



Saudi teachers' views on appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks: insights into TESOL teachers' management of global cultural flows and local realities in their teaching worlds

Submitted By

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Signature:

Dedicated with love to

My most beloved mother and father, and my family

(my wife and my children Lama and Mohammed).

*It is also dedicated to the memory of my brother, Saud Alfahadi, who
passed away in a very severe car accident during the 3rd year of my PhD
journey.*

Abstract

This study has been undertaken using an interpretive methodology in order to examine the socially constructed views of Saudi EFL teachers and their decision-making with regards to the appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools. The study also examines the factors affecting the teachers' views and how they apply their beliefs in their classrooms. In addition, the study will also examine if the Saudi EFL teachers have any concerns about what they have been through and examined and accordingly investigates how they address their pedagogical decision-making in the classroom. Moreover, this study is interested in looking at EFL teachers as local teachers teaching a global language.

In view of the exploratory nature of this study and its context-specificity, the naturalistic orientation of interpretive and social constructivism as an epistemological stance were selected. The research design employed a concurrent mixed methods design using an adapted version of Cresswell (1996). In this study, the participants were Saudi Arabian EFL teachers from one city in Saudi Arabia teaching in all of the three public education levels (primary, intermediate and secondary). The data collected were both qualitative (interviews and open-ended questionnaires) and quantitative (close-ended questionnaires). For the interviews, 14 male and female teachers equally interviewed, whereas for the questionnaires 280 male and female participated. The data collection of both data qualitative and quantitative occurred at the same time during my field journey in 2009 in Saudi Arabia. I used the SPSS descriptive statistics for the analysing the quantitative data and used exploratory content analysis for the qualitative data.

The study findings revealed that the Saudi EFL teachers were not satisfied with the cultural content currently promoted in the Textbooks as they inappropriately contradict the local cultural values. Thus, they believe that for a better cultural content, the textbooks should therefore include a mixture of different cultures that do not mismatch with the local. And as they are controlled by some educational and social factors, they are limited to practice what they think is appropriate to apply in the classroom, therefore, their decision-making in this regards to some extent are to be controlled. In addition, the findings of the current study revealed that the Saudi EFL teachers show their openness to other cultures based on their global position as local Saudis teaching a global language.

The conclusion of the study has some suggestion and implications to improve the cultural content of the EFL textbooks as well as implications for the EFL teachers in general and their practices and decision-making with regards to the textbook. Furthermore, the study proposed a model for the appropriate EFL textbooks for each educational level and can be applied locally in the Saudi context and globally for other similar context around the world.

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List of Abbreviations

ARAMCO	Saudi Arabian Oil Company
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
ICA	Intercultural Communicative Competence
L1	The Source Language (Local)
L2	The Target Language
LM	Pseudonym for the city where the study was conducted in Saudi Arabia
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
KSA	Saudi Arabia

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis reports on a study which explores Saudi teachers' views on appropriate cultural models for their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks. In doing so it is interested to shed light on how these reflect the ways in which they understand themselves as local educators in an increasingly globalised world and one in which English is increasingly occupying the view of a lingua franca (Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Dewey, 2007; House, 2003; Jenkins, 2006, 2007; Prodromou, 2008; Seidlhofer, 2004) but is also closely linked to the spread of the interests of certain powerful and influential political and economic global players, such as the UK and the USA (Crystal, 2003). The study is also interested to uncover the ways in which these views may lead to tensions and dilemmas for TESOL teachers in their working life and how this informs their in-class decision-making.

While it may be argued that globalization is not a new phenomenon, it is widely considered to have intensified in the twenty-first century in line with technological developments leading to the "dramatically and relentlessly increasing connections and communications among people regardless of nationality and geography" (Tobin, 1999: 60). Appadurai (1996) argues that globalization in the twenty-first century is distinguishable in particular by the spread of symbolic cultural flows as opposed to only material and political exchanges. These flows foster in people a growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant and new forms and ways of imagining their inter-relationship. (Appadurai, 1996; Giddens, 2000; Tomlinson, 1999; Steger, 2003).

The precise effects of globalization on localities and people have been the focus of considerable debate in the literature on globalization. While there are those who argue that this is leading to greater homogenization worldwide (Ritzer, 1993), to a view of globalization as posing a threat to local ways of life and as something to be resisted, others argue that it is a transformative process, contributing to greater

heterogeneity and to new social and cultural practices which result from the ways in which the local and global interpenetrate to develop what Robertson (1995) calls new glocal or hybrid understandings and practices. From this perspective, globalization is theorised as something which is not just imposed on people but is something that people draw upon to inform their thinking and decision-making. Thus, those who take a transformative stance with respect to the impact of globalization, argue that while the outcomes of globalization are unpredictable, at the local and individual level, global cultural flows can be understood to trigger a process of reflexivity. As Giddens argues, for example: "The reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those practices." (1990: 38). As a consequence, this has increased interest in understanding how people make decisions which reflect the growing complexity of the worlds in which they live.

Given the intimate relationship between English and globalization alluded to above, it is not surprising that in TESOL in recent years a considerable literature has evolved to consider how global cultural flows can be seen to impinge on pedagogy at all levels. Much of this has focused on debates about language policy with regard to language models and pedagogy; to the need to be aware of the neo-imperialist agendas associated with the growth and spread of English as a global medium of communication (Pennycook 1994, Philipson 1992, Block and Cameron 2002), and to concerns about the linguistic genocide of other languages in the wake of the continued spread of English as the dominant lingua franca, Skutnabb-Kangas (2009: 340) in this regard claimed that education "through the medium of a dominant language often transfers [...] children to the dominant group linguistically and culturally within one or two generations". She also added that Language education based on such dominance "violates the human rights to education" (ibid: 340). Moreover, another concern can be referred to the need to develop 'local' responses and resistance (Canagarajah, 1999) to address the colonising tendencies of English and the cultural practices of English speaking countries that are understood to permeate alongside the promotion of this language. This literature has, therefore primarily concerned itself with concerns

about the homogenising effects of the spread English, drawing upon the work of those who theorise globalization from this perspective mentioned above.

However, there are also those within TESOL who are engaged in debate as to how English is being transformed through globalization and with discussion of the implications of this with respect to how to develop curriculum which can best respond to the growth of English as a lingua franca and what sorts of language and cultural models are most suitable and appropriate for these purposes (see for example, Jenkins, 2003; Baker, 2009). Part of this debate has also been a reappraisal of EFL textbook design in terms of cultural and linguistic content (Gray, 2006). Recently, the issues surrounding the continued expansion of English within the context of cultural globalization has also led some to emphasise the importance of awareness-raising among teachers of the importance of how far what they do in class addresses the increasingly complex relationship between culture and English with reference to its widespread use as a medium of communication between people in a wide range of cultural settings worldwide. Thus according to Yakovchuk (2004: 29) for example “being trained in both a foreign and a native language and culture, (teachers) would, ideally, be able to raise their students’ global awareness while building up an appreciation of and respect for our native context at the same time” and as Nault (2006: 2) has commented:

It could be argued that English educators, if they hope their craft to remain relevant and up-to-date, must look afresh at how they teach both language and culture. In this respect, English teaching professionals need to rethink the answers to such questions as whose culture should be taught, what goals should guide culture teaching, and how culture-related course materials should be designed and selected.

Nevertheless, to date there have been few attempts to interrogate the impact of global cultural flows on TESOL teachers themselves and to seek to capture their own reflexive understandings of their positions as teachers situated within particular socio-cultural and institutional settings, but teaching a language intimately connected to the project of globalization in the 21st century.

The importance of teachers' views and seeking to understand these is well-documented in the literature. This is because they are seen as exerting an important influence on their in-class practice (Borg, 2003). More broadly, their views are increasingly seen as important for those who seek to implement curriculum and textbook reforms (see for example Wedell 2009 and Gray 2006). From this perspective, as increasingly curricula reforms are engaging with the growth of English as a lingua franca and implications for cultural models for the TESOL classrooms, an understanding of their views of these initiatives and how these translate into practice should be seen as important in any wider educational decision-making process (Moon, 2000; Richards, 1998; Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Smith, 1996; Trappes-Lomax & McGrath, 1999).

To sum up, as Singh and Doherty (2004) have observed, TESOL teachers find themselves situated at a global-local nexus and it seems likely that this will pose dilemmas for them in their daily teaching and may initiate a variety of different responses. Given the importance of teachers to what happens in the classroom, to , understanding their views and the relationship between these and their decision-making is an important way of understanding how globalization intersects with TESOL in the immediacy of the teaching world with important implications for pedagogy, both with regard to the enactment of and support of reforms. Textbooks are central to teachers work in many parts of the globe, they are a major, if not the major, teaching resource, possibly to be adopted wholesale but also to be censored and adapted by teachers in accordance with their views of what is suitable for their learners (Gray, 2000). They are also a major medium through which the reforms are passed on to teachers. As such, exploring teachers' views on the cultural models in their course books and their decision-making with respect to how they use these, is an important way to explore the ways in which they manage the global-local dilemmas they face as teachers of a language intimately connected with the spread of globalization worldwide.

1.2 Statement of the Problem and the Rationale

While issues raised by increasing globalization and the growth of English as a lingua franca can be seen to be impacting on teachers in all parts of the globe, the

study reported in this thesis focuses on the views of Saudi TESOL teachers working in public schools, at primary, intermediate and secondary levels. On the one hand this reflects my own interest as a Saudi national formerly working within a public school in Saudi Arabia. However, it is also a reflection of an interest to explore the views of teachers on cultural models for TESOL textbooks within a country which occupies a particularly complex place in global discourses, and in which local educational practices have been the focus of considerable attention and have recently been undergoing a series of reforms, especially with regard to cultural content.

In part, this reflects a recognition within Saudi Arabia of a need, as elsewhere, to develop an educational system which can help prepare its citizens for life in an increasingly globalised world requiring an educational system which is open to and responsive to learning about and from other countries. However, it is also the case that this has been prompted to some extent by events which have shone a spotlight on the Saudi educational system in the wider global community. The most notable of these is the September 11th 2001 attacks, after which it was claimed by the American authorities that 15 out of 19 of the perpetrators were Saudi nationals. This had two important consequences. Firstly, it led to much more open criticism of Muslim and Arab countries and their educational systems; accordingly, it was suggested that Islamic and Arabic materials and subjects should be reduced and reformed (Washington Times, 2003). Moreover some, like Susan Glasser, went beyond this to call for Islamic and Arabic subjects to be replaced with more English sources and values (Washington Post, 2003). Textbooks were singled out for special criticism as Karmani observes:

In June 2002, Congress (H. Con. Res. 432) concurred that some of the text books being used in Saudi educational curricula were fostering what it described as 'combination of intolerance, ignorance, anti-Semitic, anti-American, and anti-Western views' in ways that posed a danger to the stability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Middle East region, and global security' (Karmani, 2005: 262).

The second impact of these political events, and the growing Islamophobia that followed, seems to have been to generate a self-reflective stance in Saudi Arabia as

a whole. This was observed by Saudi Arabia's former ambassador to the United States, Prince Turki al Faisal, writing in *USA Today*. He asserted:

“Saudi Arabia is a nation undergoing dramatic self-examination. Every aspect of Saudi Arabia's society and culture is being openly debated. We have recognized that a comprehensive, modern and open educational system - with new and revised textbooks - is fundamental to the growth and prosperity of our country. A thoughtful revision of this system is necessary, and indeed well underway”.

With regard to EFL textbooks in particular, one response has been to modify the cultural content of the most recent textbook for public schools, *Say it in English* initially introduced into Intermediate level schools in 2003 and subsequently promoted at all stages of public school education. Whereas in the previous textbooks, English was largely taught with reference to local Saudi cultural models, in this textbook, there is a much greater presence of other, notably Western, cultural values. A particular feature of the new textbook is the adoption of characters with Arab names, and wearing Arab clothing but enacting Western cultural values. Such as, for example, a Saudi boy introducing his sister to another Saudi boy, something that is not an acceptable local cultural practice for Saudi people.

The ways in which cultural content has been represented in Saudi EFL textbooks can be seen as an interesting response by the Saudi educational authorities to wider global discourses and the self-reflective stance of a country seeking to position itself with regard to wider political and economic forces and to preserve local values and practices. Thus it seems that recent attention to cultural models in textbook reforms may be attributed to a range of complex factors. It seems likely that that these factors (both global and local) will themselves impact on the views and decision-making of those who use the materials, arguably, most importantly, the teachers. As McGrath (2006) has observed, teachers' views of textbooks are an important influence on how they use these and on how these are received by students. Moreover, their views are likely to be significant to the extent to which reforms initiated by educational authorities are enacted. In other words, teachers views on what are appropriate cultural models to be presented alongside English may well impact on how they engage with those presented in the textbooks and an

examination of these can serve as a way to understand how they negotiate their professional identity with respect to broader local and global discourses.

As a teacher who worked in an Intermediate school in Saudi Arabia from 2003-04, this reform is one that I observed to receive a mixed reception among Saudi teachers and which provoked considerable debate. Given that many Saudi's, especially men, travel outside of Saudi Arabia, some teachers' views are likely to be informed by their own personal encounters with other cultures. These may be positive, but given the way in which Saudi and Islamic culture is presented in the media, it is also possible that they may hold negative attitudes. The military presence of several western powers in several countries in recent times may also be important in shaping their views. It also seems likely that teachers will be influenced by local media and the views and attitudes of the wider public and be mindful of these in forming their views of culture and its place in the foreign language classroom. Being a country in which religious values are seen as integral to cultural practices these are also likely to inform teachers' views. The hostile way in which these are assumed to be presented in western media is often alluded to by prominent Saudi's, such as Nourah El-Khereiji (2005) who, writing in the *Arab News* newspaper observed: "Islam has been wrongly used as a synonym for terrorism, and most Westerners consider Muslims terrorists". These views may well influence teachers, perspectives.

In reality, however, as is clearly evidenced from the events that started at the beginning of 2011 which are collectively described as the Arab Spring, there are a number of different and competing views in Middle Eastern countries reflecting the complex ways in which these countries are grappling with global and local discourses. Thus, as was evident among the demonstrators on the streets of cities in Egypt, there were a host of different views and demands. The tensions can be seen to reflect how the Arab world sees itself, as it is considered to have both Arabic and Islamic values but also to share with the global world an identity call for democracy, modernity, development and different interests to ideally make the world one village. These debates can be seen to play out in the microcosm of the EFL classroom in Saudi Arabia. For foreign language teachers in Saudi Arabia, the

EFL classroom is a place where these kinds of cultural tensions show themselves very clearly. Moreover, they have to make decisions and think about what is the best way to proceed to achieve cultural models which are appropriate for their own textbooks.

My interest in exploring Saudi teachers' views of the cultural content in EFL textbooks, led me to undertake a small-scale inquiry into this for my Master's dissertation completed in 2006. (Alfahadi, 2006). This suggested that while teachers agreed that political events and Islamophobic discourses did impact on them as foreign language teaching professionals, this did not necessarily lead them to believe that it was inappropriate to introduce western target cultural values, traditions and beliefs into their course books or their teaching. Rather for some it urged them to argue for a more multicultural model and a greater focus on intercultural awareness raising. The results also suggested, however, that many teachers felt themselves to be facing what might be seen an ethical dilemma. These results have prompted me to examine this issue in more depth; to gain a more detailed analysis of their perspectives and to also consider the relationship between these and their in-class decision-making. Undertaking this preliminary study also raised my awareness of how these teachers were pivotal in enacting the reforms and also, given this, of the importance of providing a platform for their voices in a context in which they are rarely consulted on the decisions made within the educational system. It is therefore hoped that the results of the study reported in this thesis can not only shed light on the ways in which TESOL professionals position themselves with regard to local and global discourses to generate their views on cultural models for the EFL classroom but also to consider how these can provide valuable insights into the extent and ways in which these cultural reforms are likely to be successful that can be drawn upon to inform and evaluate the EFL curriculum and textbook reform process in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 Aims of the Study

This study has been undertaken using an interpretive mixed methods methodology in order to examine the socially constructed views of Saudi EFL teachers and their decision-making with regards to the appropriate cultural

models for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools. The study will also examine the factors affecting teachers' views and how they apply these in their decision-making in their classrooms.

Therefore, this study aims:

- To examine Saudi teachers' views about current cultural models presented for the EFL classroom in the Saudi public schools.
- To examine their views of the most appropriate cultural model to be presented for the Saudi EFL textbooks.
- To identify factors impacting on teachers' views
- To explore the ways in which these factors may inform their pedagogical decision-making.
- To consider the implications of the findings with respect to insights into the ways in which TESOL teachers position themselves as local educators in an increasingly globalized world and how these understandings might usefully inform wider educational decision-making and reform.

1.4 Significance of the Study

An important significance of this study lies in its contribution to better understanding how TESOL practitioners live with, and develop responses to, certain global forces. In other words, it contributes to the still limited knowledge of the different ways in which language teachers negotiate and manage their understanding of global forces, such as the spread of western cultural values via the growth of English as an international language. In light of the current ways in which Muslims are viewed in global discourses, and the negative coverage that Saudi Arabia often attracts, research into Saudi Arabian teachers in particular can provide important and interesting insights with regard to TESOL teachers' views in a region that is still relatively under-researched and from which the views of teachers are under-represented in the TESOL literature. It will provide information on how teachers reconcile potential contradictions and tensions in their position as teachers of a language associated with those who may be seen to be most critical of Saudi religious and cultural traditions and those who have a significant political and military presence in the Middle East region.

In this thesis, an examination of cultural models employed in textbooks serves as a focus for examining teachers perspectives on the global-local nexus which the thesis is interested to explore. However, it can also make a contribution to a still very limited body of research which has sought to examine textbook content from this perspective. In the context of Saudi Arabia, such a focus is particularly topical given the recent reforms of the cultural content of EFL textbooks. As such a further significance of this study is to seek out the voices of teachers on these reforms in the belief that they can generate new insights which can contribute to new understandings of the enactment of the reform and which can be used by policy makers to critically evaluate its success and to suggest new directions this might take. In other words, one potential significance of this study is how it can deepen understanding by revealing the viewpoints of a group which is not normally heard and which does not normally have a place in decision-making in Saudi Arabia.

1.5 Overview of the Thesis

This study includes seven chapters in which the material comprising the thesis is developed and the research questions answered. Following on from this first chapter where I have provided a rationale for the study and its aims and objectives, in the next chapter, Chapter 2, I go on to consider relevant background information regarding the Saudi context where the study is based and from where the data were collected. In Chapter 3 the literature relevant to the study is reviewed, and key concepts articulated and the conceptual framework laid out. Next, Chapter 4 discusses the methodology of the study, the data collection and procedures. In the subsequent chapter, chapter 5, the data findings are presented. Following on from this, in Chapter 6 the results of the study are discussed and finally the study is concluded through a consideration of the implications, contribution to knowledge, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

The Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the aim is to present background information regarding the context of this study. The chapter starts by considering Saudi Arabia, from an historical, geographical, economic and cultural perspective. This is followed by an overview of the educational system in Saudi Arabia, and details of EFL in the Saudi public school system, including the goals and objectives of English language teaching and the reforms undertaken in 2003. A particular focus will be placed on a discussion of the EFL textbooks and how these were modified in line with these reforms. The chapter will close by presenting a profile of EFL public school teachers in Saudi Arabia and the importance of their views on the cultural models in their textbooks will be outlined.

2.2 Saudi Arabia: an overview

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) was established in 1932 by King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al-Saud in the central part of the Arabian Peninsula. The country has since been ruled continuously by the Royal family of Al-Saud, mainly by the sons of King Abdulaziz. The country is the largest in the Arabian Peninsula and one of the largest countries in the continent of Asia. Saudi Arabia lies in a very important location at the point where Asia and Africa meet, and covers most of the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, it has the Red Sea along the western coast of the country, and the Arabian Gulf borders the Eastern cost from north to south, comprising about 2,000,000 square kilometres (Saudi Arabia Information Resources, n.d.). The land borders comprise Jordan on the north and Iraq to the northeast; the Arabian Gulf, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates lie to the east, Oman to the southeast; and Yemen to the south. The capital city, Riyadh, is located in the middle of the country, and the main cities of the country are the two Holy Islamic cities; Makah and Medina in the western region (Hijaz), along with the Jeddah, the

second largest city, that is economically important on the western coast by the Red Sea. Dammam is also another important city, in the east by the Arabian Gulf.

The population of Saudi Arabia is more than 27 million. Among this number, more than 18 million Saudi citizens all share both the Arabic language and Islam as their only religion. The remaining eight and a half million comprises foreign expatriate workers drawn from a wide range of different nationalities and with differing linguistic and cultural practices. The Kingdom is seen as the heartland of Islam because of the two holy Islamic cities, Makah and Medina, where more than two million pilgrims from all over the world come to perform pilgrimage every year. Islam and the Holy Islamic place give Saudi Arabia an importance in the region and also in the world.

The figures 2.1 and 2.2 below shows a map of the country followed by the Saudi official flag which reflects the significance of Islam as it says in Arabic: No God Except Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet.



Figure 2.1: Map of Saudi Arabia

Source: (Saudi-US Relations Information Service, 2009)



Figure 2.2: Flag of Saudi Arabia

2.2.1 The discovery of oil

The Kingdom is classed as a developing country, both among other countries in the surrounding societies and around the world. The discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia during the last century in 1933, and also after the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) of which Saudi Arabia is a key member imposed oil embargo in 1973, have changed Saudi Arabia, along with other states of the Arabian Gulf region, from poor countries to developing countries (Karmani, 2010). Accordingly, the vast developments that have occurred in health, education and living standards have been made possible by a steadily increasing oil price with the price of oil increasing by 300% since the 1970s (Hourani, 1991). In fact, oil and its by-products continue to be responsible for more than 90% of the Saudi national income today (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in the UK, 2011). According to the *Saudi Gazette* (2011), a Saudi newspaper published in English, “Now the country has more than a quarter of the world’s total proven reserves, over 264 billion barrels, and is also the largest producer and exporter on the planet”. In addition to its role and importance in the Arabic and Islamic world, Saudi Arabia has gained importance in the field of international relations and diplomacy as one of the most important countries in oil market.

2.2.2 Sociocultural norms and values in Saudi Arabia

Although there are some minor regional variations in cultural practices among Saudis from different regions, such as between for example the Hijazi people in Jeddah and Mecca, and the Najdi people in Riyadh and Al-Kharj, the Saudi culture is by and large very uniform and applies to Saudis across the country, irrespective of where they live. This is because, as explained above, the Saudi people all share the Arabic language and Islam as their religion. In a multicultural country, like the UK or the USA, it is increasingly difficult to talk of a single culture as there are so many different people practicing different ideas and values but this is not the case in Saudi Arabia. In other words, despite the large number of expatriate workers in the country, strict control is exerted over the practice of other than Islamic and Saudi practices and these are only allowed to be practiced in compounds where the majority of expatriate workers live. Thus, Saudi Arabia works hard to preserve the *status quo* where sociocultural norms are concerned, an approach in part attributable to the important role of the Islamic values and regulations along with the Saudi local traditions. Particularly significant is the family unit and the importance of retaining strong links between family members, rooted in a clear hierarchy of respect for elders. This paternalistic model is one that pervades society and is closely linked to the significance of Islam as a social religion, which will be discussed below.

2.2.3 Islam in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's customs and law are rooted and based on Islamic values and the Sharia Law set by Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) more than fourteen centuries ago (Al-Johani, 2009). Islam and Islamic rules and regulations are believed to be universally applicable, irrespective of time and place. Moreover, Islamic values contain not only religious practices, but also extend to social life and culture. As Ayubi (1994: 35) maintains "Islam is indeed very much a social religion, seeking to organize the practice of social life, and above all the minute details of family life".

Generally speaking, in both Saudi Arabia and other neighbouring Arab and Muslim countries, religious people are deeply appreciated and regarded as noble, sincere,

honest, and merciful, always well behaved and trustworthy. This observation is made with regard to the researcher's own background as a Saudi following the Sunni way of Islam, in common with the majority of the population and the ruling Royal family. This is explained, for example by the fact that the first man next to the King in their formal meetings is the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, the head of the Sharia law committee. This is because when the country was established, King Abdulaziz and the Saudis swore allegiance to the Sharia law as the main source of the country's laws and policies.

The religious people in Saudi mostly try to follow as best they can the prophet Mohammed's (peace be upon him) commands and recommendations; some of the commands that are clearly apparent are for males not to shave their beards and letting them grow freely, and for both men and women to adopt a modest form of dress. In Islam, it is clear that men and women are to be different in the way they dress as for women they must wear Hijab and wear some clothes that cover their bodies from head to toes. For Saudi Arabia specifically, women must wear Abaya which is coloured black and also wear the veil that cover their faces, although, in some parts of Saudi women wear the Hijab instead of the veil, but in most places it is the veil. Besides, there are other commands from the Prophet to Muslims concerning good behaviour, such as truthfulness, that a good Muslim must follow. Accordingly, religious people are the best-behaved and most moral people in society. Any misbehaviour on the part of a religious man would be regarded as highly irregular. In addition, men and women are to be segregated in education and in most fields of social activities in the country. Therefore, as will be discussed later in chapter 4, it is difficult for a male researcher such as myself to meet a woman in Saudi Arabia, and this had to be taken into consideration when collecting data from female participants.

As regards terrorism and its links to Islam and Islamophobia, groups like 'Al-Qaeda' in the 1980s and other extremists misbehave and misuse Islam under the pretext of being good Muslims, as mentioned above (Prince Turki Alfaisal, 2011). This is actually a very intelligent way to trick people with false appearances, and to work on their hidden agendas using this cover. Although such groups are luckily

rare some people react negatively towards faithful Muslims and fear religious people in case they are 'bad guys', resulting in a perceived threat and caution towards any person of Islamic appearance until they are known personally. This kind of awareness has spread globally and causes many problems to Muslims in general, as attitudes towards a minority have become applied to a whole society. In fact, it has bearing on the way Saudi Arabian people orientate themselves towards globalization and the way the country is viewed globally around the world which I will discuss further below.

2.2.4 Globalization and the Arab world

In the Arab world and in Saudi Arabia in particular the phenomenon of globalization invokes mixed responses. On the one hand, one viewpoint that is expressed is as Abuelma'atti (2005) argues that globalization may be seen from an economic angle as something promoted by Western governments concerned with profits, leading to the promotion and spread of certain cultural and political agendas to best serve their economic objectives and interests. This leads in some quarters to a hostile view of globalization seen as a threat to local norms and values and to a desire to protect these from the language and cultural practices of powerful countries as Amiin (1999) maintains. Additionally, it is believed that mismatches and conflicts will be created within the culture that will, in the end, increase the gap between rich and poor elements of society as well as increase a differential between 'inferior and superior nations' (ATAamish, 1999; Peter Martin & Schumann 1998).

On the other hand, however, there are those within the Arab world who view globalization more positively. Thus for example, Najjar (2005) and Mahfuz (2000) have pointed to the ways in which globalization allows for greater contact with other people and nations and the opportunity to exchange knowledge, technology, science and any other sources of social development that will improve individuals and countries in the Middle East as a whole. These debates are ones that are also evident in Saudi Arabia but remain unresolved. To sum up, Saudi Arabia occupies an important place in the world economically, and there is increasing contact between other nations and Saudi people both within and outside the Kingdom.

Indeed, Saudi Arabia sends large numbers of students overseas to study each year (there are currently more than 120,000 students studying overseas). Nevertheless, it is also the case that Saudi Arabia is keen to preserve local customs and traditions and seems to be ambivalent regarding its engagement with other value systems. This can be evidenced in the way English, linked as it is to globalization, is perceived in the country as I will discuss below.

2.3 The status and Use of English in Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, the official language is Arabic and 100% of the population are Muslims, therefore Arabic is used everywhere in the country and in the government and public sectors. However, English is widely used in business, industry, healthcare and many other different fields, especially when communicating with non-Arabic speakers (Habbash, 2011). English is also considered by the Saudi government as the medium of diplomatic relations and also for importing new technology to the country. Its status is also a reflection of the particular strength of the trading relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States and Britain, especially regarding armaments and education. In addition, the Saudi commitment to the World Trade Organization in 2005 has further increased the importance of English. The language, therefore, has a very important role among Saudis as the aim of teaching it is to enable Saudi students to communicate with other nations in English and to learn it as a foreign language. Saudis, therefore, feel that they need to communicate with different countries and to promote contacts with the international community; as a result the English language was language used for this purpose.

The result of this is that, as in other countries, the English language is now seen by many people in Saudi Arabia as an important key to helping achieve development targets set by the government. For example, English is seen as necessary to enable people to communicate with the large imported workforce brought in to help meet development plans. The common language of communication here is English. It is also seen as important to facilitate communication between other non-Arabic speaking Muslims attending religious festivals in the country such as during the

Hajj (pilgrimage) period when Muslims visit the two Holy Mosques in Mecca and Medina from different parts of the world.

In addition, employers are seeking job applicants whose English is at a level which meets their needs. In many cases in order to obtain and succeed in a good job an employee needs at least minimum English language skills to compete and to make career progress. Accordingly, it is doubtless that Saudis in general acknowledge the importance of English in their lives, both inside the country and outside, and also for their own children's future.

To sum up, the reason for the continuing significance attached to English may be seen to largely reflect the importance of English as a global language of trade and economics in general. However, while on the one hand Saudi Arabia is a global player and seeks to gain from its contact with the outside world via English, it is also keen to preserve its cultural and religious practices. It might also see itself as having a duty to uphold these due to its status as the centre of Islam. However, this can create a tension for Saudi people when viewing English with respect to the desire to preserve cultural and religious practices alongside embracing a language highly valued for global communication. This tension can be seen reflected in the attitudes towards the learning of this language and may account for on-going debates about the role it should occupy in society.

One widely voiced concern is whether learning this language will lead Saudis to develop negative views of their own culture; views which are seen by the west as a positive way of encouraging learning and exchanging knowledge with other nations. In addition, many Saudi's are aware of criticism by the western media and negative stereotyping of Arabs leads to some Saudis to profess a hatred of the west. Such negative stereotyping can be clearly seen in the picture given of Saudi society in the Hollywood movie "The Kingdom", which shows the Saudi streets as a dangerous jungle for western people. No one can walk there without a guard. Similarly, many other movies produced in Hollywood also show Arabs or Muslims as evil or dangerous. Although many Saudis believe this to be the view of the film's director or producer, not the view of western society as a whole, this can create a

negative impression of English among some young people. In addition, as a result of a suspicion of the west, some parents may discourage their children from learning English, or at least put less emphasis on it as a subject simply to be passed in an examination, and may react against attempts to promote western values in the course books. Parental perspectives on English as a school subject and the cultural values associated with this are also likely to exert an important influence on teachers and the decisions they make regarding the ways they approach textbook content; this will be discussed further in 2.6.1 below. For school children, negative attitudes at home can contribute to students holding negative attitudes towards learning in school and this may be an important contributing factor in the poor achievement of students in English in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, most young people leave secondary school with a lower than expected standard of English as the following extract from the *EFL Gazette* reported in 2005 that:

A recent survey conducted by Saudi Arabian newspaper Al-Jazirah has shown that 87 percent of Saudi students are leaving high school without the English proficiency expected from the public educational system. (Hannah, 2006).

2.4 The Educational Setting

2.4.1 Background to the education system in Saudi Arabia

Great attention is attached to education in Islam and the first verse of the Holy Quran introduced to the Prophet: "Read, in the name of Thy Lord and Cherisher Who created. Who taught the use of the pen" (The Holy Quran, Sura xvi Verse 1). Moreover the Quran stresses there are obligations for Muslims to learn all the knowledge that mankind needs, and to learn different languages and different sources of information which may improve and develop the social community all over the world. Quran affirmed that god created mankind with different colours, origins and languages in order to recognize each other. It is perhaps not surprising that in when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932, education was already highly valued. At that time, however, religious education was the only type of education in existence reflecting the fact that the education system was strongly influenced by Islam.

At that time the Holy Qur'an was taught in Mosques, and only to male students (Al-Johani, 2009). However, in addition to this, families used to teach their children at home with basic knowledge, mainly traditional customs and behaviour. By 1926 (at the early stages of uniting the whole country) a formal education system had started in cooperation with nearby countries such as Egypt, and King Abdulaziz oversaw the creation of a Directorate of General Education with responsibility for formal education in the country (Al-Johani, 2009). This led to the country to moving forward and has led to the constant efforts since this time to provide expand and increase educational opportunities in the interest of helping Saudi citizens partake in the building of their country and learning from other nations' knowledge and experience (Albahiri, 2010).

The need and demand for an increased number of schools in Saudi developed after the discovery of oil in 1938 (Al-Baadi, 1988). This demand spread all over the country and created a need for native Saudi teachers. Therefore, the government realised that the country should have a Ministry of Education to deal with all educational matters, mainly teacher training. Since then, there has been a remarkable growth on the number of schools of all stages, not only in the general levels but also covering higher education for both boys and girls. Most of the main cities and regions in the country have either a university or a college, whereas relatively recently, in the 1990s, there were only seven universities in the whole country.

Girls' education traditionally took place at home (Hamdan, 2005) but gradually schools for girls started to open and the numbers grew rapidly. While during the 1960s according to Al Mohsen (2000) there were only 15 official girls schools in the country , by the 1970s this number jumped to reach 155 and by 1981 the number of girls enrolled in schools was almost equal to the number of boys (Hamdan, 2005). In addition, the first girls' college was established in 1970 in Riyadh and admitted those with secondary level schooling and by the 1980s, approximately 10 similar colleges with the same requirements had opened. (Hamdan, *ibid*: 50). Since that time, female education has grown substantially and women now have access to many majors at university level.

When girls schooling was first introduced the administration of this was controlled by the Directorate General of Girls' Education, an organisation staffed by conservative religious scholars 2002. (Hamdan, *ibid*: 50) whereas boys education was under the control of the Ministry of Education. This led to male and female students following different curriculum. However, since 2003 the Ministry of Education has unified the curriculum in most of the subjects (Al-Johani, 2009), with the exception of physical education, which is taught only to boys, being replaced for girls with home economics.

2.4.2 The education system in Saudi Arabia

As indicated in (2.2.3) above, Saudi Arabia is an Islamic state where the Sharia (Islamic holy law) serves as both constitution and legal framework. The educational system can be seen to reflect this in two main ways: in the way formal education is organized and in the stated general aims of formal education (Al-Mandeel, 1999). In relation to the structure and organization of education, it is the Ministry of Education that administers public and private schools' affairs nationwide. The Directorate of Curricula is the department in the Ministry whose job it is to carry out the process of curriculum design and development. The Ministry supervises both the Directorate of Education for boys and also the Directorate of Education for girls. The genders have to be separated as Saudi religious and cultural tradition dictates. As explained above, in the past, this led to materials and text books being differentiated according to gender. But in the newly reformed text books there is no difference, although male and female students continue to be taught separately.

With regard to the aims of education, in 1980 the Higher Committee for Educational Policy issued a document, stipulating in its 28th Article that the governing principles of education are to have the students understand Islam in a correct and comprehensive manner, to plant and spread the Islamic creed, and to furnish students with the values of the teachings and ideas of Islam. In addition, it should equip students with the skills and knowledge to develop their conduct in constructive directions. It should also develop society economically, socially and

culturally, and prepare the individual to become a useful member in the building of his community (Ministry of Education, 2007).

The current education system for boys and girls comprises the following: primary schooling lasting for 6 years (from 6 to 11 years old), the intermediate level lasting for three years (from 12 to 14) and the secondary for 3 years (from 15 to 17). Education in Saudi Arabia is not yet compulsory and the government is still making efforts to encourage people to go to school. While only a very small minority do not attend school, a more significant number leave part way through their schooling.

2.5 The Place of English in the Educational Curriculum

2.5.1 EFL in Saudi public schools

According to the policy of Saudi Arabia, English is considered a foreign language. It is used as a medium of instruction and communication in some of the big companies such as the Saudi Aramco oil company, and also in some other companies and hospitals. Therefore, it is also the medium of instruction at university level in some majors like medicine, engineering and, recently, business. As Habbash (2011) observes, colleges in the majority of universities in Saudi Arabia are changing their medium of instruction from Arabic to English, thus increasing the importance of English (Habbash, 2011). English is therefore an important subject in the Saudi public school curriculum, although in practice the Ministry of Education minimises the importance of the subject by allowing students to pass English with low marks compared with other subjects, like maths and science, and to progress to the next level if they fail English, as long as they pass the other subjects.

The place of English in the curriculum

English has enjoyed an important status in the educational curriculum as a compulsory subject since its first introduction in 1925. when Saudi Arabia first introduced both English and French to its educational curriculum, mainly in secondary schools (Al-Abdulkader, 1978). Following this, English was introduced

to public intermediate schools (grades 7-9) in 1958 for boys. However; for girls, as stated earlier, formal education started as late as the 1960s (Hammad, 1973). However, while English has continued to be part of the secondary and intermediate curriculum since then, French was removed in 1969.

The continued importance of English to the country has in recent years led to English being given an ever higher status within the Saudi education system. For example, in 2004 the government extended English instruction by introducing it into grade 6, the last year of primary school, for the first time. It has also steadily increased its status in higher education, as well as being made compulsory for all students for a part of their study time. In some faculties it has become a medium of instruction. In addition, English has also come to occupy a prominent position in the curriculum of the ever-increasing numbers of private schools. In these schools, English is typically introduced from the early stages of primary schooling, and in some schools it is also the medium of instruction for many areas of the curriculum.

The teaching of EFL in Saudi public schools

In recent years the Saudi Ministry of Education has striven hard to reassess its policy of teaching English language in the Kingdom. To do this, in 2003 the Ministry expended great efforts to improve the nature of the English language curriculum. However, for the reason that Saudi Arabia is the centre of Islam, where millions of Muslim people target their directions five times a day for the Holy Mosque there, and because of the conservative Arabic culture of the Saudi people, the teaching of English always poses problems, especially when dealing with cultural issues, since cultural behaviour must not contradict Islamic values or beliefs and Islamic principles must be practiced everywhere in the country.

Since 2010 English language as a compulsory subject has been introduced still earlier, in year 4 of primary level. However, because the research was conducted and the data collected in 2009, this study will focus on the teachers' views with regard to the teaching of English in public schools as they were in 2009 (the sixth grade of primary, intermediate and secondary schooling), excluding years 4 and 5. There are four English language lessons a week at both intermediate and

secondary levels. There are, however, only two lessons of 45 minutes each for the sixth grade at elementary level. Each academic year is divided into two terms of between 15 and 17 weeks. On average, each classroom has 25 to 35 students.

