INTERCULTURALITY IN AN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK: A CRITICAL TEACHING ALTERNATIVE

Interculturalidade em um livro didático de língua inglesa: Uma alternativa de ensino crítico

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RESUMO: O objetivo deste estudo é apresentar possibilidades para o uso de um modelo de Ensino Comunicativo Intercultural de Línguas (ECIL) utilizando o trecho de uma unidade do livro didático *English File – third edition, pre-intermediate* - sob uma perspectiva intercultural crítica (CANDAU, 2020; PARDO, 2018; WALSH, 2009). No que tange ao modelo de ensino, este estudo considera a sugestão de Tran e Duong (2018) de ECIL, a fim de promover o que chamamos de Performatividade Intercultural Crítica, através do uso do livro didático e de materiais autênticos. Esta pesquisa está organizada de acordo com as seguintes seções: 1) uma reflexão acerca de representações culturais em livros didáticos de inglês; 2) uma discussão do trecho da unidade alvo sob uma perspectiva intercultural crítica (PARDO, 2018); 3) a proposta de um modelo de ECIL para abordar o trecho dessa unidade considerando a interculturalidade crítica. Este estudo concluiu que representações culturais na unidade alvo do livro didático *New English File* (NEF) majoritariamente retrataram conhecimento hegemônico – ancorado na dualidade ocidental EUA-Europa – e sugere uma versão crítica do modelo de ECIL de Tran e Duong (2018) para utilizar o livro didático conforme as realidades de alunos/as brasileiros/as.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Interculturalidade crítica; Modelo de ECIL; Livro didático de inglês; Ensino de línguas.

ABSTRACT: The aim of this study is to present some possibilities on the use of an Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching (ICLT) model to teach part of a unit of the textbook *English File – third edition, pre-intermediate* - under a critical intercultural perspective (CANDAU, 2020; PARDO, 2018; WALSH, 2009). As far as the teaching model is

concerned, this study considers Tran and Duong's (2018) suggestion of ICLT in order to promote, what we call, Critical Intercultural Performativity, by using the textbook and authentic materials. This paper is organized according to the following sections: 1) a reflection on cultural representations in English textbooks; 2) a discussion of the targeted part from the chosen unit under a critical intercultural perspective (PARDO, 2018); 3) the suggestion of an ICLT model to approach the part of this unit considering critical interculturality. The study concluded that cultural representations in the targeted unit of the textbook New English File (NEF) mostly depicted hegemonized knowledge – grounded in the common US-Europe west-centered duality – and it suggests a critical version of Tran and Duong's (2018) ICLT model to use the textbook according to the realities of Brazilian learners.

KEYWORDS: Critical interculturality; ICLT model; English textbook; Language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' practices in language classrooms are directly related to their social, historical and political contexts (RANDOLPH; JOHNSON, 2017). Besides this influence, language teaching methodologies, decisions and discourses also depend on resources and materials (un)available to teachers. Moreover, multimodality in language teaching, which can be present in teaching materials, approaches and even in students' practices, has shaped what teachers do and the way they do it (PREDIGER; KERSCH, 2013). Given such modern context, in which teaching practices tend to a digital pedagogy, where do textbooks stand? Kovac and Mohar (2022, p. 11) explain that textbooks "have been the primary teaching tool since the 19th century". Additionally, the authors explain that the knowledge present in textbooks is designed in conformity with values of their particular societies. Although technology has increasingly integrated language classrooms, textbooks are sometimes the most – if not the only - teaching resource for teachers, given the reality of education in countries like Brazil.

As Batista (2020, p. 135) states, there is a gap in foreign language teaching policy documents in Brazil, once they "do not prescribe the necessary conditions for English Language teaching (ELT) to take place effectively". Therefore, educational realities must be considered when reflecting on language teaching materials, so that teaching conceptions and methodological trends do not neglectfully overlap varied realities. In this sense, turning eyes into textbooks and discussing their roles in language classrooms is an effective alternative to promote a more critical and transgressive educational environment in a country like Brazil. With the purpose of seeking cultural awareness in English Language Teaching (ELT), this study is concerned with the way culture is conveyed in/through English textbooks in Brazil, under a critical perspective of intercultural education (CANDAU, 2020; WALSH, 2009).

