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The Case of Culturally-Oriented Speech Acts in Textbooks

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Applied Linguistics

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of Master of Arts

By

Fatma Elzahraa Abdelrahman Mohamed Abdelrahman

Under the supervision of Dr. Marilyn Plumlee

May 2017

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Culture: The Case of Culturally-Oriented Speech Acts in Textbooks**

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
The degree of Masters of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

has been approved by

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Abstract

The study explores issues related to the place of the target culture in the context of teaching English as a foreign/second language in Egypt. There are two research questions in this study. The first one is concerned with identifying the speech acts taught in the *Hello!* textbook studied by Egyptian students in all governmental and private schools of the third year of General Secondary Education. The second research question investigated the perceptions of governmental and private school teachers on teaching aspects of the target culture in their English classes in Egyptian schools.

The research is of a quantitative/qualitative nature. A critical analysis of the speech acts activities from the *Hello!* textbook has been provided and it was found that only six units out of 18 in the *Hello!* textbook contain information on speech acts. These six speech acts are: giving advice, making and responding to suggestions, expressing wishes and regrets, offer to help, giving and responding to warnings, and persuading. Using a teacher questionnaire, data from 50 participants teaching at governmental and private schools in Egypt has been collected. This data was supplemented by interviews with three teachers from each type of school for a total of six teachers. The results reported from the questionnaire are in the form of statistics while those reported from the interviews are in the form of descriptive analysis.

The results of the study show that the teaching of the target culture and pragmatics in ESL classes in Egypt is neglected due to many reasons, which include the lack of facilities and resources available to teachers, the use of a standardized high school exit exam which does not include questions on cultural aspects, and the resultant washback effect on teachers' and students' attitude toward the inutility of teaching cultural aspects.

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List of abbreviations

EFL: English as a foreign language

ELF: English as a lingua franca

ESL: English as a second language

L2: Second language

Dedicated to

My mom, Fatma Moussa, who has always shown me that compassion and going out of our way to help people, is one of the true purposes in life…

My loveliest nephew and nieces, Omar Yousri, Mariam Yousri, and Khadijah Mohamed, who have always made me feel so much better about everything in life…

Mariah J. Fairley, who has always been a dear friend and a good listener and advisor whenever I needed a shoulder to cry on throughout the last two years of my MA, and to her beautiful daughters Alenka Fairley, Farida Shady, and Leyli Shady, who are a clear reflection of the great mom they have…

One of my previous professors who has always doubted my abilities and did not attend to my student needs, who has always pushed me so many times to change this thesis topic because he thought it did not have potential and that what I have identified as a research problem was really nothing from his perspective…Thank you, you have challenged me to prove myself! And today I'm so proud my thesis has eventually come to being!

And last but not least, all women who have suffered at any point in this world because of men…

Acknowledgments

I am truly indebted to Dr. Marilyn Plumlee, my thesis advisor, who has always been a major source of support to me, not only throughout the thesis writing process, but also over the last two years of my MA TESOL program at the American University in Cairo. Dr. Plumlee, you have shown me the type of teacher I truly aspire to be. Your kindness, support, and encouragement will always be among the most beautiful memories I am taking out of my experience as an MA TESOL student at the AUC. You have believed in me and my capabilities even when at many points I myself was in big doubt, and you have given me the exact guidelines of what I should do with my students to help them develop. Coming to your office down and disappointed, but leaving happy with a pile of resourceful books to refer to was one of so many examples why I will never be able to thank you enough. I will never forget the countless hours you spent reading my thesis, providing the most useful feedback and comments, and that despite all your commitments and very heavy workload, I was always one of your top priorities. You did not only stand by my side academically but also psychologically when stress was taking over, making it a difficult challenge for me to keep moving forward. I will be grateful for my academic experience with you until the end of time. You did not just teach me so much about critical thinking, thesis writing and academia, but also a lot about life! Thank you so very much for everything, Dr. Plumlee!

I also would like to extend my special thanks and gratitude to my second reader, Dr. Reem Bassiouney, whose comments and feedback on my thesis have been so valuable. Dr. Bassiouney, you have challenged me at many points of my thesis writing process to think from another perspective and you have been available to me whenever I wanted to meet with you and discuss things. Thank you so very much!

In addition, I would like to thank my third reader, Dr. Atta Gebril, whose comments and feedback during my thesis defense have given me insights on some issues to be considered. Thanks very much, Dr. Gebril.

This thesis would have not come to being without my parent's consistent support. To my mother, Fatma Moussa, I can barely find the words to express my deep gratitude to the big love you have always shown and to all the prayers you have always said for me. I am always thankful for every thoughtful gesture you make to push me forward and help me attain my goals and dreams in life. I cannot forget that you were the one who helped me get the hard copy of the *Hello!* Textbook on which a big part of this thesis is built. I would have never been where I am today without having you always by my side. Thanks so much, mommy! I love you. And to my father, Abdelrahman Ezzat, you have always believed in me and my capabilities, and that with patience and perseverance I can achieve anything in life. You have always made me realize the importance of good education and that everyone should always strive to develop themselves academically and professionally. You have always believed in my potential and that my postgraduate studies should be an essential part of my educational and professional life as a teacher. I hope that today I am making you and mom proud. Thank you so very much for everything, dad!

I cannot forget to thank my brothers Yousri Abdelrahman and Mohamed Abdelrahman. Yousri, to me you have always been a very true manifestation of dedication and hard work. Your life path has shown me that if we put our will into something, we can always achieve it no matter what obstacles we have on our way. I cannot thank you enough for all the support you have given me, especially during the period before my thesis defense when I was overwhelmed with stress. Thanks so very much for everything you have ever done to help me stay strong! Mohamed, you have always asked about my progress of writing and even though TESOL is not your area of specialization, I truly found your insights and

advice useful at many points. The way you would let me vent out and voice my frustrations of the difficulties I have met through my journey of thesis writing have helped release my stress at points. Thank you very much, Mohamed.

Eman El-Feky, you have been an excellent example of what a good friend looks like. I will never forget the countless times you have called to check in on me, the numerous times you have dealt with my attitude because of the stress I was under, all the beautiful different ways you have provided support and expected nothing in return, but the one thing I would be most grateful for to you is helping me recruit teachers from private schools to be my participants in this research. The teachers I have met through you were one big reason this study now exists and for that I would never find the proper words to thank you enough. You will start writing your thesis soon, and I hope I can give you back as much as you did. Thanks so very much, my dear friend and school mate!

Last but not least, I would have never been able to reach the good number of governmental school teachers for this study without the amazing help of Mr. Ahmed El-Gendi, who totally went out of his way to help me reach the biggest number of teachers in and outside of Cairo. He has distributed the online questionnaire to as many social media groups as possible and has even called many teachers to urge them to participate. In addition, he has sent a soft copy of the questionnaire to one of his colleagues in a school outside of Cairo to print and distribute it among teachers. Mr. Ahmed, you have been a very good example of what kind of service and volunteering this world needs more of! Thank you so very much!

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Chapter One

Introduction

English is widely spoken in many different parts of the world and it is certainly the world's most widely used language (Wierzbicka, 2006). English is the majority language in the UK (British English), the USA (American English), Canada (Canadian English), and Australia (Australian English); it is one of the languages that is characterized by a non-monolithic nature due to the fact that there are many different varieties of English. By the same token, an attempt to define what the "English culture" is might be a challenging task. Wierzbicka (2006) states that English and its role in the modern world have become so wide-spread to the extent that trying to link it to any specific culture or way of living may be very problematic. Graddol (2006) stresses the fact that ELF advocates agree that ELF should reflect the needs of the increasing number of non-native speakers of English who use English to communicate with other non-native speakers of the language. Widdowson (1998: 245-6) also says that "there is a growing notion that we should be teaching English *as* an international language, rather than as a language attached to a specific culture from the English-speaking West" (as cited in Holliday, 2005: 8). Therefore, this calls for change from the traditional methodologies of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Unlike EFL, ELF focuses on using pragmatic strategies that are necessary for successful intercultural communication. In other words, the target model in this case is not to produce a native-like speaker but rather a fluent bilingual speaker (Graddol, 2006).

Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, Svartvik, and Crystal (1985) also define English as

pre-eminently the most international of languages. Though the mention of the language may at once remind us of England, on the one hand, or cause association with the might of the United States on the other, it carries less implication of political or cultural specificity than any other living tongue (16).

But at the same time the authors also argue for a shared English culture in one way or another. This means that

> the cultural neutrality of English must not be pressed too far. The literal or metaphorical use of such expressions as case law throughout the English-speaking world reflects a common heritage in our legal system; and allusions to or quotations from Shakespeare, the Authorized Version, Gray's Elegy, Mark Twain, a sea shanty, a Negro spiritual or a Beatles song—wittingly or not—testify similarly to a shared culture. The Continent means "continental Europe" as readily in America and even Australia and New Zealand as it does in Britain (Quirk et al., 1985: 16).

In light of the above definitions, if English does in fact reflect the specificities of various English speaking communities, then the definition of English culture might require some further explanation. However, the authors have not gone any further than this point. Crystal (2003a) argues that

> [w]ith over 60 political and cultural histories to consider, it is difficult to find safe generalizations about the range of social functions with which English has come to be identified. General statements about the structure of the language are somewhat easier to make (106).

> With the growing significance of English as a primary language in the modern world, there will always be a need to find a concrete answer to the question of whether there is a conflict between, on one hand, the fact that English is a language shared by many people belonging to many different backgrounds and, on the other hand, the view that English, like any other language, would entail certain cultural assumptions (Wierzbicka, 2006). Kachru (1985) refers to "Anglo" English which is the English of the "inner circle", what Crystal (2003b) also refers to as "the traditional bases of English, where it is the primary language: …the USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand" (60).

Some authors in the field of English as a second language have attempted to put the sub-elements of culture into categories. For example, Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) classify culture into four main categories: aesthetic, sociological, semantic, and pragmatic (sociolinguistic). The first one they refer to as culture with a capital C. This capital C culture refers for example to media, music, cinema, but most important of all, literature. The authors also state that in many cases these sub-categories of the capital C culture provide information on the sociological category of culture. The sociological feature of culture is referred to as the culture with a small c. This includes aspects like family organization and home lifestyles, work and leisure, and interpersonal relationships which is a very wide and broad area where only major points could be selected for examination and study when studying the language as a foreign language. The third category of culture is the semantic one which includes many semantic areas like food and clothes. Adaskou et al. (1990) describe these semantic areas as "culturally distinctive" (3) due to the fact that they may reveal a specific lifestyle. For example, one may not be able to learn the names of different meals unless he/she also learns about the main meal times and that is one reason that leads these semantic areas to differ from one English-speaking country to another. The last category relates to the pragmatic/sociolinguistic feature of culture. The authors propose that background knowledge in addition to social and paralinguistic skills contribute to successful communication in the target language. Further, in order for this successful communication to take place, other aspects would need to be taken into consideration as far as pragmatics is concerned, i.e. intonation patterns and relevant politeness strategies and norms.

The present study aims to focus on the fourth aspect of culture, namely, the pragmatic/sociolinguistic feature. To be more precise, the researcher's framework is the speech acts of the target language which is one of the most important elements that might be overlooked in the teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL). Zhao

and Throssell (2011) state that studying speech acts is one essential component of communicative competence that would help learners make use of the language appropriately. Speech act strategies are culturally-bound and expressing a particular speech act in a given language would probably be different from it in the learner's first language. Thus, in order for learners to be successful in real life situations, they need to utilize the social rules of the target culture whose language is studied (Turkan & Celik, 2007).

Teachers of ESL are a significantly important element in the learners' process of acquiring English. Language teachers should not only invest in the learners' linguistic competence but should also work on their pragmatic competence (Zhao & Throssell, 2011). In many cases, ESL teachers are not equipped with the resources that would allow them to teach such detailed cultural content appropriately. In addition, most textbooks tend to focus on the linguistic aspect of the language and overlook pragmatics, which is an equally important aspect.

Perceptions of ESL/EFL teachers on teaching the target culture in classrooms

Rostami (2016) studied the stance Iranian foreign language teachers and learners hold from exploring the target culture in foreign language classrooms. He used two versions of an attitude questionnaire, one for teachers and the other for learners, in addition to a semi-structured interview to investigate the extent to which Iranian language teachers and learners value the instruction of the target culture in English language teaching. The participants' responses have shown that both teachers and learners hold positive attitudes towards the teaching of culture in language classes. Teachers' responses to the interview questions were then analyzed and compared to those of the questionnaire and the findings show that teachers regard the teaching of culture as an important element in teaching the English language but they were also concerned about maintaining the Iranian culture. Learners have also favored the role of culture in language teaching but expressed a preference for studying it in the form

of dialogues and communication rather than reading. Statistical analysis has also shown that there was no significant difference between learners' and teachers' attitudes towards teaching the target culture in classrooms.

Another similar study that deals with ESL teachers' perceptions in the Libyan context is that of Ahmed (2015), who examined how 20 Libyan EFL teachers perceive the role of teaching the target culture in English language classrooms. The teachers were prompted to express their perceptions by responding to seven multiple choice questions regarding their inclusion of the target culture in their instruction. Findings show that teachers hold positive attitudes towards the teaching of the target culture which shows their awareness of its importance in the instruction of the English language and that full mastery in English cannot be attained without the cultural element.

A third study by Gonen and Salgam (2012) has investigated whether a teacher's educational background in the Turkish context would affect their perception of the target culture. In other words, some of the researchers' participants graduated from English Language Teaching Department while others did not. Interviews and a comprehensive questionnaire have been used with 60 teachers. Even though there were some differences among teachers on what specific aspects of the target culture should be taught in English classes, both categories of teachers have indicated that teaching the target culture is an essential element in English language teaching that enhances students' success in the target language. Findings show that the teachers' main objective behind teaching the target culture is to help students develop an understanding towards the target culture and familiarize them with the lifestyle and values of the people from that culture. The study has also highlighted the fact that despite the teachers' awareness of the importance of the target culture in their English language instruction, the way they deal with certain aspects of the target culture in their teaching is highly influenced by the curriculum.

Research gap

Many researchers (Vellenga, 2004; Reimann, 2009; Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015) have argued that pragmatic competence is an essential element in the advancement of students' overall language level. However, pragmatic content in textbooks has also received very little attention compared to other linguistic aspects of the language like vocabulary and grammar. The *Hello!* textbook of the third stage of secondary school was not previously investigated as far as the teaching of the target culture and pragmatic aspects are concerned. The significance of this investigation stems from the fact that the majority of Egyptian students who attend governmental and private schools study. ESL/EFL textbooks taught in Egyptian schools need to be examined to reveal the extent to which these textbooks tackle the teaching of the target culture as well as pragmatic content in addition to inspecting how Egyptian ESL/EFL teachers deal with such content. Exploring the pragmatic content in these textbooks provides insights to teachers and curriculum designers on assessment measures to be taken in order to boost the communicative competence of Egyptian students.

Research problem and importance of the study

The topic of investigating the target culture and speech acts in ESL teaching is of particular importance. During the present researcher's teaching experience at a boys' high school in Cairo, she noticed some exchanges with the students during which transfer from the students' first language has affected their speech in English. These students' utterances attracted the researcher's attention to the way the target culture and speech acts are presented in textbooks used in Egyptian schools. In addition, the researcher believes that Egyptian ESL teachers' perception of teaching the target culture inside the classroom may be a relevant factor in the progress of these students' pragmatic competence.

The researcher aims to investigate the level to which the speech acts of the target culture of English are represented in the nationally studied ESL *Hello!* textbook (Haines &

Dallas, 2014). In addition, the researcher will examine the perception of Egyptian ESL teachers on the importance of the instruction of the target culture and speech acts. Thus, this study is concerned with answering two main research questions:

Research questions

1. What are the culturally-oriented speech acts presented in the ESL *Hello!* textbook for grade 12 (third secondary stage)?

2. What are the Egyptian ESL teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture and speech acts?

Delimitations of the study

The present study focused primarily on two issues: the perceptions of Egyptian ESL teachers on the importance of teaching the target culture and speech acts inside the classroom and the level to which the speech acts of this target culture are incorporated in the nationally studied ESL *Hello!* textbook.

In this respect, part of the study is dedicated to analyzing the *Hello!* ESL textbook that is used in the third secondary stage (Grade 12) in all Egyptian governmental schools (and all private schools as well, but in addition to a higher level ESL textbook) as a sample textbook for the speech acts that all Egyptian students study at this particular stage. The researcher chose the textbook of the third stage of secondary school (Grade 12) to do a content analysis of speech acts since it is generally believed that the complexity of speech acts strategies develop with the learners' proficiency level. In their study findings, Aksoyalp and Toprak (2015) found out that in the 17 course books they analyzed, the repertoire of speech acts strategies expanded with the increasing proficiency level.

The present study did not examine any of the textbooks used in private schools mainly due to the fact that the advanced level ESL textbooks used in private schools differ from one school to another and therefore the pragmatic functions and speech acts taught in one

textbook might be different from other textbooks. The study is concerned with analyzing speech acts presented in the "functions" section in the *Hello!* textbook. In other words, the study did not focus on the reading, listening, grammar, critical thinking, and writing sections of the textbook.

