

التحليل السيميائي لعناصر الثقافة السعودية في مقررات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للصف الثاني الثانوي

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المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل مستوى تمثيل المحتوى الثقافي الوطني السعودي في مقرر اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للصف الثاني الثانوي، استخدمت الدراسة منهجا بحثيا خلط بين أسلوب البحث الكيفي والكمي اعتمادا على المبادئ الأساسية للتحليل السيميائي؛ حيث تم تحليل محتوى المقرر لأربعة محاور هي: منتجات الثقافة، وممارسات الثقافة، والمنظور الثقافي، والشخصيات العادية والمشهورة والمؤثرة في الثقافة المحلية، وأظهرت نتائج البحث أن مقررات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للصف الثاني الثانوي تحتوي على قدر غير كافٍ متعلق بالثقافة المحلية السعودية؛ حيث وجد أن مجموع المحتوى الممثل للثقافة الوطنية السعودية نسبته (٣٠,٢٪)، مقابل (٦٩,٨٪)، للمحتوى الثقافي الدولي؛ وبناء على هذه النتائج أوصت الدراسة بضرورة إعادة النظر في تطوير محتوى مقرر اللغة الإنجليزية للصف الثاني الثانوي (Mega Goal ٣&٤) للموازنة في التمثيل الثقافي لمحتواه بين المحلية والدولية بشكل تتحقق فيه الأهداف التربوية المرغوبة إضافة لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السيميائية، عناصر الثقافة، تطوير المناهج، اللغة الإنجليزية، الصف الثاني الثانوي.

Semiotic Analysis of Saudi culture factors in English as a Foreign Language Textbooks for the Second Grade of Secondary School

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Abstract:

Language and culture are two attached perceptions, whether in daily life or in teaching courses. Both notions are found in textbooks which are the central resource of knowledge and information in the official teaching practice. This study aimed to analyze the level of representation of the Saudi national cultural content in the EFL textbook for the second grade of secondary school. The study used a research method that mixed qualitative and quantitative research methods based on the basic principles of semiotic analysis. The course content was analyzed for four axes: the products of culture, the practices of culture and the cultural perspective, and the ordinary, famous, and influential personalities in the local culture. The results of the research showed a course of English as a foreign language for the second secondary grade that contains insufficient content related to the local Saudi culture, where it was found that the total content representing the Saudi national culture was (30,2%), compared to (69,8%), for the international cultural content. Based on these results, the study recommended the need to reconsider the development of the English language course content for the second grade in secondary school (Mega Goal ٣&٤) to balance the cultural representation of its content between local and international in a way that achieves the desired educational goals in addition to learning the English language.

Key words: semiotics, elements of culture, curriculum development, English language, second grade of secondary school.

Introduction:

Achievements, which are the first fundamental elements of the curriculum, are the expressions that describe the knowledge, skills, and competencies of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor areas, which we can refer to as the dimensions of learning, that students are expected to have at the end of a unit, term, or academic year. When defining these accomplishments, the requirements of the person and the needs of society are two essential reference points that must be taken into consideration. In tandem with the fast change in the world, these requirements evolve at the same rate, necessitating a growing amount of effort to ensure that the attainments in the curriculum are tailored to satisfy these requirements. Therefore, it is now intended to include culture that students will need in their personal, social, academic, and business lives into the national and international curriculum to prepare them for their future

Studying English as foreign language (EFL) is more of a norm than an exclusion in today's culture, and it is becoming more common. Many sources aid in collecting and studying the language; nevertheless, the earliest and most significant of them is almost a textbook on the subject. The purpose of EFL textbooks, and in particular their cultural content material, are the primary focus of this study's investigation. It is proposed in this study that a semiotic technique be used to interpret the representations of cultural material found in EFL textbook contents. An approach that is semiotic and multimodal in nature, as loosed to a traditional approach to textbook analysis, allows for a more comprehensive picture of the culture, which is a significant potential and a frequently overlooked component of language students' involvement in texts and visuals embedded within the framework of a pedagogic assignment.

It is critical to evaluate and prepare for the language's way of life and raise public knowledge of the language's many features. Several investigators have suggested that subculture and language are two faces of the same currency, and as a result, they are inextricably linked (Mitchell & Myles, ٢٠٠٤; Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler, ٢٠٠٣). If we consider the way of life an essential component of the language, then it follows that it should be one of the most essential textbooks. A semiotic method will be used to examine the Saudi cultural elements of EFL textbooks for high school, to determine the potential of these textbooks. It is possible to conduct analysis via a semiotic viewpoint lens oriented to multimodality and examine a semiotic agenda consisted of texts, pictures, and responsibilities. In a similar vein, the analysis will include semiotic ideas and identify possible ways of meaning-making processes concerning the cultural content material under consideration.

