

Intercultural Awareness in an Algerian EFL Textbook Visual Discourse**Fatima Zohra Chalal⁽¹⁾ Dr. Yassine Souryana⁽²⁾**

1-Department of English, University of Algiers 2, fatimzohra.chalal@univ-alger2.dz

2-Department of English, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou, souryana.yassine@ummt.dz

Received: 16/10/2019**Revised:** 24/03/2021**Accepted:** 25/05/2021**Abstract**

The textbook is the central learning aid in the Algerian EFL classes; hence, the present paper examines the first year EFL textbook "At the Crossroads" (2005) in terms of the intercultural dimension represented in its visual discourse. Results of the multimodal analysis (adapting Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) framework) reveal that the visual discourse of the textbook does not succeed to promote intercultural learning due to the gap in the representation of the Self and the Other. This calls for re-considering the visual design of the EFL textbook in such a way to contribute more to the development of EFL learners' intercultural awareness.

Keywords: *EFL textbook, intercultural awareness, multimodal analysis, visual discourse.*

الوعي بين الثقافات في الخطاب البصري لكتاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجزائر

ملخص

نظرا لكون الكتاب المدرسي أداة التعلم المركزية في أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر، فهذه الورقة تبحث في كتاب السنة الأولى للغة الإنجليزية من حيث البعد الثقافي لخطابه البصري. كشفت نتائج تحليل الخطاب البصري (بالاستعانة بنظرية كريس ولوفن 2006) أن الكتاب المدرسي لا ينجح في تعزيز التعلم بين الثقافات، ويرجع ذلك إلى الفجوة الموجودة في تمثيل الذات والآخر. تدعو هذه النتائج إلى إعادة النظر في التصميم المرئي لكتاب اللغة الإنجليزية للمساهمة أكثر في تحفيز الوعي بين الثقافات لدى المتعلمين الجزائريين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كتاب اللغة الإنجليزية، وعي بين الثقافات، تحليل الخطاب البصري، تصميم مرئي.

La sensibilisation interculturelle dans le discours visuel d'un manuel d'Anglais algérien**Résumé**

Le manuel scolaire est l'outil d'apprentissage central dans les classes d'anglais comme langue étrangère en Algérie. Le présent article examine donc le manuel de première année «At the Crossroads» (2005) en termes de dimension interculturelle représentée dans son discours visuel. Les résultats de l'analyse multimodale (en adaptant la théorie de Kress et Leeuwen (2006)) révèlent que le discours visuel du manuel ne parvient pas à promouvoir l'apprentissage interculturel en raison de l'écart dans la représentation du Soi et de l'Autre. Ces constatations soulignent la nécessité de revoir la conception visuelle du manuel d'Anglais de manière à contribuer davantage au développement de la conscience interculturelle des apprenants.

Mots-clés: *Manuel d'anglais, conscience interculturelle, analyse multimodale, discours visuel.*

Corresponding author: Chalal Fatima Zohra, fatimzohra.chalal@univ-alger2.dz

Introduction:

Developing an intercultural awareness is a central educational goal mainly in the EFL context, as it encourages positive attitudes and understanding of other cultures which eventually leads to tolerance, the overcoming of culture shocks and stereotypes, and success in intercultural communication. The need to develop this awareness is brought about by globalization which assigns English the status of a global language used to access technology, commerce, and education (Crystal, 2003). When EFL learners develop intercultural awareness, they learn not only about other countries and their cultures but also reflect on their own local culture and identity. As EFL learners, Algerian secondary school pupils need to develop such a faculty in order to cope with the complexity of today's world communication, to take part in global issues and strongly compete in the worldwide business market. Since the textbook is the most commonly used material in Algerian educational settings, it is necessary to figure out whether it is equipped with the resources needed to foster EFL learners' intercultural awareness. Accordingly, this research paper investigates whether the visual resources presented in 'At the Crossroads' (2005) textbook supports intercultural learning in Algerian secondary school education, through conducting a multimodal analysis of the textbook following Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) framework: The Grammar of Visual Design.

1- Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Model:

Intercultural awareness traces back to the concept of competence, which has undergone several revisions stemming from Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence (1965) up to the recent models of intercultural competence, namely Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence. This paper uses this model as a reference because of its relevance to the context of foreign language education. According to Byram (1997), teaching languages should have as its primary goal developing learners' competencies through teaching linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competencies and combining them with intercultural competence which equips language learners with the skills of discovery, comparison, analysis and critique of cultures. Accordingly, Byram (1997) defines intercultural competence as the "Knowledge of others; knowledge of self; skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact; valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviours; and relativizing one's self"⁽¹⁾. To word it differently, Byram's model encompasses five interrelated components, or what he calls *savoirs*, that are all crucial to becoming interculturally competent. These are Knowledge, attitudes, skills (with their two sets) and cultural awareness. The latter refers to "the ability to see all cultures, one's own and foreign, as the historically transmitted results of a community's history, mentally and living conditions"⁽²⁾. Said differently, cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) consists in the understanding of similarities and differences of the different cultural groups and their products; it enables EFL learners to develop a cultural understanding as it permits them to critically compare and evaluate the differences, assumptions and stereotypes in intercultural contexts. This cultural awareness component paved the way for Baker (2011) to elaborate the notion of intercultural awareness which is the core interest of the present study.

2- The Shift from Cultural to Intercultural Awareness

Byram's cultural awareness (CA) is a significant component for investigating the cultural dimension in the language teaching context. In other words, foreign language learners have to be aware of their own as well as the others' cultural behaviours and communicative norms to develop an understanding of intercultural communication. Nevertheless, for Baker (2009), although CA offered the basic cultural knowledge needed in language teaching and learning, it limits the conception of culture to its national sense. That is, it deals with the English culture as belonging to native speaking countries only and not as a global *lingua franca*. Accordingly, Baker proposes the notion of Intercultural awareness, or what he labels ICA, to replace the essentialist view of culture and language, and to better cope with the dynamic relationship that exists between the two mainly in the realm of intercultural communication.

