| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

A Postcolonial Analysis of the Representation of the "Other" in ELT Textbooks: The Case of *Interchange Level 3* and *Summit 2*

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| **ABSTRACT**

This research paper is an attempt to analyze the intricacies of the representation of the "Other" in English language teaching textbooks, namely Interchange Level 3 and Summit 2, that are widely used to teach English as a foreign language. This study is encompassed by English language teaching and postcolonial cultural studies, and its importance stems from the fact that textbooks are used not only to teach language skills but also to shape learners' perspectives about worldviews that align with Western narratives. The analysis explores how the two textbooks portray the "Other" and how Moroccan teachers perceive these depictions. The theoretical backbone of this study draws on Stuart Hall's concept of representation, Edward Said's Orientalism, Louis Althusser's Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs), and Homi Bhabha's concepts of ambivalence and mimicry. The outcomes of this research indicate a centric representation of the West in the content of the two books, a fact that is evidenced by the interviews of the teachers who confirmed the prevailing dominance of Western norms to the detriment of non-Western representation.

1. Introduction

Cultural representation has been a salient component in shaping identity, constructing social strata, and mediating democratic participation. It has been addressed across various terrains, such as media studies, sociology, and education. Notably, in English language education, cultural representation is approached through the analysis of who is represented, how they are represented, and who is the one representing. In this context, language plays a nuanced role in representing culture because it serves as a vehicle that conveys implicit values and encodes social hierarchies; it can either be a site where multiple voices are heard or silenced. "English is the dominant or hegemonic language in a global linguistic hierarchy, sustained by an ideology that English is a neutral, universal medium" (Robert Phillipson, 1992, p. 47). English as a lingua franca is not the outcome of language superiority but rather the result of economic globalization and cultural dominance. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the expansion of the British Empire in many areas of the globe created a need for a language that would serve as a medium of administration and trade. Many educational systems worldwide, primarily in ex-colonized territories, utilize English in their curricula. In those areas, namely Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, English has become a fundamental component of any reform. Based on a 2021 report by the British Council Morocco titled "Shift to English in Morocco," among Moroccan youth, almost 65% regard English more than French as a foreign language (British Council Morocco, 2021, para. 4).

The 2019 Education Act and Framework Law 17.51 demand that science and technical courses be taught in foreign languages—traditionally French, but increasingly English. (Arredondas, 2023) Since the 2023-2024 school year, English instruction has gradually been introduced to middle school; as a first phase, 10% of seventh-grade classes, followed by 50% of eighth-grade classes by 2025–2026, growing to 100% by the end of the decade. The primary reason for implementing English in Morocco's schools is to

facilitate economic integration and provide access to technological advancements. However, there is another side of this process that is deemed to be intricate inasmuch as the materials used to teach English, especially textbooks, usually favor Western standards, values, and viewpoints. Such bias reflects what Edward Said describes as the "construction of the Other," which reduces non-Western cultures to simplistic, exotic, or inferior images. This situation creates a challenge for teaching English in Moroccan schools. Cultural content in ELT materials reflects values and ideologies, usually ones that serve dominant cultures. Western content is presented in ELT materials as standard and universal, which, sometimes, eclipses the specificities of local cultures. Despite the apparent alignment of content objectives with pedagogical purposes, deliberate maintenance of an ideology persists. Kumaravadivelu says, "The cultural content of English language textbooks is invariably governed by ideologies of the target language culture, often portraying it as the norm and the desirable, while disregarding or marginalizing local cultural realities" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p. 135).

The quote denotes that the content of textbooks is not neutral but rather intentional. It builds on the assumption that Western culture is the norm, exhibiting the superiority of the dominant narrative. It, implicitly, conditions learners to believe that success aligns with adopting a Western mode of life.