A total of two parts makes up this research. The first element serves as a theoretical foundation for the second element, which is the sensible component. First and foremost, it defines semiotics and essential terminology, beginning with the origins of the field and on to modern semiotic approaches. Specifically, it is concerned with semiotic analysis and multimodality in literature, particularly in textbooks. Furthermore, it clarifies the concept of culture as well as the relationship between culture and language. In the end, it provides insights on the usage of textbooks for EFL beginners and highlights the significance of teaching and getting to know the culture of the target community. The most significant findings are summarized in conclusion, along with discussing actual implications and recommendations for further research.

Third, the semiotic analysis of texts, photographs, and tasks connected to the components of Saudi culture specified in three EFL secondary school textbooks now in use in Saudi Arabia forms the second half of the research. The aim is to entice attention to the connections between texts, photographs, tasks, and the culture aspects.

The problem of the study:

Because the curriculum is intended to educate individuals inside the community, its material should be connected to that group's culture. It is well known that English language courses taught in non-English speaking nations are frequently produced by corporations or third parties with links to English-speaking countries. As a result, the study's difficulty is summed up in the following primary question:

What are cultural factors may be found in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia?

١. What are the products of the culture that may be found in the content of Saudi high school EFL textbooks??"
٢. What are the cultural practices that can be found in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks?
٣. What are the cultural perspectives that may be discovered in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks?
٤. What types of personalities are likely to be found in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks??"

Objectives of the study:

The study's objectives are as follows:

١. Investigating cultural factors in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia.
٢. Investigating the products of culture that found in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia.
٣. Discovering the cultural practices that included in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia.
٤. Exploring the cultural perspectives in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia.
٥. Determine the kinds of personalities that may found in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia.

The importance of the study:

The following is the research gap that is being filled by the current research:

First and foremost, the scientific significance where several studies (Mosleh, ٢٠١٥; Alharbi, ٢٠١٦, Al-Bedeiwi, ٢٠١٧; Al-Fuqaha, ٢٠٢٠) recommended the necessity of conducting studies on English language textbooks to examine the national contents in new ways and methods. The significance of this research derives also from the fact that they include new method that is the semiotic analysis of Saudi culture into the secondary school English language course curriculum.

The second point to mention is the practical significance where this research contributing to what the studies have recommended to the elements of national culture and the values required to be included in English language textbooks for all stages to guide the work of foreign publishing companies that are usually tasked with composing foreign language textbooks. It may also be beneficial to English language curriculum

designers in selecting the appropriate content for Saudi society and its unique characteristics. In addition, it may assist researchers who are seeking English language textbooks requirements in picking the most relevant content for students at various educational levels.

Theoretical background:

Semiotics definition:

To comprehend numerous semiotic definitions and tasks, one must first understand the most thorough and most straightforward definition. The study of signs, according to Chandler (٢٠٠٧), includes both words and body language. To investigate meanings, their development, and their link to reality is the fundamental aim of semiotics.

Signs and non-scientific research have existed since the dawn of time. According to Danesi (٢٠٠٤), Hippocrates, the founder of Western medicine, invented semiotics for medicinal purposes. A disease's symptom was referred to as a semeion or a mark or bodily sign. St. Augustine distinguished natural, conventional, and sacred signals in his first sign theory, according to Danesi (٢٠٠٤). Natural symbols are found in nature (plant colors), human-made signs are produced, and holy signs come from God.

According to Merriam-Webster, semiotics is a broad, philosophical theory of signs and symbols that deals primarily with their role in both artificially produced and natural languages'. The Cambridge Online Dictionary defines semiotics as 'the study of signs and symbols, meaning and allocation.' Encyclopedia Britannica defines semiotics as 'semiology, the study of signs and sign-using behaviors.'

However, Chandler (٢٠٠٧) stresses the distinctiveness of semiotics that is expressed in various theoretical positions and disciplines, including linguistic, psychology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and media theory that are included in the scope of semiotic activity (Figure ١).

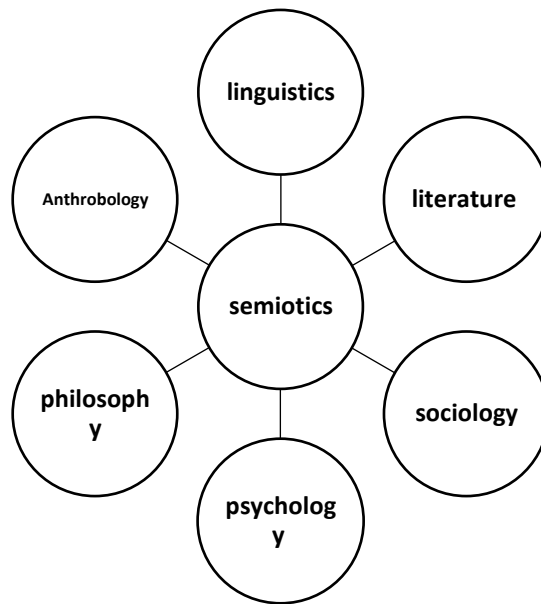


Figure 1. Semiotics and related fields of study (Gogić, 2019, p.3)