3-Intercultural Awareness:

Given the complex nature of the construct of Intercultural Awareness, there is no consensus on a single definition. Hence, several scholars offer different definitions each in relation to his/her field of interest. According to Chen and Starosta (1999), ICA can be considered as a minimum condition in today's global world where interactions are characterized by a multicultural nature. Along the same line with Chen and Starosta's definitions, Korzilius, et al (2007)⁽³⁾ propose that ICA refers to: ... the ability to empathize and to decentre. More specifically, in a communication situation, it is the ability to take on the perspective of a conversational partner from another culture or with another nationality, and of their cultural background and thus, to be able to understand and take into consideration interlocutors' different perspectives simultaneously (p. 02). Always in an attempt to define ICA and figure out its characteristics, Zhu (2011) considers it as the foundation of communication. He agrees on the points discussed above and further explains that ICA includes two qualities: (1) the awareness of one's own culture; and (2) the awareness of another culture. This implies that people have to know not only about their cultural values, beliefs and perceptions but about others' cultures as well; because for Zhu what is considered as appropriate in one culture may not be appropriate in another. Zhang and McCornac (2013) maintain that ICA is necessary in order to achieve competence in intercultural relations. This implies that ICA is not only one aspect of Intercultural Competence as discussed above (Chen & Starosta, 1999), but it constitutes its main pillar. After reviewing previous definitions of ICA provided by intercultural communication research scholars (Cebon, 2005; Elia, 2007; Shi, 2006; Korzilius et al, 2007; Xiao and Petraki, 2007), Baker (2009) concluded that they are very similar to the definitions of CA. The argument he sets forth is the fact of conceiving intercultural communication as occurring between two defined and knowable cultures, which is not always the case. Another argument that highlights the gaps in previous definitions is the lack of further elaboration on the fact that ICA should form an essential component of ELT in EFL contexts. Therefore, based on the dynamic notions of cultures in intercultural communication, Baker⁽⁴⁾ views that intercultural awareness is a conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices and frames of understanding can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and context-specific manner in real-time communication.

This definition entails that the concept of awareness needs to be thoroughly explained and the role of culture and language and the relationship between them in intercultural communication should be accounted for.

3-1- Baker's (2011) Model of Intercultural Awareness:

Baker (2009) conceives ICA as an extension and continuity and not as an opposition to CA. For him, ICA caters for the needs of an intercultural communication mainly in the expanding circle EFL contexts (Kachru, 1990); which are characterized by dynamic and diverse cultural influences. Two years later, Baker (2011) developed a model of ICA (see appendix, p. 22) which consists of two complementary phases: A *conceptual* and a *practice-oriented*. Each phase goes through three levels of cultural awareness: A *basic*, an *advanced* and an *intercultural awareness*. As far as this paper is concerned, only the conceptual phase of the model can be applied in the analysis of the selected textbook; because the practical phase goes beyond the scope of this study; i.e. this requires another research design such as experimental or ethnographic research. Thus, the cultural content of the visuals under analysis will be examined in terms of the cultural aspects highlighted in order to figure out the level of cultural awareness each visual representation embodies.

The first level, which is labeled basic cultural awareness (henceforth, BCA), reflects the cultural behaviors, beliefs, values of the *Self* and the *Other* and compares the similarities and differences between cultures at a general level. The second level, which is labeled advanced cultural awareness (ACA), refers to a more complex and detailed comparison of specific

cultures as it refers to an awareness of the relative nature of culture, of individuals as members of specific cultural groups, of the diverse perspectives within a cultural group, and that cultural understanding is always open to revision. The third level, which is labeled intercultural awareness (ICA), highlights the role of culture in intercultural communication through explaining the way cultural frames of reference and the communicative practices are related to specific cultures, but at the same time they are dynamic and open to change once in intercultural communication.

Following Baker's (2011) model, it is important to understand how English functions at an international level. For this aim, it is necessary to look at Kachru's (1990) model of global English language which covers the notion of *world Englishes* referring to three main areas/situations which use English. The model outlines three circles: (1) the inner circle referring to the traditional English speaking countries namely the US, the UK and Australia (i.e. ENL); (2) the outer circle referring to the institutionalized non-native varieties of English, namely the ex-colonies such as the Philippines, India, and Ghana (i.e. ESL); and the expanding circle referring to countries which have not developed their own variety of English, but use the language for limited purposes mainly in international communication such as China, Russia, Algeria, etc. (i.e. EFL).

Additionally, it is necessary to distinguish between two major sets of cultural aspects that can be represented in EFL textbooks; i.e. the visible and the hidden cultural features. Holliday (1999) refers to these two sets as the big 'C' culture, including items such as language, literature, food, dress, folklore, holidays and festivals, etc. and small 'c' culture, including items such as beliefs and assumptions, core values, thought patterns, body language, family roles, etc.

Since the present paper evaluates the intercultural dimension of EFL textbooks visuals, this calls for reviewing the theory of multimodality which accounts for the visual resources that are conquering our contemporary communication in general and printed texts in particular.

4- Multimodality and EFL Textbooks:

Multimodality is a theory of communication that emerged in the late decade of the twentieth century, and which posits that all communications are multimodal; that is, meaning is constructed and transmitted using more than one semiotic mode, and more than one medium of communication. Jewitt⁽⁵⁾ considers multimodality as a set of 'approaches that understand communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend to the full range of communicational forms people use -image, gesture, gaze, posture and so on- and the relationships between them'. (p. 14)

The roots of this theory stem from the works of the 'Sydney semiotics circle' members, who expanded Halliday's Social Semiotic view of language to non-linguistic systems of communication, especially visual communication. To put it another way, Halliday (1978) considered the linguistic modes of speech and writing as semiotic resources that are activated when writing or speaking to perform three specific social metafunctions; the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual. Two decades later, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) extended Halliday's linguistic principles to the field of visual communication. For them, even the mode of writing is a form of visual communication in itself. They further add that the writing mode started to lose its dominance in the last few decades with the transition from the older technologies of print to modern, digital means of representation. For instance, in the educational context more technological devices such as interactive boards, tablets, data show, etc., are replacing the traditional paper and ink materials. In this contemporary era, the dominance shifts to screen images; these semiotic modes display a range of different semiotic resources, which all combine to contribute to the meaning of the end-product (Kress, 2010) Said differently, the meaning-making potential of an image can be enhanced through different semiotic resources such as colors, layout, gaze, distance, and so on and so forth.

The progress in multimedia technology and the emergence of Multimodality theory has a noticeable impact on the field of education. Nowadays, there is a growing importance and

tendency towards a multimodal EFL teaching and learning. Classroom materials, namely the textbook, are becoming multimodal. A multimodal textbook is the textbook which is composed of more than one mode of representation; such as visuals (e.g. images, graphs, diagrams, etc.), cassettes (with audio files), CD-ROMs (with video files), etc.⁽⁶⁾. According to Yassine (2014), the visual turn in contemporary communication has influenced the field of EFL textbook design which started incorporating more images that are considered as means of cultural diffusion. She further adds that this increasing number of visual images, which has made the EFL textbook a multimodal material, has eventually urged the learners to go beyond the traditional language-based literacy. To better cope with this new multimodal design of the teaching materials, education stakeholders need to develop learners' Multiliteracy and Multimodal skills which are crucial when dealing with the complex combinations made in multimodal texts.

In the same vein, Kress⁽⁷⁾ claims that it "is now impossible to make sense of texts, even of their linguistic parts alone, without having a clear idea of what these other features might be contributing to meaning of a text". (p. 337) This implies that it is essential to understand the affordances of the diverse modes integrated in the textbook such as words, images, audio and video files; and the meanings of the various combinations that can be made of these modes and media.

