

Prioritizing Criteria for Evaluating Cultural Contents in EFL Textbooks through AHP

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Abstract—With the rising interest in culture and the development of intercultural approaches in language teaching, evaluating the cultural contents in EFL textbooks is becoming a great concern. The main purpose of this study is to develop a measurement model for assessing cultural contents in EFL textbooks through the analytic hierarchy process (AHP) method. Using AHP, the criteria influencing textbook evaluation are identified and their relative importance is weighted. The results show that among the 17 criteria, the six that rank the highest are intercultural attitude, communication, cultural knowledge, relevance, diversity and interest. These findings suggest that the goals given in textbooks related to promoting intercultural competence and topics with the potential to develop intercultural competence are highly valued. Additionally, the high ranking of the criterion measuring student participation underscores the importance of cultural activities in triggering learners' active learning. It is hoped that the results will provide teachers with a reference for assessing cultural contents in textbooks and offer textbook writers information that will allow them to revise contents created for the development of intercultural communicative competence.

Index Terms—cultural contents, EFL textbooks, analytic hierarchy process (AHP)

I. INTRODUCTION

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has been recognized as an essential skill in the globalized world and regarded as a crucial instructional goal in foreign language education. In fact, it is not difficult to persuade language teachers of the importance of teaching language and culture as an integrated whole because the cultural dimension has long been emphasized within the profession even if it has not been systematically included in practice. One challenge is the lack of materials in textbooks aimed at general language development that are suitable for promoting intercultural competence (Chen, 2010; Chen, 2011; Chen, 2012; Lu, 2006; Xiang, 2007; Widdowson, 2005; Yamanaka, 2006; Young & Sachdev, 2011). The question of how teachers should use textbooks to foster intercultural competence consequently has focused on teachers' expectations of EFL textbooks (Young & Sachdev, 2011).

Textbooks profoundly influence teaching. Textbooks help in the process of lesson planning, make available a wide selection of resources and tasks and cover many topics. The great variety of textbooks has led language educators and applied linguists to suggest differing criteria for assessing them (Kilickaya, 2004; Olajide, 2003). To help teachers to select an appropriate textbook, many scholars have also proposed criteria or check lists. However, few proposals have contained a systematic method that integrates each criterion to arrive at an evaluation outcome or weighed each component in a way that would allow the evaluation to be adapted to varying teaching contexts. Some scholars (Huang, 2009; Kato, 2014; Mamaghani, 2010; Tseng, 2011) consequently have applied Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to prioritize criteria for textbook evaluation.

General English textbooks increasingly include intercultural dimensions, and the analysis of such contents has also become a topic of interest in the EFL field (Chen, 2010; Chen, 2011; Lee, 2009; Lu, 2006; Wu, 2010; Xiang, 2007; Xiao, 2010; Yamanaka, 2006). The heightened interest suggests the importance of cultural contents in facilitating intercultural instruction. Evaluating the cultural contents of textbooks is essential because they vary greatly. Just as with textbooks, some scholars have proposed criteria or check lists to evaluate cultural contents (Byram et al., 1994; Cunningsworth, 1995; Huhn, 1978; Kilickaya, 2004; Reimann, 2009; Risager, 1991; Sercu, 1998). Building on previous studies using AHP to evaluate textbooks as a research framework, this study applied AHP (Saaty, 1980) to construct criteria to evaluate intercultural contents in EFL textbooks for general English purposes and weighed each component to adapt the evaluation to other teaching contexts. This study has constructed an evaluation model to help teachers, particularly those who lack area expertise, prioritize materials more efficiently when choosing among a wide range of textbooks. It aims to promote the continued development of intercultural competence in language education. The results should also prove useful to textbook designers.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews some recent studies analyzing cultural contents in EFL textbooks and looks at some scholars' proposed criteria. In addition, an overview of the application of AHP in textbook evaluation is provided.

