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# Evaluating Intercultural Awareness of "*At the Crossroads*" (2005) Reading Texts through Critical Discourse Analysis

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## Introduction

The importance of intercultural awareness has increased in today's connected and global world. It is essential to comprehend and value the diversity in our world since people from various cultural origins interact daily. Building bridges and promoting tolerance, empathy, and understanding between many cultures is made possible by intercultural awareness. It enables people to become aware of and appreciate the various customs, beliefs, values, and behaviors of others and acquire the abilities needed for cross-cultural communication. Furthermore, intercultural awareness is crucial for success in the twenty-first century due to the increasing significance of international trade, travel, and communication.

The ability to perceive and appreciate the diversity of cultural norms, values, and beliefs is known as intercultural awareness, which can be developed through reading texts. Readers can learn about the practices, traditions, and viewpoints of people from varied origins by reading works from many cultures. Exposure to various perspectives might aid readers in enlarging their cultural horizons and cultivating compassion for those with multiple ideas and experiences. Reading texts from many cultures can also help in dispelling biases and stereotypes that may be present, enabling people to have a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of various civilizations. Ultimately, reading texts that increase intercultural understanding is essential for establishing a more accepting and diverse society.

Even though intercultural awareness is becoming increasingly crucial in today's globalized society, there still needs to be more studies on fostering

this awareness while reading texts. Even though there has been some research on international communication and language learning, more in-depth studies are still needed on the best ways to use reading texts to foster intercultural understanding. This is especially crucial given the rising variety in many societies and the requirement for people to understand and traverse many cultural views. Without additional research in this area, teachers and learners may find it challenging to effectively acquire the knowledge and abilities required to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

It is crucial to critically analyze texts after reading them to determine how much they advance intercultural understanding. This entails looking at the author's viewpoint, delving into any possible cultural biases and assumptions, and estimating how the work might affect readers from various cultural backgrounds. By evaluating texts critically, we can spot preconceptions, question them, learn more about different cultures, and foster intercultural understanding and empathy. Instead of fostering intercultural awareness and understanding, we risk reinforcing stereotypes and maintaining cultural misconceptions by failing to analyze reading materials critically.

In the Algerian context, Yassine (2006) conducted a study that looked at two Algerian EFL textbooks, "Spring One" and "Spotlight on English", to determine the cultural teaching philosophies of the textbook designers as translated into the reading texts. The researcher makes the case that the designers' attitudes toward the target culture are reflected in their choice of cultural content. The study discovered that "Spotlight on English" featured an intercultural perspective while "Spring One" only incorporated national culture, presumably showing fear of acculturation. The researcher concluded that designers considered intercultural awareness more after the educational reform and adopting a competency-based strategy.

In 2010, Yassine employed social semiotics to assess the cultural and cross-cultural attitudes in the third-year secondary education textbook "New Prospects". The researcher looked at six reading texts and discovered that the textbook reflected three cultural categories: the local culture of the learners, the target culture that was in another country, and the universal culture. Each category included information on overt and covert aspects of culture, such as foods, movies, music, attitudes, values, and beliefs. The study came to the conclusion that reading passages from " New Prospects " helped EFL learners develop their intercultural communication competence for cross-cultural understanding.

In 2021, through a multimodal study, Chalal & Yassine explored how intercultural awareness is portrayed in the EFL textbook" At the Crossroads. "Their study showed that the investigated images favored British and American cultures over Algerian culture, hindering cross-cultural understanding. Because learners were passive consumers of cultural information and the highlighted cultural characteristics were superficial, their awareness of other cultures was constrained. The study finds that the visual discourse in the textbook doesn't help learners to learn about other cultures. Accordingly, the present study aims to investigate whether the linguistic discourse in 'At the Crossroads' has the same potential as the visual one in raising EFL learners' Intercultural awareness by addressing two research questions:

1. What are the dominant discourses in the *'At the Crossroads'* reading texts?

2. How do these discourses shape the intercultural awareness of the reading texts?

# 1. Exploring Intercultural Competence in Language Education

## 1.1. Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competence is a concept that stems from communicative competence. Dell Hymes coined the latter term in 1972, which covers language's social and functional uses. Canale and Swain added the fourth component, Strategic competence, to their model in 1983, and Van Ek proposed social competence in 1986. Celce-Murcia et al. extended Canale and Swain's model by adding a fifth component, Actional competence (1995). Kramsch (1993) et al. highlighted the Sociocultural context in foreign language teaching models. The concept of intercultural competence emerged in 1994-97, thanks to the works of Byram. Byram believes that teaching languages should develop learners' intercultural competence by combining linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competencies with intercultural competences.

