultural Linguistics and social constructionism by means of selected examples. Some of the examples are lexemes from national languages, and some of them go across national languages.

5.1. Categories pertaining to gender

The first example I would like to put forward are gender-related categories. In the previous section, I suggested that the conceptualization of something and the subsequent construction of a label are about people's understanding and giving meaning to the world. Like the *STONE* category that we discussed earlier, the gender categories *MALE* and *FEMALE* may seem obvious, because of the distinct physiological differences, which are “real”. However, it is through the labeling that we give meaning to these categories (cf. Hall's 1997c concept of representation as “the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language”). It is no news that labels pertaining to gender are not only understood and used about physiological differences, but also about psychological differences between the two. It has been, and is being discussed, in parts of the world in modern history whether or not there are natural psychological differences between human males and females. The conceptualization of these categories as being different from each other has led to different possibilities and expectations and to different social roles in all parts of the world.¹⁶ Although men and women are still not treated equally, a historical flashback shows that the conceptualization of gender categories has changed, i.e. the cultural models/schemas have changed (cf. Holland & Quinn 1987: 4 and Sharifian 2011: 8-11). This is due to the fact that conceptualizations are cultural. In addition, male and female categories are conceived of differently in different communities (not only in national communities). People have different cultural models of the categories – not only across national boundaries, but also in the same place at different times. This example illustrates that the conceptualization of the categories, the linguistic construction of it, and the use of the label are related to culture. The culture in a community is reflected in the meaning of the categories, and at the same time the actual meanings influence the culture through interactions within a community. However, even though the relationship is dialectic, we are not dealing with an unbreakable circle. Societies develop and new meanings and practices are negotiated by social agents. The example is very illustrative of the basic assumptions of social constructionism presented by Burr (1995: 3.5): that we should have a critical stance towards our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world, that the categories and concept we use are historically and culturally specific, that our understandings of the world are constructed between people in the course of social life, and that different social constructions brings with them different kinds of social actions. Regarding the last assumption, the way the biological sexes are constructed socially as genders has consequences as it brings different possibilities and expectations to people. It is both important how the labels are used, and when they are made relevant. For example, they are sometimes used as explanations of behavior or even specific incidents. It goes without saying that the conceptualizations of the gender categories and the way these are expressed in language have consequences for the way individuals from the two sexes are met in different contexts.

16 It is worth mentioning that some languages lexically distinguish between the cultural and biological aspects of gender while others do not. For instance, English lexically distinguishes between *gender* and *sex*, while in Danish *køn* covers both aspects.

Through language people reproduce expectations to individuals based on gender membership.

A number of categories have been constructed from the more “basic” gender categories. In Danish, for example, the word *pigefnidder* has been constructed on the basis of a conceptualization of a certain behavioral phenomenon among girls. The lexeme *fnidder* refers to something like “small disputes and power struggles”, whereas *pige* means GIRL. The compound noun refers to a special kind of problem between girls which normally is associated with certain behavioral patterns and emotions, for example jealousy. If the same problem occurs among a group of boys, it is not conceived of in the same way, and Danish does not have a lexeme for this. In a similar vein, Danish has a word pranks made by boys – namely, *drengestreger* – but not a word for pranks made by girls. The cultural models of gender categories have consequences for both boys and girls on different occasions in the Danish society as they are not met on the same conditions and understandings of the individual child are lost. Other examples of categories constructed on the basis of gender are GENDER DISCRIMINATION and GENDER QUOTA. These categories are reflections of two competing characteristics of a culture: 1) that the genders are exposed to being treated differently, and 2) that it is a generalized idea that this is not acceptable. Presumably, cultures with a clear-cut division of labor between men and women do not have the concept for GENDER DISCRIMINATION and therefore not a label. GENDER QUOTA (and, to some extent, GENDER DISCRIMINATION) are examples of what I characterize as institutionalized categories, i.e. categories that have existence by virtue of some constitutive rule systems, constructed socially in a society (cf. reference to D'Andrade 1984: 91 in Section 4).