Principles underpinning the importance of English and its teaching in schools:

With the rapid increase in the level of science, technology and economics in Saudi Arabia, the government realised that there was a need to consider the means of communication between Saudi society and the international community. Thus, this has led to an emphasis on the importance of teaching the English language. The Ministry of Education set seven principles regarding the teaching of English as a subject in Saudi schools. Some of these were set by educationists in the field but referred to the Ministry as a source:

- 1) English is the language mostly widely used in travel around the world and it is the most broadly used in mass media.
- 2) Since Saudi Arabia has established diplomatic relations with the western world, English must become the most important foreign language taught in all government schools. Therefore, a number of Saudi students are expected to hold positions that require them to deal with English-speaking people; in this case they need good instruction in English so that they can understand the other part whatever materials are required in their professional development.
- 3) English is acknowledged as the leading language of science, technology, education and politics, as well as business and commerce.
- 4) References, scientific researches and technological terms are written in English, so English should be taught to our students in order to for them to comprehend what they read.
- 5) Understanding the culture and thinking of other peoples require us to understand the language which reflects their thoughts and ideas. Al-Kamookh (1981: 3-4)
- 6) Developing language ability in various ways that can add to strength of Arabic language and help in deriving enjoyment from it and in sensing the aesthetic aspects of its style and ideas.

- 7) Teaching the students at least another living language beside their own native one in order to allow them to enrich themselves with science, cultural affairs, arts and useful creative things and working on the conveyance of our science and intellectual achievements to their societies, thus contributing to the spread of Islam and the service of humanity. Al-Zaid (1982: 11).

As can be seen from these goals, the importance and power of English language in the world has led the Saudi government to adapt their system and goals of teaching English in order to participate with other nations in seeking the best outcomes from education.

Objectives of teaching English language in Saudi Arabian public schools (primary, intermediate and secondary)

The current stated general objectives of teaching English Language in Saudi Arabia, taken from the current English textbook, *Say It In English*, are listed below. In essence, these have remained unchanged over several decades. Students should be able to:

- 1-Develop their intellectual, personal and professional abilities.
- 2-Acquire basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in order to communicate with speakers of the English Language.
- 3-Acquire the linguistic competence necessary to various life situations.
- 4- Acquire the linguistic competence required in different professions.
- 5-Develop their awareness of the importance of English as a means of international communication.
- 6-Develop positive attitudes towards learning English.
- 7-Develop the linguistic competence that enables them to be aware of cultural, economical and social issues in their society, in order to contribute towards solutions.
- 8-Develop the linguistic competence that will enable them in the future to present and explain Islamic concepts and issues and participate in spreading Islam.
- 9-Develop the linguistic competence that will enable them in the future to present the culture and civilization of their nation.

10-Benefit from English-speaking nations, in order to enhance the concepts of international cooperation that develop understanding and respect of cultural differences among nations.

11-Acquire the linguistic bases that enable them to participate in transferring the scientific and technological advances of other nations to their nation.

12-Acquire the linguistic bases that enable them to present and explain Islamic concepts and issues, and participate in the dissemination of them. Cited in the current EFL textbook (Say it in English, 2006: VI).

As we can see from the above, the main objective of teaching English language in Saudi public schools is to appreciate the importance of English language as an international language of communication. Thereby, it can be seen as a means for Saudis to introduce Islam, the Islamic nations' culture and the cultural achievements of Muslims and Saudis to other nations. It also seeks to benefit from the achievements of other cultures, in accordance with Islam (Ministry of Education, 2006).

2.5.2 Saudi public school EFL textbooks: cultural models employed

This study is concerned with the cultural models for the current EFL textbooks in the Saudi public schools, published in 2003, but it is relevant to consider briefly the cultural content of the previous textbook which it has replaced. According to Al-Quarishi, Watson, Hafseth, and Hickman (1999), the cultural content of this earlier book was largely rooted in the local culture. In addition, in his comments about the textbook, Hinkel (1999: 205, cited from Turkan, 2007: 20) asserted "When the textbook characters greet one another, talk about professions, make Arabian coffee, or talk about going on a pilgrimage to Mecca, they are predominantly Saudi Arabians performing culturally-familiar activities in their own country with their own citizens (in English)." Turkan's own view is that this way of teaching the language with only one source of culture was problematic as, as it was mainly based on local culture, it "seems unlikely that students would be able to learn about the target culture, unless teachers and students reflect on the nature of culture, and actually contrast or compare the cultural aspects likely to be held in

common between the native and target cultures (2007: 20-21). This is in part what led to the reform of the current EFL textbook.

Currently the textbook series *Say it in English*, is in use in all Saudi public schools. These textbooks were reformed in 2003, starting from the first grade of intermediate school then subsequently reformed grade by grade. It is now based on integrating the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) to cover all language functions and achieve the goal of teaching English for communicative purposes. The series is written and prepared by a group of ELT specialists under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The textbooks are generally based on language functions, in which grammar is carefully controlled. As an example of the new reformed textbook, there are 16 units in the first intermediate grade textbook, and each unit is divided into four 45-minute lessons. Four weeks of the course are set aside for revision. In both intermediate and secondary levels, *Say it in English* used in all grades. In the sixth grade of elementary school, students learn the basics of the English language that will form the foundation for its mastery in the future. The textbook comes with its own work book as one set; a sample unit from the course book and a copy of the contents are in (Appendix: 1).

There has been some debate around the cultural models that should best accompany English in the textbook. In accordance with the objectives mentioned above, although the Western culture model had been promoted to a limited extent in the previous textbook, the local Islamic culture has traditionally been the dominant model promoted in ELT materials in Saudi public schools, demonstrating how Islam and Islamic values form the main part of Saudi culture. However, recently, there has been a shift in the textbooks as part of a process of reform. There is some evidence of increased reference to target language culture and other non-target language cultures but what distinguishes this textbook from the former one is an attempt to integrate local culture with target culture through the introduction of local people enacting western values. For example, in the first intermediate textbook a Saudi boy shows his mother's and sister's photograph to his friend, which is contrary to the local cultural values. This action can be seen as the promotion of a western value, as in Saudi Arabia such an introduction would

contravene local customs. Also, in another example, there is a dialogue between two girls which forms the basis for a role play to be undertaken by both girls and boys in their respective classrooms. In my experience that is regarded negatively by most boys who are unhappy having female Saudi students as a model for their language work. This promotion can be seen as a new way of Saudis enacting western values (see Appendix: 2).

2.5.2.1 Reasons for the reform of the EFL Textbooks in Saudi public schools

Due to the low achievements of Saudi students in English, therefore, there was a need to reform both the EFL textbooks and the curriculum in general. The methods of teaching English in Saudi public schools remain essentially focused on a mixture between a weak form of communicative language teaching and audiolingualism. In fact, the new reformed textbook showed some changes to improve its quality, however, the changes have not proved satisfactory, either to teachers or in terms of students outcomes (Elyas, 2008). With regards to the outcomes of English language teaching in Saudi Arabian public schools, there has been a considerable agreement among teachers, parents and stakeholders in the Ministry of Education that the level of English language proficiency of students leaving secondary school is very low and does not reach the goals set by the government. This of course shows that the six years of four lessons a week (before introducing English at elementary level) did not help to reach the goals. Unfortunately, most students go to university with very weak English and are hardly able to express themselves. A recent study concludes that students who entered at university level in Saudi always carry this weakness with them; when one of the main universities in Riyadh examined their students' English level, there was a 70% failure rate (Al-Toaimi 2011). In fact, this problem is not something new to Saudi; two major Saudi newspapers raised this issue in 1984. The daily newspaper *Okaz* raised the following questions:

- 1) What is the main cause of students' low achievement in English?
- 2) When and how do we improve English language acquisition/learning?
- 3) Are the course books suitable for the students?
- 4) Is the method of instruction one of the factors that led to the falling standards of achievement in English?

5) What are the solutions to the problem of students' low achievement in English? (May 1984: 6).

In addition, another Saudi newspaper, *Al-Riyadh*, also stated that “students' low achievements level in English is a big problem that needs a solution.” (April, 1984: 4). There is no answer to these questions yet; there have been some studies that considered some of these questions but few solutions were suggested, and most were not applied.

Another possible reason for this reform, as highlighted in chapter 1 above, is that after the 9/11 attacks in New York in 2001, the Saudi Arabian educational system in general was targeted for blame, mainly with regard to the Islamic emphasis in the curriculum which was singled out for criticism. Some American writers suggested that the Saudi Ministry of Education should implement change, and suggested replacing some of the Islamic and Arabic sources with English references (Karmani, 2010). As a result, Saudi Arabia was, arguably put under some pressure by the international community to undertake these reforms. As the following quote from a press conference undertaken by the Foreign Minister, Saud al Faisal, during a press conference with the US Secretary of State in the US suggests:

The education reforms in Saudi Arabia go beyond textbook rewriting. And they go into teacher training, directions ... and so the whole system of education is being transformed from top to bottom. Textbooks are only one of the steps that have been taken by Saudi Arabia. Cited in: Saudi-US-Relations Information Services (2006).

The cultural content in the recent textbooks can be seen to manifest the complex relationship between the local and global in Saudi Arabia to day as mentioned earlier posing a number of potential dilemmas for teachers which the study in this thesis is interested to explore. I will now provide some background information on these teachers in order to gain an understanding of how their own knowledge, qualifications and role may contribute to the ways in which they view and work with these textbooks.

2.6 A Profile of Saudi English Language Teachers in Public Schools in Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, especially after the discovery of oil, the number of schools increased tremendously. This led to a shortage of Saudi English language teachers, who teach mostly at school level but are rarely seen at university level which depends mostly on foreigners, either native or non-native speakers (Al-Mandeel, 1999). As elsewhere in the world, Saudi Arabia recognises the importance role that teachers play in the educational process. As Al-Juhani, notes for example with regard to the role of teachers in the education process in Saudi Arabia: "The most serious and important factor for the learning process is teachers as they play the main role and can contribute to the success or failure of the learning process". Others, like Al-Gaeed (1983), Arishi (1984) and Abu-Ras (2002) share a similar opinion of the role of the Saudi teacher in their classroom and the link between this and the proficiency of the students.

In Saudi Arabia, Saudi English language teachers train in a range of different courses and institutes. Some are graduates, mostly with a BA degree and a few with an MA. There are also specialist colleges of education offering teacher training courses in English language teaching within the Saudi school system. Qualified Saudi English language teachers have undertaken two types of programme. First is a four-year programme which offers a BA degree in English language teaching as a foreign language, which is offered by some Saudi universities and colleges in the schools of Education or Art. The second type of programme is offered by the Ministry of Education to teachers who have already been teaching in public schools; they can study for two years and get a diploma in teaching English.

However, The Ministry of Education's minimum qualification for Saudi English language teachers is a degree in English, but no experience or previous training is required (Elyas, 2008). Moreover, unfortunately, because of the small number of Saudis graduating in English, many teachers have studied English as a translation major, or studied English literature, and are accepted by the Ministry of Education as teachers due to shortage of numbers. This shortage has led the Ministry to recruit many qualified expatriate teachers from different countries, mostly Arabic speaking countries (Elyas, 2008).

To compensate for the lack of practical pre-service training outlined above, attempts have been made to provide regular, short, one- to fourteen-day in-service training courses for teachers throughout the year; the aim is to help address the English curriculum requirements and course book reforms. However, in-service training remains very variable across the Kingdom.

Broadly speaking, reflecting the picture outlined above of teachers as lacking in adequate training, there appears to be a widely held view in Saudi Arabia that teachers are of poor quality in public schools and that students' poor language proficiency can be largely attributed to this. One outcome of this is that more affluent Saudi parents will endeavour to send their children to private schools, where standards are presumed to be higher. Some studies that have been carried out to investigate the problem of teaching English language in Saudi Arabia have drawn the following conclusions about public school teachers, suggesting that these are a body of teachers who may struggle with curriculum and who may share different perspectives to those advocated in curriculum reform initiatives. The conclusion was as follows:

- 1- Most of the teachers lecture or dominate the talk in class at the expense of students' participation and practice of language.
- 2- Some of the teachers use Arabic language in explaining English patterns or vocabulary. They use translation to make their job easier. The use of Arabic and translation impede students' progress in developing their communicative competence.
- 3- Quite a few teachers spend too much time correcting the students' grammatical and phonetic mistakes. In other words, those teachers seem to be more concerned about accuracy than fluency.
- 4- Some teachers do not budget the class time to cover well all the lesson material. As a result, they run out of time and consume the students' break.
- 5- The culture of target language is rarely mentioned or considered by teachers.

- 6- Some teachers encourage students to memorise certain answers to some questions to prepare them to pass the examinations and not learn the language.
- 7- Newer methods of foreign language teaching, such as communicative approaches, are never tried by the teachers.
- 8- Some teachers consider textbooks an end not a means to create communicative abilities in students.

(Arishi, 1984; Alansari, 1995, cited in Almandil, 1999: 25).

As well as pinpointing some of the major problems identified among EFL teachers in public schools in Saudi Arabia, these sorts of studies have helped reinforce the supervisory inspection element of the educational system as means of both supporting and monitoring teachers' professional work.

2.6.1 Teacher accountability and role in decision-making processes

The predominant form of support available to teachers with their work is from the existing system of school supervisors who can potentially offer a valuable source of support to teachers. However, supervisors also primarily operate as part of a top-down system for the management of teachers; supervisors visit classes regularly to ensure that standards are being maintained and that the material in the textbooks is covered. These combine to create conditions where teachers are focused on completing textbooks on time, making sure teaching and learning goals are achieved and teaching to the exam. As such, teachers are primarily configured as implementers of decisions about curricula and pedagogy that are conceived and formulated at ministerial level, and supervisors are tasked with ensuring teachers are effective in delivering these. Perhaps it is not surprising that, in this climate, while some teachers will independently seek out better, updated methods and classroom techniques and provide students with additional activities and skills to improve their English language learning, this is not the norm.

Another important group exerting an influence over teachers' accountability and decision-making are parents. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, parental attitudes towards English language and course book content can influence student

perspectives and parents often carefully monitor the materials and activities used to teach their children with regard to their moral content. Teachers and schools are aware of this influence and take it into account because if parents have any issues with the school, they can easily withdraw their children or instigate formal complaint procedures. Accordingly, teachers will often avoid risking creating unnecessary problems which may impact on their job security, and may therefore omit activities and course book content which may be viewed in negative ways by some parents.

Taken together, the joint influences of supervisors and parents would appear to militate against a view of teachers as playing an active role in decision-making in schools. However, in practice, as elsewhere, in my experience, there are those teachers who are active in making their own decisions about classroom activities and textbook material, although the culture of accountability means this tends to happen covertly rather than overtly.

To sum up, although Saudi Arabia acknowledges the importance of teachers to students' learning experience, to date little attention has been paid to seeking out their views or acknowledging how these will impact on the success of reforms. Seeking out the response of teachers to the recent changes to the cultural model in their textbooks can hopefully serve to reduce the gap between classroom realities and the policy reforms highlighting areas that teachers may need support to enable these to work but also providing an opportunity to hear the views of teachers, both in terms of how they work with these and whether they feel they are appropriate for the promotion of English as a language which is important both locally but also as a *lingua franca*.

2.7 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has highlighted key aspects related to the context in which the present study is carried out. The chapter has also discussed the social, economic, and religious background forming the Saudi context. In addition, the chapter discussed the educational system historically and currently along with the status of English language in the country. The English language teaching and the changes

occurred to the curriculum were presented. And finally, the Saudi English language teachers were focused on in this chapter presenting their educational background and the need of their voice in any reform of the textbooks. The next chapter reviews the conceptual framework of this study along with relevant research literature.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the literature will be discussed that is relevant to the study reported in this thesis. A primary focus of the chapter is to develop the conceptual understanding of culture informing the study. Culture is seen as central to this study both in terms of its interest in documenting Saudi EFL teachers' views of appropriate cultural models for EFL course books but also because these teachers' views are themselves seen as constructed with reference to their sociocultural realities.

I will therefore start by detailing the importance of culture to the inquiry undertaken in this thesis and then drawing upon a distinction made by Holliday (1999) who highlights two different ways of understanding culture; an essentialist and non-essentialist understanding of culture. The chapter will then consider how these different understandings have been adopted in discussions about the role of culture in language learning and in TESOL classroom practices and materials. It will then be demonstrated how the growth of globalization and English as an international language is increasingly leading to policy makers, materials writers and practitioners to adopt new positions with respect to the role of culture in language learning and teaching, ones that embrace a non-essentialist perspective.

Following this I will then turn to a consideration of the significant role teachers' play in mediating cultural materials in textbooks and the importance of their beliefs to their classroom decision-making with respect to how they work with these course books. Following on from this I will consider the existing research with respect to the factors deemed significant to teachers beliefs both generally and with regard to their views towards appropriate cultural models for EFL course books and classrooms. The chapter will end by summarising the conceptual framework underpinning the study reported in this thesis.

3.2 The Significance of Culture to Human Meaning-Making

Culture is viewed as a significant concept in the description of human meaning making among a large body of theorists who adopt a socially constructed understanding of human meaning-making, such as for example, Vygotsky (1987) and Bruner (1990). This is one which argues that humans are essentially social beings, born into a world of meaning from which they draw upon to construct their own understandings of the world. From this perspective, Geertz (1973: 44) has argued that culture can be understood as “a set of control mechanism – plans, recipes, rules instructions ...for the governance of human behaviour”. As Crotty (1998) argues, a central tenet among those who adopt this view of the role of culture in individual understanding is that without culture we could not function.

One of the most prominent theories adopting this socially constructed understanding of human meaning-making is the sociocultural theory developed by Leontiev Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky argues that the human mind is essentially mediated by the social world, with meaning appearing first on the ‘intermental plane’ (between people) and then on the intramental plane (as internal constructions). Language occupies a central position in Vygotsky’s theory as it is the primary means through which this mediation takes place, that is to say it is the most prominent tool through which people come to acquire their understandings of the social world within which they are immersed. For Vygotsky, human understanding can be seen to evolve from engagement in a social world with language, a tool which facilitates socialisation into the social world but which is also an artefact of the particular social world within which it has evolved. In other words, language develops culture and is also a cultural practice. Because of this emphasis on language, not surprisingly, this socially constructed understanding of meaning making has attracted a lot of attention in the TESOL field (see for example: Thorne, 2003; Lantolf, 2000; Swain, 2000; Thorne, 2000).

These perspectives with their emphasis on the significance of the social setting (or culture) to learning and the relationship between this and language as both tool for learning and as cultural artefact are ones that are of central interest in this thesis with its emphasis on teachers’ views on appropriate cultural models for EFL

course books. However, while these highlight how teachers' views are likely to be socially constituted and the role of language in their formation, the concept of culture employed in these is largely underdeveloped. For social constructivists such as Vygotsky (1987), many of whom are interested primarily to describe human learning, culture is understood to refer to a social world but the precise nature and the parameters of a social world are not clearly set.

It is important to therefore turn to a consideration of what can be seen to constitute culture as how this is defined has an important bearing on how the social realities of the teachers in this study are understood and the different understandings they bring to bear on the relationship between language and culture which are likely to be important to their views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks within their classrooms. As will be shown below two dominant and competing understandings of culture are evident in the TESOL literature, an essentialist and non-essentialist view of culture.

3.3 Towards a Definition of Culture

A first observation to make with regard to attempts to define culture, is that this term is very difficult to pin down. Indeed, Williams (1976: 87, cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2008: 9) argues that culture "is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language". This he suggests is because the word is used in a variety of intellectual disciplines in several distinct and incompatible ways. Williams argues that broadly speaking three distinctions need to be drawn between the use of the term culture, an 'ideal', a 'documentary' or a 'social' understanding of culture:

There are three general categories in the definition of culture. There is, first, the 'ideal' in which culture is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain universal values ... Then, second, there is the 'documentary' in which culture is the body of intellectual and imaginative work, in which, in a detailed way, human thought and experience are variously recorded. The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the activity of criticism ... Finally, third, there is the 'social' definition of culture, in which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. (1965: 57-58)

Another distinction drawn in the literature is between culture with a capital C and culture with a small c. That is to say whether culture can be understood as standing for 'creative endeavours such as art, music and literature which constitute the aesthetic life of a community', capital C culture or whether it is concerned more with the beliefs morals, customs and norms that govern the practice of everyday life, or culture with a small c (see for example Kumaravadivelu, 2008:10).

In this thesis, the focus is on teachers' perspectives of culture in their everyday working lives (a small c perspective). That is, in Williams' terms, their 'ordinary behaviour' in their lived realities; the thesis therefore subscribes to his social definition of culture. Among those who adopt this view of culture there are nevertheless different understandings of how to identify a discrete culture and whether it is possible to do so, the relationship holding between cultures, and how far these cultures can be understood as stable or not.

My review of the literature revealed many different ways of thinking about culture. In part these reflected the distinctions that Williams made, but they could also be seen to reflect the influence of modernist versus post-modernist perspectives on understandings of social worlds. The former emphasise geographically-bound ways of describing human society and the latter place greater emphasis on the social grouping, which could transcend or be inside a particular national or region, as is increasingly common in a globalised world (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). My reading led me to the work of anthropologists, most notably Clifford Geertz, and to others in the field of TESOL who have been influenced by his work such as Holliday (1999), Dervin (2010) and Rich (2011), who have referred to those two different discourses of culture, following Geertz (1973) as essentialist and non-essentialist respectively. I found these a useful way to categorise and critically examine the different approaches to culture implicit in TESOL pedagogic practices and materials, and to reflect on the ways in which teachers, such as those in my study, orientate themselves towards culture in their teaching worlds.

3.3.1 Essentialist and non-essentialist understandings of culture

In TESOL the distinction between essentialist and non-essentialist has been drawn upon to critically interrogate the dominant essentialist understanding of culture in the field. For Geertz, the key differences between an essentialist understanding of culture and a non-essentialist one referred to how far it is possible to describe a culture as fixed or unchanging and homogenous in nature or if this is best understood as in a state of flux, and open or dynamic. While Geertz applied this description to groups of any size Holliday (1999), who has drawn upon this distinction extensively in his work on culture, has employed this to challenge the longstanding assumption in the field of TESOL that to talk of culture means to talk of national culture, as will be elaborated on further below. Before discussing this I will first discuss the distinction between these two different understandings of culture.

3.3.1.1 The essentialist view

The essentialist view of culture is one which sees this as a representation of the essential stable characteristics of group of people. Typically this is used to refer to large groupings of people in a given geographical location or nation but might also refer to a way of looking at groupings smaller than this as well (Rich, 2011). It is seen to enable a clear demarcation between groups enabling for example one nation to be differentiated from another (Holliday, 2011).

One influential figure in this essentialist view is considered to be Hofstede (1991). In fact, he holds the view that culture is based on the solid features of one nation to differentiate it from another nation. In his work, Hofstede categorises global communities and cultures according to geographical maps and distances between one culture to other. Consequently, he presented the idea of cultures as physical bodies that can be touched, seen and experienced by cultures other than their own (Holliday, 1999). Therefore, he defines culture “as a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede, 2001: 9, cited in Holliday, 2011: 6) and he also believes that culture can be “any human collectivity or category: a profession, an age group, an entire gender, or a family” (ibid: 10), but within a given nation.

Thus the essentialist view of culture involves different small or sub-cultures that can be used to consider groups of all sizes but sees these as discrete and distinct entities. Those sub-cultures all share the same main characteristics that are common features of one nation or culture. Holliday (1999), therefore, claimed that those sub-cultures are like an onion skin or a Russian doll, as they have their own characteristics with many differences among them, however, they still hold similar features and can be categorised under one national culture as they also share its main culturalistic values. It is clear that some societies may vary on their views towards culture by understanding the real meaning of it. Accordingly, some see 'culture' as a synonym for 'civilisation' or 'modernity'. Huntington, for example claims that based on an essentialist approach, that:

The culture of a village in southern Italy may be different from that of a village in northern Italy, but both will share in a common Italian culture that distinguishes them from German villages. European communities, in turn, will share cultural features that distinguish them from Chinese and Hindu communities. Chinese, Hindu, and Westerners, however, are not part of any broader cultural entity. They constitute civilizations. A civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of which distinguishes human from other species. (1996: 43, cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2008: 10)

In the nineteenth century the essentialist concept of nationalism, the socially constructed or so-called 'national culture' had already taken root in Europe, whereas in the developing countries, it is only recently that governments have realized the need for enhancing the united nationalism of their citizens through different mediums such as education, media and other different sources (Holliday, 1999). An example of this concept can be seen in the context of Saudi Arabia, where minorities from different cultural backgrounds can share the Saudi national identity just as they share with other Saudis the same religion, Arabic language and country, and they can freely talk about any other groups within the country and cite common cultural norms, for instance: in Saudi society, young people have to respect older people.

3.3.1.2 The non-essentialist view

In contrast to the dominant essentialist view in social science, the non-essentialist view is considered to be struggling to be known globally and requires more

consideration (Holliday, 2011). Culture is seen through the non-essentialist lens as a mobile notion that can cover any group of people and differentiate them from other groups, with relevance to a chosen time in which they can be categorised according to the needs of political, scientific or identity purposes. Baumann's (1996) ethnographical work which was conducted in the Southall suburb of London came up with the concept that it could happen that, at a certain time, people from different cultural and geographical backgrounds use the term 'culture' to mean a cultural group suiting their needs and demands for that specific time and occasion (Holliday, 1999). In this, people can be classified to represent their own cultural group according to their interests, what they like to watch, eat, visit, listen to or play at; therefore, they can create a cultural community shaped according to their different needs and interests. Using this definition, someone in Saudi Arabia could share a culture with another person from the UK or any part of the world. The Saudi person and the British may support the same football team and may therefore think of other fans of the team as having the same perspectives and similar views. Again, Atkinson commented, with respect to this non-essentialist understanding that this:

May be able to account more readily for both the shared perspectives with which more traditional understandings of culture have been preoccupied, and the fragmentation and difference impacting individuals and social groups that are the prime concern of recent cultural critique. (1999: 639).

Therefore, with a more flexible view of culture, the non-essentialist notion brings a 'seamless melange' of various groupings around the world as they share common cultural features, no matter the number of people, nor the time; they can be classified as families, business people, educators, sport fans, or even vending machines queues, thus, they can also be identified as small cultures (Holliday, 1999).

In the literature, 'culture' is defined at different levels: large culture and small culture. Holliday explains that:

whereas the large culture notion imposes a picture of the social world which is divided into 'hard', essentially different ethnic, national or international cultures, the small culture notion leaves the picture

open, finding 'softer' 'cultures' in all types of social groupings, which may or may not have significant ethnic, national or international qualities (1999: 240).

So, Holliday's point is that part of an essentialist perspective on culture has been to focus on fixed or hard and stable classifications of beliefs values and practices in large cultural groupings. Although it might be a way to try to describe things in smaller groupings too (hence his idea of the Russian doll effect), emphasising small groupings means that it becomes easier to articulate and acknowledge non-essentialist perspectives. We have multi-group memberships because in reality we live in many small groups.

From another perspective, Hoijer (1964) believes that the traits and patterns that make up a structured or organized system of culture are subject to constant change due to their historical roots. Thus, improvement within culture can be acknowledged in which it is historically inherited and transferred from one culture to another and from one generation to the next. As such culture is open to change and is closely linked to other living cultures.

Three key points emerge from this section. One is that cultures are not fixed or stable; the second is they are not necessarily related to geographic, national or ethnic boundaries (they can cross over these) and the third is that in this way culture does not determine individual behaviour, there is no one to one relationship between practices and culture. This way of thinking about culture is increasingly gaining favour in the light of globalization. To state my perspective on culture for the current study, I can argue based on the points made earlier in the thesis in chapters 1 and 2 that I see globalization as a significant phenomenon impacting on teachers views and impacting on the design decisions with regard to Saudi EFL course books. Therefore, the non-essentialist view of culture is where I position myself in this study.

With reference to this discussion of essentialism and non-essentialism, Table 3.1 below presents the differences between both ways of thinking as suggested by Holliday (2004: 4 and 2011: 5).

Table 3.1 Essentialism and non-essentialism (after Holliday, 2011: 5)

Essentialist view of culture	Non-essentialist view of culture
A physical place with evenly spread traits and membership	A social force which is evident where it is significant
Associated with a country and a language	Complex, with difficult to pin down characteristics
Has an onion-skin relationship with larger continental, religious, ethnic or racial cultures, and smaller sub-cultures	Can relate to any type or size of group for any period of time, and can be characterised by a discourse as much as a by language
Mutually exclusive with other national cultures. People in one culture are essentially different from people in another	Can flow, change, intermingle, cut across and through each other, regardless of national frontiers, and have blurred boundaries

I will now turn to an examination of how these two perspectives have been adopted in the field of TESOL. I will given consideration to how far an essentialist understanding forms the ‘received’ view of culture, as Atkinson (1999: 626) argues and how far an alternative non-essentialist view is replacing this in the terms of how the relationship between culture and language is viewed, and in terms of classroom practices and materials.

3.3.2 The relationship between language and culture

The relationship between language and culture has been discussed widely in the literature (Hall, 2003). As has been stated earlier in 3.2 language is fundamentally a social phenomenon, a way of communicating with others, both shaped by the world and also a primary means through which the world is shaped. According to Kramsch (1998: 3), “Language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives. When it is used in context of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways”. However, there are different understandings of what this means, namely how far language is linked to a specific bound group of people or whether it has a more complex relationship to culture, that is, can be applied across as well as within different cultural groupings. While there is clearly a relationship between culture and language, the precise nature of

this can be seen differently from essentialist and non-essentialist perspectives and with different implications for how to handle this relationship in the TESOL classroom.

3.3.2.1 Language and culture: the essentialist view

Broadly speaking, the essentialist view of culture can be seen to inform a dominant understanding in TESOL of how language is linked to a particular national grouping as Holliday (2011) observes in the table above. From an essentialist perspective, therefore, it seems that if, as Nostrand (1968:2) has argued, that, “Language is not-self dependent; it cannot be understood without reference to the culture of which it is a part and the social relations which it mediates”. This has led to a long-standing belief that in teaching a foreign language it is necessary to teach the culture of the people who speak this language. Indeed, this has been seen as a central tenet of foreign language teaching from its early practice as the following quote from Jespersen writing in 1904 indicates:

The highest purpose in the teaching of language may perhaps be said to be the access to the best thoughts and institutions of a foreign nation, its literature, culture ... In short, the spirit of the nation in the widest sense of the word. (1904: 11).

That is to say, to the view that students cannot fully be successful communicators in a foreign language unless they understand the culture that this language manifests. This view is still widely held today as the view of Kramsch (1998: 3) illustrates:

The way in which people use the spoken, written, or visual medium itself creates meanings that are understandable to the group they belong to, for example, through a speaker’s tone of voice, accent, conversational style, gestures and facial expressions. Through all its verbal and non-verbal aspects, language embodies cultural reality.

On one level this appears to be true. As is the case of Arabic language in Saudi Arabia; in every tribe people have their own way of speech that differs from other tribes. However, they can all understand one another but from the way of speaking, the tone, and the word stress and annotations, people can still tell the difference and identify the speaker’s tribe. Similarly, on the same basis one can distinguish between someone from the south of Saudi or the north, or from Najd or Hejaz. Moreover, in some cases people can tell that a person for example comes

from a certain tribe and lives in the north, while at the same time his cousin from the same tribe lives in the south. Variations within one society, therefore, can result in different way of speech, dialects of one language.

From an essentialist perspective, it is argued that if the meanings of a particular language point to the culture of a particular social grouping, then the analysis of these meanings - their comprehension by learners and other speakers involves the analysis and comprehension of that culture and this would suggest a need to teach culture alongside language. Other reasons cited for teaching the culture of the target speaker community alongside language are some meanings of the language being learnt may be unclear or misunderstood if learnt without cultural references (Gatbonton and Tucker 1971). Additionally, Steffensen, Joag-dev and Anderson (1979) added that language may be hard to fully understand if based on teaching through syntactical bases; culture can make it easier for the learner.

From an essentialist perspective, therefore, language and culture are parallel and linked together, they cannot be separated and this link produces good outcomes of understanding in a new language.

3.3.2.2 Language and culture: the non-essentialist view

Within the non-essentialist view, it can be argued language and culture are linked, but from a different perspective to that of the essentialist view. This is because with the advent of globalization, it is hard to argue that language, particularly English can be understood with reference to a particular and discrete culture, English is now increasingly understood as a lingua franca or an international (Jenkins 2000; 2003; 2006a; 2006b; Leung 2005; Seidlehofer 2001; 2004; Pennycook 1994; McKay 2002; 2003; Llurda 2004). As Gray points out:

These terms point to a situation in which the previously common 'English as a foreign language' (EFL) is no longer seen as an adequate descriptor for the ways in which the language is being used globally. This situation, I would suggest, is linked to the way in which English is intimately associated with that complex set of interrelated phenomena known as globalization. (2006: 27)

As a lingua franca, English can be understood to occupy a dynamic and variable relationship to culture as Cogo & Dewey, 2006, Dewey, 2007, and others have argued and no longer linked to the linguistic and cultural norms of inner circle countries such as the UK or the USA (Kachru, 1990).

Non-essentialism suggests that the relationship between language and culture is that culture cannot be reduced to a comparison of two units (whether those be languages or cultures) as a language can be used in a multitude of ways by a multitude of people, so it has no fixed way of being and no fixed location. Similarly, culture can refer to groups of any size; it can cross geographical boundaries so it is not fixed in one location. This means that cultural/linguistic comparison (something that is a practice of the cultural awareness approach of essentialism) is inadequate as it is view that assumes there are two fixed things that can be compared. The implications of a non-essentialist perspective is that culture and language are fluid, variable and changeable so the approach needed, pedagogically speaking, with regard to culture in the EFL classroom (to be discussed below) is to help learners develop skills to enable them to encounter any culture positively and to encourage intercultural awareness and competence.

As regards the choice of culture portrayed in teaching English as a Lingua Franca, it can be argued, from a non-essentialist viewpoint, that the target cultural model is considered to be outdated and should not be the sole model portrayed in EFL textbooks. Accordingly, considering both; the local cultural practices and values of those learning the language along with other global cultural practices and values are to be appropriate in this regards As Baker (2009: 2) maintains:

cultures in ELF should be conceived as liminal, emergent resources that are in a constant state of fluidity and flux between local and global references, creating new practices and forms in each instance of intercultural communication. (Baker, 2009: 2)

3.3.3 The pedagogic implications: Cultural awareness versus intercultural awareness?

Cultural awareness

This section will explain the pedagogic implications of an essentialist perspective on culture, in terms of what should be taught and how it should be taught. The link between language and culture implied by this approach is closely linked to the emphasis on developing learners' communicative competence in the target culture but also knowledge about this culture, which could be described as a cultural awareness approach.

The term communicative competence was coined by Hymes (1971), an American sociolinguist who argued that there was a need to move beyond the understanding of competence developed by Chomsky, as only referring to a knowledge and ability to use the language structure or syntax. This term was the adopted by those working in the field of foreign language teaching such as Savignon (1972), who argued that foreign language teaching needed to entail not only the promotion of grammatical and lexical knowledge but also knowledge of how to use these appropriately. Hall for example describes communicative competence as:

Both the knowledge and ability that individuals need to understand and use linguistic resources in ways that are structurally well formed, socially and contextually appropriate, and culturally feasible in communicative contexts constitutive of the different groups and communities of which the individuals are members (2002: 105-106).

The promotion of communicative competence is widely seen as central in discussions of TESOL pedagogy and closely linked to the view that learning a foreign language requires knowledge of its uses within a particular cultural grouping, the target cultural grouping that the learner is assumed to be seeking membership of. Thus as Wilga Rivers argues, in support of seeking to develop learners communicative competence:

Mere fluency in the production of utterances in a new language without any awareness of their cultural implications or of their appropriate situational use of assumptions underlying them. (1981: 315)

A similar view is also held by Byram who contend that: “communicative competence involves an appreciation of appropriate language use which, in part at least, is culture specific” (1989: 61). The widespread adoption of this approach is seen to necessitate the teaching of culture in the foreign language classroom with the view that learners need to be helped to develop the sorts of knowledge and skills they will require to interact successfully with those people who are the native speakers of this language as Robinett argues:

Knowledge of how a society uses language involves the concepts of acceptability and appropriateness. Obviously, a grammatical choice must be made, but is the chosen language form one that is acceptable to native speakers as appropriate for the particular situation? There are, then, both grammatical and social restraints on what a person says (1979: 152).

As such from this perspective, culture is understood to comprise the practices of a particular group of speakers, and embraces the essentialist perspective outlined above. Part of teaching a foreign language can therefore be seen to develop cultural awareness.

Byram defines cultural awareness as an understanding of relevant cultural values and practices that leads to “an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (Byram, 1997: 101). This is seen as an important pedagogical goal in order to help develop the communicative competence discussed above. It is also seen to have a number of other important advantages. Firstly, it is widely regarded that learning a foreign language together with its own culture can motivate learning; it is interesting to find out about the new foreign language and how people in this culture think, or view other cultures. As Hendon mentioned this:

Stimulates interest in foreign language study, besides being a welcome change from much of the oral drill of grammar exercises. Most students are curious to know more about the foreign peoples and their way of life, and they will find the discussions about culture an exciting experience. (1980: 192)

It is also seen to help build confidence in learners and without this knowledge learners may encounter many misunderstandings when communicating with those

for whom this is a first language. Armed only with syntactic skills, he may find himself lost among new aspects of language and culture with which he is unfamiliar. Finally, putting culture and language side by side in the EFL classroom is regarded to ensure authenticity and meaningfulness in language learning, or as Chastain maintains, this can “help students to relate the often abstract sounds and forms of a foreign language to real people and places”. (1971: 303).

Intercultural awareness

In line with the growth of English as a lingua franca alongside globalization, however doubts have been raised about the appropriacy of teaching one culture alongside English casting doubts on the model of communicative competence outlined above and the assumption that students need only to develop awareness of target speaker cultural norms. These new perspectives, have argued for a need to promote intercultural as opposed to communicative competence, and to develop intercultural awareness and can be seen to reflect a move towards engaging with a more non-essentialist understanding of culture and of its relationship to language. If, it is argued it is no longer possible to see tight relationships between one language and one culture, then what is needed is to develop pedagogic practices that can teach people skills that will enable them to communicate successfully in English with people from many different place.

Intercultural competence, is a concept developed by Byram (1997) among others to refer to the competencies people need for effective interaction between people from different countries with different languages and in this he extends the original meaning of Hyme’s (1971) concept of communicative competence which, as explained above has been linked to a native speaker ideal as a target for successful foreign language learning. Such an approach as Gray has observed, “Condemns language learners to failure, as teachers try to turn them into ersatz ‘native speakers’” (Gray, 2006: 54).

Byram (1997) argues that intercultural competence can be promoted by using linguistic and non-linguistic means and can move away from the sort of cultural stereotyping of people in accordance to cultural norms that a cultural awareness

approach can lead to. Moreover, this can help people become more open in dealing with others and learn from each other for the reason of knowing oneself and overcoming misunderstanding and misjudging others. This is of course gives the individual a position in which he can better understand his own cultural beliefs and values and also can understand the way other people behave in a certain way for the sake of knowing. In this regard, Baker (2011) refers to such as approach as intercultural awareness in contrast to cultural awareness pointing out that this is, “is more relevant to needs of intercultural communication in expanding circle and global lingua franca contexts, in which cultural influences are likely to be varied, dynamic, and emergent. (Baker, 2011: 66). Baker defines this intercultural awareness in the following way:

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. (2011: 66)

Such an intercultural awareness pedagogy has also been linked to critical pedagogy as it seen to acknowledge the rights of the learner as a legitimate speaker of the target language and inspired by the work of Freire’s (1970), to calls for a more dialogic pedagogy in which language students, could “start using the foreign language not merely as imperfect native speakers, but as speakers in their own right” (Kramsch, 1993: 28). In concluding his discussion about intercultural communicative competence, Alpetkin (2002) argues that such an approach can help learners recognise that they are global speakers of English and can help them position themselves as both members of national cultures but also as linked to broader international cultures and can develop the skill of critically reflecting on the relationship s between their local and global worlds.

