Degree Thesis 2
Master’s Level
Representations of culture in EIL

Cultural representation in Swedish EFL textbooks

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Subject/main field of study: English  
Course code: EN3071, English IV for Teacher Students, Upper secondary level  
Credits: 15 hec  
Date of examination: 2016-01-12

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The English language has become an international language and is globally used as a lingua franca. Therefore, there has been a shift in English-language education toward teaching English as an international language (EIL). Teaching from the EIL paradigm means that English is seen as an international language used in communication by people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As the approach to English-language education changes from the traditional native-speaker, target country context, so does the role of culture within English-language teaching. The aim of this thesis is to investigate and analyse cultural representations in two Swedish EFL textbooks used in upper-secondary school to see how they correspond with the EIL paradigm. This is done by focusing on the geographical origin of the cultural content as well as looking at what kinds of culture are represented in the textbooks. A content analysis of the textbooks is conducted, using Kachru’s Concentric Circles of English as the model for the analysis of the geographical origin. Horibe’s model of the three different kinds of culture in EIL is the model used for coding the second part of the analysis. The results of the analysis show that culture of target countries and “Culture as social custom” dominate the cultural content of the textbook. Thus, although there are some indications that the EIL paradigm has influenced the textbooks, the traditional approach to culture in language teaching still prevails in the analysed textbooks. Because of the relatively small sample included in the thesis, further studies need to be conducted in order to make conclusions regarding the Swedish context as a whole.

**Keywords:** English-language teaching, EIL, EFL-textbooks, content analysis, cultural content
Table of contents

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 1
   1.1 Aim........................................................................................................................................ 2

2. Background ...................................................................................................................................(2
   2.1 English language education in the Swedish upper secondary school ........................................ 3
   2.2 Culture in language pedagogy and foreign language education .............................................. 3
   2.3 Textbooks in foreign language education .................................................................................. 4
      2.3.1 Previous research on cultural representation in English language textbooks ....................... 5

3. Theoretical perspective ................................................................................................................... 6
   3.1 The EIL Paradigm .................................................................................................................... 6
      3.1.1 Kachru's Concentric Circles of English ............................................................................ 7
      Figure 1, Kachru's concentric circles (Kachru, 1989 p.128) ..................................................... 7
   3.2 Culture within the EIL paradigm – Horibe’s model .................................................................. 8

4. Method and material ....................................................................................................................... 9
   4.1 Material ................................................................................................................................... 9
      4.1.1 Presentation of the textbooks ............................................................................................. 9
   4.2 Model of analysis ..................................................................................................................... 10
      Table 1: Categories and codes based on Horibe’s model (Horibe, 2008 pp. 244-248) ................. 11
   4.3 Reliability ............................................................................................................................... 11
   4.4 Ethical Aspects ......................................................................................................................... 12

5. Results ........................................................................................................................................... 12
   5.1 Geographical Origin ................................................................................................................ 12
      5.1.1 Textbook 1, Blueprint A Version 2.0 ............................................................................... 13
      Table 2: Geographical origin Blueprint A Version 2.0 ............................................................ 13
      5.1.2 Textbook 2, Echo 5 Main Issues .................................................................................... 14
      Table 3: Geographical origin Echo 5 Main Issues .................................................................... 15
   5.2 Aspects of culture in EIL based on Horibe’s model .................................................................. 16
      5.2.1. Aspects of culture Blueprint A Version 2.0 ................................................................. 16
      Table 4, aspects of culture Blueprint A Version 2.0 ............................................................. 17
      5.2.2 Kinds of Culture in Echo 5 Main Issues ......................................................................... 18
      Table 5, Kinds of culture in Echo 5 Main Issues ..................................................................... 18

6. Discussion ..................................................................................................................................... 19
   6.1 Discussion of results ............................................................................................................... 19
   6.2 Limitations of the thesis ......................................................................................................... 21

7. Conclusion ................................................................................................................................... 22
   7.1 Suggestions for further studies .............................................................................................. 23

References .......................................................................................................................................... 24
1. Introduction

The English language has become an important part of the cross-cultural communication in an increasingly globalized world, particularly in business and academics. The spread of English across the world and its use as a lingua franca has made it difficult to classify different varieties of English. Thus, the international status of the language has prompted many researchers to argue that a new approach is needed in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) (Dröschel, 2011).

McKay (2003) argues that a more comprehensive approach to EFL teaching is required to include all the diversities of the English language. Likewise, Kramsch writes that traditional concepts such as “target cultures” and “native speakers” are becoming problematic within the frame of foreign language teaching (2013, p.2). The shift from traditional English-language Teaching (ELT) towards teaching English as an international language (EIL) can be seen in the Swedish national curriculum as well. In the curriculum from 2011, the formulations changed from “English-speaking countries” (Lpf 94) to “different contexts and parts of the world where English is used” (Skolverket, 2011a, p.54). The curriculum also states that students should be given the opportunity to learn about “the spread of English and its position in the world” (Skolverket, 2011a, p.54).