Semiotics and language:

The link between linguistics and semiotics was debated for years, notably regarding structuralism. "Any building is both some type of sanctuary and a particular kind of message," says Jakobson (١٩٩٠, cited in Chandler, ٢٠٠٧, p.٥). In this situation, structuralism assists and goes underneath the surface of a sign. As a result, Levi Strauss seeks myth and totemism, Lacan in unconsciousness, and Barthes in language. Due to Saussure's impact, semiotics depends on language ideas, says Chandler (٢٠٠٧). Language is one of the most significant systems of signs, according to Saussure (٢٠١١), p.١٦). On the one hand, Jakobson (١٩٧٠) characterizes language as the primary human semiotic system, whereas Benveniste (١٩٦٩) sees language as the system for interpretation of all linguistic and non-linguistic systems. Consider Levi-Strauss' (١٩٧٢, given in Chandler, ٢٠٠٧, p.٦) characterization of language as 'the semiotic system par excellence; it cannot but signify and lives only via signification.

Semiotic analysis:

Semiotics is an interdisciplinary study of all forms of communication. Semiotics is the "queen of interpretative sciences," according to Berger (٢٠٠٥). This section of the article discusses the meaning and method of semiotic analysis. A brief introduction of semiotics and semiotic analysis in various disciplines 'involving or concerned with communication and information transfer' (Berger, ٢٠٠٥, p.٤).

First, the relationship between semiotics and linguistics, or semiotics and language, is intriguing. Kumral (٢٠١٣, p.٣٢) uses a semiotic method to explain the link between semiotics and language:

In short, language is a virtual communication system comprised of verbal signals (words) previously stored in members' long-term memory. Semiotics becomes the central focus of the issue when words are viewed as verbal signals with arbitrarily given meanings utilized for any purpose of communication in any environment. A word in any social environment can be considered a sentence with all the surrounding characteristics.

Semiotics and language are inseparable due to their versatility. The meaning of each word in the language is given through symbols, in this instance, alphabetic signs. Semiotics is frequently used for textual analysis and is hence included in structural analysis. As the name implies, the structural analysis examines the structural relationships between all components of the signifying system. According to Chandler (٢٠٠٧), structuralism focuses on identifying the semiotic system's constituent parts, studying their structural links, and examining the part-whole relationship. Regarding semiotics and its use in analysis, here are some notable researchers who employed it: Barton Beebe (٢٠٠٣) studied trademark law, C. Marlene Foil (١٩٨٩) studied corporate language, Gemma Penn (٢٠٠٠) studied still pictures, and Massimo Leone (٢٠٠٤) studied religious conversions and identity. Besides these, semiotic analysis has numerous more applications.

Denotation and connotation:

In semiotics, denotation and connotation describe the relationship between the signifier and the signified. It is the definitional, literal, apparent, or common-sense interpretation of a sign, according to Chandler (٢٠٠٧, p.١٣٧). The dictionary tries to convey the denotative meaning of linguistic signals.' According to the Cambridge Dictionary, denotation is 'the basic meaning of a word, excluding any associated sentiments or concepts.' Danesi (٢٠٠٤, p.١٢) defines the word square as 'a figure composed of four equal straight lines meeting at right angles.' No matter if the lines are thick, dotted, ٢ meters long, or ٨٠ feet long. A square is a figure with four equal straight lines meeting at right angles. 'On the other hand, Connotation is a term used to express 'an emotion or concept that is suggested by a word but is not part of the word's meaning.

Intertextuality and codes:

There are various sorts of signals occurring in written and oral language, such as sound or visual pictures. The film, television, video pictures, posters, magazine, and newspaper advertising may all be analyzed semiotically, according to Alev Fatoş Parsa (٢٠٠٥, p.٢). The most prominent method for analyzing visual pictures is semiotics.

Intertextuality is a word strongly connected to semiotics and semiotic analysis. Intertextuality refers to any connected texts that help the reader to comprehend and interpret the text better (Kumral, ٢٠١٣, p.٣٧). Intertextuality provides context and aids recognition, according to Chandler (٢٠٠٧). Context is a semiotic word that refers to the circumstance and/or process in which the interpretation happens.