In this section, two competing understandings of culture and how this should be managed in the classroom have been presented. I will now turn to a consideration of how these debates are seen to inform appropriate cultural content in EFL textbooks.

3.3.3.1 EFL textbook content

Spencer-Oatey and Franklin argued: “Foreign language teaching and learning materials aimed at the professional have long since incorporated a cultural aspect to the communication situations for which they aim to develop the necessary language skills.” (2009: 217). However, precisely what this content should be, as with how culture should be taught, discussed above, become the focus of considerable debate over the years, and as above can be seen to draw upon the two different understandings of culture developed by Holliday (2011) mentioned earlier.

Some writers would argue that incorporating authentic target culture language materials into the language classroom is important, as it can provide students with knowledge of the language produced by native speakers, as well as helping them to develop their sociolinguistic competence. According to Alvarez and Gonzalez (1993) authentic materials help to expose students to foreign life as it really is, not to a make-believe classroom version. Andersen and Risager (1981: 23) consider foreign language teaching as a “factor in the socialization of the learner” and this entails textbooks giving a real experience of the society they claim to represent (cited in Byram, 1989: 72).

However, there has also been an increased acknowledgment among those writing about textbook content in recent years that this should also address issues of inclusivity and appropriacy (see for example Gray, 2002) and this has led to calls for textbooks to also include references to local culture. Indeed, as was discussed above in chapter 2, in many countries, local culture is often preferred as a better cultural model for EFL textbooks, particularly in those contexts where learners (especially younger learners) may not envisage encountering native speakers of the language at any time in the near future. In relation to this, Hall argues that:

In locating learning in social activity, and defining it as a process of sociocultural transformation, it makes it impossible to consider the process and outcomes of learning apart from their specific sociocultural context. No aspect of learning can be considered context-free, i.e. ‘uncontaminated’, or isolatable from the specific context in which it occurs. (2002: 64)

That is to say, if learners are learning in a particular setting, they are learning, first and foremost, how to better engage in their own social context. Similarly, Spencer-Oatey and Franklin disagreed with using the target culture as the only source for the EFL when they asserted:

‘Cultural information’ originating, for example, in the English language both in books and on the internet is often not very useful to members of other cultures because of the reference culture (usually the USA or UK) guiding both choice of information and its interpretation. (2009: 213)

Accordingly, by introducing the students’ own cultural model, the learning process becomes much easier for both students and their teachers. This is because in the classroom, the teacher will be teaching the foreign language with local references that are familiar to the students’ own cultural background and their local context and they will not have to make an effort to search for the meaning of what is said by the teacher.

However, as English has come to be recognised as a lingua franca, there have also been additional calls to move away from this ‘either or’ approach to thinking about cultural content for textbooks and there have been calls for the need to develop a multicultural approach, one that represents many cultures, not just target and local cultures, in course books. Thus for example, Gray (2002:166) has argued for what he calls a glocal textbook – something which can give a better ‘fit’ and “simultaneously connect the world of students to the world of English”. Such a textbook can better promote the intercultural competence that Byram (1997) has advocated. Within a broader framework for developing textbooks, Gray (2006) has distinguished between what he calls the dominant paradigm for textbook writing and the need to develop an alternative. The differences between these two ways of working are shown in Table 3.2 below. This distinction, particularly with regard to his comments on the role of culture, can be seen to suggest a growing awareness in the field to move away from an essentialist towards a non-essentialist model of culture for textbook content.

Table 3.2 Summary of competing textbook writing paradigms (source: Gray, 2006: 56).

Dominant paradigm in foreign language teaching	Proposed educational alternative
language teaching seen narrowly as skill training impoverished and conservative instructional and monologic culture occupies the background communicative competence as the aim of language learning ‘native speaker’ model aim to enable learners to survive as tourists/consumers learners construed as skills acquirers textbook as carrier of superficial view of target culture	language teaching seen broadly as education rich and critical educational and dialogic culture occupies the foreground intercultural communicative competence as the aim of language learning intercultural speaker model aim to create learners who are internationally socially aware learners construed as apprentice ethnographers textbook as carrier of realistic view of target culture

In this section, I have shown the ways in which different understandings of culture have informed TESOL practices and how there is a discernible, albeit still limited move towards a more non-essentialist view of culture in the field brought on by efforts to address the impact of globalization on foreign language teaching. Teachers along with others involved in foreign language teaching are also likely to be increasingly affected by these debates and the sorts of issues raised above are likely to impact on their work. Teachers views of culture and particularly of the cultural models in their textbooks are also likely to impact on the decisions they make when using these books and in the next section I will consider teachers, how their views are shaped and what sorts of factors will impact on these in more depth.

3.4 Teachers’ Views and their Importance in Educational Decision-Making

As Pajares (1992) among others has argued, views can be said to encompass opinions, attitudes, perspectives, orientations and beliefs and these terms are often used interchangeably in the literature. For the purposes of this study, views are subjective ideas about what we think is true about our world and about ourselves and are formed through our interactions with the world. In line with the socially constructed understanding of human meaning making discussed at the start of this

chapter, teachers views can be understood as resulting from their on-going experiences in their social worlds.

Since as argued in chapter 1, globalization is a force effecting people on the planet wherever they live through symbolic cultural flows (Appadurai, 1996), teachers views can be understood to reflect not only local value systems and norms of behaviour but will also be shaped by their exposure to other perspectives encountered through electronic media, visible representations of these in their own setting and through the opportunity to travel to other countries that they may have. In keeping with the non-essentialist understanding of culture adopted in this thesis, within the context of globalization, the social worlds of teachers, such as those who are the focus of this study, are understood to be simultaneously both local and global and both will exert an influence on the personal views they hold about a given phenomenon. Moreover, since educational views are the product of personal perspectives and values about knowledge, society and politics drawn from their social worlds (Kegan, 1992), it may be impossible to separate teachers views about educational perspectives, and views on appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks from these broader beliefs (Woods,1993). In other words, teachers' views about pedagogy are closely linked to their understandings of their social worlds.

Teachers views have been the focus of considerable attention in recent years in the literature as there is a recognition that these are closely linked to decisions they make about their classroom practice (see for example Borg 2003 and Pajares 1992). This is because, as Lihua (2010:61) argues, "teachers are generally concerned with more than simply fulfilling issues of curriculum content. When they teach, they also make efforts to implement a personal philosophy of teaching which reflects their individual understanding and beliefs about what good teaching is and how it is achieved". As such, understanding these views is increasingly seen as important in the efforts to introduce educational reforms both with regard to understanding how best to initiate reforms and to develop initiatives to support these. (Fullan 1992; Fisher 1999; Harris 2001; Kirk 2001; Hess 2002; Crawford 2003, Flores 2005). For these reasons, there is an increasing recognition of the need to consider the relationship between their views and decision-making in

research as Freeman (1996), for example has observed and findings suggest a close relationship between these and their planning and instructional decisions (Lihua, 2010).

3.4.1 The relationship between global and local influences on the development of teachers' views

As has been suggested above, teachers' views are socially constructed with reference to their social worlds. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, an essentialist understanding of social worlds or cultures sees these as distinct and stable over time and from this perspective as determining individual actions. However, from a non-essentialist perspective on culture, culture is better seen as *influencing* rather than determining what people do. As Spencer Oatey and Franklin (2009: 3) have argued for example:

Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour.

This means, as Guest (2002) has noted, that rather than viewing culture as a way to explain what people do, it is better to focus on the individual and his or her own interpretation of the social worlds he or she encounters. Within the context of globalization as Giddens (2000) argues, there are likely to be a wider range of influences on people, both local and more global and the views people come to hold will result from a process of on-going reflexivity on the relationship between local values and practices and the global cultural flows referred to by Appadurai (1996). The outcome of this process, is as Robertson (1994) has argued, the development of 'glocal' understandings, drawing upon both local and global influences. An important point is that the ways in which people of an understanding of the relationship between global and local understandings cannot be predicted and may well be variable from one individual to another and cannot be predicted on the basis of nationality or region. For some it may cause tensions and the feeling of being pulled in different directions as the following extract from Carr (2003) illustrates:

[One example] . . . is the experience of being a second- or third generation immigrant, growing up knowing several, often conflicting codes of acting, thinking and feeling. Young people in these circumstances may find themselves sandwiched uncomfortably between the 'global' culture of youth and the more 'local' values embodied in their caregivers' enduring traditional values. (2003: 9)

However, for others it may produce dilemmas that lead in different directions and conflict cannot be assumed to necessarily be an outcome of the interrelationship between the global and local. Robertson argues that the term glocalization enables us to reposition debates about globalization, away from what he sees as the 'mythology about globalisation' which sees that concept as referring to developments which involve the 'triumph' of culturally homogenising forces over all others such that "much of the talk about globalisation has, almost casually, tended to assume that it is a process which overrides locality" (Robertson, 1994: 34). For Robertson, globalization and locality are not dichotomous but are best understood as linked together or, as (Kraidy, 2003: 36) puts it:

the local and the global need not always be opposites; rather they are engaged in a relational and reciprocal process whose dynamics are mutually formative. In short, the local and the global are complementary competitors, feeding off each other as they struggle for influence (Kraidy, 2003: 38).

There is therefore a need to "move beyond the oppositional thinking of global versus local" to thinking that the "global constitutes and is constituted by the local and thus the global and the local interpenetrate" (Mowlana, 1994: 17).

This literature has helped me understand how the views of the teachers who are the focus of this study will be informed by both global and local factors as teachers of a global language within their local context. Their views and decision are understood to reflect the sense they make of these, in other words, their glocal understandings. Figure 3.1 below illustrates this process.

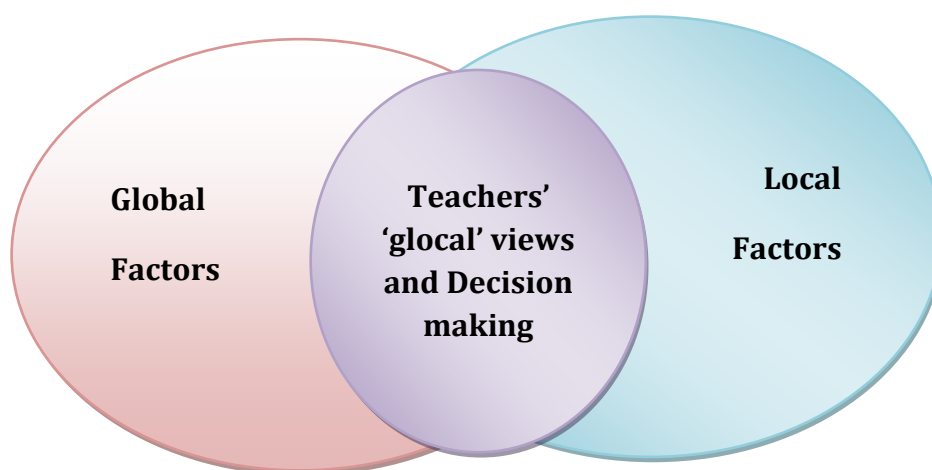


Figure (3.1): The interplay between global and local factors affecting teachers' views

3.4.2 Factors affecting teachers' views about appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks

Having described the ways in which teachers views and decisions are shaped by local and global factors, I will now go on to consider what are likely to be significant factors informing teachers views on appropriate cultural models for their EFL textbooks. I will first consider global factors and then factors that may impact on their views in their local worlds.

3.4.2.1 The Global Factors

A factor that is likely to be important and to impact on teachers views is that they are involved in teaching, English, a language with a huge global reach and that has developed into an important, if not *the* important means for global communication.

The English language is one of the most important languages in the world and is considered to be the language of globalization, since not only is it widespread throughout the world but it is the major language of trading and business. Accordingly, it is seen by *The Economist* (cited in Graddol 1997: 2) as “impreguably established as the world standard language: an intrinsic part of the global communications revolution”. In 1995 the British Council estimated that one fifth of the world's population had some level of English language skill, and 1,400 million

people inhabited countries where English was an official language (Graddol, 1997: 2); 13 years later the number had increased to 2 billion (Crystal, 2008). The status of English as the language of communication, business, academia, media, diplomacy and sport, among others, is increasing the pressure to acquire at least minimum competence.

From this perspective, it is likely that teachers may hold positive attitudes towards this language and see the general recognition for the need of English worldwide and its increasing presence in curricula at all levels of education as evidence of its importance. However, the spread of this language provokes a number of strong reactions and is closely linked to the spread of cultural practices of English speaking countries which have led some to see this as a harmful language which teachers may also take into consideration in forming their views.

Globalization as Friedman (1999: 45) argued has led to the 'democratization of technology' and also the 'democratization of finance' which he sees as contributing to the building of a peaceful and interdependent world capable of raising the standard of living in different parts of the world. However, from a different perspective as Tonkin maintains, it has also led to: "the exploitation of cheap labour, the concentration of extreme wealth in a small number of hands, and the growing gap between those who have access to technology and those who do not." (2003: 321). In addition, Americanization or Westernization is also seen by some as posing a threat to local ways of life and the development of what Barber (1996) named the McWorld or the McDonalization of cultures. These views are ones that are widely written about in Saudi Arabia as explained in chapter 2 and are ones that teachers are likely to be aware of as significant to the views of students and parents of these children.

English is closely linked to those countries which are accused as promoting their cultural values in ways that negatively impact on local cultures and teachers may well find themselves in an awkward position teaching a global language which carries these negative connotations. Thus in the Middle East as elsewhere, English is also regarded as a threat to local linguistic practices as stated by Pennycook

(1994:8) in which he argues that the widespread of English “threatens other languages and resulted in English being the language of power and prestige in many countries, thus acting as a crucial gatekeeper to social and economic progress”. And there are also concerns about the effect of this language and globalization on local culture, particularly among the young as elsewhere. The spread of English and culture is for example seen to have an effect on Indian youth as Blythe has observed, “English is not just the unquestioned language of choice, but a badge of style and class” (Blythe, 2001a: 12). Similarly he argues that among Japanese youth, there is an “appetite for all things western” and “British and American [music] bands attract a massive Japanese following, in spite of the linguistic divide [and] the teenage cults of the west are ever present in the local music scene” (Blythe, 2001a: 15). These examples show how certain global cultural flows penetrate and becomes interwoven into local contexts.

To sum up, in many quarters English is regarded as a threat on many levels. As Pennycook argues:

Its widespread use threatens other languages; it has become the language of power and prestige in many countries, thus acting as a crucial gatekeeper to social and economic progress;... it is closely linked to national and increasingly non-national forms of culture and knowledge that are dominant in the world; and it is also bound up with aspects of global relations, such as the spread of capitalism, development aid and the dominance particularly of North American media (1994: 8).

Teachers are likely to be aware of the way in which the language they teach is viewed negatively, and this may well be something that informs their views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks.

3.4.2.2 Local Factors

The discussion of globalization in section (3.4.1) above has highlighted the increasing interconnectivity between places and people around the planet and the concept of glocalization suggests it is hard to see global and local as separated. In this respect, it is important to recognise that local factors, such as the attitudes of significant others in teachers daily and professional life are themselves formed with reference to their own perceptions of the global spread of English and global

cultural flows. Similarly, as noted earlier, global cultural flows find their way into local cultural realities through the media and through commerce. Nevertheless, there are some important local cultural values and practices as well as educational ones that are likely to be important to teachers views of cultural models for their textbooks and which will impact on their in-class decision-making and these will be discussed in this section.

Local cultural norms and values

With regard to culture, this is evident not only in material forms but in the ideology of a particular group of people. Thus belief systems as well as visible practices work together to feed a cultural image of one society (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009). These are contributing factors in shaping teachers views and the views of others in the surrounding society. In chapter 2, I have documented some of the core beliefs and practices in Saudi Arabia, and in particular, the importance of religion in guiding daily practices and values.

Whether students should learn a foreign language is hotly debated among religious clerics in Saudi Arabia with some in favour of learning a language and others of the opinion that a language should be learnt only if needed. Therefore, some Saudis do not approve of the teaching of English as one of the main subjects in the Saudi public schools, or may give it less emphasis when it is taught to their children. In support of this strong view against learning a foreign language, Omar bin Alkhattab, the second Islamic Khalifah and Islamic leader, said “Do not learn the language of the non-Arabs” (Abd Al-Razzâq Al-San’ânî, 2011: 411). This is because he did not want any language to replace or harm the Arabic language, the language of Islam and the Holy Quran; when he heard two people talking in a foreign language near the Kaabah in Makah he turned to them and said “Find some way to learn Arabic” (ibid: 411). In fact, he did not mind that Muslim people learn other languages, if there is a need for it. But another interpretation of this extract, some may argue, is that learning a foreign language may harm their local language.

On the other hand, Albukhari (one of the most popular narrators of the Prophet’s hadith) maintained that Zaid bin Thabit, the prophet’s companion, said that the

prophet asked him to learn the language of the Jews in order to read their letters for the prophet and to translate for him (Ahlalhdeeth, 2011). Accordingly, when there is a need to learning a language Islam is not against it, as this 'hadeeth' of Zaid bin Thabit demonstrates. At the present time people need to communicate with other people from different nations for business, trading and for other purposes. English, there is no doubt, is currently the language of globalization and is dominant. In addition, there is a very famous saying that many Arabs and Muslims always use to encourage people to learning a new language: "they who have learnt the language of other people made themselves secure of their evil" Sawani (2011) referred it to the Prophet Mohammed peace be upon him, but unfortunately as I searched for it in different sources of the Sunnah, I only found that different people refer it to the prophet with no certain reference, but many Islamic scholars agree with the meaning of it and not with referring it to the prophet (Alsuhaime, 2007). These debates have and continue to exert an influence on educational decision-making at the policy level. In the Middle East, while religious conservatives continue to air their resentment at the introduction of English at all academic levels, there is a realization that English currently plays an important role in their regions' development and advancement. Nevertheless, there were considerable delays to the introduction of English in to the primary system as a result of the resentments and concerns from some quarters in Saudi society. These debates are likely to be significant to teachers, in the views they form and the decisions they make. Reflecting the debates about the role of English in Saudi Arabia, some teachers may have mixed feeling about teaching English and may wonder about the ethicality of what they are doing.

3.4.2.3 People surrounding teachers: students, parents, head teachers, and decision-makers

The main focus of this study is on teachers, although the people who surround them, such as students, parents, head teachers, and decision-makers at the Ministry of Education are also factors affecting teachers' attitudes towards the appropriate cultural models promoted in the curriculum. The views of these people are also likely to exert an influence on teachers, contributing to their views about appropriate cultural models for their classrooms and how they do or do not

promote them in their classrooms. As with the teachers themselves, these people are likely to hold a variety of different views.

One concern for teachers may well be their students, their needs and aspirations but also their views. In general, students in Gulf countries view language learning as a means for progression within the educational system and to help improve their employment prospects as a study in Kuwait conducted by Al-Shalabi (1982) that looked into the motivation of university students for studying English found. The students were asked to respond to 11 items, which were classified into instrumental, integrative and general categories. The majority leaned towards instrumental motivation for language learning. They indicated that they learn the foreign language “to be an educated person” and “to get a higher degree.”

On another level, English is widely seen to have political associations. Candlin and Mercer (2001) maintain that even for the period of a fundamental grammar lesson, students understand the language they are learning derives from current political situations surrounding that language. Since English is frequently linked with American culture, it may come in reality to be associated with political issues like terrorism and American and British policy in Iraq and in the Middle East. This may mean that teachers will find students ready to openly discuss political topics, because these are already attached to the language itself. But it will also mean that they themselves may come to hold strong views about the values they associate with a particular language.

Teachers will also take into account learners’ attitudes towards learning English and the impact of their parents on these. As Narayanan observes:

Attitudes, like all aspects of development of cognition (relating to the mental process of learning) and affect in human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents’ and peers’ attitudes, contact with people who are “different” in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in human experience. These attitudes form a part of one’s perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living (Narayanan, 2011: 4).

Students are likely to hold a variety of different attitudes into the classroom, including, potentially negative attitudes towards English, as explained above, are present in some parts of the wider community. These views are likely to be taken into consideration. The way parents perceive the cultural model chosen for their children's English language learning, whether or not it conforms to their cultural values, would certainly be reflected in the students' attitudes, and consequently in their teachers' attitude. Indeed, Holliday (1994) believes that teachers are strongly influenced by parents and the local community.

Finally, teachers' views are likely to be influenced by significant others in their teaching worlds, such as supervisors and head teachers as well as by those who design and propose new curricula innovations, such as those introduced into EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia. As Tudor (2001) has observed:

the institutional structure of state education introduces into the decision-making process a variety of participants such as head teachers, school inspectors, administrators, government officials, and politicians. These participants have their own role and perceptions of teaching, and exert an influence on what occurs in classroom (2001: 37).

Thus, with regard to the headteachers of schools, their relationship with students and their parents and also their direct links with the Ministry represented by its expert supervisors would certainly produce a multilayered picture of the cultural model. This would then lead principals to play their part in putting pressure on teachers' views about cultural models. However, effective principals may then serve as guardians of teachers' instructional time, and can affect their attitudes and perceptions. Similarly, the Ministry supervisors may also play a part in affecting teachers' attitudes towards cultural models by presenting their experiences, whether positive or negative.

3.5 Previous Studies Related to the Research Topic

Few studies, it seems, have to date explored teachers' views of appropriate cultural models whether in the Middle East, or elsewhere. Below I will discuss those I have located.

Among those I have identified as of interest to my own, one is a study conducted by Tariq Elyas (2008) investigated the impact of 9/11 on the educational system in Saudi Arabia. In particular, he discussed how this phenomenon took its course to influence the English teaching system in Saudi Arabia, and the attitude and the impact of this new phenomenon in the Saudi society, in light of the current debate between Arab linguists on the issue of more English less Islam. He also presented a case study on a group of Saudi freshmen students studying English at King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. A 12-item questionnaire, related to this topic was distributed to 65 Saudi students studying English in their second semester of the New English Curricula. In his findings, his study provided valuable data on how the youth feel towards Western ideology, learning English and Western culture. Although the findings were context specific, they indicated that the Saudi students mostly agreed that both the study of the English language and its culture are necessary in order to develop their English comprehension.

The findings of this study appear to concur with those of another undertaken in the Gulf region, one conducted in Kuwait by Malallah (2000) where it was found that the attitude of students, teachers and parents towards English was positive. They did not find teaching English or learning English a threat to their Arab or Islamic cultural values. The majority of them recognized the international importance of the language, indicating that English has a global application in business, technology, education and communications.

With regards to writers who have looked at teachers perceptions of the cultural content of textbooks, one study, undertaken by Gray (2006) investigated cultural content in a sample of British ELT global textbooks published over the past three decades from a cultural studies perspective. Using a constructionist epistemology, the study aimed to identify the nature of cultural content, to account for the form it took and to examine what a group of Barcelona-based teachers thought about such content and the role of culture in ELT. Interviews reveal that they construe their practice in terms of teaching English as an international language, predominantly for lingua franca purposes. Broad approval for the representational practices associated with gender and race does not extend to the pervasive 'native

speakerism' or content which is seen as irrelevant to the context of instruction. The study concluded that the form cultural content takes is best decided by locals, for whom English may have a range of meanings other than those determined for them by British ELT publishers.

A second study of relevance is one conducted by Lai (2004) which looked at the perceptions of cultural and language models of 31 junior high school Taiwanese English language teachers. In this study, a questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection, with the focus on teachers' perceptions of the role of culture in the EFL classroom, the relationship between culture and language and an appropriate language model for the EFL classroom. The results suggested that although many teachers were not aware of the objectives and aims of cultural learning in the given curriculum, their perceptions of cultural and language models generally corresponded with a view of English as an international language, and one requiring teachers to develop intercultural communicative competence. It is likely that these views reflected their understanding of the Taiwanese position in a world affected by the global community. However, given that Saudi Arabia may be seen as positioned differently, teachers' views may not mirror those of the teachers in Taiwan as reported by Lai (2004).

With respect to Saudi Arabia in particular, there are few studies to my knowledge; one conducted by Al-Houssawi (2010) into the perceptions of English language teachers of a western textbook called North Star in use in their institution. The sample consisted of 35 male teachers who had experienced teaching the investigated course book at an English language institute in one of the Saudi state universities. In this study, questionnaire was the data collection method. It consisted of close-ended and open-ended questions. Interpretation of the data revealed that the participants had a negative perception of the cultural models and traditions represented in North Star course book. More specifically, they were not perceived to be adequately designed to suit the context cultural background. Also, the data revealed the absence of local cultural norms and traditions. Moreover, the participants indicated that the course book failed to embody the international cultures of English speakers. The study recommends adopting new cultural

strategies which consider incorporating both the local as well as international cultures and traditions of speakers of English. The study reported on in this thesis will examine the views of Saudi public school teachers using a locally prepared textbook and the situation may or may not mirror the findings of Al-Houssawi's study.

Moreover, in his article about 'At Crossroads of EFL Learning and Culture: How to Enhance Cross-cultural Awareness in EFL College Students' Abdul aziz Fageeh (2011), theoretically argued that there is a solid recognition in pertinent literature that teaching English cannot be isolated from teaching its culture. Therefore, his article, basically a discussion paper, introduced cultural awareness as a significant step towards activating a sound theory of English teaching and learning pedagogy. To this end, the article outlined the concepts of culture in English language teaching (ELT), acculturation, cultural competence and cultural awareness as basic steps for inducing effective communication. The differences between Arabic and English cultures, and the need for cultural awareness were also discussed. The article has also discussed how to foster students' cross-cultural awareness in EFL teaching, and the implications of this in EFL teacher education programmes.

Another study in the Saudi Arabian context was done by Tariq Elyas (2008) on 'The attitudes and the impact of the American English as a global language within the Saudi educational system'. His paper investigated the impact of 9/11 on the educational system in Saudi Arabia. In particular, it discussed how this event played a part in influencing the English teaching system in Saudi Arabia, and the attitude and the impact of this new phenomenon in the Saudi society, in light of the current debate between Arab linguists on the issue of more English less Islam. It also presented a case study on a group of Saudi freshmen students who were studying English at King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. A 12-item questionnaire related to this topic was distributed to 65 Saudi students studying English in their second semester of the New English Curricula. The findings provided valuable data on how the youth felt towards Western ideology, learning English and Western culture. Although the findings were context specific, they

indicated that the Saudi students agreed (for the most part) that both the study of the English language and its culture were necessary in order to develop their English comprehension.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have developed my conceptual understanding of culture underpinning this study; I have argued that meaning making occurs in social settings and that teachers' views are therefore socially constructed. In line with the growth of globalization, I have also argued for a need to adopt a non-essentialist understanding of culture, one that suggests new ways of understanding the relationship between language and culture and which argues for activities and materials in classrooms to be geared to the promotion of multicultural perspectives and intercultural awareness-raising.

I have also suggested that a non-essentialist perspective can best explain the ways in which teachers views and decisions are drawn from their understanding of both local and global cultures, providing them with what I have called glocal views informing their decisions. In the following chapter, I will describe the design of the study which reflects and draws upon this conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the methodological assumptions structuring this study and its epistemological and ontological nature are analysed, and the design of the study, along with the different methods of data collection are described. In addition the research participants, along with the procedures for data collection and data analysis are discussed. An exploration of the ethical issues encountered throughout the different stages of the study - such as access, anonymity and confidentiality - follows, before a consideration of issues of validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the research are addressed and the limitations of the study discussed.

Doing research with Saudi EFL school teachers is not without its problems and challenges. As other researchers in the region have observed, e.g. Albahiri (2010) and Alzaydi (2010), these reflect the fact that Middle Eastern teachers are not used to engaging in this kind of process. In fact, the research culture in Saudi is still building, especially when it comes to school teachers. Hence, throughout the chapter I will refer to ways in which I addressed a number of challenges posed by undertaking this study with these participants, challenges which relate to their lack of familiarity with the research process, the conceptually challenging nature of the research focus and issues of access to female participants. I will consider the ways I addressed these challenges in the appropriate places throughout the chapter.

4.2 Research Questions

The aim of this study, as explained in chapter 1 of the thesis is to identify Saudi EFL school teachers' views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia.

With respect to this, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are Saudi EFL school teachers views of the current cultural model promoted in their EFL textbooks?
2. Do they feel this is the best model and what alternative models would they prefer, if any?
3. What are the identifiable factors impacting on their views?
4. How, and in what ways, do their views inform their in-class pedagogical decision-making?

4.3 Theoretical Underpinnings of the Study

The current study with its interest in understanding the socially constructed nature of Saudi EFL teachers' views of appropriate cultural models for their textbooks is ontologically and epistemologically consistent with the interpretive tradition. This section will highlight some of the philosophical and theoretical aspects related to the interpretive tradition, along with a justification for its selection.

Broadly speaking, attempts to produce a definition of ontology have produced a great deal of controversy. The term 'ontology' refers to the study of the subject of existence. Earnest (1994: 20) defines ontology as "a theory of existence concerning the status of the world and what populates it". Crotty (1998: 10) defines it as "the study of being". He believes that "it is concerned with 'what is' with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such".

Two different ontological assumptions are evident in the literature surrounding educational research. The *positivist assumption*, also referred to as the 'scientific' assumption, is the first. Here, objects existing outside the mind are assumed to be reality. The second is the *interpretivist assumption* (Cohen et al, 2000). For Crotty (1998), an interpretive assumption is one which accepts that the thought processes of people in society are assumed to play a major role in the creation of their 'reality'. Interpretivism is ungoverned by natural regulations and tries to elicit the answer to the question: what information we can get out of reality?

(Anderson and Biddle, 1991); consequently, the scientific view of objective reality is rejected in favour of a view of the world constructed of multiple realities. Indeed, Pring (2000: 56) comments that interpretivism is the idea that “human beings cannot be the objects of science”.

The interpretivist ontological stance was chosen for this study since it is attempting to find meaningful explanations for Saudi teachers' views towards the appropriate cultural models for EFL text books in Saudi Arabia and assumes these reflect their experiences of social and cultural phenomena. In other words, following Crotty (1998: 67) the study is looking “for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world”.

Epistemology is a term used to refer to a “way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know” (Crotty 1998: 3). On the whole, epistemology is understood to be concerned with the nature of knowledge (Biesta, 2005; Hamlyn, 1995). In addition, Pring uses the argument that, in educational research, epistemology can be seen as a concept in which researchers find a different logical character. In this sense, he defines epistemology as “different underlying theories of explanations, of truth and of verification”(Pring, 2000: 45).

Crotty mentions that there are a variety of epistemologies. Objectivist epistemology gives a:

view of ‘what it means to know’, understanding and values are considered to be objectified in the people we are studying and, if we go about it in the right way, we can discover the objective truth (1998: 8).

Another epistemology is constructivism, which rejects this view of ‘human knowledge’. “Truth, or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world” (Crotty, 1998: 8). Additionally, there is subjectivism, in which the:

meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject. Here the object as such makes no contribution to the generation of meaning (Crotty, 1998: 9).

In this study, the epistemological assumption is consistent with constructivism. Here, the researcher attempts to construct meaning through the interpretation of the reasons underpinning the impact of the surrounding factors on teachers. This can also be seen through the involvement of the researcher himself in the study. Without his involvement, it could not be completed. As the subject, the researcher tries to construct meaning through the interpretation of the educational environment in which teachers (the objects) function. Moreover, meaningful reality can be clearly understood by the construction of the objects' views regarding what is being investigated by the subjects. Being in line with constructivist epistemology, this study shows how the participants are social, practicing their dependence on interaction, one which stresses interaction between individuals and their social setting. In other words, this can show the extent that this social setting includes the involvement of local norms and practices but also the broader global world within which the teachers live. Since we see them living locally and as not unaffected by globalization the understanding I have of their social setting is broad in this thesis not narrow.

4.4 Methodology and Design of the Study

With regards to the design of this study, an exploratory design was adopted in order to suit the study's aims, as an interpretive study seeking the socially constructed views of the Saudi EFL teachers. Following Radnor, the aim is to:

Uncover the many idiosyncrasies and present 'slice-of-life' episodes documented through natural language to represent as closely as possible how people feel, what they know, and what their concerns, beliefs, perceptions and understandings are" (Radnor, 2001: 99).

4.4.1 Mixed methods design

This study explored the phenomenon of teachers' views of cultural models through a mixed methods approach, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The use of mixed methods in educational research will be explored in detail through the relevant literature, both to review the method and to justify its use in this study.

In the social sciences, qualitative and quantitative researchers take different approaches, as Walliman asserts:

The researcher doing qualitative research will attempt to obtain an inside view of the phenomenon, getting as close as possible to the subject of the research in order to collect resonant, fertile data to enable the development of a social construct through the dynamic process of research. The quantitative researcher, on the other hand, chooses to remain distant as an outsider, collecting hard and reliable data, as reality is considered to be exoteric and static (2005: 247)

However, a mixed methods design seeks to incorporate both and sees these as complimentary perspectives rather than as in competition with each other.

There has been a growing interest in the use of mixed method approaches by social science researchers as a legitimate research design (Creswell, 2002, 2003; Greene, Caracelli, and Graham, 1989; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998, 2003). The emergence of mixed method approaches dates back the 1960s preceding the “paradigm wars” era between the constructivist/phenomenological approach and the positivist/empiricist (Tashakkori, 1998). Thus, while quantitative methods were dominated and maintained by positivists, qualitative methods were exclusively promoted by social constructivists.

Tashakkori (1998) describes how, three decades later in the 1980s and 1970s, there were repeated calls for both paradigms to merge. Indeed, the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in the form of a mixed methods approach was subsequently accepted. In this pragmatic approach two or three different techniques are combined by the researcher in one study (Robson, 2002). The decision depends mainly on the chosen research questions, and the choice to use qualitative and/or quantitative approaches can be made by the researcher (Tashakkori 1998). Robson maintains that a pragmatic approach is one which “uses whatever philosophical or methodological approach works best for the particular research problem at issue” (2002: 43). There are similarities in the essential values of quantitative and qualitative methods which are believed to allow for cooperation, for instance in cases of what Tashakkori refers to as a “belief in the value-laden nature of inquiry, belief in the theory-laden nature of facts,

belief that reality is multiple and constructed, belief in the fallibility of knowledge, and belief in the under termination of theory by fact” (1998: 13).

At the practical level, Creswell et al (2003: 212) define mixed methods research as “the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research”. Since it is believed that both approaches, qualitative and quantitative, include both strengths and weaknesses it has been argued that a mixed methods approach is a useful tool to overcome the shortcomings of each, and to make use of the strengths of both. As Burton observes:

Qualitative approaches can assist quantitative work in a number of ways such as by providing hunches or hypotheses to be tested by quantitative research; as a mechanism for validating survey data: interpreting statistical relationships and deciphering puzzling responses; to help construct scales and indices for survey items; and offering case study illustration. Survey data can identify individuals for qualitative study and representative and unrepresentative cases. (2000: 298).

Moreover, useful insights into varied and complex research questions will be provided by the combination of the two designs. As Robson argues, a rigid distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods is, “more apparent than real and that can be an advantage in combining qualitative and quantitative approaches” (2002: 6).

In order to ensure the validity of this study’s findings, especially when the results of both types of data were alike, the combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches was applied to examine the same research questions. It is possible for results in some cases to be different as a result of bias in the methods used. Blaikie, however, concurred with Mathison (1988), who “rightly points out that while different methods may produce different results because of the bias in each measure, different methods may also tap different ways of knowing. We might add, from different ways of knowing we may discover different realities (Blaikie, 2000: 267).

4.4.2 Approaches to mixed methods research design

Once the need to adopt a mixed methods approach had been established, it was necessary to create procedures for shaping these research methods (Creswell, 1994; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). There are two procedures that can be adopted, as follows:

1- Sequential Procedure

It has been stated by Tashakkori (1998) that a qualitative study can be applied first, followed by a quantitative study, forming two sequential phases of data called the mixed methods sequential model, this sequence can also be applied in the reverse order. This may vary according to the need of the researcher to any type of this procedure; exploratory, explanatory or transformative.

2- Concurrent Procedure

With concurrent procedures there are three strategies, namely: concurrent nested, concurrent transformative, and concurrent triangulation strategy (Cresswell, 2003). In this procedure the researcher designs and collects both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time, to come up with clear and comprehensive results after analysis, to answer the research questions. . Using this procedure, the researcher collects both types of data simultaneously; at the interpretation phase he integrates the elicited information. The main difference between these three strategies is in the interpretation stage. A nested concurrent strategy prioritises one source of data over the other in the interpretation and the transformative concurrent strategy seeks to draw from the two data sources those things which inform the critical theory that underpins this. The third one is the concurrent triangulation strategy, and its interpretation “can either note the convergence of the findings as a way to strengthen the knowledge claims of the study or explain any lack of convergence that may result” (Cresswell 217: 2003).

4.4.3 The mixed methods design adopted in this study

For the purpose of this study, following Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), a concurrent mixed methods approach was implemented, which took the form of a concurrent triangulation strategy, comprising questionnaires and interviews as tools for data collection. This design aimed to capture and provide not just a rich

set of data but also to allow me to triangulate and contrast the perspectives of these teachers in this complicated topic and to also highlight contradictions. As shown in Figure 4.1 below both questionnaires and interviews were designed simultaneously and were conducted at the same stage. On the one hand questionnaires were used to gain a global understanding of aspects pertinent to appropriate cultural models for EFL teaching from a large group of participants comprising male and female Saudi EFL teachers. On the other hand, interviews were conducted with a smaller sample to obtain deeper insights into the same phenomenon. Similarly, the collection of interview results was conducted parallel to that of the questionnaires. In this sense, questionnaires and interviews complement each other, yielding richer data to address the research questions in the current study. This process is supported by Blaikie who states that each method “is used in the service of a particular research strategy in order to develop an understanding of the phenomenon and to assist the researcher in presenting a case for a particular answer to a research question” (2000: 271).