5.2. *Categories pertaining to ethnic identity*

Another example are categories based on nationality, ethnicity, etc., such as *second-generation immigrant*, a concept which refers to children of immigrants, who themselves are not immigrants. This notion transcends national borders and is lexicalized in other languages than English, such as Danish (*2. generationsindvandrere*), German (*Einwanderer der zweiten Generation*) and Spanish (*inmigrante de segunda generación*). Constructions of social categories such as gender categories or categories based on nationality or ethnicity are made because somebody identifies some specific characteristics of a group for example regarding some practices that they want to be able to make relevant for some reason.¹⁷ Sometimes the group is made relevant without an explicit reason. According to Potter & Wetherell (1987: 116), category membership is an important and pervasive part of people's discourse: “Pick up any newspaper and many stories will concern people who are described, evaluated and understood not in terms of any unique features of their biography but through their category membership.”

5.3 *Categories pertaining to legal systems*

Many of the institutionalized categories are categories connected to the legal system, for example crime categories. In a democratic society, legal categories are constructed through time on the basis of generally shared cultural values and moral. Like other categories, these have been constructed through negotiation over time. Consequently, they have undergone changes throughout the history of their existence (and some have disappeared while new ones have been introduced) and, thus, legal categories are not uniformly identical in all parts of the world (as the legal systems are not). Importantly, they are not given by nature, but by culture. A category such as TAX EVASION, for example, requires a tax system, which in itself forms part of a culture. The dialectics of legal categories is, on the one hand, that the categories are based on already existing values, and therefore

¹⁷ Baker et al. (2013) have made a corpus driven analysis of representations around the word *Muslim* in a word corpus of British newspaper articles. An analysis of noun collocates of *Muslim* found that the following categories were referenced: ethnic/national identity, characterizing/differentiating attributes, conflict, culture, religion, and group/organizations (Baker et al. 2013: 255).

form part of a culture and, on the other hand, that they themselves influence values and moral for the members who are born into the society in question because they tell people what is right and what is wrong. Another, more direct, set of consequences of this type are obviously the legal consequences.

English and Spanish both have lexemes for the phenomenon of a woman being killed because of her gender: *femicide* and *feminicidio*. The Spanish version was entered in Real Academia Española, the official institution in Spain responsible for regulating the Spanish language, in 2014, after Spain and other Hispanic countries had experienced a long period in which violence against women, often with fatal outcomes, committed by their partners. In an essay, the group According to Feminicidio.net, a website with the aims at raising awareness of femicide and the group behind it, “Murders of women need a linguistic and a political-legal category both in Spain and in other countries” (my translation).¹⁸ The group argues that the term is new in Spain, but that the people do not use it. This means that for something to be considered a phenomenon, it needs a linguistic construction, a word. In addition, the group wants a more direct institutionalization of the category. They want it to be reflected in the legislation as a crime category with legal consequences (<http://www.publico.es/sociedad/espana-mata-mujeres-mujeres-mito.html> 24/4 2015). The linguistic category and the legal category of the concept will reflect that this phenomenon is a problem in society and that society does not accept it. Otherwise it could be seen as a reflection of a culture that accepts this kind of act. If a language does not have a word for this phenomenon, it can be because the society in question does not experience the problem or because the Establishment does not conceive of it as a problem (which, in the case of non-recognition of femicide as a category, could be reflective of a non-democratic patriarchy). In other words, the linguistic construction or the absence of the linguistic construction is a reflection of a certain cultural model.

Legal categories can also have the function to exempt individuals from punishment or to reduce it. Examples of this are the institutionalized categories of CRIME OF PASSION and HONOR KILLING. The notion of honor is to a great extent a cultural phenomenon. In some cultures, the legal system exercises “understanding” of the homicide of a member of a family by other members, due to the perpetrators' belief that the victim has brought shame or dishonor upon the family. A concept as HONOR KILLING is linguistically coded in many languages even though it is not a category from the legal system of the societies where these languages “belong”. This is due to the fact that different societies do not exist isolated from other societies, but are in contiguity with each other.