A. Analysis of Cultural Contents in EFL Textbooks

With the rising interest in culture and the development of intercultural approach in language teaching, many scholars have concerned and analyzed cultural contents in EFL textbooks. Yamanaka (2006) studied the countries included in junior and senior high school English textbooks based on Kachru's (1992) three-concentric-circles model. The study of textbooks for young Japanese students found more focus on countries in the inner circle than in the outer or expanding circles and suggested that a better balance of countries would allow students to learn a greater variety of cultures. Lee (2009) investigated the aspects of culture included in eleven EFL conversation textbooks used in Korea. The majority of the investigated textbooks revealed a strong tendency to include big "C" target-culture learning such as facts and statistics in the fields of arts, history and customs related to the USA without any explication of the small "c" domain of a target culture. Wu (2010) investigated the cultural contents in College English, published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press in 2001. The results suggest more passages should reflect the culture of other English Speaking communities. International cultures should be included and the content of the Chinese culture should be increased. In addition, the comparisons and contrasts between different cultures should be added.

In Taiwan, Chen (2011) also examined the cultural contents in terms of countries in senior high school textbooks. The result showed increased varieties of countries included in the curriculum of year 2010. Xiang (2007) compared two senior high school textbooks published by two well-known local publishers in 2006 in Taiwan. The results show both textbooks are culture-specific, which means British and American cultures are more introduced than other cultures. In addition, most cultures are presented as facts-only. Little information is sensitive to students' values or beliefs. Only 12% of the activities are relevant to cultural learning. Lu's study (2006) of an elementary school textbook found that the textbook is western culture-specific and includes gender stereotypes. The study suggested the role of local culture should be embedded, and more diverse cultural issues should be considered to benefit underprivileged students.

These studies show that the most widely used criterion is types of culture. However, there are additional aspects of cultural contents that can be considered in evaluating textbooks and promoting the development of intercultural competence.

B. Criteria and Checklists Recommended to Evaluate Cultural Contents

According to Byram (Byram et al, 2002), the components of intercultural competence are knowledge, skills and attitude. The role of the language teacher is therefore to develop skills, attitudes, and awareness of values just as much as to develop knowledge of a particular culture or country. Byram (1989) asserted that although cultural learning and teaching have been viewed as an integral part of language education, the great majority of cases were "the mere acquisition of information about a foreign country, without the psychological demands of integrated language learning." Kramersch (1993) also charged that in many language classes, culture was frequently reduced to the four Fs', meaning foods, fairs, folklores, and statistic facts. A great number of texts addressing cultural content are limited to offering overt, "tourist culture" or teaching abstract and irrelevant facts, which are often presented with bias and consequently do little more than reinforce stereotypes, and exaggerate or misrepresent the culture (Kramersch, 1993; Byram, 1997; Moran, 2001). Widdowson (2005) also pointed out typical EFL texts fail to engage students while providing limited and unrealistic cultural information. Owing to the importance of cultural contents in textbooks to facilitate the development of intercultural communication competence and the necessity of evaluating the materials, some scholars have proposed criteria and checklists to evaluate cultural contents in textbooks. TABLE 1 summarizes these guidelines, question lists or criteria suggested.

TABLE 1.
SUMMARY OF CRITERIA TO EVALUATE CULTURAL CONTENTS IN TEXTBOOKS.