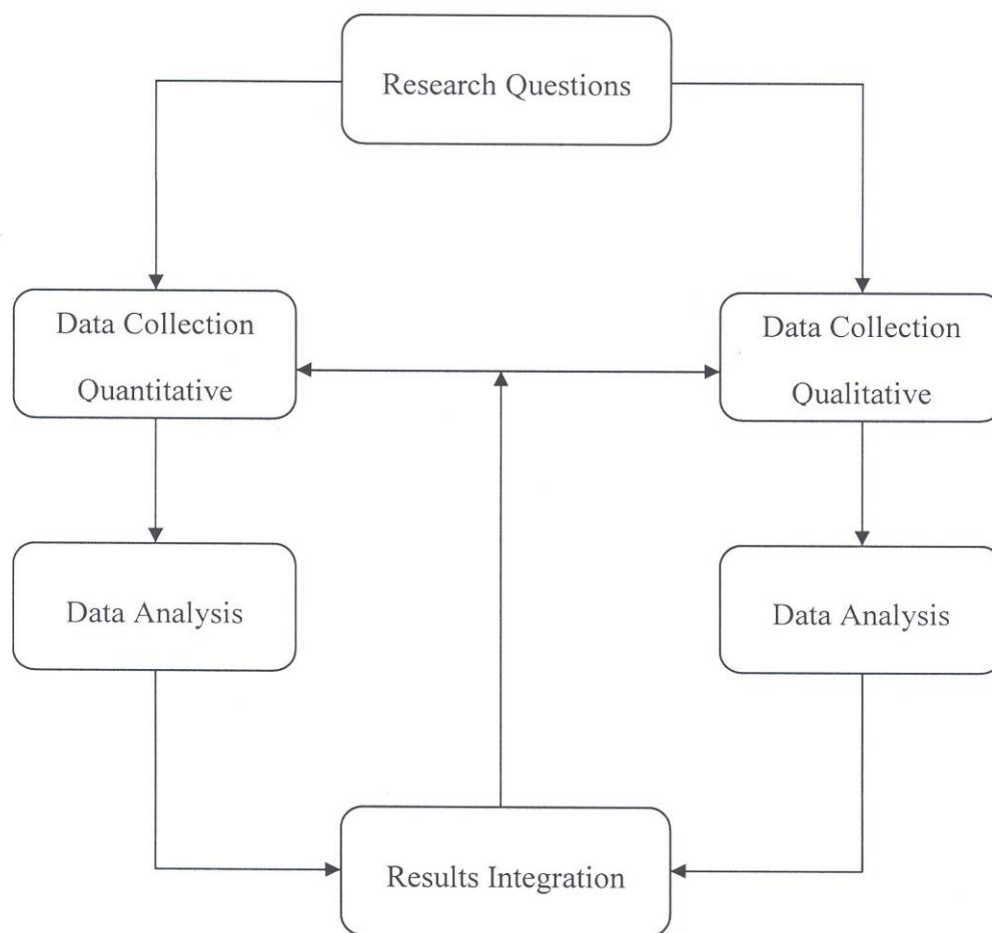


Figure 4.1: Concurrent mixed methods (adapted from Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 688)

Quantitative data collection, in the form of questionnaires, is included to gain knowledge about the Saudi teachers' views about appropriate cultural models for the EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools. Questionnaires were also used with the aim of gaining knowledge about the identifiable factors impacting on teachers' attitudes. The result was a rich and vast pool of data, in my terms the participants responded to the questions I provided them about the matter being investigated; therefore, this quantitative questionnaire method was adapted for descriptive purposes as it “can provide information about the distribution of a wide range of people’s characteristics and of relationships between such characteristics” (Robson 2002: 234). Concurrently, the in-depth interviews sought to confirm, explore, clarify and validate or corroborate findings within this research (Greene et al, 1989; Morgan, 1998; Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird and McCormic, 1992).

The following two sections will elaborate on the use of questionnaires and interviews, which together form the concurrent mixed methods approach employed in this study.

4.5 Data Collection Methods

As stated above two methods were used within the mixed method design of the study. I will discuss these in turn below.

4.5.1 First data collection method: questionnaires

Questionnaires are a common research tool, used to generate both qualitative and quantitative data. A questionnaire can be defined as “a set of questions on a topic or group of topics designed to be answered by a respondent” (Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992: 303). Broadly speaking, questionnaires allow researchers to collect data in field settings, and “the data themselves are more amenable to quantification than discursive data such as free-form field notes, participant observers’ journals, the transcripts of oral language” Nunan (1992: 143). Thus it is helpful to use questionnaires as a method of data collection to examine the views, perceptions and attitudes of participants in any given context, giving the researcher the ability to unlock the hidden information or views in the participants’ thinking. In addition, questionnaires allow the researcher to elicit background information as well (Cohen et al, 2000). Along with their impersonality, the fixed inflexibility of questionnaires is also a major feature where the researcher is distant from the research question with the aim to minimizing bias and is thus not affecting the participants’ responses and consequently the research findings. Moreover, the anonymity of the participants gives them more freedom and allows them to respond without restraint (Walliman, 2005).

It is also worth mentioning the economic aspect of the use of questionnaires; this is a convenient method as regards both distribution and administration, which saves money and time when analyzing. Questionnaires also allowed sufficient time for the participants to reflect comfortably on their answers (Cohen et al, 2000). In

addition, Wilson and Mclean (1994, cited in Cohen et al. 2000: 245) contend that “questionnaires are also comparatively easy to analyze”. For instance, Cohen et al (2000) maintain that questionnaires can be sent and conducted by different methods. They did a comparison between the merits and demerits of questionnaires and interviews, and argue that in questionnaires, the large number of participants as needed can be easily reached, whilst this cannot readily be achieved using interviews alone.

With regard to questionnaire design, there are a number of questionnaire design types, structured, unstructured and semi-structured. In this regard, structured questionnaires tend to use closed questions, while unstructured questionnaires tend to use open-ended questions and semi-structured questionnaires tend to use a combination of both open and closed questions (Wray, Trott and Bloomer, 1998). Wray, Trott and Bloomer (1998) point out that open-ended questions normally require a longer response, whereas closed questions such as Likert scale and multiple-choice items need a single answer or a limited number of responses. Moreover, questionnaires can be distinguished according to the ranges in their level of explicitness. Seliger (1989) points out that structured questionnaires are classified as being of a high level of explicitness in which, for example, respondents are required to check agreements or disagreements, mark responses or select a number of alternatives. Consequently, this type of questionnaire is systematic and is one in which subjects' similar responses to each question can be located and organized, leading to a relatively easier and more efficient analysis of the results. On the other hand, an unstructured questionnaire has a lower level of explicitness in which respondents are left with open questions to complete with more elaborations. In this sense the use of structured questionnaires is considered to be more efficient than open or unstructured questionnaires in that they draw out data in the form of numbers, checks and ranking and can be easily be statistically analysed using software packages for quantitative research, such as SPSS. A further type of questionnaire is often referred to as a semi-structured questionnaire, and combines features of both structured and unstructured questionnaires.

For the purpose of the current study, this last type of questionnaire, combining closed and open-ended items was used to collect data in order to answer the research questions. Totally structured questionnaires have the disadvantage that they tend to use closed questions, meaning that participants often do not have the opportunity to express their views and perceptions freely. Semi-structured questionnaires, therefore, enable participants to elaborate on, and add to their answers to the closed questions. Thus as Cohen *et al* (2000:248) assert “the semi-structured questionnaire sets the agenda but does not presuppose the nature of the responses”.

4.5.1.1 Design of the questionnaire employed in this study

Dornyei (2003) observes that in order to obtain accurate responses the questionnaire items should not be too long or monotonous or respondents may begin to respond inaccurately as a result of tiredness or boredom. With this in mind, the questionnaire I developed included 34 items and were divided into five sections. The design of the questionnaire was informed by the conceptual framework developed in chapter 3 above and insights from the literature reviewed regarding different understandings of culture prevalent in discussions of cultural models and pedagogy in TESOL classrooms and textbooks, the understanding of how teachers views are constructed with respect to their social realities, local and global factors that may affect these and the role of these in their pedagogical decision-making. Details of the five sections are discussed below:

(a) Background information. This section comprises six items and was constructed with the aim of obtaining background information about the participants. It includes information about their gender, location in the country, work experience, the level they teach at, whether they have been to an English speaking country, and finally whether they want to visit these countries in the future.

(b) Comprising 4 items, this section was to examine teachers' views about the cultural content of EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabian public schools. Firstly, teachers were asked to describe their local culture in Saudi by choosing one or more of the given options, with a space for any further option they might think of. Next, they were asked to choose one answer to indicate their perception of the cultural

content that is currently promoted in EFL teaching for the Saudi public schools. Then they were asked about the importance of addressing target language culture in EFL teaching in Saudi. Finally, they were asked about how happy they are with the cultural content promoted currently in EFL teaching in Saudi.

(c) Teachers' views on aspects of English speaking culture and its suitability for the Saudi Arabian context. This section comprises one part, comprising only close-ended items; it aimed to elicit teachers' views on the chosen aspects related to the main topic of this section. Teachers were given 11 statements and asked to indicate the extent of their agreement on a five-point Likert scale.

(d) The first part of this section asks teachers about their views of the best cultural model for EFL teaching in Saudi public schools. It employs six close-ended items, followed by open-ended questions to elaborate on these answers. The second part comprises only close-ended items and aims to elicit information about what teachers think influences their views of the appropriate cultural content for the EFL teaching in Saudi public schools. They were given 11 statements and asked to indicate the extent of their thinking on the level of influence using a five-point Likert scale.

(e) The final section in the questionnaire concerns the application of teachers' views on suitable cultural content for language teaching in their teaching practice. In a close-ended question with three options they were asked about their ability to apply their beliefs about suitable cultural content in their teaching. Finally, an open-ended question was given for the teachers to indicate any factors that impact on their answers to the previous questions in this section.

A copy of the English version of this questionnaire can be found in appendix 3. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic before distribution to respondents as a reflection for my awareness of the fact that some may teachers have limited English proficiency and that the sorts of concepts I was asking them to deal with were challenging to handle in a foreign language.

4.5.2 Second data collection method: interviews

Interviews are seen as a powerful instrument for data collection and are a common tool used to gain in-depth insights into the views of participants. Hence, Kvale (1996: 14) defines interview as a research tool which brings about “an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data” (cited in Cohen et al, 2000: 267). He also believes that the use of interviews “marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and data as somehow external to individuals, and towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversations” Kvale (1996: 11). Interviews can be classified into three types, 1) structured, 2) semi-structured and 3) unstructured (Verma and Mallick, 1999). For structured interviews, the interviewer has a list of questions which are “tightly specified in advance” (McDonough and McDonough 1997: 182) in terms of both content and procedures, without any expansion permissible whether in the questions or the answers. Structured interviews are particularly useful when there is a need to interview a large number of respondents and in which identical and particular information is to be sought. Contrary to the case with structured interviews, in unstructured interviews, the “direction of the interview intentionally follows interviewee responses, with some of the characteristics of natural conversation” (McDonough and McDonough 1997: 184). Although in unstructured interviews the interviewer normally begins with some form of objective, such interviews give the respondent broad freedom of expression and expansion and often appear to be informal discussion; one question leads to another without a pre-planned agenda of what will be discussed.

Between these types come the semi-structured interview, in which there are particular questions determined in advance and which provide a loose framework for the interview, however the interviewee is given time to explore and elaborate within the limitation of the questions being asked. When conducting structured and semi-structured interviews, the interviewer uses an interview schedule listing the questions or topics to be investigated, with space to record the information procedures during the interview or any problems that might occur when conducting the interview. According to Belisle (1998: 2) “Digital recording is a

time-saver and value enhancer whose time has come. It allows consultants to work directly with the subtleties of the audio record and puts it right on their desktop. Ultimately, it should lead to better research, at a lower cost”.

For the purpose of the current study, a semi-structured interview was used as a second tool for data collection, concurrent with the semi-structured questionnaires. After the interview, the goal is to compare as well as to continue the validation of the questionnaire’s results, concurrently. Regardless of the advantages that questionnaires lend to this study, they have certain limitations. One main drawback of the use of questionnaires is that they limit the participants’ responses to the specific questionnaire items without leaving space for new questions to arise. Moreover, while it is impossible to gauge the number of questionnaires which will be returned, the likelihood of gaining data from an interview is far better Kvale (2007). It is for this reason that interviews were used as a second instrument to produce the best research outcomes and also to give respondents the chance to elaborate their answers with more freedom.

Interviews elicit more in-depth detail of what is being investigated; as Seliger and Shohamy (1989) note, unknown information can be elicited and clear data developed to help the researcher. Additionally, interviews provide a very good chance for participants to raise more issues and express themselves freely, providing more information which could enhance the information provided by the questionnaires. Bell (1978: 70) maintains that interviews differ from questionnaires in that “a skilful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do”; the interviewee therefore is freer to elaborate and expand on his answers, as he is alone with the interviewer. Qualitative research, as Berg (2004: 11) maintains, “provides the framework to explore, define, and assist in understanding the social and psychological phenomena of organizations and the social settings of individuals”. Therefore, in this research, participants were given enough time to speak freely about what was being investigated without the researcher controlling the discussion to prevent the interview deviating from a narrow focus. In other words, the researcher chooses semi-structured interviews to assist the “control of

the direction of the interview but with much more leeway”, since he is able to amend the order of the questions and elicit more information to gain richer data (Berg, 2004: 184). This is as satisfactory a way for participants to express their way of seeing the world through their own eyes as it is to deal with the interviews (Silverman, 1993). In other words, to give the participants the opportunity to talk freely and with no stress about whatever issues they choose concerning the study (Cohen et al, 2000).

4.5.2.1 The design of the interview in this study

Interviews were conducted using questions based on the research questions, and designed to cover every aspect of them. Since the questionnaires answered all the research questions, the interviews were designed to gain more in-depth and complementary data from the participants. The semi-structured interview framework is shown below this was informed by Radnor’s (2001) suggestion that this can be presented as themes and ‘pick ups’ of things that might be raised by participants as can be shown in Table 4.1 below. When conducting the interviews, the questions were used by the researcher to ensure that the necessary topics were covered within the framework of the interview; direct question were avoided and the interviewee was allowed to take their time to talk freely, with my guidance and control, within the limitations of the semi-structured interviews.

Table (4.1) Interview Framework

No.	Theme	Pick up
1	Introductory warm up: participants' views on teaching English to students in Saudi Arabia.	How necessary is this to them, students and parents.
2	Participants' views on the current cultural models (cultural content) promoted in the EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia and why.	Concerns and views on appropriacy.
3	Alternative models they would prefer and why.	Local cultural model versus target cultural model versus multicultural model.
4	Factors impacting on their views.	<p><i>Local factors:</i> school, wider society, parents, religious and other cultural values.</p> <p><i>Global factors:</i> importance of English, attitudes to western culture, their travel, and politics.</p>
5	The relationship between views and practices. Do their views inform their in-class decision-making. Why /why not?	Examples of what they do – adaptation or omission of textbook content. Their perceived personal control over decision-making.

4.5.3 Design issues and their resolution in questionnaires and interviews: obtaining participants' views on the complex phenomenon of culture

One important difficulty to acknowledge is the complex meaning and understanding for the term 'culture' found among Saudi EFL teachers. This issue was sensed and encountered during the process of interviewing the participants in this study. As will be explained with more details later in this chapter, different participants were not sure about what was meant by 'Culture'. This is seen locally in the Saudi context: people often use the word culture as a synonym for modernity or civilization, especially when using their local version of Arabic. Furthermore, people can also confuse language with culture, as one may mean the same as the other. This of course goes parallel with the discussion in chapter 3 about the definition of 'culture' in the literature, which is seen by Williams (1976) as a complicated word. Accordingly, I had to give explanations or examples in

brackets in the questionnaire to ensure that the participants fully understood what was meant by 'culture' (for example in question number 2 in section B of the questionnaire) as well as translating all the questionnaire items into Arabic.

With regard to the interviews, I found it easier and clearer for the participants to be interviewed in Arabic. A further technique was used to make sure the participants understood the meaning of culture: using some warm up questions about general information on EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia. Then the questions were introduced in more depth later in the interview. If the participants were not fully aware of the exact meaning of culture, their answers would not contribute to the research. A participant who was unaware of the meaning of culture in this context might talk generally about English language teaching in the country, mix up meanings and interpretations and talk about the degree of civilization and modernity of the native speaking nations, as occurred with some participants when conducting the interviews for this study, giving rise to the suspicion, voiced elsewhere, that participants' comprehension of this concept were not always consistent.

4.6 The Research Setting and the Participants

The research setting for this study was a city in central Saudi Arabia. This was chosen because it is a city where I live and where I am known to the educational authorities which was deemed to make access to participants easier as I will explain below. This medium sized city was also deemed to be representative of the typical social and cultural milieu within which the large majority of teachers in Saudi Arabia live and work. It enabled me to generate a different sort of data than might have been obtained from a more cosmopolitan city like Jeddah or Riyadh, but inevitably it cannot create a comprehensive picture of Saudi teachers perspectives.

With respect to the sampling strategy adopted, my decisions were informed by insights from Cohen and Manion (1994) who outline four factors that should inform researchers' decisions about sample size: (1) the current research purpose, (2) the investigated context of population, (3) the number of variables which the

researchers embark for control in their analyses, and (4) the statistical test types which they wish to construct. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the current study employs a mixed methods research design. Accordingly, the choices made in relation to the sample are divided into random sampling in the case of the quantitative part of the study and purposive sampling in the case of the qualitative part. The reason for this is to have general view for the research with regards to the quantitative data, given the large number of participants. This would give me a chance to see different views from different participants of different experiences and different stages and views.

The research sample comprised Saudi female and male English language teachers in public schools in Saudi Arabia teaching at the sixth grade of elementary schools, intermediate, and secondary grades. Some teachers may teach more than one level at the same time. Table 4.2 below provides an overview of the sample for the questionnaire and interviews.

Instrument	Female Teachers	Male Teachers
Questionnaires	152	128
Interviews	7	7

Table (4.2): Number of participants for the questionnaires and interview data

Questionnaire samples

The questionnaire sample comprised 152 female teachers and 128 male teachers from all of the different levels of public schools. They were selected randomly to represent the population of all Saudi EFL teachers in the chosen city. Because of the male/female segregation in the Saudi educational system, and in order to give equal opportunity to the research participants, the random sample covers the gender variable comprising male and female teachers. In addition, the random sample covers the different levels of school to include the sixth grade of elementary school, all three grades of intermediate school and finally all three grades of secondary school. This was done with the aim of achieving a higher

response rate and, more importantly, obtaining as many diversified views as possible.

Interview samples

The interview sample was chosen purposefully and comprised seven female and seven male EFL teachers. Teachers were selected to present the context of this research with similar reasons as the questionnaire samples regarding the selection of both genders. Equal numbers of both genders were selected to give both the opportunity to give their voice on the matter in question. Additionally, the teachers were also purposefully selected from different levels of public schools. Interviewees were selected with a variety of qualifications and teaching experience at different levels, in order to cover a wide range of views. Details of how these 14 male and female participants were identified are discussed further below in section 4.7.5. This interview sample was considered to be large enough to be representative of the different sorts of teachers. In the interests of anonymity, interviewees are referred to by pseudonym in the discussion of the results.

4.7 Data Collection Procedures

This section will introduce the data collection procedures with regard to both the qualitative and quantitative data. I will first describe the piloting and trialling phases of the questionnaire and interviews. Next I will describe how access to the participants was negotiated and then how the questionnaire and interviews were conducted.

4.7.1 Pilot questionnaire

Once I had designed the questionnaire, before seeking to identify teachers who could be approached to complete this, I first undertook a pilot of the questionnaire. Bell maintains that “all data-gathering instruments should be piloted to test how long it takes recipients to complete them, to check that all questions and instructions are clear and to enable you to remove any items which do not yield

usable data” (1993: 84). In the current study, the piloting of the questionnaire took place in two phases.

The first phase was designed to ensure the questionnaire written instructions were easy to comprehend by the participants. In addition, this phase was also useful to decide the amount of time needed to complete the questionnaire items. The questionnaire was given to two doctoral supervisors and five TESOL research students from the Graduate School of Education at the University of Exeter, as well as three Saudi English language teachers to obtain their feedback and suggestions. All participated in answering the questionnaire and returned them with comments and feedback. Some changes to the questionnaire were recommended by those who participated in this pilot. Some items on the questionnaire were deleted and some were modified because they were deemed to be too conceptually demanding for the intended participants, especially when it comes to the meaning of culture and the cultural models for EFL textbooks. Hence, new items were added to cover all areas of the research questions, and some questions were reworded to make them easier for the participants to comprehend. In addition, the layout of the questionnaire was changed to look shorter and easier to follow. This involved presenting part of the questionnaires in the form of tables which reduced the number of pages from 15 pages to 10.

Phase two of the piloting was carried out to test both the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed through the Saudi internet English language teaching forum “saudienglish” (www.saudienglish.net) to 60 Saudi English language teachers, both female and male, who taught English language in Saudi public schools either in the 6th grade of elementary or at intermediate or secondary levels. Further improvements were applied to the questionnaire at this stage and since several teachers indicated that they liked completing the questionnaire a decision was taken to make use of the internet an option for participants in the main study. Saudienglish Forums, an internet forum for Saudi Arabian English language teachers. This would cover both male and female Saudi English language teachers teaching the three public schools levels, primary, intermediate and secondary, from all over the country. In their answers

the Saudi teachers on this forum mostly used pseudonyms and therefore were free to answer the questionnaire confidentially. Following this, every participant was assigned a number to indicate his or her answer and neither real names nor pseudonyms were used for analysing or reporting the data.

4.7.2 Trialling interview technique

The piloting of the questionnaire was the first step in preparation for the data collection procedure. The second step was to trial three practical elements of the other research instrument, the interviews: length of interview, suitability of the interview guide, and the use of the tape recorder. Two Saudi teachers with the same characteristics as the research sample were selected for the interview pilot. One of them was a masters' student on the TESOL programme at the Graduate School of Education, Exeter University, who had been in the UK for less than a year after teaching English in Saudi. The second participant was also in the UK doing an English language course and waiting to start his masters' programme in TESOL at the same University; this person had only spent a month in the UK after teaching in Saudi. Both were helpful and also representative of the sample, able to give feedback and raise issues to be touched on in the real interview to be conducted in Saudi Arabia. An expensive and time-consuming visit to Saudi to pilot the interviews was thus avoided.

As a result of trialling, some improvements were made. The tape recorder was replaced by a digital recorder, both to improve the sound quality and to enable interviews to be uploaded to computer. The pilot interviews lasted for more than an hour, so changes were made to focus the interview better and limit it to approximately 45 minutes, which proved sufficient for the both the interviewees and the interviewer. Finally, the interview pilot was useful in increasing the researcher's confidence in managing time, in the use of the technology, and in phrasing questions. Trialling the interview also gave me an opportunity to practice my interview technique; it was useful for a novice researcher.

4.7.3 Negotiating access to the research sample

A research conducting a study in the Saudi Arabian context should be aware of the difficulties and limitations that may be faced. The segregation of male and female education is one of the difficulties, as a male researcher cannot either enter a girls' school nor meet female teachers or students face to face for religious and traditional reasons, as reported above in chapter 2. Therefore, distributing and collecting the questionnaire is a real challenge; additionally, conducting interviews is much harder in the Saudi context.

The process of gaining permission to approach the research sample was lengthy and time-consuming. A letter was sent to the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London with the research supervisor's approval stating the period needed for the data collection to be conducted in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Cultural Bureau then requested another approval from the Ministry of Education in Saudi. After obtaining initial verbal approval, a formal request to approve the field work trip was sent to my sponsor, the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education. Following the acceptance of this request, the researcher received a formal letter signed by the cultural attaché to support the request to conduct research in Saudi. A visit to Saudi allowed the letter of approval and copies of both data collection tools, questionnaires and interview, to be presented to the Ministry of Education for approval, after which two formal letters were issued to be handed to both the Directorate of Education for Girls and the Directorate of Education for Boys in the chosen city (Appendix 4). Once all the necessary permissions from the relevant institutions, both in the UK and in Saudi, had been obtained the researcher travelled to 'LM' city on 25th of April 2009 and stayed there for three months to collect the main data for this study. Following this, I was able to commence data collection.

4.7.4 Questionnaire data collection

After making the necessary amendments resulting from the pilot study, questionnaires were distributed. In this study, the questionnaire method was chosen for the advantages in enabling access to participants who were hard to reach within the time frame available to the current research. In addition, due to

gender segregation, the use of questionnaires was particularly useful to facilitate access to female teachers. This in turn helped to increase the potential for obtaining higher rate of responses for the study.

Four hundred copies of the questionnaire were presented to both the Directorate of Education for Boys and the Directorate of Education for Girls in the city that formed the setting for the research, so it could be distributed to all male and female Saudi English language teachers in the city. Moreover, an electronic copy of the questionnaires was provided to both directorates by email, so it could be sent to the teachers' email addresses. Participants had the option of returning the completed questionnaires either to the Directorates of Education or direct to the researcher by email. It should be noted here that questionnaires sent using the schools' web mailing system were converted to an online version for those who chose to complete and send their responses directly to the researcher's personal email. The use of the Internet for collecting questionnaire data, as happened in this case with more than 60 of the teachers, is a useful method and one which is supported by Hewsan (2002: 44) who asserts that:

first there is the novelty value of responding to an internet-based study, which may enhance its appeal to potential participants. Further, participants are able to complete the whole process - receiving materials, giving responses, posting back to the researcher from the comfort of their own home and at a time that suits them.

The main reason for offering these options to the participants is due to the challenges and limitations found within the Saudi context which were mentioned earlier in this chapter (4.5.3), mainly the access issues.

Some of the completed questionnaires were returned from the schools as hard copies to the Directorates of Education in 'LM' city, for the researcher to collect. These were posted in sealed envelopes to protect participants' privacy and ensure anonymity. A number of participants opted to send completed questionnaires electronically to the researcher's email address, which was given on the cover page of the questionnaire. About half of the questionnaires were completed and

returned approximately three weeks after distribution, and the rest of the questionnaires arrived back within three months. The response rate for the questionnaires was 280 out of 400 distributed copies (including both electronic and hard copies).

4.7.5 Interview data collection

4.7.5.1 Selection of interview participants

In this study, as mentioned above, 14 male and female English language teachers were chosen purposefully to participate individually in the interviews. The interviews were conducted in Arabic for the reason mentioned earlier: it would help the participants to freely elaborate on their answers and give deeper views.

All interview participants were from 'LM' city. Questionnaires included a section where teachers were asked if they wished to be interviewed, if chosen. In the event, more than enough participants agreed to be interviewed; therefore I was able to select a representative sample of the participants from different levels of schools and who vary in experience and gender. Teachers who agreed and were chosen to be interviewed were then asked to select one of two ways in which they prefer to be contacted and interviewed: face to face or by telephone interviewing. For the male teachers a face to face interview was the appropriate method. Accordingly, some male teachers notified their agreement to be interviewed directly to the researchers' email and some during the visit of the researcher to random schools in the city.

On the other hand, female teachers opted for telephone interview only, that being the only available choice for them culturally. Therefore, they responded directly to their supervision department at the Directorate of Education for Girls in 'LM' and gave their agreement to interview and also a scheduled time to conduct the interview. This process was done at the Directorate. Although male and female staff in the Directorate of Education for Girls work separately, they communicate by phone. Therefore, a dedicated office was given to the researcher to conduct interviews with participants on the other side of the Directorate, to which female teachers were invited by arrangement and with the support of the Directorate of

Education for Girls. In addition, the Directorate offered transportation for the teachers who were interested in participating. However, choosing the two options mentioned earlier could give my participants more freedom and relaxation when being interviewed, this is due to the cultural background in Saudi where women are separated from men which may make it harder to interview female teachers, in which the phone could be the solution. These different ways helped to keep the participants safe and free of stress.

4.7.5.2 Techniques for conducting interviews

There are several techniques for conducting interviews. One to one or individual interviewing involves one interviewer and one interviewee, whereas group interviewing is where “several participants in a social context can be interviewed simultaneously” (Frey and Fontana, 1991: 175). In this study I applied the first technique to interview male participants, since a face to face interview is very helpful in gaining direct information about participants and the chosen questions.

A second technique was used with female participants: interviewing by phone, which is considered an important of data collection as maintained by Cohen et al (2000). Sykes and Hoinville (1985) and Borg and Gall (1996) believe that “telephone interviewing reaches nearly the same proportion of many target populations as ‘standard’ interviews, that it obtains nearly the same rate of response, and produces comparable information to ‘standard’ interviews, sometimes at a fraction of the cost”. Because of the cultural considerations that do not allow male and female to contact and must be segregated as outlined earlier in chapter 2, this technique was used for interviewing the female teachers.

The interviews with the male teachers were easy to conduct and straightforward. After permission from the general Directorates of Education for Boys and Girls was granted, the permission letter was sent to all participating schools in the city along with the questionnaires to be passed to the teachers. Accordingly, within the first month of conducting the research, as mentioned above, about half of the questionnaire participants had already completed their questionnaires. Therefore, I found it very useful and easier to interview the participants with some knowledge

of the topic under investigation. However, some of the interviewees had not finished their questionnaires by the time the interview was taken place. In this case, more efforts had to be to introduce the topic to the interviewee. In fact, the questionnaires had no influences on the interview questions, merely gave the participant an idea of what is meant by 'culture'.

On each visit, the researcher introduced himself to the head teacher and gave him a copy of the permission letter, which he had already got in advance. Every head teacher called the Saudi English language teachers in his school to ask for their approval to carry out the interviews. Each school provided a room to conduct the interviews. Before each interview, the teachers were briefed about the study aims and objectives, told that their responses were important and would help achieve the current research aims and questions and were given the right to withdraw from the interview at any stage. Likewise, teachers were assured that information provided by them would be anonymous and would be kept strictly confidential. When starting the interview, the researcher made sure that the room door and windows were closed to avoid any external distractions as well as to give more privacy and comfort to the interviewees. A digital voice recorder was used to give much clear sound quality and to enable interviews to be uploaded and saved on computer; this method is much more accurate and time saving than, for instance, writing notes of responses while interviewing.

The steps above were carried out in most schools, however unfortunately, in some schools the library had to be used, as the quietest place in the school. All of the interviews lasted for approximately 45 minutes. On the other hand, with the female teachers the research situation was completely different. Because of the cultural boundaries between males and females in Saudi there was no chance for the male researcher to meet female teachers face to face. Although the way of working in the Directorate may seem strange to a non-Saudi, there are male and female sections separated from each other but able to communicate by phone. A further difficulty faced was the recording of interviews, in that some families in the context did not want the women's voice to be recorded. In this case, the researcher wrote down answers and notes, and recorded himself while interviewing so that

the answer given by the interviewee was repeated by the interviewer, and the latter was recorded.

During the interviews, many participants remarked on the example of a Saudi boy showing pictures of his family members to his friend, as illustrated in Appendix 2. This is because this is seen locally in Saudi Arabia as contrary to tradition; photos of female family members, like the mother in this case are not acceptable. For this reason, teachers often face problems when teaching this lesson.

4.8 Data Analysis

Two different collection instruments were used to provide data to answer the research questions, and these generated two new forms of data: the quantitative close-ended questionnaires and secondly, the qualitative data from both the semi-structured interviews and the open-ended questionnaires. The next sections focus on the qualitative and quantitative data analysis in more detail.

Analysis of the quantitative data

During the process of collecting data for this study, 280 participants completed questionnaires; accordingly, all the close-ended questionnaires were put together in an MS Excel spread sheet and coded from 1 to 280. Following this process, as suggested by Bryman and Carmer (1999: 16) “The great advantage of using a package like SPSS is that it will enable you to score and to analyse quantitative data very quickly and in many different ways”, therefore, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 16) was used and the Excel file was converted to an SPSS file. Percentages and frequencies are presented in table form in Chapter 5 below, showing all categories of the questionnaires. As Norusis claimed, SPSS is “a powerful, comprehensive, and flexible statistical and information analysis system” (1990: 1).

Analysis of the qualitative data

As both male and female Saudi EFL teachers were interviewed, two different methods were used to collect this data to suit the Saudi cultural traditions and religious values. As noted above, the interviews with male teachers were

conducted face to face in the schools whereas, female teachers' interviews were conducted by phone, recording only the interviewer's voice and writing down or recording a repetition of female interviewees' answers.

All 14 interviews were transcribed into a MS Word document, and because they were all conducted in Arabic, translated into English (see appendix 7 for an interview sample). For the female interviews, the responses repeated during the interviews had to be linked with separate notes. The translation was reviewed by two professional Arabic colleagues, who are PhD candidates in the School of Education at Exeter University, and the transcribed data were sent back by email to the participants to ensure the trustworthiness of the transcripts, a process known as member-checking Radnor (2001). To guard against loss, interview data was saved at different email addresses as well as being saved on a hard disk and on a flash drive.

Following the advice of Radnor (2001), I read through the interviews and identified initial codes which I highlighted in different colours. Responses that fitted more than one theme or category were highlighted in multiple colours. Having established about 30-35 categories in every interview, the codes were reduced and subsumed into a number of themes. In this way, the huge amount of data was reduced by integrating similar categories into one main theme, giving each a colour code (Radnor, 2001). The data can therefore be easily controlled and labelled according to a relevant theme (Bryman, 2008). During this process, as shown in Appendix 8, I presented and classified the codes into related categories, sub-themes, and themes that create a solid meaning from the data and allow an accurate representation of the Saudi EFL teachers' views on the most appropriate cultural models for the EFL textbooks in the Saudi public schools.

With regard to the open-ended questions included within some sections of the questionnaires, it was more appropriate to analyse them qualitatively with the interview data in order to come up with appropriate themes, sub-themes, and categories of the data.

Finally, as Holliday (2002) claimed, the power and richness in describing a data can be done through the smooth emergence within the data, interpretation and argument. The procedure adopted for analysing the data was using three main steps as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) in which the data reduction is presented, then displayed, and finally conclusions are drawn and confirmed. Accordingly, by summarising the data, writing notes, memos and categorising the abstracts we can then reduce the data. In addition, data can be displayed through thematic tables and charts, matrices, networks and other different forms. And finally, through the time spent in research and the efforts to find the best answer for the research questions, a conclusion can be reached.

Based on the research questions of this study, the findings were outlined thematically. In this regards, the findings of the 280 close-ended questionnaires for male and female Saudi English language teachers in the Saudi public schools were analysed statistically in order to produce the right percentages. In addition to this, the open-ended questionnaire responses for the same participants were analysed. The semi-structured interviews, conducted with seven male Saudi English language teachers and also seven female Saudi English language teachers, were both analysed. Both qualitative and quantitative data findings were combined and presented in the same integrated themes, categories, and sub-categories. By using descriptive statistics, SPSS was used to analyse the results of the quantitative data. By using exploratory content analysis, the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews and the open-ended questionnaires was analysed. Following this, because the interviews were conducted in Arabic, the data were transcribed and then translated by the researcher and checked by two professional Arab colleagues. The themes were presented and categorised, merged and then compared with other themes; these steps entailed repeated reading and checking of the respondents' answers until final outcomes and results were reached (Lalik and Potts, 2001).

4.9 Ensuring Data Quality

In this section I will consider a number of steps taken to ensure data quality; first the issue of reliability and validity will be discussed. Since the notion of validity has been constructed to describe quantitative research, for qualitative research, there has been a tendency to replace it with the notion of trustworthiness which, will be discussed with in more detail below.

4.9.1 Reliability of quantitative data

Reliability can be seen through the quantitative research lens. In the case of quantitative research, reliability is defined as:

The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Joppe, 2000: 1).

Cronbach's Alpha was carried out to examine the reliability of the instrument and the resulting score was .749 and this result demonstrated the reliability of these items. However, this study is undertaking an exploratory approach; it is not seeking to show its representativeness of all Saudi EFL teachers around the country (see Table (4.3) below.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized Items	No. of Items
.749	.749	34

Table (4.3): Reliability Statistics

4.9.2 Validity

Broadly in the literature, validity in quantitative research has been argued with its importance and can be defined as:

Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit “the bull’s eye” of your research object? Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others (Joppe, 2000: 1)

To validate the instrument, both face validity and construct validity were examined. As mentioned above, the questionnaire piloting phases helped to test the validity of this research. The questionnaires were given to the researcher's two supervisors and then given to five colleagues, PhD candidates at the Graduate School of Education at Exeter University for their feedback. Following this procedure, all of the comments were considered, administered by the researcher and handed to his supervisors in order to be finalized and to obtain the final approval. The Arabic version of the questionnaire was given to two Arabic PhD colleagues, both professionals in English language teaching, to check the translation and give their feedback. This procedure was necessary to achieve face validity.

4.9.3 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness can be defined as "a set of criteria advocated by some writers for assessing the quality of qualitative research". (Bryman, 2008: 700). It is a criterion offered by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as an alternative to the traditional reliability and validity in judging educational research. Trustworthiness has four parts: "(i) credibility; (ii) transferability (cf. *external validity*); (iii) dependability; (iv) confirmability (the latter two being parallel to reliability)" Willington (2000: 201), this section will only discuss all four parts of trustworthiness below. Therefore, we can see that "quantitative findings have to be tested for their reliability and validity while qualitative data have to be tested for their trustworthiness, which entails confirming truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 289). Consequently, in this section I will discuss trustworthiness in the light of this research.

Credibility

One procedure to examine research trustworthiness is to ensure that it measures what is essentially meant to be tested in a particular study, to bring up what is called internal validity (Shenton, 2004). Merriam (1998: 213) suggests that in qualitative research, the concept of credibility has more to do with the question of "how congruent are the findings with reality?". Accordingly, trustworthiness has some factors to be established and ensuring credibility is an important one among

them (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Accordingly for the current study the research design and its implementation are described step by step to enable readers of this research to develop or even to continue the research in a similar situation in further depth. Additionally, detailed information about the data collection is included within the study, with all the steps taken and the difficulties faced, along with possible resolutions of such difficulties to assist future researchers in similar contexts and with a similar target group of participants.

First of all, the researcher intended to familiarise the participants with the research under investigation. For example, part of the data, the questionnaire, was handed to the participants a few days before conducting the interviews to give the interviewees a clearer idea about the study and what is being investigated. In addition, teachers involved in the research data are familiar with the current cultural models used in their curriculum and are aware of the changes in the curriculum as teachers, or even as students in the past.

Triangulation is another key angle for ensuring credibility, in which individuals interviewed may come up with different views in each question investigated, and their different opinions could give rich information needed for the research. In addition, individual interviews can be used as supporting data for the background information of the context under investigation. In addition to this, ploys were also incorporated to avoid false responses from the participants, this was done by asking the same question using different methods or even at different stages of the interview.

Transferability

Transferability is “concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations” as Merriam (1998: 208) defines external validity. The participants in this research, as mentioned earlier in the study, mostly share a similar cultural background in the city they teach in. In addition, the population of Saudi Arabia mostly has a similar Islamic and Arabic cultural background. Therefore, transferability for the findings of the data in this research can be applied to different small cities or regions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, excluding the two

largest cities of Riyadh and Jeddah. Transferability across cultures cannot be claimed, because of the particular cultural characteristics of the research participants

Dependability

It can be argued that there is a close relationship between credibility and dependability; as Lincoln and Guba (1985: 69) maintain, “a demonstration of the former goes some distance in ensuring the latter”. Accordingly, in the current study the research design and its implementation are described step by step to enable to develop it further at a later date or to carry out research in similar situations in more depth. Additionally, detailed information about data collection is included, noting the steps taken and difficulties faced along with possible solutions of such difficulties in order to inform the work of future researchers in similar contexts and with a similar target group of participants.

Confirmability

In order to check the confirmability of the data Given (2008) claimed that interpretations and findings have to be matched with data. Therefore, the researcher assured confirmability in this research as follows: firstly, he depended on the research supervisors in order to clarify descriptions and steps of the data collection and its analysis. Next, it was confirmed that the research process and its data interpretations were consistent with the literature of the current research and also the methodological approach, depending on an independent reviewer to follow so-called “an audit trial” Given (2008). Following this, after the researcher finished the transcription stage, participants were given final copy of their interviews by email to check.