In the literature related to intercultural competence, there is a lack of consensus on its definition and terminology. Meyer defines intercultural competence as the ability to behave flexibly when confronted with foreign cultures, while Samovar and Porter define it as the ability to enact a cultural identity effectively. Fantini adds that developing intercultural competence can provide opportunities for self-reflection on one's own cultural values. The text highlights the importance of intercultural competence in handling cultural differences.

In the language education context, Deardorff (2006) noticed that many educators consider Byram's definition the most relevant for pedagogical aims. Byram's definition includes knowledge of others and oneself, skills to interpret and relate, skills to discover and/or interact, valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviors, and relativizing oneself. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey emphasize that foreign language learners must be able to ensure shared understanding with people of different social identities and interact with them as complex human beings with their own individuality.

Byram's works on intercultural competence significantly impacted the language education field, which started recognizing the urgent need to integrate the intercultural dimension in ELT programmes.

In an attempt to make a general definition, Deardorff (2004) surveyed over 100 intercultural scholars to develop a generic definition of intercultural competence, which is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes". This definition encompasses three main interrelated components: attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Attitudes refer to holding positive emotions towards other cultures and developing readiness to accept differences. Knowledge involves being curious to know about these cultures. Finally, applying these affective and cognitive aspects to solve communication problems in real-life intercultural situations is referred to as skills of intercultural competence.

The paper highlights Byram's model (1997) as it is relevant to teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) and includes a cultural awareness component. This component has influenced Baker's (2011) development of the notion of intercultural awareness (ICA), which is the focus of the study being discussed.

## 1.2. Byram's (1997) Model of Intercultural Competence

Byram's model comprises five interconnected elements, which he refers to as "savoirs," that are essential for developing intercultural competence. These include awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and two sets of skills.

- Knowledge: knowledge is important for EFL learners, particularly about social groups they interact with. This knowledge encompasses various aspects such as beliefs, practices, values, and communicative norms, including verbal and nonverbal cues. The author suggests that this dimension of knowledge involves two key components:

understanding social processes and the products of those processes, which includes information about both the self and others.

- Attitudes: To learn about different cultures, having a positive attitude toward them is crucial. Intercultural experiences require people to understand and appreciate cultural diversity, be willing to overcome communication barriers and be actively engaged in such encounters. Having a positive mindset means being curious and receptive toward other cultures and your own. Cultivating positive attitudes towards all cultures involved in an intercultural exchange can promote cultural sensitivity and pluralism.

- Skills: Byram discusses the two sets of skills that are necessary for intercultural competence. The first set involves interpreting and relating to cultural events and documents from other cultures and being able to explain them in the context of one's own culture. This requires the skill of mediation. The second set of skills involves acquiring new cultural knowledge and applying all components of intercultural competence (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) in real-time interactions.

- Cultural Awareness: Byram describes the concept of cultural awareness or savoir s'engager, which involves recognizing one's own culture and foreign cultures as the products of a community's historical and living conditions. This understanding includes identifying similarities and differences between cultural groups and their products. Developing intercultural competence requires acquiring a complex understanding of other cultures, which cultural awareness can help with. This allows EFL learners to evaluate assumptions and stereotypes in intercultural contexts critically.

## 1.3. Intercultural Awareness

Cultural awareness (CA) is an important component in language teaching, as it allows learners to understand their and others' cultural behaviors and communication norms. However, the author notes that CA can limit the conception of culture to a national sense and proposes the idea of intercultural awareness (ICA) instead. ICA recognizes the dynamic relationship between culture and language in intercultural communication and avoids essentializing either concept. The idea of ICA was introduced by Baker in 2009 as a more comprehensive approach to cultural and linguistic education.

Baker (2009) argues that intercultural awareness (ICA) should be viewed as an extension of cultural awareness (CA) rather than an opposition to it, and is essential for effective intercultural communication in expanding the circle of English as a foreign language context. After reviewing previous definitions of ICA, Baker finds they are very similar to CA's and do not adequately address the dynamic and varied cultural influences in intercultural communication. He offers a definition of ICA that emphasizes its importance as an essential component of English language teaching in EFL contexts. Baker defines ICA as follows:

> Intercultural awareness is a conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices and frames of understanding can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and context-specific manner in real-time communication.

This definition suggests that it is important to clearly define the meaning of "awareness" and acknowledge the significant influence of culture and language on intercultural communication and their intricate interplay. This realization prompted Baker (2011) to identify twelve distinct components that characterize ICA.