This research paper argues that ELT textbooks present simplified, stereotypical, and often exclusionary images of the "Other" in the name of neutrality and globalization. ELT textbooks present their content as both culturally inclusive and pedagogically neutral. Therefore, this paper is divided into four sections; the first section unveils the theoretical background of the topic by referencing postcolonial theory, drawing on works of Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Stuart Hall, and Louis Althusser. The second part verifies the existing literature on cultural representation in English Language Teaching (ELT), focusing on how the "Other" is, culturally, represented in ELT curricula. This third part concerns the methodology approach; a case study is conducted to examine both the textual and visual content of the two student books selected, Interchange Level 3 (Richards, Hull, & Proctor, 2017) and Summit 2 (Saslow & Ascher, 2021). The final part investigates the pedagogical and ideological implications of the findings while offering recommendations about a more inclusive approach in designing ELT materials.

2. Literature Review

ELT textbooks try to aestheticize human experiences but at the same time fail to adhere to the cultural specificities of certain communities (Setyono & Widodo, 2019, p. 394). Textual and visual content in ELT textbooks is heavily influenced by Western culture. ELT, therefore, becomes a crucial tool not only to teach fundamental skills of language acquisition but also to act as a medium of cultural transfer (Masoud & Rahimi, 2017, pp. 45-62). While learning a language, students do not only acquire rules of grammar or pronunciation… they also assimilate a cultural background from which that particular language comes. Exoticizing the Other is a recurring idea in many studies, as in "Cultural Stereotypes in Foreign Language Textbooks," where the representation of the other is stereotypically labelled under the frame of the dichotomy (modern vs. traditional, developed vs. developing) (Dervin, 2012, pp. 109–122). The content of ELT textbooks is decided upon by the decision makers (Western pole); thus, the knowledge it communicates reconciles with the Western norms that encourage consumerism and individualism while shying away from alternative narratives (Gray, 2010, p. 45). The content of ELT revolves around the American and the British cultures, which emphasizes the Anglo-centric framing in global ELT materials (Tajeddin & Teimournezhad, 2015, pp. 180–193.) However, these curricula primarily focus on superficial aspects of life, such as food and holidays, while neglecting deeper areas related to values and beliefs. ELT textbooks entail hidden messages that are mediated through images, lexical choices, and thematic content (Sadeghi & Sepahi, 2018, pp. 66–85.) These messages unveil the stereotyped construction of the Other as inferior and ignorant. The dominance of the cultures of the U.S. and U.K. is prevailing to the extent that learners find it challenging to see themselves in the content they study (Yuen, 2011, p. 460). This growing body of critical scholarship highlights that ELT materials serve not only as an instrument of pedagogy but also as a platform for the transmission of cultural norms of dominant global powers. The content of these curricula claims inclusivity when it comes to the representation of the Other, but this idea is challenged by the hidden ideology of Western centrism in the US and UK. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to further investigate the extent to which the "inclusive" ELT textbooks either resist or uphold the Western narrative. Additionally, it's crucial to understand how teachers interpret the concealed messages within ELT curricula.

3. Theoretical Framework
This research paper tries to depict how non-Western cultures are portrayed in Interchange 3 and Summit 2. It also attempts to investigate to what extent these textbooks foreground Western culture and how teachers perceive the representation of "Other" cultures in these textbooks. The analysis draws on the following theoretical framework:

Hall — Representation & Meaning Construction
Stuart Hall highlights that representation is "the production of meaning through language" (Hall, 1997, p. 15). In cultural studies, representation is not a simple depiction of the other, but it is an intricate process of meaning circulation and production, especially in cultural contexts. It is characterized by subjectivity since it is a discursive practice that is constantly affected by power structures

and identity formation. Representation does not mirror reality, but it does construct it. Hall says that meaning is not fixed, but it is volatile since it is constantly negotiated by the recipient (Hall, 1997, p. 15). According to him, meaning is produced within dominant narratives reinforcing ideological frameworks. "They [media messages] must be perceived as meaningful discourses, and be meaningfully decoded, before they have an 'effect'—however defined. This is the 'moment' when messages are appropriated by meaning-making practices situated within dominant ideological frameworks" (Hall, 1980, p. 131).

The quote shows that meaning is not inherent to the message but is made through interpretation. Though the audience tries to shape its standpoint, they are still stifled by prevailing or hegemonic ideologies. In other words, messages are 'encoded' by producers of meaning, but those messages are 'decoded' by recipients who do not necessarily approve them.