Multimodality:

Humans have used Signs since the dawn of time. For example, the ancient Egyptian written language hieroglyphics used pictures to represent sounds and objects. We now use 'multiple representational and communicative modalities' (Chen, ٢٠٠٩) to communicate through signs. Multimodal implies involving several modalities, according to Merriam-Webster. According to Van Leeuwen (٢٠٠٥, p.٢٨١), it is 'a mix of multiple semiotic modalities, for example, language and music'. In this situation, communication involves many modalities. Depending on the situation, people might get many different meanings and inferences from different styles of communication.

Culture and language:

Teaching and learning a language necessarily entail teaching and understanding its users' culture,' argues Piasecka (٢٠١١, p.٢١). There are as several definitions of culture as scientists, authors, anthropologists, sociologists, and others who have engaged with the topic over time. Lee and Peterson's famous and widely accepted description and categorization of culture as Big 'C' and Little 'C.' Both Lee and Peterson (Lee, ٢٠٠٩; Peterson, ٢٠٠٤) believe Big C signifies art, history, festivals, customs, geography, and social norms.

Culture in EFL:

The concept of culture in EFL has been there for a century, but it has evolved significantly in the last fifteen years. Byram and Grundy (٢٠٠٣, p.١) define culture in language teaching and learning as 'a/the culture connected with the language being taught.' Given the close link between language and culture, it is not unexpected that the cultural component of EFL is valued and encouraged. The same is stated in Genc and Bada's ٢٠٠٥ article. They believe that studying any language is inadequate without

studying its cultural components. Like other experts, they believe that learning a language is more than memorizing grammar rules and a new vocabulary.

Advantages of learning culture in EFL lessons:

Many scholars have examined the relationship between language and culture in the learning process of any foreign language. The issue with English is unique because of its prominence and usage in today's global communication. According to Otwinowska – Kasztelanica (٢٠١١), it is still unknown how much time should be spent on culture in English language classes, which culture to teach, what themes to pick, and how to minimize stereotyping and bias among students. While many seek solutions, Otwinowska – Kasztelanica (٢٠١١) concludes that all learners should know their own and other cultures. It also means cultural understanding and tolerance for everyone, especially minorities.

Culture in EFL textbooks:

Following the preceding research's goals and potentials, it is essential to quickly highlight the experts who have addressed this issue and their perspectives on cultural material in EFL textbooks in general. The incorporation of cultural aspects in the EFL syllabus, and hence in textbooks, has been discussed previously. Let us start with the cultural categories in textbooks. Cortazzi and Jin (١٩٩٩, quoted in Abbasian and Biria, ٢٠١٧) classified cultural material as follows:

١. Target cultural products that indicate American/UK culture,
٢. The resources show the learners' culture and subculture.
٣. Cultural items from throughout the world, not only English-speaking countries.

By 'expanding acquaintance with the target culture,' textbooks assist students in creating understanding and shaping social and cultural attitudes towards diversity (Ahmad and Shah, ٢٠١٤, p.١٢-١٣). To improve intercultural communication, textbooks and educational resources should encourage pupils to utilize English (Raigon-Rodriguez, ٢٠١٨).

Literature review:

In recent periods, further studies have been done on society culture and its portrayal in EFL textbooks. Rajabi and Ketabi (٢٠١٢) researched cultural components in English textbooks used in Iran, they made sure that local culture should be included in the content of ESL/EFL textbooks as a necessity. Raigon Rodriguez (٢٠١٨) examined cultural aspects in EFL textbooks in Spain, he stated that although there has been some improvement in some areas, there has to be a more tremendous effort made to incorporate local cultural learning into ESL/EFL textbooks. Mayangsari et al. (٢٠١٨) evaluated cultural material in EFL textbooks in Indonesia. He indicated that the EFL textbook has been dominated by cultural products and perspectives dimensions, but practices, communities and person dimensions have less intention in it. Also, in Saudi Arabia (Aloraini & Alshaya, ٢٠١٧) analyzed science textbook of ٢nd year at intermediate schools to examine the extent to which the images in the science textbook fit the Saudi social context according to social semiotics. Al-Harbi (٢٠١٦) aimed to determine a list of educational standards that should be included in English language textbooks for the primary stage in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Al-Bedeiwi (٢٠١٧) aimed to analyze the national concepts included in English language textbooks for the secondary stage in the light of the Kingdom's vision ٢٠٣٠, as it was limited to the

domain of a vibrant society. There are some studies conducted in Arab countries such as of Musleh (٢٠١٥) that aimed to identify the existing values in the content of English for Palestine grade eight textbook. The study of Al-Fuqaha (٢٠٢٠) aimed to reveal the degree of availability of national values in the English language textbook for the third basic grade from the viewpoint of teachers in one of Jordan cities (Madaba).