Authors /year	Criteria
Reimann's study (2009)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do the texts actively seek to engage the students through language or cultural content? 2. Do the texts consider the learners' culture? 3. Do the texts offer an unbiased perspective of culture? 4. Is there any connection or reference made to the learners' own culture in order to establish relevance? 5. Is culture used purely as a source of facts to learn about or is it presented as stimulating material which students can learn from? 6. Do the texts further basic stereotype or its material presented objectively for students to make their own discoveries and interpretations? 7. What are the goals of the textbooks? What is the actual purpose of including cultural content? 8. Are the goals of the text a linear approach to developing native like proficiency or a more holistic approach to understanding the diverse culture and communication styles of English as an international language?
Kilickaya (2004)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the book give any information, instructions or suggestions about how the book may be used and how the cultural content may be handled? 2. Does the book address specific learners or are there any characteristics of the learners that the book addresses to? 3. Does the book suggest any role that the teachers using it should have? 4. Do they include a variety of cultures or just specific ones such as British or American culture? 5. Do they represent the reality about the target culture or the author's view? 6. Where is the cultural information taken from? Author's own ideas or empirical research? 7. What subjects do they cover? Are these specific to the target culture? Are there any topics that might not be culturally suitable for the learners in class? 8. What cultural and social groups are represented? Is this adequate coverage of a variety of people or is this limited to a chosen people? If so, what kind of people are these? Are there any stereotypes? 9. Does the book include generalizations about the culture? Does it inform the audience of the fact that what is true of the parts is not necessarily true of the parts? 10. Is the cultural information presented with comments such as being good or being bad? Or is it presented without such comments? 11. Are there illustrations? If so, are these appropriate to the learners' native culture? Would additional information be necessary to explain them or are they self-explanatory? 12. What are the activities asked of the learners? Are they familiar to the learners? 13. Would a teacher using this book need specialized training to be able to use it or is there enough information given? 14. What are the learners supposed to do with the cultural information such as using actively or just be aware of it for a better understanding of the target culture? 15. What is your overall view of the textbook?
Sercu (1998)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What image is presented: a royal or a realist one? 2. Does the textbook only present a tourist point of view? 3. Are negative and problematic aspects of the foreign culture touched upon? 4. Does the textbook offer an authentic reflection of the multicultural character of the foreign society? 5. Do situations occur in which someone with a good mastery of the foreign language is not understood because of differences in culture-specific reference frames? 6. Are teachers and learners encouraged to consult additional material on the topics dealt with? 7. Do the textbooks include materials/texts written by members of the different nationalities living in the foreign country or do they mainly present the white male point of view? 8. Are mentality, values, ideas, dealt with? 9. Is a historical perspective presented and used to explain certain present-day features of mentality or national character? 10. Is the information on the foreign culture integrated in the course or is it added at the end of every chapter or even in presented in a separate chapter at the end of the book?
Cunningsworth (1995)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the social and culture contexts in the coursebook comprehensible to the learner? 2. Can learners interpret the relationship, behaviors, intention etc. of the characters portrayed in the book? 3. Are women given equal prominence to men in all aspects of the coursebook? 4. What physical and character attributes are women given? 5. What professional and social positions are women shown as occupying? 6. What do we learn about the inner lives of the characters? 7. Do the coursebook characters exist in some kind of social setting, within a social network? 8. Are social relationships portrayed realistically?
Byram et al. (1994)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social identity and social groups 2. Social interaction 3. Belief and behavior 4. Socio-political institutions 5. Socialization and the life-cycle 6. National history 7. National geography 8. National cultural heritage 9. Stereotypes and national identity
Risager (1991)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The micro level-phenomena of social and cultural. 2. The macro level-social, political and historical matters. 3. International and intercultural issues 4. Point of view and style of the textbook author(s)

Huhn (1978)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Factual accuracy and up-to-date information 2. Critical handling of stereotypes 3. Presentation of a realistic picture 4. Freedom from (or questioning) ideological tendencies 5. Presentation of phenomena in context rather than isolated fact 6. Relevance of historical material to contemporary society 7. Presentation of personalities as products of their age.
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As Table 1 shows, the lists vary greatly in terms of the number of criteria. Difficult decisions may consequently occur in the process of textbook evaluation. This study uses the analytic hierarchy process (AHP) to answer the heretofore lack of a systematic method that integrates each criterion to arrive at an evaluation outcome and weighs each component in a way that allows the evaluation to be adapted to varying teaching contexts.

C. *The Application of AHP and Textbook Evaluation*

The analytic hierarchy process (AHP), initiated by Saaty (1980; 1995), is a well-known multiple-criteria, decision-making method to help decision makers find the answer that best suits their goal and understanding of a problem. It has been used in a wide variety of fields —such as government, business, industry, healthcare and education (Anada & Herath, 2003; Ho, 2008; Hong, 2009; Lee, 2014; Udo, 2000) including business planning, project selection, educational strategies, English language program planning, competence measurement, curriculum development, and course design (Chen et al., 2011; Grandzol, 2005; Hsieh, 2013; Tang, 2011). AHP is also applied in textbook evaluation (Huang, 2009; Kato, 2014; Mamaghani, 2010; Tseng, 2011). These studies have adopted AHP to assess, generate or prioritize competences demanded by various professions (Hafeez & Essmail, 2007; Lin, Lin, Chiu, Hung, & Chen, 2010). The use of AHP involves the disaggregation of the decision into a hierarchy of more easily comprehended elements and the evaluation of the relative importance of elements by experts or decision makers in the field under investigation. The AHP uses fuzzy pair wise comparison judgments rather than exact numerical values of the comparison ratios to derive a numerical weight or priority of each element in the hierarchy.