5.4. *Diagnosis categories*

As the last example I will mention a specific type of categories, which crosses national boundaries and the actual status of which is an obvious reflection of a widespread culture in modern Society: the diagnosis-culture. Diagnosis-categories are constructions of diseases based on symptoms. Sets of symptoms have been grouped and labeled as diseases through history. Diagnoses are not constant, but develop over time and are constructed socially. Naturally, this does not mean that the symptoms are not real; it only means that the decision as to which symptoms in combination lead to a diagnosis, is negotiated and constructed socially. In addition, although many groups of symptoms are categorized in the same way in many parts of the world (for example as THE FLU or TONSILLITIS), they are not the same in every part of the world. Many diagnoses are institutionalized categories in the health system. An example is neurodevelopmental psychiatric disorders, for example ADHD). According to Conrad & Potter (2000: 561), psychiatric diagnoses are historically and culturally situated, and certain diagnostic categories appear and disappear over time. Medical categories such as ADHD, ANOREXIA, CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME, REPETITION STRAIN INJURY, FIBROMYALGIA, PMS, PTSD, and MCSD belong to a wide range of new medical categories that did not exist previously

18 <http://www.publico.es/sociedad/espana-mata-mujeres-mujeres-mito.html> 24/4 2015

(see Conrad & Potter (2000: 560). Disorders are identified with point of departure in a conceptualization of normality, which is culturally determined and not static (cf. Sharifian 2011: 3 regarding members of cultural communities negotiating 'templates' for their thought and behavior).¹⁹ The widespread diagnosis-culture is a reflection of a common understanding regarding feelings, behavior, etc. In the case of neurodevelopmental psychiatric disorders, the negotiation and the constructions are very concrete and observable. ADHD figures in ICD-10, which is the 10th revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD), a medical classification list by the WHO. The list contains codes for diseases, signs and symptoms, etc., and is revised from time to time. As such it is the result of negotiations. It is discussed why some many children today suffer from a neurodevelopmental psychiatric disorder (especially ADHD): is it because the diagnoses were not constructed earlier (but the children were the same), or because the world has changed? In any case, diagnoses are constructed on the basis of culture. This is one of the sides of the dialectic interplay between this type of category and culture. The other side is the direct consequences – positive and negative: getting a diagnosis of a neurodevelopmental psychiatric disorder gives (at least in many countries) direct access to help from the health system – but it also stigmatizes people.²⁰

6. Concluding remarks

The aim of this paper was to discuss the interplay between language and culture within a societal dimension, and to illustrate that the frameworks of Cultural Linguistics and Cultural Studies based on basic social constructionist ideas are useful to this purpose. The combination of the cognitive foundation and the constructivist view allows us to grasp the process from the very conceptualization of a category to the linguistic construction of it into a linguistic item. This process is related to culture as both conceptualization and construction is a cultural matter. As social constructionism not only focuses on construction of language, but also on the consequences of language use, this aspect can also be discussed within the topic of the relationship between language and culture. The interplay between language and culture is seen as dialectic as language, on the one hand, reflects culture, and, on the other hand, influences culture. Language and language use are seen as reflections of different conceptualizations of the world. Conceptualizations are culturally based as they emerge throughout people's encounters with the world in their cultural environments. As such, language is not an objective reflection of the world. National languages and their use reflect various conceptualizations, and conceptualizations and constructions can also be similar across national languages. The existence and the use of linguistic constructions influence worldview and as such culture, but not in the sense that they determine people's culture, as both language and culture are dynamic by nature.

My paper should be seen as a theoretical contribution to the discussion about the interplay between language and culture, and the discussed examples are from different areas and serve to substantiate the points put forward in the paper. I suggest that these points could serve as a theoretical basis for investigations within specific areas of Society, such as the relationship between legal categories and culture or categories from the social system and culture.²¹

19 In earlier times (and still in some places in the world), for example, homosexuality was considered an abnormal condition and, as such, a kind of disease.