## 1.3.1. Components of Intercultural Awareness

Baker (2011) established a list of twelve components to clarify the common features of intercultural communication, based on those previously identified by Byram in 1997. These components emphasize the importance of cultural awareness, including understanding shared behaviors, values, and beliefs, the role of culture and context in interpretation, and the ability to compare one's cultural background with that of others. They also highlight the relative nature of cultural norms, the provisional and open-ended nature of cultural understanding, and the presence of multiple perspectives within cultural groups. Additionally, the components stress the importance of recognizing individuals as members of multiple social groups, understanding commonalities and differences between cultures, and being aware of culturally-based communicative practices. The final components underscore the need to move beyond cultural stereotypes and generalizations and negotiate and mediate communication differences based on understanding culture in intercultural communication.

In Baker's model of intercultural communication competence, several features describe the knowledge and skills needed for effective communication in a lingua franca, such as English. While knowledge of specific cultures is still important, participants need to have generalized culturally based frames

of interpretation and the ability to negotiate and mediate between different cultural references and practices. This combination of knowledge and abilities is necessary for dealing with the diversity of intercultural communication where cultural frames of reference are not easily defined.

### 1.3.2. Levels of Intercultural Awareness

Baker (2011) created an Intercultural Awareness (ICA) model based on the twelve components of ICA, which considers the relationships between the elements and the learning processes. The model considers the associations and interactions between these components and suggests how they are learned and operationalized in intercultural communication. Unlike previous models of cultural differences, Baker's model seeks to uncover cultural values in EFL contexts. The focus of the current study is to investigate how intercultural awareness is represented in the linguistic discourse of an EFL textbook, using only the conceptual phase of Baker's model, as the practical phase is beyond the scope of this research.

### 1.4. Reading Texts as Cultural Vehicles

Reading texts can be an effective tool for learning about and comprehending other cultures. Readers can learn about the cultural setting in which literature was written by immersing themselves in its language, topics, and beliefs. This understanding can therefore assist readers in appreciating and respecting the variety of human experiences and give one a way to consider their own cultural presumptions and biases.

Reading texts can serve as cultural intermediaries by introducing readers to fresh ways of seeing and understanding the world. In his book "The Interpretation of Cultures", anthropologist Clifford Geertz makes the claim that "culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly – that is, thickly – described" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). And reading writings from different cultures can help us comprehend and appreciate the complexity of those frameworks, which give the framework within which people make sense of their lives.

For instance, reading the poetry of Rumi, a Persian mystic who lived in the 13th century, can shed light on Iran's cultural and spiritual traditions and those of the larger Islamic community. The Sufi tradition of Islam, which emphasizes the value of spiritual connection and the quest for inner calm, is reflected in Rumi's writings. Readers can have a deeper knowledge of how religious and cultural traditions affect how individuals perceive the world and their role in it by reading Rumi's poetry.

Similarly, reading texts from various historical eras can shed light on how cultural attitudes and ideals have changed over time. For instance, reading Jane Austen's books can provide insight into the social mores and standards of early 19th-century England. The severe social distinctions and gender roles of Austen's day are satirized in works like "Pride and Prejudice" and "Emma", among other works. Readers can better grasp how historical context shapes cultural attitudes and values by reading and thinking about these works.

Reading texts may be a way of evaluating and questioning cultural presumptions and biases and introducing readers to new ways of thinking and experiencing the world. Readers can gain a more nuanced knowledge of the complexity of cultural identity by analyzing the ways in which literature reflects or contradicts prevalent cultural narratives.

For example, the works of James Baldwin, a Black American writer, offer a powerful critique of the systemic racism and oppression that continue to shape American society. Baldwin's novels and essays, such as "Go Tell It on the Mountain" and "The Fire Next Time," offer a searing critique of the ways in which racism operates not only on an individual level but also on a structural level. By reading and reflecting on Baldwin's work, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which cultural narratives about race and identity shape our perceptions of ourselves and others.

In conclusion, reading texts can be an effective way to learn about and understand various cultures. We can understand the cultural setting in which a piece was written by immersing ourselves in the language, topics, and values it contains. A more nuanced awareness of the complexity of cultural identity can be gained by reading writings that challenge and critique dominant cultural narratives. The capacity to interact with and respect many cultures is more crucial than ever as the globe becomes more varied and linked. We can acquire the knowledge and insights needed to successfully negotiate this complicated and shifting environment by reading texts.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Materials

### 2.1.1. Presentation of the Corpus

"At the Crossroads" is an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook designed locally in 2005 by Riche, B. et al. It was created as part of the national educational reform in Algeria, which aimed to reintroduce the second foreign language (English) into the sixth grade of intermediate school. Additionally, the Communicative Based Approach (CLT) was replaced by the

Competency-Based Approach to Language Teaching (CBALT) in all three levels of national education: primary, middle, and secondary education. This first-generation textbook, "At the Crossroads," was designed for first-year secondary school learners (SE1) aged 15 to 16 and is suitable for all streams, including science and literature. It consists of five didactic units covering different themes: "Getting Through," "Once Upon a Time," "Our Findings Show," "Eureka," and "Back to Nature."