Using these previous studies that employed AHP as a research framework, this study was a first attempt in the literature to use AHP in evaluating cultural contents in EFL textbooks. A more detailed description of the procedures of AHP was specified in the section of method.

III. METHOD

Application of Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)

In this study, the procedure of AHP consists of three steps: (1) to establish the hierarchical structure of AHP, (2) to compare the weights among the attributes of the decision elements that form the reciprocal matrix, and (3) to synthesize the individual subjective judgement and estimate the relative weights (Tzeng & Huang, 2011). Each step is explained below.

1. Establish the hierarchical structure of AHP

To set up the hierarchical system by disaggregating the problem into a hierarchy of interrelated elements, a literature review on studies related to evaluating cultural contents was conducted first to identify criteria. Table 2 shows the criteria identified. These criteria were reviewed by a panel of 11 EFL experts and one AHP expert with a purpose to develop consensus on the criteria and their appropriateness. The reason for the number of the experts is based on the literature maintaining that for research studies relevant to planning or decision making, a typical panel size would range from 7-15 participants (Phillips, 2000; Labuschagne & Steyn, 2010). A homogenous group of expert is suggested to solicit appropriated consensus opinions (Baker, Lovell, & Harris, 2006).

TABLE 2
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING CULTURAL CONTENTS

Dimension	Criteria		Source	
Goals/Objective	Cultural knowledge	This refers to whether the purpose of the cultural content in the textbook is to develop cultural knowledge.	Reimann (2009) Byram et al. (2002)	
	Communication	This refers to whether the purpose of the cultural content in the textbook is to develop communication skills.		
	Intercultural attitude	This refers to whether the purpose of the cultural content in the textbook is to develop intercultural attitude such as awareness, respect for others or openness.		
Cultural Topics	Relevance	This refers to whether the topics are culturally appropriate for the learners.	Reimann (2009) Kilickaya (2004)	
	Interest	This refers to whether the topic attracts target learners.	Cunningsworth (1995)	
	Diversity	This refers to whether the topics are rich with different social aspects.		
Cultural Information	Types of culture	This refers to what cultures (one culture or multiple cultures) are presented? Is students' own culture taken into account? Are there examples of culture for raising awareness in connection with learners' own culture for relevance	Chen (2012) Chen (2011) Xiao (2010) Wu (2010) Chen (2010)	
	Cultural sensitivity	This refers to whether the information is sensitive to students' values and beliefs.	Lee (2009) Reimann (2009)	
	Perspective and representation	This refers to what views are taken from (for example, the author or empirical research?). Are there both positive and negative views of the culture? Are there stereotypes (racial, gender, sexual or culture) to deal with?	Xiang (2007) Yamanaka (2006) Lu (2006)	
	Authenticity	This refers to whether the information is factual, real, or up-to-dated.	Kilickaya (2004) Moran (2001) Sercu (1998)	
	Presentation		This refers to whether the cultural information is integrated in the course or added at the end.	Byram (1997) Cunningsworth (1995) Byram et al (1994) Kramsch (1993) Risager (1991) Kachru (1992) Huhn(1978)
Cultural Activities	Student participation	This refers to whether the activities trigger learners' active engagement or active learning.	Reimann (2009) Widdowson (2005)	
	Familiarity	This refers to whether the activities are familiar to learners and the teacher.	Kilickaya (2004) Seru(1998)	
	Logistics	This refers to time constraints, space limitations and materials required.	Kramsch (1993)	
Teaching Aids	Illustration and images	This refers to how cultural elements are presented through illustrations or images. Are they easy to explain?	Reimann (2009) Kilickaya (2004)	
	Teacher's manual	This refers to whether the teacher's book is provided to offer instructional support.	Huhn (1978)	
	Supplementary teaching resources	This refers to for example, DVDs or other authentic documentaries.		