20 For readers with special interest in the subject of diagnosis-culture, I would like to draw attention on an ongoing research project at the University of Aalborg, Denmark: "Diagnostic Culture: The experience, history and social representation of depression and ADHD" directed by Svend Brinkmann, see <http://www.communication.aau.dk/research/Research+Projects/dc>. See also Brinkmann (2016), which presents findings from this project.

21 McLaughlin (2009), for example, seeks to trace the development of the terms that have been used in British social work to identify the relationship between those who commission or provide services and those who are in receipt of those commissioned or provided services, including *client*, *customer*, *consumer* and *service user*. The article seeks to

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examine the different ways this relationship has been conceptualized and the implications of these conceptualizations for social work practice.

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Rerview of *Identity, Narrative and Metaphor. A Corpus-Based Cognitive Analysis of New Labour Discourse*

Emilie L'Hôte, *Identity, Narrative and Metaphor. A Corpus-Based Cognitive Analysis of New Labour Discourse*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, 305 pp., ISBN 978-1-137-42738-0. Hardback 63 lb.

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Emilie L'Hôte's book analyses the cognitive and statistical underpinnings of British Labour Party discourse as a key to its political success in 1997-2007 after more than 22 years in opposition. The scholarship is evidently inspired by the founders of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA), Norman Fairclough (2003: 13, 37) and Teun van Dijk (2009), whose reflections on Labour discourse gave an impetus to the work under consideration. At the same time, what makes L'Hôte's book unique is her quite successful endeavour to combine cognitive, CDA and statistical methods into a synergy, which she describes as "a corpus-based cognitive analysis of political discourse" (p. 49).

Established across three decades, CDA (Fairclough 1989, 1995, 2003, 2006 [1993]; van Dijk 1984, van Dijk 1993, 2008, 2009; Weiss & Wodak 2003; Wodak 1989, 2013) has won a large number of followers, which is perhaps motivated by its multidisciplinary nature (van Dijk 1998) and with the diversity of its principles and approaches. The author attempts to further inform it with cognitive theories and suggests reading the letter *C* in the CDA abbreviation as *Cognitive* (pp. 19-24). Having adopted this strategy, the author aims, on the one hand, to preserve the objective stance of discourse analysis (which is prone to ideological bias) and, on the other, to satisfy a long-standing want for a link between discourse and cognition. In this book L'Hôte makes use of a wide range of cognitive methods, such as cognitive theories of metaphor (e.g. Barcelona 2000; Gibbs 2006; Goatley 1997; Kövesces 2002; Lakoff & Johnson 1980), blending (Coulson 2006), mental spaces (Fauconnier 1985, 1997) and semantic frames (Fillmore 1982, 1994; Fillmore & Atkins 1992).

While the application of corpus methods is established in CDA, L'Hôte speaks of its "relatively slow integration" and emphasizes the need for quantitative accountability in relation to the size and composition of corpus data (p. 29). Similarly, she remarks that much of the pioneering work in cognitive linguistics lacks empirical grounding; consequently, "some of the conceptual metaphors established may not be as accurate as originally expected" (p. 30). In this book, L'Hôte applies WMatrix (an online tool for corpus analysis and comparison), frequency lists and keyness analysis in order to address "a need to go back to the materiality of the text" (p. 23) and thus gain a certain level of objectivity. The corpus consists of two parts. The first presents three political sub-corpora: New Labour 1994-2007 (NL), the Conservative Party of the same period (CL), and the Labour Party before 1994 (LP). The second part is composed of post-Blair era Labour and Conservative Party sub-corpora.

The scholarship demonstrates a clear-cut and carefully designed research procedure which includes the following stages.