Recently, the Algerian EFL textbook curriculum has undergone reforms, resulting in a second generation of textbooks being designed. From 2016 to 2018, the second generation of middle school EFL textbooks was designed and is currently in use. However, the design of second-generation secondary school textbooks is still ongoing.

## 2.1.2 Sampling the Corpus: Purposive Sampling

"At the Crossroads" (2005) utilizes a multimodal design, incorporating verbal and visual semiotic modes. However, this paper will solely focus on analyzing the linguistic content. The textbook comprises thirty-four texts that are organized into five units.

To fit the purpose of this research, only five out of thirty-four texts are subject to analysis. These texts were selected using a "purposive sampling" method. This qualitative method is commonly used in research literature today (Gentles et al, 2015). Purposive, also known as purposeful sampling, involves selecting participants or data sources based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the research questions. This selection process is tied to the researchers' objectives and the research context.

Accordingly, the five selected texts (see appendix, page 18) represent the main reading texts for each didactic unit as represented in the following table:

| Text | The Didactic Unit | The topic |
|------|-------------------|-----------|
| Text 1 | Getting Through | Kirsi's Email |
| Text 2 | Once Upon a Time | Excerpt from "Things Fall Apart" |
| Text 3 | Our Findings Show | Report from The Times |
| Text 4 | Eureka | Development of Communication Technology |
| Text 5 | Back to Nature | Article from Popular Science |

## 2.2. Methods

To evaluate the sixteen texts that were chosen, this paper used Fairclough's (2003) framework for critical discourse analysis as its data analysis approach. This approach examines language choice's impact on social variables, grammar, and vocabulary choices. Thus, it challenges the writers' stances and clarifies how alternative representations of the same discourse can differ from the authors' version. Norman Fairclough is one of the key figures in CDA research. His framework includes three interconnected stages of analysis, including "a progression from description, to interpretation, to explanation"[17.] These are explained as follows:

- *Textual Analysis:* This refers to the description stage as it describes the general features of discourse, such as the discourse type, the addresser, the addressee, etc.

- *Discursive Analysis:* which refers to the interpretation stage and deals with discourse as a product that seeks to affect people; it is about sorting out the relationship between the content of the discourse and the interaction

- *Social Analysis:* This refers to the explanation stage and has to do with the discourse and the social context, i.e., how it is structured to influence people regarding their society.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Critical Discourse Analysis of Text 1: Kirsi's Email

Textual Analysis: The sixteen-year-old Finnish girl Kirsi emailed the Algerian teenager Amel, whose address she discovered online. The essay details Kirsi's upbringing, daily schedule, and interests. She briefly overviews Finland, describing its geography, climate, and well-known attractions like saunas and lakes.

- Discourse Practice: In her email, Kirsi expresses her desire to get to know Amel and discover more about her culture. The tone is casual and welcoming, and Kirsi divulges intimate information about herself and her life. She also probes Amel about her own life story and experiences.

- Social Practice: Young people's social and cultural habits in Finland and Algeria are both represented in the email. The way that Kirsi describes her daily activities and educational ambitions illustrates the value that Finnish society places on education as well as the

expectation that young people will put forth a lot of effort to meet their objectives. The significance of family and animal friendship in Finnish culture is shown in her depiction of her family and dogs. Her portrayal of Tikkakoski as a little village where everyone is familiar with one another is representative of the close-knit community structures found in rural Finland. Amel's answer to the email would indicate her social and cultural norms, attitudes, and convictions regarding friendship, communication, and cross-cultural interchange.

## 3.2. Critical Discourse Analysis of Text 2: Excerpt from "Things Fall

Examining the textual discourse in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart offers a nuanced analysis of character portrayal, specifically delving into the dichotomy between Okonkwo and Unoka. The character Okonkwo, emblematic of strength and heroism, elicits admiration through meticulous physicality and assiduity, exemplified by his triumphant feats over notable adversaries. Lexical choices such as «tall,» «huge,» and «famous» serve to underscore and perpetuate a narrative of dominance and superiority.