The 11 EFL expert participants included 11 female teachers from three different private universities. Except for one teacher with a master degree, all participants have doctoral degrees in fields related to ELT, such as Applied Linguistics and TEFL. The teacher with the master degree has more than 20 years of experience teaching English. These EFL experts have an average of 11 years of teaching experience and obtained their degrees overseas. All of them have taught *Freshman English* for non-English majors and have rich experience in textbook evaluation.

The 11 experts' opinions were quantified using a structured questionnaire and the 10-point Likert scale with 1 indicating least important and 10 indicating most important). An example of the 10-point Likert scale in the questionnaire is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
10-POINT LIKERT SCALE

Criteria	Scale
	least important 0,1,...,10→most important
C ₁₁ Cultural knowledge	7

A hierarchy with five dimensions and 17 criteria was established based on the experts' opinions on the degree of importance of each dimension and criterion and suggestions on revising the dimensions and criteria shown in Fig. 1. The five dimensions include goals/objectives, cultural topics, cultural information, cultural activities and teaching aids. The dimension of goals/objectives comprises three criteria: intercultural attitude, communication, and cultural knowledge. The dimension of cultural topics comprises three criteria: relevance, interest, and diversity. The dimension of cultural information comprises five criteria: types of culture, cultural sensitivity, perspective and representation, authenticity, and presentation. The dimension of cultural activities comprises three criteria: student participation,

familiarity and logistics. The dimension of teaching aid comprises three criteria: illustration and images, teacher’s manual and supplementary teaching resources.

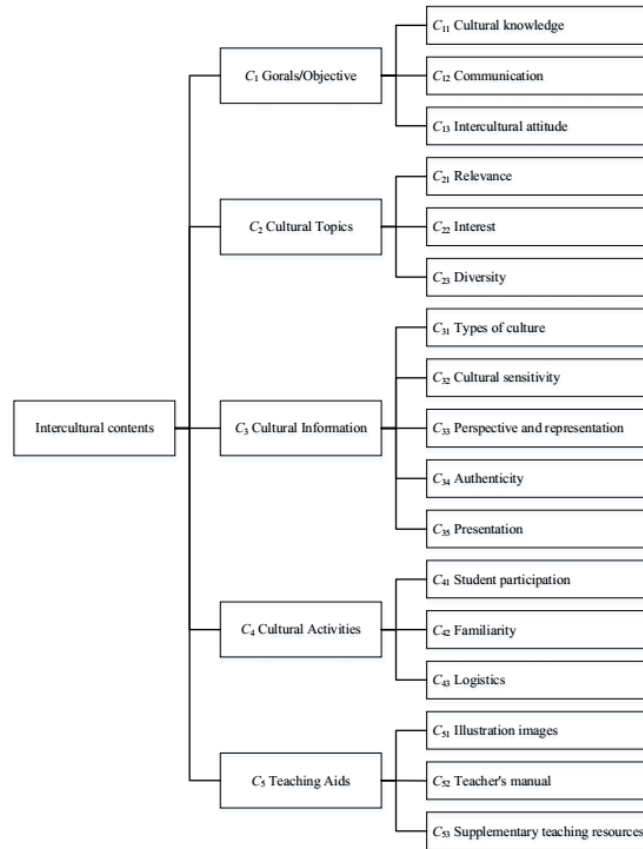


Figure 1. The hierarchical structure of AHP

2. Compare the comparative weight between the attributes of the decision elements to form the reciprocal matrix

An AHP questionnaire based on the final resulting hierarchy was distributed to the same group of 11 EFL experts to compare each criterion in the same level in a pair-wised fashion based on their own experience and knowledge using the pairwise comparison scales provided by Saaty (1995). An example is shown in Figure 1.

Comparison of “C1 Goals/Objectives” (C11, C12, C13)

Verbal scale	Absolute Importance			Essential Importance			Equal Importance			Essential Importance			Absolute Importance			Verbal scale		
	Very strong Importance			Weak Importance			Weak Importance			Very strong Importance								
	9:1	8:1	7:1	6:1	5:1	4:1	3:1	2:1	1:1	1:2	1:3	1:4	1:5	1:6	1:7		1:8	1:9
C11 Cultural knowledge						✓												C12 Communication
C11 Cultural knowledge														✓				C13 Intercultural attitude
C12 Communication															✓			C13 Intercultural attitude

Figure 1. An AHP questionnaire

To assist the participants in completing the questionnaire effectively, detailed instructions as well as the specific example shown in Table 4 were provided to illustrate the use of the 1-9 scale (Tzeng&Huang, 2011).