In Part 1, the author deals with New Labour identity. As the author concludes, New Labour turned into "a political brand with a good name" as a consequence of the frequent occurrence of *Labour* (N) collocated with the epithet *new* (p. 79). New Labour is presented as an abstract entity rather than a group of members. In terms of mental spaces theory, this "provides the basis for a legitimization strategy that presents new Labour as a valid (pragmatic) value for the Labour role

defined in discourse” (p. 79). L’Hôte also discusses the disassociation of Labour from a series of negative political representations, analysed as “pathological stereotypes” i.e. the worst-case scenario that metonymically stands for the entire category, suggesting that the pathological variant is typical (Lakoff 2002: 311). Two pre-1994 Labour stereotypes, its “softness” concerning war (defense) and crime, and its “incompetence” in economic issues, are treated from the point of view of frequency and framing respectively, with a stress on two basic discourse strategies: Appropriation (p. 89) and Reciprocation (p. 113). The former is achieved by adopting and reframing concepts from an opposing model into Labour party discourse. For example, as the domains of business and economy become prominent in Labour party discourse, this defuses the effect of the negative stereotype of inefficiency and incompetence. The strategy of Reciprocation instead turns the stereotype against its initiator, e.g. when Tories themselves are featured as soft and incompetent. Both discursive strategies contribute to blurring traditional party lines with the consequence that the two metaphoric models of the Strict Father and the Nurturant Parent (Lakoff 2002: 65-142) become less relevant than before.

Part 2 shows that change acts an impetus for Labour Party discourse transformations. Internal change (change made by the party or the country) is made the synonym of *progress*. This occurs through New Labour’s demonisation of the past in British politics, contrasting the party both with Conservatives and pre-1994 Labour. In this context the metaphor POLITICS IS A JOURNEY represents the party’s journey towards better Labour through liberalization.

External change and in particular globalization, is viewed as inevitable, unpredictable, and impossible to argue against. This comprises the basic qualities of the metaphor GLOBALISATION IS INDEPENDENT ENTITY. The metaphor sets up globalisation as an agent of progress while at the same time its hostile side is also widely represented. External change as an engine of internal change in the country brings about what L’Hôte refers to as the “no-alternative” rhetoric of Labour. Through the identification of a recurrent use of a no-alternative strategy in her data, she adds empirical support to Mouffe’s (2009: 108-128) claim that New Labour seeks to create “politics without adversaries” (p. 209). In combining images of external and internal change, Labour presents its future as inevitable progress, while at the same time denying the possibility of any other type of change.

Labour after Blair (2007 till present) produces discourse that on the one hand demonstrates continuity, and on the other successfully manages to deviate from some of Blair’s visions of the Labour Party. The first tendency is evident, for example, from the decreased occurrence of the word *tough*, which paradoxically testifies to keeping up with the New Labour party line. As L’Hôte concludes, the stereotype of the tough Labour demonstrates stability in the mind of the public and therefore needs no further confirmation (p.226). The opposite tendency is revealed when Brown and Miliband distance the Labour from Blair’s globalist discourse, which promised never-ending progress for the country, on the one hand, and from the issue of war in Iraq, on the other. The idea of globalisation is substituted by the concept of “a world of shared global rules founded on shared global values” (p. 249). Concerning war in Iraq, after the global disavowal of Britain’s participation in it, L’Hôte features this Blair’s wrong choice at cognitive level: it is demonstrated as subjectively biased in the Mental Space built by *I thought* (p. 251).

The author also attempts to examine the new party strategies in multimodal texts (e.g. election posters and popular parodies) in terms of Blending Theory and mental airbrushing.

Blending proves to be an efficient tool for explaining the mental underpinnings of political popular parodies. As an example, L’Hôte considers a spoof poster, which illustrates public reaction to the Labour election strategy in 2010. This strategy was aimed at adapting Gordon Brown’s reputation for his short temper and aggression to his image of a hard politician that is ready for an open and even physical confrontation. The spoof poster shows Gordon Brown as a schoolyard bully addressing the words “Step Outside, Posh Boy” to David Cameron, his political opponent. The title

of the poster associates David Cameron with his upper-class background (*posh*), suggests his weakness and absence of appropriate experience (*boy*). L'Hôte models the situation as a blend resting on the conventional metaphor of COMPETITION AS A PHYSICAL CONFLICT. The blend is presented as the result of mapping British politics on the schoolyard fistfight between the pupils of different social backgrounds (p. 234).