Theoretical definitions

The target culture. For the purpose of this research study, the target culture is defined as the culture where English is spoken as the main primary language as in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, the UK, and the USA, where there are general cultural rules that most native speakers of English tend to abide by when they perform speech acts.

Speech acts. Speech acts are "the actions performed by means of utterances (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015: 125). They are "the core units of human communication. Complaints, apologies, and suggestions….are among examples of speech acts" (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015: 125). Speech acts exists in all languages; however, their linguistic realization and frequency are culturally bound and differ from one language to another (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015: 125).

Perceptions. Perceptions happen when "a person is confronted with a situation or stimuli. The person interprets the stimuli into something meaningful to him or her based on prior experiences. However, what an individual interprets or perceives may be substantially different from reality." (Pickens, 2005: 52)

Context. It "is the conversational setting broadly construed. It is the mutual cognitive context, or salient common ground. It includes the current state of the conversation (what has just been said, what has just been referred to, etc.), the physical setting (if the conversants are face to face), salient mutual knowledge between the conversants, and relevant broader common knowledge" (Bach, 2005: 21). In other words, context includes situation, speaker and interlocutor, topic, relationship between speaker and interlocutor/social distance, and the

settings. Researchers in the field (Stilwell Peccei, 1999; Yule, 1996) also define it as "analyzing the parts of meaning that can be explained by knowledge of the physical and social world, and the socio-psychological factors influencing communication, as well as the knowledge of the time and place in which the words are uttered or written" (as cited in Cutting, 2015: 2).

Operational definitions

The target culture. This study operationalizes the target culture (the culture of the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland) as that presented and explicitly mentioned in the speech acts of the target language. One example of these speech acts from the *Hello!* textbook is "persuading" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 110).

Speech acts of the target culture. The present study examined the second language speech acts that are presented in the nationally studied *Hello!* textbook. The cultural context in which the speech acts are mentioned is analyzed.

Perceptions. The present study attempts to measure teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture in ESL classes, i.e.: their insights and awareness of it. By means of a teacher questionnaire and interviews, data were gathered about how teachers perceive the importance of teaching the target culture and speech acts in their classes, as well as how these speech acts are represented in the *Hello!* textbook. A sample example from the teacher questionnaire which elicits "perception" is "I think teaching of the target culture (English culture) is an important factor when Egyptian students' are learning English".

Context. Within the scope of this research study, context is operationalized by investigating to what extent does the *Hello!* textbook provide sufficient information for different social situations as far as the performance of speech acts is concerned, so that students would know under which circumstances they would utter one speech act statement rather than another.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Teaching the target culture in ESL classrooms might for different reasons not be an easily carried-out task for instructors or students. Instructors in educational institutions might/might not realize the significance of teaching the target culture in ESL. Even those who regard the teaching of the target culture as an essential element in the acquisition process of their students' second language might not have the appropriate resources to embark on such an arduous task. Textbooks and curricula often focus on the linguistic aspects of language like vocabulary and grammar while disregarding or paying little attention to the cultural aspects of it which might be a reason for the students' lack of communicative competence in many cases. In addition, instructors might be reluctant to bring extra cultural materials to their ESL classes, in some cases due to lack of time to search for the relevant appropriate material or because of their lack of experience of the way cultural material would be approached. This may result in students who excel at the use of grammatical rules and sentence structure but suffer at the socio-cultural pragmatic level of the target language which would be a reason for pragmatic failure and communication breakdown. Thus, there should somehow be a balance between the weight given to teaching the linguistic aspects of the language and the cultural/pragmatic aspects of it.

In this chapter, the researcher will be investigating some of the most prominent factors that might hinder or accelerate teaching or learning aspects of the target culture. The chapter starts with a background definition of culture after which it proceeds to provide a thematic overview of the literature as far as three main elements are concerned: pragmatic functions and speech acts which is the framework chosen to conduct this study, the role that ESL/EFL teachers have in the process of culture teaching inside their classrooms, and the representation of culture in textbooks and curricula.

What is culture?

Many researchers have argued for the importance of teaching culture in ESL/EFL classes (Valdes, 1995; Byram, 1997; Byram & Fleming, 1998). But before discussing the importance of that, a definition of culture is needed here. Culture, as defined by Goode, Sockalingam, Brown, and Jones (2000), is an

> integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations (1).

Transmitting all previously mentioned aspects will take place by means of language. In other words, language is the vehicle used to transfer all these aspects of culture to the coming generations. Language is therefore an integral part of culture and cannot be separated from it. Some specialists in the teaching of foreign languages (e.g. Valdes, 1995; Byram, 1997; Byram & Fleming, 1998) believe that it is in fact impossible to teach a specific language without integrating its culture. Turkan and Celik (2007) however argue that most EFL classes primarily focus on studying the linguistic aspects of the target language and that cultural aspects such as the lifestyle and standards of the target culture are hardly ever present. This may result in learners who struggle with finding the right words to say to the right person at the right time, a major problem that hinders proper smooth communication with native speakers of English. Reimann (2009) also argues that owing to the fact that learners have diverse future communicative needs in the target language, there is an increasing demand that EFL be taught in a comprehensible way that includes critical thinking, intercultural knowledge and understanding in addition to a good sense of cultural awareness. This may help learners to be successful at the linguistic as well as the socio-cultural pragmatic level of the language.

Pragmatic functions and speech acts

Teaching pragmatics in ESL/EFL is one of the essential facets of teaching the target culture. Some researchers argue that learners' difficulties in the second language pragmatics are, unlike grammatical errors, less tolerated by native speakers, and that these difficulties often imply rudeness (Boxer & Pickering, 1995). If students of the target language want to become communicatively competent, they not only need to abide by the linguistic rules of that language, but also to show their understanding of its pragmatics rules by applying them in their speech. However, this might be a complicated task that in many cases ends with students relying on their first language sociolinguistic rules. In other words, students would transfer their first language pragmatics to their second language (Nelson, El Bakary, & Al Batal, 2006). For example, one of the main areas where ESL/EFL students fall short is speech acts. Milleret (2007) argued that the communicative competence of our students is marked by speech acts. Zhao and Throssell (2011) state that a well formulated speech act in a given culture may be considered inappropriate in another where the potential for misunderstandings and failures in intercultural communication is highly possible. The authors make the point that in order for effective and successful communication to take place, the need for the appropriate and polite speech act usage is undeniable. Turkan and Celik (2007) confirm that language use and the social rules underlying it necessitate an understanding of the social context in which this language is used. This is due to the fact that speech acts not only require using the target language linguistic expressions but also making use of the non-verbal contextual situation where the speaker should communicate within a specific cultural context. Zhao and Throssell (2011) also build on that by explaining that in the process of conveying messages, learners not only make use of the grammatical structures and vocabulary of a language, but they also carry out actions via those utterances. Pragmatic failures would cause

unwelcome consequences such as misunderstandings, laughter, embarrassments, or even sometimes rage (Milleret, 2007).

If language learners desire to be communicatively competent in the target language, they would need to develop their pragmatic competence (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015). In other words, students who have mastered the linguistic rules of the target language but lack the pragmatic aspects of it would to an extent still be considered incompetent language users because they will probably fail as far as their performance in social situations is concerned. Turkan and Celik (2007) make the case that it is important for language learners to be exposed to and involved in communicative acts that are similar to those in the target language. This would help result in learners who are capable of developing an understanding of the cultural views and references that exist in a particular target culture and that the native speakers of this target culture have. Misunderstanding between two interlocutors who do not necessarily share the same cultural background could happen easily due to the fact that the performance of speech acts in different cultures would vary. For example, learners may need to be aware that applying intonation patterns of their speech communities may not fit into their second language's (Zhao & Throssell, 2011) and therefore they would need to learn the new patterns of that new language they are learning. In addition, many learners of ESL may have difficulty understanding the actual meaning of a given speech act or producing a speech act appropriately using appropriate language of the target culture. Research has found that classroom instruction can help learners to improve their appropriate production of speech acts and therefore have better interaction and communication with native speakers of the target language (Milleret, 2007). It is for this reason necessary that educators understand that L2 proficiency level should be evaluated based on both: the grammatical skills and the student's performance of culturally appropriate discourse and language usage (Milleret, 2007).

If teachers aim at realizing the goals of communicative competence for students, pragmatic ability must become part of what they teach in the classroom. Milleret (2007) asserts that effective classroom instruction of communicative competence relies, firstly, on the gathering and presentation of authentic examples of speech act data, and secondly, on the development of assessment measures to evaluate students' understanding and performance of speech acts. There is thus a general consensus among scholars that if instructors and curriculum designers aim at improving students' socio-cultural pragmatic awareness and competence, more emphasis should be given to the instruction of speech acts.

It is however argued that most textbooks fail at the teaching of English pragmatic competence. Vellenga (2004) analyzed four integrated skills textbooks of EFL; *Headway Upper Intermediate*, published by Oxford, *Interchange 2* and *Passages 1*, published by Cambridge, *Voyages 2*, published by Prentice Hall Regents (*New Vistas*, published by Longman) and four grammar textbooks of ESL; *Focus on Grammar High-Intermediate*, published by Pearson Education, *Grammar Links 3*, published by Houghton Mifflin, *Intermediate Grammar: From Form to Meaning and Use*, published by Oxford, and *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, published by Longman. The author found that the acquisition of pragmatic competence in English through textbooks is highly unlikely due to the amount and quality of pragmatic information provided. Furthermore, teachers' surveys have proven that teachers seldom bring extra material to supplement the textbook in the teaching of pragmatic aspects of the language (Vellenga, 2004) which invokes the role of ESL/EFL teachers in the process of learning about the target language and culture.

The role of ESL/EFL teachers in teaching culture

The teacher is the most important factor in the educational setting. This means that if teachers are not well-prepared for the task of teaching, the advancement of the educational

process will not necessarily reap the target benefits and outcomes (Khan, 2011). Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, and Reynolds (1991) also say that

> [w]hen we approach the language class as an opportunity for learners to expand their communication across cultural boundaries, we, as teachers, have the responsibility to equip them with not only the structural aspects of the language, but with the pragmatics as well: more simply, the right words to say at the proper time (13-14).

In this process of learning pragmatics, ESL teachers can have a major role in promoting their students' comprehension and understanding of the speech acts of the target culture. In other words, the explicit teaching of L2 speech acts can have a positive effect on the cultural awareness and progress of ESL/EFL students. Further, most speech acts like complaints, thanks, requests, compliments, and apologies are closely tied to the cultural context in which they exist. This reflects the major importance of using the correct speech act that will spare learners many difficult and embarrassing moments (Milleret, 2007).

However, a belief in the importance of the role of cultural and pragmatic teaching in ESL/EFL might still not be shared by all ESL/EFL teachers. Mekheimer and Aldosari (2011) found that some teachers still doubt the importance of culture teaching in ESL/EFL classrooms. According to Afrin (2013), this might be due to many reasons. First of all, teaching the target culture will probably imply putting more time into the language syllabus and therefore more effort on part of the teachers due to the limited time span they would have in a given semester. Second, some teachers share the view that students might learn the basic grammatical rules and lexical items first while learning about culture at a later point in their process of acquiring ESL/EFL. In other words, teachers tend to postpone the teaching of the target culture to a subsequent stage in the students' language development process. Third, some teachers might be concerned about the fact that they do not have sufficient knowledge of the target culture to be able to teach it. Along these lines, Aksoyalp and Toprak (2015) also

affirm the fact that it is a common observation that language teachers often tend to fall short of meta-pragmatic awareness and knowledge. This might be a reason why many non-native ESL/EFL teachers might feel uncomfortable teaching abstract concepts of language and culture (Reimann, 2009). Afrin (2013) argues that this last reason might not be based on a well-informed approach to what language teaching should entail since a teacher's mission is rather to equip the students with the required skills to understand and learn about the target culture. A fourth reason as to why teachers of ESL/EFL tend to ignore teaching the target culture is that they face difficulties as far as the negative attitudes of learners are concerned. Afrin (2013) states that it is often the case that learners of ESL/EFL reject the target culture. This in fact adds to the teacher's responsibility since he/she may also be prompted to help attenuate these negative attitudes. Choudhury (2013) has also argued that in some traditional societies the teaching of the target culture might be viewed as a way of imposing "cultural hegemony or linguistic imperialism" (20).

Dai (2011) explains that in order for ESL/EFL teachers to help learners improve their communicative competence, they need to have a thorough understanding of the target language and culture. As a matter of fact, even in ESL/EFL classrooms where the culture is somehow integrated, teacher feedback is most of the time restricted to mechanics and language errors like grammar and vocabulary (Khan, 2011). Dai (2011) says that the role of ESL/EFL teachers is to help students overcome their linguistic problems in addition to any difficulties they might have in their learning about the target culture. In the same sense, when Politzer (as cited in Brooks, 1960) discussed the teaching of foreign languages to Americans in the US, he says:

> As language teachers we must be interested in the study of culture not because we necessarily *want* to teach the culture of the other country, but because we *have to* teach it. If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it

operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning; for unless he is warned, unless he receives cultural instruction, he will associate American concepts or objects with the foreign symbols (85-86).

Therefore it is the language teacher's duty to incorporate teaching the target culture in language classes. However, Dai (2011) states that teaching the target culture is not an easy task and that teachers need to employ a variety of techniques in order for this task to be successfully fulfilled. For example, Zhao and Throssell (2011) propose that a teacher may incorporate some cultural features into an explicit topic of in-class discussion, one that may be associated with some linguistic features of the target language. This may be one way learners are made aware of those particular cultural features that may be different from their first culture. Turkan and Celik (2007) in fact argue that it is the language teachers' responsibility to deal with the issue of integrating the target culture in their teaching one way or the other. The authors make it clear that the assumption teachers of ESL/EFL often make that learners would be exposed to aspects of the target culture at a later point of their language mastery may not be reasonable. It is the role of a foreign language teacher to foster the students' linguistic competence as well as their pragmatic competence (Zhao & Throssell, 2011).

Language teachers should not judge the teaching of culture as an undemanding task; on the contrary, it is a mission that needs to be handled with care since it would include selection, adaptation, and development of materials (Turkan & Celik, 2007) before they reach the final stage of classroom instruction. While the role of ESL/EFL teachers may have its profound effects in the process of teaching learners about the target culture, the role of textbooks and curricula may still be equally important for the presentation of pragmatic content would be of a particular significance.

The representation of culture in textbooks and curricula

Textbooks and materials provided by the educational institution are the teachers' primary resource of teaching, if not the only one. Juan (2010) says that textbooks play a major role in the teaching and learning process and that they introduce students to different countries and regions; therefore, their content should be relevant to students so that students' cultural awareness and communicative competence would be fostered and empowered. Given this fact, course books have a significant role in providing pragmatic input. However, it has been found that the examination of pragmatic aspects in textbooks is still not a very common field of research (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015). This may be due to the common belief that ESL/EFL materials should focus on linguistic aspects of the target language rather than aspects of its culture.

Reimann (2009) explains that for example the way textbooks present cultural materials is limited to titles, tourist information, or arbitrary content. That is, culture is presented in a way that is in many cases biased, oversimplified, or decontextualized. This in fact might intensify the problem of pragmatic competence rather than solve it. In other words, if textbooks present culture biases, this would probably further deepen misconceptions about culture rather than help to dispel them. In the same study that is based on the Japanese context, Reimann (2009) elaborates that most texts do nothing to dispel the previously held beliefs and stereotypes and that Japanese people rather have a natural difficulty when dealing with other cultures because cultures are different and unique. Therefore, learners are encouraged to accept cultures as they are rather than investigate them.

Hinkel (2014) makes a distinction between two levels of culture: "the visible and the invisible" (395-396). The author demonstrates the first level by giving an example of L2 learners and ESL/EFL teachers who when asked about their definition of culture, they mentioned history and gave accounts of the geography of their countries. In fact, this is just a

general popular grasp of the concept of "culture". Other definitions of culture may also include "styles of dress, cuisine, customs, festivals, and other traditions" (396). Hinkel (2014) calls this the "visible" level of culture for it expresses the superficial aspects of culture that could be viewed by anyone and that could be discussed and investigated relatively easier than the "invisible" aspects. The "invisible" culture, Hinkel (2014) states, is much more complex. It is the culture that applies to the socio-cultural beliefs, assumptions, and values that are relevant to subcultures. This "invisible" culture is often individualistic and therefore multifaceted which means that people cannot explore it intellectually because in many cases they are not even aware of it. Rodriguez (2015) has analyzed three of the most commonly used instructional EFL course books in Colombia. His target was to investigate whether these textbooks incorporate both types of culture explained by Hinkel (2014) and that Rodriguez (2015) refers to as rather "surface culture" and "deep culture". The findings in his study prove that the three textbooks have mainly included aspects of the "visible" or "surface" culture and ignored the more complex type, the "invisible" or "deep" culture. It might be argued at this point that if learners want to achieve a good level of socio-cultural communicative competence, then they may need to be equally exposed to these two types of culture.