4.10 Research Ethics

With regard to ethical issues, Pring (2003: 143) asserts that “there are different kinds of moral considerations which enter into deliberations about the conduct of research”. In both educational and scientific research, when investigating inanimate objects, or animals, ethics and morals play an important part. However, when human beings are considered as objects, this factor is multiplied. Willington

asserts that “ethical concerns should be at the forefront of any research project and should continue through to the write-up and dissemination stages” (2000: 3). These considerations should also include confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, openness and no harm (Burgess, 1989). As a further consideration, Cohen et al (2000) adds that researchers should bear in mind that some potential respondents in sensitive research refuse to co-operate if an assurance of confidentiality is weak or not understood.

In this study, ethical issues were given serious consideration. For example, the cover page of the questionnaire contains information about the researcher, explaining the timing needed and explaining that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers. In addition, participants are assured of their anonymity and confidentiality. The next page is the consent form to be signed by the participants with details about obtaining informed consent from all targeted participants (see Appendix 5). Participants were also told that they would be told the aims and results of the study; as Wellington points out, “participants in a research study have the right to be informed about the aims, purposes and likely publication of findings” (2000: 56). Additionally, the researcher stated that the participants had the right to withdraw from the research at any stage during the life of the research since, according to the ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA):

Researchers must recognize the right of any participant to withdraw from the research for any or no reason, and at any time, and they must inform them of this right (2004: 6).

A research ethics forms was completed and approved by the Graduate School of Education at Exeter University (see Appendix 6). This follows the requirements of Exeter University which are in line with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines.

4.10.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

Participants should be assured that all data will be worked on anonymously. If the information is misused, it may affect the participants. The ethical approach adopted in the current research is summed up as, “ethics has to do with the

application of moral principles to prevent harming or wronging others, to promote the good, to be respectful and to be fair” (Siber, 1993: 14, cited in Wellington et al, 2005: 104).

Furthermore, since Saudi English language teachers and decision-makers are participants in this study, it is likely that they have put themselves in a situation in which they are the focus of attention in their environment. Such a process may raise an ethical issue, where participants “may experience distress or discomfort in the research process” and where researchers “must take all necessary steps to reduce the sense of intrusion and to put them at their ease” (BERA, 2004: 7).

Finally, the importance of the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were taken into consideration. In this study no private information that could identify the participants’ real identity was communicated. Moreover, the participants’ anonymity and confidentiality are protected throughout the stages of this research. For example, during data analysis the identity of participants in the interviews was protected by employing pseudonyms throughout the thesis to ensure no personal information relating to the participants is revealed. Supporting this, Bibby et al stress that:

confidentiality ... must be respected and protected by positive measures; and data subjects should be told the purpose of the research and should have adequate opportunity to withhold their cooperation (1989: 17).

4.11 Limitations of the Study

This section will present the limitations faced by the researcher during the collection stage for the data. As mentioned earlier in chapter 2 with regards to the boundaries or the separation of male and female education in a conservative Muslim culture, it was impossible for the researcher to enter a female school in Saudi Arabia and conduct an observation inside the classroom. Since the study considers both female and male teachers equally one classroom should not logically be observed and another ignored. For this reason also I was not able to observe teachers in their classrooms and this would have added a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between their views and decision-

making, these are in addition to the interview issues I faced when working with females.

In addition, for the same reason it was impossible to interview female teachers face to face, only by phone within the Directorate of Education for Girls and also with the support of the General Directorate. Even using phone interviewing the researcher was not able to record the female voices as some believe it to be against their cultural values. Therefore, the only possible course of action was to record the researchers' voice alone while conducting the interview and at the same time listening to the female teacher and writing down their responses, and in some cases repeating what the interviewee was saying for the benefit of the recording. These factors therefore limited the potential to obtain richer data from female teachers by taking into account the way a response was made (the tone of the voice, facial expression, hesitation, etc) "which can provide information that a written response would conceal" (Bell, 1978: 70).

Moreover, limitations include the fact that I only undertook this study in one city and I need to acknowledge that while this was typical in many ways of the sorts for environments where EFL teachers work, it cannot be seen as representative of all teachers in different settings, accordingly, those in big cities may hold different views.

In addition, the research culture in Saudi Arabia is still in its infancy; therefore, researchers face different challenges in conducting their studies, particularly when dealing with school teachers. Moreover, the concept of culture itself can be interpreted locally in different ways, and thus may be interpreted as referring to modernity or civilization; as a consequence it can be considered to be conceptually challenging.

Nevertheless I do feel the study design has been valid in gaining some important insights into the topic under investigation.

Chapter 5

Findings and interpretations

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present the findings from the study. In keeping with the research questions underpinning the study, findings have been organised into three main sections. In the first section I will consider participants views of the cultural model for EFL textbooks in public schools in Saudi Arabia, with respect to what they see as the current cultural model, their satisfaction with this and what they feel might be a more appropriate model. Following on from this, I will consider the factors identified from my analysis of the data that can be seen to influence their views. I will then consider the relationship between their views and their in-class decisions with regard to the cultural models in the current textbook and how they deal with some sensitive cultural aspects.

In each section I will discuss the findings with reference to key themes identified as explained in chapter 4 above, and in keeping with the concurrent mixed methods approach, I will integrate findings from the questionnaire and interviews where appropriate in discussing the various themes identified in each section. Starting first with a consideration of questionnaire responses and then a consideration of how interview responses can be seen to further illuminate these, including how far these can be seen to confirm or contest questionnaire findings. In some cases, themes are identified from the interview data alone. Since the majority of questionnaire respondents did not complete the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, very limited reference will be made to these.

5.2 Teachers' views about cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools

Figure 5.1 below provides an overview of the organisation of this section which looks at participants' views of the current cultural model, their satisfaction with this and what they feel would be an appropriate cultural model for EFL textbooks.

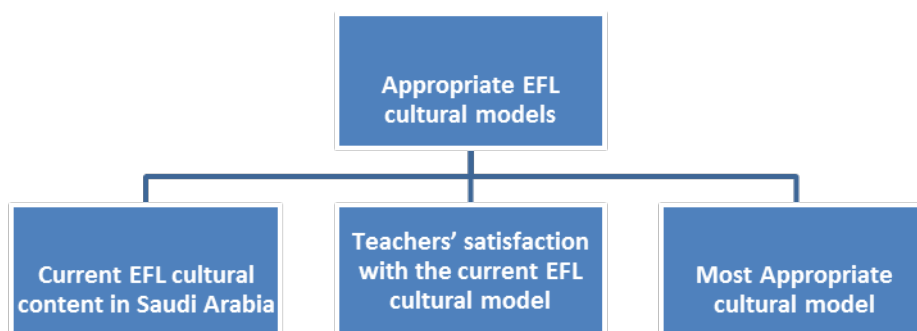


Figure 5.1 Appropriate EFL cultural models: sub-themes.

5.2.1 Participants' views on the cultural content of current EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia

5.2.1.1 An overview of participants views on the cultural content of the current EFL textbook

The following table shows the participants' perceptions of the cultural content currently promoted in EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools.

Table (5.1): Teachers' perceptions of the current cultural content (item 2 section B in the questionnaires)

Item	Target	Local	Combinations of target and local	Variety of international	Unsure
Perceptions of the current cultural content	12.1%	38.6%	23.6%	22.1%	3.6%

The findings in Table 5.1 above reveal a mixed picture with 38.6% of participants perceive the current cultural model promoted to be that of local culture, while 23.6% of the participants perceived it to be a combination of target and local cultures. Slightly fewer, 22.1%, perceived the cultural content to be international,

making a total of 45.7% who identified some mixture of cultures. Only 12.1% of the participants opted for “target culture” to describe the current cultural model promoted in English language teaching in Saudi Arabia. The results suggest that participants hold very diverse views as to the current cultural model presented in the textbooks, something that was further evidenced in their interview responses.

Of the 14 participants who were interviewed, while some described the cultural model as local, many confirmed that they saw this as mixed, either by providing a combination of target and local culture or through presenting topics which were international or which introduced a variety of other non-English speaking cultures in the coursebook. A further group expressed the view that the coursebook presented western views through Saudi characters enacting western values. Below I will consider each of these perspectives in turn.

5.2.1.2 Views of the current cultural content as local

A number of those interviewed indicated that they saw the cultural model as local. Thus for example, Lama said: *“It seems to me to be completely local at the secondary level, and in other levels as well”*. And another, Dalal, commented: *“There is a dominancy of the local cultural model. I don’t see other models other than this”*.

These views, as will be elaborated on below provided some interesting insights into their understanding of what ‘local’ culture meant to them which were closely linked to their responses to a questionnaire item which asked them to identify their understanding of local culture in the questionnaire. The results from the questionnaire are shown in Table 5.2 below.

Table (5.2): Teachers’ descriptions of the local culture (item 1 section B in the questionnaires)

Item	Islamic	Arabic	Middle Eastern	All three	Other
Descriptions of the local culture	28.2%	15%	1.8%	55%	0%

From the above table, it can be seen that a sizeable proportion (55%) of the participants believe local Saudi culture comprises a combination of Islamic, Arabic and Middle Eastern elements. The next most significant proportion (28.2%) sees it as exclusively Islamic.

Accordingly, it appears from the analysis above that Saudi Arabia's local culture is deemed by most to be at once Islamic, Arabic and Middle Eastern. This could be due to the emphasis on Islam which is perhaps not surprising, (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3); Saudi Arabia is an Islamic state where the Sharia (Islamic holy law) serves as both constitution and legal framework. Moreover, even in education, local Islamic culture was, and still is the dominant cultural model promoted in ELT materials in Saudi public schools. The low number of respondents who singled out race alone (Arabic) shows that this is not deemed to be the only way of describing local culture. It seems that it is this, together with religion and language that define 'Saudi-ness'. It is interesting here to see that participants allude to culture partly consisting of the transnational category of 'Middle Eastern', suggesting that a pan-Arab identity is important to participants and that culture is in some senses perceived to be regional as well as national.

In line with the emphasis on religion as a way of defining local culture in the questionnaire, several participants explained their reasons for describing the cultural model of the current textbook with reference to religion. Thus for example, Mashaa indicated:

The local Islamic model and perspectives is the dominant model. It covers so many issues in the Islamic and local values and behaviours. Hajj [pilgrimage] is a very clear example in which different practices are presented in English. Other example is inside our schools, we find our style of living and clothing presented accurately in the English textbook.

Lama shared a similar perspective, saying:

The features of the textbook include Islam and the Islamic values and features. As a history, we have the prophet's Hijra [his first trip from Makah to Medina]. We have also the expanding the two holy mosques. The Islamic calligraphy and designs.

Other reasons offered for describing the cultural model included reference to history and traditions, including religious traditions. Thus for example, Hasan commented:

Local culture is dominant in the new English curriculum. For example, in year one curriculum, there is a lesson about Hajj in which it talks about King Abdulaziz and the night of Qadr. In this lesson, all the names are Arabic and the clothes used are of an Arab style.

And Khalid commented:

Yes, the lessons included are derived from history. It is derived from the history of Muslims talking about the traveller Bin-Battuta, the famous Muslim traveller both for us and the west. The lessons also talk about the holy month of Ramadan and the achievements of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the fields of roads, transportation, communications and so on..

Reasons given also highlighted the view that local cultural practices were included in the textbook evidenced by reference to local foods and way of dress both in the pictures and in the topics presented to students as the following comments from Dalal illustrates:

It covers mostly our style of living and brings examples from our local Universities. We have also the Arabic food and specifically the Saudi well known meal 'Kabsa' and the way we make it and eat it. Additionally, all the names and pictures are local.

Another participant, Aljazi, observed that there was also a good representation of the diversity of regional differences presented in the coursebook and that that there local model could therefore be seen to be inclusive and a good representation of Saudi culture as a whole: *"There are local customs which are not contradictory. It includes the southern and the northern traditions and varieties of food"*. This confirmed the portrayal of the differences within the Saudi cultural practices and traditions as mentioned in (chapter 2, section 2.2.2), in which people have lifestyles which differ depending on which part of the country they live in. For instance in the western part of Saudi, mainly in Jeddah, a woman can go shopping in the street with her face uncovered, but wearing a Hijab. However, in the middle region of the country, for example in Al-Kharj city, a woman has to cover her face by wearing the local black veil; if she did not, it would cause a problem.

5.2.1.3 Views of cultural content as mixed

Interviews with participants also confirmed that many participants saw the cultural model in the current textbook as mixed, participants remarked on how the textbook combined elements of both local and target culture and also of how the content handled topics that were international in nature and also provided some insights into other non-English speaking cultures.

Views of target and local culture evident in the cultural model for the textbook

With respect to there being evidence of both local and target culture for example, Rajeh suggested:

Conversations exemplify this. For example, there is a Saudi person, the local side is there, it is not hidden, and who talks to another person from the target culture represented by being named as John, for instance. This is a clear example. It means a conversation between the local and the target culture.

Similarly, Sultan reasoned that target culture: “is presented in different pictures: Christmas, music, dance, stories and journeys”.

Target cultural values through local pictures

In addition, several participants highlighted the distinctive way in which the textbook has sought to combine local and target culture referred to in chapters 1 and 2 above. Namely, one which appears to portray local Saudi textbook characters enacting target cultural values and practices. As Nassar remarked:

The example of a boy showing his family’s pictures to his colleague doesn’t relate to our culture, especially that youth can’t show this in the classroom because of the crowd. This idea is western but with our local faces and looks, it is funny in some way.

Others commented on how the language models used showed the presence of target cultural values even if the cultural content appeared to be local. Thus for example, Mohammed remarked:

I mean like for example when the Saudi content is represented in the textbook, you find most names and pictures of the people and the ways they dress tend to be taken from the Saudi culture. However, I have a feeling that most of the language used in conversations and

other interactive exercises in the textbook are from American and British culture.

This was also stressed by Baynah who maintained that: *In the public schools it is local with little reference to the foreign culture. But the pronunciation and references are based on the American accent.* These comments would appear to reflect the ways in which these teachers saw language as a manifestation of culture, and as I will discuss further below, teachers often talked about English language in their interviews interchangeably with culture.

Views of the cultural model as international

Some interviewees remarked more on the international nature of the cultural model presented and how this did not only show target culture. As Saud claimed: *"It looks to be a mixture of different cultures including the eastern cultures but not only local and target"*. Likewise, Khalid also considered the content to represent an international culture as he said: *"I could call this international. There is one topic as an example which talks about medicines, overcoming some illnesses, using medicinal drugs and discovery of medicinal drugs"*. This view of medicine as international topic can be seen to reflect an awareness that a topic such as medicine is not confined to one culture, but shared by all people on earth. Finally, one participant, Nasser, suggested that the cultural model was international as it included references to other non-English speaking countries, citing a unit where the eating habits of France and Italy were also introduced.

To sum up, the views of teachers regarding the current cultural model as presented through the questionnaire and interview data show a wide range of opinions and views. It seems surprising that there was not much consensus regarding the cultural model presented in their coursebook and the reasons for this will be further discussed in chapter 6 below. It seems that these views reveal differences between participants' in terms of what they see culture to comprise and the significance of their own value systems in the reasons they provide for these views. The sorts of factors that were cited in the interviews as exerting an influence on their views will be discussed in section (5.3) below. Ahead of that, I

will now consider their satisfaction with the current cultural model and what sorts of alternative they would prefer.

5.2.2 Teachers' satisfaction with the current cultural model in the EFL textbook

The table below presents data to show to what extent Saudi EFL teachers are satisfied with the current cultural model in EFL textbooks.

Table (5.3): Teachers' satisfaction with the current cultural model (item 4, section B in the questionnaires)

Item	No	Yes
Satisfaction with the cultural content	55.7%	43.2%

Table 5.3 above shows that just over half (55.7%) of the participants were not happy with the current cultural content in EFL textbooks promoted in the Saudi public schools. The remaining participants (43.2%), however, held the opposite view. Data from the interviews shed more light on this picture. While there were some who expressed themselves to be satisfied with the current cultural model, the majority of interviewees (10 out of 14) were not with most of those who expressed dissatisfaction expressing a desire for a move away from what the perceived to be too much weighting towards local culture.

Among those participants who were satisfied with the current cultural content. Rajeh commented:

I am happy with the current cultural content, it is suitable, and it is suitable for our students and their context. The students are happy with it as well, but perhaps it is overloaded and cannot be covered in time given.

Another participant, Al-Anoud, concurred with Rajeh, explaining that this was because it reflected local religious values and traditions which, as outlined above were highlighted by those who felt the textbook enshrined these things well. As he said *"It is very important to be suitable to our religion and traditions, and this is what we find. Yes it is satisfactory"*. This view was also echoed by Hasan by

contrasting this with the model of culture he believed was employed in private schools:

As I believe, in our public schools it is not bad and it has a lot of information. It develops thinking skills and is linked to traditions and customs. Whereas, private schools are mostly to have a western cultural model. For example: dancing and celebrating Christmas.

It is interesting to note that this participant talks about western culture rather than target language culture, and indeed western culture was often used in place of target culture in interviews as will be shown further below suggesting that participants saw western culture and target culture as synonymous, a point I will discuss further in (5.3.2) below.

Those participants who expressed a dissatisfaction with the current cultural model, made reference to a number of different problems they felt this posed. For many this was felt to relate to a need to provide students with greater exposure towards target cultural models (or western cultural models). As Dalal said, for example:

Well, being honest, I am totally not satisfied. I think there are some improvements needed for our cultural content. Comparisons between two or more culture are needed to raise the awareness of the students and push them forward to be able to use the language communicatively and in a proper way. For example, we could have our topics about food and at the same time we could bring the food of the western culture and then it should be compared with our food. This can make sense and students can learn something through culture.

Mashaa shared a similar view:

It is so close to our local culture with only few examples from the western culture. Yes we want the local but not in this way. We need more examples of other cultures especially the American because we are learning their language and we should learn how they live. I don't want our culture to be so closed this much.

Several participants placed emphasis on the importance of linking cultural models to the language being taught as a further reason for their dissatisfaction. One response from the open-ended question in the questionnaire was, for example:

Students should know about other cultures very well because for instance, the American culture specifically is around us everywhere

and students should learn how to deal with it and thus, they need to improve the current spoken language.

In her interview Baynah also indicated that she also felt that language could not be taught without reference to the culture which she perceived it portrays. As she said:

It needs to have a mixture of different cultures, not only local and Arab cultures. Our students need to have a general idea about the surrounding cultures. What's the use of teaching a language without knowing its roots and cultural content? Having a general idea about the surrounding cultures makes communication with them even easier.

Among those who expressed dissatisfaction with the current cultural model, one participant in the open-ended questionnaires made an interesting observation that this was problematic as it did not portray an accurate picture of Saudi culture. As he said:

We should have a curriculum that reflects the real culture of the country e.g. instead of topics that talk about Kabsa [the traditional Saudi dish] and camels, we should have topics about the internet, Bluetooth and other technological stuff which are interested to youngsters.

For this participant there was an evident recognition of the need to acknowledge the ways in which Saudi culture could not be considered in a vacuum and that the textbook content needed to recognise how local culture was influenced by and linked to aspects of global culture as manifested in the ready adoption of technology, particularly among young people.

The different perspectives above on how far participants in this study perceived themselves to be satisfied with the current cultural model are closely linked to their views on what they felt would be appropriate cultural models which I will discuss below.

5.2.3 Participants' views of the most appropriate cultural model for Saudi EFL textbooks

In this section, I will present the results concerning the participants' views of the appropriate cultural model for EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia, obtained from both

the questionnaire and the interviews. Table 5.4 below shows participants' views of the most appropriate cultural model for EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia as indicated in the questionnaire.

Table (5.4): Teachers' views towards the most appropriate cultural model (item 1, section D in the questionnaires)

Item	British	North American	Local culture	Mixture of cultures	Cultural-free
The most appropriate cultural model for The EFL textbooks in the Saudi public schools	28.9%	9.6%	20.4%	40.4%	0.7%

According to the highest number of participants (40.4%), a combination or mixture of cultures is the best cultural model for the teaching of English language. The second largest number of participants (28.9%) believes that it is best to use the British culture to represent 'native' speaking countries. Another group (20.4%) chose the local culture and the rest.

In comparison with their views on the *current* cultural model shown in table 5.1 above, it can be seen that participants would like to include more reference to other cultures in their course book than is currently the case. 38.6% of participants in table 5.1 indicated that they felt the current cultural model was based on local culture but only 20.4% as shown in table 5.4 above indicate that this is the most appropriate model. That almost three times the number of people preferred the British model to the American may be due to the American political actions in the surrounding regions as many people in the local society are not happy with such actions as will be shown in section 5.3.4 below. Finally, results with regard to whether they would prefer a model based on a combination of cultures as shown in table 5.4 above are 40% whereas their perceptions of what the current cultural model is as shown in table 5.1 are about 23%.

However, while these tables provide a useful overview of the differences between the current and perceived appropriate cultural models for Saudi EFL public school textbooks, they do not explain their reasoning or, for example, what they perceive to be an appropriate way to combine or mix cultures differently from the ways they believe this is currently addressed in their textbook. Below I will turn to insights into these things provided by interview participants.

Interviews with participants showed a similar picture to the questionnaire data revealing that the majority of the participants have chosen a cultural model that is a mix of different cultures, ranging from local to target and international, but all on condition that it does not contradict with Islamic or local values. Thus for example Baynah presented her view, suggesting that the cultural model should be “a mixture, and should not be local only in order not to be deserted from the other nations”. This showed that some of the Saudi EFL teachers are aware of the gap between the local culture and other cultures around the world. The proof of this is demonstrated because the Saudi government is sending thousands of Saudi students to be educated abroad, not only to gain knowledge from foreign countries, but also to enable Saudis to adapt themselves to different international cultures and then return to transfer both knowledge and culture as well. Consequently some participants, as in the case of Nasser, believed that it is important to promote other cultures apart from the Saudi culture in the textbook:

I think somehow that we are fine so far with the curriculum we have but we still need some mixture of cultural values to be introduced like the western people idea of thinking. This for sure helps to go alongside with our culture. Additionally, the way they work and how they reach their success in life. This with no doubt could help and at the same time has no clash with our own cultural values.

These results could be attributed to be able to cooperate with other societies and not lag behind in the field of development. Therefore, the participant hoped to have the best parts of western culture introduced into the Saudi EFL curriculum, to help students and show them successful examples in order to motivate them and raise their willingness to progress. Similarly, Al-Anoud maintained that a mixture of cultures would not harm local culture, and arguing for:

A mixture making use of the western people experiences and culture while preserving our values. For example, in Japan, they seem to have a very good education and technology, and they are open to the west, but still hold their own cultural values. Applying their theories and researches can be useful to our educational development process.

Given the concern that introducing another culture in the curriculum may harm local cultural values, resulting in the rejection of new cultural dimensions or practices, Japan is a very good example, as the participant explains.

Similarly, Mashaa had the same opinion about a mixed model of cultures with, at the same time, a strong local cultural base as she commented:

A mixture of models and predominance for the local model. Including foreign models provided that they do not contradict with our religion or culture. If there is any different point, the difference should be pointed out emphasising that it does not relate to our customs or our culture. Just to tell students that differences can exist and we have to accept it without applying it.

From this it is evident that Mashaa perceived there to be differences between the local and the target or global cultures. Accordingly, some people in the local society believe that such differences should remain, and some fear that these differences risk destroying the local culture, and people will lose their local identity. Mashaa's view was that students' awareness of difference must be raised in order to protect and maintain students' local values.

Furthermore, agreeing with previous views on the mix of cultural models, Dalal added that this has to be introduced gradually:

I think we can't say this model or that model is the best cultural model for us. But we can in some cases have different opinions about different stages. Essentially, this depends on the stage and the age of the students in that stage. We shall start with the local in the early stages, then the Middle Eastern cultures come next, and with the higher levels we could then bring the western mixed with other cultures. Of course, we highlight the Islamic culture with all the levels.

From this we can see her view that youngsters need first to acquire their own cultural values before adding any other cultural values, because younger students might be easily be affected by any new idea or concept, whereas older students may not be as easily affected. Dalal therefore, suggested the use of a mixture of cultures in EFL textbooks at the final stages of public school, or at least before University level. Sarah shared this opinion adding: *"a mixture that is not contradictory to our religion or our traditions. And to be more precise, more western*

cultural contents could be useful in the secondary level". Sarah's view illustrates something that was raised by all participants. Namely, that the introduced culture should not present values which are in strong contradiction to local values and beliefs. .

One participant expressed a new thought about the EFL cultural models; Saud suggested a cultural model of successful international Islamic countries, for a very specific reason:

As long as we are after developing the abilities of our sons to be able to produce medical modern technology ... etc., then the most suitable culture is the Middle Eastern or Eastern cultures. For example, Malaysia is an Islamic country in which English language is taught. Also, Singapore, if I am not wrong, has no political aims or a religious agenda that is communicated through English language.

The results of this finding direct attention to the political factors that may have an influence on the learning process. In other words, for this participant a cultural model that does not conflict with the local or the Islamic culture is favoured. In addition, another participant, Lama also suggested an international culture, but one drawn from the wider Middle Eastern region as she said:

First of all, it should be Islamic and Arabic. It is also possible to be Middle Eastern. Because of the influence of occupation by the United States to some Arabic and Islamic countries, we may have an international culture from Turkey and Iran provided that it does not contradict with religion or customs.

In this finding, the results probably this participant ascribed a possible link between the Saudi culture and other surrounding cultures, for example Turkey. Local Saudi culture does share some aspects of Turkish culture, mainly the Islamic values and beliefs. In addition, Turkish culture has in itself some aspects of western cultures as they are geographically neighbours and therefore have something in common. In her view, the Turkish cultural model would suit Saudi students as it includes both Islamic and western cultural values.

Finally, the view of Mohammed, shown below with its explicit reference to American or British culture shows a view held by several participants that an

alternative to local cultural model meant an exclusive focus on native speaker target culture. As he said:

I think they could better include the American or British culture along with the Saudi culture. However, these need to be of appropriate nature that suits the Saudi culture.

Mohammed's comment reveals a widely held assumption that when referring to the English language or its culture, then the models are only those of British or American people, without reference to other native English speaking countries such as Canada or Australia or other countries where English is widely spoken such as South Africa or Singapore.

Having presented the findings on participants' views of cultural models for EFL textbooks, I will now turn to a consideration of the various factors that were seen to be significant to their views.

5.3 Factors affecting teachers' views on appropriate cultural models

This section presents the factors that Saudi EFL teachers believe influence their views about the most appropriate cultural content for the Saudi EFL textbooks. Three sub-themes have emerged from the data analysis: Language and culture, the impact of political factors, and teachers in their school world, as shown in the following figure:

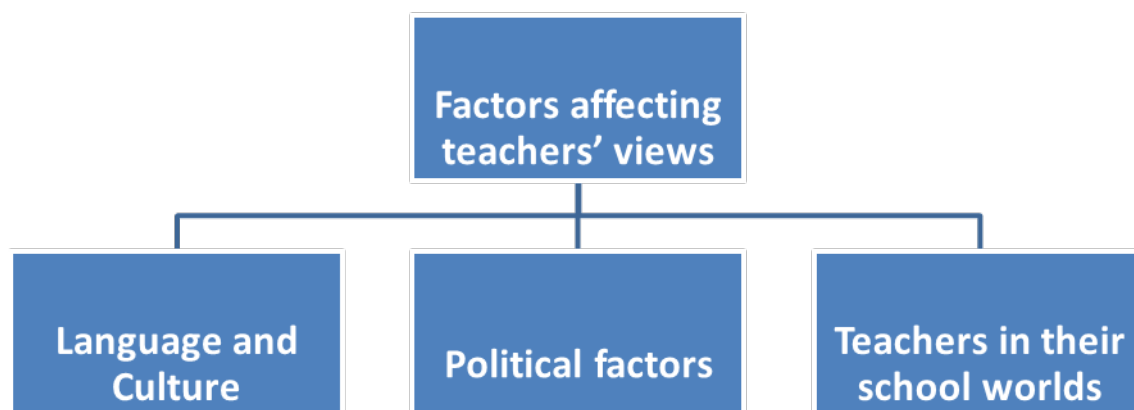


Figure (5.2) Factors affecting teachers' views

5.3.1 Participants' views on the relationship between language and culture

This sub-theme will present the findings related to language and culture. The discussion will focus on five categories: the inseparability of language and culture; competing views on the importance of addressing target language culture when teaching the target language; the importance of English language, culture and ideology in the world; the significance of local perspectives on the relationship between the English language and its cultural practices in Saudi Arabia; and the significance of new technologies as providing a link to the global community on teachers views of appropriate cultural models.

5.3.1.1 The inseparability of language and culture

One factor that can be seen to influence participants' views was the degree to which they felt that it is necessary to teach culture when teaching a foreign language, as Table 5.5 below shows.

Table (5.5): Language and culture cannot be separated (Item 8 in Table C of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Language and culture cannot be separated, and have to be taught together.	40.4%	22.1%	9.3%	18.6%	9.6%

From the above table it can be seen that the majority of participants (62.5%) agreed that language and culture cannot be separated and have to be taught together. This could be attributed to the local way of teaching the Arabic language, which cannot be taught without references to Arabic literature or history. Accordingly, language and culture can be seen as two faces of one coin. Other participants (28.2%) thought it is acceptable to keep them separated, possibly because some teachers may prefer to teach the language alone, to avoid any cultural sensitivity that may appear.

5.3.1.2 Competing views on the importance of addressing target language culture when teaching the target language

In line with this, the majority of the participants (11 out of 14) in the qualitative data, also saw language and culture as tightly linked and that there is a need to refer to culture when teaching a foreign language. However, there were different views as to what culture needed to be taught and why. For some participants linking language to culture meant a requirement to address target cultural models but for others this was contested. This was evident in their response to another questionnaire item, on the importance of addressing the target cultural content in the Saudi public schools' EFL textbooks, shown below.

Table (5.6): Teachers' views on the importance of addressing target culture (item 3, section B in the questionnaires)

Item	Very important	Quite important	Unsure	Not very important	Not important at all
Importance of addressing target culture	52.1%	24.3%	15.4%	7.1%	1.1%

From Table 5.6 above, it can be seen that the majority of the participants (76.4%) believe that it is either important or very important to address the target culture in

English language teaching, whilst a fraction of teachers (8.2%) believe it to be unimportant. I will now consider the different and more detailed perspectives revealed in the interviews on the topic of which culture needs to be presented when teaching the English as a foreign language.

Teaching language and culture together means teaching the target culture

11 out of the 14 interviewees confirmed the view shown in the results for the questionnaire above with regard to the need to address target language culture. As Al-Jazi mentioned, for example:

In teaching any foreign language, learners should be acquainted with at least the minimum knowledge of the target culture. Because, people always differ in their way of speech and the way they use their own words. Like in our Arabic language, there are so many words that have hidden meanings, and no one could reach the meaning until she understands the cultural goal of it. Hence, the English language textbook should include the target culture with any possible picture.

This informant acknowledges a parallel between needing to know the cultural references in foreign language learning and in her mother tongue. Accordingly, this participant thinks it important for the Ministry of Education to address the target culture in the EFL textbooks.

Similarly, Hasan, commented: “usually, culture is related to language. Also, English language represents English culture, no doubt about this”. This view was also expressed by Saud:

I can't imagine teaching any language; English for example is our case here, without mentioning anything about culture and the way of life practiced by people speaking that language. Let's say we are teaching some new nouns and activities for the daily morning or even a whole day using a free-cultural model, believe me, without noticing I will find myself at the end teaching the cultural practices for the native context of English or may be any other context. It is the only way to explain and interpret some new nouns and words in the English language. Even I wanted to ignore them, I will accidentally refer to them without noticing.

Alternative view on the relationship between language and culture

Although most participants saw the need to teach the culture of target language to some extent, as with the questionnaire results above, there were those who had reservations and suggested alternative views, for example Hasan asserted:

I am not with this for example including western cultural issues such as Christmas as a means of understanding the other, because what I do is to teach the student an English language curriculum. I am not teaching the student the culture of the other society. I teach the student language only. But of course, language is related to culture. However, this does not mean to include all the culture.

Similarly, Khalid claimed that: *"The western culture is sometimes in conflict with our culture, our religion, and sometimes it carries political interferences"*. Here we can clearly see a view that non local cultural values are at times viewed suspiciously in Saudi Arabia a view reiterated by Mashaa:

I think it represents a source of danger, which is political, religious or even social to our students and the society as a whole. Educational decision makers should be careful with these sensitive issues. But on the other hand, if we had the local cultural contents it would be great; it would have a positive effect on the students. When the content deals with local issues, general and familiar to the student's culture, it can be expressed and expanded and also understood.

For Khalid there was an evident sense that teaching language might be best achieved through attention to local culture and this would provide a suitable model for the EFL classroom as he said:

When the culture is from outside the local cultural values, which is irrelevant to the students, the students are unable to participate in this issue. The student's reaction is disapproval of these issues. We should master their local identity through learning and education.

Finally two participants presented a case for trying to promote language teaching without reference to culture. Hasan argued that this was because teaching other cultures could have a negative effect on young people and encourage them to adopt inappropriate religious practices. As he said:

My point of view is that some cultural issues like Christmas should be deleted from the curriculum because of the embarrassment it causes. There are so many neutral issues which could be included in the language curriculum and result in good achievement. The problem is that this concept is not in the mind of students. Consequently, it will have an effect on them and their culture. They will say, 'We want to

celebrate Christmas'. The teacher may not think of this point, but it may affect the student.

On the other hand, Rajah argued that since English is a global language there was no longer any need to link language to culture at all:

Why do I need to mention culture in teaching the language? The English language has become the global language, thus, we shouldn't relate it to any culture. It is better just to teach the grammatical structures of the language along with teaching other skills, and to leave mind in peace with no reference to culture. I feel it better this way.

From the findings presented above, it is clear that participants had strong views on the relationship between language and culture; while most felt it was necessary to present the target culture in teaching foreign language, a variety of different perspectives were raised by others.

5.3.1.3 The importance of English language, culture and ideology in the world

Another facet of the relationship between language and culture that was seen as important to explore in this study, and which helped to explain the views held above on the importance of teaching target language culture, was interviewees' perspectives on the global reach of English language and culture. Table 5.7 below shows the results of a number of questionnaire items which asked them for their views on this.

Table 5.7: Identifiable factors leading to the importance of English language and culture (items 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Table C of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Cultural practices of English speaking countries predominate in all western cultures.	41.1%	35.7%	12.1%	10.7%	0.4%
Cultural practices of English language countries are widespread around the globe	47.1%	33.9%	12.5%	6.4%	0%
The value systems and ideologies of English speaking countries are widespread around the globe.	20%	31.4%	19.6%	22.9%	6.1%
English speaking countries' ways of presenting the world and other nations and cultures are widespread around the globe.	24.6%	35%	23.2%	11.1%	6.1%

In order to gain a clear picture of the importance of the English language and its culture globally, according to the participants in this study, it is helpful to analyse where participants see this importance as coming from. According to the first item

in Table 5.7 the majority (76.8%) agreed that the English speaking countries' cultural practices are dominant in the western culture. This result seems to be due to the wide spread nature of English cultural aspects in the west. That is to say that they felt that the way native English speakers live their life, or even their way of thinking or religious beliefs were representative of western cultures as whole. As noted above in (see 5.2.2) this reflected the tendency among some interviewees to use the western and the English culture interchangeably.

The second item in the table reveals a similar picture with 81% of the participants in this study indicating a belief that the cultural values of English speaking nations are widespread. It is interesting to note, that responses for the third and fourth items in the table, which can be seen to highlight the spread of the ideologies and values of English speaking countries show less agreement than with respect to the spread of cultural practices, nonetheless in both cases more than half of participants indicate that they agree with this view.

Moreover, some participants believe that English has importance and is globally wide spread because of the power of its people. In relation to this, Mohammed argued:

Of course, it is the language of the west. The most popular at the moment are the UK, the USA. These are the famous English speaking countries. I think since they are the two most powerful countries in the world, they meant to spread their language and traditions.

This interpretation of the status of English in Saudi Arabia reflects the fact that American culture can be clearly seen in almost every home and every city around the country. American media, movies, lifestyle and food have become for many Saudis part of their culture and daily routine. Accordingly, they see the American power through the influence on their culture inside Saudi.

Taken together these results suggest the perceived significance of English in global terms may well account for their views that it is also important if not unavoidable to use the cultural models associated with this language. For some, this was synonymous with western cultural models. Another theme explored was English as the language of globalization.

English as the language of globalization

Many participants acknowledge they are teaching an important subject, both locally and globally. Mohammed, for example when asked about his views on the current EFL curriculum used in the Saudi public schools, expresses his satisfaction that the curriculum is appropriate for global ambition: *"to some extent, I see that I am a bit satisfied with our curriculum as a whole, that it gives rich knowledge to be used globally"*. Likewise Nasser, another participant, agreed with this view of the need for English as a tool for global communication:

With no doubt, English language is the language of globalization, therefore, it is important everywhere. If you have a look at the inside of the car, you will find that everything is written in English. English language nowadays is more important than some other subjects in the school. It is possibly more important than some of the sciences. Even sciences need English language. It is very important.

From these findings it can be seen how Saudi EFL teachers relate to English as a subject they teach because of global need. They also believe that it is more important than some of the sciences as it is the only source for translation, at least in Saudi Arabia. This is may be due to the fact that instructions and support information for most imported products, including vehicle manuals, are written in English; in most cases the latter are not even translated into Arabic.

Another participant agreed about the need for this global language, but also mentioned the need for English for use in international and political affairs. Dalal asserted:

English is a language of international communication, it is widely spoken everywhere. It is a language of knowledge and conceptions. You can see its dominance through politics and the international affairs. It is noticed that the whole world is lagging behind especially in the USA.

This participant asserted the need for English, not only for ideas and information, but also as a global language for communication between countries with different languages. Additionally, she commented on the political power wielded by the USA

as the strongest player on the world political stage, and added her belief that countries must follow in the USA's footsteps.

Table (5.8): English language is no longer related to any country (item 9 in table C of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The English language is no longer related to any specific culture or country.	37.5%	36.4%	9.6%	11.1%	5.4%

The quantitative data for Table 5.8 above revealed that most of the participants (73.9%) agreed that the English language is no longer related to any specific culture or country.

These results appear in contradiction with those shown in Table 5.6 above; it seems that according to the data in Table 5.6 participants favour teaching target culture but, at the same time, they recognise that English is a global language as shown in Table 5.8. The possible reason for this will be considered in more detail in chapter 6 below. However it may well be that the dominance of English cultural values leads them to think that these must be promoted even if they are aware that, as an international language, English can no longer be linked to any specific culture.

The interview data endorsed this picture showing that participants see English as the global language and that it is considered to be an international language. Thus for example Lama said: *"It is the global or international. No way to be linked to any certain country like before. Globalization has changed everything"*. Similarly, Sarah added:

It is the global language and it is spoken everywhere in the world. It used to be for the west only, but now it is different. Australia is in the east, and even India and Pakistan, I think people who speak it there are more than the British people themselves.