The shift towards teaching EIL also affects the cultural aspect of language teaching, which the Swedish National Agency of Education notes in their commentary material to the 2011 curriculum, where they point to the increased emphasis on students’ sociocultural and intercultural knowledge (Skolverket, 2011c). Thus, the notion of target cultures has become problematic (Kramsch, 2013). Horibe (2008) develops this further and writes that within the traditional ELT paradigm, students were supposed to adapt to, and learn about the target cultures of the English speaking countries. Furthermore, he writes that within the EIL paradigm, it is no longer appropriate that students should strive to conform to a conceived notion of the culture of a target country. Horibe does point out however, that even though traditional notions of target cultures are no longer applicable, culture still has an important role in language education (Horibe, 2008). In the same vein as McKay, Horibe argues that a new, comprehensive framework is needed in order to teach culture within the EIL paradigm. Based on the debate on culture in language teaching over the last three decades, he proposes a model of teaching culture that divides the cultural content in language teaching into three categories: “Culture as
social custom”, “Culture in the pragmatic sense” and “Culture in the semantic sense” (Horibe, 2008).

Horibe argues that it is very important to study what and whose culture is included in EIL teaching and several other researchers have emphasized how problematic it can be to teach culture in the foreign language classroom. Tornberg (2009) writes that teaching culture in a classroom environment can be problematic since the teacher risks giving an over-generalized and stereotypic presentation of other cultures, a consequence that may add to the notion of a “foreign culture” (Tornberg, 2009, p.71). Furthermore, Byram (2014) has noted that many teachers are not adequately prepared to teach the cultural aspect themselves, and hence, rely on the aid of textbooks and other teaching materials.

Since the 1990’s, it has been the teacher’s responsibility to evaluate the quality of teaching materials. Yet, studies have shown that many teachers do not have the time required to review textbooks and other teaching materials (Stridsman, 2014). Additionally, the results of my first degree thesis also revealed that although there are a substantial number of studies on the subject of cultural representations in EFL textbooks internationally, there were no comprehensive Swedish studies to be found (Wilhelmson, 2015). Therefore, it is important to study how culture is represented in Swedish upper secondary school EFL textbooks.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this thesis is to investigate and analyze how cultural representations in two commonly used EFL textbooks for Swedish upper secondary school correspond with the EIL paradigm. To achieve this, the following two research questions are posed:

• In terms of the international status of the English language, what geographical regions do the cultural representations in the two textbooks represent?

• In terms of Horibe’s framework of the cultural aspect of EIL teaching, how comprehensively do the cultural content in the textbooks represent the EIL paradigm?

2. Background

This section of the thesis presents a background on English-language education in Sweden as well as an overview on culture in English-language education. Additionally, a look at how
textbooks are used in language education and a short review of previous research on cultural representations in EFL-textbooks is presented.

2.1 English-language education in the Swedish upper secondary school

Since Sweden is a member of the EU, it is important to remember that international guidelines, such as The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), also have an influence on language education in Sweden. The Swedish national curriculum is directly linked to the CEFR (Skolverket, 2011c, p.1). The framework points to the growing internationalization of Europe and the world, and stresses that the cultural aspect of language education is an important aid in promoting democratic values and preventing xenophobia and ultra-nationalist movements within Europe (European Council, 2009).

The English language is part of our everyday life, and as is written in the curriculum, students will encounter it in many different aspects of their lives. The curriculum expresses the importance of the English language when it comes to creating international contacts and giving students the ability to understand and to view the world from different perspectives. To achieve this, the curriculum states the following: “Students should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge of living conditions, social issues and cultural features in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used” (Skolverket, 2011b, p.1). As mentioned earlier, the formulations had been changed in the new curriculum from “English-speaking countries” to “parts of the world where English is used”, which indicates that there has been a shift in Swedish English-language education towards viewing English as an international rather than a foreign language. Thus, the cultural content of English-language education should include cultures from all around the world where English is used (Skolverket, 2011b).

2.2 Culture in language pedagogy and foreign language education

In language pedagogy and the Swedish curriculum, the term culture is seen in a broad anthropological sense and includes everything from art to the values and expectations of individuals and groups of people (Skolverket, 2011c). Culture is thus a complex, comprehensive term and the cultural content of language education is meant to not only improve the students’ communicative competence, but also to achieve the overall educational aim of promoting democratic values (Skolverket, 2011a). This, however, has not always been the case in Swedish foreign language education.
Tornberg (2000) writes that since the idea that one nation equaled one culture was introduced by nationalists in the 19th century, culture has been taught as a fait accompli in Swedish foreign language education. Because of the changing reality of the world, Tornberg argues that culture should be seen as a process rather than a series of statistical facts that can be taught objectively. Tornberg also refers to the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis that has had a great influence on the teaching of culture in language pedagogy. The hypothesis points to the connection between language and culture and both Tornberg (2000) and Kramsch (1991) argue that culture and language should be viewed as indistinguishable concepts. However, Horibe (2008) argues that the internationalization of the English language has led to the fact that the role of culture within language education needs to be reevaluated since the English language is used beyond and across national and cultural borders.

Likewise, the Swedish National Agency for Education writes that it is important to acknowledge that English has become an international language and points out that language areas and cultures seldom correspond with national boundaries (Skolverket, 2011c). Horibe argues that since people from many different cultures and linguistic backgrounds use English to communicate with each other, teaching the culture of native-speaking countries is no longer sufficient. As previously mentioned, Horibe proposes a model of teaching culture that divides the cultural aspect of language education into three categories. A more detailed description of this model is presented in the theoretical background below.

### 2.3 Textbooks in foreign language education

The textbook is an important instrument used in English language education. Several researchers, including Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), and Ammert (2011), point to the influence of textbooks in foreign language education. Although the textbook might only be meant to be a teaching-resource, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) write that many teachers often expect the textbook to cover all aspects of language education.