TABLE 4. FUNDAMENTAL SCALE FOR PAIR-WISE COMPARISONS.

Verbal scale	Numerical values
Equal importance	1
Weak importance	3
Essential importance	5
Very strong importance	7
Absolute importance	9
Intermediate values to reflect compromise	2,4,6,8

To compare a set of n attributes pairwise according to their relative importance weights, where the attributes are

denoted by a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n and the weights are denoted by w_1, w_2, \dots, w_n , then the pairwise comparisons can be represented by questionnaires with subjective perceptions as:

$$(1) \quad A = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & \dots & a_{1j} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ a_{i1} & \dots & a_{ij} & \dots & a_{in} \\ \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ a_{n1} & \dots & a_{nj} & \dots & a_{nn} \end{bmatrix}$$

Where $a_{ij} = 1/a_{ji}$ (positive reciprocal) and $a_{ij} = a_{ik} / a_{jk}$. Note that in realistic situations, w_i / w_j is usually unknown. Therefore, the problem for the AHP is to find a_{ij} such that $a_{ij} \cong w_i / w_j$. Let a weight matrix be represented as:

$$(2) \quad W = \begin{matrix} & w_1 & \dots & w_i & \dots & w_n \\ \begin{matrix} w_1 \\ \vdots \\ w_i \\ \vdots \\ w_n \end{matrix} & \begin{bmatrix} w_1/w_1 & \dots & w_1/w_j & \dots & w_1/w_n \\ \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ w_i/w_1 & \dots & w_i/w_j & \dots & w_i/w_n \\ \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ w_n/w_1 & \dots & w_n/w_j & \dots & w_n/w_n \end{bmatrix} \end{matrix}$$

By multiplying W by w yield.

$$(3) \quad W \times w = \begin{matrix} & w_1 & \dots & w_i & \dots & w_n \\ \begin{matrix} w_1 \\ \vdots \\ w_i \\ \vdots \\ w_n \end{matrix} & \begin{bmatrix} w_1/w_1 & \dots & w_1/w_j & \dots & w_1/w_n \\ \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ w_i/w_1 & \dots & w_i/w_j & \dots & w_i/w_n \\ \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ w_n/w_1 & \dots & w_n/w_j & \dots & w_n/w_n \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} w_1 \\ w_j \\ \vdots \\ w_n \end{bmatrix} = n \begin{bmatrix} w_1 \\ w_j \\ \vdots \\ w_n \end{bmatrix} \end{matrix}$$

Or

$$(W - nI)w = 0 \quad (4)$$

Since solving equation (4) is the eigenvalue problem, we can derive the comparative weights by finding the eigenvector w with respective λ_{max} that satisfies $Aw = \lambda_{max} w$, where λ_{max} is the largest eigenvalue of the matrix A , i.e., find the eigenvector w with respective λ_{max} for $(A - \lambda_{max}I)w = 0$.

3. Synthesize the individual subjective judgment and estimate the relative weights

In order to ensure the consistency of the subjective perception and the accuracy of the comparative weights, two indices, including the consistency index (C.I.) and the consistency ration (C.R.), are suggested. The equation of the C.I. can be expressed as:

$$C.I. = (\lambda_{max} - n) / (n - 1) \quad (5)$$

Where λ_{max} is the largest eigenvalue, and n denotes the numbers of the attributes. Saaty (1980) suggested that the value of the C.I. should not exceed 0.1 for a confident result. On the other hand, the C.R. can be calculated as:

$$C.R. = \frac{C.I.}{R.I.}$$

Where R.I. refers to a random consistency index, which is derived from a large sample of randomly generated reciprocal matrices using the scale 1/9, 1/8, ..., 1, ..., 8, 9. The R.I. with respect to different size matrices is shown in Table 5 (Tzeng & Huang, 2011).