The sense of participants' uncertainty as to whether as a global language, English does or does not manifest a particular cultural perspective as discussed above was also evident in some of the comments. Thus, for example, Baynah claimed that: *"it*

is widely used as an international and global language, and we can nearly refer it as a western and American language". Similarly, Khalid added:

Still linked, even if it has become international, it is still linked, especially to the USA. I see that the American people obviously like to spread their language for their own political and financial reasons. Moreover, we can see for example; New Zealand, Canada and Australia are among native speaking countries.

5.3.1.4 The significance of local perspectives on the relationship between the English language and its cultural practices in Saudi Arabia

In this section I will present participants' views which indicate the importance of local perspectives on English cultural practices in Saudi Arabia in shaping their views. Subthemes to be discussed are views on the suitability of English speaking countries practices in the local Saudi context, the degree of threat posed by English language and culture to Saudi Arabia, and the importance of English in Islam.

The *suitability* of English speaking countries practices in the local Saudi context

Table 5.9 below shows the influence of participants' views regarding the *suitability* of English speaking countries' practices in the local Saudi context.

Table (5.9): Influence of the acceptability of English speaking countries' cultural practices (item 2 in Table D2 of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Influenced	Influenced	Not Sure	Not Influenced	Strongly not Influenced
The acceptability of English speaking countries' cultural practices.	7.1%	39.6%	30.4%	20.7%	2.1%

From the table above, it is interesting to note that opinions are split: 30.4% of respondents were not sure about the influence of the local Saudi views on the acceptability of the cultural practices of the English speaking countries, a slightly larger percentage (46.7%) of those who responded, indicated that they do feel they are influenced. The reason for this may be found as participants see western culture every day as they go out in the Saudi streets or even at home, watching TV or using the internet. In fact, western culture is evident in Saudi daily practices, in the young generation's way of dressing and even in the widespread availability of

American fast food. In addition, many Saudis watch a lot of American movies and listen to western music. These practices of course were clear to be in the participants' minds when thinking of western culture and the changes occurring in the society.

As noted above when analysing the qualitative data, people within the local culture link every aspect of their cultural values to Islamic morals and regulations. However, some of the aspects of local culture still go against Islamic morals. Accordingly, as mentioned earlier many people in local society feel ashamed to mention any of their female relatives to a stranger, or even to a close friend. This action or behaviour is very common in Saudi Arabia as part of their culture, but when it comes to Islam the view can be completely different. In regards to this, Khalid said:

With regards to the example of a boy showing his friends his family's pictures or mentioning their names before his friends, the prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, was showing proud of the names of his family members. Whereas in our local culture it is against the young boys' culture to tell others of a name of his family, the whole class will make fun of it.

In this finding, this participant therefore highlighted that there are occasions when Saudis claim to follow Islamic law; we can see here that their cultural traditions are accurately with the morals of Islam. Therefore, the participant could be suggesting that some aspects of western culture are not contradictory to Islam but might be highly appreciated by the greatest Muslim ever, Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him.

Moreover, there are western cultural aspects and practices that are highly admired by the local Saudi people. Lama argued:

Yes of course there are some western values that we learn from and we should acquire. But sometimes, I select anything that does not cause me conflict and reforms education. It should be something useful to me and my society. Therefore, I take this and leave what I don't want.

In this case Lama reflects the Saudi view that while there are differences between the two cultures and some values are contrary to their own, there are more values

that are good and should be adopted. Accordingly, this teacher appreciates those western cultural values that do not clash with her own culture; however she was very concerned about any practice that is in contradiction and ignores this. This move to openness to other nations was also highlighted by Nasser who argued:

From my point of view, I guess there is an indication of the possibility of culture, the possibility of speech with the other nations, and the ability to communicate and learn with good manner. I mean that our nation is time by time getting more open to other societies and to theirs cultural beliefs.

Participants also referred to western culture as being accepted by the local people, even though, the local society is very strict about their own cultural aspects. Nasser for example highlighted that: *“even with our conservative cultural traditions, it is possible to include general topics like friendship, but not culturally sensitive issues”*. The type of friendship dubbed ‘sensitive’ is the friendship between two different sexes, as girlfriend and boyfriend, that are against the religious and traditional beliefs; this sort of relationship between a boy and a girl is, therefore, not acceptable. However, society approves other friendships as they are deeply valued. Sultan commented:

Yes, I am with introducing some cultures such as friendship and responsibility: these issues may help somehow to widen students’ knowledge and give them more opportunities to understand other people in order to communicate in a better way.

From this finding, it is brought to our attention that in Saudi Arabia, therefore, there are people who are aiming to enhance their communicative skills in order to interact with other people from different countries and different cultural backgrounds. It is interesting to note the reference to friendship and responsibility and that these are viewed as positive cultural traits of people from English speaking countries.

Furthermore, another participant had the view that if there was any political difficulty with one country, the blame should not be extended to other nations. Therefore, while Mashaa felt American and British cultures should not be stressed due to their political actions around the world, other English speaking countries’ cultural practices could be included. As she contended: *“yes, it is possible. New*

Zealand is not in conflict with us neither in religion nor in politics. At the moment, Canada's culture is also suitable".

However, the analysis of the interview data revealed that some participants do not accept some issues of western culture, views which originated in their own understanding of their cultural backgrounds. Hasan for example, argued:

Why do we include the western culture in the curriculum to be learned by the Saudi student and this is as we all know away from the experience and culture of the child or the student in Saudi Arabia?

Furthermore, an example was mentioned by Saud to show how some content contradicts local values:

Sometimes, some of the students brings the phrase, 'damn it' and ask me about its meaning. He looks for it or asks the students for another time. The phrase is written and wants a translation for it. And other issues like this. Such phrases shouldn't be used in our society. In my opinion, these phrases are not useful. They are not suitable. The society should avoid using them.

The degree of threat posed by English language and culture to Saudi Arabia

In addition to the above discussion, in this section I will present findings showing the extent to which participants perceive the English language and culture to be a threat. These are drawn from questionnaire items on the acceptability of the cultural practices of English speaking countries, contrasted with interview data where participants discussed how far English language and culture was seen to be a threat.

Table 5.10 below shows the responses to questionnaire items about how acceptable English speaking countries' cultural practices are to Saudi Arabians.

Table (5.10): Participants' views on the acceptability of the of English language and culture (items 5, 6 and 7 in table C of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The cultural practices of English speaking countries are acceptable to Saudi Arabians.	8.2%	17.1%	6.1%	45%	23.6%
English speaking countries' ways of presenting the world and other nations and cultures are acceptable to Saudi Arabians.	5.4%	11.4%	22.9%	39.6%	20.7%
The value systems and ideologies of English speaking countries are acceptable in Saudi Arabia.	5.4%	6.1%	16.8%	39.6%	32.1%

These results present a mixed picture, but broadly indicate that the participants are either uncertain or in disagreement. For example the result for the first statement in Table 5.10 above shows that the majority of the participants (68.6%) think that English speaking countries' cultural practices are not acceptable in the Saudi context, although 25.3% did find them acceptable. A similar picture is seen in the results for the second and third items, which asked about the acceptability of the ways in which English-speaking countries portray other countries and cultures, and the acceptability of these countries' ideologies and value systems.

The results of interviews when participants were asked if they felt English-speaking countries' cultural practices were a threat provided a different set of perspectives, with most participants (11 out of 14) claiming they did not perceive there was any threat caused by the English language and culture to the local cultural values and beliefs. For example, Baynah said *"nothing to make us threatened, we are teaching a language like any other language in the world, but with a high importance internationally and also locally"*. Similarly, Sultan maintained *"this is a global language, if there was a threat then other cultures and nations may have the same, I disagree that English is a threat"*. This finding shows how the majority of teachers, as with the first example, perceived that there is no threat at all, which explains why Saudi teachers are generally relaxed and able to teach the language like any other subject without being concerned about cultural repercussions, and are confident that society generally knows that English is important both locally and globally both for them and their children's education and careers. However, when asked if English language and culture posed a threat, one interviewee seemed to feel that it did, and made the following observation:

I believe that there are some people who may favour the western culture. However, I think this eliminates our culture. One culture has to demonstrate, and we can clearly see how the English culture spreads everywhere in the world. If the other nations in the world are happy to lose their traditions and identities, then we should be able to stand for our cultural values. Also ignoring this fact wouldn't help us keep our culture at all, we have to accept it and modify it in our own way. I think this is not just a matter of teaching the subject in the classroom, the whole society are involved.

The importance of English in Islam

Another important theme evident in the interviews which was seen to inform the participants' views on appropriate cultural models is the significance attached to learning a foreign language in Islam. As mentioned in chapter 2, Saudi Arabia is a Muslim country, which uses Islam and Sharia law (the Islamic rules based on Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah or words) for most of the country's systems and daily way of life. Consequently, the Ministry of Education's policy with regard to teaching English in Saudi public schools reflects the policy of the government as a whole, which in turn refers to Islam as the basis for education in all subjects. The English language is considered within the Islamic framework of education and, as consequence, Saudi EFL teachers always relate their teaching to Islam and to Islamic values and rulings.

There was almost unanimous agreement among participants in the current research that Islam encourages people to communicate with people from other societies and cultures. Similarly, it is also seen that the participants strongly agree that Islam encourages people to learn foreign languages. Accordingly, in interview one participant asserted:

From my local point of view, English language is very important for our religion, Islam and for sciences as well. And more importantly, spreading Islam and giving the right picture of our religion and culture to the other societies. I believe this is one of the goals of teaching English in Saudi.

In this finding, Lama tried to link her interview response to her viewpoint as a Saudi EFL teacher, showing the importance of English for Islam; to protect it, deliver its main messages and present it in a good light to other nations around the

world, all of which can be done using English as a tool. This standpoint is directly linked to the cultural beliefs of the Saudis, using Islamic practices and regulations to shape their way of living and own culture. Accordingly, Lama's views on English are seen through context of her beliefs.

Similarly, Sultan shared the same opinion on the importance of English in Islam, referring to the earliest days of Islam as he said:

... it is very good for religions and Islam specifically, where you can protect it and serve it with better knowledge. Islam and the prophet's companions encouraged learning languages. Its importance for Islam may be helpful for clarification and correction for some misunderstandings and some ideas about Islam around the world.

This participant seems to relate to the prophet's companions as being the main source of the prophet's own interpretations and clarifications of Islam and the Islamic rules, therefore delivering the right message about Islam. Sultan's mention of 'misunderstandings' of Islam by other nations was a reference to news coverage of terrorism and the involvement of some Muslims in organizations such as Al-Qaida. That is, how the presentation of Islam in the media has created a contradictory image of Islam and fear-provoking stereotyping of Muslims.

Other participants agreed on the importance on English in Islam, although Rajeh viewed the importance of protecting Islam through English from different angle, that of protecting the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him); he asserted:

It is widely important, not just in the Kingdom. We mostly find it useful in places like the hospitals. In addition, it is very useful for our religion and our nation too. Thus, it is a great tool in defending Islam and the prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, and also good to protect our principles.

In this finding, the participant Rajeh had the same opinion of the Islamic view towards learning other languages; unsurprisingly, he opined that learning English should help to protect the prophet's rights and reputations. This viewpoint can be illustrated by incidents such as the publication in Denmark of images of the prophet which were insulting to him, to Muslims and also to Islam, the religion of almost fifth of the world population. As a result, Muslims around the world

boycotted Danish products, taking action on a personal basis to right a perceived wrong; English proved a useful tool to communicate, not only with other Muslims and but also with people from different religions and cultures.

5.3.1.5 The significance of new technologies as providing a link to the global community on teachers views of appropriate cultural models

An interesting theme in interview data was a factor impacting on teachers' views of cultural models was the internet as a global way in communicating with others around the world; this was mentioned by several participants. This was seen by the majority of the participants in the interviews to be another major factor in shaping their opinion towards the most appropriate cultural model for EFL teaching in schools. In this regard, Nasser, for example, asserted:

I believe that the internet reserve a big space in filling the learners knowledge for English language the varieties within its culture, people are getting involved with it.

Evidently, the internet can give teachers the opportunities to view the other parts of the world clearly in order to give a better decision with regard to their views. In relation to this view Sarah said: *"I think we live together with media and internet; they are actually part of our daily life. Therefore, they both have strong influence on our thinking"*. It is clear therefore that in the local Saudi society people are involved, as are many nations around the world, in the internet revolution. It is part of their daily life, and it is their access to the hidden world and also to the world which they may never have heard of. Consequently, they must be influenced of what they see there and certainly, their views would be shaped accordingly. Mashaa agreed with this view as she mentioned:

For some extent yes, the internet is seen by some people holds a great influence in the world. Even if you think you are not able to go outside your country, you still can travel by the internet and see so many places. More importantly, you can read different views and access to different sources from different perspectives. I can agree it has positive influence on me; however, we have some parents who think it is dangerous for young students and can ruin their behaviours.

This finding directed our attention to the significance of the relationship between local society and the internet. It is linking them to the rest of the world and making the world one village by closing the distance between people and cultures. Therefore, it is not surprising that this is helping to promote positive views towards other cultural behaviours or beliefs.

In this section, the significance of participants' views on the relationship between language and culture have been explored as these were identified as one set of factors impacting on teachers' views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia. Findings have shown that most participants do not believe that the English language and its culture can be separated, and it is very important to address the target culture of English in EFL textbooks. However, in contrast, they also maintain that English, as an international language, is no longer associated with a particular country or set of practices. The source of their views has been seen to be related to the fact that the English language, culture and ideology occupy a strong and important global position, as well as to perspectives on English language and culture in Saudi Arabia (especially religious perspectives) and the significance of new technologies in providing a link to the global community. An exploration of participants' perspectives on the relationship between language and culture have shown an awareness of the position of English language speaking countries as a political and economic force, highlighting the potential significance of political factors on their views about appropriate cultural models which I will turn to next below.

5.3.2 The impact of political factors on participants' views of appropriate cultural models

Since, as has been discussed in chapters 1 and 2 above, political events and commentary about the Saudi Arabian educational system are seen to be potentially significant to the views teachers hold about cultural models, in this section I will present the findings from the questionnaire and interviews which provide an indication of how significant participants felt these to be. Questionnaire data is drawn from a number of items in section D (2) of the questionnaire which explicitly asked participants to indicate the extent to which they felt their views

were influenced by certain political perspectives. The impact of politics on participants' views will be considered with reference to 3 sub-themes. Firstly, participants' perspectives on the influential nature of English language and cultural practices. Secondly, the significance of politics on their views of English language and cultural practices, and finally, the extent to which politics is viewed as significant to their own sense of self and the way in which they view people in English speaking countries.

5.3.2.1 Participants' perspectives on the influential nature of English language and cultural practices

The spread of English language and culture

In this sub-theme, the main focus is to examine participants' views on how far they feel the increasing spread and influence of English language and culture around the world influences their views on appropriate cultural models. The results are shown in Table 5.11 below.

Table (5.11): The widespread of English (item 1 in table D2 of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Influenced	Influenced	Not Sure	Not Influenced	Strongly not Influenced
The wide spread nature of English speaking countries' cultural practices.	21.8%	45%	16.8%	14.3%	2.1%

From Table 5.11 above, it is clear that most of the participants in the questionnaire (66.8%) believed that they are influenced by the wide spread nature of English speaking countries' cultural practices in forming their views. This was backed up by interview results. Hasan, for example, claimed that the spread of the English language globally has led to its dominance: *"I believe, it has started already to be the dominant language, absolutely it has started"*. Indeed, the dominance of English in the world is clearly seen in different fields and for different reasons. Even in Saudi Arabia, the position of the English language is getting stronger than before, and people start to realise the need for it in order to speed up the country's development in different fields. There are several possible reasons for this dominance, as indicated by Lama:

I think that the reason for the English language and its culture spread is power of the native speakers. And also could be for the vast development in technology and modernity.

This finding reflects the dependence by many countries around the world on the English speaking countries in many fields. Saudi Arabia is one example, as it depends on the United States and also on other western countries to help in the development process carried out by the Saudis. Likewise, Nasser mentioned: *“of course, it is the language of the United States, the most powerful country in the world. And for sure, it is the first language in politics, economic and also other different fields”*.

Taken together, questionnaire and interview data reveal that most participants believe that English language and culture has had an extended influence across the globe, allowing it to evolve and become the most widespread culture of this day and age. One impact of this is, that in many countries nowadays, the movement towards development and modernization has led to an awareness of a need for English as a tool for communication with people from many different cultures, and this is increasingly the case in Saudi Arabia. Saudis see this language as key to being a competitive society in the world. They use English for medical, technical, business, defence and other purposes. Thus, the participants' views shown in Table 5.9 reflect the acknowledgement of English as an international and global language.

5.3.2.2 The significance of politics to participants' views of English language and cultural practices

The question of whether political factors influence teachers' views on the most appropriate cultural model for the EFL textbooks used in Saudi public schools is examined in this section, using data elicited from both instruments: interviews and questionnaires. Themes identified were: their views on the general impact of politics on teachers working lives, their views and attitudes towards political events and actions involving English-speaking countries, and politics as a lens through which to view self and others.

Participants' views on the general impact of politics on their professional lives

In this regard data analysis of the interview suggested that politics, and political actions in the surrounding societies and also around the world, may have an impact on the Saudi EFL teachers' decisions on the most appropriate cultural model for the Saudi public schools. Lama explained: *"politics live with us, and yes it has an effect. We watch news daily and see some news that hurt. We cannot do anything about it, but we feel it"*. In Saudi, as in many places around the world, the news has become part of daily life, as people sometimes schedule their plans around news time. News sources like TV, newspapers and the internet feed a constant diet of daily news and therefore people are constantly updated on current affairs. Consequently, teachers would certainly have their own opinions about every particular event and accordingly, this would have its effect on them. As Nasser said:

Actually, I am not about this, but it can be seen that, yes, politics has an influence on English language learning and that influence could be considered positive or negative in some cases. I think this depends on the person himself and how he reacts to political issues. Therefore, the influence can also be from the cultural and economic sides.

Teachers can, then, be affected by political factors; the effect does not have to be negative, but also can be positive, in the same way that working under pressure can produce a better result. However, a negative reaction may lead to rejection and then failure. Rajeh claimed:

I think because of the political factors, the English language becomes now an international medium for many uses in the world. Of course, there is an influence, but a positive one in the way we are encouraged to compete with other nations in order to bring and also create knowledge and technology.

The development of English as an international language, therefore, can help motivate competition and development. On the other hand, political factors can also have a negative effect. As Dalal maintained:

It is negative for many people. I don't think learning English would be easy because of what politics and political do to the world. The world needs more peaceful environment in order for people to interact and communicate in their best mode.

Political factors can, therefore, be the cause of negative effects and the implication is that political action against Muslim and Arabic countries results, in some cases, in hatred of anything coming from the west, including the English language. Clearly, such a negative reaction to political events would hinder the will to learn English and also have an impact on interaction with other communities.

Some respondents, however, think that they, and therefore their learning, are unaffected by political factors. With this regards, Sarah claimed:

No, I don't think this could be influential with education. We learn or even teach for the purpose of learning and developing our status. It is better not to look at politics or problems around the world negatively.

There are some teachers therefore who deal with the English language as a subject to teach, or a job to do. Thus, they ignore anything outside school try not to mix it with their teaching or their subject. The reason here could be due to the interests to the language itself that some teachers may have, as we can see that some teachers interested for example in sport, and this sport is famous in one western country, this person then would support the sport and the team and would not look at politics or what political do.

The analysis of the interview data indicated that political factors have some effect on the local society. Accordingly, the effect can be differed within the society with the variations on how people perceive the effect. A sample example of this view was said by Hasan as follows:

Yes, there should be an effect on the family as part of the society. The family is a source of influence on the student especially when the student is young. More attention is then paid to the student until he/she joins the University.

Since, as Hasan claims, parents play a major role in their children's achievements at school, if adults are negatively affected by political factors this will have an impact on their children. Likewise, when a family is positively influenced, this again would be reflected on the students.

Al-Jazi claimed that the effect of political factors on Saudi EFL teachers was limited:

Possibly on us as teachers, but not to a great extent. But for sure, as we live with it every day, it may have affected us without realising. We cannot say no about its existence. However, I don't believe that it has and an effect on the student that much.

As long as teachers see the news every day, and see political news and political events around the world, it is possible that politics will influence them, even subconsciously, so there would be an indirect impact. Consequently, this would play a part in the teachers' views about appropriate cultural models.

Participants' views and attitudes towards political events and actions involving English-speaking countries

This sub-theme will look at the Saudi EFL teachers' views and attitudes towards political events and actions led by English-speaking powers. Therefore, the focus here will include the attempt of the western governments to influence policymakers in the Middle East, attitudes towards western nations, and stereotyping of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis by the West.

Table (5.12): The attempts of the Western governments to influence policymaking in the Middle East (items 10 and 11 in Table D2 of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Influenced	Influenced	Not Sure	Not Influenced	Strongly not Influenced
The attempt of English speaking countries' governments to influence policy-making in the Middle East.	20.7%	32.9%	22.5%	17.1%	6.8%
The attempt of English speaking countries' governments to influence policy-making in Saudi Arabia.	21.4%	26.1%	22.1%	18.2%	12.1%

The quantitative data from the first item of Table 5.12 above showed that 53.6% of the participants believed that the attempts of English speaking countries' governments to influence policy-making in the Middle East have influenced their views on the most appropriate cultural model for EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia. Whereas 23.9% of the participants claimed the opposite. Moreover, the second item of the same table showed a somewhat similar result, with 47.6% claiming to be influenced by attempts to influence policy-making in Saudi Arabia, while 30.3%

claimed they were. For those who admitted this influence in both items, the reason could be the continuing intrusions of the western leaders in the Middle East, as in the case of Iraq and also of Palestine. In addition, when it comes to Saudi, it is also seen that there is pressure both by the western media and also by some western governments on Saudi policy, mainly education policy.

When it comes to the data analysis of the interviews, it highlighted that the majority of the participants do not see that the American political actions and their existence in the surrounding countries by force, as seen by the local perspectives, have much influence with reference to education. In reference with this view, Saud maintained that: *"we shouldn't link. They are different things. If we want better education and development they should be apart"*. Another participant, Lama, shared the same view, recommending that political events should be independent of the English language in education:

I can see that it is important to learn the language of the other nations what so ever. And whatever the Americans do in the Middle East, this shouldn't affect our teaching or learning. English language is the global language not only American. We should see the light side of this, and keep politics aside.

This finding shows Saudi EFL teachers' awareness of the importance of English in both the local and the global context, an awareness probably due to the increased emphasis on the need to teach the language and also the wider dependence on it. It was this latter aspect that Baynah focused on, saying:

I agree with this view in which we see the language as a source of knowledge coming from a modern country that has the success in different fields and sciences.

The finding here directed us to the positive view that can be taken against any action we face, therefore, this participant disregarded the negative aspect of political actions and focused only on what significance the English language could have for their education.

On the other hand, the case for other participants believed that even if they were not affected directly, there must be an effect on the society surrounding them. In relation to this, Dalal said: *"I think the influence could affect many of our people, I*

mean people who see the news regularly. They see the occupation". Rajeh was thinking on the same lines:

As we are part of the society's chain, we share some feelings with the surrounding Arabic nations whom still suffering from the occupation. It is true that we are not happy with those actions, but at the same time this mustn't affect us negatively.

These results are unsurprising given the almost daily news from surrounding countries, for example Palestine, which suffers from Israeli occupation and the continuous destruction of homes and construction of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories. In addition to this, they are also affected by the killing and continuing attacks by the Israeli military on the Palestinians, with the support and backing of the US government. Thus, those pictures could have an effect by itself on the whole society.

The interview data analysis showed that all of the participants do not have any negative attitudes towards the west as a nation, but there are some who believe that the west is a source of knowledge and modernity. Accordingly, Sarah claimed: "*why do we hate them? Their culture is spreading everywhere in our society as a sign of appreciations*". The spread of western culture includes western food, clothing, lifestyle and language, all of which are used by a large number within the local society. Even if they do not adopt all these aspects, many Saudi people adopt one or more of them. Sarah interpreted this application of cultural values in another community as a sign of appreciation.

With reference to the use of western language, Baynah commented:

Actually, there are many parents who are keen on their children learning and they hire private tutors to help them. If they had negative view about the west, believe me, they wouldn't do this.

It is clear that there is separation between reactions to western political policies and education in general. As a result, the parents concentrate only on their children's education and ignore anything else.

On the other hand, some participants while not expressing hatred of the western nations, feel strongly about the policies of those countries, and the political leaders. Mashaa maintained: *“The hatred is only to the policy makers of those countries not citizens”*. Similarly, Mohammed said:

No. I don't hate the west. However, I am against the American administration policy towards us as Muslims especially when they say: you either have to be with us or against us. So if you have a particular view different from the view they have, they will see you as an enemy and a terrorist even if you condemn terrorism and even if you, and your society, have been a desirable target for terrorists. So I think this is not fair. The American administration was the first to announce that the majority of victims from terrorist attacks were from Muslim communities.

The stereotyping of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis by the West can be in itself a factor influencing participants' views. Therefore, Table 5.13 below, along with data from the interviews, shows how they are influenced by these stereotypes.

Table (5.13): Participants' views on Factors revealing the stereotyping of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis (items 3, 4 and 5 in Table D2 of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Influenced	Influenced	Not Sure	Not Influenced	Strongly not Influenced
The acceptability of English speaking countries' ways of looking at the world.	8.6%	27.9%	28.2%	23.6%	11.8%
English speaking countries' views of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis.	21.1%	30.4%	16.8%	14.6%	17.1%
English speaking countries' representations of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis in the media.	25.4%	34.3%	13.6%	16.4%	10.4%

The quantitative data results for the first item of Table 5.13 above revealed whether or not participants were influenced by the acceptability of English speaking countries' way of looking at the world. Broadly speaking only about half or fewer participants seem to feel they are influenced or strongly influenced by these views and representations. Therefore, 36.5% of participants agreed this was an influence, whereas similar percentage (35.4%) was negative about it. This could be due to the fact that sometimes people see this view without noticing or having

at least the minimum knowledge about different countries around the world, or perhaps their knowledge could be limited. In this case the western media is the main source of this knowledge. On the question of the English speaking countries' views of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis in the second item, most of the participants (51.5%) believe that this has an influence on them, to which can be attributed the discomfort of the participants about this view of their own cultural values and beliefs. The third item in the same table looks deeper to see how participants perceive the representations of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis in the media in English speaking countries. A larger number of the participants (59.7%) thought these representations had an influence on them, whereas 26.8% did not see an influence in this regard. This could be due to the repeated negative stereotyping of Muslims and Arabs that has been spread by the western media worldwide, whereby characters from these cultures are rarely seen in American movies without being portrayed as terrorists or as dangerous.

With this regard the qualitative data showed that teachers want to understand how western people view Saudis and what stereotypes about the local Islamic and Arabic cultures are in their minds. In relation to this, Dalal asserted:

We can clearly see through media, internet and other sources how we are seen in the eyes of the west. They are looking down at us, and they blame us of every trouble they have. It is a shame, really shame, they only see bad things.

This finding could be due to the continuous blame for terrorism and criticism by the western authorities, the media and a large number of the western people against Islam and Arabic people. Another participant shared a similar view and showed it annoyed him; as Nasser argued:

Yes, I do think that when you hear the news in English from different sources and perspectives around the world, you are then able to understand it and even you understand the 'Ellah' [problems] the media write about us. You also understand the reasons they speak in this way.

In addition, the desire of Saudi teachers to understand other people's cultural values and ways of thinking could be considered as a factor in this regard. Al-Jazi supported this view as she maintained:

Understanding the other is a positive sign. Understanding the other or taking things more easily is important. However, it is not a must that understanding the other should be positive. This does not mean that when I understand the other, should mean I completely agree with the other. Not at all, there is a difference between agreement and understanding. Understanding may have an influence on every one. I may understand another religion, but I am not convinced. It is not necessary to bring to the curriculum Christmas to understand the other. Other issues could be used. Therefore, I understand people to appreciate them, and also to have some appreciations from them.

5.3.2.3 Teacher positioning and the extent to which politics is viewed as a lens through which to view self and cultural others

In this section I will consider how teachers view themselves in relation to cultural others and the extent of their openness to global influences. Broadly speaking, findings suggest that while participants acknowledge that various political events have an impact on the ways in which Saudi Arabia is positioned in the global arena in contrast to English speaking countries such as the UK and USA, that this is not a highly significant to the ways in which they are positioned or position cultural others. Below I will discuss the findings under three themes drawn from the analysis of questionnaire and interview data. These are, openness to linguistic and cultural other, distinguishing between politics and community and the impact of politics on their professional identity as teachers of English.

Openness towards the linguistic and cultural other

Openness towards the other was seen to be evident in the responses participants provided to questions concerning their desire to travel to English speaking countries as shown in table 5.14 below.

Table (5.14): Teachers' experiences and desire to visit English native-speaking countries

	Item	No	Yes
1	I have been to a native English language speaking country	69.3%	28.9%
2	Desire to visit any of the native English speaking countries	7.1%	86.4%

In Table 5.14 above item 1 indicates that the number of teachers (28.9%) who had travelled to a native English speaking country is relatively small; a significant majority of the participants (69.3%) had not visited these countries. However, the second question in the same table shows that the great majority of participants (86.4%) wish to visit one of these countries. The reasons most participants have not yet had the opportunity to travel to a native English speaking country may be religious or political. However, given that the vast majority would be happy to visit these countries in the future, it would seem that most see no intrinsic problems with these countries. In addition, there may be religious reasons for not visiting an English speaking country in the future, because women in Saudi society have restrictions on travelling abroad alone and need a male relative to accompany them. Even if they wanted to, they cannot cross the Saudi border without permission from their father or husband. Thus, it is possible that the reasons for these responses reflect local cultural practices which make it difficult for women to travel independently, rather than problems with English culture or society.

When it comes to the analysis of the interview data, the majority of the participants showed an interest in travelling abroad, as Baynah said:

No, I have no problem travelling abroad and mainly to an English speaking country, I believe this would enhance my English and also travelling in itself helps to widen my knowledge. I am looking forward to travel in the near future; it is possible 'inshallah' [God willing].

This finding brought to our attention that there is no reason, therefore, to stop this participant from travelling abroad. In addition, we can see from what she said that she holds a strong religious perspective, since she used the word 'inshallah'. Her Islamic and cultural beliefs, therefore, do not oppose the idea of travelling and communicating with people from different cultures, even if their beliefs are different. Khalid agreed:

I have had this idea for a long time. It is important to know the native speakers. Beside, as long as I am teaching the language, I should live with the people who speak the original pronunciation of it.

This participant wishes to travel to an English-speaking country, with no cultural boundaries to hinder him. His reasons seems to be linked to his role teaching English language in the Saudi public schools since, when learning English for communicative purposes, the best place to use the language and master it for Khalid is to practice it in its native countries.

Distinguishing between politics and communities

There were a number of findings which point to an awareness of the need to distinguish between communities and politics. People might be categorized and positioned politically, but not to the extent that this determines the values and norms of individuals. Broadly speaking, these findings show that they did not believe it is helpful to link political actions and decisions in one country to people living in that country and that there was therefore a need to distinguish between politics and community .

Participants clearly appreciated that there was no one to one correlation between a given region or nation and the views and norms of behaviours of those that lived in these. This is evident in their perceptions of the different factors informing their own views reported in Table 5.15 below.

Table (5.15): Participants views on factors seen to influence their views on appropriate cultural models (items 6, 7, 8 and 9 in Table D2 of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Influenced	Influenced	Not Sure	Not Influenced	Strongly not Influenced
Local Saudi Arabian cultural values and beliefs.	37.9%	45.4%	7.1%	6.1%	3.6%
Your own values and beliefs.	40%	40%	13.9%	5.4%	.7%
Your own ethnic background.	23.2%	26.4%	18.2%	13.6%	18.6%
Islamic values and beliefs.	52.1%	30.7%	6.4%	6.8%	3.9%

From this it can be seen that the majority regard their own views to be informed by a variety of factors and crucially, 80% saw their opinions shaped by their *own* values and beliefs rather than determined by categories such as ethnicity, religion and nationality, all of which are drawn upon in the ways in which Saudi Arabia is positioned by others globally and seeks to position itself as discussed in chapters 1 and 2 above.

This is also evident in table 5.16 below which shows their views with regard to norms and values of those residing in English speaking countries.

Table (5.16): Views of the generalizability of the norms and values of English speaking countries. (items 10 and 11 in table C of the questionnaires)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It is not possible to generalize about the cultural practices of people in an English speaking country such as the UK or USA.	23.9%	41.4%	21.8%	9.6%	3.2%
It is not possible to generalize about the values and ideology of people in an English speaking country such as the UK or USA.	32.5%	37.5%	13.9%	12.9%	3.2%

As can be seen in table 5.16 above, the majority of participants do not feel it is appropriate to generalize about the cultural practices of people in an English speaking country like the UK and the USA (65.3%) or about the values and ideology of people in an English speaking country like the UK and the USA (70%). These results suggest an awareness of the mixtures of cultural norms and values that can be seen in English speaking countries particularly where people have moved from post-colonial to former colonial countries in search of improved employment and lifestyles. Therefore, many nationalities have moved, carrying with them their cultural values and beliefs and transferring them to English speaking countries. This of course, has created multiple pictures of the western culture. In addition, within English speaking countries cultural values and traditions there are also values and features that differ for instance Scottish from the Irish, and the English from the Canadian. Accordingly, it is not possible to generalize any picture, whether positive or negative, about any English speaking countries context. This conclusion indicates that as long as there is variety within

those cultures, there will be opinions and beliefs that differ from those of the government.

Interview data analysis supported the picture emerging from the questionnaire findings, revealing that the majority of the participants believed that members of their society do distinguish between politics and communities. When asked if it was possible to correlate the two, Baynah maintained: *"It is ridiculous to think in this way. I am sure our people wouldn't think this way"*. Moreover, Mohammed also commented in this issue, agreeing that there should be no connection between political decisions and the community:

No, of course as I said before, for example, I am not against the American people but sometimes I am against the American administration. We have nothing to do with the American people. I believe that many are ignorant about politics and don't care.

These teachers' thoughts could be particularly attributable to the Saudi context, since in that country the general population has no vote and no say in government decisions; everything is decided by a single authority. Accordingly, participants assume that in the United States decisions are out of the individual citizen's hands.

Sarah illustrated the difference between politics and society by referring to Saudi Arabian history:

Politics is something and societies are something else. We cannot blame, for example, the Turkish people now for the Ottoman Empire occupation to some Saudi parts in the past.

Sarah's point is that nowadays there are good relations between Saudi Arabia and Turkey, although several times in the past the Saudis suffered occupation under the Ottoman Empire. Any blame, therefore, must be laid at the door of the historic perpetrators, not the modern nation. At the present time people could find reasons to hate the west or the Americans for continuing political and military action in Muslim countries; as Mashaa said:

Possibly, as I mentioned to some extent only. Some people in the society think this is the language of the Americans, the language of the enemy who kills innocents in Iraq and Afghanistan and other places in the world. They always support Israel to kill Palestinians. Other than that, most people link it with politics and politicians, they never link it with citizens, and I don't see a reason.

This shows local society's concerns about American policies in the region; although they may condemn these, they can still distinguish between politics and American citizens, a philosophy that reflects the Saudi cultural belief and Islamic prohibition on judging people for other's mistakes.

Nevertheless, despite the general picture emerging from interviews regarding a need to distinguish between politics and the views and behaviours of individuals and communities, there were some participants who held a different viewpoint. Sultan for example, acknowledged: *"yes, some people find a good reason to hate people from particular countries. There is a relationship"* suggesting that some people in Saudi Arabia might extend their dislike of the American government to the American people. As Al-Anoud claimed:

There is a relationship between people and politics, they call for democracy and vote for their governments. If they think their governments are corrupt, they can stop them or at least demonstrate against them. The majority voted for the government.

The impact of politics on participants' professional identity as teachers of English

The analysis of the interview data also provided some interesting insights into the ways in which they felt themselves (as teachers of English) to be affected by politics in their immediate teaching worlds, with the majority again, suggesting that this was not something that concerned them much. Thus, in relation to this, Hasan argued:

Well, it seems to me a little bit complicated question to answer. You know, we are Saudi living in Saudi and teaching Saudis in a Saudi society and environment. At the same time we feel to be a bit apart from our other Saudi teachers, perhaps because we are teaching a foreign language. Anyway, I call it work identity. Nothing else, I teach this language. And I am sure this has nothing to do with my culture, but of course it is seen to be the global language and a good chance to protect our religion. I will still be Saudi.

From this finding we can see that this participant is very keen to show how he admires his own Saudi identity, however, he is still concerned about being seen by the local society as a tool to break their values or traditions. He stresses that

English, as a global language, can be used to defend Islamic beliefs, this being one of the main goals of teaching English language in the Saudi public schools. Consequently, he directed our attention to the aims of teaching English in order to protect himself from any implication that he is not a good Saudi. Another participant had similar views about existing in both cultures; locally and globally, but added that in his position he will have a better chance to share aspects of his identity with other people from different places around the world. Sultan asserted:

I am not sure about this question. I see myself as a Saudi teacher carrying all of the Saudi Arabian features and values. On the other hand, teaching English language as a global and international language gave me a feeling that I could have the access to any country I go, there must people everywhere in the world who share an identity with me. Of course I see myself there as global, but I still keep my origins.

The reason for this finding could be due to access and that he saw that being an English teacher gave him opportunities outside to communicate with other people using the English language both inside their country and even. Therefore, inside the country, teachers can share this identity with all of the people who speak the language in Saudi, as English is widely used especially in hospitals, companies and many other places where there is a very high percentage of foreigners who use English in their work alongside Saudis as mentioned earlier in section (2.3) in chapter 2. In addition, they have access through the internet as they can communicate with a large number of people around the world who share their interests. Furthermore, when they travel abroad, of course, English is the global language and they can easily find themselves having no problem communicating with others. Consequently, these which were identified from analysis of interview data factors helped give them more confidence in shaping their own position as local teachers, teaching a global language in their local context

In fact, from this finding of the political factors, participants showed that they cannot judge people by politics alone. They do not make their minds up; their views are formed from several different perspectives. In addition, they consider their own beliefs and values, ethnicity and religious backgrounds and at the same time recognize that individuals are not just products of culture or politics. This is

how they identify themselves, and they view communities and politics as of how they view other places.

Therefore, politics as a factor affecting teachers' views on the appropriate EFL cultural model seems to have little significance, because they do not see themselves purely involved in politics. Interviewees are happy to travel to English speaking countries, and they do not think they make up their minds purely on the basis of national categories. They see themselves as people, and they see others as people too. Accordingly, although politics holds some significance it is not at a level that might affect their teaching or other practices in a direct way. I had anticipated that political events would prove to be a significant factor affecting teachers' views and started this study thinking this way, however, it turned out otherwise.

5.3.3 Teachers in their school world

A final group of factors that were explored in interviews were a number of things that related to participants professional experiences. These suggested that of the Saudi EFL teachers by examining their views about different issues with regards to the current curriculum, the suitability of the curriculum to the Saudi EFL teachers, and the teachers' views on the 2003 EFL reforms.