Public reaction to political manipulations is also analysed as a kind of mental airbrushing. This term is associated with the computer trick of changing the images of politicians to make them look better or more beautiful in election posters to the extent that their natural features can be barely recognised. Mental airbrushing is considered as the means of manipulating public mind to conceal unpopular characteristics of a party and to show them to advantage. L'Hôte features such manipulation in the parody of "We can't go on like this" Conservative election poster. There, in Barack Obama's famous slogan "Change you can believe in" the word *change* is substituted by the word *airbrush* (p. 236). Combined with an image of photoshopped David Cameron this substitution directly questions the validity of the Conservatives as an effective power to change the country.

L'Hôte also concentrates on blurring the borderline between Lakoff's models of Nurturant Parent and Strict Father providing the political relevance of post-Blair Labour. She clearly demonstrates the bias towards a more Nurturant image, which makes Labour closer to their political counterparts (p. 257).

This obviously successful attempt to present a relevant corpus-based cognitive interpretation of a political discourse brings to the foreground a number of issues which will want clearing up in prospective studies.

The first concerns the effectiveness of corpus-based research in cognitive studies. Its great advantage (of scientific objectivity) is absolutely evident in case where cognitive metaphors and metaphoric models are 'demystified'. This may be considered a great leap for cognitive linguistics, but leaves unsolved the mechanisms of (e.g. nationally specific) associative thinking as a key process for creating new metaphors. As any other cognitive process (e.g. creating stereotypes in L'Hôte's argumentation involving Lipmann's theory (1960) [p.82]), it may be considered in terms of modeling or mapping the world.¹ This theory explains the way every culture programmes the image of the world in our heads. It is a kind of a conceptual or cultural matrix of the nation² that depends on the attitudes, biases, traditions, history, geographical position, current political and economic situation of a certain nation. As a cognitive structure it is presented as a set of logically connected domains (domain matrixes) or frames. Verbally, it is implemented in a national corpus. Consequently, such politically relevant concepts as CHANGE, GLOBALISM, CRISIS may be mapped and lexicalized differently. Similarly, in the world map, the choice of relevant source and target domains in metaphoric mappings is also stipulated by the tendency to "perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture" (Lipmann 1922: 81).

1 Karasik, Valadimir. 2004. *Yazykovoy krug: lichnost', konzepty, diskurs* [Linguistic circle: personality, concepts, discourse in the Russian language]. Moscow: Gnozis; Kubriakova, Elena S. 2004. *Yazyk i znaniye. Na puti polucheniya znaniy o yazyke. Chasti rechi s kognitivnoy točki zreniya. Rol' yazyla v poznanii mira* [Language and knowledge. On the way to receiving knowledge about language. Parts of speech in cognitive perspective. Role of language in comprehending the world in the Russian language]. Moscow: Yazyki slavjanskih kul'tur; Popova, Zinaida & Sternin, Iosiph. 2003. *Yazyk i nazional'naya kartina mira* [Language and national model of the world in the Russian language]. Voronezh; Serebrennikov, Boris (ed.). 1988. *Chelovecheskiy faktor v yazyke* [Human factor in language in the Russian language]. Moscow; Ter-Minasova, Svetlana. 2000. *Yazyk i kul'turnaya kommunikaziya* [Language and intercultural communication in the Russian language]. Moscow: Slovo.

2 Assman, Jan. 1998. *Moses the Egyptian*. Harvard University Press; Erll, Astrid & Nunning, Ansgar. 2005. Where Literature and Memory Meet: Towards a Systematic Approach to the Concepts of Memory used in Literary Studies. In Herbert Grabes (ed.) *Literature, Literary History and Cultural Memory*. Tübingen. 21. 261–294; Nora, Pierre. 1989. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire. In *Representations*. 26. 7–24; Whitehead A. *Memory*. Routledge, 2009.

On the other hand, quantitative (especially keyness) analyses of the corpus may produce quite predictable results when considered against the geopolitical situation, e.g. the prominence of war-related keywords *Kosovo*, *Saddam*, *terrorism*, *Taliban* etc. in the discourse of new Labour and Conservatives in 1994-2007 (p. 93).