The choice of the culture portrayed in textbooks has been highlighted as a vital issue. The decision of why one culture should be represented and the other ignored has become exceedingly difficult. The answer appears to be in the context of use. As a result, varied cultural content in textbooks and other instructional materials is required in today's modern society. Of course, before learning about another culture, each learner must first become conscious of his or her own culture (Saville-Troike, ٢٠٠٣, Yuen, ٢٠١١), as cited in Raigon- Rodriguez, ٢٠١٨). Ensuring that culture is not just stated but discussed and pondered about in EFL courses is critical to master the component of culture completely. The investigations by Csilla Wenninger and Tamara Kiss (٢٠١٣) and Anja Sovi and Vlasta Hus (٢٠١٦).

Wenninger and Kiss (٢٠١٣) utilized a qualitative method to analyze two EFL textbooks authored by Hungarians and used in Hungarian secondary schools. The authors then described the role of textbooks in language teaching and learning and the semiotic method utilized in the research. The primary goal was to analyze a cultural meaning potential within the task, text, and picture relationships, emphasizing the relevance of guided semiosis, which we shall see in the second half of this article. The choice of secondary school textbooks is based on the notion that students must understand the concept and meaning of culture. The term culture must be understood by older students, notwithstanding its obscurity. They should also learn cultural specifics, beliefs, and behavioral patterns (Mihalczyk, ١٩٧٦, as cited in Deneme et al., ٢٠١١).

After reviewing all the previous research, the researcher noted some conclusions are as follows:

١. Text, image, and tasks have a semiotic connection that is mostly indexical in nature.
٢. The focus is on denotations rather than connotations.
٣. Some of the instances may lead to cultural stereotyping, which is a negative development.
٤. Although both textbooks feature numerous cultural parts, the difference between the two is that the latter contains more.
٥. Texts, pictures, and activities are designed primarily for linguistic purposes, leaving cultural components and implications unexplored and untapped, and their potential unexploited.

And in ٢٠١٦, the researchers Sovi and Hus performed semiotic analysis of English textbooks, with the difference being that they were working with textbooks for younger learners. And in contrast to Wenninger and Kiss's study, which concentrated exclusively on the cultural component of the study, Sovi and Hus examined the images in textbooks designed for children aged ٥ or ٦. Their investigation was likewise qualitative, although it was mostly descriptive in nature. Some images are worthless since young learners are unable to understand them, as the authors discovered throughout their research and shown by way of example. Additionally, images featuring motion devices have a higher impact on a learner's brain activity, and the authors recommend that they be used more frequently. Finally, all the textbooks under consideration have comparable

shortcomings, and there is still space for improvement to make the textbooks more appropriate for young learners.

Methodology of the study:

The current study employed a mixed-methods strategy that included both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, known as (concurrent embedded design). It is possible to collect qualitative research data, for example, to answer one of the research questions, and quantitative research data to answer other research questions with the help of this method when it is implemented. When employing this technique, the researcher does not compare quantitative and qualitative study findings but evaluates each separately. In addition, the researcher may choose to discuss the outcomes of the two methodologies in the discussion section (Discussion) or a different section of the study.

Research population and sample:

The community of the investigation were six distinct EFL textbooks. These are the names of the individuals:

Brewater, S. (٢٠٢٠). Mega Goal ١ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education

Brewater, S. (٢٠٢٠). Mega Goal ٢ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

Brewater, S. (٢٠٢٠). Mega Goal ٣ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

Brewater, S. (٢٠٢٠). Mega Goal ٤ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

Brewater, S. (٢٠٢٠). Mega Goal ٥ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

Brewater, S. (٢٠١٧). Mega Goal ٦ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

The first reason for choosing these textbooks is because they are relatively recent EFL textbooks for secondary schools in Saudi Arabia, an important consideration. Due to the researcher's and colleagues' observations of a cultural gap between the author of EFL textbooks and the Saudi secondary stage pupils, it was determined that these books should be analyzed to determine their relationship to Saudi culture.

The selected EFL textbooks to be the sample for this study were two books as the following:

Brewater, S. (٢٠١٧). Mega Goal ٣ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

Brewater, S. (٢٠١٧). Mega Goal ٤ (Student's book), Riyadh: ministry of education.

These two textbooks were selected because they were available for the researcher as printed copy and as E-copy.

Procedures and criterion for the analysis:

This adapted from Mayangsari et al (٢٠١٨) serves as the primary criterion for the research. It is illustrated in Table ١ below, which depicts a table with four cultural dimensions (themes) and ١٤ elements (codes) of culture within each dimension.

According to the cultural dimension to which the textbook belongs, each textbook is completely analyzed through its components, page by page according to each dimension(theme) that include product of culture, its practices, perspectives, and persons. Local and international items were added in qualitative analysis to distinguish between the mentioned dimensions (themes). Then, depending on the presented cultural content, the information is placed into the table ٢. The results are displayed in tables with percentages acquired from Microsoft Office Excel being used to generate them. In addition, a brief analysis of the data pertaining to the portrayal of cultural material in each textbook is provided.