In fact, in many cases English language textbooks are devoid of any culture-specific content. When students master the grammatical rules of the language, this will contribute to the degree of sentence structure accuracy but when students have cultural knowledge of the target culture, this will result in an effective and appropriate discourse (Fageeh, 2011). Peterson and Coltrane (2003) also argue that socio-cultural features should be regarded as an essential part of language learning. For example, Saudi Arabia ELT syllabus designers and educationalists have separated the teaching of English language from its culture until a very recent time (Fageeh, 2011). As a result, most of the available textbooks that students study

focus on rules of grammar without paying enough attention, if at all, to cultural content (Fageeh, 2011). For example, findings of Aksoyalp's and Toprak's (2015) study which examined 17 course books of different language proficiency levels show that the speech acts of apology, suggestions, and complaints received limited attention when compared to other language components such as grammar units, phonology, and spelling. In fact, even many commercially available English language materials do not provide the learners with natural or pragmatically appropriate, conversational models (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991). This may result in severe pragmatic breakdowns that can even be detected in the comprehension and production of language learners of higher proficiency levels (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015).

Moreover, many researchers have noted the lack of authentic texts in ESL curricula which they regard as a problem facing Arabic-speaking ESL students (Akasha, 2013). Melvin and Stout (1987) argue that authentic texts connect students directly with the target culture, which makes them more able to communicate meaning in meaningful situations rather than show their knowledge of a grammar rule or lexical items (as cited in Akasha, 2013). That is why Peterson and Coltrane (2003) emphasize the importance of incorporating culture-specific materials in ELT curricula in order for the students to get to experience the true socio-cultural aspects of the language. Those culture-specific materials should include the significant cultural values of the target language (Sharaf Eldin, 2015) so that hopefully the outcome would be students who Tucker and Lambert (1973) believe would develop some awareness and sensitivity towards the traditions and values of the people whose culture is studied.

Investigation of the cultural content in textbooks may need to be done case by case since textbooks vary from one country to another; even within the same country, there may be a variety of ESL textbooks used for different purposes and occasions. As far as the Egyptian context and this study are concerned, the pragmatic functions/speech acts in the nationally studied *Hello!* textbook are examined.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Data

Design of the study

This study uses a qualitative/quantitative design to investigate the perceptions of ESL teachers in Egyptian governmental and private schools towards the teaching of the target culture of English. The research is also concerned with analyzing the speech acts presented in the ESL *Hello!* textbook that is taught in all governmental and private national language schools throughout Egypt. On the one hand, the study qualitatively analyzed the content of the "functions" section in the ESL *Hello!* textbook to find out what speech acts are presented in the textbook and how they are exemplified. On the other hand, the study quantitatively/ qualitatively analyzed private and governmental school teachers' responses to see whether Egyptian teachers tend to support or reject the role of teaching the target culture and speech acts in ESL. The researcher does not aim at testing any pre-determined theoretical hypotheses.

Participants

The participants in this study are ESL governmental and private school teachers who are using the *Hello!* textbook in their teaching and who are thus familiar with the textbook content. While teachers in the governmental schools use only the *Hello!* textbook, teachers in private schools use two textbooks: *Hello!* and another ESL textbook of a higher/advanced level that each private school decides on. The researcher did not include participants from international schools for this type of school is authorized by the Egyptian government to implement its own curriculum which differs substantially from that of Egyptian governmental and private schools. In addition, international schools usually conduct their entire curriculum

in English or another foreign language, which means that their students are not using the *Hello!* textbook.

Recruitment of participants

I collected data from fifty teachers in the form of a questionnaire. First, an online version of the questionnaire was created using Google Forms and shared with many teacher groups and communities on social media websites. In addition, I made use of her network of teachers to help me distribute some questionnaire copies among governmental and private school teachers so that in the end the data coming from both participant types could be compared and analyzed.

I interviewed six teachers, three from two different governmental schools and three from another two private schools. Among these six teachers, only one was a female. The two governmental schools are one-gender, one is boys and the other is girls, whereas the two private schools are mixed-gender. recorded the participants' answers and transcribed them to get the relevant data for this qualitative analysis.

Participants' biographical information

All teachers are teaching at least one of the three stages of secondary school but all of them are either currently teaching the third stage of secondary school or have taught it at one point in the past. This is significant, for the study particularly targets teachers who are familiar with the content of the cross-cultural communication activities included in the *Hello!* textbook of the third stage of secondary school. Out of the 50 teacher participants, 10 were females and 40 were males. Out of the governmental school teachers who participated in the questionnaire, four were females and 29 were males; among the participants from private schools six were females and eleven were males. The participants ages range from 28 to 58

years old and their years of teaching experience range from three up to 37 years. They teach

at a variety of private and governmental schools in and outside of Cairo.

Instruments

In order to collect data for this quantitative/qualitative research study, two instruments were

used: a questionnaire and interviews.

Questionnaire. By means of a questionnaire, the ESL governmental and private school

teachers answered two sets of questions. The first set is related to the teacher's perception of

the importance of teaching the target culture inside the classroom while the second is about

the cross-cultural communication activities and speech acts content included in the *Hello!*

textbook (See appendix A). Fifty questionnaires were collected from both types of teacher

and a four-point Likert scale was used to analyze teachers' responses.

The questionnaire was piloted before it was distributed to the teachers and based on

the received comments, revisions were made to a few questions on it.

Interviews. I interviewed six teachers, three from two governmental schools and three from

another two private schools in Cairo, and asked them a set of questions to investigate their

perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture and speech acts in ESL/EFL

classes in Egyptian schools (See appendix B). Taking into consideration that answering the

interview questions might need teachers to use some terminology or that they may not

necessarily be familiar with the research study topic, I gave all interviewed participants the

option of using Arabic to express their views in their first language (Arabic) so that their

output would be more substantial and purposeful for the aim behind the study. Three of the

six participants mainly used English while the other three used Arabic. All answers were then

translated and transcribed so that I could find the information that is relevant to answer the research questions, the second one in particular.

Materials

  Textbook content analysis. The third secondary (Grade 12) *Hello!* textbook (Haines & Dallas, 2014) consists of 24 units in total. Every fourth unit is always a review of the previous three. Each of the 18 main units is divided into six main sections: grammar, listening, reading, critical thinking, functions, and writing. The researcher's analyzed the "functions" section in the units that include the teaching of speech acts to explore how these speech acts are presented.

Treatment of each research question

  To answer the first research question, I examined the "functions" section in all 18 units in the third secondary stage (Grade 12) *Hello!* textbook that is used in all governmental and private schools in Egypt. The researcher looked at whether those speech acts are contextualized or whether there are any application activities where students could see how different utterances for the same speech act are used. The reported results for this research question are in the form of descriptive analysis.

  To answer the second research question posed in this study, the data from the teacher questionnaire was tabulated and analyzed (See appendix A). Then using a four-point Likert scale on an Excel sheet and numbering the scale options from one to four (totally agree: 1, agree: 2, disagree: 3, totally disagree: 4), I found the percentage of teachers who "agree" or "disagree" (with respect to the level of "agreement" and "disagreement") on each of the questions in the two sets of questions described in the instruments section. In case of the affirmative questions, I then classified the "totally agree" and "agree" responses as positive

teachers' responses towards the teaching of the target culture while the "totally disagree" and

"disagree" responses as negative towards the teaching of culture. This resulting data

enlightened me as to whether Egyptian teachers positively/negatively support the teaching of

culture in their ESL classes.

In addition, I also collected and analyzed the data resulting from the interviews (See

appendix B for interview questions) I held with governmental and private school teachers.

The answers of the governmental school teachers were compared with those of the teachers

from the private schools. Similarities and discrepancies in the answers provided were noted.

The data resulting from these interviews was complementary to the answers received on the

teachers' questionnaires and these two sources of data were combined in order to answer the

second research question regarding teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the

target culture in ESL classes in Egyptian schools.

No data was gathered from students at either type of school since getting permission

to do so in Egyptian governmental schools was deemed difficult or impossible to obtain.

Overview of types of schools and English curriculum in Egypt

There are primarily two types of schools in Egypt, governmental and private.

Governmental schools are further subdivided into three types: Arabic, experimental, and Al

Azhar schools (Al Azhar schools are governmentally-run in accordance with Al Azhar

University in Egypt). On the other hand, private schools are categorized into Arabic national,

language national, and international schools. According to the Egyptian Ministry of

Education Statistical Yearbook (2014-2015), governmental schools for all stages all over

Egypt constitute around 86.4% whereas private schools constitute around 13.6%. The

percentage of students attending a governmental school of any stage is 90.5% whereas those

who attend private schools form 9.5%. More precisely, the percentage of governmental

General Secondary Education[1] schools (the three stages of General Secondary Education) is 68% whereas private General Secondary Education schools constitute 32%. Among all students who study at a General Secondary Education school, 87.9% attend governmental schools whereas only 12.1% attend private schools.

In governmental Arabic schools, students study all subjects in their first language, Arabic. In other words, textbooks, teacher talk, and class discussions are all in Arabic. Classes normally have a large number of students that could reach up to 80 students (as reported by one of the teachers in the interviews). In experimental schools, however, classes might be smaller than those in Arabic schools. In addition, most other subjects like mathematics and science are taught in English. In Al Azhar schools, curricula are similar to those studied in Arabic and experimental schools, but in addition there is an intensive Islamic curriculum along with the other subjects' curricula. This additional Islamic curriculum for example requires the students to memorize and recite chapters from the Qur'an, study the history of prophets, and learn about Islamic law and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence. However, the curriculum does not require students to stay for extra school hours to accommodate this specific Islamic instruction. The school hours are rather divided so that this curriculum fits into the students' school schedule. In addition to this, students on their own do much of the required work for this curriculum and teachers would follow up on their progress. For example, the memorization of the Qur'an verses does not take place at school. Teachers read the verses with the students in class and explain the recitation rules, but students are required to memorize at home and come to class prepared to recite to the teachers.

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[1] General Secondary Education refers to the schools that qualify students to join university after they have completed their secondary school education. On the other hand, there are "vocational" schools that qualify students to master a particular craft/technical skill. After graduating from this type of school, students normally join a two/three-year college/institution where they are provided with more training on the technical skill they started learning about in their vocational secondary school.

On the other hand, private schools are independent from the government in several aspects. First of all, Arabic and language national private schools have smaller classes than governmental schools, an average of 20-28 students (as reported by one of the teachers in the interviews). International schools, however, have the smallest classes among all types of schools with an average of 20 students in class. In Arabic national private schools, students learn the national English curriculum in addition to a more advanced level of English, but they study all other subjects in Arabic. The main difference between Arabic national and language national private schools is that in the latter, students learn all subjects' curricula, like science and mathematics, in English rather than in Arabic (subjects like Religion, Social and National Studies are taught in Arabic, however). In other words, students in Arabic and language national private schools study the same curricula for the English language and all other subjects as well, with the language of instruction as the main difference. International schools, however, follow their own educational curricula and have a different system. They normally follow the American/British Diploma systems, which employ a different curriculum than that of the government-supervised schools.

That being said, for the purpose of this research study and as far as the English curriculum in these two types of school, governmental and private, is concerned, the *Hello!* English textbook is being investigated for its major significance in teaching the majority of Egyptian students. Thanaweya Amma, which is the Egyptian standardized high school exam and the one that determines university admission cut-off scores, applies to students in Arabic and experimental governmental schools in addition to the Arabic and language national private schools. This means that the final high school standardized English exam targets a notably high percentage of students all over Egypt. This exam tests students' knowledge of the language aspects presented in the *Hello!* textbook only, and not any other additional English textbooks. Therefore for the purpose of the data collection in this research study, Al

Azhar and international schools are excluded since they are not required to use the *Hello!* textbook.

The *Hello!* student book consists of 18 units with a review unit after every three. At the beginning of each unit, there is an objectives section that briefly states the content of six main language skills: grammar, listening, reading, critical thinking, functions, and writing. The current research study is concerned with the "functions" section which in some units presents pragmatic functions while in other units, speech acts are presented. This study focused on the units where the "functions" section presents a speech act and disregard the rest of the units. Noteworthy in terms of the metalinguistic references used by the textbook authors is the fact that what are labelled "functions" in the introductory section which presents the objectives of the lesson are later labelled "communication" in the application sections. This use of alternative terms is potentially misleading and confusing for the student users.

Chapter Four

Results

Speech acts presented in the textbook

Observing the English oral performance of some Egyptian ESL students at one of the Egyptian schools in Cairo has triggered the researcher's interest in how the target culture pragmatics, particularly speech acts, are presented in textbooks taught at Egyptian schools. The researcher has noticed that students may be transferring a particular speech act from their first language that is Arabic to their second, English. Speech acts are culturally bound, which means that one speech act could be appropriate and acceptable in one culture but unacceptable and even rude in another. In order for students to master their second language acquisition, they not only need to work on the linguistic aspects of the language but also know about and apply the second language pragmatic rules in their speech so that they would function successfully in social situations of the second language. The descriptions and critique of the following six units in the *Hello!* textbook constitute the researcher's attempt to answer the first research question:

1. What are the culturally-oriented speech acts presented in the ESL *Hello!* textbook for grade 12 (third year, secondary stage)?

Speech acts are taught in six of the 18 units in the textbook: unit five (giving advice), unit eight (making and responding to suggestions), unit ten (expressing wishes and regrets), unit 11 (offering to help), unit 14 (giving and responding to warnings), and unit 17 (persuading)

The following section will give a description of how each of these six speech acts is presented in their respective units.

Speech act: Giving advice

The "communication" section of unit five presents the speech act of giving advice in the form of three activities. In the first activity students listen to an audio track where five people are giving advice to a student on how he could help others. The students are prompted ("which do you think is the best advice?") to think of the best advice given to the student in the listening audio track (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 30) and then compare their answers with their partners. In a follow-up activity (activity two), students have a list of phrases used to give advice, some of which were utilized by the speakers in the previous audio track. Students listen again and tick the phrases they hear. In the third and last activity, students sit in groups of five and each presents a problem of his/her own, one they would like their peers to give advice on. When giving their advice, students should use one of the phrases on the list in activity two.

Activity two is a central activity in this section of "communication" since it ties the other two activities (activities one and three) together as well as provides some of the most-commonly used phrases used to give advice in English. In this activity, in their student book, students see the following seven phrases: "I think you should…", "Why don't you…?", "If I were you, I'd…", "What about –ing…?", "I think it'd be a good idea to…", "You could…", "The best thing you could do would be to…" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 30) These are the same phrases students use to give advice to their partners in activity three. As shown above, some of the phrases are statements while a couple take a question form. However, the textbook does not explain whether this has any significance. In addition, students have heard some of these phrases in the listening audio track of activity one, but since students had only oral exposure to some of these phrases, they may not be able to determine the appropriate context of use. In other words, the phrases that the students did not hear in the audio track but are included on the list in activity two of the student book are decontextualized. It is then either

the role of the teacher to provide context to these phrases in case there would be any pragmatic difference among them, or the students would just use the phrases on the list interchangeably regardless of the person they are talking to, the context where the advice is given, or the content of the advice itself.

Speech act: Suggestions

In the "communication" section of unit eight, there are three activities structured on the theme of joining/discussing the book club. In the first activity, students fill in a short questionnaire to join a new book club. In activity two, which is a follow-up activity on the previous questionnaire, students listen to an audio track where some speakers talk about their answers in the questionnaire. The students then listen and see if any of the speakers in the audio track expresses the same ideas as theirs. A second part of this activity requires the students to listen to the audio track one more time and tick the phrases the speakers said to make suggestions or respond to them. As shown in Table 4.1, this is done in a three-column table where the first column says "making suggestions", the second "responding to suggestions", and the third "agree or disagree?" An example that is already done for the students in the book is the following: "How about…?" is under the "making suggestions" column, "I'd go along with that" is under the "responding to suggestions", and under the "agree/disagree" column, there is "agree". This means that by responding with "I'd go along with that" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 50), the speaker states his agreement to the suggestion given.

Table 4.1:
          Example of student activity related to suggestions (excerpted from Haines & Dallas, 2014: 50)

Making suggestions	Responding to suggestions	Agree or disagree
How about…?	I'd go along with that.	Agree
I'd say…	I'm not sure about that.	
If you ask me…	Personally, I'd prefer…	
Let's say…	Sorry, I don't agree.	
We could…	That's a good idea.	
What about…?	That's what I think.	

The benefit of this activity is that it may allow students to learn chunk suggestion-making and responding phrases. The phrases which occur in the chart from which students are expected to practice but which are not found in the audio track are again decontextualized. In addition, students may need to know the strength of a particular response to a suggestion. In other words, it is important that students learn that the above responses to suggestions could not be used interchangeably, and that the context is a determining factor when choosing to use one phrase rather than another. For example, a statement such as "sorry, I don't agree" might imply a very strong disagreement with the speaker, especially when accompanied with an assertive or aggressive tone of voice. Therefore, even though "sorry, I don't agree" and "personally, I'd prefer…" are responses to suggestions, and both serve the same function, which is disagreement or rejection of a suggestion, they still would not be used interchangeably in particular contexts and social situations. Using them as such may in fact result in misunderstandings and pragmatic failures in conversations.