Another issue pertains to such salient notions as “framing”, which is widely used in the book. Initially, the term is introduced in the sense of the seminal work of Fillmore (1982) as mental structures describing typical (experience-grounded) situations considered as a *system of participants*, their *roles*, *attributes* and *properties*. This view of the frame stipulates a clear-cut analysis procedure described by Fillmore (Fillmore 1994; Fillmore & Atkins 1992) and extended by Dirven & Verspoor (1997: 75–79). However, in the discussion that follows, the meaning of this term transforms from “framing” to “presentation under a certain angle” or “glossing”. For example, “As for remaining differences between new Labour and Conservative discourse, they may this time have to do with *framing*: While new Labour focuses on issues of justice ... and images of strength and “toughness” ..., the Conservatives emphasise discipline and punishment.” (p. 91).

The last arguable issue concerns L’Hôte’s decision to omit political personalities from her scope, which was obviously done for the sake of objectivity. However, Enkelmann (2013: 31-32) observes that “[a] charismatic person possesses power. It means that he/she influences the actions and thoughts of other people” [translation mine]. Other recent studies have emphasised the role of a personality in political discourse (Mondak 2010; Redlawsk & Lau 2006) and have considered linguistic (political) personality in its cognitive aspects (Karaulov 1988). The data suggest that a considerable portion of the party’s success belongs personally to Tony Blair. The heydays of New Labour between 1994 and 2007 will go down in history as Blair’s era; and not for nothing does his most characteristic stance grace the book cover. Consequently, tearing apart a successful party *identity* from the *personality* of its leader, his/her communicative potential and charisma, seems somewhat unnatural.

In conclusion, L’Hôte’s book represents a successful synergy of CDA, cognitive and corpus-based linguistics. Though it naturally leaves some issues in cognitive linguistics beyond its scope, it opens wide perspectives for further empirically supported and computer assisted research in cognitive theory of metaphor, blending and mental spaces.

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Review of *Teaching English Grammar to Speakers of Other Languages*

Eli Hinkel (ed.), *Teaching English Grammar to Speakers of Other Languages*,
Routledge, 2016.

Marie Møller Jensen, Aalborg University

This volume, edited by Professor Eli Hinkel, forms part of the Routledge ESL and Applied Linguistics Professional Series. It is aimed at students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels studying TESOL-related degrees as well as at practicing teachers and educators within the field. It adopts an engaging style which should appeal to a wide audience. It is very much concerned with providing practical advice and offers a range of materials, study questions and discussion points as well as lists of essential reading.

The volume contains 12 chapters distributed across three sections; principles and foundations of grammar teaching; strategies and techniques; and grammar for productive skills: speaking and writing.

Part one is concerned with the principles and foundations of grammar teaching and contains contributions from Marianne Celce-Murcia on “The importance of the discourse level in understanding and teaching English Grammar”, Sandra Lee McKay on “Teaching grammar: English as an international language”, Susan Conrad who investigates “Using corpus linguistics to improve the teaching of grammar”, Keith S. Folse who looks at “Grammar in student books vs. grammar that students need: which grammar to include, which grammar to omit” and finally Anne Burns who reports on “Functional approaches to teaching grammar in the second language classroom”. This part focuses on areas for instruction and different methodologies and, as we can see from the titles, the section covers a range of different approaches.