English File, the textbook discussed in this study, has been widely used for language teaching, in countries like Iran, Spain and China (PARDO, 2018). Tas (2010) explains that it claims to have been designed according to the Common European Framework (CEF). However, the reason why this book was chosen to be discussed in this study does not result from its broad use, but it is an action taken against the uncritical construction of knowledge present in language textbooks like this one (PARDO, 2018; TAS, 2010). Critically discussing and suggesting an ICLT model to teach a unit of this book confronts hegemonic cultural representations in language textbooks, thus acknowledging intercultural critical language teaching as an alternative to achieve it.
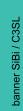
CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

Despite all the technological development and digital culture, still nowadays textbooks are widely used by teachers to plan and deliver their lessons. Tílio (2008) conceives textbooks under a broader perspective, as discursive genres, which means that they present features other than only pedagogic ones, thus relating with social, cultural, ideological and political aspects. Pardo (2018) claims that English textbooks are not neutral, as they commonly reinforce stereotypes and present dominant cultures. According to the author:

> They [textbooks] not only depict and reproduce values, behaviours, cultural patterns, traditions and dominant ideologies, but they also reinforce stereotypes and support the idea that one nationality is superior to others. This supremacy of dominant cultures over dominated ones has been done through their written texts, oral discourses, iconography or activities proposed (PARDO, 2018, p. 232).

As stated by the author, English textbooks not only support stereotypes, but depict some cultures as superior to others. This demonstrates the importance of considering how interculturality is or is not settled in/through English textbooks, since they are mostly driven by hegemonic and excluding conceptions. Additionally, considering textbooks as ideological elements (PARDO, 2018), what is chosen to be or not to be portrayed in such materials is a result of decisions, and certain sociocultural groups are neglected and poorly depicted in this process. According to Pardo (2018, p. 232), as a consequence of it, "the dominant discourse of knowledge, power and ways of being are legitimized, naturalized and perpetuated".

Studies that investigate intercultural aspects in English textbooks usually consider the (non)presence of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in their content. According to Byram, Nichol and Stevens (2001, apud Pardo, 2018, p. 244), ICC is "the set of social and psychological abilities of individuals to interact appropriately with other people from other cultural backgrounds", which implies a critical sociocultural conception of communication. Promoting such competence in classroom may lead to questioning: How am I portrayed in this material? How are people from other cultures portrayed in this material? How do the cultural representations of this material promote interaction between my reality and other people's? These are important questions to have in mind when seeking critical interculturality in textbooks, so that ways of understanding, acknowledging and relating with other cultures and sociocultural beings are fostered in language classrooms.

Specifically concerning intercultural relations and the presence of ICC in English textbooks, Pardo (2018) analyzed studies about these aspects in different countries. Pardo explains that a study with 4 English textbooks in Iran revealed that their representations of culture were "very limited" and did not foster ICC in students, as they only depicted shallow events of *Modus Vivendi*. Additionally, a study with fourteen English textbooks in Spain demonstrated that the UK was predominantly focused as cultural reference, thus excluding other English-speaking countries and cultures. Also, a study in China with the mostly-used textbooks showed that "no attention was paid to local or universal culture" (PARDO, 2018, pg. 243) and American and British cultures were once again privileged over others. Therefore, these studies prove that culture, when approached in English textbooks, is mostly grounded in hegemonic ideas of dominant sociocultural groups, mostly embracing American and British cultural aspects and diminishing what varies from this double-sized superiority. Usually, the culture – especially ways of living and communicating – of former colonies on which the English language was imposed by the colonizers is not considered, not even mentioned in these instruction materials.

In a study to analyze students and teachers' perceptions on cultural representations in the NEF, Tas (2010) shows that 91.5% of the students acknowledged the importance of learning culture while learning an additional language. Also, the study demonstrated that 86.7% of the teachers claimed that language cannot be taught separated from culture. This demonstrates that both teachers and students are aware of the role of culture in language learning, but how is culture depicted in such textbook? In a recent study concerning culture representations in English textbooks, namely *Top Notch* and *English File,* Abdollahi and Hassaskhah (2021, p. 105) showed that source culture - the one that refers to the local culture of students who are learning an additional language - is merely depicted in the textbooks, in a way that "the dimensions of culture are biased in favor of the western products, persons and perspectives".

THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO: A DISCUSSION OF A UNIT OF THE NEF UNDER A CRITICAL INTERCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

The textbook of this unit in analysis is the *Oxford's English File - pre-intermediate student's book - 3rd edition*. The level for which the book is indicated allows us to infer that students have enough linguistic repertoire to follow and participate in discussions in the foreign language. Before discussing the unit that was chosen for this study – the second unit of chapter 2, unit 2B -, it is relevant to think about what the book claims in regards to its content. As stated on the third page of the book, which is a sort of introduction to

what students and teachers may find in this new edition, the book brings "engaging topics, tasks, and activities that get students talking on every page" and also "fresh, lively lessons relevant to students' lives and learning needs". From these two statements, we would like to focus on the terms "engaging" and "relevant" to think of what the book suggests as its guiding principles to learning. What is it to be engaging and relevant? How does it relate to the reality of Brazilians who are learning English as an additional language? These are questions that lead us towards reflecting on the role motivation plays in the process of learning an additional language. As claimed by Purmana, Rahayu and Yugafiati (2019), motivation involves attempt and desire, which are resulted from people's needs towards their objectives. Therefore, learners' behavior in learning another language has to do with their needs, which is directly related to how meaningful a certain content is to their reality. Having said that, promoting motivation in class implies considering students' realities, in a way that their culture is effectively approached and involved in their learning process. This is where our study is anchored, in problematizing the way culture is (non)depicted in the textbook by considering its meaningfulness to the reality of Brazilians who learn English as an additional language.

The discussion of this unit, more specifically, is based on Pardo's reflections on tensions in English textbooks from an intercultural perspective (PARDO, 2018). Thus, this analysis addresses the following subjects: the depiction of deep and/or shallow culture, the (non) fostering of an intercultural teaching praxis, and stereotypical and decontextualized cultural representations. Accordingly, this reflection is grounded in a critical perspective of interculturality, in order to problematize inequalities in the depiction and relation of different sociocultural groups in English textbooks (WALSH, 2009). This discussion also aims at confronting distorted and biased cultural representations in English textbooks, so that choices in favor of hegemonizing knowledges and the marginalization of diversities be questioned and transgressed (PARDO, 2018).

The unit is entitled "The story behind the photo" because its first picture shows people waiting for the results of the presidential elections in the United States in 2008, when Barack Obama was first elected. Although this reinforces the monolithic cultural depiction of hegemonies in textbooks (PARDO, 2018), since it is focused on the US, this moment is of great meaningfulness for the fight against prejudice and promotion of a more diversified society. For the first time, a black person was elected president of one of the most powerful and influential countries in the world. Surprisingly, this fact was not approached in the unit, as the image brings the title "a moment in history" – see figure 1 -, but the reason why that occasion represents a moment in history was not even mentioned. Pardo (2018) claims that textbooks decide what to hide or show in their content, and not

exploring the real importance of such moment for history neglects its meaningfulness. It appears that the grammatical goals of the unit – in this case, it is aimed to teach the past continuous and prepositions of time and place - overlap the potential of the discussion that is likely to be addressed with the topic of the unit.

Figure 1 – People waiting for the 2018 election results in the USA

Source: Koenig-Latham, Oxenden e Seligson (2012).

This picture was taken by Tom Pilston and it brings a description written by the photographer. Pilston explains that he could not enter the Convention Center, as he did not have a press pass, but he ended up coming across a much better situation: "I was watching Obama's victory through the faces of all these people, African, Hispanic, Chinese, White". Pilston's report displays great potential to promote a critical discussion with students because 1) it is a report from the perspective of someone who was there, 2) the intercultural potential of the moment. As mentioned, there were people of different cultures in that situation: African, Hispanic, Chinese, etc. However, instead of exploring the reason why those people were there, or why that moment was also important for those people, the book brings shallow questions towards this occasion. These are some of the questions in the exercise: *Why did Tom Pilston go to Chicago? What was the weather like? Where did he take this photo? Where could the people see the election results?* All these questions demand a shallow understanding of the situation from students. It is a

superficial cultural exploration of such historical moment (PARDO, 2018), that is focused on trivial artifacts of the situation, instead of approaching the intercultural potential of the picture, the moment and the people it relates to.