The last activity is a group activity where students work in fours. Each of the group members suggests two books they have included in the questionnaire in activity one. Students should use the suggestions-making phrases above and discuss their reasons behind the book choices they made. They should finally agree on only four books to discuss in the book club.

This activity requires the students to use the target speech act phrases and at the same time is designed to help them relate the speech act to their own lives since they are given the chance to talk about books they have already read and liked. This is supposed to encourage each student to provide some input and to contribute to the group discussion.

Speech act: Wishes and regrets

The "communication" section of unit ten tackles four activities. In the first activity, students listen to an audio track and provide the answers to two questions. Students listen a second time and on the table they are provided, they tick the wish/regret phrases that they hear.

The second activity is a discussion in pairs where students tell their partners about a school subject they would like to be better at, using some of the phrases in the table of activity one. No model exchanges are provided for the students under this activity, so here it is the teacher's role to model an exchange so that students can follow.

The third activity provides the students with a newspaper headline that says "the country will need more scientists in the future" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 65). Four questions follow this newspaper headline and students in pairs are instructed to discuss the answers to these questions: "Why do you think more scientists will be needed in the future? What do you think the following kinds of scientists do? (Chemists, food scientists, nuclear scientists, environmental scientists, medical scientists, space scientists) Which of these scientists do you think will be needed most in the future? Why? How do such scientists improve everyday life?" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 65)

While this may be a useful activity for practicing conversation, it in fact has very little to do with the speech act of wishes/regrets, especially that the answers to the questions will not necessarily elicit the production of wishes/regrets phrases from the students. That is to

say that while the activity fits into the theme of the unit and prompts students to use their critical thinking and higher order skills to provide depth to their oral production, it does not achieve the objective behind introducing the speech act of wishes and regrets.

Another pair work is the fourth activity which is a role play where scenarios for Students A and B are provided. The prompt for Student A is "You want to study a science subject at university, but cannot decide which one to choose. You want to know which subject would be most useful to your country now and in the future. Tell Student B your problem using some of the language above" while the prompt for Student B is "You have decided which science subject to study at university. Choose a subject and tell Student A why you want to study it. Now help Student A make a decision about which science subject to study at university. It does not have to be the same subject that they have chosen." (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 65)

These provided scenarios may provoke a good discussion between pairs, but the given prompts may not necessarily elicit the target structures/speech act. In other words, the written prompt may need to be revised to ensure that students would produce the required form. In addition, this activity would be more practical if the textbook presents other scenarios that do not only include the students' peers. In other words, since there would be other various social situations and contexts where students would probably need to express their wishes and regrets with other interlocutors, then providing sample scenarios for these social situations where this target speech act of wishes/regrets is produced would be helpful in terms of the students' pragmatic competence development and interaction in different social situations.

Speech act: Offer to help

The "communication" section of unit eleven has included four activities to teach students how to offer help. In the first activity students listen to a conversation between

neighbors and answer some follow up questions. In the second part of this activity students
have two tables, one includes expressions used to offer help and the other contains replies to
offers. Students are required to tick the phrases they hear in the conversation between the two
neighbors. Table 4.2, below, illustrates this:

Table 4.2:
Example of student activity related to offering help (excerpted from Haines &
Dallas, 2014: 70)

Offer to help	Replies to offer
Is there anything I can do to help?	That's very kind of you.
Would you like me to…?	Would you mind?
If you like, I could…for you.	Thanks very much.
Shall I…for you?	That's great.
Let me…	I'd really appreciate that. Thanks.

This activity attracts the students' attention to chunks that they can use when they
would like to offer help to someone. Nevertheless, there are a few questionable issues here.
First of all, the "replies to offer" do not include any phrases that might imply rejection or
refusal of help, which is a separate speech act on its own. The second issue here is that the
textbook does not mention whether all the phrases used to offer help are employed regardless
of the social context, and whether all replies are appropriate to use no matter what the offer-
to-help phrase is. For example, does the utterance "is there anything I can do to help?" have
the same significance that "let me…" does? Would these two utterances be used
interchangeably regardless of who, when, and where? Also under "replies to offer", would
the reply "thanks very much" be equivalent to "would you mind?"? (Haines & Dallas, 2014:
70) The students might pick some contextual clues for some phrases from the audio track
they listen to. However, the phrases that are not covered in the audio track may require the
teacher to provide examples of proper contexts and social situations where some utterances
would be more appropriate than others. If the teacher does not do so, this may not help
students' pragmatic development.

The second activity in this section of the textbook is a pair activity. In the first part of the activity, students are asked to discuss with a partner things they may have offered to do for a friend or something that they were offered to get help with. The second part of the activity asks students to make a list of things they might offer to help a neighbor with, a list they would use later in the last activity of this section of the unit.

The third activity is a follow-up on the previous one. In pairs again, students are asked to role play two speakers in one of the situations they created in the list in activity two and they are required to use the "offer to help" and "replies to offers" phrases presented in activity one.

Role plays are effective in that they may allow some creativity and imagination on part of the students on the one hand, and allow the teachers on the other hand to assess the students' pragmatic, linguistic, and sociolinguistic competence in using the language. However, one downside to this particular activity in the textbook is that it focuses mainly on the "neighbor context" similar to activities one and two. For example, the scenario provided for a model role play is the following: Student A is given the following prompt, "Student B is your neighbor. Tell Student B what you need help with. When Student B offers to help, you should use some of the replies above." The prompt for Student B is "listen to Student A's problem. Offer to help Student A using some of the language above" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 70). The repetition of the scenario of offering help to a neighbor over three activities out of the four in this section may need to be reexamined and questioned. Further, a potentially controversial aspect of offering help to a neighbor is that in some cultures offers for help from neighbors may be welcomed and appreciated while in other cultures it might be seen as intrusive and a violation of privacy. Teachers may need to explain to their students the paralinguistic and pragmatic fine lines so that situations like this may not lead to embarrassment of either side.

The fourth activity is the one that prompts students to use role play situations from the list they have created in activity two. This is the only activity that allows students to go outside of the "neighbor situation" box and use their real personal life knowledge to create situations that they themselves might have been in at some point.

Speech act: Warnings

The "communication" section of unit 14 presents the speech act of "warning" through three activities. The first activity is divided into two parts. In the first part, students listen to three short conversations and identify the two speakers in each conversation. The textbook also prompts the students to describe the situations. For example, students can say that in the first conversation the speakers are a mother and her child who are crossing the road.

Prompting the students to describe the situation where the speakers interact in these short exchanges is an effective technique to link the warning utterance and its response with the situation. In other words, when students describe the situation and determine who the speakers are, this would act as a good exercise for their pragmatic competence where they analyze the contexts in which warning phrases are given.

The second part of this activity asks students to listen again and choose the correct warning words or phrases they hear, which is a good exercise that introduces the students to the language of giving and receiving warnings. One limitation to this activity, however, is that it does not provide a variety of contexts i.e., in the first and third conversations, the warning word or phrase was used to signify a nearby physical danger ("be careful" and "watch out", Haines & Dallas, 2014: 90), a car in the first conversation and a snake in the third. Only the second conversation was about a teacher warning a student to work harder so that he/she would not fail the test.

The second activity in this section prompts the students to think of a story in which "a young person benefitted from a warning from an older member of their family" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 90). The activity gives students the choice to think of people they know, public figures they might have read or heard about, or fictional people that they have seen in movies or read about in books and novels. Students are given some time to prepare their stories which they need to present to two other classmates.

This activity personalizes the speech act of warning since it would relate it to the students' lives. However, the context is still very limited. Both the first and second activities seem to focus on warnings as far as an elder is giving it to a young person. In other words, there are no other examples where an employer is warning an employee against low performance or TV announcers are warning the audience about bad weather. There are a variety of other situations where important real life warnings are given but the textbook does not deal with any of those.

The third activity is a group activity where students discuss two main questions: "how young people can benefit from advice given by older members of their family" and "why grandparents are particularly good at giving advice to their grandchildren" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 90). This activity may be building on the one before it with the purpose of providing more depth to the students' conversations. However, and as noted earlier, dealing with warnings within the context of only elders giving them on one hand and young people receiving them on the other might well exclude a variety of other social real life situations where this speech act is used and that students need to be aware of.

Speech act: Persuading

The "communication" section of unit 17 tackles "persuasion" via two main activities. The first activity is divided into two parts. In the first part, students listen to three short

conversations and say what the speaker in each of them is trying to persuade the other person to do. In the second part, students have a list of expressions used in persuasive arguments. They listen again and tick the expressions they hear.

This activity aims to teach students chunks or phrases that they can use in certain conversations but it does not contextualize the phrases that are not covered in the audio tracks. For example, "are you sure you can't…?" "Why don't you…?" "Surely the best thing to do is to…" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 110) are all phrases that exist on the list but that are also decontextualized. It would be useful if students are also taught how to use these other phrases and whether there is a difference for example between saying "are you sure you can't…?" which is not contextualized in any of the three audio track conversations and "please" which is. In addition, "surely the best thing to do is…", a phrase that was among the decontextualized phrases above, might be confused with another similar phrase that was introduced in unit five of the same textbook to teach the speech act of giving advice which is "the best thing you could do would be to…". This latter phrase was also decontextualized in unit five which might lead to confusion on part of the students since the wording in both phrases are relatively similar, and therefore some explanation of the differences between the two phrases might be required.

In the second activity, students work in groups of three. They are given a prompt "your neighborhood has been given a large amount of money. You have the job of deciding the best way to spend this money. You all have different ideas, but you must agree in order to get the money" (Haines & Dallas, 2014: 110). Student A would like the money to be spent on children's facilities like a public playground and Student B would like to spend the money on repairs and decoration whereas Student C would like to spend it on improving the roads. Within each group, every student will speak for about one minute and when all three students

are finished, they are to have a general discussion to agree on one way they would like the money to be spent.

This discussion may encourage students to prove their point of view, elaborate on it, refute counter-arguments, and exercise their persuasion techniques, and vocabulary. However, since this is a task that involves the interplay of many linguistic and pragmatic skills, students might stumble at some points during the activity, and therefore it is the teacher's role to monitor the students closely so that he/she would facilitate the group work whenever needed.

Teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture

Teachers are a very crucial element in the advancement of the students' linguistic and pragmatic competence. If the teacher is not qualified for such a task, then the students' linguistic and communicative competence in the target language may be put at risk. For this reason, the researcher investigated the teachers' perceptions of teaching the target culture in ESL classes. The following reported results from the teacher's questionnaire and interviews attempt to provide the answer to the second research question:

1. What are the Egyptian ESL teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture, and speech acts?

Questionnaire results

Introduction

The following section reports on the data resulting from the questionnaire distributed to governmental and private school teachers on two aspects: their perception of the importance of teaching the target culture in ESL classes in Egypt as well as the content of the speech acts and cross-cultural communication activities in the *Hello!* textbook. Out of the total number of the received 50 questionnaires, 33 were from participants in governmental

schools (66% of the total number of teachers) while 17 were from private schools' (34% of the total number of teachers).

This section reporting on the questionnaire results is divided into four sub-sections and tables. First, Table 4.3 reports on the percentages from the questionnaire data on the teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture in ESL classes in Egyptian schools. This table reports on the collective data from governmental and private school teachers. Second, Table 4.4 reports on the collective data from the part of the questionnaire on the content of speech acts and cross-cultural communication activities in the *Hello!* textbook. Third, Table 4.5 contrasts the data from governmental and private school teachers on their perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture. Fourth, Table 4.6 also contrasts the data from both types of school teachers on the content of speech acts and cross-cultural communication activities in the *Hello!* textbook.

Questionnaire analysis

Teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture

Using a Likert scale on a continuum from "totally agree" to "totally disagree" excluding the "neutral" option, the data was analyzed as reported by the governmental and private school teachers. Table 4.3, below, shows the collective percentages of responses on each of the items on the part of the questionnaire concerned with examining the teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture. On some question items, teachers' responses showed some uncertainty as to whether they agree or disagree as far as teaching particular aspects of the target culture in ESL classes is concerned. For example, on the second item of Table 4.3 which states, "I may avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture (English culture) if I know it will shock the students", 52% of the teachers totally agree or agree while 48% totally disagree or agree. Similarly, another interesting

statistic regarding the teacher responses is the one given to item six: "I think most English lessons should include information about the culture of English speaking countries" where 54% of the teachers adopt the totally agree/agree position while 46% are on the totally disagree/disagree side. These last two items call into question the reasons why teachers are inconclusive about their stances from teaching some aspects of the target culture of English in their ESL classes. In addition, on items seven and eight, around 30% of the teachers believe that excluding the target culture from textbooks does not affect the students' language development and that students' lack of knowledge of the target culture does not hinder their communication with native speakers of English.

Some of the items on the questionnaire elicited quasi-unanimous support for the teaching of culture. An example of this is the first item (Table 4.3) "teaching the target culture is an important factor when Egyptian students are learning English, to which 92% of the teachers either totally agreed/agreed. In addition, 82% of the teachers indicated that they may include an aspect of the target culture that is not tackled in the textbook, and 96% of them either totally agreed/agreed that they are capable of presenting many aspects of the target culture to their students.

Table 4.3:
Teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture, percentages from governmental and private school teachers data

Question	Governmental and private school teachers (N=50)			
	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
1. I think teaching of the target culture (English culture) is an important factor when Egyptian students are learning English	62%	30%	6%	2%
2. I may avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture (English culture) if I know it will shock the students.	20%	32%	26%	22%
3. In my classes, I may include a cultural component from the target culture (English culture) that is not included in the textbook.	42%	40%	18%	0%
4. I believe that English language teaching should only teach language components like grammar, spelling, and pronunciation.	4%	6%	30%	60%
5. I believe that I am capable of presenting many aspects of the target culture (English culture) to my students.	36%	60%	4%	0%
6. I think most English lessons should include information about the culture of English speaking countries.	20%	34%	36%	10%
7. Excluding the target culture (English culture) from course books does not affect the students' language development.	10%	20%	36%	34%
8. Communication with native speakers of English is not hindered by the students' lack of knowledge of the target culture (English culture).	10%	22%	40%	28%

Hello! textbook and speech acts content

The second part of the teachers' questionnaire is concerned with how effective the presentation of cross-cultural communication activities and speech acts are in the *Hello!* textbook (Table 4.4). While teachers collectively tended to either totally agree/agree or totally disagree/disagree on some question items on this part of the questionnaire, it was also noted that there was some indecisiveness on part of the teachers on other question items. For example, results for the first item (Table 4.4) "the textbook integrates teaching the 'functions' of the target culture (English culture) in most units" reported that 56% of the teachers either

totally agree/agree while 44% either totally disagree/disagree. As referred to earlier in the

content analysis of the *Hello!* textbook units, the textbook incorporates a "functions" section

at the end of every unit of the 18. However, only six units out of the 18 are dedicated to the

teaching of speech acts: giving advice, making and responding to suggestions, expressing

wishes and regrets, offering help, giving and responding to warnings, and persuading. The

third item "I think enough space (content) of the textbook is devoted to communication

activities" (Table 4.4) is one more instance where teachers' answers do not provide a

relatively more certain stance where 38% of the teachers agree and a similar percentage

disagrees. In a similar fashion, 34% of the teachers agree while 32% disagree on whether the

"the teacher's guide to the textbook includes information about how to communicate in

English and how to present this to students" (The

sixth item, Table 4.4).

Table 4.4:

Hello! textbook and speech acts content, percentages from governmental and private school teachers data

Question	Governmental and private school teachers (N=50)			
	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
1. The textbook integrates teaching the "functions" of the target culture (English culture) in most units.	16%	40%	38%	6%
2. I am satisfied with the way the textbook teaches students how to communicate in English.	14%	20%	44%	22%
3. I think enough space (content) of the textbook is devoted to communication activities.	6%	38%	38%	18%
4. Students can still master English without necessarily practicing how to communicate.	0%	4%	26%	70%
5. It is almost impossible to teach how to communicate in English by using just the textbook.	44%	40%	12%	4%
6. The teacher's guide to the textbook includes information about how to communicate in English and how to present this to students.	22%	34%	32%	12%

Generally, some of the percentages showed the teachers' discontent with the

presentation of the cross-cultural communication activities in the *Hello!* textbook. For

example, teachers denied with a relatively high percentage (66%) that they are "satisfied with

the way the textbook teaches students how to communicate" (the second item, Table 4.4). In addition, teachers strongly denied (96%) that "students can still master English without necessarily practicing how to communicate" (the fourth item, Table 4.4). Further, 88% reported that "it is almost impossible to teach how to communicate in English by using just the textbook" (the fifth item, Table 4.4).

Comparison of governmental and private school teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture

Part of this research study is dedicated to examine whether teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture will differ due to the type of school teachers work at and the curriculum they teach. For this reason, the data resulting from the sum of collective percentages of governmental and private school teachers' answers (Table 4.3 above) on the first part of the questionnaire "teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture" has been analyzed to see if there is any contrast in the data provided by teachers in both types of school. Table 4.5, below, details the data reported by governmental school teachers on the one hand and private school teachers on the other on each of the question items. When comparing the percentages of agreement provided by governmental school teachers against those provided by private school teachers on the second item of this part of the questionnaire "I may avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture (English culture) if I know it will shock the students", a discrepancy was found. While 60.6% of the teachers in governmental schools affirmed (totally agreed/agreed) the statement, only 35.29% of the teachers at private schools did. Variation was also found in item six (Table 4.5) "I think most English lessons should include information about the culture of English speaking countries". The agreement percentage provided by governmental school teachers is 48.5% whereas that provided by private school teachers is 64.7%.