Said — Orientalism & Othering
Central to this analysis is the concept of the Othering of Edward Said's Orientalism. Said asserts that the West constructs the East based on the dichotomy of binary opposition. "The Orient was almost a European invention… a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (Said, 1978, p. 1). The West sees the East as inferior and underdeveloped; this is translated, for instance, in literature and cinema. Like Stuart Hall, Said emphasizes that this process of representation is not innocent, but it is rather biased since it is used to reinforce the Western identity more than to mirror the reality of Eastern individuals. This ideological mechanism of Othering is not limited to colonial discourse, but it can also be depicted in pedagogical curricula.

Althusser — Ideological State Apparatuses
Another key concept that is fundamental to this analysis is Althusser's Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). He deliberates how education, religion, and media participate in shaping and reproducing mainstream narratives.

> Ideology functions in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among individuals… by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation… It is not only the church, but also the school, the army, and the family which function as Ideological State Apparatuses. (Althusser, 1971, p. 174)

For Althusser, the state uses many layers, like church, schools, and media, to maintain its official narrative. Unlike Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA), ISAs do not require force nor violence; they opt for the internalization of ideology with minimal use of force to ensure the reproduction of the dominant ideology.

Bhabha — Ambivalence & Mimicry
Homi Bhabha's concepts of ambivalence and mimicry enhance the analysis of how ELT textbooks represent different cultures. According to Bhabha, these two concepts decorticate the complex relationship between the colonized and the colonizer. He states that mimicry has been used by the colonizer to encourage the colonized to imitate Western norms, language, and behaviors. However, this imitation does not succeed in creating a Western replica, "almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86); thus, a liminal space (a zone of ambivalence) is created where the colonizer's authority is contested and challenged. In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), Bhabha's theory is deeply rooted in the pedagogical sphere. English textbooks tend to portray the West as the ideal cultural model. The textbooks encourage learners to embrace the entirety of the Western lifestyle. Research indicates that ELT materials often promote Western values like individualism, cosmopolitanism, mobility, wealth, and success at the expense of diversity, inequality, and systemic issues.

Synthesis
These theories collectively offer a critical lens to investigate how the representation of the "Other" is portrayed in ELT textbooks and how dominant ideological frameworks are reproduced and negotiated in pedagogical contexts.

4. Methodology

4.1. Approach
This research paper draws on a qualitative framework to depict the complexities of cultural representation in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks. It seeks a comprehensive identification of both the representations and the underlying mechanisms of their construction.

4.2. Instruments
This study implements three primary instruments for data collection. First, a systematic deconstruction of the visual content in the ELT textbooks Interchange Level 3 and Summit 2 is undertaken to assess how images represent cultural content. Second, a linguistic analysis of the textual materials in the same textbooks is conducted to reveal latent ideologies, highlighting vocabulary registers, dialogues, and cultural references. Third, a semi-structured interview, comprising open-ended questions, is conducted with ten

English language teachers who are using Interchange Level 3 and Summit 2. These instruments provide a correlative lens that enables a comprehensive understanding of how cultural representation is embedded and perceived in ELT materials.

4.3. Analytical Procedures
The study investigates how the representation of the Other is portrayed in ELT textbooks through both visual and linguistic analysis using an intersectional theoretical framework of Stuart Hall, Edward Said, Louis Althusser, and Homi Bhabha.

4.4. Interview Method
The last part of the analysis concerns the structured interview with open-ended questions of ten teachers. In order to gather rich, thorough information that could capture subtleties in participants' interpretation of cultural representation in ELT textbooks, open-ended interview questions were used to enable participants to share their perspectives and experiences in their own words without restrictions. (Creswell, 2008). The interview consists of eight questions that align with the theoretical framework (e.g., Hall's Representation, Said's Orientalism, Bhabha's Mimicry). The data collection is performed through WhatsApp video calls with the interviewees, of which the answers are recorded and later transcribed.