Conversely, Unoka assumes a contrasting role, portrayed as feeble and indolent, subjected to derogatory appellations such as "coward" and "improvident." Noteworthy is the narrative's deliberate dismissal of Unoka's musical pursuits, casting them as ostensibly inconsequential.

A discourse analysis reveals an intricate interplay of ideologies and power structures within the societal framework of the novel. Okonkwo's language aligns with a rhetoric of admiration, attributing his triumphs to unwavering tenacity, thereby validating societal expectations of masculine virtues. Conversely, Unoka's linguistic portrayal frames his perceived failures as emanating from a narrative of cowardice, reinforcing prevailing societal norms.

Broadening the analysis to encompass broader societal constructs, gender norms emerge as a salient thematic concern. Unoka, embodying traits associated with kindness, is relegated to a subordinate male archetype. Okonkwo, in stark contrast, epitomizes power and dominance, aligning seamlessly with entrenched societal expectations of assertive masculinity. The lexical nuances employed in the text not only serve to individuate characters but also play a pivotal role in the perpetuation and reinforcement of established gender roles within the cultural milieu depicted in Things Fall Apart.

### 3.3. Critical Discourse Analysis of Text 3: Report from The Times

- Textual Analysis: This study elucidates the computer utilization patterns within a cohort of 60 adolescents, with a particular emphasis on delineating the nature of their activities. The subjects, aged 13 to 19, uniformly possess home computer access. Predominantly, the study reveals a pervasive proclivity among these adolescents, as evidenced by unanimous acknowledgment, towards recreational computer usage, notably in the form of gaming. In stark contrast, a minority engages in computationally mediated endeavors pertaining to word processing or academic support. The outcomes are succinctly presented through a graphical representation appended at the conclusion of the report.

- Discourse Practice: The construction of meaning within the text is intricately executed through a myriad of discourse techniques. Notably, the author strategically deploys statistical evidence as a rhetorical device to substantiate the assertion that computer usage among adolescents is predominantly recreational rather than scholastically oriented. The integration of verbatim quotations from the surveyed youth serves not only to fortify the contentions proffered but also imparts an air of authenticity by establishing the empirical basis of the presented data. The report strategically employs framing as a discursive device, framing itself as an experimental endeavor aimed at scrutinizing the prevailing assumption regarding the technological adeptness of the youth. This intentional framing establishes anticipatory expectations in the reader, with subsequent survey data serving either to corroborate or refute the prevailing assumption.

- Social Practice: This study extends beyond the microcosm of computer usage among adolescents to encapsulate broader sociocultural attitudes and practices. The discerned predilection for recreational computer use among young individuals mirrors and potentially contributes to the societal discourse surrounding youth disengagement from academic pursuits. Furthermore, the incorporation of statistical information and empirical evidence within the report aligns with broader social practices inherent in academic and journalistic discourse, wherein the strategic utilization of quantitative data functions as a rhetorical tool to confer heightened credibility upon articulated claims. The study thus emerges as a

microcosmic reflection of societal dispositions towards technology use and the nuanced interplay between recreation and scholastic pursuits among contemporary youth.

### 3.4. Critical Discourse Analysis of Text 4: Development of Communication Technology

- Textual Analysis: The narrative provides a comprehensive historical account of the evolution of communication technology. It extols the significance of pivotal inventions such as the telephone, wireless telegraph, and communication satellites, positioning them as transformative solutions to the perceived inadequacy of long-distance communication facilitated by drums. Projections within the text anticipate that by the year 2050, electronic information technology will undergo a paradigm shift, fundamentally reshaping global trade, education, and familial dynamics.
- Discourse Practice: Positioned within a problem-solving framework, the text presents technology as a catalyst for societal progress. The developmental trajectory of communication technology is delineated as a continuum of advancements, elevating long-distance communication from primitive and unsatisfying modes typified by drum usage. The essay fosters an optimistic perspective regarding the future, asserting that electronic information technology will engender substantial enhancements across various societal domains.
- Social Practice: The text encapsulates and perpetuates the values and worldview inherent in the dominant culture that engendered and assimilated it. The thematic emphasis on technology as both a problem-solving mechanism and a driver of progress reflects the ideals of an industrialized, capitalist society that places paramount importance on innovation and operational efficiency. Furthermore, the textual emphasis on transformative changes in business, educational institutions, and family life underscores a profound belief in the centrality of these societal structures.