Table 4.5:

Teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture, comparison of percentages from governmental and private school teachers data

Question	Governmental school teachers (N=33)				Private school teachers (N=17)			
	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
1. I think teaching of the target culture (English culture) is an important factor when Egyptian students' are learning English	66.67%	27.27%	6.06%	0.00%	52.94%	35.29%	5.88%	5.88%
2. I may avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture (English culture) if I know it will shock the students.	24.24%	36.36%	27.27%	12.12%	11.76%	23.53%	23.53%	41.18%
3. In my classes, I may include a cultural component from the target culture (English culture) that is not included in the textbook.	39.39%	39.39%	21.21%	0%	47.06%	41.18%	11.76%	0%
4. I believe that English language teaching should only teach language components like grammar, spelling, and pronunciation.	6.06%	6.06%	36.36%	51.51%	0%	5.88%	17.65%	76.47%
5. I believe that I am capable of presenting many aspects of the target culture (English culture) to my students.	36.36%	60.61%	3.03%	0%	35.29%	58.82%	5.88%	0%
6. I think most English lessons should include information about the culture of English speaking countries.	12.12%	36.36%	39.39%	12.12%	35.29%	29.41%	29.41%	5.88%
7. Excluding the target culture (English culture) from course books does not affect the students' language development.	9.09%	21.21%	33.33%	36.36%	11.76%	17.65%	41.18%	29.41%
8. Communication with native speakers of English is not hindered by the students' lack of knowledge of the target culture (English culture).	12.12%	21.21%	42.42%	24.24%	5.88%	23.53%	35.29%	35.29%

Comparison of governmental and private school teachers' data on the *Hello!* textbook and its speech act content

Table 4.6, below, details an analysis of the percentages provided by governmental and private school teachers on each of the question items in the second part of the questionnaire concerned with the content of the speech acts and cross-cultural communication activities in the *Hello!* textbook. Upon examination of the six question items, some discrepancies have been noted between the percentages provided by governmental school teachers and those provided by teachers in private schools. For example, results for the second item (Table 4.6) "I am satisfied with the way the textbook teaches the students how to communicate in English" show that over 50% of both types of school teachers, 60.6% from governmental schools and 76.47% from private schools, have reported their discontent with the way the textbook presents cross-cultural communication activities. In addition, on the third item (Table 4.6) "I think enough space (content) of the textbook is devoted to communication activities", nearly half of the governmental school teachers agreed (48.5%) where in private schools only 35.3% agreed. One more item where there is some contrast between the percentages from both types of teacher is the sixth item (Table 4.6) "the teacher's guide to the textbook included information about how to communicate in English and how to present this to students". On this item, governmental school teachers agreed with a relatively high percentage of 63.6% whereas private school teachers agreed with a percentage of 41.2%.

Further examination of item one "The textbook integrates teaching the 'functions' of the target culture (English culture) in most units", item four "Students can still master English without necessarily practicing how to communicate", and item five "It is almost impossible to teach how to communicate in English by using just the textbook" showed that no major discrepancies have been found in the percentages provided by both types of school teachers.

Table 4.6:

Hello! textbook and speech acts content, comparison of percentages from governmental and private school teachers data

Question	Governmental school teachers (N=33)				Private school teachers (N=17)			
	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
1. The textbook integrates teaching the "functions" of the target culture (English culture) in most units.	15.15%	36.36%	42.42%	6.06%	17.65%	47.06%	29.41%	5.88%
2. I am satisfied with the way the textbook teaches students how to communicate in English.	15.15%	24.24%	39.39%	21.21%	11.76%	11.76%	52.94%	23.53%
3. I think enough space (content) of the textbook is devoted to communication activities.	3.03%	45.45%	36.36%	15.15%	11.76%	23.53%	41.18%	23.53%
4. Students can still master English without necessarily practicing how to communicate.	0%	3.03%	30.30%	66.67%	0%	5.88%	17.65%	76.47%
5. It is almost impossible to teach how to communicate in English by using just the textbook.	30.30%	51.51%	15.15%	3.03%	70.59%	17.65%	5.88%	5.88%
6. The teacher's guide to the textbook includes information about how to communicate in English and how to present this to students.	24.24%	39.39%	30.30%	6.06%	17.65%	23.53%	35.29%	23.53%

Interviews Results

Introduction

The following results come from the interviews conducted with six teachers, three from two governmental schools and three from two private schools.

Challenges teachers face while teaching the cross-cultural communication activities in the *Hello!* textbook

There are a few common points mentioned by all six teachers. One of these is the differences between the Middle Eastern Muslim culture and the Western/English culture. Teachers mentioned that there are some contrasts between the two cultures that are difficult to explain to the students. One teacher mentioned that whenever there is an instance where English culture clashes with "our culture" or the students' first culture, he intentionally avoids providing explicit detail. An example of a point he may skip is the description of a romantic relationship between two people. Another teacher affirmed the same attitude by saying that if reading passages dealt with a point that was different from the students' first culture, she skipped it as well and told them: "do not write this word", "we have our own traditions, our system", "we are Muslims". She said that she does not want to draw the students' attention to the foreign culture. The same teacher, however, mentioned that students should rather know the "disadvantages" of the other culture to be able to avoid them and that students should take the "good" sides only from the target culture.

Another teacher mentioned that the main problem is the students' extreme lack of knowledge about the target culture and that they do not know what English culture is in the first place. This makes it a challenge for the teacher whenever a cultural point happens in the lesson because then it takes him much time to explain to the students and make sure that they understand. Another teacher also says that his students do not know about the cultural habits or customs of the English community and that he "does not mind" discussing culture as long as he relates it to religion and then allows the students to differentiate between "what is good and bad".

A governmental school teacher mentioned that the main challenge that faces him in the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities is the absence of audio players, speakers, and recording devices in the classrooms. As an alternative, the teacher reads the listening script to the students from the teacher's guide. The teacher has expressed his concern that this may not be as effective as when students listen to a "native speaker". Another teacher from the same governmental school mentioned that teachers rely in most cases on the board to present their lessons and even though the school has tried to introduce smart boards to the teachers, it did not grant them access to the internet, and teachers continued to use the old boards. Thus, all technological initiatives seem to remain incomplete.

Another challenge that a teacher in a governmental school has mentioned is that students of the third secondary stage do not come to school[2] and that the 45-minute slot of class is not even enough to cover everything. The teacher explained his concern about the way his supervisors want him to approach the curriculum and that he needs to abide by what he is told to do inside the classroom. In addition, he mentioned that parts of the teacher's guide do not address the activities in the students book sufficiently, which constitutes a challenge for the teachers whose only resource is the teacher guide.

Importance of teaching cross-cultural communication activities

Five of the six teachers have more or less agreed on the importance of teaching the cross-cultural communication activities in their classes but also admitted that these activities are not the main focus of their teaching.

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[2] Most students of the third stage of secondary school do not go to school regularly for they mainly depend on private lessons outside of school. This applies to the majority of governmental and private schools where students resort to these private lessons because they study in small groups. In addition, they learn about strategies on how to answer questions on their final exams, so that they would get high scores for university admission.

Teachers have mentioned that the importance of teaching such activities stems from the fact that language is not just about studying "lexical items" and that students need to know about the lifestyle of the target culture people who have different celebrations, foods, and behaviors in their daily life. One teacher mentioned that students need to know about the target culture because if they do not, they will not be able to know "their" ways of thinking and therefore will not be able to communicate with them. In other words, if students want to deal with the target culture people in real life, then understanding the target culture is a way towards communicating with people who represent that culture. Lack of understanding the target culture may lead students to say something that is considered "impolite" in that culture. The teacher elaborated by saying that learning the language happens also when one is involved in the culture. A teacher from a private school has also voiced one good aspect about teaching the target culture, i.e. it helps her "break the monotony of the lesson", so that instead of only teaching vocabulary and grammar throughout the semester, the teaching of culture comes to provide some variety in her teaching.

However, teachers admitted that they may fall short when it comes to the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities for the educational system is traditional. One teacher from a governmental school said that he does not regard the teaching of these activities as important because the exam questions focus on grammar and the function of words, but not on communication, i.e. the main target is to teach students how the language is used in written discourse and reading passages. Students therefore pay more attention to their writing skills than on daily life conversations. Another teacher from a private school confirmed this, saying that students only study English to pass the final standardized English exam.

A teacher from a governmental school had some concerns about the teaching of culture, saying that curriculum designers should take into consideration the differences in culture and traditions between the target culture and the students' first culture, and that some

aspects of the second language culture cannot be taught. To elaborate on this, he gave an example from "Prisoner of Zenda", the novel assigned for the third stage of secondary school as part of the curriculum, together with the *Hello!* textbook. The teacher mentioned that the novel is simplified and modified so that some of the cultural incidents are different from the original. For example, he said that in the original text Rudolf Elphberg was drugged by drinking a glass of wine whereas in the text modified for students of the third stage of secondary school, he ate a poisoned cake.

Contrasting the benefits and drawbacks of teaching cross-cultural communication activities

When teachers were asked about their perception of the benefits and drawbacks of teaching cross-cultural communication activities in English classes, they reported the following.

Teachers said that benefits include developing the students' language in ways that would help them to communicate in daily life for example when meeting a tourist on the street or any native speaker of the language. Some students may also travel abroad and be exposed to misunderstandings in the "other people's" culture that would lead to problems in communication. Thus, when students know about the target culture, they may avoid the cross-cultural problems that may take place. One teacher expressed his concern that teaching such aspects of the language is not done "the right way" in schools. He elaborated on this by saying that when a listening activity is done in class, the focus is normally on training students to listen for a particular piece of information in the audio tracks, not on how the conversation goes to serve the purpose of communication in daily life. In other words, observing how real life conversations, such as in a restaurant, a café, a train station, an airport go is not the main target in listening activities. The priority is given to understanding

particular "pieces" that may not be necessarily relevant to "practical life". The same teacher believes that discussing information like the author of a novel or when a novel was written are not very effective aspects to students learning.

One teacher reported that one of the benefits of teaching the target culture is that it interests the students. They get ideas about the other culture that would help them interact with people from foreign countries through Facebook and other media platforms, which creates a "link" between the two cultures.

As for the drawbacks, almost all teachers referred to the clash of the target culture with "religion" in their answers.

One teacher said that drawbacks of teaching the target culture include discussing differences in traditions and religion. He mentioned that teachers should only present the "positive" and common points between the two cultures but disregard and avoid whatever clashes with "our culture". Another one said that even though there is a need to learn the target language, culture, and ways of thinking, "I should only take what does not contradict with my religion and principles".

One teacher said that in the process of teaching the target culture, some people get attracted to whatever is "different and new" in the other culture while some take only the "good points" that they need. She elaborated, however, that students at the age of 18 do not have the sense to differentiate, so the role of the teacher is to pick what the students can benefit from and put them on the "right track". She said "we as Muslims have our own beliefs". She expressed that people of the target culture regard the relation between the person and God as personal which she disagrees with. She supports her statement by giving an example of how she deals with her son when it is time for prayers: "time to pray", "go and pray", "if you want God to be with you, do your duty". She then mentions that young

generations in the students' culture see these constant reminders as interference and she thinks that "the English culture enforces this point of view and this is what [she does not] like and this is the drawback of the others' [culture]". She has mentioned another instance when she struggled to respond to her ten-year old son who came back from school once and found a used glass of water on the table during Ramadan (the month of fast for Muslims). The teacher said that the glass was used by her Russian guest but her son asked why the guest would not be fasting since he is. That was an instance when two different cultures were together in the same place, an instance when the teacher felt the other culture has exposed her because she could not explain to her ten-year old son how people may have different faiths and may not necessarily follow the same beliefs as his. It was threatening to see that the other culture is clashing now with a religious value in front of her little kid.

Another teacher stated his concern about one aspect of the target culture that he thinks clashes with the students' culture. He expressed the idea in these terms:

Students may be affected or misled if these cultural ideas are not introduced well. If we speak about that boys and girls in the target culture leave the house at an early age and have relationships, if this is introduced without guidance, they may think that they would like to do like them. One of my students wants to leave her home and live alone. Of course this is not mentioned in the book, but she watches a lot of English movies and she wants to do the same and wants to have her own life. She doesn't want to marry and wants to just live alone. So, I keep discussing and guiding, but not blaming. So, it is not a good idea if the cultural concept would just be introduced only without comments, without showing the difference between them and us. And when you speak about religion, people just withdraw so I use their own thinking, 'if your daughter did this, would you be satisfied?' The student does not agree then. So, I use their logic first and then I support this with religion.

A teacher from another private school said "our culture is not the same as theirs". He supported his expression by referring also to the story "Prisoner of Zenda" that all students of the third secondary stage study. He mentioned that a few incidents in the story have been modified due to cultural differences and to maintain the conservatism of "this society". For example, Rudolf Elphberg, one of the main characters in the story, ate a "poisoned cake" while in the original text, the poison was put in his glass of wine. The teacher said that he tells his students about the right incident in the original text because students would possibly watch the movie or read the actual novel and then know that what they were taught was incorrect. The teacher, however, sounded hesitant as to whether teachers should always include the common aspects in addition to the different ones from the target culture:

I don't know if it is a good idea to focus on the common things or the different things. The benefit of discussing the common things is that students won't be shocked since these instances are the same, and this helps integration and building bridges with the other cultures but on the other hand our culture and the others' are not completely the same, so we need to discuss the differences, teaching the common features and teaching the odd ones. We focus more on teaching the common features, but if we teach the odd features, students might feel that the two cultures are not the same and we are not the same.

Is cross-cultural communication avoided in English teaching in Egypt?

With different degrees of agreement, all teachers have confirmed that cross-cultural communication in English teaching in Egypt is either neglected or not taken seriously.

One teacher from a governmental school expressed the idea that ignoring cross-cultural communication in English classes comes in the form of skipping the listening activities. He explained that no matter how efficient a teacher is, he/she cannot effectively

present the English language and culture without having the students listen to materials from "native speakers". He believes that having the students listen to native speakers on CDs or cassette player would be more effective because when students listen to the correct pronunciation of words, they are also learning something about the culture. He said that in the old English curriculum, teachers used to have cassette players and they could play the cassettes so that students would practice listening which also made "a big difference" in the student's level of fluency. Another teacher from the same school affirmed the same point and said that cross-cultural communication is avoided unless the student takes a private course where he/she gets exposed to these activities.

The theme that third secondary stage students do not care about learning the target culture or how to communicate in real life situations because of the final exam was also explicit in some teachers' statements. "Students do not care about learning the other culture or what information is presented to them, they only care about their scores and even the teachers themselves are concerned about this". Teachers mentioned that the education system in Egypt lacks innovation and creativity: "We do not for example encourage discussion of ideas or ask students to search for something on their own. Everything is traditional even our exams."

Teachers mentioned that they teach for the final standardized English test and that this is their main target because the students need to pass the test with a high score; otherwise, this teacher will not be seen as "excellent". One teacher said that she used to help her son to study for the final test and attract his attention to the "tricky parts" that most students of this stage get wrong on the final exam. She confirmed that the main and only objective in the third secondary stage is high scores. Another teacher also emphasized that teachers do not teach English so that students can communicate in the target language and culture, but rather to help the students get "their certificate".

Ability of Egyptian ESL teachers to teach cross-cultural communication activities to students

Teachers did not seem to agree whether they are capable of presenting and teaching cross-cultural communication activities to students.

They mentioned that if the relevant resources are available to teachers in class, like the internet for example, teachers will manage to carry out the task. They also mentioned that teachers at some points may need to be trained on how to gather and synthesize the information presented to them. They may need guidance, guidelines, and courses together with a relevant curriculum because lack of quality materials will affect the way the teacher presents tasks to students. A teacher from a private school also mentioned that teachers need to learn before they teach: "We need to develop the teachers to learn before teaching. Teachers need to be aware of different teaching methodologies". She elaborated on this by saying that if teachers have a variety of information from reading, searching, and accessing the internet, they would have enough sources and materials to teach. However, the lack of all the previous makes it a challenge for teachers. She said, "If the teacher is ready to prepare himself well to teach the different cultures, it is not difficult, but he needs to work on himself first before he works with his students".

One teacher from a private school, however, said that the syllabus gives teachers the chance to explore the target culture with the students inside the classroom because the syllabus is "well-equipped" but he also suggested providing the teachers with background information about these cultural instances discussed in the textbook since the teacher guide is not very useful.

One teacher from a governmental school mentioned that once a person finishes his academic higher education and starts to work in teaching, he/she would have to abide by

teaching a curriculum that targets the final exam skills where the examination of listening and communication does not exist. This requires the teacher to focus on teaching the students how to answer writing questions on the final exam. As a result, teachers do not prioritize speaking activities and do most of the work in writing on the board or solve a model exam exercise so that all their teaching time is directed towards how to help students pass the test, not how to communicate.