4.5. Thematic Coding
Responses were coded thematically using ChatGPT 5 with categories such as "dominance of Western culture," "tokenistic inclusion of other cultures," and "absence of local representation." These were then interpreted through the lens of postcolonial theory.

4.6. Analytical Lens
The choice of using open-ended questions is very relevant to this study since it allowed the interviewed teachers to express themselves without constraints and be critical towards the content which they are teaching.

5. Findings
I.   Case Study I: *Interchange Level 3*
Interchange Level 3 concentrates on the importance of daily communication in a world that is increasingly interconnected. The topics revolve around global issues such as technological advancements and climate change as well as hobbies, education, and lifestyles. While these themes are presented in a neutral way, they often contain Western values and beliefs that include individualism, consumerism, and universalism.

1.   Use of Images: Visual Analysis.

Fig. 1 Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani activist. Interchange level 3, fifth edition, p. 66.

According to Stuart Hall, "meaning stems from language and cultural modes. He says, "Representation is the production of meaning through language. Language is defined in this way not as the written or spoken word but as any system of representation that carries meaning" (Hall, 1997, p. 28).
 Here, Malala Yousafzai is presented as an epitome of female empowerment who was born in Pakistan, but when she was attacked, she was brought to the West (England) to be saved and later celebrated through the Nobel Prize. The textbook is produced by the

West; therefore, this representation is not neutral inasmuch as the West (England) is portrayed as a place where things are fixed; it is the control tower that supervises what occurs in the world, endorsing narratives that align with its policies while rejecting others. Supporting Malala Yousafzai's campaign of women's right to education is another way of addressing the obliviousness of the global South. Figure 2 remains an example of how visuals are used in ETL textbooks to indoctrinate.
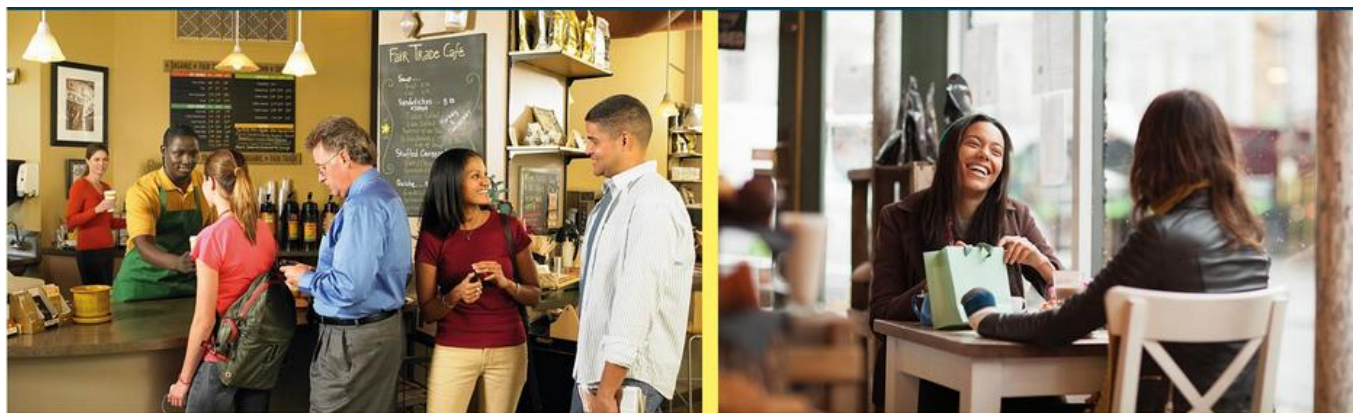

Fig. 2. Interpersonal Interactions in a Café Setting. Interchange level 3, fifth edition, p. 118.

One of the claims of ELT textbooks is that they aim for inclusivity. It is true that Fig. 2 represents a multi-racial plot in which various ethnicities are spotted, but the social role assigned to the Black person is the service provider. Edward Said says that the Other is never perceived as identical; what is significant is not their attributes but their deficiencies: not modern, not developed, not powerful. The display of the Black individual does not serve egalitarian purposes; instead, it represents token inclusion, as this representation is merely symbolic and lacks a place in the mainstream narrative. The barista's symbolic positioning behind the counter emphasizes immobility, while the clients stand in an open space where they are free-willed. "The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, 'different'; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, 'normal.'" (Said, 1978, p. 40). ELT textbooks illustrate how Orientalism constructs the East through the dichotomy of binary opposition.