The exercises that follow: 2, 3 and 4 are almost entirely focused on grammar itself. The content of prepositions of time and place and the past continuous are presented in a decontextualized way, except for letter b in exercise 4, which asks students to discuss, in pairs, what they were doing on the past day according to the time given. As stated by Mart (2013), teaching grammar in context helps students better understand the language, which we believe leads students to understand the functioning of language through their realities. We do not advocate for the exclusion of grammar from language classes, but it is crucial to teach it meaningfully to students. Therefore, teaching grammar should also be an opportunity for promoting an intercultural learning environment, in which cultures and their relations are used as territory for better understanding the way language is used.

Similar to what initially happens in the unit, exercise 5 is based on a picture that represents a well-known moment in history – see figure 2. Once again, the content of the book is grounded in hegemonic knowledge (PARDO, 2018), thus bringing a Eurocentric piece of information. The picture shows Caroline de Bendern – an English fashion model whose picture in a protest got famous in the 1960's - sitting on a man's shoulder, carrying a Vietnamese flag. She was in a protest, marching towards the Bastille square, along with other students. The exercise brings the picture, the beginning of a newspaper article about it, an audio in which a woman plays the role of Caroline and describes the situation, and some sentences with gaps to be filled in. As in the exercise first discussed here, exercise 5 also has great potential for promoting critical discussions and intercultural connections. However, it does not happen, since the exercise treats its discourses merely as linguistic fragments for exemplification.

Firstly, in regards to the beginning of the newspaper article, Caroline claims she did not know why her grandfather had decided to leave her all his money: "I never knew why", says Caroline. "Perhaps because I was pretty". Caroline's speech reinforces a sexist conception, as it attributes her worthiness of the money exclusively to her beauty. This is an opportunity to discuss the role of women in society based on a discourse that is widely spread and supported, a potential that is depreciated in the exercise. In addition to it, the audio is repleted with discourses that should definitely be addressed with students, such as: "I wasn't really interested in politics. I wasn't a communist or an anarchist", which neglects our political role as citizens (FREIRE, 1985) and conveys the idea that only communists and anarchists care about it. "Another boy, who was walking next to us, was

carrying a Vietnamese flag. It was the time of the Vietnam war […]", Caroline explained that the boy asked her to carry the flag for him and she did it. This is another opportunity for setting an intercultural approach to the exercise, as the reason why a Vietnamese boy was in the protest with the flag of his country, in a march in Paris, could have been discussed. "That's it, you're a communist. I'm not going to leave you anything, not a penny". This is what Caroline's grandfather said after seeing her picture in the protest on the covers of magazines, which could have been used to address the problems emerged from extremist conservative political conceptions, thus relating it to education and to the reality citizens have undergone in Brazil through the past years (CANDAU, 2020).

Figure 2 – Caroline de Bendern in a protest in Paris

Source: Koenig-Latham, Oxenden e Seligson (2012).

Overlooking such discourses in some of the exercises of this unit relates to what Pardo (2018) demonstrates while reflecting on a study made by Di Franco, Siderac and Di Franco (2007). This study analyzed the type of citizenship generated by textbooks, considering what is called by the authors as "uncritical approach". As far as the results of the study are concerned, we would like to focus on three of its findings and relate them to what is present in the unit targeted by this study. Firstly, the authors claimed that the study revealed "an important de-contextualization of the knowledge presented, in terms of temporality, spatiality and significance" (PARDO, 2018, p. 238). This decontextualization,

more specifically in regards to the significance of the content, was present in almost the entire unit. The examples brought by the book were presented in a shallow manner, although most of their discourses opened room for intercultural connections[1] (PARDO, 2018). Secondly, Pardo (2018, p. 239) explains that the study showed an "absence of social conflicts due to omission of contemporary leaders, and the inclusion of those from the past, but without deepening into their reasons for struggling". In the case of this unit, the social conflicts were present, but were overlapped by structural questions that were meant for learning and practicing grammar itself. Also, not relating its discussions to our contemporary context diminishes the potential of the subjects present in the unit and deviates from promoting meaningful learning. Finally, Pardo (2018, p. 239) affirms that the study revealed an "absence of citizen's participation, since there are no communities or a sense of belonging, that can resist and fight for their rights (ethnic or racial groups, or members of the LGBT community)". This also relates to the reality of the unit discussed here, as marginalized sociocultural groups – the book mentions Hispanic, African, and Chinese people who were waiting for the election results in the United States – are commonly present in the exercises, but they never receive appropriate attention.