TABLE 5.
THE R.I. FOR DIFFERENT SIZE MATRICES

n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
R.I.	0	0	0.52	0.89	1.11	1.25	1.35	1.40	1.45	1.49	1.51	1.54	1.56

IV. RESULTS

A. The Local Weights and Ranking of Five Dimensions

The first level of the hierarchy comprises five dimensions: goals/objectives, cultural topics, cultural information, cultural activities and teaching aids. The weights assigned to these five dimensions are as follows: goals/objectives (.397); cultural topics (.236); cultural information (.177); teaching aid (.105) and cultural activities (.086). Based on these weights, ranking by dimension shows goals/objectives is ranked as the top priority followed by cultural topics, cultural information, teaching aid, with cultural activities as the lowest priority. (see Table 6)

B. The Local Weights and Ranking of Criteria under Dimensions

The dimension of goals/objectives comprises three criteria: intercultural attitude, communication, and cultural

knowledge. The weights assigned to these three criteria are as follows: intercultural attitude (.362), communication (.342), and cultural knowledge (.295), which reveals intercultural attitude is ranked as the top priority followed by communication, with cultural knowledge as the lowest priority.

The dimension of cultural topics comprises three criteria: relevance, interest, and diversity. The weights assigned to these three criteria are as follows: relevance (.368), diversity (.326) and interest (.306), which reveals relevance is ranked as the top priority followed by diversity, with interest as the lowest priority.

The dimension of cultural information comprises five criteria: types of culture, cultural sensitivity, perspective and presentation, authenticity, and presentation. The weights assigned to these five criteria are as follows: authenticity (.274), cultural sensitivity (.255), types of culture (.219), perspective and representation (.169), and presentation (.083). These weights show that under cultural information, authenticity is ranked as the top priority followed by cultural sensitivity, types of culture, perspective and representation, with presentation as the lowest priority.

The dimension of cultural activities comprises three criteria: student participation, familiarity and logistics. The weights assigned to these three criteria are as follows: student participation (.632), logistics (.242) and familiarity (.126). According to these weights, student participation is ranked as the top priority followed by logistics, with familiarity as the lowest priority.

The dimension of teaching aid comprises three criteria: illustration and images, teacher's manual and supplementary teaching resources. The weights assigned to these three criteria are as follows: supplementary teaching resources (.454), illustration and images (.391), and teacher's manual (.155). According to these weights, the criterion of supplementary teaching resources is ranked as the top priority followed by illustration and images, with teacher's manual as the lowest priority.

C. The Global Weights and Ranking of 17 Criteria

As Table 7 shows, the global weights of these 17 criteria are as follows: intercultural attitudes (.144), communication (.136), cultural knowledge (.117), relevance (.087), diversity (.077), interest (.072), student participation (.054), authenticity (.049), supplementary teaching resources (.048), cultural sensitivity (.045), illustration and images (.041), types of culture (.039), perspective and representation (.030), logics (.021), teacher's manual (.016), presentation (.015) and familiarity (.011). The greater weights received preferred priority. Therefore, intercultural attitude is ranked as the top priority followed by communication, cultural knowledge, relevance, diversity, interest, student participation, authenticity, supplementary teaching resources, cultural sensitivity, illustration and images, types of culture, perspective and representation, logics, teacher's manual, presentation, with familiarity as the lowest priority. Table 7 summarizes all the rankings and weights.

TABLE 6.
SUMMARY OF WEIGHTS AND RANKINGS OF DIMENSIONS AND CRITERIA

Dimension	Local Weight	Ranking	Criteria	Local Weight	Ranking	Global Weight	Ranking
C ₁ Goals/Objective	0.397	1	C ₁₁ Cultural knowledge	0.299	3	0.119	3
			C ₁₂ Communication	0.339	2	0.134	2
			C ₁₃ Intercultural attribute	0.362	1	0.144	1
C ₂ Cultural Topics	0.236	2	C ₂₁ Relevance	0.370	1	0.087	4
			C ₂₂ Interest	0.305	3	0.072	6
			C ₂₃ Diversity	0.324	2	0.076	5
C ₃ Cultural Information	0.177	3	C ₃₁ Types of culture	0.219	3	0.039	12
			C ₃₂ Cultural sensitivity	0.255	2	0.045	10
			C ₃₃ Perspective and representation	0.169	4	0.030	13
			C ₃₄ Authenticity	0.274	1	0.049	8
			C ₃₅ Presentation	0.083	5	0.015	16
C ₄ Cultural Activities	0.086	5	C ₄₁ Student participation	0.632	1	0.054	7
			C ₄₂ Familiarity	0.126	3	0.011	17
			C ₄₃ Logistics	0.242	2	0.021	14
C ₅ Teaching Aids	0.105	4	C ₅₁ Illustration and images	0.389	2	0.041	11
			C ₅₂ Teacher's manual	0.154	3	0.016	15
			C ₅₃ Supplementary teaching resources	0.457	1	0.048	9