Given the multimodal nature and design of textbooks, EFL teachers can be more resourceful in the classroom through exploiting the different types of texts supplied in the textbook. That is, teachers can explain the various themes presented in the textbook relying not only on the linguistic texts, but on learners' everyday multimedia materials namely CD-ROMs, video clips, and the Internet⁽⁸⁾. Thus, these multimodal textbooks constitute a vital aspect of constructing knowledge in today's classrooms; because they provide "flexible conceptual frames that support more efficient interaction than with more rigid, linear print"⁽⁹⁾.

However, although EFL textbooks are multimodal, little is done on how teachers can assist their learners to take advantage of the visual forms of knowledge by connecting them to the linguistic forms⁽¹⁰⁾. Hence, "the visual and multimodal survive at the margins of the curriculum". (p. 15) Most of the research conducted so far emphasizes and restricts the role of visuals as illustrative and motivational tools; i.e. these visuals "are still often ignored or treated superficially in the classroom"⁽¹¹⁾. In the same line, Ajayi (2012) argues and illustrates that teachers rarely involve their learners in acritical analysis of the images included in the textbooks; though they are laden with social discourse. Hence, there is a huge gap between theory and teachers' practices.

Through rethinking how teachers deal with multimodal texts in the classroom, new opportunities for promoting learners' participation, negotiation of meanings and freedom to communicate can be offered thanks to the availability of diverse semiotic possibilities for meaning making. In the same line, Walker et al. (2010)⁽¹²⁾ claim that multimodal texts provide "a different, expanded form of classroom discourse that spans intertextuality and critical connections that were usually not made available in traditional print-based materials". (p.18) This entails that multimodal materials support learners to develop a multimodal thinking and cognitive flexibility which is very significant for the language learning process through interpreting and decipher the hidden meanings embodied in the different, images, texts, layouts, colours, and captions provided in their textbooks.

In the Algerian context, Yassine (2012) is considered as a reference to the present work because the findings reached open new doors for further research that would look at the potential of recent/current EFL textbooks in Algeria in reflecting an intercultural discourse. Yassine (2012) has conducted a diachronic analysis of three EFL textbooks used in Algeria from 1989 to 2007. The study aims at evaluating the development of culture contextualization in the textbooks by targeting key notions namely culture, ideology and otherness. It also aims at evaluating the shift in the textbooks' design from a monomodal to a more multimodal

layout following a social semiotic multimodal approach. Her findings revealed that the three EFL textbooks (*Think it Over* (1989), *Comet* (2001), and *New Prospects* (2007)) favor ENL cultures; i.e. British and American, though they are locally designed. This applies to the two semiotic modes: language and image which both reflect a surface aspect of culture. Accordingly, the relation between the *Self* and the *Other* is not bridged in such a way to form a *third* space. Her results also show that the international culture is given a notable place though it is restricted to western/European countries. The researcher concluded that unlike the two previous textbooks the recent one; i.e. *New Prospects* (2007) allocates a remarkable place for the local culture and intercultural learning.

Materials and Methods1-Materials1-1- Presentation of the Corpus

“*At the Crossroads*” is a secondary school EFL textbook locally designed in 2005 by Riche, B. et al. The textbook is the outcome of the national educational reform that took place in 2002, in which the Algerian ministry of education planned the reintroduction of the second foreign language (English) into the sixth grade (intermediate school). This reform has also replaced the Communicative-based Approach (CBA) by the Competency-based Approach to Language Teaching (CBALT) in the three pillars of national education: Primary, middle, and secondary education. *At the Crossroads* is a first-generation textbook designed for all streams (science and literature) first-year secondary school learners (SE1) aged (15/16) years old. It includes five didactic units dealing with different themes; these are: getting through, once upon a time, our findings show, eureka and back to nature. The recent reforms in the Algerian EFL textbooks work on designing the second generation of textbooks that would replace the first generation ones. From 2016 to 2018, the second generation of middle school EFL textbooks has been designed and is currently used; whereas the design of second-generation secondary school textbooks is still ongoing.

2- Sampling the Corpus:

‘*At the Crossroads*’(2005) (which inspired “*New Prospects*” (2007)) in its multimodal design combining two complementary semiotic modes: The verbal and the visual. This study is limited to the analysis of the visual content only. The textbook encompasses one hundred and four images which are grouped following Yassine’s (2012) categorization into three types: Real images/ photographs, drawings/ cartoons, and diagrams/ maps. Some of these visuals are in black and white and others are in colours.

2-1- Purposive Sampling:

For the sake of systematicity, the one hundred and four visuals are sampled following the “*purposive sampling*” method. The latter is a qualitative method that is used in qualitative research literature today⁽¹³⁾. Purposive, also called purposeful sampling implies that the sampling process is tied to the nature of the researchers’ objectives as well as the context of the research⁽¹⁴⁾. It is defined as “The selection of participants or sources of data to be used in a study, based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the study’s research questions”⁽¹⁵⁾. Accordingly, to fit the purpose of the present research, only twenty-five out of one hundred and four visuals are subject to analysis (see Appendix N°1, page 21). This sample is restricted only to the visuals which represent a cultural content. The remaining seventy-nine visuals are meant either for illustrating the different teaching points or for entertaining the learners, such as the cartoons which accompany the English jokes and poems at the end of some sequences and units.

The following table shows the distribution of the visual resources under analysis in “*At the Crossroads*”:

Table n°1: Types of the Visuals under Analysis

Visual Resources in <i>At the Crossroads</i>	Real Images/ Photographs	Drawings/ Cartoons	Diagrams/ Maps	Total
N	18	07	00	25
%	72%	28%	00%	100%

3-Methods:

The data analysis method adopted in this paper to analyze the twenty five selected visuals consists in Kress & Leeuwen’s (2006) framework for reading images which is known as “*The Grammar of Visual Design*”.

Table n°2: Kress and Leeuwen’s Three-pattern System of Representation

Representational		Meaning				Compositional	
		Interactional		Interactional			
Narrative	Conceptual	Gaze	Distance	Perspective	Saliency	Info. Value	Framing

As it is shown in the above table, the meaning of a visual composition consists of three interrelated systems or levels of meaning: The representational, the interactional and the compositional meanings. Each image is analyzed following this model at three levels:

3-1- The Representational Meaning:

The first level of meaning depicted in a visual representation shows the way worldly events are represented in the image through various semiotic resources. This is paralleled to Halliday’s experiential meaning. This level can be represented through *narrative* or *conceptual* processes. The former is created when the represented participants are connected by a vector, which means they are represented as doing something to or for each other. This is what Kress and Leeuwen (2006)⁽¹⁶⁾ label dynamic activity or agency. The latter is when the represented participants are not engaged in any movement or action but are shown in a static, general state

3-2-The Interactional Meaning:

The second level of meaning shows the way the image engages the reader through some semiotic resources such as gaze, distance, and perspective. It is paralleled to Halliday’s (1978) interpersonal meaning.