Additionally, it relates to Walsh's claims (2009) on critical interculturality, since the author states that there has been a movement towards making marginalized sociocultural groups visible, but without really considering their problems and doing something to change them, thus promoting a pseudo inclusion and a pseudo interculturality – "functional interculturality" (WALSH, 2009). Therefore, the relevance of the subjects in this unit, which is a to-be-achieved goal present in the book's introduction, appeared not to be structured towards appreciating different sociocultural groups, but only depicted them without further attention, which "impeded the development of a critical consciousness" (FREIRE, 1971, 1993 apud PARDO, 2018, p. 232).

AN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING MODEL: A CRITICAL ALTERNATIVE

What motivates the suggestion of this teaching model is related to the fact that many teachers still neglect the importance of teaching culture as part of language classes (TRAN; DUONG, 2018). Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) is considered

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1   Although the object of our analysis was not the teacher's manual, we had access to it and observed that there is no orientation towards the adoption of a critical approach by the teacher. In our opinion, this denotes a problem in the origin of the material under analysis, since it limits the teaching performance and, consequently, the development of the students' critical sense.

to be one of the competences of the twenty-first century, which claims that learners should be able to understand themselves as sociocultural beings, be aware of their cultural values and manage to interact with other people and cultures in a multicultural world (TRAN; DUONG, 2018). Suggesting this teaching model is not only an attempt to promote students' ICC, but a critical action towards using interculturality as an alternative against hegemonic knowledges in language classrooms (WALSH, 2009). To do so, the textbook here is conveyed and used as a (des)articulation tool in regards to stereotypical cultural discourses and representations (PARDO, 2018).

This Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching (ICLT) Model was developed by Tran and Duong (2018) with the aim to promote students' ICC. Therefore, ICC is the ultimate goal of this model, which is structured in an on-going process of scaffolding based on the relation Language-Culture. The model consists of four teaching steps, namely *Input, Notice, Practice* and *Output*. The first step, the *Input*, is about providing students with language and intercultural knowledge, which is done by using authentic materials. Tran and Duong (2018) explain that this step is based on Krashens's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (KRASHEN, 1985), which claims that exposing students to content that is already-known, but "one step beyond their understanding", may increase learners' motivation (TRAN; DUONG, 2018, p. 4). The second step, the *Notice*, is meant to have students compare unknown features with what they already know, thus focusing on the students' response to language and intercultural elements. The authors state that this step is grounded in the theory of Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (SCHMIDT, 2001), which focuses on raising students' language and intercultural awareness (TRAN; DUONG, 2O18). The third step, the *Practice*, is the moment for students to be engaged in controlled communicative activities, it is an opportunity to use recently-acquired language knowledge in an intercultural perspective. As affirmed by Tran and Duong (2018), this step is underpinned by Long's Interaction Hypothesis (LONG, 1996), which, according to the authors, fosters:

> learners' ICC development by assisting learners to make use of their previous comprehensible input to enhance their language skills (e.g., speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and intercultural skills (e.g., abilities to interpret the meanings in the target culture and re- late them to one's own and to interact with people from different cultures) (TRAN; DUONG, 2018, p. 5).

In the fourth and last step, the *Output*, students should be able to perform "earlier input features" (TRAN; DUONG, 2018, p.5). This moment is meant for using language

and intercultural skills learned and developed throughout the scaffolding process of the model. According to the authors, students' performance may happen through "language and intercultural tasks (e.g., project, drama, presentation, etc.)". Tran and Duong (2018) explain that this step is grounded in the theory of Swain's Output Hypothesis (SWAIN, 2000), which aims to help students be aware of gaps in their own learning process.