Another teacher from a different governmental school raised the point that if a teacher is in touch with the Western culture through watching English movies, TV series, shows, news, and has access to the internet to see what is happening in other countries "the US, Britain, India", then he/she may be able to teach the target culture. He said that if the teacher likes English as a language, not as a subject, then he/she may be capable of presenting it "properly" to the students. For example, if the teacher is following the news and knows what is happening in the US about the Muslim ban now, he/she may then initiate a discussion on this in his/her lessons and this makes a big difference. The same teacher however also referred to the final exam and that he is committed to the curriculum where the focus is on vocabulary and grammar, which makes it more likely for him to skip teaching the target culture. He said that finishing the curriculum would be the most essential task he is focused on as a teacher, especially that he is also instructed by his English supervisors on how to teach. He expressed his wishes to run his classes differently but said that this is not possible for him.

How teachers approach cross-cultural communication activities in English classes

Most teachers have stated that the way they approach cross-cultural activities in their English classes happens mainly through open discussion or listening activities.

Two teachers from a governmental school said that a significant amount of cultural information could be found in listening activities, so they read the listening script to the students since the classes are not equipped to play the audio tracks. They solve the exercise which focuses on specific information mentioned in the script like dates, numbers, and places with the students. Questions on listening exercises are often in the form of multiple choice questions. One of the two teachers mentioned that listening exercises do not focus much on speaking. The other teacher said that if there is something to be said about the listening excerpt in the teacher's guide, he mentions it and may give his comments and point of view; otherwise, he only explains the difficult vocabulary. One teacher from a private school also referred to the listening activities by mentioning that students think they are a waste of time and that they refuse to do such activities because they only come to school to get information on how they are going to correctly answer questions on the final exam. Students would like the teacher to focus on answering exam-like questions, grammar exercises, questions on the novel "Prisoner of Zenda", and paragraph writing. Therefore, if the teacher plays a listening activity, students might do it "for fun not to learn".

A teacher from a private school mentioned that the nature of the curriculum does not allow cross-cultural communication activities to happen in forms other than discussion. To initiate and prompt a discussion, teachers may ask the students questions such as "Do you like this or not?" "How do we see it in our culture" "Why do we see it this way in our culture?" "What is the difference?" and let the students judge. If, however, students would like to further discuss a particular point, the teacher may ask the students to search the internet to find more information. Some students are eager to do that while others are not interested at all. Another teacher from another private school said that she may take the students every once in a while to the computer lab where students present what they found in their search. She says that this gives students the chance to compare between cultural ideas

presented in the textbook and what they found on the internet which creates a "fruitful discussion". However, the teacher also stated that this depends on time, so she may do that once a week or once a month depending on priorities and students' needs.

A teacher from a private school also mentioned that there is an out-of-class activity called "International Day" that the whole school participates in once or twice a year. Students in groups choose a particular country, gather information about it, and represent that country on "International Day". Students get dressed in the costumes people of that country wear, and present its food, flag, and national holidays.

Differences in teaching cross-cultural communication activities in private and governmental schools

When asked whether they think the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities differ in private than in governmental schools, all teachers agreed that those types of activities might be given more emphasis in private schools for a few reasons.

Governmental school teachers have referred to the availability of more financial resources at private schools. Private schools can provide facilities like audio players, data show and computers to present audio-visual materials. In governmental schools, they said, the financial resources are too limited to provide such facilities and tools and therefore the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities in private schools may be more effective. One teacher said that in governmental schools they do not discuss much about the cross-cultural communication activities whereas in private schools, he believes, there would be more open discussions because the language skills of students in these schools are higher which would help them to discuss such cultural activities in better ways than in governmental schools

Another teacher said that in private language schools, students study the original version of novels and a strong English language curriculum in addition to the one provided for governmental schools. Private language school students have studied different English curricula since they were in elementary school, and therefore their English language skills may be better than students in governmental schools. For example, the teacher said that students in private language schools do the original version of the story of the third stage of secondary school (Grade 12) "Prisoner of Zenda" when they are in first preparatory stage (first stage of middle school). However, the more advanced English language level of students at private language schools does not guarantee that those students will necessarily get a higher score in the final standardized English exam than governmental school students because it often happens that students in private language schools do not take the governmental English curriculum seriously. Thus, a governmental school student may study harder for the final exam than a private language school student and end up getting a higher score.

Two of the private school teachers agreed that in governmental schools the teaching of the cross-cultural communication activities might be neglected or ignored for a few reasons. One teacher thinks that one of the reasons behind this is that students at governmental schools, and even the teachers themselves, might have not traveled abroad and may not be in direct contact with the other culture. He elaborated that these cultural activities may not be tackled at all in schools in Upper Egypt or other rural areas. Another teacher from the same private school said that one of the reasons for ignoring cultural activities in governmental schools is the number of students that may reach up to 80 as opposed to 20 or 28 at most in private schools. She says that teachers in governmental schools have "their own excuses" for disregarding cross-cultural communication activities in their instruction of English.

Are cross-cultural communication activities planned or spontaneously taught?

Four of the six teachers who were interviewed mentioned that they do not plan their cross-cultural communication activities before class and that they do them spontaneously in class for a few reasons.

Teachers reported that they may not be required to teach a particular cultural point. One teacher said that those types of activities are not the main focus in the syllabus because the most important thing for "Thanaweyya Amma" (the third stage of secondary school) is to study the language for the final standardized English test. They said that cross-cultural communication activities are important but they are not the main focus for students who do not care about these activities because their target is not to learn how to communicate in the target language and culture.

Two teachers, one from a governmental school and another from a private school, reported that they prepare the activities in the textbook beforehand. They said that planning is important to organize ideas and arrange points for discussion with students inside the classroom. They both agreed that what comes spontaneously in class is based on the reactions and questions of the students. For example, if a student initiates a conversation or asks about something that is unclear to him/her, the teacher needs to clarify and explain. Planning of ideas comes as the first step for these two teachers so that they could be ready for the students' questions and save time by having a productive discussion. They believe this also gives the students more space to express their points of view regarding the point under discussion. One teacher gave an example of a class he taught on the day of the interview. He says "today the reading passage was on 'Lord of the Flies'. If it has political background, I need to prepare this prior to class to be able to present it to the students".

Attitudes of Egyptian ESL students towards the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities inside the classroom

When asked about their students' attitudes towards learning cross-cultural communication, teachers in both types of school agreed almost unanimously that students do not reject the idea; however, reference to the final English exam was made again.

Teachers said that students get attentive when they hear about different ideas from those of their culture. They get involved because they hear about things that they have no knowledge of. Teachers said that this provides some variety inside the class, so instead of learning language all the time, students also get information about other countries and cultures. One teacher said students do not reject the target culture because they are already exposed to it in movies, cartoons, and theater. He said that some aspects of the target culture contradict the students' first culture, but some students still prefer these aspects of the target culture. He explained that one student in his class hates the Arab traditions and customs and wants to "break free" and when asked about his response to this student's attitude, the teacher replied "I don't argue about this because I know I need to be flexible and speak indirectly. The problem is in how we introduce our culture to them. The other culture seems free, natural and open, everything is available but here we impose restrictions".

One teacher from a governmental school said that his students' attitudes vary. One student may feel enthusiastic about learning a different culture while another may not even care because this type of student is focused on studying the materials to pass the test. The teacher mentioned that unfortunately the percentage of those "enthusiastic" students who are eager to learn about the target culture decreases every year. A small percentage of students now care about English as a language and regard it as a school subject that they would like to get the "full mark" on. There might be a student who likes English as a language, a student

who welcomes any new vocabulary even from outside the curriculum, but this clashes with the needs of the other students who are only targeting a high score on the final exam. When asked whether he promotes the curiosity of those students who are "enthusiastic" about learning the target culture, the teacher said that he used to do so in the past but now he ceased to, taking into account the students' weak level. He added that in recent years, students have lost their ambition to speak in class and that all they want the teacher to do is to write on the board the new vocabulary so that they can copy it into their notebooks. Students need the teacher to translate those words into Arabic and explain how to use grammar particles like "if, unless, must" so that in the final exam they would know how to answer the questions. Improving their communicative ability has ceased being a priority, and that is why it is very common to find high school students who would get the full mark on the final English exam but cannot speak one good complete English sentence.

Another teacher from the same governmental school also emphasized the same idea. He said that students do not take communication activities seriously. Feelings of shyness and embarrassment pervade the class atmosphere when they participate in English in class. If it happens and one student attempts to speak in English, the other students would mock him as if he (a boys only school) is doing something inappropriate. The teacher added that those students who are willing to communicate in English are a minority. He said that most students are unaware of the fact that speaking in English will benefit them later in their practical life. He tries to get across to them the idea that interviews in most companies now are held in English and that even in some institutions the medium of communication is English like in call centers where workers get phone calls from foreign customers abroad. He added that a teacher should always stress with the students the fact that communication in English is directly related to their future practical life and that "it is a necessity, not a luxury". He tries to motivate them by saying that in some professional institutions, the employees with

the most advanced English skills get promoted faster than others. He elaborates on his students' attitudes by saying "when I imitate the accent of a native speaker, students laugh as if this is something wrong. I deal with this problem by persisting and encouraging them to imitate *my* accent". On another occasion, the teacher said, he may encourage the students by acting out one of the dialogues in the assigned story "Prisoner of Zenda" with one of them, where the teacher applies the intonation rules and prompts the students to do the same. The teacher believes that students have developed this attitude towards the English language and culture since they were in primary and preparatory stages (elementary and middle schools) where students are not trained to deal with the language differently. They have always known that they should study English only for the test.

Two private school teachers have sensed that sometimes their students get embarrassed or shocked when they know about cultural differences. For example, one of the textbook units talks about festivals, and students learnt that some festivals in Japan may gather around seven million people while in Egypt "we have monuments, rivers, the Nile and we can't gather that huge number of people so students feel embarrassed for their country for having facilities that we don't benefit from", the teacher said. Another teacher in the same school mentioned also an instance when her students felt embarrassed for their country when she explained to them how the underground works in other countries and that people should wait in a line for their turn to get on. She said students laughed because the same behavior would not necessarily happen in their country.

The teachers have also mentioned cultural instances where students felt shocked. One of those instances, the teacher said, was when they discussed in one of the units how "Chinese people celebrate death by leaving food by the sea coast at night for the souls of dead people to come and eat it". He said that Muslim students in his class were shocked when they heard this because it is against their Islamic beliefs where the souls of dead people

become part of the afterlife and would not be resurrected at any time of the worldly life until the Day of Judgment. On another occasion the students felt offended when they read in the textbook that celebrating festivals in other countries includes cleaning the house, buying new clothes, visiting relatives whereas the Egyptian Sham el-Nessim (an ancient Egyptian festival that marks the beginning of the spring) was presented as a simplistic festival celebrated in the open gardens by eating salted fish and onions. The teacher said that students believe these are not the only things that mark Sham el-Nessim celebration in Egypt. In addition, students thought that there may be rather more important festivals in Egypt to be discussed.

Strategies used to express cross-cultural communication concepts

Teachers acknowledge that the strategies used for the expression of cross-cultural communication concepts differ from one language to another.

One teacher affirms that the "functions" of English are different from Arabic and that is why he believes it is important to focus on these functions because English is not the students' first language and students should know how to deal with particular situations in English. In Arabic, they spontaneously know how to function in similar situations because they witness their culture firsthand in reality through real life situations. However, because English is a foreign language, some attention should be given to the "functions" of the language since students do not experience real life situations unless they watch an English movie or listen to a song, which does not necessarily happen in English classes either because teachers do not have time, or students do not come to school.

One teacher's approach to the teaching of these strategies in English is by comparing the student's first language culture to English and introducing how a particular concept exists in both languages. He gives an example of this by saying that a cat "has seven lives" in "our culture", but in "their culture" it "has nine lives". Another teacher gives an example of

agreement in English. He says that phrases like "I agree", "I absolutely agree", and "I couldn't agree more" serve the purpose of expressing agreement in English. However in Arabic, he says, there is more emphasis by combining more than one phrase at a time to express the same function.

In conclusion, this chapter has provided the results that answer the two research questions in this study. To answer the first research question, an analysis of the "functions" section in six units of the *Hello!* textbook has revealed that the speech acts covered in the textbook are: giving advice, suggestions, wishes and regrets, offer to help, warnings, and persuading. Some critique of the speech acts activities was also provided.

To answer the second research question, the data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews was presented both quantitatively and qualitatively. Analysis of the teachers' questionnaires and interviews has shown some general trends. In general, teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with how cross-cultural communication activities are presented in the *Hello!* textbook. However, teachers also mentioned that they may avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture if they know it will shock their Egyptian students. In addition, reference to the final standardized English exam was explicit in the teachers' responses. Most teachers said that the teaching of the target culture is disregarded because the final exam does not test the students' knowledge of the target culture and thus the teachers' main focus is on the students' reading and writing skills rather than on their listening and speaking.

Chapter Five will provide some interpretation of the findings reported in this chapter. The discussion of the results in the next chapter is divided into two parts: a discussion of the results of the content analysis of six speech acts from the *Hello!* textbook, and a discussion of the results reported from the data provided by the teachers in the questionnaires and

interviews. The chapter also includes a few limitations to the present study before it provides

some recommendations for future research.

Chapter Five

Discussion

This chapter is divided into four parts: discussion of the results of the study, limitations of the study, recommendations for further future research, and conclusion.

Discussion of results

The first part of the discussion of results deals with addressing the analysis of the speech acts activities in the "functions" section of six units in the *Hello!* textbook, which showed one main issue as far as pragmatics is concerned, that is lack of context. Context is an important pragmatic constituent without which the successful performance of a given speech act is unguaranteed. The second part of the discussion of results attends to the analysis resulting from the teacher questionnaire and interviews, which mainly revealed that teaching the target culture of English is neglected for reasons including of lack of class equipment and the fact that the final standardized English exam does not test students' knowledge of aspects of the target culture.

Content analysis of *Hello!* textbook

Lack of context

In the first part of Chapter Four, the speech act content in six units of the *Hello!* Textbook was analyzed. The six speech acts found are: giving advice, making and responding to suggestions, expressing wishes and regrets, offer to help, giving and responding to warnings, and persuading.

One major issue reported when analyzing the speech act content in those six units is the lack or absence of context for some speech act phrases and words. For example, one of the ways the textbook has employed to introduce the students to the context of the speech act under consideration is to provide listening audio track to which students listen and identify

particular phrases related to the speech act presented. However some activities introduce phrases or words with no context and prompt the students to use them in pair work or role plays.

One major constituent of pragmatic competence is context and without context, students are not likely to reach the desired level of pragmatic competence in social interactions. Doyle (2007) says that meaning is affected by context since one utterance in one particular situation could mean something but when employed in another situation, it could mean something totally different. This will depend on the who and when and where aspects of the situation. If students are not provided with the contexts of use for the speech act phrases, then they are likely to use the speech act phrases inaccurately, which may result in miscommunication and misunderstanding.

This is in line with what several researchers (Backman & Plamer, 1996, 2010; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972) have argued, namely, that the two major aspects of pragmatic competence are the user's knowledge about language use in context in addition to his/her ability to apply these language functions in real social situations. In this case of Egyptian students who study the *Hello!* textbook, the students' knowledge about language use in context is a matter of concern since some of the speech acts phrases and words presented in the *Hello!* textbook lack context in addition to the fact that even when the phrase is contextualized, the context is very limited to particular situations. For example, in unit 14, the speech act of giving warnings is introduced by phrases like "watch out" and "be careful" which are limited to physical danger, a snake and a car as the unit mentions. While this context is valid, it is not the only context where students would be exposed to warnings. Other social situations include a warning from an employer, weather forecast, or even among friends.

Taguchi (2012) mentions that the development of pragmatic competence is a long-term complex process which requires time and the interplay of language, its users and the context in which it is used. Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) define two essential components required for the development of pragmatic competence. These two are 'pragmalinguistics' and 'sociopragmatics'. The first refers to the fact that in order to perform language functions, available linguistic resources have to be available for language users whereas the second refers to the user's understanding and evaluation of the context in order to perform particular language functions using those available linguistic resources (as cited in Taguchi, 2012: 10). Taguchi (2012) gives an example when someone refuses another's invitation. This refusal requires the speaker to know the appropriate forms and vocabulary to use. In fact, the speaker would need to know whether this refusal is socially appropriate in that particular context and situation in the target culture (10). This means that in order for a learner to successfully perform the speech act of refusal, he/she needs to attend to the context, i.e. the interlocutor, the topic, the settings, and the relationship between him/her and the interlocutor(s). Based on all these factors, the learner would then employ the linguistic aspects of the language that would fit within the context in question.

For these reasons, more context needs to be provided for the speech acts phrases and words presented in the *Hello!* textbook if curriculum designers and teachers aspire to see their students reach a higher level of pragmatic competence.