Table ١

The constructs of cultural dimensions (themes). (Mayangsari et al, 2018, p.193-194)

| No. | Culture Dimension | Aspects |
|-----|----------------------|---|
| ١ | Products of culture | Artifacts: name, food, document, language, money, tool, good/ things, jewelry, and hobby. Places: buildings, cities, houses. Institutions: family, law, economy, religion, education, politics, occupation, media, entertainment, and conventional institutions. Art forms: instrument, clothes, dancing, painting, literature, and architecture. |
| ٢ | Cultural Practices | Operation: manipulation of cultural products, how to use or make the product of culture. Acts: ritualized communicative practices such as eating habit, table manner, behave, and celebration. Scenario: extended communicative practices Lives: stories of culture's members. |
| ٣ | Cultural Perspective | Intellectual values: thoughts, habits, perceptions, beliefs, traditional values, etiquette, attitudes, ethnics, and ideas. Behaviors: non-verbal behavior patterns, verbal behavior patterns, other behavior patterns, means of communication, and reactions to situations. Minor values: public holiday, weather conditions, traffic rules, and travel habits. Major values: history, geography, and philosophy. Formal values: legal system, politics, and the economy. |
| ٤ | Persons | Personal names, identity, and life history. |

The table categorizes all cultural material and culture-related issues in textbooks. Then, selected sections are separated and semiotically analyzed to determine their quality or lack thereof, as well as their potential cultural value. As a result, the table comprises the cultural material contained in textbooks. Still, the semiotic analysis includes just some sections with text, image, and task that combine to form one whole. The extracts with cultural content, text, picture, and task are chosen at random, then qualitatively analyzed and explained using some of Peirce's semiotic concepts. As a result, the focus is on the triadic relationship between sign, object, and interpretation. There's also the semiotic process, which combines all with the above and generates meaning.

Result discussion:

Each textbook contained four examples from each of the four cultural aspects. Additionally, there is an analysis and probable interpretational directions.

Mega Goal ٣&٤:

These two textbooks, each of them has six units in addition to the introductory unit, are taught to second-year students at Saudi secondary schools during the first and second semester. The twelve units are as the following: Connected by Technology, Crime Doesn't Pay, Far and Away, TV Around the World, working ٩ to ١٠, Going Green, there is No Place Like Home, The Sporting Life, Lough Out Loud, You Are What You Eat, Amazing Animals, and What Would You Do? Each unit has got almost ٦ parts intended to give an appropriate language input or develop a certain skill. These parts are divided as following: Grammar, Vocabulary, Reading, Speaking, Listening, Writing. It is important to emphasize that the textbooks do not have one unit that deals only with culture. In accordance with all the above, the cultural content in Mega Goal ٣&٤ is shown in Table ٢ and the quantitative representation of cultural dimensions is given below in the table (٣).

Table ٢

cultural content in Mega Goal 3&4

| No. | Culture Dimension | Aspects |
|-----|-------------------|--|
| ١ | Products | Artifacts: photographs, books, jewelry, money, Food, Places: Capsule hotels, The Kakslauttanen hotel, Gamirasu Cave hotel, Caadocia, Turkey, Torne River, ICEHOTEL, Sewed, Pacific Ocean, Galapagos, Abha, Asir, Red Sea, Jizan, Saudi Arabia, China, Japan, Abu Dhabi, United states, Mexico, Europe, Middle east, Malaysia, coast Rica, Jules' Under sea lodge, Brazil, Florida, Argentina, California, Makkah, Jeddah London, England, Lapland, Finland, Petra, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Dubi, Greek, Africa. Institutions: National Geographic channels, Jeopardy (American quiz), CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, Olympic games Art forms: A terrifying adventure on water, Moby Dick, Saudi clothes, mind over matter. |
| ٢ | Practices | Operation: Acts: planting trees, sport, and celebration, Japanese sport, invitation to restaurant, studying, having Arabiac coffee, watching TV. Lives: cook. |
| ٣ | Perspective | Intellectual values: happiness, traveling, complain, Behaviors: social expressions, business conversation, arranging a meeting, sending an E-mail, writing a letter, writing job applications, telephoning. Minor values: nothing Formal values: Saudi Arabiaa's٢٠٣٠ Vision. |
| ٤ | Persons | Famous and influential: John Baird (researcher), Paul Nipkow (inventor), Vladimir Zworykin(inventor), Prince Sultan bin Salman, Majed Abdullah (footballer) Normal Persons: Wilkinson, Fahd, Imad, Omar, Ali, Albert, Khaled, Joe, Asma, Khan , Sabah, Cara, Grandma, Liela, Ana, Ahmed, Al Ali, Faisal, Alharbi, Luke, Mitchell, Hashim, Alfredo, Ramirez, John,Alex, Noura, Baird , Walter, Lee, Aston , Sena, Khamis, Hussain, Badri, Al Otaibi, Adnan, Rob, Ibrahim, Jasim, Barry, Charlie, Kevin, Nawal, Fadwa, Jake |

A comprehensive study of the textbook, page by page, revealed weaknesses in several areas, such as cultural perspectives and practices, that needed to be addressed. As previously said, just a few components of Saudi culture were included in the material

of this course. In the following table, we will present the information included in Table No. ٣, qualitatively to answer the main question of the study: What are cultural factors may be found in secondary school EFL textbooks of Saudi Arabia?