It is intended here to suggest an alternative to teach the targeted unit of this study by considering these four steps of Tran and Duong's ICLT model. Moreover, the aim of this suggestion is not only to develop students' ICC, but to promote what we would like to call Critical Intercultural Performativity. Firstly, we decide not to use the term "competence" to refer to the aim of this study, which corroborates Paiva's criticism towards the idea of intercultural competence (PAIVA, 2018). The author explains that it is complex to say that someone is interculturally competent, since interactions among people of different cultures involve elements other than just cultural ones. The very conception of competence is questionable, especially considering the way it has been conveyed in the field of language teaching. Kumaravadilu (2012) claims that discourses and practices in language education are commonly west-centered, which implies the overestimation of hegemonic knowledge. Additionally, the author adds that these knowledges are usually stereotypical and excluding, which contribute to diminish marginalized groups. Therefore, this conception of competence may be conveyed through power relations that are biased enough to exclude what deviates from west-oriented epistemologies – e.g the overestimated image of the native speaker. That is why, in agreement with Kumaravadivelus's suggestion for an epistemic break (KUMARAVADILU, 2012), we chose to use the term performativity, in a way that interculturality is conveyed as a possibility for people to critically perform by negotiating their identities with features of otherness.

Input

Following what is suggested by Tran and Duong (2018) for the first step of their teaching model, this part is focused on providing students with intercultural and language knowledge by using authentic material.

Figure 3 – The fall of the Berlin wall (1985)

Source: Viotti (2017).

According to Candelario (2022), an authentic material implies that the "material has *not* been created with English language teaching in mind". So, the material is taken from different sources other than pedagogical ones, a content that is part of social use. As authentic material, we chose a picture of the fall of the Berlin wall (1985) – see figure 3 -, which is supposed to be shown to students along with the picture that is part of the first exercise - the "a moment in history" picture, figure 1. Both pictures – figures 1 and 3 - must be shown along with their respective dates: A moment in history (2008) and The Fall of the Berlin Wall (1985), but their titles are not supposed to be shown yet. The following chart complies the steps we suggest to conduct the *input* moment[2]:

2   We refer to the first stage, the input, as *moment*, and its procedures are referred as *steps*.

Chart 1 – The input moment

Step	Description	Additional information
1) Show both pictures with their respective dates.	Show pictures and ask students if they know what historical moments they refer to. After that, reveal that they refer to both the election of president Barack Obama (2008) and the fall of the Berlin Wall (1985). Ask students what they know about these both moments and wrap up their answers in a word cloud on the board.	None.
2) Asking questions about the historical moments.	Show students the following questions: 1. What were people doing in these moments? 2. Why do you think they were doing it?[3]	It is an opportunity to go deeper into some features of each historical moment. The teacher can discuss the social context prior to those moments, the way they happened and their social impact in a local/world level.
3) Language and intercultural input.	This is the moment to explore the target structure. To do so, use the answers for the questions in step 2 to work with the structure of the past continuous. These are possible answers that can be used: Picture 1: a moment in history 1. They were watching the election results. 2. They were staring at the screen to check the election results. Picture 2: the fall of the Berlin wall 1. They were breaking the wall. 2. They were kissing in front of the wall. 3. They were looking at the wall.	Make sure to explore the details of each situation, such as: the way people were feeling while waiting for the results and why they were feeling that way; the reason why people were breaking the wall; the reason why some people were kissing each other – with attention to the two men kissing – in front of the wall.

Source: The authors, 2023.

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3   Firstly, elicit actions students can identify in the picture, such as breaking (referring to the man trying to break the wall), kissing (in relation to the couple kissing among the people) and staring (as most people are staring at the wall). After that, explain that those people were doing these actions in the past and use the questions to explain to students how they can talk about ongoing past situations.

As explained in the chart, the first step of the input moment is meant for exposing students to authentic material (TRAN; DUONG, 2018), which is done with a picture of people in front of the Berlin wall during its fall (1989) along with a picture from the book that shows people waiting for the 2018 election results in the United States. In the second step, teachers have the chance to better explore the sociohistorical moment of each picture, especially by using the question "why do you think they were doing it?". This question allows teachers and students to discuss the importance of these moments to marginalized groups - black, Hispanic and Chinese people were anxiously waiting for the election results, in the first picture, and two men were kissing in front of the Berlin wall, in the second picture. The third step is the moment to provide students with language input by considering people's actions during such moments. Therefore, this suggestion is underpinned by an inductive teaching approach (THORNBURRY, 1999), in which students are first provided with language examples and intercultural discussions in order to understand the way the targeted structure – the past continuous – is used.

Notice

The second moment of this suggestion, the notice moment, is focused on the idea of having students compare their previous knowledge with content that is still unknown (TRAN; DUONG, 2018). This moment complies the following steps:

Chart 2 – The notice moment

Step	Description	Additional information
1) Showing a picture.	Show a picture to students – Figure 4 – and ask them if they know what moment the picture refers to.	Make sure to show both the picture and the date it was taken.