5.3.3.1 The current curriculum

Analysis of interview data showed that the majority of the EFL teachers interviewed were not satisfied with the English language curriculum in Saudi public schools; participants also explained their reasons for this dissatisfaction. One claimed that the Saudi English language curriculum was "*to some extent, less than expected. It could be less than 50% of our expectations*" (Baynah). Echoing this dissatisfaction, Sarah claimed:

I don't have much experience to give a fair judgement. However, I can say that English language hasn't yet reached what we have expected. It is used in many places, and it becomes now the medium of instruction for many subjects at the university level. Therefore, it should be in a better situation than what it has now.

With English language expectations in the country; indeed the level of proficiency among Saudi students at university level shows evidence of their low achievement in English language, with some universities offer English language courses and programmes for newly registered students. Another participant also shared her disappointment with English teaching in Saudi; Al-Anoud maintained that:

Aims are in one direction and we are in another, the opposite. There are no involvements in discussions or decisions with teachers. And also time for the lessons is not enough for us to cover the curriculum. However, we appreciate the personal efforts we receive with the help from some families. Moreover, the internet and private teaching can be helpful for many students.

This evidence indicates that the aims of the EFL curriculum, with its goals and objectives for English language learning in Saudi, are not achieved. For instance, one of the main aims is that the Saudi students will be able to communicate with other nations and exchange knowledge using the English learnt in school.

Despite the negative viewpoints, there are some teachers who believe that English language teaching in Saudi has attained some measure of success. Al-jazi expressed her satisfaction with the curriculum:

I could say I am more than 70% satisfied. You could see how possible you can speak the language in almost every town of the Kingdom. This is one success of our educational goals.

What she claimed here could be because the increase in the use and spread of English throughout the country is because in every main region of Saudi Arabia there are foreign companies that use English for communication with Saudis. This can help even young students to practice their English with foreigners living around them. Likewise, another participant was also happy with achievements of English teaching; Rajeh mentioned that “*the curriculum is good because there are good students. However, the level of the textbook is beyond most of the students’ ability*” highlighting the success of English language teaching despite difficulties within the curriculum. These difficulties are because the textbooks used for EFL in public schools are very content-heavy, and some teachers tend to skip or drop sections in order to cover most of the textbook. Difficulties are also caused by the language levels in the textbooks, which can be too advanced for the students.

Mohammed was also positive about the success of English language usage in the Kingdom:

I think in terms of its function, English is increasingly used in Saudi Arabia with great achievements. This could be due to many things such as education and the aims set for the English language, contact with the increasing number of expatriates from non-Arab countries, travel, and more importantly the use of the Internet and other technological inventions.

Appropriateness of the EFL curriculum level to the students

The EFL curriculum has been always an issue among Saudis, causing debate on whether or not it is appropriate for the students, and whether or not the students are able to master it and reach the goals and objectives set by the Ministry of Education. Accordingly, this part of the research explored the participants' views on the appropriateness of the curriculum. All of the participants agreed on the gap between actual levels of student achievement and curriculum expectations. Nasser claimed:

Well, at the meantime, the curriculum subjects are beyond the student's level. For example, the curriculum is too difficult for students in the intermediate stage. They always hate English language and it is true that it is overloaded. Perhaps, they need to lower down the level of the textbook and modify it to the needs of the students.

In this regard, gap could be attributed to the policy of transferring the student to the next grade in school despite failing English. As a result, such students will carry weaknesses in this subject alone throughout every grade, a process which would create problems at a later stage in secondary school. Another participant echoed Nasser's opinion, but had a different explanation. According to Hasan:

The student's difficulty in learning English language may be similar to the difficulty of learning other subjects such as Arabic and mathematics. However, the student studies Arabic, which is his native tongue. English is another language. Therefore, the student does not have solid background in English. This is one factor.

I think the participant here referred to the difficulties with regard to other subjects as well as the English language to be in the same range or level of difficulties. And for this reason Hasan implied that students will prefer to concentrate on subjects

that have their own mother tongue language rather than making an effort to face the difficulty of a foreign language, thereby widening the gap which is already existed.

Furthermore, the dissatisfaction with the curriculum can be also seen from different point of view; as Saud maintained:

Apparently, the curriculum is unstable for our students and is over loaded. Consequently, the third grade in intermediate level is difficult to teach in which make students dislike the subject. Unfortunately, it has become a subject of rote memorisation rather than skilful learning. This is not the way we are aiming to reach.

Students' low achievements

The low achievement of the Saudi students in English language studies is widely acknowledged in the country. As a result, there has been dissatisfaction with English language teaching among students' families. Some of the participants agreed; Hasan claimed:

As for achievement, I am not satisfied with students' low achievement. I think that the student should know the basics of writing using the language and also should know conversation in English language. This is the aim of learning English language in Saudi Arabia. It is not for the student to write an essay. Our aims as teachers are not very high at all, but it is for the student to learn and to be aware. What is there is that the student should be able to speak the language which he is far to do so.

EFL teaching in the Saudi public schools are the main reason for this state of affairs; the current study showed that Saudi teachers are disappointed with the outcomes of their teaching and the achievements of their students. As seen above, Saudi teachers wanted the Ministry to be more realistic and to set goals more appropriate to the students' language level. Another participant looked at the problem from another angle, and justified the slow move of teachers to cover the whole textbook during the scheduled time for the EFL lessons and then blamed the Ministry, as Saud said:

The curriculum is overloaded to the extent that the teacher cannot cover it in a way that makes it useful to the student. The teacher can cover it in just one month, but what about student achievement! To

be more realistic, the students' low achievements have become an issue for us as it gets worse and worse by the time.

Saud's comment illustrates that it is common among the Saudi teachers to leave some parts of the textbook aside in order to reach the end of the textbook. This happens because the teacher is always under pressure from both the headmaster and from regular inspections by the teaching supervisors. Both the school administration and the supervisors want every textbook unit to be taught in all circumstances, whether the students have met the goals of the curriculum or not. At the end of the term, they want the exam to include all units.

Furthermore, other participants agreed also with this view of the students' low achievements, however, they tried to look at it from the students' side, and listed the factors they believed would hinder students' progress. Hasan mentioned:

There are many factors for the low achievement of the student. These reasons include: the curriculum itself, students' dissatisfaction with it, perhaps it is not appealing to the student. The curriculum could be attractive and satisfactory to the teacher, but not for students with a low proficiency level.

The majority of Saudi students do not reach the expected level of the English language, and claim that the textbooks are difficult. Thus, students tend to have low levels of motivation, which makes the teacher's job doubly hard; teaching the subject and also motivating students.

While there is a view that the target culture is harmful or dangerous to the local one, some consider that any cultural model is acceptable, as long as it benefits the learning process to the aims and objectives of teaching the subject. This was shown by the analysis of the interviews, for example, Baynah said:

I think the curriculum is overloaded, and this is not the case. It is too much, but it is ok as we believe that development of the curriculum is necessary. However, the question is: does it result in more student achievement? If the answer is yes, then I am with this provided that it is not at the expense of my own culture. Therefore, this new element included is meant to raise the student's achievement of the language taking into consideration that it is not in conflict with my own culture.

Some participants, therefore, are either not fully aware of the differences between cultures, or may not see such differences as cause for concern. It is possible that, due to the spread of global culture, differences are not seen as significant and are accepted as long as they are not in conflict with their own.

Another participant also shared the same opinion, although he gave a low significance to the position of culture in English language teaching. Nasser maintained:

From my point of view, the cultural content does not play an important role. From a teacher's point of view, what is of concern to me is that the student understands the lesson. For example, if I am teaching if conditionals, after I teach the rule, I want my student to know how to put it in an example. It does not matter for me as a teacher whether the student brings the example from the culture of the society or culture of another society. What is more important is that the students answer correctly.

5.3.3.2 The unsuitability of the curriculum to the Saudi EFL teachers

After examining teachers' views of the EFL curriculum in Saudi public schools earlier, in section 5.3.6.1, this section focuses on the quality of English language teaching in general in Saudi Arabia, but specifically on the unsuitability of the curriculum to the Saudi EFL teachers. Interviews sought to establish to what extent the participants are satisfied with the quality of teaching in public schools. The data revealed that the majority were not satisfied, for various reasons. Mashaa expressed her dissatisfaction, blaming the Ministry of Education for not offering all the materials needed in the EFL classroom and also for not offering enough training for teachers:

Not satisfied at all, how could I be? Tapes and materials are not available!! Can you improve your students' skills without the needed materials? There are no efforts from the ministry or teachers themselves to improve the language and its outcomes. I think the ministry doesn't care and also teachers are happy to relax and do the same routine every day with no changes.

One reason for dissatisfaction, therefore, is the failure of the Ministry to provide teaching materials. Some schools receive materials two or three months after the start of the academic year, and some schools receive no materials at all. Another

reason could be the lack of in service training to update teachers on the changes and newly published textbooks; courses offered by the Ministry do not usually meet teachers' expectations. Lama blamed the Ministry of Education for a different reason:

I am not satisfied. The contents are overloaded in the intermediate stage and there are a lot of gaps in secondary stage. Can you believe they mention in the textbook that we have in Saudi only 7 Universities, although; we have now more than 20? We also have some old-fashioned materials; like the expansion of the two holy mosques, transportations and some other materials. They all needed to be up to date with new numbers and new information.

The source of this participant's dissatisfaction is the outdated textbook content brought about by the rapid changes and developments in the country, especially following the accession of King Abdullah in 2005, which are not reflected in the texts.

Although the Ministry of Education has policies and plans to improve attainment levels in Saudi schools one participant believed that they are taking the wrong direction. Mohammed maintained:

I think ELT in Saudi is going in an unclear direction. Between now and then, you hear many things being done as part of what they call 'unprecedented educational reforms'. However, as teachers, we don't really see any improvement on the ground. I wonder what type of reforms these are.

Mohammed's evidence touched on the tendency for incoming incumbents in the Ministry of Education to implement change for change's sake, without necessarily considering the usefulness of existing policies. Some new policies therefore can create more problems than they solve.

5.3.3.3 Teachers' views on the 2003 EFL reforms

This part of the research sought the participants' views on the reasons for the reform of EFL textbooks conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2003. And here we will be able to elicit the teachers' views of whether the reform was a result of set plan by the Ministry of Education or as a result of the criticism in the western media against the Saudi Ministry of Education. The data shows that most of the

participants see the reforms as being the result of a planned update of teaching methods by the Ministry of Education. This may reflect participants' awareness that the Ministry of Education had already taken their decision to reform, even before the 9/11 attacks in New York. According to Dalal: *"In my opinion, it is the Ministry, who decided it, and the evidence is that the curriculum does not include the western culture; it only has mostly local culture."* Rajeh shared the same opinion and added that there was a need for the change a long time before there was any pressure from the media on the Ministry or the curriculum:

It is so clear for us that there was a need to change and modify the previous curriculum; therefore, there was a plan from the Ministry of Education. To prove this view, we can see the new curriculum does not include the western ideas or values; it has only the local and Islamic traditions.

The reasons put forward by these teachers are borne out by the reformed EFL textbooks for in use Saudi public schools. A cursory examination of the textbook shows that local cultural content is dominant and there are very few non-local cultural references. The policies of Saudi decision makers strongly stress both the need to improve English language in the country and the reliance on English for the external goals of the country, like trading and educating its citizens. One participant admitted that although there was pressure from the western media on the Saudi Ministry of Education with regard to some subjects taught in the public schools, English was not among them. Lama said:

Obviously, there was media pressure on all educational subjects especially religion. But I exclude English, as it has nothing to do with media and it wasn't criticised or blamed.

On the other hand, some participants believed the reforms to be both the result of criticism in the western media and the Ministry of Education's plans for development. As Sarah said: *"there were I think a well-studied plan. And also there were some influences from the media as well to have changes in the whole curriculum"*. Baynah agreed, and mentioned the weaknesses of the previous EFL textbook and some of the actions taken by the Ministry to improve the language:

It is because of the fruitlessness of the old curricula which did not focus on essential skills. Therefore, they've started teaching English in grade six for preparation to be useful when students start their intermediate grade. Additionally, there is also media pressure on the

Ministry of Education, but I don't think there is any relationship to religion for making such decision.

From this finding, it may be the case that the participants may have this view as a result of what they experienced before the reform and after it was conducted as teachers or even as students. In other words, teachers with a longer experience may have this view as a result of their direct experience of teaching the textbook both before and after the reform.

However, one participant did not believe that there was any set plan by the Ministry of Education, and claimed that reforms took place only because of the criticism; Mashaa asserted:

We all saw the voice of the media was very hard and focused on our education, not only English. It is the western media and the local media as well. Especially, after the attacks in the USA in 2001.

This teacher saw the reforms as caused by media coverage throughout Saudi Arabia, with talk of pressure by the US government and the western media. Additionally, the local media also mentioned and showed some of the western criticisms against both the Ministry of Education and the Saudi government.

5.3.4 Summary of findings on factors impacting on participants' views of appropriate cultural models

The findings in this study have revealed that participants were influenced by range of factors affecting their views towards the most appropriate cultural models for the Saudi EFL textbooks. These factors as evidence, have not affected them negatively, but rather gave them a wider scene to look at what is appropriate to their local context when dealing with a global language. Thus the above findings showed that the Saudi EFL teachers believe that English language and its culture are linked together and accordingly must be taught together. In addition, English is widely spread around the world as the dominant language which with the influence of globalization has its cultural values spread as well. They acknowledge that the spread of English language and its culture comes from the political power of the English speaking countries and also the vast development they have in technology and other fields in life. Thus, this has led them as EFL teachers teaching

this global language to be open to other cultures and as a consequence, the openness they hold have led them to accept views and values of other non-local communities. Moreover, whatever political actions they do not like of English speaking countries in the Middle East, does not mean they hold negative attitudes towards the nations of these countries. Therefore, they have created their own identity with accordance to their position as local Saudi teachers teaching the dominant international and global language. Hence, the final factor here was their actions in their school world as they have showed dissatisfactions towards the current EFL cultural content which they believe is unsuitable for their students and therefore they think some materials are not appropriately presented in the textbook.

In this regard, these factors have showed that they are all interlinked. So, for example, views about language and culture are closely linked to certain political factors such as the status and role of English worldwide and both are manifest in the textbooks they use and their views on various educational practices in their school world. These factors will be discussed in more details in chapter 6 with reference to the theoretical framework presented earlier in chapter 3 and references from the local realities of the Saudi context.

Having considered a number of factors impacting on teachers views of appropriate cultural models of the EFL textbook, I now turn to a consideration of the relationship between their views and the ways they try to enact these in the classroom.

5.4 The relationship between participants' views about appropriate cultural models and their in-class decision-making.

In this section I will report on the results of questionnaire and interview data which considered the relationship between participants' views of cultural models and how far they felt able to apply these to their classroom practice. Findings will be reported under two main themes; the relationship between beliefs and practices, and dealing with sensitive cultural aspects. With regard to the Saudi EFL

teachers' decisions in the classroom, Table 5.17 below indicates the results of a questionnaire item which examined participants' ability to apply their beliefs about the suitable cultural content.

The relationship between participants' beliefs and classroom practice regarding cultural content

Table (5.17): Teachers' ability to apply their beliefs and practices (section E in the questionnaires)

Item	To a large extent	To a limited extent	No, not at all
Teachers' ability to apply their beliefs about the suitable cultural content	24.3%	73.9%	1.8%

The questionnaire data analysis presented above in Table 5.17 revealed that the majority of the participants (73.9%) believed that they can apply their beliefs about the suitable cultural content, but only to a limited extent, whereas 24.3% thought they could apply their decisions to a large extent.

This finding brought to our attention the restricted, prescribed curriculum that teachers are obliged to follow. This plan as stated earlier in chapter 2 can be seen in the teachers' book supplied with each textbook, in which every lesson plan and lesson objectives are laid out. Therefore, the Ministry's supervisors' job is to check how far the teachers follow the plan and gives them guidance on doing so; at the end of each term, the supervisor and the school principal will evaluate the teacher according to his work and to how he deals with the curriculum and the students as well. Consequently, we can clearly see that the majority of the participants have chosen to be free in their decisions in the classroom only to a limited extent, indicating that they are fully aware of the Ministry's control and cannot break the rules.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that interviews revealed a number of ways in which participants dealt with sensitive cultural aspects in the textbook as a response to their dissatisfaction with this as discussed in section 5.3.3.1 above

Dealing with sensitive cultural aspects

The findings identified that there is some sensitive cultural content in the textbook which the teacher has to deal with in his own way and the majority of interviewees stated that they do face sensitive cultural aspects in the curriculum; for instance Mohammed claimed:

I think there are many examples in the textbook where you can obviously observe a foreign cultural content that contradicts with our local Saudi culture and religion.

Similarly, Hasan observed:

Generally speaking, I have come across some cultural issues in the curriculum that are not acceptable in the Saudi culture for example; there is a dialogue activity in the students' textbook between two students. One of the students is showing the other some family photos. The student is pointing to the content of the photo saying, for example, 'This is my mother. This is my sister.' I think that this is not acceptable in some Saudi communities especially among Bedouins and tribal communities from all regions. It is not acceptable for that person to show the photos of his family saying this is his mother and this is his sister in our Saudi society.

This highlights the diversity within local Saudi culture as mentioned earlier in section 2.2.2 in chapter 2, where some practices are accepted in one section of society, but the same practice is not acceptable to others in the same country. The examples mentioned by the participant here, which refer to Bedouins and tribal groups, are relevant because those groups are believed to have different traditions other than Islamic beliefs. Another example is that in the local culture it is not acceptable for women to drive cars, however in Islam there is nothing wrong about driving itself. Consequently, some teachers are very concerned about what cultural content is portrayed and whether it is suitable for the students and their society or not.

Another example was given of how cultural differences can prove very embarrassing for teachers; as Mashaa maintained:

Well, I think that there are many examples which contradict with our local culture. One major example is as you know that in our culture we don't discuss 'sex' or sexual issues in the crowd and mainly with children, never in our culture. However, one example

about the word 'pussy' as to mean the little cat, but the girls in my class finds it funny to cheer out the class and keep asking about different meanings for it. I found it so embarrassing to react to the question and my face turn red.

The result of this finding directed our attention to the fact that in the local Saudi society, people do not discuss issues related to sex except on some certain occasions, but never in the presence of young people.

Teachers vary in their reaction in the classroom towards the dilemmas they faced. Some, such as Sultan, adopted a strategy of explaining things to students when they arose. As he stated:

I explain it and guide the students and ask them about their points of view. I explain that it is not in agreement with our religion and it is forbidden. I make a discussion out of it. And from that discussion I make sure they got the goal of this as it is not part of culture.

This finding showed that teachers in the Saudi context are very close to their local society and try to apply local beliefs and values in their teaching, even subconsciously. In fact, the reinforcement of Islamic beliefs and values is meant to be one of the main goals of teaching English in the Saudi public schools. Therefore, the participant automatically links his teaching to the Islamic rules, as they are the basis for local society's culture and traditions. Thus, the participant here is considering both his local cultural values and also his religious beliefs and is trying to use them both to show that the cultural aspect depicted is contrary to local beliefs, and hence to raise the students' awareness. Baynah adopted a similar approach to Sultan in dealing with dilemmas posed by the cultural model of the textbook. As she said:

For knowledge, it is important to teach these examples and show where the problem is. For example singers and dancers are seen in our culture to be in the wrong direction of cultural virtues, so we have to present the lesson and raise to the students' knowledge the reason for mismatch with the local culture.

In contrast however, some participants indicated how they would prefer to omit those aspects of the course book they found unsuitable. Thus for example, Nasser commented:

From my own perspective, in the existing curriculum which has negative points and positive ones, there are some opposing experiences which, if presented, will clash with religion, culture, or traditions we get used to in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, whenever I face such topics I omit or ignore them and move to the next section in the textbook.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are taboos in the local cultural context. Cultural traditions segregate female from male, as does Islamic law. Accordingly, issues relating to women are very sensitive and people have to be careful in mentioning them, hence, it is common between youngsters not to mention the name of their mothers or sisters to their friends. So a girl's picture could be considered a big issue for the society. In fact, female issues mean 'nobility' for the local society, therefore, anything touches this issue; for them it harms their 'nobility'. As a consequence, the teacher does not want these topics to be shown to the Saudi students, in case they become familiar with such topics and lose their own noble beliefs with regard to female issues. Hasan said:

It is not immediately in conflict with our culture, but it may have an effect on the student in the future. You can also say the word of a church without necessarily showing a picture. I think that the picture may have an effect. It is not completely definite. However, there are factors. It is better to let sleeping dogs lie. Why do I bother? I could use other things that might help a lot.

Some participants talked about how they tried to address particular cultural content in the textbook. Thus for example, Al-jazi commented:

We have the Christmas as a contradictory to our religion. At the start of lesson we should begin by introducing the affective aim of each section or unit: guidance is needed and linkage to our traditions and religion. And also, the students should know other cultures in order to widen their knowledge and do comparison as to raise thinking.

In addition, some aspects of western culture are considered to be major sins in Islam. Teachers have different views about such topics. Al-Anoud said:

'Wheel' should be deleted. We have the example of 'Weal' which we believe is a contradictory with our religious believes. It is one of the major sins to deal with magic or even to believe in them. No way to accept it locally or by teachers. We can accept other values but please not to mismatch with religion.

Similarly, Dalal also mentioned:

We set aside contradictory points and provide an alternative and point out the difference. The lesson about 'my face', for instance, has a magician, therefore, we try to avoid it and bring something else and useful for the students.

5.5 Conclusion

To sum up this chapter, based on the research questions for the current study, I tried to provide a descriptive and interpretive analysis of the collected data from different perspectives. Accordingly, a combination for the findings of the thematic content analysis as well as results of statistical analysis has been conducted, where integratively appropriate, to present the study findings and to avoid repetition. Teachers' views about the appropriate cultural models were examined from different perspectives with regard to the Saudi teachers' backgrounds and accordingly came up with different results. Additionally, the factors affecting teachers' views and decision-making on the appropriate cultural models for the Saudi EFL textbooks have raised four main factors and also other factors within those four. And finally, the Saudi teachers have described their own practices and actions in the classroom, as Saudis teaching a global language in their local context. However, the findings showed that there was some misunderstanding and lack of knowledge of the topic of culture and its relation to the English language teaching as a global and international language being taught in the Saudi local context, and accordingly still a mismatch between their views and their practices. These conflicts will be discussed and interpreted in more detail in the following discussion chapter.

Chapter 6

Discussion, Implications and Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 5 and considers the implications of this study with regard to the Saudi EFL teachers' views on the most appropriate cultural model for the EFL textbooks for the Saudi public schools as a way of exploring teachers' management of global cultural flows and local realities in their teaching worlds. The organisation of the discussion will be around the answers to the research questions stated in Chapter 4 above. Accordingly, in the first section in this chapter I will discuss participants' responses to the first two research questions which together provide an indication of their views on the appropriate cultural model. I will then consider the findings concerning the factors affecting teachers' views about the appropriate cultural model for Saudi EFL textbooks and the relationship between these and the ways in which they make day to day pedagogical decisions about how to handle cultural materials in their classrooms. Following on from this I will consider the theoretical and practical implications of the study. Finally, I will conclude the thesis by reflecting on the contribution of the study and possible directions for future research.

6.2 Teachers' views of the appropriate cultural model for Saudi EFL textbooks

In this section, I will discuss the findings related to the first and second research questions:

5. What are Saudi EFL school teachers views of the current cultural model promoted in their EFL textbooks?
6. Do they feel this is the best model and what alternative models would they prefer, if any?

To answer these questions, I asked the participants about their perspectives on the current cultural content, their satisfaction with it, and what they felt an alternative might be. The results obtained from an analysis of questionnaire and interview data were presented in 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3. In what follows, I will first provide an overview of the key findings with respect to these research questions and will then go on to discuss these in more detail.

While some tendencies are evident with regard to the results on these topics as mentioned above, an important finding is also the lack of consensus in participants' responses. On the one hand, broadly speaking, the findings suggest that participants view the cultural content currently promoted in the Saudi EFL textbooks as mixed (mainly local but with some references to the target English and other international cultures) and the majority indicate an appropriate model being one which provides more attention to cultural diversity than is currently evident providing this does not impact on or threaten the view of local culture with its established norms and values. However, on the other hand, the considerable diversity of opinion between participants also suggests a need to be wary of over generalization and to give some consideration to key factors which may account for these. I will consider these things in more detail below.

6.2.1 Teachers' views of the cultural model currently promoted

The data reported in section 5.2.1.1 above showed that participants had ranges of responses, but mostly believe a variety of cultures is currently depicted in EFL textbooks, with a dominance by the local culture. As mentioned earlier in chapter 2, Hinkel (1999) commented that the previous EFL textbook showed a Saudi cultural context. The evidence shows there has been some change, and there are now some references to the target culture and to international cultures; indeed, participants like this move to a mixture cultural model. As part of the reform process, the promotion of the international or the target culture as well as more of the local culture has become more evident in ELT materials, as discussed in Chapter 2. Also, participants appreciate the importance of English as an international communication tool. This recognition coincides with the objectives of

teaching English in Saudi public schools (as stated in chapter 2, 2.5.1) in which encourages learning other cultures and languages in order to improve the local understandings of the wider community around the world and also to be able to share and transfer knowledge with others. In addition, it would seem to suggest that the new language pedagogy appears to **include** more than one culture alongside English which is an important move in light of globalization and the role of English as a lingua franca as Kumaravadivelu (2001), for example, has mentioned.

The presentation of Western images

While participants generally endorse a mixed model they are not happy with the way in which textbook writers sometimes opted to bring diversity into the current textbook. The findings of this study outlined in section 5.2.1.1 showed that participants were not happy with the presentation of some particular western cultural values through local Saudi pictures (Saudis enacting western cultural values), as it does not appear appropriate to them. Participants cited an example of this misuse as including a picture of someone who is wearing Saudi local clothes, representing the local culture, but who is celebrating Christmas (as in in the second term textbook of the third intermediate level, unit 9-lesson2) Locally, this is an important issue, because in Islam there are only two occasions to celebrate: 'Eid', right after Ramadan, and the second on the Hajj day (a pilgrimage where Muslims go to Makah once in their life as one of the major conditions among the five conditions of Islam). Thus in some Islamic societies, such as Saudi Arabia, to practice Christmas would be against their values and beliefs. There was a sense from the results that participants are therefore keen for materials to show a clear distinction between the local culture and other cultures in the textbook. In other words, that every culture should be presented in its own right and that there are clear distinguishing features of Saudi culture that need to be preserved.

The importance of teaching the target cultural model

This dissatisfaction of the presentation of some western images in the EFL textbook among the participants does not, however, mean that they do not want the target language (English) culture to be addressed. On the contrary, the findings of this study demonstrated that the majority of the participants think that it is important to teach the target culture of English along with teaching the language. As discussed in Chapter 5 section 5.3.1, there are several reasons for this. It is believed within the Saudi local culture that 'culture' is an important element in shaping local identity and distinguishing one nation from the other. In addition, when comparing the Arabic language and culture with the English language and culture, the participants linked cultural practices to the source belief of the nation and the people who own the chosen culture and language. In this respect, they reflected the social constructivist view (following Vygotsky, 1978) outlined in chapter 3 (see 3.2) that human understanding and language evolves from engagement in particular social worlds and that these are therefore significant to take into account in language learning – a view held by Kramsch (1993) among others. Elyas in his study into the attitudes and the impact of the American English as a global language within the Saudi educational system reported in chapter 3 above, found a similar view held by his participants commenting that the majority of participants: "believe that learning English cannot be done without learning the culture of the language itself" (2008: 44).

One reason for preferring a mixed cultural content which include the target culture as 'an element of the mixed cultural model' could be attributed to the fact that the Saudi people view other societies not only through their languages, but also through their cultures. Therefore, those within the local Saudi society who can be considered as open to other nations (on condition that there are no conflicts with local values) seek an understanding of 'others' (Holliday, 2011) and, in order to understand them, value the study of their cultures. Hence, it could be argued that the participants are reflecting their local society's beliefs and views in this regard. Thus for example, Saudi society and Arabic society in general are usually very interested in poetry and literature, which form a very precious part of their heritage and shape their traditions and culture, being one of the main sources for

the Arabic language and history. Consequently, it should not be surprising that, when it comes to culture, Saudis will refer to Shakespeare or Charles Dickens as historical figures to represent English native culture, since the literature they produced belongs to humanity in general not just to the British people.

6.2.2 A 'glocal' cultural model as the most appropriate cultural model for the Saudi EFL textbooks

The findings of this study outlined in chapter 5, section 5.2.3 above showed that the majority of the participants preferred a mixed cultural content for the EFL textbooks in the Saudi public schools. These findings, as discussed in the following section, appear to be attributable to a number of global and local factors that intersect in complex ways. Participants view a mixed cultural content as one that comprise materials which draw upon multiple different cultural models through which to present and teach English; local Saudi culture, the target culture and a host of other international cultures. In this respect it seems that participants are broadly in favour of a glocal cultural model, in line with the argument put forward by Gray (2002) because this can provide a way to connect the global world of the English language and culture to the students' own local world, a point raised by several in interviews (see 5.2.3 above). Furthermore, this can also be seen to show their interest in raising their students' intercultural awareness as proposed by Baker (2011) and Alpetkin (2002) among others by providing materials which could help students develop the skill of criticality reflecting on the link between their local and other cultural realities.

Nevertheless, the findings also provide an indication of the distinctive ways in which participants envisage that these different cultural models can be adopted. In particular that the local norms and values should play a role in deciding how different cultural models can be utilised. Something that was emphasised throughout the interviews was the need to take care to ensure that models employed were not done so in ways that might threaten local (and particularly Islamic) norms and values. In this they echo the point made by Hall (2002) presented in (3.3.3.1 above) that local cultural perspectives should be given

considerable emphasis, and more than has sometimes been the case. In fact, this view of local culture as an important starting point also agrees with the conclusion of Fageeh's article into how to enhance cross-cultural awareness in EFL College Students' reported in chapter 3 above. As he said:

it could be argued that instead of thinking about either teaching English through the culture of its native-speaking countries or via the learners' native culture, it would be feasible to upgrade the students' knowledge from their own culture to the now new emerging global English culture of certain areas such as science, the Internet, the media, or even through human interaction within the globalisation era (2011: 69).

In addition to this, he added:

Not only does this allow students to understand the language and the nuances of American and British culture better, but it also helps them acquire a more conscious cultural awareness of their own culture and encourages students to dedicate themselves to the development of their English proficiency for communicative practices. (ibid: 70).

Indeed, one participant, Dalal, as reported in section 5.2.3 of Chapter 5, made explicit reference to this, putting forward the idea that at every educational stage there should be a cultural model suitable to children's needs and age. She indicated that a mixed cultural model should be introduced gradually with English being taught through local cultural content in the early stages of public schools, and then more foreign and international culture being introduced gradually with age.

6.2 3 Lack of consensus among teachers' views about cultural models

As mentioned earlier, despite the general tendencies discussed above, results for the first two research questions also demonstrated considerable diversity and no clear consensus among participants. There was no clear agreement regarding the current cultural content in the textbook, different views on whether this was satisfactory, and precisely what a more appropriate cultural model might be.

One of the reasons for the variety of opinions is the fact that Saudi Arabia is, of course, like other countries, not a completely uniform country as discussed in chapter 2. On one level the different opinions would seem to reflect the enormous

diversity within Saudi Arabia and current competing views in Saudi society where conservative views and more open opinions exist side by side and competing views regarding appropriate cultural models are one manifestation of the general ambivalence shown towards globalization in Saudi Arabia (see chapter 2, 2.2.4). Indeed, these competing views are also found among participants in the current demonstrations and debates across the Middle East as part of the Arab Spring movement (as discussed in chapter 1). This diversity is not always evident in the ways in which Saudi Arabia presents itself or is represented in the global media but is a very real part of Saudi society. It is also evident, as shown in table 5.15 in the previous chapter that the participants in the study vary in the degree to which they have travelled overseas and this may impact on the extent to which they are open to models which embrace cultures other than the immediate local culture.

Another possible factor that might account for these results and the results of some other items as will be discussed further below in 6.3 is participants' varying understanding of the term culture. First of all, there is a tendency in Saudi Arabia to draw upon somewhat essentialist us and them' views of culture whereby all western cultures are viewed as a single culture which differs from local culture, irrespective of whether it is British, French, German or American. This may reflect the fact that in the west, people mostly are Christian, have similar style of clothing and are certainly very different from the local Saudis. Results (see for example those in table 5.7) suggest that participants see English speaking countries practices as widespread throughout many western countries, reflecting the power and influence of, in particular, the USA. This means that there may be a tendency for some participants to not clearly distinguish target language culture from other international cultures in their responses, meaning that it is hard to interpret the degree of consensus or otherwise to some degree.

Another reason for the apparent contradiction in the results regarding culture is a possible confusion about what this refers to in participants' responses. Some participants seemed to be confused as to what culture meant and whether they were talking about language or culture. For example, one participant, Sarah,

commented that: *“what we use in Saudi public schools is a British cultural model”* but which it became clear through elaboration was actually a reference to the language model which appeared to actually relate to the language rather than cultural model being used. Similarly, Hasan expressed his view on the current cultural model used in Saudi EFL textbooks as follows:

Actually, during my experience of teaching, there is nothing in the curriculum from the target culture or the international culture. In addition, names and forms of clothes are all local. Whereas, the international elements regarding other cultures can be found only in the university level.

Although his response shows that in his view the local culture is the only cultural content used in the Saudi EFL textbooks, however, surprisingly, at a different point in the interview the same participant expressed the opposite view:

... in our English textbook, the example of a boy showing his family's pictures to his colleague doesn't relate to our culture, especially that in our culture this is considered as a taboo, where a male person cannot show his female family member's picture to other male friend.

One problem that may account for this apparent contradiction is the fact that the word 'culture' as Williams (1976) observed (see section 3.3 above) is an enormously complex concept with several different and competing definitions. In fact in Arabic one meaning of culture is the traditions, values and beliefs of one's society, but it also conveys a sense of modernity or civilisation echoing the point made by Hunington, (1996) in chapter 3 above. Thus, participants may invoke either or both meanings in completing the interviews and questionnaire.

However, perhaps one of the most significant reasons for the variation in response regarding culture is that teachers are unlikely to have received any input on culture in their training or have been asked to consider this aspect of foreign language teaching previously. Given that one of the areas mentioned in the curriculum is the importance of promoting students intercultural awareness (see chapter 2, 2.5.1 above) this is surprising and is something that I will consider further in the implications below. In what follows I will turn to a consideration of the results of the third research question, namely other key factors that might

account for the views of Saudi teachers and cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools.

6.3 Factors affecting teachers' views on the appropriate cultural model for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools.

In this section, I will discuss the findings related to the third research question of this study:

3. What are the identifiable factors impacting on their views?

In order to answer this question, participants were asked for their views on a number of factors which might impact on their views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks in public schools in Saudi Arabia. These were designed to see the impact of their being teachers of a global language in a local setting and focused on their views on the link between language and culture, the significance of global political events on their views and the significance of their working context to their views. The results of the findings were shown in sections 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3. in chapter 5 above.

6.3.1 Participants' views on the relationship between language and culture

One important variable that I sought to explore that I felt might impact on their views of the most appropriate cultural model for EFL textbooks in Saudi schools, was the relationship between language and culture. As was discussed in chapter 3, despite some recent moves towards accommodating a wide range of cultural models in line with the growth of English as an international language, the presentation of English source culture alongside English language is still commonplace and a belief in the importance of teaching target culture when teaching the target language remains an influential discourse. I was interested to see what participants' views of these things were and to gauge whether these could account for their views.

Results show that as with the findings regarding the first 2 research questions, participants views of the relationship between language and culture were complex, with most holding seemingly contradictory views regarding the relationship between language and culture and showing no difficulty in reconciling these at a personal level. Key findings were a general openness to presenting English through a non-local cultural model (in contrast to the approach taken in their coursebook) and a belief among the majority that the target language must be taught alongside its target culture but also that any culture can be taught through English language or mixture of different international cultures. Below I consider these in turn.

6.3.1.1 Teaching both target language culture and international cultures alongside the target language.

As mentioned above, many participants held views in line with a number of those in the literature mentioned in chapter 3 who advocate a communicative approach to teaching English and argue that target language culture should be taught when teaching the target language (see for example Hymes, 1971 and Hinkel, 1999). These views echo those found by Elyas in his study which revealed, as he said that: “the majority of the Saudi students in this study oppose the idea of separating the learning of English and the culture of English” (2008: 43). The reasons for this are likely to reflect a number of different things. Firstly, given the tight link between language, religion and culture in Islam mentioned in chapter 2, part of the reason for this could be the transfer of the belief in the inseparability of the link between language and culture in their own context. Another important reasons is that for those Saudi’s who travel for study or leisure purposes, the majority will go to English-speaking countries or other western countries and being knowledgeable about these is an important way to acquire status in Saudi society. This point is echoed by Yamani (2000: 58) who argues:

English is also the language of instruction and of technical knowledge, and it is crucial for success in the secular fields of business, commerce, higher education and government. Therefore, proficiency in spoken and written English becomes a status symbol, a marker for the ability to

obtain private education and to travel abroad, and a sign of a cosmopolitan lifestyle.

The reasons mentioned above are in part informed by another likely reason. That is that English is seen as a prominent language globally and is closely linked with the spread of western cultural practices which are increasingly widespread across the globe (Block and Cameron 2002), a process variously referred to as 'McDonaldization' and 'Americanization'. The close relationship between the spread of English and cultural norms and values is also evident in the Saudi educational system, especially higher education which is not only increasingly English medium but also uses American resources which convey target cultural content (Coffman, 2003 cited in Habbash, 2011).

The close link between English and western norms and values is something that is clearly evident in the results (see sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 in chapter 5) and has been the focus of considerable criticism among those critical of the spread of English as a medium of instruction who perceive English to thereby represent a destructive force and a threat, (see for example, Crystal,2000 & 2004; Nettle & Romaine, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Phillipson, 2003; Hagège, 2006) or even a Trojan horse through which cultural norms and values of western countries can be disseminated (Cooke,1988).

However, while participants' comments in interviews indicate that they are not unaware of these things, the majority remain pragmatic in their views of the relationship between language and cultural models and this may be central to accounting for the fact that many seemingly hold to a view that English can be linked to a variety of different cultures given its widespread use worldwide. However, owing to the points made above about employment, study and travel purposes, while hypothetically speaking the target language can be taught with non- target language cultures, in reality, a target language cultural model is likely to be most useful and relevant to participants in learning the target language.

6.3.1.2 Reconciling non-local cultural models for learning English with local cultural norms and values

The results presented in section 5.3.5.2, show that some participants believe that EFL textbooks present western cultural practices that run contrary to local cultural values. For a minority this meant that they would prefer a local cultural model for teaching English, but the majority, as shown above, did not see this as a reason for rejecting a target cultural model or international cultural model. In contrast, they highlighted a number of local cultural norms and values that favoured the promotion of non-local cultural models when teaching English and, contrary to my expectations and the views of many cited above, did not, in the main, perceive non local cultural norms to be a threat.