This literary exposition systematically charts the historical trajectory of communication technology, portraying it as an instrumental force in resolving challenges and propelling societal advancement. It serves as a reflective mirror of the ideals and perspectives endemic to an industrialized, capitalist society that prioritizes efficiency, innovation, and an optimistic outlook on the transformative potential of technological evolution across various societal institutions.

### 3.5. Critical Discourse Analysis of Text 5: Article from Popular Science

- Textual Analysis: Within the intricate tapestry of environmental discourse, the examined text employs a lexicon saturated with words such as "pollution," "poison," "diseases," "die," "suffocate," "dangerous," and "toxic," crafting a narrative underscored by urgency, danger, and terror. These lexical choices contribute to the establishment of a palpable sense of imminent threat, notably augmented by the article's dire predictions regarding the pervasive impact of pollution on both human health and the ecosystem. The proclamation that "most of us will die" in the absence of concerted efforts to curtail carbon dioxide emissions adds a prophetic layer to the discourse.

- Discourse Practice: The author articulates a resolute perspective on the detrimental consequences of urban and rural pollution, particularly emphasizing the precarious implications for human health. The text delves into the potential risks associated with the application of pesticides on food crops, explicitly linking this practice to the development of Parkinson's disease. The robustness of the argument is substantiated through a meticulous incorporation of research findings, prominently featuring contributions from the esteemed University of Rochester and other pertinent scientific data.

Social Practice: Positioned within the societal context, the text adopts a prescriptive posture, urging immediate action to avert impending environmental catastrophe. The reader is cast in the role of a potential victim of pollution, intensifying the urgency underlying the call to action. Simultaneously, the text elevates scientists to the status of authoritative figures, framing them as purveyors of irrefutable evidence elucidating the hazards associated with pesticide use and pollution. The stylistic complexity of the text hints at a specific level of scientific literacy, potentially rendering it less accessible to a broader readership.

### 4. Discussion

The email between two adolescent girls from Finland and Algeria can improve intercultural understanding because it exemplifies both cultures' communication customs and cultural values. Kirsi discusses her own experiences and the geographic setting, climatic conditions, and notable characteristics of Finland. In the email, Kirsi expresses her wish to get

to know Amel and discover more about her culture and nation to foster understanding across cultural and geographic borders.

The terminology used to describe the characters Okonkwo and Unoka in the "Things Fall Apart" extract reveals the power dynamics and ideology of the society portrayed in the book. The text supports gender norms and societal expectations, but it might not greatly advance intercultural awareness because it does not consider intercultural communication practices.

By reflecting larger social norms around young people's internet use, the Times report on the subject helps improve intercultural understanding. The paper provides evidence that all teens frequently use the computer for gaming. Still, a small percentage of them use it for word processing or studying using statistical data and firsthand statements from teenagers. The use of computers by young people as a reflection of broader social practices can help people learn and become more conscious of various cultural practices and values.

The fourth section describes the evolution of communication technology and emphasizes its importance in overcoming obstacles and fostering progress. The book portrays an industrialized, capitalist society's ideals and values that prioritize efficiency and creativity. Its positive attitude toward the future suggests a strong faith in institutions, including families, corporations, and educational institutions. Suppose the language used in the book is examined using Fairclough's framework for critical discourse analysis. In that case, it presents a certain perspective that reflects the values and beliefs of the dominant culture.

According to the modified Popular Science article, pollution harms the environment and human health in urban and rural locations. The author asserts that pesticide use on food crops can cause Parkinson's disease and provides evidence for this claim in studies from the University of Rochester. The language utilized in the book conveys a sense of danger, urgency, and terror, casting the reader in the role of a possible polluting party and pressing for quick action. Using critical discourse analysis, we can see how these viewpoints are supported by language.

Following Baker's (2011) Model of Intercultural Awareness, the study's findings generally show that the investigated corpus demonstrates various degrees of cultural awareness. A link across cultural and geographic borders is made possible by the first text, an email interaction between two adolescent females. It is especially helpful in fostering intercultural understanding since it reflects both countries' individual communication styles and cultural