One of these aspects is culture, an area in language teaching where the textbook plays an important role. Byram (2014) suggests that many language teachers are not sufficiently prepared to teach the cultural aspect of language education themselves. Thus, the textbook and other teaching materials will influence the education and, in Sweden, it is the teacher’s responsibility to ensure the quality of the material they use in their teaching. Therefore, the Swedish Agency of Education writes that knowledge of how to critically approach textbooks should be
included in teacher-training programs (Calderon & Sandström, 2015). Since the view of what and whose culture should be included in English-language education changed in the 2011 curriculum, it is especially interesting to see what and whose culture is represented in the textbooks. The following section presents a short overview of previous research on cultural representation in EFL textbooks.

2.3.1 Previous research on cultural representation in English language textbooks

Internationally, especially in Asia, several studies on cultural representations in EFL textbooks have been conducted. In a paper from 2011, Chen, Eslami and Shin studied cultural representations in seven series of internationally distributed EFL textbooks. Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, they found that the culture of English-speaking countries dominated in the textbooks. They also found that most of the cultural representations were knowledge-oriented, i.e. surface-oriented knowledge that did not require the students to make deeper reflections on the cultural material. Chen et al. (2011) conclude that these results may affect students’ skills in cross-cultural communication and they also refer to Kikuchi and Sakai’s (2009) study of demotivating factors in EFL-teaching (Chen et al., 2011 p.264). In their study, Kikuchi and Sakai conclude that learning materials are a demotivating factor in EFL-teaching, especially to less motivated students (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). Additionally, Chen et al. (2011) write that content that represents cultural references that are unfamiliar and hard for the students to relate to may be the reason why students are demotivated by learning materials.

Vettorel (2010) finds similar results in her study of 16 textbooks from an international/Italian educational context. Her study reveals that a majority of the cultural representations are from English-speaking countries’ contexts. Vettorel does, however, also find tendencies that imply a more international perspective in the textbooks.

In contrast to Vettorel and Chen et al.’s studies, the results of Munandar and Ulwiyah’s (2012) study of two Indonesian textbooks revealed that most of the cultural content of the textbooks included in their study represented Indonesian culture. However, Munandar and Ulwiyah also found that cultures of English-speaking countries were overrepresented in comparison to other cultures around the world. Furthermore, they found that the cultural content of target-countries was often over-generalized (Munandar & Ulwiyah, 2012).
3. Theoretical perspective

The theoretical perspective of the thesis is based on the EIL paradigm, i.e. the idea that English has become an international language and should be treated as such in the educational context. Additionally, this section of the thesis provides a more detailed presentation of Horibe’s (2008) model, which outlines the role of culture within the EIL paradigm, as well as a presentation of Kachru’s (1989) model of the Concentric Circles of English. Horibe and Kachru’s models will also compose the framework of the analysis.

3.1 The EIL Paradigm

Traditionally, English has been taught as a foreign language in Sweden, and the focus has been on English-speaking countries and a native-speaker context (Tornberg, 2000). However, as is written in the Swedish steering documents, English is considered an international language. As previously noted, it is written in the commentary material to the Swedish curriculum that English is used in many different contexts and in communication between non-native speakers with different first languages. It is also written in the curriculum that one of the educational aims of the subject is to make students aware of how the English language is used within global communication and how it is spread in the world (Skolverket, 2011a). Thus, ELT in Sweden has shifted towards teaching English as an international language and, therefore, it is interesting to study how culture is represented in textbooks from the perspective of the EIL paradigm.

In an article concerning the EIL paradigm and its implications to teachers, Sifakis (2004) writes that in real life communication in English between native and non-native speakers as well as between two non-native speakers, communication, comprehensibility and culture are the three key terms. He argues that, when teaching, and especially when teaching in the multicultural classroom, it is important to remember the students’ individuality. This way, it is possible to give them the opportunity to reflect on different varieties of English instead of striving for a norm, as is done in traditional native-speaker oriented education (Sifakis, 2004). It is thus important that students are given the opportunity to study and reflect on how the English language is used in the world, and Kachru’s (1989) model of the Concentric Circles, which was developed to describe how English is used worldwide, is presented below.
3.1.1 Kachru’s Concentric Circles of English

Kachru developed his Concentric Circles of English in the 1980’s. The model was developed to map the spread of the English language across the world and the variety of world Englishes (see Figure 1 below).

![Concentric Circles Diagram]

**Figure 1, Kachru’s concentric circles (Kachru, 1989 p.128)**

The model consists of three circles, the “Inner Circle” representing countries where English is the native language, e.g. Great Britain, the US and Australia. The “Outer Circle” consists of countries where English is used as a second language and many of these countries are former colonies, such as India and Tanzania. Finally, the “Expanding Circle” consists of countries where English is a foreign language, e.g. Sweden, Indonesia and Japan (Kachru, 1989). Since it was published, the model has received a great deal of attention and influenced the field of applied linguistics because of its usefulness as a tool to understand the presence of the English language in the world (Schmitz, 2014). However, the model has also received some criticism for not taking the linguistic and cultural diversity of most countries into consideration. The critics point to the fact that Kachru’s model does not account for the varieties of English dialects, and that “Inner Circle” countries have many citizens who do not have English as their
first language. Schmitz (2014) points out that this is a problem with most models as they are often limited in what they can convey since a certain amount of generalization is necessary. In order to answer the first research question to see what geographical regions are represented in the cultural content of the textbooks analyzed in this thesis, Kachru’s model will provide the framework for the analysis. Even though the criticism against Kachru’s model is valid, and certainly points to some issues with the model, the model is still applicable in this thesis since it is offers a descriptive overview of the different regions. However, the multicultural aspect of the cultural representations is also taken into consideration in the discussion of the results.