Fig. 3, Jack Andraka, a teenage science innovator Interchange level 3, fifth edition, p. 63.

In Fig. 3 Jack Andraka, a teenage science innovator who won the grand prize at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair for developing a new, low-cost test for pancreatic cancer. The most notable aspect of Fig. 3 is that the photo of Jack Andraka is positioned in the middle of the reading text, which suggests a focus on Western centrism. The lightbulbs, associated with Western Enlightenment ideals, symbolize knowledge, creation, and advancement. In contrast to figures 1 and 2, figure 3 reinforces the narrative that portrays the West as superior and more developed. Thus, ELT textbooks often feature visual and narrative content that promotes "global" ideals embodied by Western, white subjects. The claim that ELT textbooks are inclusive is not authentic, as

evidence from various textbooks proves that their content is shaped to advocate for a mainstream perspective that, implicitly, emphasizes Western superiority.

2. Language as Ideological Apparatus:

In Interchange Level 3, language is used as a mechanism for interpellation: it assigns learners selected roles that align with Western capitalist, individualist, and professional norms. The textbook perpetuates prevailing views under the pretense of linguistic instruction. Interchange Level 3 uses a register that conforms to neoliberal purposes. Words and phrases such as "budget," "career path," "time management," "entrepreneur," "online shopping," "travel," "personal growth," and "job satisfaction" place learners squarely within the capitalist sphere.

Fig. 1 Survey of business strategies. Interchange level 3, p. 78

The survey reflects capitalist values that target business strategies. A task like this one might seem relevant vis-à-vis the needs of the job market in the 21st century. It is true that contemporary jobs require various skills, both soft and technical, and that individuals are trying to acquire as many skills as possible so that they are able to market themselves in a way that guarantees getting the job post they wish for. However, there is an overemphasis on this area in Interchange Level 3; this activity situates the learner as a financially accountable entity within a neoliberal paradigm. John Gray says, "Textbooks interpellate learners as consumers and economic actors by embedding capitalist values such as competition, individual success, and personal responsibility, thereby shaping subjectivities in line with neoliberal, Western, middle-class norms" (Gray, 2010, p. 145). This quote confirms what Althusser defines as interpellation.

"Ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals… or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing" (Althusser, 1971, p. 174). ELT textbooks position learners within economic and ideological frameworks, fostering consumer identities. Learners are subtly encouraged to identify as economic participants, with their identities linked to their spending behaviors, which in turn perpetuates Western ideology. This is not politically objective, as it is intentionally designed to shape learners' perceptions of the roles they are supposed to enact in today's job market.

II.   Case Study II: *Summit 2*
1.   Use of Images: Visual Analysis.

Figure 1. Learners discuss when lying is acceptable or not, using grammar to express moral reasoning. Summit 2, p. 17

The snapshot of Fig. 1 shows two girls who look like Eastern or African girls discussing the consequences of lying. The decision to include non-Western individuals in a discussion about lying is not innocent. The two girls are, implicitly, invited to identify the nefarious effects of lying and are more encouraged to mimic the Western values that reject dishonesty. In this regard, Homi Bhabha asserts that:

> Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation. A strategy which appropriates the Other as it visualizes power. Mimicry is not merely a servile imitation, but a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 122)

Mimicry is a colonial strategy that aims to create a class of individuals who imitate the colonizer's values, language, and customs. Fig. 1, latently, relates truth-telling and integrity to the West, and the non-West (the two girls) are invited to mimic the Western perspective that values honesty. Nevertheless, positive values are associated with the West. As shown in Figure 2, futuristic ambitions are related to Western perspectives;

Fig. 2 Summit 2, p. 100

Fig. 2 are Kenneth Olsen (CEO of Digital Equipment), Steve Jobs and Bill Gates (who introduced the first personal computers—the Macintosh and IBM). They are carefully selected with the purpose of exhibiting how the West has led the world. Associating development with the West has become a standardized perspective in ELT textbooks, reinforcing claims of Western superiority and development. The Occident, intentionally, constructs the Orient as a site of backwardness.