norms. The second text, an excerpt from "Things Fall Apart" provides insights into the society's culture and values depicted in the novel. However, it may not significantly enhance intercultural awareness, as it does not reflect intercultural communication practices. By reflecting broader social practices surrounding young people's computer use, the third text – a report on their use of computers – can help to improve intercultural awareness. The study backs up its assertions with evidence, giving it more credibility and fostering greater knowledge of other cultural customs and beliefs. The fourth text, which describes the development of communication technology, reflects the ideals and worldview of an industrialized, capitalist culture and might not immediately advance cross-cultural understanding. However, it can offer insightful perspectives on how various cultures view and value technology. The final piece, an article about pollution and its effects, positions the reader as a prospective victim of pollution and implies that immediate action is required by using language to evoke a sense of urgency, danger, and terror. While it may not immediately advance intercultural understanding, it draws attention to the significance of environmental challenges in all cultures and the necessity of international cooperation in tackling these issues.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the discussion highlights the importance of intercultural awareness in promoting understanding and respect for diverse cultural perspectives. The email exchange between teenage girls from Finland and Algeria, the excerpt from "Things Fall Apart" and the newspaper report on young people's computer use provide different examples of how language promotes intercultural understanding. However, Text 4 and Text 5 analysis using Fairclough's framework for critical discourse analysis reveals how language can also be used to reinforce dominant cultural values and beliefs. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the language used in different contexts and to analyze texts to understand the underlying messages and perspectives critically. Promoting intercultural understanding and empathy can ultimately contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious world.

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# Appendix

### Text 1

Dear Amel,

I've found **your** address on the Internet. I'm writing because I want to know more about you and your **country**. But I have to introduce myself first. §1

My name's Kirsi. Kirsi is a name which is quite common in Finland. I'm sixteen years old. Nearly everyone my age goes to school in Finland. Children can finish school when they are 16, but no one really wants to do so, because without any serious training, they can't get a good job. I want to become a journalist later. So I will have to study for six more years. §2

On weekdays, I generally get up very early in order to prepare **myself** for school, which is a little bit far from my home. I always go there by bus so as not to arrive late. I have classes from 8:30 to 12 in the morning and from 2 to 4 in the afternoon. I have lunch either at the school canteen or at a fast-food restaurant. I revise my lessons until about 10 in the evening. I rarely go out at the weekend because I prefer to relax at home listening to music or watching TV. §3

My family is a typical Finnish family: Mum and Dad and two children (my brother Jari and me). Jari's fourteen years old. My mother is a housewife and my father is an electrician. Our house is rather small. We **all** love animals. We have a dog and a parrot, but neither of them really belongs to me. Both of **them** are Jari's **pets**. I'm always happy to hear the parrot repeating my name every time I come back home from school. The dog is sometimes furious at the talkative parrot. §4

We live in Central Finland in a tiny village called Tikkakoski. Tikakkoski has only about 4,000 inhabitants, and we all know one another. Jyvaskyla is our nearest town. It's very nice. It isn't very big. It has only 63,000 people, but you know, we have about 7 million people in the whole **country**. §5

Finland is in the north of Europe, near the Arctic Circle. It's very famous for its saunas and lakes. Winter is terrible. It's always freezing. But summer is fairly cool. In summer, I like going to public gardens in order to listen to elderly people telling funny stories about the time when they were young. §6

Well, I guess that's all for now! Keep in touch!

Kirsi

xxx

*Finish culture & ...*

P.S Find my photo in attachment. Please, send me some information about Algeria.

### Text 2

Okonkwo was well-known throughout the nine villages. He was tall and huge. He had a very dark complexion, a wide nose and bushy eyebrows which gave him a fierce look. At the age of eighteen he won a wrestling match against Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the greatest wrestler of the time. He was called the Cat because his back never touched the earth. It is this man whom Okonkwo threw to the ground twenty years ago. His victory against Amalinze made him very famous in his village, Umuofia. In addition, Okonkwo was a very hard worker. During the planting season, he worked daily from cock-crow until the chickens went to roost. He became a wealthy farmer and one of the greatest men of his time. §1

Unoka was Okonkwo's father. He was a thin, handsome man with a gentle look. He was always in his *agbada*. In his day, he was lazy and improvident and was incapable of bringing food to his wife and children who were always hungry. He spent most of his time playing on his flute. Unoka was never happy when people talked about war. In fact, he was a coward and preferred to talk about music. §2

Okonkwo was different from his father. He was a man who liked action, so he was the first to take up arms in defence of his village. His courage against the British invaders won him a place among the heroes of his tribe. ... §3

(Adapted from *Things Fall Apart*)

Text 3

**THE TIMES**     SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th, 2004

This report presents details about computer use by a sample group of 60 young people. Everybody thinks that teenagers today know about computers and are familiar with using them. I decided to do a survey to find out if this was true. §1

I questioned sixty young people between 13 and 19 in order to know what they use the computer for. When I asked how many of them had computers, all the teenagers I chose said they **had** one at home. I asked them how much time they spent on their computer in a week, but my main interest in fact was in what they used their computers for. §2