Table ٣*Dimension of culture in Mega Goal 3&4*

| Culture Dimension | Type | Frequency | percentage | Total percent. |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|----------------|
| Products of culture | local | ٨ | ٦,٦ | ٤٢ |
| | international | ٤٢ | ٣٥,٤ | |
| Cultural Practices | local | ٠ | ٠ | ٦,٧% |
| | international | ٨ | ٦,٧ | |
| Cultural perspectives | local | ٥ | ٤,٣ | ١٠,٩% |
| | international | ٨ | ٦,٧ | |
| persons | local | ٢٣ | ١٩,٣ | ٤٠,٣% |
| | international | ٢٥ | ٢١ | |
| Total | local | ٣٦ | ٣٠,٢ | ١٠٠ |
| | international | ٨٣ | ٦٩,٨ | |

Tables (٢) and (٣) depicted the actuality of each of the four cultural dimensions covered in the Mega Goal ٣ textbook. Culture's products came in first place with a proportion of (٤٢%). Cultural practices were ranked last (٦,٧ %), cultural perspectives were ranked third (١٠,٩%), and the dimension (persons) was ranked second (٤٠,٣%). These findings contrast from those of (Mayangsari et al., ٢٠١٨), in which the dimension (persons) was in the last level (٨,٠٣), cultural practices were in the third level (١٢,٥ %), perspectives were in the second level (٢٤,١٢ %), and products were in the first level, as in the current study (٣٨,٣٩ %). Table (٣) revealed that the total content representing the Saudi national culture was (٣٠,٢%), compared to (٦٩,٨%), for the international cultural content. These results are lower than those obtained by (Al-Bedeiwi, ٢٠١٧), who found that national culture accounted for (٢٢ %) compared to (٧٨ %). Based on these results, Saudi national culture in Mega Goal ٣&٤ is insufficient. There is need to reconsider the development of the English language course content for the second grade in secondary school (Mega Goal ٣&٤) to balance the cultural representation of its content between local and international to be at least ٥٠% locally to achieve the desired educational goals in addition to learning the English language.

Table ٤

Products of culture in Mega Goal 3&4

| Culture Dimension | | | frequency | percentage |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Products | Artifacts | local | ٠ | ٠% |
| | | International | ٥ | ٤,٢% |
| | Places | local | ٧ | ٥,٨% |
| | | International | ٣٠ | ٢٥,٣% |
| | Institutions | local | ٠ | ٠% |
| | | International | ٤ | ٣,٤% |
| | Art forms | local | ١ | ٠,٨% |
| | | | ٣ | ٢,٥% |
| Total | | International | ٥٠ | ٤٢% |

When we looked at the table (٤), we saw that there were no national (artifacts) included in the textbook, which helped us to answer one of the study's first questions: "what are the products of the culture that may be found in the content of Saudi high school EFL textbooks?" In terms of locations, there were just seven Saudi locations listed in Mega Goal ٣&٤ textbooks (٥,٨ percent), whereas there were over thirty international locations mentioned (٢٥,٣%). Based on this finding, there is a significant disparity between nominal culture and foreign culture in the content of secondary EFL textbooks. Also, when it comes to institutes and art forms, it was discovered that there is a significant gap, as there are no national institutes in the content of the textbook. In contrast, there are four international institutes. When it comes to art forms, we find only one national art form against three internationals. this result confirming the need to improve the content of the textbook to retain the student's national identity, it is necessary to strike a balance between promoting the local, national culture and opening to other international cultures.

Table ٥

Practices of culture in Mega Goal 3 & 4

| Culture Dimension | | | frequency | percentage |
|-------------------|-------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Practices | Acts | local | ٠ | ٠% |
| | | International | ٧ | ٥,٩% |
| | Lives | local | ٠ | ٠% |
| | | | ١ | ٠,٨% |
| Total | | International | ٨ | ٦,٧% |

To respond to the second question of the study, "What are the cultural practices that can be found in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks?" table (٥) revealed that there were no national (acts) in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks. However, there were seven international cultural practices found in the content (acts). In addition, there were no national events during daily life, but there was

one international event. The previous finding suggested that the content of secondary school EFL textbooks should be improved to be more effective in their pedagogical benefits.