3.2 Culture within the EIL paradigm – Horibe’s model

Horibe (2008) writes that his model is an attempt to define the role of the cultural content in English language education in a world where English has reached the status of an international language. The model divides the cultural aspect of language teaching into three kinds: “Culture as a social custom”, “Culture in the pragmatic sense” and “Culture in the semantic sense”. The first category, “Culture as a social custom”, includes many of the aspects that people associate with the word culture such as the daily life and values of people and groups, social customs, traditions, celebrations, art and literature. The context and origin of the culture that is taught depends on the teaching situation and its purpose. Thus, the content may vary greatly between different situations (Horibe, 2008).

The second category, “Culture in the pragmatic sense”, refers to cultural choices when it comes to language, and includes norms of speaking, speech acts and conversational patterns. Just as with the first category, no particular culture is referred to and therefore it depends on the teaching situation what culture is to be included. Hirobe (2008) argues that the main purpose of teaching this category is to improve students’ ability to adapt to sociolinguistic norms and thereby, develop the students’ cross-cultural communicative skills. This category corresponds to the European framework’s aim that language teaching ought to provide an opportunity for the students to improve their cross-cultural communicative skills (European Council, 2009).

The last category, “Culture in the semantic sense”, is the only category that Horibe argues should be based on the native-speaker context. The category refers to how culture is imbedded in the semantic structure of the language, which is why Horibe writes that it is important that native-speaker English is the reference point. However, he points out that it is important that
students can reflect on differences between English and other languages, mainly their first language (Horibe, 2008).

4. Method and material

The method chosen to study cultural representations in textbooks is content analysis. Content analysis is a set of procedures in which the content of written data is systematically defined, summarized and reported (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The mode of procedure used in this thesis is based on the 11 steps of content analysis outlined by Cohen et al. (2007). In short, the process begins with determining the research aim and questions. Subsequently, the sample material is chosen from a predetermined population. The following steps include deciding the units of analysis as well as the model of analysis which will be used in coding and categorizing the data. Next, the data is coded and categorized, and finally the results are summarized, presented and discussed (Cohen et al., 2007). An elaboration on how the steps are applied in this thesis is presented in the following section.

4.1 Material

The sample studied in the thesis is two EFL-textbooks taken from the population of all upper secondary EFL textbooks used in Sweden. One of the textbooks was chosen on the basis that it is the best-selling English textbook series from LäroMedia, whose clients include most of the public schools in Sweden (Läromedia, personal communication, September 14, 2015). The other textbook chosen for the study was published more recently (2014). This makes the comparison between the two textbooks more interesting. In order to make the comparison relevant, both textbooks are used in the English 5 course of the college preparatory programs. English 5 is the first English course in Swedish upper secondary school, typically studied during the first year, although it may vary between different programs.

4.1.1 Presentation of the textbooks

The first textbook chosen for the thesis is Blueprint A Version 2.0 from Liber and it is written by Christer Lundfall, Jeanette Clayton and Ralf Nyström. The textbook is part of the Blueprint series, one of the bestselling textbook series in Sweden and this version, which is the most recent publication of the textbook, was published in 2007. The publisher describes it as an “all-in-one” textbook, and it is designed to have an approach to language learning that is similar to the student’s first language education (Liber, 2015). The curriculum in Sweden
changed in 2011, and consequently, the textbook was published before the change of curriculum. Therefore, Echo 5 Main Issues, which was published in 2014 is included in the thesis as well.

Echo 5 Main Issues was written by Kevin Frato and it is part of the Echo Series from Natur & Kultur. According to the publisher and the author, the series is closely connected to the Swedish curriculum. The focuses of Echo 5 Main Issues are global issues and genre knowledge (Frato, 2014).

4.2 Model of analysis

Sándrová (2014) writes that the framework or models used to study, evaluate and analyse textbooks is of great importance for the outcome of the study since it needs to fit the purpose of the study to ensure that the researcher collects the right data and is not swamped by data that is not relevant to the aim. Therefore, a model of content analysis based on the study by Chen et al. (2011) is used to categorize and analyse the data since it has already proven to be successful. Each textbook is divided into units by theme, and the material is then coded and divided into categories in accordance with Cohen et al.’s outline and Chen et al.’s study. To answer the first research question, Kachru’s (1989) Concentric Circles of English are used as the model of analysis. Kachru’s model categorizes the world’s countries by their use of English and, therefore, the codes are the names of the countries represented in the unit. If, for example, one unit consists of a text about football hooliganism in Great Britain and a feature on football hooliganism in Argentina, the unit is coded with “Great Britain” and “Argentina”. The data is then categorized using Kachru’s model, so “Great Britain” falls under the “Inner Circle” category, while “Argentina” is in the “Expanding Circle” category. The data is subsequently quantified by assigning a category a full point each time it is the majority of a unit. If two categories are represented equally, as in the given example, they get half a point each.

A similar procedure is used to answer the second research question, although this time, Horibe’s (2008) division of the cultural content in EIL teaching is used as the model of analysis. The codes used are based on Horibe’s model and an overview of the codes and categories is presented in Table 1.
Table 1: Categories and codes based on Horibe’s model (Horibe, 2008 pp. 244-248)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture as social custom</th>
<th>Culture in the pragmatic sense</th>
<th>Culture in the semantic sense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditions</td>
<td>Conversational patterns</td>
<td>Semantic meaning of language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrations</td>
<td>Pragmatic norms in communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social issues</td>
<td>Speech acts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyday life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first category includes more codes than the second and third category, and this is because the first category is broader than the other categories. This does not, however, mean that this category is more important than the others when it comes to learning and educational aims. As Horibe (2008) points out, teaching culture in the pragmatic sense is an important part in improving the students’ skills in cross-cultural communication.