All the people questioned said that they regularly **used** the computer to play games. Twenty-eight told me they did some **word-processing** at home, but not very much. Only 4 of the informants said that their computers helped them **with their studies**, while 16 of them told me they kept **addresses and telephone numbers on their computers** - or **used them as diaries**. Two of them said that they **used them as calculators**. When asked if they used computers to learn to programme them, only 6 people said they did. The graph gives the overall findings in detail. §3

Text 4

From **the time of primitive man**, humans have wanted to communicate through space. **Centuries ago**, men used drums to send and receive messages. In Ghana, for example, this means of communication is called 'talking drums'. §1

However, communication through drums and other means was not satisfactory over very long distances. Long-distance voice communication became possible only in **1876** when Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone. Twenty-three years later, Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi used Heinrich Hertz's discoveries about electromagnetic waves to invent another means of telecommunications. It was the 'wireless' telegraph, and it was the ancestor of the radio. It allowed communication between England and France in **1899**. §2

There was still a problem with long-distance voice communication via micro-wave radio transmission. The transmissions followed a straight line from tower to tower. So the system was impracticable over the sea. In **1945**, science fiction writer, Arthur C. Clarke, suggested a solution. He proposed a system of communications satellites in an orbit, 35,900 km above the equator. The satellites would circle the Earth in exactly 24 hours. §3

**Today**, it is possible to communicate internationally by satellite. The latest satellites can carry over 100,000 simultaneous conversations. By the year **2050**, electronic information technology will have transformed world business, schools and family life. §4

Adapted from *Hutchinson Encyclopaedia*

Text 5

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

Most of the energy we use today comes from the burning of fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas and coal. These fuels are non-renewable. Specialists predict that most of these sources of energy will run out during this century. If this really happens, what will power our cars, air planes, buses, and trains? What will provide electricity for our computers and factories?

Fossil fuels pose another problem. This problem is that of pollution, which threatens our environment and man's existence on Earth. If pollution goes on, we will soon wear masks both inside and outside home. Some of us will die of thirst because of the contamination of water sources.

So, what shall we do to solve the problem of energy shortage and pollution? The sun, the wind, the Earth and the sea can supply man with energy until the end of time. This energy is renewable and is safer than nuclear energy and cleaner than oil and coal. The World Energy Council has identified six energy sources, which can replace fossil fuels. What are these sources and which of them is the most practical?

## Abstract

The textbook is crucial for teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Algeria. This paper aims to explore the level of cultural awareness present in the first-year EFL textbook "At the Crossroads" (2005) through critical discourse analysis, using the frameworks of Fairclough (2003) and Baker (2011). The results indicate that the textbook does not effectively cultivate intercultural awareness among EFL learners. Consequently, there is a need to reconsider and reassess the linguistic content of the textbook to provide a more balanced cultural input for EFL learners.

## Keywords

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Cultural Awareness, EFL Textbook, Linguistic Discourse

**مستخلص**

يعتبر الكتاب المدرسي أداة مهمة لتعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في الجزائر. تهدف هذه الورقة إلى استكشاف مستوى الوعي الثقافي الموجود في كتاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للعام الأول "At the Crossroads" (2005) من خلال تحليل الخطاب النقدي ، باستخدام أطر Fairclough (2003) و (2011) Baker). تشير النتائج إلى أن الكتاب المدرسي لا ينمي بشكل فعال الوعي بين الثقافات بين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وبالتالي ، هناك حاجة لإعادة النظر وإعادة تقييم المحتوى اللغوي للكتاب المدرسي من أجل توفير مدخلات ثقافية أكثر توازناً لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

**كلمات مفتاحيّة**

تحليـل الخطـاب النقـدي (CDA) ، الوعـي الثقافـي ، كتـاب اللغـة الإنجليزيـة كلغـة أجنبيـة ، الخطـاب اللغـوي

Résumé

Le manuel est un outil crucial pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de l'anglais langue étrangère (EFL) en Algérie. Cet article vise à explorer le niveau de conscience interculturelle présent dans le manuel d'anglais langue étrangère de première année "At the Crossroads" (2005) à travers une analyse critique du discours, en utilisant les cadres de Fairclough (2003) et Baker (2011). Les résultats indiquent que le manuel ne cultive pas efficacement la conscience interculturelle chez les apprenants d'Anglais. Par conséquent, il est nécessaire de reconsidérer et de réévaluer le contenu linguistique du manuel afin de fournir un apport culturel plus équilibré aux apprenants algériens.

**Mots-clés**

Analyse Critique du Discours (CDA), Discours Linguistique, Manuel d'anglais, Sensibilisation Culturelle