2. Language as Ideological Apparatus

One of the most striking observations about Summit 2 is the lexical jargon on which the textbook relies. The vocabulary lexis that is used is mainly related to economy (budgeting, saving, investing, smart spending), professional settings (career goals, leadership, innovation, success), and consumerism (brands, online shopping, lifestyle choices). These content-based curricula shape learners as neoliberal subjects in the capitalist realm. Another observation is related to grammatical structures, namely reported speech and how it is contextualized in cultural scenarios in a way to condition the perspective of the learner concerning certain issues; for instance, how the grammar lesson of indirect speech is used on page 57 in the discussion activity to discuss the different types of jokes, such as dirty, ethnic, sexist, verbal, or political jokes. Although this exercise may appear common, high-context cultures typically do not adopt the same attitude towards explicitly telling jokes, particularly dirty jokes. Another example is how the simple future is contextualized in the grammar spotlight on page 100; the target language is situated in a text that promotes Western technological determinism, portraying Western figures as a key to development. These examples show how hidden ideologies perpetuate behavioral patterns through Western liberal moral codes.

In the broader socio-cultural and ideological context, Pearson frames learners as global citizens in an effort to integrate them into a new Western cultural framework. Summit 2 claims to be a neutral medium of modernity—a gateway to participation in the global economy and a passport to upward mobility in the social strata. However, this is a component of neoliberal globalization that tends to create market-oriented individuals. Introducing units that emphasize employability skills is purposeful since in an interconnected world, capitalist interests necessitate subjects that originate from different parts of the world, and this is reminiscent of how outsourcing businesses operate in the economic sphere; Apple, which is an American company, operates in China, where the workforce is Asian; therefore, ELT text can be very useful in shaping perceptions of Asian employees and workers to make them "always-already subjects." (Althusser, 1971). In other words, the subject is already positioned inside social structures, norms, and roles, having been "hailed" or interpellated by ideology. This ideological aspect of Summit 2 is obvious in sections that replicate job interviews, career planning, and personal branding, as well as assignments that require learners to explain "strengths and weaknesses," "personal goals," or "success stories." These aren't neutral exercises because they function as regulators of perception and behavior. Neoliberalism and capitalism govern the job market, where the learning experience extends beyond the classroom.

III. Investigating Teacher Perceptions of the Cultural Representation of the "Other"

To complement the qualitative content and discourse analyses previously discussed, this section investigates the representation of the Other in Interchange 3 and Summit 2 using a structured interview that primarily consists of open-ended questions. In this regard, using an interview will facilitate a contextualized comprehension of the beliefs, practices, and perspectives of participants. "Open-ended questions are used so that the participants can best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings" (Creswell, 2008, p. 225).

Therefore, the data are collected via semi-structured and open-ended questions. These questions are categorized according to thematic content: cultural representation, visibility of non-Western perspectives, ideological bias, and learner identity. The semi-structured aspect of the interview allows more adaptability from the side of the interviewer to dig deeper into the cultural and professional background of the interviewees. According to Bakhtin, "The word in language is half someone else's" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293). This means that meaning emerges from the interaction between two speakers—interviewer/interviewee—where the interviewer is actively listening and ready to adapt. In this regard, the researcher cannot impose their assumptions on the interviewees' responses. For this purpose, eight teachers were selected to be interviewed: three female teachers and five male teachers between the ages of 36 and 46 years old with a minimum experience of 10 years of teaching English to students between the ages of 17 and 22 in both the private and public sectors. These teachers were primarily designated to be interviewed because of their familiarity with the instructional materials under investigation, Summit 2 and Interchange 3, in their teaching at the American Language Center of Casablanca, Morocco. The teachers were told that the interview was voluntary and agreed to be interviewed. This open-ended interview employs eight questions that are categorized into four thematic sections: cultural representation, stereotypes and inclusion, ideology, and learner identity. Each section contains two questions.