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A. Discussion and Implication

The AHP analysis showed that the five dimensions were ranked in the orders of goals/objectives, cultural topics, cultural information, teaching aids and cultural activities. Among the 17 criteria, the six highest priority criteria, intercultural attitude, communication, cultural knowledge, relevance, diversity and interest are all drawn from the two highest priority dimensions of goals/objectives and cultural topics. Based on the results, the expectations of the cultural contents in EFL textbooks to promote intercultural competence are highlighted and discussed.

First, the rankings reveal that the experts highly expect textbooks to define intercultural competence and to make explicit the goal of helping students to attain it. The ultimate goal of the contents should be developing in students an

intercultural attitude by raising their awareness of difference, encouraging them to show respect and emphasizing the benefits of being open minded to cultural variations. Such an approach contrasts sharply with the mere teaching of communication skills or the presenting of factual information about other cultures.

According to the AHP analysis, the topics included in textbooks should be positively evaluated in accordance with the degree to which they provide opportunities to develop intercultural competence and contain a variety of social elements attractive to students. Since the choice of cultural topics wields considerable influence on learning activities, topics with a higher potential for intercultural learning such as those that compare cultures and relate information to learners' cultures and values should be evaluated higher than topics that fail to include such potential. Emphasis on intercultural competence enhances students' knowledge and understanding not only of others, but also of themselves.

Although the dimension of cultural activities did not receive high priority, the criterion of student participation under this dimension is of great concern. For teachers, the question of whether activities hold the potential to trigger students' active engagement and learning in pursuit of the development of intercultural competence is of utmost importance. Enriching learners' experiences and challenging their assumptions through comparison and analysis are often the guiding principles of activity planning. Moreover, comparison, analysis and experience need to be accompanied by time and space for reflection, leading to the gradual development of critical awareness and understanding. Making available supplementary resources, such as films and documentaries, are also beneficial to students.

The process of constructing AHP hierarchy in the present study has provided opportunities to consider various criteria used in evaluations reviewed in the literature. All the possible criteria are disintegrated into a comprehensive model. Each criterion in this model has its own priority weight, allowing diverse and often incommensurable elements to be compared to one another in a rational and consistent way. The present study only aimed to identify prioritized criteria and their weights. It is hoped that the application of this model can be useful for schools and teachers when selecting and evaluating EFL textbooks with more focus on the cultural contents. It is also hoped that this study will be useful to those involved in textbook development and focus their attention on the importance of the development of intercultural competence. The results should provide valuable information for textbook developers. It is also hoped that using this model can raise teachers' awareness and responsibility for developing intercultural competence in learners in a more conscious way.

B. *Limitation and Recommendation*

The present study focused mainly on cultural contents in EFL textbooks for non-English freshmen in universities; therefore, the results of this AHP analysis may not be generalized to other discussion on textbooks used for different courses. Different results of the hierarchy or criteria rankings may be generated to fit in different learning contexts due to the nature of classes and groups of experts. This study was a first attempt in the literature to utilize AHP in evaluating cultural contents in EFL textbooks. Further experimental studies are also needed to examine if the users, both teachers and students, are satisfied with the learning contents in the textbook selected by AHP. Among studies on textbook evaluation by AHP mentioned earlier, the factor of cultural contents is always an essential criterion, but has not been elaborated in the hierarchy. To promote intercultural competence, further studies are recommended to use AHP to construct a more comprehensive model for textbook evaluation with more emphasis on the factor of cultural contents in the future.

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