2) Contextualizing.	Explain the context of the picture: when it was taken, in which historical moment. Also, explore details of the picture with the following questions: 1. What were people doing at this moment? 2. What sociocultural groups do you identify in the picture?[4] 3. Why do you think these people were chosen for this moment? 4. What does this moment represent to Brazilian history? 5. What do/don't you know about the Brazilian presidential election?	Probably, students have already seen this picture, as this moment has recently happened. However, make sure to contextualize it by giving information about the 2023 Brazilian presidential inauguration. Also, it is an opportunity to promote intercultural connections by talking about each person in the picture. These are people that represent Brazil's diversity.
3) Comparing pictures.	Have students reflect on the relation between both historical moments: the presidential election in the USA (2008) and the presidential inauguration in Brazil (2023). Teachers may use these questions to guide this moment: 1. How do these two situations relate with each other? 2. What similarities and differences do you believe these two moments share?	Additionally, teachers may also use a picture of president Obama in his presidential inauguration to better compare both moments.

Source: The authors, 2023.

Besides accessing students' previous knowledge, this *notice* moment is also based on contextualization. It is supposed to bring the lesson content closer to students' realities, in order to value their own sociocultural features and promote a more meaningful teaching praxis in terms of territoriality, spatiality and historicity (PARDO, 2018). Also, exploring deeper features of Brazilian culture – talking about the country's electoral system, its political assets, its diverse culture – confronts the habit of superficially representing cultures in textbooks (TAS, 2010).

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4   Students might now know how to talk about these sociocultural groups in English. In this case, teachers may let students free to use some vocabulary in their first language, so that these words are taught in the target language. Grounded in Littlewood and Yu's thoughts (2009), we believe that the use of first language in foreign language learning may be a support for the learner, instead of an obstacle, as many teachers believe.

Figure 4 – 2023 Brazilian presidential inauguration

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, fourth from left, arriving at the Palácio do Planalto with a group representing Brazil's diversity.

Source: O Globo (2023).

Practice and output

The *practice/output* moment is suggested to be organized according to the following steps:

Chart 3 – The practice-output moment

Step	Description	Additional information
1) Speaking.	Students are asked to discuss questions 1-4 in exercise 6 – Figure 5. After that, the discussion is opened to the whole group. Teachers may approach the following topics to have students talk about their discussions: 1. Ask students to talk more about a picture they really like (what picture it is, when the student first saw it, etc.) 2. Ask students if they have the habit of posting pictures on social media. Have them talk about what social media they mostly use, the type of photos they usually post, etc.	Many students may not use Facebook, which is the social media present in the questions of exercise 6. It is an opportunity to allow students to talk more about their reality. Ask them to talk about their habits while using social medias.

| 2) Practice. | This step is based on questions 5 and 6. So, first, students will have to choose a picture they have in their photo galleries and share it with their classmates. To do it, students should:

   1. Talk about what people were doing in the situation.

   2. Contextualize it. Say when it was taken, where and by whom.

Secondly, based on question 6, students will have to look for pictures, on the internet, of a Brazilian historical moment. After that, students will present this picture to their classmates by talking about:

   1. What historical moment it is.

   2. What people were doing in the picture and why. | Make sure to explain to students that:

1. There must be people doing something in both pictures, so that students can use the past continuous to talk about what they were doing.

2. The first picture must be somehow connected to students' lives.

3. They are supposed to look for moments in Brazilian history. The focus of the activity is Brazil. |

Source: The authors, 2023.

According to Tran and Duong (2018), these steps of the teaching model are about promoting controlled communicative activities, so that students can practice the language and intercultural knowledge they have recently had contact with. However, we have decided to follow a freer kind of teaching technique, since controlled practice has already been established in previous steps of this model. It is a way of moving from a more manipulative way of teaching to a contextualized and communicative learning setting (BROWN, 2011 apud GALINDO, 2008). Therefore, both practice and output moment are suggested to be applied simultaneously in this study, since it is intended to have students practice the learned content by delivering presentations. This stage focuses on the experiences of students, who must talk about a picture that relates to their lives, whose answers will certainly vary according to students' realities. Also, the second activity, based on the 6th question of exercise 6 – Do you know any other famous historical photos? Who or what are they of? -, is grounded in the idea of promoting contextualized learning through textbooks (PARDO, 2018), considering that we decided to ask students to talk about historical moments in Brazilian history, thus approaching their own sociocultural and historical repertoires.