4.3 Reliability

As with any study, there are several issues that may affect the reliability of the results. Cohen et al. (2007) write that it is important that the researcher knows the intentions of the text he or she is studying. Since the sample in this study is two textbooks used in English education in Sweden, the pedagogical and educational intentions of the texts are evident. Generally, using content analysis as the research method to study textbooks ensures that the data is analysed through objective categories (Chen et al., 2011). Cohen et al. (2007) point out that larger units make the results of the analysis less reliable than smaller units. However, as pointed out by Weninger and Kiss (2013), focusing on smaller units such as words and phrases without looking at the context might change the meaning of the unit and therefore make the results less reliable. Hence, larger units are used in the study and to increase the reliability of the study, another teacher-student was appointed as second coder of the material. Cohen et al. (2007) write that even though reliability as replicability may be difficult to define in qualitative re-
search, inter-rater reliability, where two or more people observe the same material using the same framework, is one way to ensure the reliability of a qualitative analysis. Percent agreement, the basic model for calculating inter-rater reliability in content analysis, was used to calculate inter-rater agreement and the inter-rater reliability was calculated to 90 percent.

4.4 Ethical Aspects

According to the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the main principles of research integrity are honesty, reliability, objectivity and openness (European Science Foundation, 2011). Thus, it is important that the research is open, both in regard to the research process and the results. It is also important that the researcher remains honest throughout the process and that the researcher is independent, i.e. that no other interests than scientific affect the results of the study (European Science Foundation, 2011). It is therefore important to emphasize that the purpose of this thesis is to study cultural representations in the chosen textbooks. The study is by no means an evaluation of the textbooks as such, nor does it claim to evaluate the educational value of the textbooks. Furthermore, the code of conduct clearly states that credit should be given where credit is due (European Science Foundation 2011). Research never exists in a vacuum and this thesis is not an exception. The study is in many aspects a replication of Chen et. al’s (2011) article on cultural representations in EFL-textbooks and the analytical models are based on the work of Horibe (2008) and Kachru (1989).

5. Results

This section will present the results of the content analysis of the two textbooks. The results of the analysis of the geographical origin of the cultural content will be presented in the first subsection. Next, there is a presentation of the results of how comprehensively the cultural content of the EIL paradigm is represented in the textbooks.

5.1 Geographical Origin

The first subsection presents the results of the analysis that aims to answer the first research question: what geographical regions are represented in the cultural content of the textbooks. The results of the analysis of Blueprint A Version 2.0 are presented first followed by a presentation of the results of the second textbook, Echo 5 Main Issues. First, there is a short description of each textbook and the structure of the units.
5.1.1 Textbook 1, Blueprint A Version 2.0

Blueprint A Version 2.0 is meant to be an “all-in-one” textbook that is comprehensive yet easy for teachers to pick and choose material from that they want to work with (Liber, 2015). The chapters are divided by theme and have been used as the units of analysis in this thesis. Each unit typically includes a short excerpt from a novel by an English-speaking author, one or two texts from other sources, e.g. news articles, texts about celebrities etc. At the end of each chapter, there are a few exercises that require the students to work with reading comprehension, lexicon, grammar and discussions of the content of the texts. Each unit is coded with the name of the country/countries that were represented in the cultural content. The cultural content includes all the content that corresponds with any of the categories outlined by Horibe (2008).

Table 2 is meant to give an overview of the analysis and how each unit is coded and categorized according to Kachru’s (1989) model of the Concentric Circles of English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Chapter</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category/Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “On your own”</td>
<td>US, Australia</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “All that glitters”</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “What’s wonderful”</td>
<td>GBR, Ireland, Canada</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Human rights and wrongs”</td>
<td>US, Sweden, Ireland, GBR</td>
<td>Inner Circle + Expanding Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “Under construction”</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “Life on the edge”</td>
<td>US, Vanuatu, New Zealand</td>
<td>Inner Circle, Outer Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. “Virtual reality for real”</td>
<td>US, GBR</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. “Wages of hate”</td>
<td>US, South Africa¹</td>
<td>Inner Circle*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be observed in the table, representations of “Inner Circle” countries’ culture dominate the textbook. In fact, eighty-eight percent of the cultural content represents culture of “Inner

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¹ South Africa is not included in Kachru’s model because of the country’s sociolinguistic reality (Kachru, 1989). *However, because of the English speaking context in the text, it was decided that it was to be included it in the “Inner Circle” category this time.
Circle” origin. The “Outer Circle” and the “Expanding Circle” are represented only one time each, and only as parts of units, which means that they made up a total of six percent of the cultural content. The US is the country that is represented in most of the cultural content; it is represented in all chapters except for “What’s wonderful”. Moreover, all excerpts from novels are written by British and American authors.