3-2-1- Gaze:

Gaze is related to the eyeline of the represented participants in relation to the reader of the image (i.e. the viewer). Kress and van Leeuwen⁽¹⁷⁾ clarify that there is a difference between the visuals where the represented participants direct their gaze to the viewers’ eyes and the visuals where there is no direct eye contact with the viewers. The former is known as “*Demand*” image, whereas the latter is known as “*Offer*” image. In the demanding gaze, the represented participant establishes a relationship with the viewers by telling something or asking them to act. In the offering gaze, the represented participants gaze at the other elements inside the image in such a way to inform the viewers about something without directly engaging them; hence, there is no interaction or relationship between the represented participants and the viewers.

3-2-2- Social distance:

Social distance refers to feelings of intimacy, close or far distance between the participants and the readers of the image which is indexed by the size of the frame: close, medium or long shot. When the size of the frame is a long shot this implies a far personal distance, when it is a medium shot it suggests close personal distance and when it is close shot it proposes intimate distance. These three zones of social distance are taken from the real social contexts in which people express the type of relationship they hold with their interlocutors through the distance they keep.

3-3-3- Perspective:

Perspective refers to the way the image is photographed which can point to commitment (involvement or detachment) and power relations between the represented participants and the reader⁽¹⁸⁾. By commitment, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) explain that when the participants are shown from the “*front*” this suggests a sense of involvement, whereas when they are shown from an “*oblique*” angle this suggests detachment from the world of the viewers. As for power relations, if the viewers see the represented participant from a high vertical angle, this implies that they have power over these participants. If the viewers see the participants in the image from a low angle, this suggests that the participants have power over the viewers.

When the viewers and the represented participants are at eye level, this suggests a relationship of equality between the two.

3-3-The Compositional Meaning:

The third level of meaning shows the way the two previous levels combine in the image to construct a meaningful whole. The compositional meaning is analyzed in terms of three semiotic resources: information value, salience, and framing.

3-3-1- Information value:

Information value refers to the position of the image which indicates different information roles; i.e. whether it is placed on the left and right, top and bottom, or centre and margin of the composition. This positioning of the visual elements is culturally sensitive and follows the reading direction of a specific culture. First, the left-right positioning of elements in a composition implies given and new information. In Western culture, the right side provides key information to the viewer which requires particular attention, whereas the left side provides information that is already given and known by the viewers. Second, top-bottom positioning proposes ideal and real structures. According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), ideal things are placed on the top of the composition whereas real things are placed at the bottom. Third, center-margin positioning suggests that the elements placed in the center signifies are at the heart of the topic while the other elements placed in the periphery are inferior and less important though the centre and margin information is coherent with each other.

3-3-2 Salience:

Salience refers to the ability of the elements in the picture to capture the reader's attention through the use of colour, font size, capital letters, focus, and tone, etc. This means that the element with a saturated or highlighted color, with a bigger size, the element which is foregrounded and which carries a particular cultural connotation is more prominent than the other elements of the visual composition.

3-3-3- Framing:

Framing refers to the way the different elements of a representation are related or separated to create coherence; either through boundaries or through natural connections. These frames are created through various semiotic resources such as lines, spaces, the edge of photographs, icons, discontinuities of colour or by images⁽¹⁹⁾. These resources are used to distinguish some elements from each other, to separate them, or connect them. Moreover, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) explain that the presence of framing highlights individuality and differentiation while its absence suggests group identity.

Results:

This section presents the results of the multimodal analysis of the selected 25 images. As it was previously stated in the methodology section, each of the 25 images was read following the three patterns: representational, interactional and compositional in order to figure out the levels of cultural awareness represented in each visual.

Image 1:

At the representational level, image (01) depicts a girl with a white uniform who is using a microscope. The image is decontextualized in the sense that the real setting is removed and replaced by a green background. Hence, no additional details can be added especially since the textbook does not acknowledge any credit/reference from which the image is taken. At an interactional level, it is an offer image (no direct gaze; and no interaction with the viewers) which associates females to the domain of science as an attempt to challenge the stereotype restricting science domains exclusively to males. At a compositional level, salience is given to two objects; i.e. the uniform and the microscope as symbols of science and this may hint at the scientific streams within secondary school education; mainly that the image is on the book cover.

Image 2:

At the representational level, image (02) shows a school boy who is sitting and holding Shakespeare's plays. Like the previous one, this image is decontextualized as the real setting is

removed and replaced by a blue background. Here again, it is worth mentioning that no credit/reference from which the image is taken is acknowledged. At an interactional level, it is an offer image (no direct gaze; and no interaction with the viewers) which associates males to the domain of literature as an attempt to change the stereotype considering literature as a female domain and science as a male domain. At a compositional level, salience is given to the book as the boy is gazing at it in such a way to invite us to look at the book he is holding. In the same line with the previous image, this may hint at the literary streams within secondary school education because the image is on the book cover.

Image 3:

At the representational level, image (03) depicts a panoramic view of Algiers (the capital of Algeria) which is indexed by the Martyrs' Memorial Building. However, the textbook does not acknowledge any photo credit. At an interactional level, it is an offer image which demonstrates one of the cultural symbols of Algeria which is loaded with historical connotations. At a compositional level, salience is given to the Martyrs' Memorial Building which is placed at the center of the image in order to reflect the identity of the learners. In terms of information value, the fact that the image is placed on the left side of the front cover suggests that local/national identity (i.e. Self) is something given/known, whereas the new identity learners have to construct; i.e. as foreign language learners, is reflected in the following picture (image 4) that is put on the right side of the page.

Image 4:

At the representational level, image (04) shows a panoramic view of London (the capital of the UK) which is indexed by the Big Ben clock. Again, there is no acknowledgement of the image credits. At an interactional level, it is an offer image that informs the learners about one of the cultural symbols of the UK which is loaded with historical connotations. Moreover, image (04) implies that '*At the Crossroads*' is a textbook of English and not another subject. At a compositional level, salience is given to the Big Ben clock which is foregrounded and made bigger. As stated previously, in terms of information value image (04) is placed on the right side of the page in an attempt to hint at the new identity Algerian learners need to construct. In terms of framing, images (03) and (04) overlap and this is shown through the blurred borders of the images. This implies that developing a second/ foreign identity is not in opposition withholding one's own local identities. (See Appendix N^o1, p.21)

Image 5:

At the representational level, image (05) shows a world map with two connected computers on the left and right sides of the image. This image has no reference in the textbook. At an interactional level, it is an offer image that depicts the current state of today's world as being globalized and technologically advanced. Image (05) serves to introduce the first didactic unit entitled '*Getting Through*'. At a compositional level, salience is given to the arrobas (@) which is at the center of the image and in the background of the map. Furthermore, the circle shape of arrobas connotes the globe. The fact that the world map is smaller than the computers and the arrobas, suggests that the world has become a small village because of 21st century technology.

Image 6:

At the representational level, image (06) depicts the Algerian Radio and TV building. The image is taken from ElWatan newspaper as stated in the textbook. At the interactional level, it is an offer image which provides factual information about the learners' local culture. Here again, this image serves to introduce the first didactic unit entitled '*Getting Through*'. At the compositional level, salience is given to the two Algerian flags which are foregrounded. The flags together with the sentence 'Algerian Radio and TV' placed at the bottom of image (06) precise the context of the image (i.e. local context). In terms of coherence, this image is relevant to unit 1 as it deals with one of the various communication technologies used in 21st century.