Different types of contexts: appropriateness in social situations

Successful communication in different situations is bound by aspects like using different registers based on the context, the audience, and the communicative purpose. Cappelen (2007) says that

[i]f you vary the context of utterance enough: audience, conversational context, the

background knowledge, you can get any sentence to communicate different

propositions. One central task for those interested in pragmatics is to identify and

classify such patterns of inter-contextual variability (3)

It was noted that the *Hello!* textbook does not provide enough situations for the

students to see how a given speech act is used based on factors in the quoted Chappelen

(2007) passage. For example, the speech act of giving advice, introduced in unit five of the

textbook, is presented to the students in the form of giving and receiving advice from peers

only. There are a variety of other situations where this speech act would be used with

different interlocutors, for example, giving advice to a child, a student, an

employee/employer, a sibling, a son/daughter, or a customer. The textbook has not employed

any of these other examples. This lack of different situations in the textbook will probably

lead students to use the same speech act utterance regardless of the audience, which may

result in unwelcome consequences. Mey (2001) mentions that in order for a successful speech

to happen, it has to abide by the situation. In other words, "there are no speech acts, but only

situated speech acts, or instantiated pragmatic acts" (218). However, even though textbooks

do not provide enough context for learners, Turkan and Celik (2007) believe that it is the

responsibility of language teachers to integrate teaching aspects of the target culture in their

ESL classes and that teachers should not think this is a simple task since it requires a lot of

selection, adaptation, and material development.

Fetzer (2004) explains that when an uttered statement or expression is unacceptable,

this means that the way it is employed in speech is not permissible whereas an acceptable

utterance on the other hand means that it is normal or permissible. Crystal (1997), however,

raises the point that deciding on whether a given utterance is acceptable or not is very

challenging in practice where native speakers themselves may sometimes disagree on

whether an utterance is normal or even possible in speech. This may be due to the fact that native speakers of the target language and culture differ according to their regional and social background, age, and even personal preferences. It is for this reason that ESL learners should be provided with as many contexts as possible to cover a variety of backgrounds, age, and the speakers' preferences where one utterance may be regarded as permissible in one situation but not in another, which brings about appropriateness as an essential element when performing a speech act.

Fetzer (2004) defines appropriateness as:

If the performance of a communicative action is seen as produced and interpreted in accordance with a speech community's ethnographic norms and strategies for a particular communicative action, it is assigned the status of an appropriate communicative action. Should it violate one or more of the norms and strategies, and their underlying rules and regulations, it is assigned the status of an inappropriate communicative action (89).

In unit 11, the speech act of "offer to help" is introduced to the students where strong emphasis is put on offering help to neighbors and friends. In unit 17, the speech act of persuasion is introduced and again the situation provided to the students in order to practice "persuasion" is to discuss with people in the same neighborhood how they would like to reform the area they live in, so that students practice "persuasive" utterances. In spite of the fact that the speech acts in units 14 and 17 are different, the situations and the interlocutors are relatively similar, i.e. neighbors and friends. More situations could have been provided throughout the textbook so that students would learn more about the circumstances that determine employing one speech act utterance rather than another, and hence appropriateness in social situations.

Teachers' perception of the importance of teaching the target culture

As we have previously seen in reviewing the perspective of scholars interested in the integration of cultural aspects along with linguistic facts in contemporary language classrooms (Valdes, 1995; Byram, 1997; Byram & Fleming, 1998), there is a general consensus that in order for successful communication in the target language to take place, learners need the background knowledge on linguistic aspects of the language as well as the social skills of the target culture so that they could be able to make use of the language appropriately (Adaskou et al., 1990; Zhao & Throssell, 2011). Data resulting from the teachers' questionnaires and interviews generally shows that teachers in both governmental and private schools are aware of the importance of teaching the target culture in instructed language learning in order to produce proficient users of the language.

Recall that the second item on Table 4.3 showed that 52% of the governmental and private school teachers, i.e., a relatively high percentage, have reported agreement/total agreement that they would avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture if they know it will shock the students. Interestingly, when the results of the questionnaire were analyzed more closely, it was discovered that while 60.6% of the teachers were from governmental schools, around 35% only were from private schools. In addition to this, 48% of the governmental school teachers reported that they think most English lessons should include information about the culture of English speaking countries whereas around 65% of private school teachers reported the same. These statistics are indicative of the difference in the degree of open-mindedness towards the teaching of the target culture exhibited by teachers in each type of school.

This is an indication of how both governmental and private school teachers perceive the importance of teaching the target culture. Generally, it was noted that more governmental

school teachers avoid discussing "shocking" differences between the students' first culture and the target culture. A lower percentage of private school teachers, however, would do that and this could be due to a few reasons, some of which the teachers have reported in the interviews. First of all, private school teachers teach two curricula, the governmental *Hello!* textbook curriculum in addition to a higher level curriculum of English. This means that teachers at private schools encounter more cultural instances through the higher English level textbook that they have to teach than teachers at governmental schools. Second, teachers at governmental schools lack the facilities and resources that would help them teach and involve the students in the teaching of the target culture. For example, during the interviews, teachers from governmental schools mentioned that classes are not equipped to play audio-visual materials and that the alternative to that is reading the listening script out loud to the students' in class. While this is not the best alternative since students miss many of the features that exist in real conversations between two speakers like intonation, voice pitch, pace, and how the exchange goes, it might also be argued that a teacher can easily skip this alternative since it is a "listening" activity that the final exam does not target. On the other hand, in private schools classes are equipped and the teachers have the facilities to play the relevant audio-visual materials. This means that resources and equipment play a big role in how the target culture is presented and taught inside ESL classes in Egyptian schools.

Hello! textbook and speech acts content

Textbooks have a crucial role in the teaching of cross-cultural communication and speech acts. Several researchers (Aksoyalp & Toprak, 2015; Rodriguez, 2015) indicated that their analysis of textbook activities that target students' pragmatic competence have been deficient in comparison to activities that target linguistic competence. While teachers may be aware of the fact, they are also unlikely to bring extra material to supplement this deficiency in the pragmatic functions activities.

The statistics resulting from the part of the questionnaire on the *Hello!* textbook and its content of speech acts have shown some general trends where governmental and private school teachers collectively tend to agree or disagree. For example, the first item on Table 4.6 shows that more than 50% of the teachers tend to agree that most units of the textbook integrate teaching the "functions" of the target culture. In addition, an even significantly higher percentage of teachers (around 97% of governmental school teachers and 95% of private schools') disagree that students can still master English without practicing how to communicate (the fourth item, Table 4.6). Another item (the fifth item, Table 4.6) where the majority of teachers agree (81% of governmental school teachers and 87% of private schools') states that "it is almost impossible to teach how to communicate in English by using just the textbook". These trends show that teachers from both types of school have some "common ground" principles that they share.

On the other hand, however, the statistics on this part of the questionnaire have also shown some discrepancy in the percentages provides from governmental and private school teachers on several items. For example, when asked whether they are satisfied with the ways the textbook teaches students how to communicate in English (the second item, Table 4.6), governmental school teachers affirmed this with a percentage of 39.4% whereas private school teachers did with 23.5%. In addition, nearly half of the governmental school teachers also affirmed that enough space of the textbook is devoted to communication activities whereas only 35.3% of private school teachers did (the third item, Table 4.6).

There may be a few reasons behind the discrepancies in these percentages. Governmental school teachers' exposure to textbooks and materials is limited to the *Hello!* textbook and the teacher's guide. In other words, since the movement of teachers from governmental schools to private schools is very limited in Egypt, teachers at governmental schools are likely to be only teaching the *Hello!* textbook throughout their teaching

experience years. On the other hand, teachers at private schools are exposed to a variety of teaching materials. In addition to the fact that private school teachers teach a higher level English textbook along with the *Hello!* textbook, every time the teacher moves to another school, he/she gets exposed to a different textbook since private schools do not have a standardized higher level English textbook. This means that in general private school teachers would have the capability of critiquing materials and textbooks better than governmental school teachers do due to their exposure to a variety of teaching materials and textbooks, which may be one reason the statistics above happened this way.

This in fact is also supported by the responses reported by governmental and private school teachers on the sixth item (Table 4.6) that while 63.6% of governmental school teachers responded affirmatively that "the teacher's guide to the textbook includes information about how to communicate in English and how to present this to students", only 41.2% of private school teachers did.

Obstacles impeding the teaching of the target culture

Out of the data resulting from the Egyptian ESL teachers' questionnaires and interviews, results show that there are some obstacles that need to be overcome before the teaching of the target culture in Egyptian schools becomes effective.

First of all is the dilemma of teaching for the standardized final English test. Almost all teachers, including private school teachers, have mentioned that the final English exam is an essential factor in the way they approach the curriculum and teach their classes. All teachers mentioned that the final exam does not target the listening and speaking skills and that is one significant reason why teachers may ignore these two skills in their teaching. Private school teachers have reported that even when they would like to have students do a listening activity, students resent the idea and they may do it only "for fun not to learn".

Therefore, students' attitude towards the test drives the teacher's behavior in class and the way he/she teaches.

Milleret (2007) asserts that pragmatic failures in social situations often result in undesirable consequences that may include, embarrassments, laughter, or even sometimes anger. Many ESL/EFL learners find it difficult to understand the particular meaning of a given speech act. In addition, they also struggle with producing speech acts appropriately using appropriate language of the target culture. Boxer and Pickering (1995) also state that grammatical errors are more likely to be tolerated by native speakers of the target language, unlike pitfalls in pragmatics which may even get across as a sign of impoliteness and rudeness. If the Egyptian government exam committee would like to see some progress in those students' listening and speaking skills, which are two essential skills in the teaching of the target culture and speech acts, they need to develop solutions to this problem. Along these lines, Milleret (2007) asserts that evaluation of student proficiency should be based on both grammatical and culturally appropriate discourse and language usage. She advocates gathering authentic examples of speech acts in addition to developing an assessment scheme to measure students' understanding and performance of speech acts at all levels of language proficiency, which could be challenging but will eventually result in more competent users of the target language.

The second obstacle is resources provided for the teachers in order to carry out the arduous task of teaching the target culture. On the questionnaire, 96% of the teachers reported that they are capable of presenting many aspects of the target culture to their students. In the interviews, however, teachers have responded affirmatively on one condition i.e. having enough resources and facilities. To elaborate, governmental school teachers do not have the basic facilities inside the classroom to be able to present the target culture to their students. The absence of computers, projectors, audio players, and all types of data show is one

important factor why this task of teaching the target culture is almost impossible. Researchers (Zhao & Throssell, 2011) have also indicated that teachers in many cases do not have access to the resources that would pave their way to teach detailed cultural content appropriately.

In addition to this, teachers at private and governmental schools mentioned that they need to be trained on how to approach the target culture, especially the aspects that they find "shocking" to students because teaching the target culture is not only about teaching the "common ground". Teachers need to have a variety of resources to be able to take on the task. Hinkel (2014) raised an issue regarding the difficulty of teaching "visible" versus "invisible" culture or what Rodriguez (2015) referred to as "surface culture" and "deep culture". Many aspects of the "visible" or "surface" culture could probably be best taught using audio-visual material resources, i.e., listening to a song or watching a movie since this level of culture expresses the superficial aspects of culture that are relatively easier to "view" and discuss than the "invisible" or "deep" level, which would rather be taught by reading not only literature, but also advice columns, editorials, a major contemporary social issue in one of the countries speaking the target language, or even just a survey of what types of news makes it to print or to the internet. In their responses, teachers almost all referred only to aspects of the "visible" or "surface" culture but not to "invisible" or "deep" culture which Hinkel (2014) refers to as much more complex because they include the socio-cultural beliefs and values of subcultures which are often individual and varied. Even the cultural insiders are often unaware of them, which makes it a challenging task to investigate them. Reimann (2009) has analyzed various textbooks provided by local and international publishers in the Japanese context and found that either cultural information is limited to the "visible" or "surface" culture like tourist information, or that the content is arbitrary. The researcher mentions that Japanese learners of ESL are encouraged to accept the target culture rather than investigate it. This, in fact, does not help bridge the cultural gaps or broaden the students

understanding of the target culture. In other words, such cultural content does not help to dispel cultural misunderstandings.

The third obstacle is the students' attitudes. This may be one of the most challenging problems that is to be resolved over a long period of time. It would need consistent efforts and dedication on part of the teachers to alter the students' attitudes towards learning about the target culture. In the interviews, teachers have mentioned that some students are not motivated to learn about the target culture and they said the reason behind that is the standardized final exam. Students study English for the test, not to learn how to communicate in the target culture. In other words, they study English as a subject to pass the exam, not as a second language to be used for interaction with other speakers. This of course affects the way teachers teach as well since they want to cater to the student's needs, i.e. if teachers know that learning about the target culture is not one of the students' priorities, then teachers are most likely to ignore it in their teaching. These findings provide further support for Afrin's (2013) claims about the reasons behind the reluctance of ESL teachers and curriculum designers to include cultural material in curricula.

On the other end of the spectrum, teachers mentioned that some students are so avid about learning the target culture that they would like to adopt many aspects of it. For example, a teacher mentioned that one of his students rejects and even "hates" many concepts in her first culture, the Arab culture. She aspires to leave her home, have a more private life, live alone and not get married; all are aspects that might be contrary to the students' first culture, but that the student thinks reflect the target culture. While exposure to the target culture is beneficial in bridging cultural gaps and resolving communication problems and misunderstandings among people from different countries, adopting the target culture is not the main goal behind teaching it in ESL classes, which is an issue that may not be always clear to the students, and sometimes even to the ESL teachers themselves.

Limitations of the study

This study has primarily focused on examining the teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture and speech acts. By means of a teacher questionnaire and interviews, the researcher collected the data and ran a quantitative and qualitative analysis. In other words, the study relied on what the teachers reported they do as far as the teaching of the target culture in their classes is implemented. However, no class observations have been made to inform the results or provide more data on what the teachers actually do in their classes.

The study has also analyzed six units of the *Hello!* textbook where there is content related to speech acts. While the results of this part of the study have shown that in many of the activities in the textbook there was a lack of context, the researcher has not made any visits to the teachers' classes to observe whether they provide context to the speech acts phrases and words. In other words, context may be missing in the textbook but provided by the teachers in their classes.

Another limitation of the study relates to the participants. First, the results in this study relied on the data provided by 50 teachers only as representative of governmental and private school teachers in Egypt, 17 from private schools and 33 from governmental schools. The researcher believes that if this study is to be replicated, the target participants should be of a higher number. Second, due to difficulty in obtaining access to teachers and the culturally embedded resistance to participating in studies, it was not possible to set generalizable selection criteria as far as gender, age, and years of teachers' teaching experience are concerned.

In addition, while this study has collected data from governmental and private school teachers to examine their perception of the importance of teaching the target culture in ESL

classes in Egypt, no data has been collected from Egyptian students in governmental or private schools to see whether the students' attitudes reported by the teachers in the questionnaires and the interviews are accurate.

Recommendations for future research

This research study has provided some foundation upon which future research studies could build. One issue to be considered for future research is the students' production of speech acts. Researchers may collect data that provide some insights into the actual students' performance as far as the speech acts presented in the *Hello!* textbook are concerned: giving advice, making and responding to suggestions, expressing wishes and regrets, offer to help, giving and responding to warnings, and persuading. In addition, the study may collect data from the students' to investigate their attitudes towards learning the target culture and whether students with positive attitudes tend to have higher pragmatic competence.

The current research study has reported on a number of challenges that hinder effective teaching of the target culture and cross-cultural communication activities and speech acts in ESL classes in Egyptian governmental and private schools. The problems identified here could be amplified by further research which could then inform the work of a task force to remedy the problems.

Implications of the study

Based on the findings of this study, there are some implications to be considered for making instructional decisions in the context of teaching the target culture in Egyptian governmental and private schools. First of all, since the final standardized English exam is highly affecting the way teachers teach culture and approach it in their ESL/EFL classes, the final exam committee needs to consider integrating aspects of the target culture in the final exam so that teachers and learners give it more attention. In addition, since the *Hello!*

textbook tackles listening and speaking in the objectives of every unit, these two skills should be assessed in the final exam as well. This is also due to the finding that this study has shown, i.e. the teachers and learners tend to disregard what the final exam does not assess, and therefore all objectives in the textbook should be assessed on the final exam.

Second, the study has also revealed that teachers in many cases may not have enough resources to teach the target culture in their ESL/EFL classes. This lack of resources has been manifested in the form of unequipped classes, mostly in governmental schools, and insufficient informational sources on the target culture that the teachers in governmental and private schools can consult. One of the first steps to be taken to help resolve these issues in governmental schools is to equip classes or provide teachers with alternatives to teach the listening and speaking skills that constitute a major part of teaching the target culture. In addition, while a significantly large percentage of teachers in both types of school have reported they are capable of presenting many aspects of the target culture to their students, they have also indicated that they may need training courses to help them approach some aspects of the target culture that they are not familiar with. Providing teachers with sufficient knowledge on how to present the target culture to Egyptian students is an essential move towards motivating them to integrate the target culture further in their ESL/EFL teaching.