1. Analysis

This section of the research focuses on the analysis of the findings from the interview with six teachers regarding the cultural and ideological content of Summit 2 and Interchange 3. The six teachers share the same experience of working at the American Language Center of Casablanca, Morocco; therefore, they are all using Summit 2 and Interchange 3 in their classes. The objective is to identify the pattern of the representation of the Other—how the Other is perceived, reconstructed, and mediated within

English Language Teaching materials. The interview data are thematically coded across four primary areas, which are cultural representation, stereotypes and inclusion, ideology, and learner identity.

The common aspect of the answers of the five teachers, Miss Sara, Mrs. Najwa, Mr. Wadii, Miss Nadia, and Mr. Hamza, Mr. Mohamed, Mr. Hassan and, Mr. Jamal and Mr. Abed Hakim is that they all observed a Western dominance, mainly American and British, in the content of Summit 2 and Interchange 3. Mrs. Najwa states, "Most of the content is Western-oriented. You can notice that from the names of the characters, the situations they are involved in, and the topics discussed." Mr. Wadii adds, "However, this diversity is still limited, and often Western cultures dominate. You find examples from American or British contexts more than others." Miss Sara also shares the same opinion; she says, "There is very little representation of cultures from the Global South, for example. Learners are mostly exposed to a Western worldview." As for Miss Nadia, she says, "In most cases, Western characters are at the center of the conversations or stories. They are the ones doing the actions, traveling, working, and solving problems." Concerning ~~the~~ Mr. Hamza, he asserts that "Even when other cultures are shown, they are often just briefly mentioned or exoticized. [...] The textbooks could do more to go deeper into the cultural practices of non-Western societies". As for Mr. Jamal, admits that the Western centrality is felt throughout the thematic choices that endorse Western norms. Mr. Abed Hakim also asserts that there is a focus on the centrality of the Western norms, he gives an example taken from Interchange 3, where Japan is depicted through traditional temples and martial arts while eclipsing its modernity. For Mr. Hassan, he reckons that there is a cultural diversity in the textbooks; however, he mentions that there are instances where the Other is stereotypically represented. He gives an example of a reading text in Interchange 3 where Americans are portrayed to be generous in tipping while Japanese are not. Finally, Mr. Mohamed says that there is cultural inclusivity, but still there is more emphasis on the Western centrality. Here is a table that summarizes the outcome of the interview:

Theme	Focus of the Questions	Illustrative Teacher Perspectives
Cultural Representation	Diversity of cultural content; recurrence of particular cultures or geographical areas.	"Most of the content is Western-oriented. You can notice that from the names of the characters, the situations they are involved in, and the topics discussed." (Mrs. Najwa) "There is very little representation of cultures from the Global South." (Miss Sara) "In most cases, Western characters are at the center of the conversations or stories. They are the ones doing the actions, traveling, working, and solving problems." (Miss Nadia)
Stereotypes & Inclusion	Presence of stereotypes; centrality or marginalization of Western vs. non-Western characters.	"Even when other cultures are shown, they are often just briefly mentioned or exoticized." (Mr. Hamza) "Sometimes the way cultures are shown is very limited... just to say they included a certain country or tradition." (Mr. Wadii) "In Interchange 3, Americans are portrayed to be generous in tipping, while Japanese are not." (Mr. Hassan)
Ideology	Cultural values embedded in textbooks; alignment with Western or capitalist ideologies.	"Most of the time, it is either the American way of life or British examples that dominate." (Mrs. Najwa) "The Western centrality is felt throughout the thematic choices that endorse Western norms." (Mr. Jamal) "Japan is shown only through temples and martial arts, not its modernity." (Mr. Abed Hakim)
Learner Identity	Learners' engagement with cultural content; inclusivity and non-discrimination in ELT.	"Students don't just learn language; they copy what they see in the content—how people live, eat, work, and think." (Mrs. Najwa) "There is cultural inclusivity but still more emphasis on Western centrality." (Mr. Mohamed)