5.1.2. Textbook 2, Echo 5 Main Issues

The second textbook, Echo 5 Main Issues has a different structure than Blueprint A in that short stories and excerpts from novels are not included in the main textbook but are sold separately in the “Short stories” component of the Echo 5 series. Apart from that, the structure of the Echo textbook is similar to the Blueprint textbook. Echo 5 Main Issues consists of ten chapters, ordered by theme. Each chapter, or unit, typically consists of one or two longer texts of different types. There are newspaper and magazine articles, fact sheets, a personal blog and chat-forum entries. After the reading of the text, students are tasked with lexicon and reading comprehension oriented assignments as well as a section called “writing skills” where the students are asked to produce texts that deal with the content of the unit. Additionally, there is an “explore further” section of each unit that suggests literature and films on the same theme as the chapter. The process of analysis is presented in Table 3 below.
Table 3: Geographical origin *Echo 5 Main Issues*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Chapter</th>
<th>Code/codes</th>
<th>Category/Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. “How Far is Too Far?”</td>
<td>Great Britain, Argentina</td>
<td>Inner Circle, Expanding Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “A World of Sci-Fi and Fantasy”</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Under Pressure”</td>
<td>US, “English speaking areas”</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “Family at any Cost?”</td>
<td>India, Canada</td>
<td>Inner Circle, Outer Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “Global Tourism”</td>
<td>US, Mexico</td>
<td>Inner Circle, Expanding Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. “The Rich and the Poor”</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Other²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. “Dreams and Role Models”</td>
<td>Singapore, US</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. “What is love”</td>
<td>“English speaking countries”</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. “Prejudice”</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>Inner Circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the cultural content of the *Echo* textbook reveals that “Inner Circle” countries dominates this textbook as well. Representations of “Inner Circle” countries’ culture make up seventy-five percent of the cultural content of the textbook. Although the cultural content representing the US and Great Britain is slightly more common than that of other “Inner Circle” countries, many of the countries in the “Inner Circle” category are represented. As can be noted in Table 3, there are several instances where no particular country is referred to. Instead, terms such as “English-speaking countries” or “English-speaking areas” are used (Frato, 2014). These terms are used in exercises that task the students to search for articles in newspapers and other media from “English-speaking areas/countries”. Thus, “English-speaking areas” could mean anywhere in the world as long as students can find the articles in English. However, since a categorization based on what articles the students choose to use is difficult to make, the category assigned to that chapter is based on the origin of the other cultural representations of that chapter.

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² South Africa is, as previously mentioned, not part of any of Kachru’s Circles because of the country’s complex sociolinguistic reality. In this textbook, this is referred to and discussed which is why it is categorized as “other” this time.
There is only one cultural representation of an “Outer Circle” country, India, which means that the “Outer Circle” category only made up five percent of the cultural content in the textbook. The “Expanding Circle” category, represented by Mexico and Argentina, made up ten percent of the cultural content.

As can be observed in the table, a fourth category, “other”, was included in the analysis. South Africa is, as previously mentioned, not part of any of Kachru’s Circles because of its sociolinguistic complexity, and since this is brought up and discussed in this textbook, the choice was made to categorize the unit on South Africa as “other” and that category makes up the remaining ten percent of the cultural content.

5.2 Aspects of culture in EIL based on Horibe’s model

This subsection presents the results of the analysis of how comprehensively the cultural content of EIL is represented in the textbooks. The analysis is based on Horibe’s (2008) model and the units are, just as in the analysis of the geographical origin, the chapters of the textbook.

5.2.1. Aspects of culture Blueprint A Version 2.0

The chapters of Blueprint A are divided by theme and deal with topics that are meant to be engaging to its teenage audience (Liber, 2015). Topics include movies, love, environmental- and social issues, ways of living and gender issues (Lundfall et al., 2007).

The coding and categorization of each unit is accounted for in Table 4 below. However, it is worth mentioning that the first category, “Culture as social custom”, is the only category that is represented in the main texts of each unit. The other categories, “Culture in the pragmatic sense” and “Culture in the semantic sense”, are represented in the tasks that the students are assigned to work with after they have read the texts.
Table 4, aspects of culture Blueprint A Version 2.0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Chapter</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category/Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “On Your Own”</td>
<td>Literature, social issues, traditions, music, everyday life, speech acts,</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the pragmatic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “All that Glitters”</td>
<td>Art, social issues, literature</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What’s Wonderful”</td>
<td>Everyday life, art, literature, history, traditions</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Human Rights and Wrongs”</td>
<td>Social issues, everyday life, history, semantic meanings</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the semantic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “Under Construction”</td>
<td>Social issues, everyday life, literature, semantic meanings</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the semantic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “Life on the Edge”</td>
<td>Ways of life, traditions, everyday life, literature</td>
<td>Culture as a social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. “Virtual Reality for Real”</td>
<td>Literature, social issues, ways of life, pragmatic norms in communication</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the pragmatic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. “Wages of Hate”</td>
<td>History, social issues, literature</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first category, “Culture as social custom” is represented in all chapters of the textbook. “Culture as social custom” is as previously mentioned a broad category, and as can be noted in Table 4, it includes a wide range of topics such as literature, art, ways of living and history. “Culture in the pragmatic sense” is represented on a few occasions in the textbook, often in exercises that ask the student to reflect on conversational patterns in language and exercises that introduce phrases, which are usually used in a particular context. An example of this can be seen in a speaking exercise that gives the students several options of phrases that are normally used as replies to apologies in an English-speaking context (Lundfall et al. 2007).