Image 7:

At the first level, this image demonstrates a group of children who are using a computer. At the bottom of the page it is written 'a computer class', but there is no visual element that supports this, because the image is decontextualized for the real setting is replaced by a white background. Hence, the image looks as if it is fabricated by means of Photoshop or another software (see Appendix N°1, p. 21). At the interactional level, it is an offer image that shows different racial belongings of the participants as indexed by some biological features which are highlighted in the image, such as coloured skin, Asian eyes, and blond hair. This image illustrates a listening task that asks the learners to re-order sentences in order to get coherent instruction for accessing an e-mail. At the compositional level, the salient element is the computer as it is foregrounded; and this makes image (07) coherent with the theme of the unit.

Image 8:

At the representational level, image (08) depicts the front of the Tower of London. No photo credit is acknowledged in the textbook. At the interactional level, it is an offer image which shows one of the British monuments or cultural symbols. This image serves to reinforce an integrated task in which learners are asked to write a short note advertising for visiting the Tower of London through using some grammar items provided under the task (the use of 'until' and 'from ...to'). At the compositional level, the Tower of London is so foregrounded and made bigger in size that no other visual elements appear in the image. Image (08) is consistent with the content of the task it is associated with.

Image 9:

Image (09) displays five book front covers: Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Arabian Nights*. It is an offer image that introduces the learners to the domain of literature through presenting some icons of English Anglo-American literature. Image (09) serves to introduce the second unit which is entitled '*Once Upon A Time*'. At the third level, and in terms of information value, Shakespeare's book is foregrounded and placed at the center of the page surrounded with the four remaining novels. This places a special focus on mainstream Anglo-Saxon literature.

Image 10:

At the representational level, image (10) depicts some parts/ scenes from *The Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor*; a tale from the *Arabian Nights*. No reference is provided in the textbook. At the interactional level, it is an offer image which introduces the learners to one of the famous world novels which has been translated to many languages. This image constitutes the main part of a listening task in which the learners are asked to look at the different scenes presented in image (10) in order to anticipate the topic of the listening script. At the compositional level, six main events of the story are placed one after another with an alphabetical ordering in order to guide the learners follow and understand the listening passage provided with the image.

Image 11:

Image (11) shows a book back cover with the photo of the Nigerian writer *Chinua Achebe* accompanied with a blurb of the novel underneath. The image shows the house of edition; i.e. Heinemann Educational Publishers, which is placed at the bottom of the image; and which is acknowledged at the end of the textbook. It is an offer image which introduces the learners to one of the famous African/Nigerian novels: *Things Fall Apart*. Image (11) constitutes the main part of the reading task in which the learners need to rely on the image in order to answer some questions to anticipate the reading text. The left and right sides of the image include some colorful jagged lines and shapes (red, orange, blue, green, yellow, black and white) which are all associated with African colors and this symbolizes African culture. The book summary and the author's photo are placed at the center. All these visual elements contribute to help the learners guess the content of the reading text.

Image 12:

At the representational level, image 12 demonstrates Dickens' *Hard Times* front cover taken from the Penguin Classics Edition as shown on the top of the image. At the interactional level, it is an offer image which informs the learners about one of the famous English literary works of the 19th century. This image supports the excerpt from '*Hard Times*' which accompanies it. Thus, it helps the learners guess the topic even before skimming the text. At the compositional level, the image is placed on the right side of the passage, as a way to illustrate the text and help the learners construct an idea about the topic discussed. In other words, the poor state and conditions of the city described in the passage are represented visually in the image (the book front cover) with the dark, dirty and sad colors referring to pollution, melancholy, etc. Hence, the image rhymes with the linguistic text; and the two modes are consistent with the overall theme of the unit.

Image 13:

Image (13) depicts three teenagers practising sport in the garden. At the bottom of the image more details are provided in the sentence '*Jim, Bob and Jack playing basketball*'. This image is taken from '*American Life and Institutions, USIA*'. It is an offer image that documents and informs the learners about one aspect of the American culture/lifestyle which consists in *sport*. Image (13) reinforces a grammar task (past continuous tense). The image does not place a special focus on one element over the others as it provides a scene which mirrors the lifestyle of American teenagers by showing one of the hobbies they practice in their leisure time.

Image 14

At the representational level, image (14) depicts a portrait of the famous English playwright William Shakespeare. No additional details can be deduced as the image is decontextualized and no photo credits are provided in the textbook. At the interactional level, it is an offer image that documents and informs the learners about one icon of English literature. It supports the 'write it out' activity which provides brief information about Shakespeare to be used in writing a biography. At the compositional level, the image is foregrounded and placed at the center against a white background. It is coherent with the content of the writing task and with the broad theme of Unit 2.

Image 15

At the representational level, image (15) is decontextualized and shows a black and white photograph of the English actor and film director Charlie Chaplin. No photo credits are provided in the textbook. At the interactional level, it is a demand picture as the participant is gazing directly at the viewers with a comic and satirical facial expression and body posture. This helps the learners know more about the type of works Chaplin is specialized in (i.e. comedy). The image supports the writing task which provides brief information about Chaplin to be used in writing a biography. At the compositional level, the image is a medium shot which is placed at the center against a blurred background. It is in harmony with the writing task and with the theme of the unit.

Image 16

Image (16) portrays a young lady with a formal dress (suit) standing and holding a notebook with a pen inside an office. She is next to a young man sitting on a desk and operating on a computer with a formal dress as well (suit). The image is taken from '*Postgraduate Prospectus, the University of Birmingham*'. It is an offer image as the participants are not gazing towards the viewers, but gazing at each other instead. This shows that they are at work; i.e. the man is talking and the lady is taking notes. This is reinforced by the sentence placed at the bottom of the page: '*At the office, a secretary taking notes*'. A computer displaying some 3D graphs/ schema is placed at the center of the image and this matches with the topic of the new didactic unit "*Our Findings Show...*" All the other visual elements in this representation synchronize with the theme of the unit.

Image 17:

At the representational level, image (17) demonstrates a young lady holding a microphone and a paper and looking at a camera carried by a young man. The image is taken from 'Postgraduate Prospectus, the University of Birmingham'. At the interactional level, it is an offer image as the participants are not gazing towards the viewers, but gazing at each other instead. The woman seems to be a journalist who is reporting news or events and the cameraman is filming her. This is reinforced visually by some objects carried by the participants; i.e. the microphone and the camera; and linguistically by the word placed at the bottom of the page: 'Reporter'. At the compositional level, no element is more prominent than the others in this representation; i.e. they are all of the equal significance as they serve to illustrate and introduce the unit "*Our Findings Show...*"

Image 18:

Image (18) depicts a shop showcase exposing a number of newspapers and magazines. Although the above print media are written in English, the context of the image is not clear as there is no acknowledgement of the photo credit. It is an offer image that shows one of the means of communication that humans used since the invention of the printing machine; i.e. newspapers and magazines. The image illustrates and helps the learners follow and understand the listening script which consists in an interview asking about the types of newspapers and the frequency of their use as well as the reliability of the information provided in mass media. The image includes one specific element consisting in print media displayed in a showcase which is foregrounded. Accordingly, no extra details are shown in the image. In terms of coherence, this image is consistent with the theme of Unit 3.