Table ٦
cultural perspectives in Mega Goal 3 & 4

| Culture Dimension | | | frequency | percentage |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Perspectives | Intellectual values | local | ١ | ٠,٨% |
| | | International | ٢ | ١,٧% |
| | Behaviors | local | ٣ | ٢,٥% |
| | | International | ٦ | ٥,٠٤% |
| Minor values | | local | ٠ | ٠% |
| | | International | ٠ | ٠% |
| Formal values | | local | ١ | ٠,٨% |
| | | International | ٠ | ٠% |
| Total | | International | ١٣ | ١٠,٩% |

According to the table (٦), the overall outcome for this dimension was "What are the cultural perspectives that may be discovered in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks?" (١٠,٩ %). Behaviors were found at the first level of the components in this dimension but were less prevalent in national than international contexts. Intellectual values were introduced at the second level, and global values remained valued more highly than national values at all levels. EFL textbooks did not incorporate any minor values in the content of the books they contained. In the content of the textbooks, there was just one formal value, which was the Saudi ٢٠٣٠ vision, which was the only formal value. It is evident from the previous that the content of this course does not reflect many of the religious, social, and formal values that are prevalent in Saudi Arabia.

Table ٧
persons in Mega Goal 3 & 4

| Culture Dimension | | | Type | frequency | percentage |
|-------------------|------------------------|---------------|------|-----------|------------|
| Persons | Famous and influential | local | ٢ | ١,٧% | |
| | | International | ٣ | ٢,٥% | |
| | Normal Persons | local | ٢١ | ١٧,٦% | |
| | | International | ٢٢ | ١٨,٥% | |
| Total | | | ٤٨ | ٤٠,٣% | |

According to the table (٧), to answer the fourth question of the study: "What types of persons' names are likely to be found in the content of Saudi secondary school EFL textbooks?" the whole percentage for national person names (١٩,٣ percent). Famous and influential persons have (١,٧ %). Furthermore, the names of persons were the highest among all the dimensions of the study (١٧,٦ %). Prince Sultan bin Salman (astronaut) and Majed Abdullah(footballer) were two well-known Saudi figures

mentioned in the content of Mega Goal ٤. The number of international persons was slightly higher than the number of national ones, but their position in this dimension is better than in other cultural dimensions.

Conclusion:

This study aimed to explore and disclose the cultural potential of selected instances from an EFL textbook for secondary school students in Saudi Arabia. The principles of semiotics are applied throughout the investigation. A theme focus of the researcher is on semiotics, cultural content, and textbooks. The findings of this assessment were as follows:

The lack of national cultural material in EFL textbooks for secondary schools in Saudi Arabia has been demonstrated. According to the cultural dimensions, the dimension of cultural products was the most prevalent in the two textbooks at a rate of (٤٢ %), followed by the dimensions of persons at a rate of (٤٠,٣ %) and cultural perspectives at a rate of (١٠,٩ %). A lower number of elements represents the other dimension. In terms of semiotic analysis, this study has revealed that most cases exhibit an indexical relationship between text and visuals, which promotes a denotative meaning. The traditional Saudi clothes for males, for example, appeared ١٨ times in Mega Goal ٣ and ١٦ times in Mega Goal ٤. The traditional clothing of Saudi females was barely mentioned on two pages in both textbooks. When we consider that the pages of each book can exceed ١١٦ pages, this is a tiny number. This shortage also includes instructional themes that may have a negative impact on students' sense of national identity.

Without question, English language education and learning are critical in Saudi Arabia. Along with comprehension, reading, speaking, and writing in English, the curriculum specifies other objectives. Thus, educational content must be included, as well as a balance between local, national culture, including images, texts, and tasks, and openness to other cultures in a way that ensures students' national identity is preserved, as well as between acceptance, appreciation, respect, and coexistence with others. The current investigation revealed a noticeable gap in the content of English language textbooks regarding the inclusion of numerous parts of Saudi society's culture, values, and well-known practices. The study advised that the content of secondary level EFL textbooks be developed to have ٥٠% local aspects of their content so that they achieve a balance of local and international themes to accomplish educational goals and teach the English language.

Further investigation into this subject is undoubtedly recommended, especially since semiotic analysis offers many alternative techniques and interpretations. More textbooks from various publishers and stages should be included in the analysis to draw more attention to any potential disparities. To gather more accurate and comprehensive statistics, it would also be beneficial and informative to compare EFL textbooks from all schools' stages in Saudi Arabia. Aspects of texts, images, and tasks that should be highlighted include their semiosis, which can be investigated through some more precise ways, particularly in numerous examples. Finally, to properly explore and grasp the cultural potential of EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia, the descriptive approach in the

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study cannot be ignored because, as demonstrated, quality is still more important than quantity.

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