The third category, “Culture in the semantic sense” is found in few exercises in the textbook, often in a context that compares different features between the Swedish and English languages. One example from the Blueprint textbook is an exercise in the “Humans Rights and Wrongs” unit where the students are made aware of the fact that there are more words in the English language than in Swedish and that English often has two or three words where Swedish only has one. The students are presented with a Swedish word and two or three English translations which they are then asked to use in the correct context (Lundfall et al., 2007).
5.2.2 Kinds of Culture in *Echo 5 Main Issues*

The chapters of the *Echo* textbook deal with topics very similar to those of the *Blueprint* textbook and just as the title of the textbook indicates, the texts deal with issues of different varieties. There are texts about social issues such as peer pressure, prejudice and socioeconomic differences as well as personal and environmental issues. The coding and categorizations of the units are presented in Table 5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Chapter</th>
<th>Code/codes</th>
<th>Category/Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “The Eyes of the Bully”</td>
<td>Social Issues, semantic meaning, pragmatic norms in communication</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the pragmatic sense, Culture in the semantic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “How Far is Too Far?”</td>
<td>Social issues, traditions</td>
<td>Culture as a social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “A World of Sci-Fi and Fantasy”</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Under Pressure”</td>
<td>Social Issues, everyday life</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “Family at any Cost?”</td>
<td>Social Issues, pragmatic norms in communication</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the pragmatic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “Global Tourism”</td>
<td>Social Issues</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. “The Rich and the Poor”</td>
<td>Social Issues, pragmatic norms in communication</td>
<td>Culture as social custom, Culture in the pragmatic sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. “Dreams and Role Models”</td>
<td>Social Issues, art, history</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. “What is Love?”</td>
<td>Social Issues, literature</td>
<td>Culture as social custom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. “Prejudice”</td>
<td>Social Issues</td>
<td>Culture as a social custom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in the *Blueprint* textbook, the *Echo* textbook only has representations of the “Culture as social custom” category in the main texts, and consequently this category dominates the cultural content of the textbook. The other two categories are only represented in the exercises that follow each text. One example of a representation of the pragmatic aspect of language is an exercise from the seventh unit, the chapter about South Africa. The exercise challenges students to select the “South African” words in the text and then to explain them in English. The students are thus asked to reflect on cultural, linguistic differences within the English language. Another example of this can be found in the first unit, in an exercise on British and
American slang about how the same phrase can have different meanings in American and British English, e.g. “get pissed” (Frato, 2014). The third category, “Culture in the semantic sense”, is only represented in the first chapter, in an exercise that explains the use of a.m. and p.m. to write time in English (Frato, 2014).

6. Discussion
The first part of this section of the thesis is a discussion of the results of the analysis in light of previous research and the theoretical background. The results discussion also presents answers to the research questions. The aim of the thesis will partly be answered here and partly in the final section of the thesis, the conclusion. The second part of this section offers a discussion of the implementation of the method of analysis as well as the method of selecting data.

6.1 Discussion of results
The aim of this thesis is to study and analyze how cultural representations in two commonly used EFL textbooks for Swedish upper secondary school correspond with the EIL paradigm. To achieve this, two research questions were posed as the focus of the thesis.

The first research question aimed to investigate the geographical origin of the cultural representations in the textbook. Because of the globalization of the world and the importance of the English language as a lingua franca, many researchers, including McKay (2003), Kramsch (2013) and Horibe (2008), argue that a new approach is needed in English-language education, one that takes the status of the English language as an international language into consideration. Likewise, the Swedish steering documents also display a shift towards the EIL paradigm. The educational aim of the subject states that students should learn of “the spread of English and its position in the world” (Skolverket, 2011a, p.54).

The analysis of the two Swedish EFL textbooks shows that the “Inner Circle” countries of Kachru’s model of the different varieties of English in the world still dominate the cultural content of the textbooks. “Inner Circle” countries, where English is the first language, are represented in eighty-eight per cent of the cultural content in Blueprint A and seventy-five per cent of the cultural content in the Echo textbook. These results indicate that the textbooks still focus on the native-speaker context. Considering Kramsch’s (2013) argument that concepts such as “native-speakers” and “target countries” should no longer be the main focus of Eng-
lish-language education, the results also indicate that the focus of textbooks has not shifted towards a more international approach to English-language education.

The *Echo* textbook, which was published after the change of curriculum, does show a greater variety of countries represented in the cultural content than the older *Blueprint* textbook. This might indicate that the change in the curriculum from 2011 has had an effect on the content of textbooks, especially considering that the author explicitly states that *Echo 5* is written to correspond with the curriculum (Frato, 2014).

The differences between the textbooks are not that significant and the results of the analysis show a dominance of texts about English-speaking countries. However, one important aspect to remember is that the topics and themes that are represented in the cultural content of the textbooks often are of what could be considered universal issues. As can be seen in the results of the analysis of the second research question, the topics often describe social issues that many students can relate to, e.g. peer-pressure, prejudice and questions of identity. Both textbooks also discuss multi-cultural societies, and the writing tasks often include one part where students can write about the subject from their own experiences. Nevertheless, representations of “Inner Circle” countries dominate the cultural content of the textbooks and therefore, the results of the analysis are similar to many of the previous, international, studies.

Chen et al., (2011) conclude that some of the textbooks included in their study showed a tendency of moving towards a more international approach to English-language education and yet, “Inner Circle” countries dominated most of the cultural content of the textbooks. According to the authors, not teaching the diversity of contexts in which English is used may undermine the students’ ability to successfully communicate in international settings. Moreover, they write that unfamiliar cultural references may be a demotivating factor (Chen et al. 2011). This might not be the case in the Swedish textbooks since the topics rarely are specific to a certain context; on the contrary, they are often a nature that could be considered universal and should thus be easier for students to relate to regardless of their background. The problem might instead be that almost all examples are from an “Inner Circle” context and consequently, other areas of the world are neglected.