It is very intelligible how the answers of the interviewed teachers align with what Stuart Hall says: "…a particular form or 'regime' of representation: not on 'language' as a general concern, but on specific languages or meanings, and how they are deployed at particular times, in particular places" (Hall, 1997, p. 61). In this regard, the regime of representation is not about isolated ideas and images; it rather echoes a whole system of rules, conventions, and cultures that models the way individuals perceive the world. According to the interviewees, the materials under investigation reflect the idea of how meaning is mediated through symbols, images, and narratives in a way that constructs the West as the center of the world, exhibiting superiority while amplifying it. Hall stresses the idea that meaning is not neutral because it is constructed in a way that serves the mainstream narrative. Secondly, while the interviewed teachers did not make any explicit remarks about issues related to stereotypes and inclusion, they highlighted the imbalance of the representation of the characters throughout the textbooks. The non-Westerns are also represented, but their portrayal lacks depth and critical engagement. This representation is characterized as superficial, frequently lacking in narrative complexity or meaningful context. This is alluding to Spivak's theory, where she stresses that even when the subaltern's voice is reported, it is filtered, distorted, or co-opted by Western academic, political, or cultural structures. This is precisely what the interviewee, Mr. Wadii, mentioned:

> I haven't seen any clear stereotypes, but sometimes the way cultures are shown is very limited. It's like they are trying to check a box—just to say they included a certain country or tradition. But this kind of representation can also be misleading.

Therefore, the patterns of Orientalist discourse are identified by the interviewed teachers, and they function as an ideological state apparatus that frames the non-Western learners as subsidiary individuals. Thirdly, all eight teachers concurred that the interviews consistently emphasized the presence of dominant Western cultures in the textbooks. Mrs. Najwa explains, "Most of the time, it is either the American way of life or British examples that dominate." This phenomenon reveals the priority accorded to representation of Western culture while eclipsing the non-Western.

Ultimately, the learner's identity formation strongly influences the process of language learning. Textbooks are not just a vehicle of learning language skills; they also function as a mechanism that sharpens the learners' awareness and perception about the world. In addition, English is no longer a means of communication; it is rather an identity builder. Teacher Najwa emphasized that students begin to associate English proficiency with "a modern lifestyle," particularly one rooted in American cultural norms. She says, "Students don't just learn language; they copy what they see in the content—how people live, eat, work, and think." In this sense, the learning process becomes convoluted because it is no more about the pedagogical objectives of a single lesson plan, but it is more about forging new perceptions that align with Western norms.

6. Conclusion

This research paper has illustrated how Interchange Level 3 and Summit 2 function as more than linguistic tools of instruction but as a mode of cultural representation that endorses the constructed nature of West-centrism, particularly privileging American and British contexts, with limited and often superficial representation of non-Western cultures. Although overtly offensive stereotypes were not identified, the portrayal of non-Western contexts was primarily tokenistic. Echoing Said's (1978) argument in Orientalism regarding the exoticization and marginalization of the "Other" and reinforcing what Hall (1997) labels a "regime of representation."

This research paper enhances our understanding of how the Other is represented in ELT textbooks by using a postcolonial theory lens to analyze the complexities of this portrayal. By applying the perspectives of Hall, Said, Althusser, and Bhabha, this study presents a theoretically grounded framework for examining how educational content shapes cultural perceptions and learner identities.

However, this study has certain limitations since it focuses on only two ELT textbooks that are used in Morocco with a limited number of Moroccan teachers (eight), which may restrain the generalizability of the findings. The analysis focuses on visual and textual content without a thorough investigation concerning the learner's reception. Therefore, future research may broaden its scope by analyzing a diverse array of ELT textbooks from various publishers and educational contexts, integrating classroom observations, and exploring learners' views on cultural representation. A possible comparative study between Global North and Global South-produced ELT materials could decorticate the dynamics of cultural hegemony and resistance in language instruction. Such research would contribute to developing more inclusive and culturally balanced teaching resources that foster genuine intercultural competence.

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