Image 19:

At the representational level, image (19) is a black and white photograph which depicts people reading newspapers while sitting in a bus. It is taken from 'Britain in Close-up, Longman'. At the interactional level, it is an offer image as the participants are not gazing at the viewers; they are all busy in reading newspapers and books. This image is the main part of a task which asks the learners to compare what is represented in the picture with their local culture. At the compositional level, the image sheds light on the newspapers which are foregrounded and put on the left of the image with the title 'The Sun' indexing British context. At the background of the image there is a man standing and reading a small book. All these elements serve the same message which consists in mirroring one aspect of British culture which is reading while travelling.

Image 20:

Image (20) displays three visual representations: a robotville, a control room with a worker wearing a white uniform who is operating different machines, and two robots talking to each other. The source, from which the image is taken, as acknowledged in the textbook, is 'the Unreel'. It is an offer image which documents about the technological human achievements which envisage and visualize an artificial world that simulates the real world (i.e. a robot world). Image (20) is meant for introducing unit4: 'Eureka!' which deals with the history of scientific inventions that have changed the course of humanity for centuries. All the visual elements shown in the three representations are coherent with the theme of the new unit 'Eureka!'.

Image 21:

At the representational level, image (21) shows an old black and white photograph depicting a group of women washing clothes manually in the river. The image is taken from 'Skills in English, Garnet'. At the interactional level, it is an offer image that demonstrates the traditional ways of washing clothes (using hands, feet, washboards and brushes, clothes beater, etc.) in an attempt to explain how difficult life was in the past without today's facilities. Image (21) is the main part of the anticipation task in which learners rely on the visual to guess the topic of the listening script. At the compositional level, the image is coherent with the listening script which accompanies it, as it guides the learners throughout

their listening process to understand the contribution of technology to the modern home through explaining old methods of household which were tiring, time-consuming and not always efficient.

Image 22:

Image (22) depicts four black and white photographs of scientists, namely: Alexander Graham Bell, Louis Pasteur, Albert Einstein, and Alexander Fleming. No photo credits are acknowledged in the textbook. It is an offer image that documents about the participants who are considered as icons of science; each in his specific domain of research. It attempts to inform the learners that it was thanks to the inventions of these scientists that life becomes easier, modern and more practical. The image is coherent with the theme of the unit in general and serves as the main part of the speaking activity in which the learners are asked to use the information provided under the photographs to comment on them.

Image 23:

At the representational level, image (23) shows four drawings: Coca-Cola bottle, a pair of Jeans, chewing gum, and a photocopying machine (Xerox). The image is taken from 'A First Look at the USA- A Cultural Reader-p.24'. At the interactional level, it is an offer image which aims at documenting about some of the American inventions that marked the world business for decades and which become symbols of the American culture. At the compositional level, the four visuals represented in image (23) are coherent and relevant to the topics discussed in the fourth unit (i.e. Eureka!).

Image 24:

Image (24) depicts a black and white photograph of George Washington Carver; an American scientist who is specialized in agricultural chemistry. The image is taken from 'The Book of Popular Science-p.129'. It is an offer image which aims at illustrating the text put on the left of the image dealing with the life of Carver. It helps the learners guess what the text is about at a first glance. Image (24) contains two elements: The participant who is a scientist, and at the bottom of the picture there is a drawing of seeds of a plant under earth that started growing up. In terms of framing, the two visual elements overlap, and this is coherent because the drawing documents the occupation/speciality of Carver as an agricultural chemist.

Image 25:

Image (25) shows two opposite representations: the first consists in an empty nest on green grass, whereas the second consists in a set of factories emitting smoke and toxic fumes. No extra details can be accounted for as the textbook does not acknowledge any reference. It is an offer image which aims at reporting the drastic situation of our earth which is threatened by pollution. In terms of information value the green nature is placed on the top of image (25) as being an ideal situation, whereas the polluted environment is placed at the bottom referring to a nasty and disagreeable situation. This rhymes with the title of the unit 5 which aims at raising the awareness of learners towards the urgent need to protect earth from the danger of pollution.

The diagrams 01, 02 and 03 (see Appendix N⁰³, p. 23) summarize the main findings of the multimodal analysis. The first demonstrates the amount of visual discourse devoted to each of the contexts of English use (ENL, ESL and EFL). The second shows the amount of visual discourse devoted to each of the cultural aspect (big C and small C cultures). The third diagram demonstrates the number of images devoted to each cultural awareness level (BCA, ACA and ICA). These results are discussed in the subsequent section.

Discussion

'At the Crossroads' (2005) has a multimodal design as it combines the linguistic and the visual modes in a single composition. It comprises more than 35 texts and 104 visuals which are merged and distributed in the five didactic units. Also, the 104 visuals include a number of semiotic resources such as color and layout. This shows that textbook designers are aware of the importance of including more than one semiotic mode in the design of EFL textbooks in the Algerian educational system. This reinforces Yassine's (2014) findings stating that unlike

the previous EFL textbooks which were monomodal, the recent one; i.e. *New Prospects* (2007) has a multimodal design. However, in terms of the content of the visuals included in the textbook, the results of the present paper revealed that only 24% (i.e. $\frac{1}{4}$) of these visuals are loaded with a cultural content; the remaining 76% (i.e. $\frac{3}{4}$) is included to serve as illustrative and entertaining tools; i.e. some visuals such as the cartoons which accompany the English jokes and poems at the end of some sequences and units are meant for entertaining the learners. Even though "... (images) cease to be there just as an ornament whose single use is to embellish the linguistic (written) text" (Yassine, 2014, p.336), the impressionistic view of images is still held in the process of textbook design in the Algerian context. This reinforces Hobbs & Frost (2003) assertion that visuals "are still often ignored or treated superficially in the classroom" and Jewitt's (2008c, p. 15) statement that "the visual and multimodal survive at the margins of the curriculum".

The findings have also shown that some of the images are not authentic and are manipulated by means of Photoshop, or another software; and in most of the cases this practice is not justified. Indeed, by manipulating an image the reality represented within it is manipulated as well, and this eventually influences learners' understanding and attitudes towards the issue tackled. Moreover, a considerable number of "At the Crossroads" visuals lack photo credits and most of the referencing format of the images which were acknowledged was not complete and not very informative. Nevertheless, in terms of the didactic value of the visuals, it is worth mentioning that a large part of the analyzed images was relevant to and support the teaching tasks it was associated with.