Both the CEFR and the Swedish steering documents state that language learning should promote the students’ intercultural and cross-cultural communicative competence, help prevent xenophobia and aid democratic values (European Council 2009; Skolverket, 2011a). Since
“Inner Circle” countries dominate the cultural content of the textbooks, these educational aims might be more difficult to achieve if these textbooks are used as the primary tool for teaching. Moreover, Horibe (2008) writes that cross-cultural competence is one of the most important reasons for teaching culture within the EIL paradigm and to achieve this, he especially points to the teaching of the pragmatic aspect of culture.

The second research question regarded what aspects of culture were represented in the cultural content of the textbooks. Horibe’s (2008) model was used as the framework for the analysis and the results show that the first category, “Culture as social custom” dominates the cultural content of the textbooks. The fact that the other categories, “Culture in the pragmatic sense”, and “Culture in the semantic sense” are only represented in some of the exercises indicates that these two categories are not considered as important as the first category in English-language education. Additionally, Horibe argues that “Culture in the pragmatic sense” is an important part of cross-cultural communication. He writes that it is important that students are taught to adapt to different sociolinguistic norms. Moreover, he points out that this does not only include the sociolinguistic norms of English-speaking countries. He points out that it could be any area or culture and that it depends on the context of that particular teaching situation (Horibe, 2008). The analysis of the textbooks shows that “Culture in the pragmatic sense” is only discussed in a target culture context, and thus, other contexts where students may use English, such as in communication with other non-native speakers, are neglected.

6.2 Limitations of the thesis
As with any study, this study has a few issues that inevitably affect the generalizability of the results. Content analysis is a useful method for a systematic analysis of the content of written texts (Cohen et al., 2007). In this thesis, the units of analysis were relatively large, which, on one hand, ensures that the cultural content is considered in the context in which it appears (Weninger & Kiss, 2013). However, larger units of analysis usually affect the reliability of the results as they leave more room for interpretation (Cohen et al., 2007). In order to prevent the sample material from being interpreted to fit a pre-ordained outcome, a second rater was asked to code and categorize the material and the inter-rater reliability was calculated to be 90 percent. Moreover, Sándrová (2014) writes that the framework used in the content analysis of EFL-textbooks is of great importance. All models have limitations since it is necessary to
make some generalizations in order to develop a model, which Schmitz (2014) points out. Thus, the limitations of the models will ultimately affect the results of the thesis as well.

The scope of the thesis also affects the generalizability of the results because of the small sample. The sample only consists of one textbook each from two series of textbooks, which is a small sample in comparison to some of the international studies, where several complete series of textbooks were studied (Chen et al., 2011; Vettorel, 2010).

7. Conclusion

To summarize, the results of the thesis suggest that the analyzed textbooks still focus on target-country representations of culture. “Inner Circle” countries dominate the cultural content of both textbooks, and the kind of culture represented is generally centered on “Culture as social custom”. The main texts of the units in the textbooks are often concerned with themes on social issues and everyday lives of teenagers and in the majority of the units these texts convey cultural representations of “Inner Circle” countries. These findings are similar to results of other studies on the cultural content of EFL-textbooks and show that even though there are some indications that English is starting to be viewed as an international language in education, countries where English is the first language remain the main focus of the textbooks. Horibe (2008) writes that in EIL pedagogy, teaching the pragmatic aspect of culture is important for the student’s cross-cultural communicative skills. Furthermore, he draws attention to the fact that it is not simply the norms and patterns of native speakers that students need to know in order to communicate successfully in English.

As Horibe (2008) and other researchers including McKay (2003), and Kramsch (2013) have pointed out, a new approach is needed in English-language teaching. The results of this thesis show that the two textbooks studied still mostly feature cultural representations of English-speaking countries. Since studies have shown that teachers are not adequately prepared to teach the cultural aspect of language education themselves, the content of textbooks will affect the results of the students’ education (Byram, 2014). Swedish students will most likely participate in communication in English with other non-native speakers from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The pedagogical implications of focusing on one aspect of the cultural content within the EIL pedagogy more than the others may thus be that students are not adequately prepared for the different scenarios in which cross-cultural communication
happens. Moreover, the aim of language teaching to aid democratic values and prevent xenophobia might be more difficult to achieve if cultures that do not represent countries where English is the first language are neglected. Given the current situation with the relative large amount of people seeking refuge in Sweden it is very important to acknowledge various cultures in the language classroom.

In conclusion, the analysis of the two textbooks shows that even though there is a slight indication that the cultural content of the new textbooks has a more international approach since the introduction of the new curriculum, the traditional target-country view of culture within English language education largely prevails. Additionally, the cultural content of the textbooks does not fully represent the EIL paradigm since one kind of culture, “Culture as social custom” dominates the cultural content of the textbooks, which can have a negative effect on the student’s ability to participate in cross-cultural communication.

7.1 Suggestions for further studies

The results of this study may suggest what cultural representations are included in Swedish EFL textbooks. However, in order to be able to draw more general conclusions of the Swedish context as a whole, further studies must be conducted where more textbooks are included. It would also be interesting to investigate what teachers and students think about the shift towards teaching English as an international language, and how the EIL paradigm is implemented in the Swedish classroom. Additionally, the results show that “Culture as social custom” dominates the cultural representations in the textbook, and, therefore, it would be interesting to study what teachers think of the importance of the other categories, “Culture in the pragmatic sense”, and “Culture in the semantic sense”, in language education.
References