Third, since students' attitudes has been an area of major concern to teachers when they teach the target culture inside their English classrooms, some measures need to be taken care of so that negative students' attitudes could be addressed and resolved. This means that the Egyptian Ministry of Education needs to provide a special training for teachers in order for them to learn how to deal with different students' attitudes. While this may be a helpful technique, the Ministry may also need to deal with students' attitudes separately by giving the students workshops on the profits they can reap out of studying the target culture. This can take place outside of class time and over an extended period, i.e. a semester or an academic

year so that students acknowledge the importance of studying about the culture and take it as seriously as they take the linguistic aspects of language.

These implications will need the collaboration of many teachers, supervisors, and even students at the school level, as well as curriculum designers, exam committees, and educational policy makers at the level of the Egyptian Ministry of Education. This is to say that coordination between all previously mentioned parties is an essential purposeful step towards better instruction and awareness of the target culture.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research study has explored the perceptions of Egyptian governmental and private ESL teachers regarding the importance of teaching the target culture in ESL classes. The framework of the study is pragmatic functions, particularly speech acts. The nationally studied *Hello!* textbook was investigated to examine how the speech acts of the target culture are presented. This textbook is used by the majority of Egyptian students since teachers in all governmental and private Arabic and language national schools use it in their teaching.

This study follows a quantitative/qualitative methodology that aimed to answer two research questions. The first question is concerned with exploring the "functions" section in six units of the *Hello!* textbook in order to see the extent to which pragmatic functions and speech acts are exemplified in the textbook that teaches the majority of students in governmental and private schools in Egypt. The six speech acts the textbook tackles are giving advice, making and responding to suggestions, expressing wishes and regrets, offer to help, giving and responding to warnings, and persuading. In addition, data was collected from 50 governmental and private school teachers in the form of questionnaires (17 from private schools and 33 from governmental schools) and interviews. The data resulting from the

questionnaires is presented in the form of statistics and that resulting from the interviews and content analysis is in the form of descriptive analysis.

The results of the study show that there are some pitfalls as far as the speech acts activities in the *Hello!* textbook are concerned. For example, lack of context was one major issue that the activities had. Some speech acts phrases and words were provided with no context of use. In addition, the activities did not include different registers and situations where students can learn about occasions when it is socially appropriate to perform a given speech act or how one speech act utterance would be permissible on one occasion but not on another.

The results of the study also show that teaching the target culture in Egyptian governmental and private schools is avoided by many teachers and students (as reported by the teachers). A major reason behind this is the fact that the final standardized English exam does not test the students' knowledge of aspects of the target culture, in addition to the fact that this final exam only focuses on the reading and writing skills whereas speaking and listening are neglected. This affects the students' and teachers' perceptions towards teaching the target culture. In other words, teaching cross-cultural communication activities in ESL classes in Egyptian schools is not a priority for teachers since they need to cater to their students' needs of getting a high score on their final English exam. This means that classroom instruction is limited to teaching linguistic aspects of the target language like grammar and vocabulary whereas teaching of the target culture is kept at a minimum, if taught at all.

The results of the study also show that private school teachers tend to be more aware of the teaching of culture than governmental school teachers are. One of the main reasons behind this finding, teachers have reported, is the lack of technological resources at governmental schools as opposed to private schools where classes are well-equipped for the

teachers' use. One more significant finding is that even when culture is taught in classes, teachers in both types of school tend to suppress the "shocking" aspects of the target culture in their teaching. In other words, they tend to rely more on teaching the "common ground" between the students' first culture and the target culture.

The study then concluded with some limitations that include the relatively small sample size of participants and the fact that no class observations have been made to verify what the teachers have reported about their teaching. Suggestions for further future research for which the current study may have established some foundations have therefore been proposed.

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Appendices
Appendix- A
Questionnaire
(For Teachers Only)

Please read carefully each of the questions in the following two sets then tick whether you "totally disagree", "disagree", "agree", or "totally agree". This questionnaire is anonymous and your answers will be used for research purposes ONLY.

Teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture:

Question	Totally agree	agree	disagree	Totally disagree
1- I think teaching of the target culture (English culture) is an important factor when Egyptian students' are learning English				
2- I may avoid teaching a particular aspect of the target culture (English culture) if I know it will shock the students.				
3- In my classes, I may include a cultural component from the target culture (English culture) that is not included in the textbook.				
4- I believe that English language teaching should only teach language components like grammar, spelling, and pronunciation.				
5- I believe that I am capable of presenting many aspects of the target culture (English culture) to my students.				
6- I think most English lessons should include information about the culture of English speaking countries.				
7- Excluding the target culture (English culture) from course books does not affect the students' language development.				
8- Communication with native speakers of English is not hindered by the students' lack of knowledge of the target culture (English culture).				

***Hello!* textbook and speech acts content:**

Question	Totally agree	agree	disagree	Totally disagree
7. The textbook integrates teaching the "functions" of the target culture (English culture) in most units.				
8. I am satisfied with the way the textbook teaches students how to communicate in English.				
9. I think enough space (content) of the textbook is devoted to communication activities.				
10. Students can still master English without necessarily practicing how to communicate.				
11. It is almost impossible to teach how to communicate in English by using just the textbook.				
12. The teacher's guide to the textbook includes information about how to communicate in English and how to present this to students.				

Biographical information:

Gender (male/female)
Age:
Current work place:
Current work place is a/an (governmental school/experimental school/private but not an international school)
Former work places:
Years of teaching experience:
Grade you are currently teaching (first, second, or third secondary)
Are you currently using the *Hello!* textbook for the third secondary stage in your teaching or have used it at any point before? (yes/no)

If you agree to be contacted by the researcher to further discuss your answers in a follow-up interview, please provide the following:

Teacher's name:
Phone number:
Email address:

Appendix – B
Interview questions
(For Teachers Only)

1- Have you faced any challenges while teaching the cross-cultural communication activities in your English classes? Why/ why not?

2- Why do you think teaching the cross-cultural communication activities is or is not important in English classes?

3- What do you think are some of the benefits or drawbacks of teaching cross-cultural communication activities in English classes?

4- Do you think cross-cultural communication is overlooked in English teaching in Egypt? Why/ why not?

5- Do you think teachers in Egypt are capable of presenting/teaching cross-cultural communication activities to Egyptian students in English classes? Why/ why not?

6- How do you teach/ present cross-cultural communication activities in English classes?

7- Do you think teaching cross-cultural communication activities is different in governmental than in private schools? If so, in what ways?

8- Do you plan the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities in your English classes, or does it come spontaneously?

9- What do you think about your students' attitudes towards the teaching of cross-cultural communication activities inside the classroom?

10- Do you think strategies used to express cross-cultural communication concepts are different in English than in Arabic? If so, in what ways?

Appendix C- Arabic translation of teacher questionnaire
ملحق أ
استبيان
(للمدرسين فقط)

من فضلك إقرأ/ إقرأي بعناية كلا من الأسئلة في المجموعتين الآتيتين واختر/ اختاري "أختلف تماما"، "أختلف"، "أوافق"، "أوافق بشدة". لن يذكر اسم أي شخص يشترك في هذا الاستبيان وسيتم استخدام الإجابات بهدف البحث العلمي فقط.

وجهة نظر المدرسين في أهمية تدريس الثقافة الإنجليزية:

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	أختلف	أختلف تماما	السؤال
				1- أعتبر تدريس ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية عاملا رئيسيا في دراسة الطلاب المصريين للغة الإنجليزية.
				2- قد أتجنب تدريس جانب معين من الثقافة الإنجليزية لو علمت أنه سيصدم الطلاب.
				3- قد أدرس في فصولي جانب من الثقافة الإنجليزية لا يتم تناوله في الكتاب المقرر.
				4- أؤمن أن تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية يجب أن يقتصر على تدريس العناصر اللغوية مثل القواعد والإملاء والنطق.
				5- أستطيع تقديم عدة جوانب من الثقافة الإنجليزية للطلاب.
				6- يجب أن تحتوي معظم فصول اللغة الإنجليزية على ثقافة البلاد الناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية.
				7- استبعاد الجانب الثقافي للغة الإنجليزية من الكتاب المقرر لا يؤثر على تقدم مستوى اللغة لدى الطلاب.
				8- عدم معرفة الطلاب بالثقافة الإنجليزية لا يعوق تواصلهم مع متحدثي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أولى.

كتاب *Hello!* المقرر ومحتوى الأفعال اللغوية الإنجليزية:

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	أختلف	أختلف تماما	السؤال
				1- يتضمن الكتاب المقرر تدريس "وظائف"/ثقافة اللغة الإنجليزية في معظم الدروس.
				2- يدرس الكتاب المقرر كيفية المحادثة والتواصل باللغة الإنجليزية بشكل كاف.
				3- يخصص الكتاب المقرر قدر كاف من أنشطة المحادثة والتواصل باللغة الإنجليزية.
				4- يمكن لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية إتقان اللغة بدون دراسة كيفية التواصل في المحادثات.
				5- ليس من الممكن تدريس التواصل/ المحادثة بالإنجليزية من الكتاب المقرر فقط.
				6- يتضمن دليل المدرسين الملحق بالكتاب المقرر معلومات عن كيفية التواصل باللغة الإنجليزية وكيفية تقديم ذلك للطلاب.

البيانات الشخصية:
النوع (ذكر/أنثى)
السن:
مكان العمل الحالي:
مكان العمل الحالي (مدرسة حكومية/ مدرسة تجريبية/ مدرسة خاصة ولكن ليست دولية)
أماكن العمل السابقة:
عدد سنوات الخبرة في التدريس:
الصف الدراسي الذي تقوم/تقومي بتدريسه الآن (المرحلة الأولى الثانوية/المرحلة الثانية الثانوية/المرحلة الثالثة الثانوية)
هل تقوم بتدريس كتاب *Hello!* المقرر للمرحلة الثانوية الثالثة الآن أو قمت بتدريسه من قبل؟ (نعم/ لا)

في حالة الموافقة على اتصال باحثة هذه الرسالة بك لمناقشة بعض إجاباتك في مقابلة لاحقة، من فضلك أكمل البيانات الآتية:
الاسم:
رقم التليفون:
البريد الإلكتروني:

Appendix D- Arabic translation of interview questions
ملحق ب
أسئلة المقابلة الشخصية
(للمدرسين فقط)

1- هل واجهتك أي صعاب أثناء تدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية؟ لماذا/لماذا لا؟

2- في وجهة نظرك لماذا قد يكون تدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي مهماً أو غير مهم في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية؟

3- في وجهة نظرك ما هي بعض فوائد أو عيوب تدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية؟

4- هل تعتقد/تعتقدين أنه يتم إهمال تدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي باللغة الإنجليزية في مصر؟ لماذا/لماذا لا؟

5- هل تعتقد/تعتقدين أن المدرسين في مصر لديهم القدرة على تقديم/تدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي الخاصة باللغة الإنجليزية للطلاب المصريين؟ لماذا/ لماذا لا؟

6- كيف تدرس/تدرسين أ أنشطة التواصل الثقافي في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية؟

7- هل تعتقد/تعتقدين أن تدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي للغة الإنجليزية يختلف في المدارس الحكومية عنه في المدارس الخاصة؟ كيف؟

8- هل تعد/تعدين خطة لتدريس أنشطة التواصل الثقافي الخاصة باللغة الإنجليزية قبل الفصل أو تدرسها/تدرسينها بشكل تلقائي داخل الفصل؟

9- في وجهة نظرك ما هو موقف طلابك من دراسة أنشطة التواصل الثقافي الخاصة باللغة الإنجليزية داخل الفصل؟ لماذا؟

10- هل تعتقد/تعتقدين أن الطرق المستخدمة للتعبير عن الأفكار الثقافية الخاصة باللغة الإنجليزية مختلفة عن تلك المستخدمة في اللغة العربية؟ كيف؟

Appendix E- Informed consent form

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study
_____

Project Title: Perceptions of Egyptian ESL Teachers of Teaching Aspects of the Target Culture: The Case of Culturally-Oriented Speech Acts in Textbooks

Principal Investigator: Fatma Abdelrahman

*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to investigate how the target culture of English is taught in the *Hello* textbook that all Egyptian students in governmental and private schools study. This analysis is to see how the speech acts of the target culture are presented in the textbook. The second part of the study is dedicated to looking into Egyptian ESL/EFL teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching the target culture on one hand, and the presentation of the speech acts in the textbook on the other. The findings may be published and presented. The expected duration of your participation is no more than 15-20 minutes in case of the questionnaire and 45-60 minutes in case of the interview.

The procedures of the research will be as follows:
Fifty teachers from governmental schools and another 50 from private schools will be asked to fill in a questionnaire. The data from the questionnaire will be in the form of statistics. In addition, four teachers from governmental schools and another four from private schools will be invited for a follow-up interview.

*There will not be any risks or discomforts associated with this research.

*There will not be any immediate benefits to you from this research. However, the findings may be informative to interested teachers who would like to follow up on the results of the research and they may be sent to all interested participants, after the research study has been completed and approved by the university.

*The information you provide for purposes of this research is confidential.

*Questions about the research and my rights, should be directed to Fatma Abdelrahman at (02) 2615 1911

*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature   _____
Printed Name   _____
Date   _____

Appendix F- Arabic translation of informed consent form

الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة

استمارة موافقة مسبقة للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية

عنوان البحث : كيفية إدراك مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية المصريين لتدريس جوانب من الثقافة الإنجليزية: الأفعال اللغوية الإنجليزية في الكتاب المقرر للمرحلة الثانوية.

الباحث الرئيسي: فاطمة الزهراء عبدالرحمن محمد عبدالرحمن- مدرسة لغة إنجليزية كلغة ثانية
البريد الالكتروني: felzahraa@aucegypt.edu
الهاتف: 1911 2615 (02)

انت مدعو للمشاركة فى دراسة بحثية تتعلق بمفهوم مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية عن تدريس جوانب من الثقافة الإنجليزية خاصة الأفعال اللغوية في اللغة الإنجليزية والتي يتم تدريسها في الكتاب المقرر للمرحلة الثانوية.

هدف الدراسة هو بحث كيفية تقديم الثقافة الإنجليزية في كتاب *Hello* والذي يدرسه جميع الطلاب المصريين في المدارس الحكومية والخاصة. هذا التحليل يهدف إلى معرفة الطريقة التي يتم إتباعها حين تدرس الأفعال اللغوية للثقافة الإنجليزية في الكتاب المقرر. الجزء الثاني من الدراسة البحثية يختص ببحث مفهوم مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية المصريين عن أهمية تدريس الثقافة الإنجليزية بالإضافة إلى الأفعال اللغوية في الكتاب المقرر للمرحلة الثانوية. نتائج هذه الدراسة البحثية قد يتم نشرها أو تقديمها في المؤتمرات العلمية.

نتائج البحث ستنشر فى دوريه متخصصه أو مؤتمر علمي أو ربما كليهما.

المدة المتوقعة للمشاركة فى هذا البحث لن تتعدى 15-20 دقيقة في حالة الاستبيان و45-60 دقيقة في حالة الموافقة على المقابلة الشخصية.

اجراءات الدراسة: يتم توزيع الاستبيان على 50 مدرس ومدرسة من المدارس الحكومية و50 آخرين من المدارس الخاصة. نتائج هذا الاستبيان سوف تتم في صورة إحصائيات. بالإضافة إلى ذلك سوف يتم استضافة 4 مدرسين من المدارس الحكومية و4 آخرين من المدارس الخاصة لمقابلة شخصية لاحقة.

الاستفادة المتوقعة من المشاركة في البحث: لن يكون هناك استفادة مباشرة من المشاركة في هذا البحث ولكن قد يتم إرسال نتائج هذا البحث إلى كل المشاركين المهتمين بعد استكمال البحث والموافقة عليه من قبل الجامعة.

السرية واحترام الخصوصية: ستكون هويتك سرية حين الإدلاء بالمعلومات اللازمة لهذا البحث.

أي أسئلة متعلقة بهذه الدراسة أو حقوق المشاركين فيها يجب ان توجه الى فاطمة الزهراء عبد الرحمن محمد عبدالرحمن ، رقم هاتف: 1911 2615 (02)

ان المشاركة فى هذه الدراسة ماهى الا عمل تطوعى, حيث أن الامتناع عن المشاركة لايتضمن أى عقوبات أو فقدان أى مزايا تحق لك. ويمكنك أيضا التوقف عن المشاركة فى أى وقت من دون عقوبة أو فقدان لهذه المزايا.

الامضاء: ....
اسم المشارك : ....
التاريخ : ..../................/..............

Appendix G- Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

To: Fatma Elzahara Abdelrahaman

Cc: Sara Tarek

From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB

Date: March 19, 2017

Re: Approval of study

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled "**Perceptions of Egyptian ESL Teachers of Teaching Aspects of the Target Culture: The Case of Culturally-Oriented Speech Acts in Textbooks**" and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" heading. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Amr Salama. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.

Atta Gebril

Dr. Atta Gebril
IRB chair, The American University in Cairo
2046 HUSS Building
T: 02-26151919
Email: agebril@aucegypt.edu

Institutional Review Board
The American University in Cairo
AUC Avenue, P.O. Box 74
New Cairo 11835, Egypt.
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