Chapter one (Celce-Murcia) describes a system for grammar teaching which departs in viewing language as discourse which is governed by contexts and purposes. The chapter is rich in examples and addresses how this approach to grammar teaching can be adapted to different levels of learners (from beginners to advanced). The different patterns which Celce-Murcia describes are to be seen as heuristics which learners can utilise in a number of ways. Furthermore, these different templates will also help learners achieve coherence and fluency. Chapter two (McKay) investigates how we can conceive of the notion of Standard English in an international context (English as an international language, EIL). After a brief survey of the current status of English, McKay presents several examples of activities which can be used to raise awareness of different aspects of variation in English to students of different proficiencies. The chapter ends with some discussion points which would prove useful for students of TESOL or similar as a way of further consolidating the points raised. Chapter three (Conrad) offers a brief introduction to corpus linguistics and describes how insights from corpora can inform grammar teaching, in particular with regards to content. At the end of her chapter, Conrad offers suggestions for how teachers can incorporate corpus linguistics into their own teaching practice and includes a brief list of corpora and software which may be useful. She also provides discussion points which would be useful for student teachers to reflect on. Chapter four (Folse) provides an overview of which grammar points are usually included in textbooks and encourages teachers to reflect on which grammar points to include and which to omit. Folse offers both sample activities and discussion points at the end of the chapter. The final chapter in this section, chapter five by Burns, adopts a functional approach and highlights Systemic Functional Grammar and the metafunctions of language suggested by Halliday. In this way, language learning and teaching is re-framed as the creation of meaning within a social context. The

chapter is rich in text examples which highlight the different discourse functions discussed and the chapter offers a range of discussion questions for student teachers which should enable them to use this approach to language teaching effectively in an L2 classroom.

Part two deals with strategies and techniques which can be used in the classroom and pays special attention to the implementation of teaching methodologies and underlying weighing of pros and cons of each approach. It consists of four chapters: “Grammar practice” by Penny Ur, “Grammar teaching as consciousness raising” by Rod Ellis, “12 principles of grammar instruction” by Jack C. Richards and Randi Reppen, and finally “Practical grammar teaching: grammar constructions and their relatives” by Eli Hinkel.

Chapter six (Ur) assesses grammar practice within different models of grammar teaching and the underlying learning theories. In the second part of the chapter, Ur focuses on the design of grammar practice activities and also provides discussion questions. Chapter seven (Ellis) focuses on types of consciousness in language learning (consciousness-as-noticing, consciousness-as-understanding, consciousness-as-control) and how these can be linked to different types of activities, which are richly exemplified. Chapter eight (Richards & Reppen) presents 12 principles for grammar instruction based on a view of grammar as both knowledge but also ability. The 12 points cover varied aspects of grammar teaching such as teaching awareness of differences between text types and written and spoken language over using corpora in grammar instruction to how to use student errors to inform teaching practice. Chapter nine (Hinkel) takes a practical view of grammar instruction and focuses on teaching academic writing from a construction grammar perspective. The chapter finishes by offering sample activities and ideas for teaching as well as discussion questions. Furthermore, the chapter includes two appendices with constructions and formulaic sequences for speaking and participating in meetings as well as for use in written academic English. These appendices would be very valuable to learners of English on all levels.

The final part contains three chapters which look at grammar for productive skills, focusing on speaking and writing. The contributors to this section are Michael J. McCarthy who discusses “Teaching grammar at the advanced level”, Dana R. Ferris who look at “Promoting grammar and language development in the writing class: why, what, how, and when” and Ken Hyland who provides suggestions for “Writing with attitude: conveying a stance in academic texts”. The chapters in this section highlight the importance of ensuring that learners acquire a high proficiency in grammar in order to strengthen their productive skills.

Chapter 10 (McCarthy) focuses on teaching grammar to advanced learners and attempts to establish what might constitute a syllabus at this level. He approaches this from the perspective of corpus linguistics and studies into spoken grammar from which he is able to draw several examples. Chapter 11 (Ferris) discusses why, what, how and when it is possible to integrate grammar and vocabulary instruction effectively into a writing class. The chapter is rich in examples and offers a list of discussion questions at the end, a sample mini lesson in an appendix and guidance for conducting a language self-study project (aimed at language learners rather than TESOL students). Finally, chapter 12 (Hyland) looks at how to convey stance in academic texts as many students are often advised to completely remove themselves from this type of writing. Hyland covers the use of hedges and first person pronouns as ways of conveying author attitudes in this particular style of writing. Again, the chapter features a range of tasks and examples as well as discussion questions for those wishing to reflect further on the topic covered in the chapter.