Figure 5 – Exercise 6 of the unit in analysis: speaking and writing

a Talk to a partner. Give more information if you can.

1 Do you have a photo you really like? Who took it? What was happening at the time?
2 Do you upload photos onto Facebook or other internet sites? What was the last photo you uploaded?
3 Do you have a photo as the screen saver on your computer or phone? What is it of?
4 Do you have a favourite photo of yourself as a child? Who took it? What was happening when they took it? What were you wearing?

Source: Koenig-Latham, Oxenden e Seligson (2012).

At last, this activity is also digitally-oriented, as it promotes discussions on the use of social medias and the use of the internet as resource to gather content for presentations and brings a more "e-learning-resource-oriented" perspective into the lesson (LAU, et al., 2018). In this last stage of the teaching model, it is intended to use the content of the textbook in favor of a more digital, contextualized and intercultural education, thus not advocating for the exclusion of textbooks in English language teaching, but conveying and using them as resources that are likely to be related with other types of materials and adapted according to different teaching contexts.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Tílio (2008) affirms that textbooks are teaching materials whose discourses must not be ignored or naturalized by teachers. Accordingly, Pardo (2018) claims that the content of textbooks is chosen and depicted based on intentions and decisions, whose representations mostly overestimate hegemonic knowledges and marginalize subaltern groups. In this context, in regards to the *Oxford's English File*, this study suggests that its content be thought and structured according to the diversity of groups that it may reach. With respect to its content and representations, this study mostly focused on its lack of contextualization, in terms of spatiality, territoriality and historicity (PARDO, 2018), its superficial exploration of cultural representations (PARDO, 2018), and its uncritical approach to marginalized sociocultural groups (WALSH, 2009), thus advocating for the use of authentic materials along with textbooks in order to approach different cultures and social realities realistically, meaningfully and unbiasedly.

As an attempt to promote such critical approach, this study suggested the use of an Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching (ICLT) model to teach a unit of the NEF textbook with Brazilian learners as focus. Based on Tran and Duong's (2018) model, but with criticism towards the idea of intercultural competence (PAIVA, 2018), this study suggested a model that is organized in three moments, namely: input, notice and practice-output. The input moment was grounded in the idea of providing students with new intercultural and language knowledge with the use of authentic material (TRAN; DUONG, 2018). To do so, the model suggested the use of pictures of two different historical moments, one from the textbook – which was about the 2018 presidential election in the United States -, and another from an external source – which depicted the fall of the Berlin wall. After that, there is the notice moment, which was focused on providing students with new intercultural content, in order to have them relate it with their previous knowledge (TRAN; DUONG, 2018) and by critically discussing the diversity of sociocultural groups (WALSH, 2009). This was done by exploring social features of Brazil, more specifically in regards to its political system and presidential elections, by suggesting an intercultural approach to have students compare their sociocultural features with other people's, and by talking about the sociocultural diversity of people in Brazil. At last, the practice-output moment was underpinned by the idea of promoting contextualized learning with students (TRAN; DUONG, 2018). To achieve it, students had to present pictures related to their own lives and also pictures of different Brazilian historical moments.

It is noticeable that our teaching environment has changed significantly in the past years. Teaching practices, materials and students' behavior have been shaped by a multimodal education scenario (PREDIGER; KERSCH, 2013). In this setting, textbooks are still present in most teaching environments, especially in Brazil, where, in some contexts, it is the only teaching material teachers have. Therefore, this study did not advocate for the elimination of textbooks in English Language teaching, but for using it in favor of a critical education that is grounded on social justice (FREIRE, 1985). In this sense, critical interculturality is seen as an alternative against hegemonic epistemes, which implies confronting the marginalization of sociocultural groups, such as indigenous people, the black community, the LGBTQIAPN+ community, southern nations, etc (WALSH, 2009). Textbooks were here conveyed and used as a disarticulation tool towards stereotypical conceptions and depictions of cultures, in a way that locality is valued and focused in a west-oriented Eurocentric world (PARDO, 2018).

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