1- Context of English Use in At the Crossroads Textbook:

As far as the cultural contexts highlighted in the visuals under analysis, it was noticed that "At the Crossroads" visual discourse is in favor of the ENL cultures (Kachru, 1990) as nearly half of the images; i.e. 44% represents British and American cultures. To illustrate, images (04), (08), (09), (12), (13), (14), (15), (19), (23) and (24) represent British and American cultural products, practices and achievements through offering a positive image of these ENL cultures and representing them as inspiring models to follow.

The context which ranked second is the ESL cultures (16%) which consist basically of Western/European countries, or what Yassine (2012) calls international/Western cultures, through highlighting their achievements in different domains namely science and literature. Here again, the visual discourse draws a positive image of ESL cultures.

Only 12% of the visuals were devoted to the local culture which is considered as an EFL country. These visuals devoted to the Algerian culture (images 03 and 06) were limited in terms of quantity and quality of cultural information represented to the EFL learners.

Finally, the context of 28% of the visuals was not clear and not easy to determine because of the lack of information due to the above mentioned factors (lack of references and authenticity). For instance, images (1), (2), (5), (16), (17), (18) were decontextualized because of the lack of the visual elements which precise the background/setting of each image though they are laden with a cultural content.

Therefore, these results show that the textbook fails to make a balance between the local culture and the other cultures; that it strengthens English cultural imperialism and native speakers through the considerable amount and the positive image of ENL cultures represented in the images. Hence, there are cultural imbalances, stereotypes, and biases embedded in the visual discourse of the analyzed EFL textbook. This goes in line with Yassine's (2012) finding that Algerian EFL textbooks fail to bridge the gap between the *Self* and the *Other* in such a way to form a *third* space for the EFL learners.

2- Cultural Aspects in At the Crossroads:

As regards culture representations, the multimodal analysis demonstrated that "At the Crossroads" visual discourse gives more prominence to the visible cultural aspects, or what Holliday (1999) labels 'Big C' culture, over the implicit aspects (small C culture). To reinforce this statement, images (3), (4), (6), (8), and (23) demonstrate some cultural

monuments and buildings which are famous and widely visited by tourists such as British Museum, Big Ben watch, etc. Images (9), (10), (11), (12), (14), (15), (22), and (24) reflect literary and scientific achievements of the different cultures represented; and images (13), (19), (21) and (23) show some cultural products and practices of the represented cultures. A few images, however, deal with the subtle cultural traits which are not observable and not easily depicted from the visuals.

3- Level of Cultural Awareness in *At the Crossroads* Visuals:

Based on the aforementioned results and in terms of cultural awareness levels (Baker, 2011), the analyzed corpus reflects a more basic cultural awareness level (52%); 28% of the images reflect an advanced cultural awareness level; whereas no image reflects an intercultural awareness level. This entails that the textbook visuals stress the superficial cultural traits such as behaviors, beliefs and values when comparing the learners' local culture and the other cultures. In other words, the understanding of others' cultures is based on stereotypes or the first impression that EFL learners acquire through focusing on some visible characteristics only. Hence, the awareness at this level is superficial and partial. As for the advanced cultural awareness, some visuals such images (13), (14), (15), (19), (21), and (22), offered information related to more significant and subtle cultural traits of specific cultures such as showing the elite of a specific cultural groups and their achievements in specific domains in an attempt to invite the learners to reflect and compare them to their own cultural groups. The surprising result of this study is that no image reflects an intercultural awareness; though some of them represent topics such as environmental issues, globalization, and technological/scientific progress; which are considered very broad themes to be related to interculturality.

Therefore, the visual discourse in '*At the Crossroads*' does not succeed to promote Intercultural learning as it does not provide enough visual input to develop EFL learners' Intercultural Awareness. As a result, the textbook needs updating and amendments mainly in its visual design to meet the requirements of the new generation of learners, through a serious and careful selection of visuals that reflect an intercultural awareness level.

Conclusion:

This paper has explored the way Intercultural Awareness is accounted for in the visual discourse of the EFL textbook '*At the Crossroads*' (2005). The Multimodal analysis reveals that the sample of the analyzed visuals is in favor of ENL cultures; i.e. British and American, at the expense of the Algerian culture though the textbook is locally designed. Thus, the relation between the *Self* and the *Other* is not bridged in such a way to form a *third* space. This restricts the comparison between cultures which is an important component towards developing intercultural awareness. The study also shows that the cultural aspects emphasized in the visual resources reflect visible and superficial cultural traits such as achievements, practices, and behaviors; and this eventually limits learners' role to passive consumers of cultural information and limits their cultural awareness to the basic awareness level. The study concludes that the visual discourse in the textbook under investigation does not succeed to promote intercultural learning, though the latter has nowadays become a core objective in the language education curricula. Therefore, this research work calls the upcoming studies for serious rethinking and research in order to re-consider the visual design of first generation EFL textbooks in a way to contribute more to the development of EFL learners' intercultural awareness.

Endnotes:

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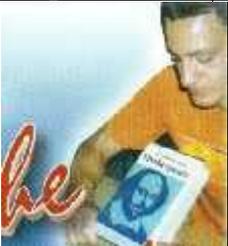
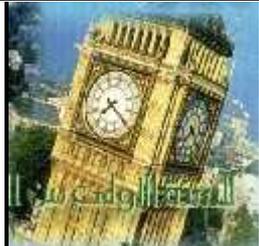
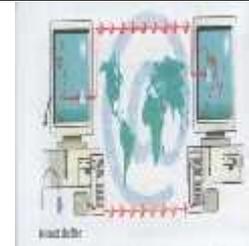
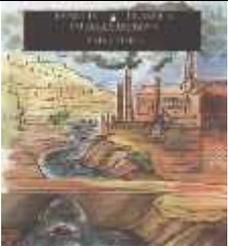
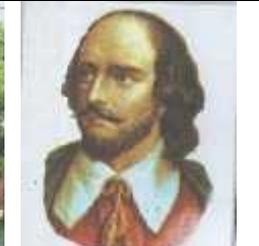
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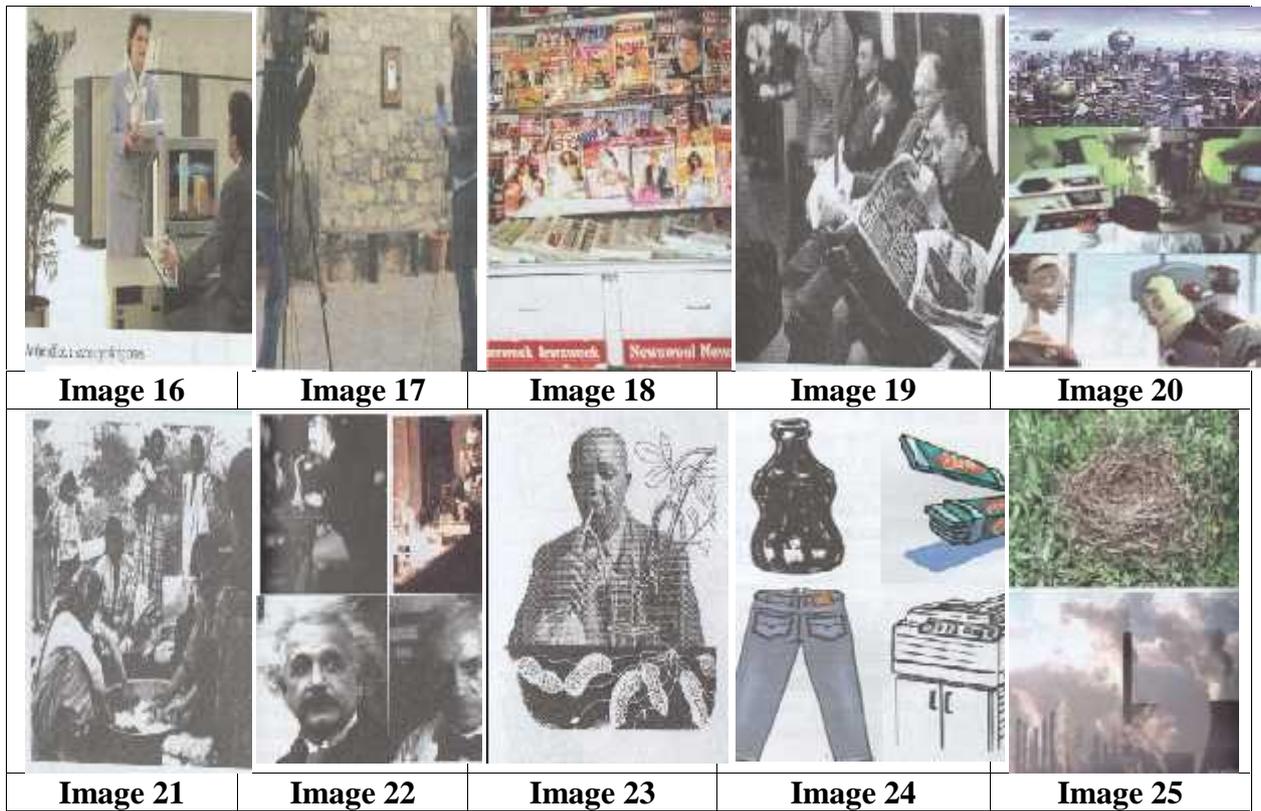
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Appendices:

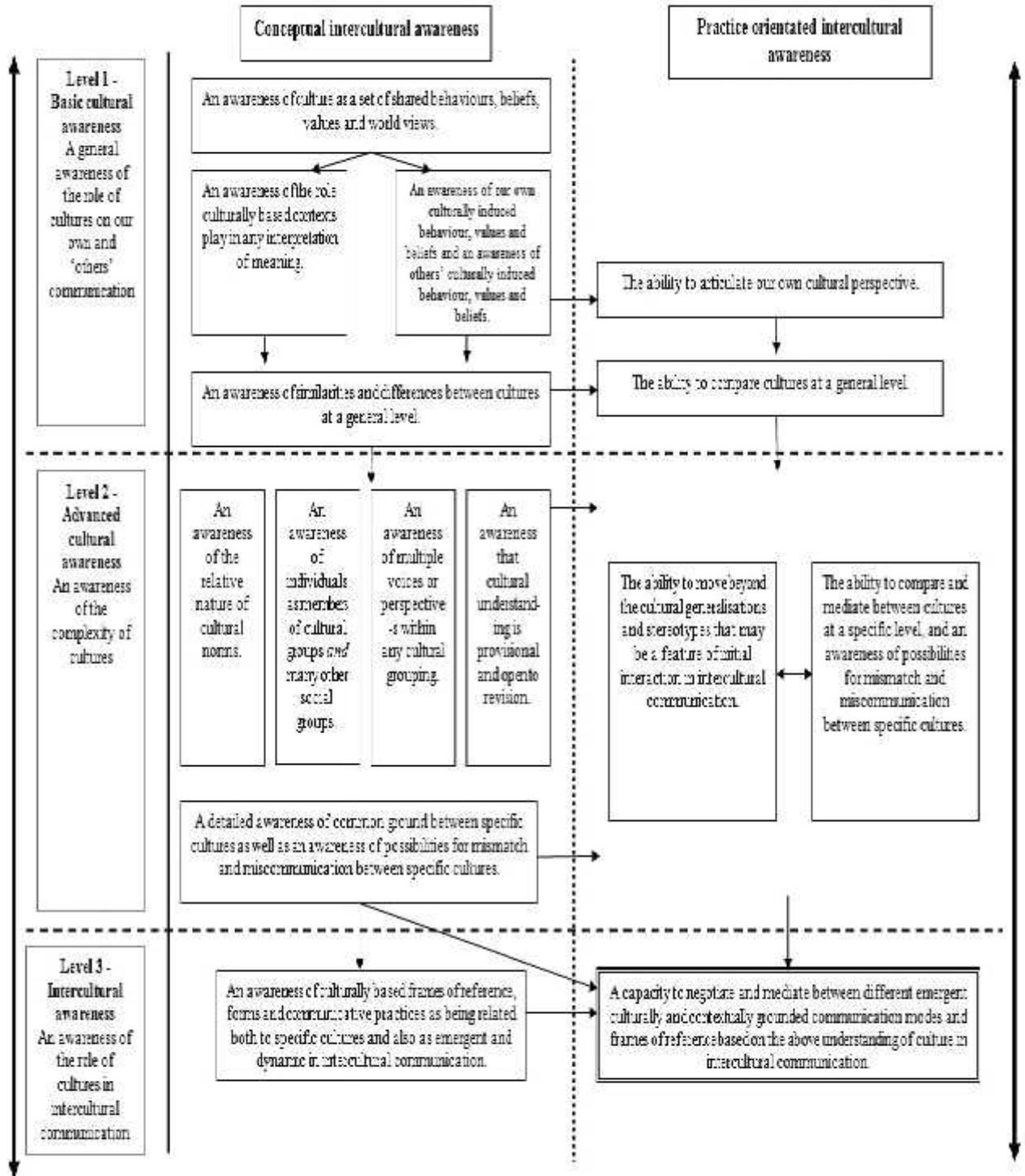
Appendix 01: The Corpus

				
Image 1	Image 2	Image 3	Image 4	Image 5
				
Image 6	Image 7	Image 8	Image 9	Image 10
				
Image 11	Image 12	Image 13	Image 14	Image 15



From: Riche B, Ameziane H, Louadj K, Arab S A, Hami H, (2005), At the Crossroads, Alger: Office National des Publications Scolaires (OPNS).

Appendix 02: Baker’s (2011) Model of Intercultural Awareness



From: Baker W, (2011), Intercultural awareness: modelling an understanding of cultures in intercultural communication through English as a lingua franca, Language and Intercultural Communication, Vol 11, n°3, pp 197-214.

Appendix 03 : Results