Among those few who did profess a preference for local cultural norms and values, this was largely borne out of a concern that western cultural values would threaten the established status quo. This reflects a protectionist stance, one of the positions adopted by 'locals' in the face of globalization (Appadurai, 1996) Given the widespread criticism that Saudi Arabia has been subjected to in the global media, this attitude towards the target culture may also be stem from concern about being discriminated against or physically attacked (Zuhur, 2005). A further reason for these views may also be that these participants are happy with the status quo and cautious to make changes in line with others in Saudi Arabia where change tends to be very slow and rejection of the new is always possible (Habbash, 2011). A final possible concern of these participants is how non-local cultural models promote alternative viewpoints which may influence students. Not only by raising students' inclination to ask, discuss and negotiate which teachers may find difficult give the broadly top-down and authoritative nature of Saudi society, but also by encouraging them to adopt different and non-Islamic values and practices. These participants will certainly also be aware of and reflect on certain discourses about educational practice that are prominent in discussions and debates about education in Saudi Arabia as represented by Al Jarf, (2008) and Al-Issa (2005) who argues:

the status of English in Saudi Arabia is a means of spreading the cultures of the United Kingdom and the United States. This serves to

validate concerns about the impact of English on the Arabic language and culture. The issue of learning English and its impact on the Islamic and Arabic identity needs to be given special attention by both scholars and the government in order to avoid future clashes (cited by Abu-Rizaizah, 2010: 209).

These concerns about preserving the local values were also evident in the accounts of those who argued for English language needing to be promoted through local cultural values with many arguing that non local values were appropriate but only if they did not present norms and values which were against those in local society. Is echoed the finding in Elyas' study (2008: 42) where he found that the majority of his participants "think that there is taboo information which they prefer not to be exposed to in their English textbooks". These results highlight, how given that these teachers are members of the wider Saudi society, that any concerns within the local society are certainly likely to inform these teachers' views.

Nevertheless, while a few teachers, taking a protectionist stance, viewed English language and culture to be a threat, the majority did not, citing instead Islamic and other cultural values that actually supported and advocated the learning of English language through non-local culture (as reported in 5.3.5.3). That is to say, the majority did not find the adoption of non-local cultural models to be a threat. This finding is supported by several studies that have been conducted on attitudes to the English language of teachers and students in an Arab environment. For example, in one research study conducted in Kuwait by Malallah (2000) it was found that the attitudes of students, teachers and parents towards English was positive. They did not find teaching English or learning English a threat to their Arab or Islamic cultural values. Rather, as in this study, the findings in section 5.3.3 revealed that Islam is a motivator for communication with people of other societies and cultures. Such a finding reflects religious doctrine as well as educational policy. The Holy Quran asserts "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other))" (Al-Hujraat: 13, translation of Quran); Islam states, therefore, that people are divided into different

nations, therefore they need to know one another and communicate. The Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) asserts that a Muslim communicating with people and being patient about any harm they may cause is better than a Muslim who does not communicate. Moreover, as previously mentioned, learning a foreign language is seen as an important way to enable people to promote Islam worldwide. Indeed, the Prophet Mohammed asked his companion Zaid bin Thabit to learn Hebrew for this precise purpose (Al-Asqalani, 1959).

With regard to educational policy, the 28th article of the document of the Higher Committee for Educational Policy states:

The governing principles of education are to have the students understand Islam in a correct and comprehensive manner, to plant and spread the Islamic creed, and to furnish students with the values of the teachings and ideas of Islam. (Ministry of Education)

A Muslim scholar asserted that “The English language, therefore, has a crucial role to play in the achievement of the ultimate aim of Muslim education” (Shafi, 1983: 35). Since Islam is an important part of Saudi culture, its values and beliefs affect the views of the participants, who are members of that society. A previous study found that the Islamic values of encouraging people to communicate with other cultures and learn from them was one reason why many participants saw a combination of both target and local cultures as the best cultural model for EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia (Alfahadi, 2006). Thus, participants believe that English is important to Islam in the Saudi context, and by learning English, Islam will become more powerful, secure and will reach more places around the world. Additionally, in Islam, it is recommended to learn other languages.

As indicated above, the strong relationship seen to hold between the target language and the target language culture shown in the findings highlights the significance of politics to participants to some extent. Below I consider the significance of politics more broadly to participants’ views, which was an important focus of the study.

6.3.2 The impact of political factors on participants' views of appropriate cultural models

Given the context of the reforms of the EFL textbooks discussed in chapters 1 and 2, the general positioning of Saudi Arabia internationally, and the involvement of American and British governments in regional policy and governance, exploring the impact of politics on participants' views of appropriate cultural models was seen to be important in this thesis. I anticipated that politics would be significant to participants' views about appropriate cultural models, and given the often negative views about the foreign policy of certain western governments that this would be reflected in participants' negative orientations towards target language speaking countries cultures as suitable models.

However, the key finding with regard to political factors is that while participants are aware of these political factors and issues related to them, the vast majority do not appear to see these as significant in forming their views. That is to say, they do not draw upon these in forming their views. Thus they do not see people as products of politics and they do not feel that their actions are constrained by politics, they form their own views based on their own personal perspectives.

Participants' awareness of politics, ideology and their relationship to language

The findings reported in chapter 5 (see sections 5.3.1.3) clearly show an awareness among participants of the ways in which the English language is linked to certain ideologies and political positions, it being the first language spoken by the majority of those in an economically and politically powerful country, namely the U.S.A. That is to say, questionnaire data and their accounts given in interviews highlight a number of the different things that are conveyed alongside the English language highlighted by Tomlinson (1999: 89) below which are viewed as reasons why some in the literature such as Pennycook (1994) argue that English has a neocolonial or imperialist influence. These things according to Tomlinson include:

“styles of dress, eating habits, architectural and musical form, the adoption of the urban lifestyle based around industrial production, a pattern of cultural experience dominated by the mass media, a set of

philosophical ideas, and a range of cultural values and attitudes-about personal liberty, gender and sexuality, human rights, the political process, religion, scientific and technological rationality and so on”.

Nevertheless, results also demonstrate that participants subscribe to the view that English is also a lingua franca and as such that it is not necessarily associated with the values and norms of a given country, that is to say they concur with the views of a number of those who argue that there is no one to one correlation between language and culture mentioned in chapter 3 above (see for example, Shaw 1981, Gray, 2006 among others). The reason for this finding are possibly in part that they are fully aware of the fact that English has come to occupy a prominent form of communication in Saudi Arabia itself as a common code among and between the large expatriate population drawn from a large variety of different countries. In addition, many will be aware of how even outside the Arabian Gulf and the Saudi context, English is spoken and used globally by non-native speakers, the total number of whom now outstrips the native speakers (Pennycook, 2007). As, Crystal (1999, cited by Nault, 2006: 320), claimed:

Nobody owns English now. That is the message we have to take on board as we begin the new millennium ... Once a language comes to be so widespread, it ceases to have a single centre of influence. The changes taking place in the way English is used in such areas as South Africa, India, Ghana, and Singapore are outside of anyone's control. Not even a World English Academy could affect them.

However, despite this, there is no escaping that English has grown to be the most prominent language of international communication and to be closely associated with globalization, and it is not possible to ignore how historically global politics has played a role in this and its growth and spread. English is the language of the era, it is dominant everywhere, and can be used on every continent. It has become the language of globalization, and when we deal with business, commerce and money, it is the right language; it is also dominant in tourism. Hence, it is not surprising that participants stress its importance in their lives and how knowledge of this provides them with employment opportunities and higher status in Saudi

society. It is also not surprising that there is very strong support to raise the level of English language skills in Saudi, and that the language has a high status in the country and is used as a medium of instruction in some fields and colleges at university level, as (Habbash, 2011) highlights . From the above it can be seen that, politics is implicated in any discussion of English and will indirectly influence participants' views of cultural models.

Participants' accounts also reveal an awareness of political events in the region and in the ways that Muslims, Arabs and Saudi Arabians are depicted in the western media and of how their own governments have had to account for and establish their own policies. Accordingly, these actions along with the 9/11 attacks in the U.S.A. have at least partly contributed to the textbook reforms. Broadly speaking, these have shown participants to be unhappy with the role that certain English speaking countries have adopted in the region and to be resentful of the ways in which Saudi people are represented by others. Taken together these findings suggest that politics is likely to be an important factor informing participants decisions about appropriate cultural models for their course books and moreover, that these decisions might lead them to hold particular viewpoints about cultural content, ones which might neglect or resist models which promote or advocate target cultural models, for example. However, as will be discussed below and as was revealed by the results, participants did not feel that politics was that important in shaping their views or that the perception of stereotyping or political events involving western governments with respect to Arab nations and Saudi Arabia in particular, led them to reject the adoption of non-local cultural models for the EFL textbooks.

Politics, openness, and individual agency

While, as mentioned above, politics was seen to underpin some of the observations made by participants about language and culture and political events viewed as a factor that did influence their views about cultural models, there was no clear relationship between these findings and the cultural model they felt to be most appropriate for EFL textbooks in Saud primary and secondary schools as discussed in 6.3.1 above.

First of all, participants appeared to hold to the view that it should be both a target cultural one and a more international one. However, interestingly, very few argued for an exclusively local cultural model. Given that Saudi Arabian cultural practices have been under increasing threat in the world press and the negative picture politically speaking mentioned above, it might have been expected that many would have adopted a protectionist stance and resisted efforts to promote other cultural models. However, it appears that the majority of participants take the opposite view. Namely that they are open to developing their students' awareness of other countries' cultures rather than, as initially thought, that it would lead them to be more closed and 'protectionist' towards their culture and values. That is to say, that political influences have, in line with their governments efforts as evidenced in the curriculum reforms regarding cultural content, led them to advocate a culturally diverse model for EFL textbooks. In part this seems to reflect an awareness of the need to help learners develop their skills and understanding of others (their intercultural competence) in acknowledgement of the fact that Saudi Arabia is part of the wider global community where English is a prominent communication tool. In part this also reflects, the status that being culturally knowledgeable about the target culture and other western cultures has in certain sectors of Saudi society. Interestingly, also evident in some accounts was the importance of being able to understand other cultures as a means to better manage these and their influence on local society, a stance that echoes the cultural realism advocated by Kumaravadivelu (2008) and as echoed by Elyas (2008: 45-46) in his discussion of English in the following way:

The demand for English is always going to be there, stronger than ever with increasing globalization. After 9/11, the need to learn English in order to understand what is being said and written about Arabs is present more than ever. Arabs cannot stand still not knowing what the *Others* are thinking and presuming about them. Arabs need to know how to interact with the West. They need to understand the West better than anyone else. (2008: 45-46)

A second important observation however, is that while participants clearly saw politics as important they tended to see this as more of a backdrop against which their own views were shaped rather than as central to them. That is to say, on the one hand, politics was one among many variables that informed their views but on the other hand, this was something which was far removed from individuals' daily realities and was not something they felt should be seen as central to their understanding of others. In other words, the participants mostly saw language and teaching as one thing and politics as something separate. As can be seen from the findings outlined in section 5.3.2.2, the presence and influences of American policy in the region may have a political influence on the decision-making of the local governments in the Middle East. However this influence, as seen by the participants, is at the level of the political leaders and does not relate to their views as teachers in their classrooms or when dealing with EFL textbooks.

The sense of a need to separate out individuals from politics was also evident in the results regarding how they viewed other people in other countries. First of all, participants professed themselves to be open-minded about cultural others and although most of the participants in this study (see section 5.3.2.3) have not visited any of the native English speaking countries, the findings showed that the majority have the desire to travel to those countries whenever they have the chance. Participants' reasons for travel were commonly for educational purposes and tourism; for other Saudis as seen by the participants can be added business purposes.

This openness is in part a reflection of the policy in Saudi Arabia to send large numbers of Saudi students to study around the world, mainly to the UK and US as discussed in chapter 2. This gives a very clear image of the openness within the local society when it comes to interaction and communication with other nations in order to gain the best knowledge and transfer it back to the country.

These findings highlighted how Saudi teachers always have a strong relationship with their own cultural values and traditions that can influence them on any decision they make (Yamani, 2000). It is clear in Saudi public schools that Saudi

teachers and students have to maintain their local traditions and practices. Therefore, when going to Saudi public schools around the country, everyone has to wear the traditional Saudi clothes and respect the customs; they also have to practice Islamic prayers together at the school, with the appropriate timing for prayers. This of course shows also shows cultural values; the prayers to represent Islam, and the 'Thoab' (the male dress) representing Saudi cultural custom. In addition, from the teachers' own reading, travelling and other experiences, it can be seen that everyone has different private cultural values of his own that may shape his view of any action he may experience. Of course, the teacher would have his own access to the rest of the world by using the global language that he teaches, and consequently, his own beliefs and even ideology would be more open to the outside world and would, as well, be different to his local values.

The findings from this study oppose what Carr (2003: 8) claimed with regard to the pressure of globalization when he said:

A glance at CNN news will tell us that many communities around the world are not taking this pressure lying down. They are 'kicking back', rebounding against what they perceive as constraints in globalisation itself. Fundamentalism and many forms of cultural backlash, including anti-globalisation movements, are proliferating. Counter-cultures, reasserting local and traditional values, are finding voice.

In fact, the evidence revealed how Saudi EFL teachers position themselves, locally and globally. They see their identity coming from their local Saudi cultural values and beliefs, as well as their own values and beliefs, their ethnic values and beliefs and also their Islamic values and beliefs. In addition, the findings demonstrated the wide gap between local cultural values and western or global cultural values. Saudi EFL teachers have to face this dilemma every day in their classroom, trying to convey knowledge of the global language they are teaching to their students while at the same time having to maintain a balance, since local Saudi society considers it important not to contradict local beliefs. While acknowledging the difficulty of maintaining this balance, teachers fully supported the position of the Saudi public education system which considers that, when used the right way, English is an important means of preserving and protecting local and Islamic values.

Now in the next section, the third factor about teachers in their school world will be discussed.

6.3.3 Teachers in their school world

Teachers are closely linked to their school world, therefore in this section different issues like their dissatisfaction of the current curriculum, the appropriateness of the curriculum to the Saudi students' unsuitability of the curriculum to teachers, and the reform of the EFL textbook in 2003 are seen to be factors in shaping their views.

Although the EFL textbook in the Saudi public schools is reformed, there still a gap between the students and the textbook itself, and the teachers cannot find a better solution to fill this gap. I believe this is a key finding here and through this I will discuss how this plays a role in the teachers' views towards the appropriate cultural model.

Dissatisfaction with the current curriculum

When it comes to the current EFL curriculum promoted in the Saudi Arabian public schools, the findings in section 5.3.3.1 show that there is dissatisfaction on the part of Saudi teachers with the curriculum. They have claimed that the goals of the curriculum were not reached and therefore the outcomes of the students were below their expectations. There must be some reasons behind these unexpected outcomes of the English language learning in Saudi. In this regard, the reasons could be attributed to the fact that the Saudi Ministry of Education, when adopting the new curriculum, did not give teachers any preparation or courses to familiarize them with new teaching methods and techniques. Moreover, some teachers may lack experience, as seen by the participants themselves, which may be related to the fact (as mentioned earlier in chapter 2) that in most of the Universities in Saudi, there are limited numbers of departments that have professional programmes for English language teaching. Therefore, the Ministry of Education

has to accept any available applicant to teach English, no matter what qualifications or experience he has, as long as he holds a bachelor degree in English language or English literature; and also for some cases they accept applicants who are specialized in Arabic-English translation. Consequently, this dissatisfaction shows the problem that exists within our educational system as seen by Al-Sultan (2009, Arab News) "there is a bigger and deeper problem in our education system. It also proves that making English the medium of instruction in our universities will not resolve the weaknesses and problems of our education system".

Appropriateness of the EFL curriculum level to the students

This study also found that Saudi students have a very low level of achievement compared with the proficiency expected by the Ministry of Education, which aims to have students master the language in order to produce good English and communicate with other nations. Unfortunately, there is a big gap between the goals of teaching English in the Saudi public schools and the level achieved by the Saudi students. The research findings showed two perspectives on students' low achievements: the teachers blame the textbooks but also make assumptions about what can negatively affect students' motivation. The environment of the school was viewed as a factor; as Al-Jazi claimed: *"I think that the School environment plays a role in the students' hatred of the English language"*. To make this clear, this can be said of all subjects, not just English, therefore, it should be noted that in Saudi Arabia the temperature most of the year ranges between 40 and 55 degrees Celsius, and therefore some schools have problems with the maintenance of the air conditioning, which breaks down regularly because of the hot weather and the sand storms in most parts of the country. Another reason given was lack of equipment, materials and facilities; some schools did not even have the minimum. These weaknesses perceived by the research participants were also discussed by Braine (2005: 130): "There are a number of contributing reasons for low EFL proficiency among Saudi students, some that can be traced back to the teaching method employed, and others the result of student attitude and motivation." I think in this regard, this could be due to some families who are less educated or not aware of the importance of English for their children's future, therefore,

teachers find some students with no motivation to learn or even no interest to improve.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning in this regard the role that the Saudi families play as a factor impacting on teachers' views. Whatever attitudes they have towards the target culture can considerably affect the school teachers. In relation to this, the study as in section 5.3.5.1 showed that participants believe that family factors play a role in their views on the most appropriate cultural models, not always negatively. The effect on students can be positive, encouraging and raising their motivation, or negative, demotivating them and making them hate the language. For example, some cultural aspects may be contradictory to local values and consequently the student's family may disapprove, an attitude which the students would reflect and which, in fact, play a major role in student education. For the Saudi people according to Yamani (2000: 54-55):

The family has traditionally been the main institution of socialization in Saudi Arabia. The family also represents the key arena for the conflict between what are seen as influences of modernization and the certainties of traditions. The parents of the new generation push their children to obtain from education all the advantages that training and qualifications can bring.

As a consequence, families may hold positive or negative attitudes towards other cultures and languages; if the student is lucky enough, the family can motivate the student. In this case, teachers would not have a problem with their teaching, and the parents' positive thinking gives them more freedom in their classroom. The impact, therefore, can be positive as well. This finding certainly confirms what is mentioned in chapter 2 about the Saudi families' role on having their control on students and therefore would have its effect on the teachers' views and their actions in the classroom with the students.

The unsuitability of the curriculum to the Saudi EFL teachers

The Saudi EFL teachers, as the findings in section 5.3.3.1 showed, generally face some difficulties to produce improved outcomes and to meet the goals stated by the Ministry of Education. The participants blamed the Ministry of Education for

not competing with surrounding countries by updating teachers' skills. In fact, teachers' skills still need more development and more work to compete with other educational establishments in the region. Teachers need more practice to master the subject and also need to adapt to new technologies and new methods of teaching in which, unfortunately, Saudi Arabia is still behind many countries. In addition, the curriculum should be developed and simplified for the students, and teachers should be aware of and trained in any changes or improvements. The teachers find that Saudi students are reluctant; they have no motivation, hate the language, and do not want to study. The reason for this finding can be attributed to the outcomes of EFL teaching in the Saudi public schools compared to the neighbouring counties in the region. As a consequence, it is known in the Arabian Gulf region that graduate students of secondary schools in Bahrain or Kuwait are far better than those who graduated from a Saudi secondary school. The Saudi Ministry of Education faces a shortage of English language teachers; consequently not only are teachers from other countries worldwide employed, but any Saudi applicant who is a university graduate, whether in teaching English, in English literature or in English translation is offered a job, regardless of GPA, experience or qualifications as states earlier in chapter 2. Al-Mohanna (2010: 74) commented on the differences between these three English courses taught in the Saudi universities as 4-year programmes:

The difference between the programs offered by the teachers colleges and those provided by the other colleges is that teachers colleges prepare trainees specially to be teachers of English and emphasize the educational aspects of their preparation, whereas the programs at the colleges of languages and translation and the colleges of arts prepare trainees to be specialists in English translation or in English literature, and not necessarily to be English teachers.

As a consequence, the evidence of the current study (5.3.3.1) revealed that there is a need for the Saudi EFL teachers' skills to be updated with training, or at least with in-service training. Participants specified that training should be specifically designed to help teachers to master skills quickly and carry on their own teaching. Training should be related to the curriculum itself (Troudi & Alwan, 2010). Hence,

the teacher needs training in how to convey the curriculum and how to make the students like the English language, additionally, they need to be able to familiarize themselves as teachers with new contents or materials and the techniques of the new textbook (Troudi & Alwan 2010). In this regards, Wedell (2009: 17) asserted that “Teachers will need to be helped to fully understand the standards and targets expected of learners at different levels of assessment, and to become familiar with new materials and/or teaching approaches”. Therefore, it can be argued that the participants’ suggestion could be due to the reason that some Educational Directorates in different regions in the country conduct training programmes at different times in the academic year and, moreover, that training may not fill the gaps between teachers and the curriculum. Therefore, some teachers attend training simply to benefit their CV. As Al-Mohanna (2010: 86) claimed:

educational reform is driven by external factors handed down to EFL teachers. If the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia supervises both the policy of language teaching and the teacher-training program, then they should go hand in hand to deal positively with these factors and to overcome the constraints that hinder EFL teachers from doing their main job (teaching the language) effectively”.

Teachers’ views on the 2003 EFL reforms

It has been debated widely in the Saudi local media and also in the international media whether the reason for the 2003 education reforms in the Saudi public school system was the pressure from the western media, or whether there was pressure from within the Ministry of Education to improve and update its curriculum. As cited in Elyas (2008: 29), Friedman (2001) reflects the former view, asserting that, especially after the 9/11 attacks in New York in 2001, in which 15 out of 19 suicide hijackers were claimed to be Saudi nationals, “the editorial pages of American newspapers have been full of articles discussing Arab educational systems, and particularly Saudi schools”. On the other hand, Prince Sultan (the previous former crown prince in Saudi Arabia) claimed in a 2003 interview that the educational reforms in Saudi aim to enhance Islamic values, ethics and the

behaviour of the youngsters, promoting moderation through teaching the correct concepts, including the Holy Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah (deeds and sayings). He added that:

The review would also strengthen the concepts of flexibility, openness to dialogue and respect for the opinions of others while maintaining religious subjects, which are the bases of our educational system ... this will provide employment opportunities for our sons and daughters when they receive the necessary qualifications for a job which suits them, whether in the public or private sector.

He added that the review was an endless process and would continue for as long as Saudi Arabia remains an influential and integral part of today's world. Prince Sultan said the reforms were carried out on the initiative of the Government, not in response to outside pressure. The reforms put greater emphasis on the need to give scientific training to Saudi students (Samirad, 2012).

The findings of this study in (5.3.3.3) reflected the latter opinion, in that most of the participants agreed that the Ministry had already planned the curriculum changes before the 9/11 attacks, as the Ministry had claimed. Participants also agreed, however, that the Ministry had not carried out the planned reforms until media criticism arose. This evidence argues that while the Ministry had its own agenda of updating and developing the Saudi educational curriculum in some subjects' implementation was slow, and outside criticism may have speeded up the process. These kind of issues and debates whether in the local or international media or even within the Saudi public education would have a part in shaping the Saudi EFL teachers views and their decision-making in the classroom as they showed in their responses.

In fact, by looking at these four aspects of 'teachers in their school world', it seems that the participants acknowledge this factor to be affecting their views. Therefore, a balance of their choice of the appropriate cultural model for the EFL textbook is needed in order to overcome any weaknesses they may encounter in their school world and accordingly not to deepen them in the future.

The interplay between factors impacting on participants' views

Taken together, the results suggest that these different global and local factors intersect in complex ways and their impact is visible in the views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks for different participants in different ways. The findings of this study revealed that the participants' views on the EFL cultural models were influenced by global and local factors which were categorized earlier in Chapter 5. These factors, as the evidence demonstrated, were not affecting them negatively, but rather gave them a clear view of culture and shaped their opinions of what would be appropriate in their classroom and of the interculturality that would lead to better outcomes for their students.

To sum up this section, there is in fact a relationship between these 3 factors, 'participants' views on the relationship between language and culture', 'the impact of political factors on participants' views of appropriate cultural models' and 'teachers in their school world', and the findings on views of appropriate cultural models discussed above. In this case, we cannot point the relation to any one particular factor. Therefore, a first point to make here is that these factors cannot easily be viewed as discrete, they are intertwined. The views that are held about the relationship between English language and culture partly reflect the fact that English is the language of some politically and economically very dominant groups in the world which helps the language to be a global. In addition, it is also a reflection of teachers in their own teaching world; their awareness of the importance attached to English in local society and the complex nature of their role as locals teaching a language which is viewed as a threat by some in Saudi society.

In addition, another key finding to raise here is that there is considerable variation in the results and responses of participants. This suggests that these diverse responses will have different impacts on different individuals depending on their own life experiences within the broader social world. Moreover, as has been seen with the political factors, while there are undoubtedly some political events which are impacting on the ways Saudis view others and are themselves viewed by

others, the results clearly show that the teachers do not see themselves as defined by these processes but as forming their own views.

Consequently, while the Saudi EFL teachers form their own views based on the different factors mentioned above, in the next section we will focus on how they are able to turn these into reflective actions in their own teaching and how they feel able to apply these views to their practice.

6.4 Teachers' Decision-Making in the Classroom: dealing with some sensitive cultural aspects

This section will discuss the fourth and final research question of this study:

4. How do and in what ways do their views inform their in-class pedagogical decision-making?

To answer this research question, I asked the participants about the extent they are able to apply what they think is suitable for their classroom, the sensitive cultural images, and the presentations of western cultural aspects they believe are appropriate. The results of these questions were presented in section 5.4 in chapter 5.

A key finding in this section is the fact that the Saudi EFL teachers are strongly controlled by the Ministry of Education's regulations and have very limited freedom. Therefore, their practices in the classroom are controlled, and also their views of whatever they want to practice are monitored by the educational supervisors. Nevertheless, participants do find ways to apply their own decision-making in spite of this as will be discussed below.

The data reported in section 5.4 showed that the majority of Saudi EFL teachers agree with the idea that the Ministry of Education controls and has restrictions over the curriculum, they mostly wish to have a say in the curriculum and to share

the decisions in relation to the textbook they teach. In fact, even with any reform or changes within the textbooks, the teachers are always ignored and have no voice. As Troudi and Alwan (2010) suggest, teachers' feedback and voices should be considered when developing textbook materials and any other updates or changes within the curriculum, and they should act as agents. Moreover, as regards educational decisions, not only at the level of the Ministry of Education but also at the level of the local leaders, teachers represent the voice of the local society, which should also be heard. Wedell argued that if the educational policy makers ignore the local realities or voices in any changes they apply to the curriculum, worse outcomes will occur, accordingly, he maintained that:

Local or institutional leaders are of course much closer to change implementation. If they follow their superiors and ignore local realities, they will find it more difficult to avoid unsatisfactory outcomes that are likely to follow (2009: 45).

In addition to this, the case is not only that the teachers were ignored in the process of developing or changing the curriculum, but also inside the classroom as they have to refer to the supervisor on certain issues, and in some more restricted cases. They seek to have the freedom to take decisions that will help improve their students' proficiency in English. In fact, the results of this study highlighted the importance that the supervisor has in the classroom, and for the teachers. This could be a sign of the teacher's need for the supervisors' support and feedback in the classroom in dealing with the curriculum, following both the curriculum teaching plan and depending on his creativity inside the classroom. Some teachers may have poor English language teaching skills and at the same time, make no effort to improve themselves and update their knowledge. Consequently, they prefer to follow the supervisors' guidance and are very happy to obey and to be controlled. This is perhaps their way of hiding their failure. Unfortunately, if the teacher has to follow the curriculum plan in the classroom, then as Al-Mohanna argued (2010: 79) "the teacher opts to focus on good students and not the poor ones albeit in order not to deviate from the lesson plan he has to follow".

Therefore, teachers in some cases try to find their own way to deal with some sensitive cultural aspects which they believe are in contradictions with the local or Islamic values. In the following section I will discuss how they deal with these sensitive cultural aspects in their classrooms.

Sensitive cultural aspects

Sensitive cultural aspects are meant to be those examples of practices that are in contradiction with the local or Islamic values. They can be western cultural practices or even in some cases local but against Islamic beliefs; for example: the wheel of fortune or anything that deals with magic which can be practiced in different Arabic cultures although they are against Islam. Accordingly, evidence from section 5.4 showed that there are some sensitive cultural aspects that the teachers have to deal with in a certain way. This can be clearly seen with the fact they mentioned when they deal for example with aspects of religion or even with the examples that could be understood as sexual references. As stated in Chapter 2, Saudi society is generally very conservative; there are restrictions to accord with Islamic values and also local traditions and beliefs (Yamani, 2000).

As an example in this regard, there is no sex education in public schools, and teachers are not allowed to raise the subject and talk about it. In this context it is not surprising that newly-married couples have no knowledge of sex, even theoretical; sex outside marriage is severely punished. As a consequence, students can be eager to make mischief in the classroom and pretend they know nothing in order to embarrass the teacher. For that reason and in case students should raise awkward issues, some teachers tend to link any topic to local Islamic values. The source for Saudi Arabian policy and the rule of government, law, education and most of what they control in the country is the Holy Quran and the prophet's Sunnah, as discussed in Chapter 2. Therefore, the whole of society follows the same line as the government, following Islamic regulations in their daily life. Accordingly, the teachers, being part of this society will also refer to Quran and Sunnah in their teaching, and especially when they face any cultural aspect they think has some contradiction with local cultural values.

The findings of this study revealed that there are some western cultural values in the current EFL curriculum that were not presented appropriately, given the local cultural context. Therefore, some participants suggested ways to present those references to the western culture. In this regard, the findings suggested that teachers do not mind presenting western cultural values in the curriculum as long as they are presented in the western way. In other words, any western cultural aspect should be portrayed clearly as part of western culture in order not to have any conflict with the local cultural values. In addition, the students should be aware that this is the western culture, which is different from their own lifestyle and their way of, for example, celebrating, and which can then be compared with local practices and celebrations. These results show that teachers are influential in terms of how culture is treated in the classroom, a point also raised by Graves (2001: 188) who describes the role that teachers play in this respect:

A teacher who views culture as an integral part of a syllabus might include the development of awareness of the role culture plays in human interaction, how to understand and interpret the cultural aspects of language and behaviour, and the development of skills in behaving and responding in culturally appropriate ways in addition to knowledge of the target culture.

Participants' emphasis on making a clear distinction between local and non- local cultural practices, mentioned above in 6.2, is clearly evident in their decision-making process. In this they appear to recognise that the concept of understanding and appreciating another culture is part of foreign language teaching and that this strategy can allow for the appreciation of cultures on their own terms (Irving, 1986). Indeed, this finding directed our attention to some of the contents in the EFL textbook in which western cultural values are presented in local pictures, with local names. One example could be the phone call in third grade of intermediate textbook where Saudi boy calls a Saudi girl to invite her to a party, when this type of party, and even contact between the sexes, is not allowed in local society. Accordingly, the participants wanted these examples to be presented as western pictures.

From these findings, with reference to the educational system in Saudi Arabia and the top-down decision-making process, teachers have also reflected on the factors mentioned above, showing that they are able to make their own decisions. Therefore, Saudi EFL teachers saw their ability to apply their beliefs about suitable cultural content as being restricted by the Ministry of Education's requirement that teachers follow the set teaching plans and the teachers' book for the curriculum. As stated earlier in chapter 2, this policy is maintained by Ministry supervisors, who monitor teaching and evaluate teachers to check their progress and their actions in the classroom. However, the evidence showed that teachers wish to make their own decisions in the classroom and to decide what materials and what methods of teaching are appropriate, both for their students and for their teaching in general. In addition, the results showed that teaching English in Saudi public schools involves sensitive cultural aspects contradicting the local values which the teachers have to face and deal with in their own way. The sensitive cultural aspects involved the reinforcement of Islamic beliefs and values, which is meant to be one of the main goals of teaching English in Saudi public schools. Therefore, teachers automatically link their teaching to the Islamic rules, as they are the basis for local society's culture and traditions. As a result, when facing such aspects, teachers tend mostly to omit cultural references that may clash with their Islamic values and beliefs. Consequently, the Saudi EFL teachers are controlled in their classrooms and in their teaching by mainly the Saudi Islamic and local cultural values and beliefs, and also controlled and monitored by the supervisors.

After completing the discussion of the findings of this study, I will now conclude the thesis by presenting the implications and contribution to knowledge based on the findings of this study and relevant literature presented in chapter 3.

6.5 Implications and Recommendations of the Study

In this section I will consider the implications of this study and go on to make a number of recommendations based on these. The primary objective of the study was to develop an understanding of how TESOL teachers, such as those who

formed the focus of this study, reconcile their teaching of a global language with their local socio-cultural realities through an examination of their views of appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks. The findings have helped shed light on the ways in which teachers' views and actions are informed by local and global realities and the usefulness of the distinction between the essentialist and non-essentialist conceptualisations of culture in understanding their views. The findings of this study also have implications for policy as well as practice and the importance of teacher perspectives in considering these. I will first consider the theoretical implications of the study and then go on to consider the practical ones and make a number of recommendations on the basis of these.

6.5.1 Theoretical Implications of the study

In chapter 3, I presented an understanding of teachers' views as being socially constructed but argued that the social worlds in which these are developed, due to technology and opportunities for mobility and the fact that the teaching of a global language, needs increasingly to be seen as not only their immediate local realities but also the wider global world meaning that teachers are access to local norms and values but also a number of alternative norms and values. These different perspectives, I suggested, as summarised in figure 3.1 in chapter 3, mean that EFL teachers' views are increasingly likely to represent a combination of both local and global perspectives or a glocal perspective (Robertson 1994). In other words, on the one hand, their views manifest how they and others in their society view local norms and values in their in and out of school worlds. But they also include their views on alternative value systems and norms available to them in through global commerce, electronic media, and travel. Thus, teachers' views are understood to be the result of their own efforts rather than determined by the value systems present in wider society. In addition their views are the results of the ways they combine and reconcile different value systems against a backdrop of global political and economic forces which position local norms and values in certain ways. Hence, as Pennycook (1994: 306) puts it they saw themselves as "engaged with both the local context and the global domain".

Drawing upon debates about the need to evolve cultural models for foreign language teaching in light of globalization, I also presented a distinction widely used in the literature between essentialist and non-essentialist understandings of culture, and the view put forward by a number of writers, Appadurai (1996), Giddens (2000) and Carr (2003) that globalization and the growth of English as a global medium of communication requires a move away from rigid static models of culture which see this as a property of a particular nation or region and towards a view of cultures as intermingling, dynamic and evolving.

The results presented in chapter 5 and discussed above provide some interesting insights which help illustrate and further develop the ideas presented in my conceptual framework. First of all, they show how teachers all acknowledge the impact of both global and local factors in shaping their views. They are aware, for example of the global power of English speaking countries, the importance of English in providing employment opportunities on account of this and of the negative ways in which Saudi Arabia is sometimes portrayed in the media. They also share views on the importance of local cultural norms and values including those in their immediate school world, however, there is considerable variety in the ways in which participants draw upon these in forming their views as to what should be appropriate models for the course books. This reflects a process at work in individual teachers' views reflecting their own particular attempts to make sense of English as a global language, its global influence and the place of Saudi Arabia within the global community and their understanding of norms and values in Saudi society. In other words, these teachers teach a global language so are inevitably going to draw upon factors which reflect their view of its status as a global language but precisely how they see this intersecting with the local can be very different and the global and local get foregrounded in different ways in different accounts. For example, while almost all participants stressed a need to make sure that local values were not threatened or ignored in the way culture was treated in the course books, for some, the preservation of local perspectives is seen as much more important than including a variety of global alternatives in shaping their views while for others, including a diversity of cultural models was welcomed

more. This suggests that there is a need to recognise that for TESOL teachers working with a global language such as English, will entail a process of management of global and local perspectives in developing their views and practices but these two things will not necessarily be given equal consideration. Thus for some participants in this study, the local realities were given much more weighting in shaping their views than for others who drew upon global perspectives more.

A second related observation regarding the conceptual understanding developed in chapter 3 above, is the extent to which, drawing upon global as well as local realities in forming views about appropriate cultural models means that they will embrace a more non-essentialist understanding of culture. Findings suggest that while many participants recognised that English might be associated with a variety of different cultures, for the majority this did not lead them to fully embrace a non-essentialist model of culture. In other words, while they agreed that the view that as an international language, many different cultural models could be presented through English, they were less comfortable with some aspects of this as put forward by Dervin (2010) and Holliday (2011) discussed in chapter 3 above. That is the dynamic and non-fixed notion of culture as something that could transverse national and regional boundaries. Rather, they argued for the importance of teaching English through target cultural values and that they are kept distinct from local Saudi values. This was also evident in the ways in which they viewed the practice in some units of the textbook where local Saudi people were seen to enact non-Saudi values. These findings highlight how when dealing with globalization, as others such as Giddens (2000) and Appadurai (1996) have argued, people may develop very different responses. While some view globalization optimistically, others may be more cautious, and these different views were clearly evident among this group of participants.

The findings also suggest that while, increasingly a more non-essentialist understanding of culture is being advocated as a model for EFL textbooks (see for example Gray 2006) as this is best seen to reflect English as a global language, this

may be quite challenging to introduce in reality. For these teachers, such a (non-essentialist) cultural model was greeted with some caution, and the ways in which this has already been introduced, largely rejected. In fact, what the results of this study show, is that teachers have no problem in accepting some elements of non-essentialist cultural models as well as essentialist models as long as they have no conflicts with the local cultural values and when necessary, omitting or modifying coursebook content to suit their needs and standpoints. These findings have therefore provided some useful insights for those interested in debates about cultural models for EFL textbooks, but also highlighted the significant role that teachers play in negotiating the textbook content and the way this gets disseminated to students which I will discuss further below.

A final observation with regard to the findings in relation to the conceptual framework developed in chapter 3, concerns the distinction between essentialist and non-essentialist understandings of culture with regard to the English language. In this study, both perspectives are evident in participants' viewpoint. That is to say, they appear to be able to subscribe to a view of culture as static, fixed and tied to region and nation and to one that recognises, the dynamic non-bounded nature of culture, in so far as this applies to the relationship between English and culture. Some of the reasons for this have been discussed above (see 6.3.1) but an interesting question is whether this means that this distinction, widespread in anthropology, is in itself unhelpful. This is something that it is not possible to establish without undertaking a considerable amount of further research, as explained, there were a number of possible conceptual issues around the term culture in this study that need to be taken into account. However, through my reading of the literature, I believe that this distinction is important and valuable, but that there is however, a need to question the assumption that non-essentialist cultural perspectives will necessarily become more widespread along with the growth of English as an international language.

6.5.2 Implications concerning the importance of teachers' views and their support

As highlighted above, teachers' views are likely to be important to what happens in the classroom and giving teachers a voice in this study has been helpful in identifying their views on cultural content which can usefully inform the curriculum design process and highlight things they need more support with. Thus for example, an important finding of the study showed that some teachers lacked an understanding of what is meant by cultural models. Therefore, they showed some misunderstanding during the interviews and needed an explanation of what was meant by culture. Consequently, efforts were made up to make sure that every participant was fully aware of what is being investigated as illustrated earlier in chapter 4 section (4.7.3). It is likely that this originated with limitations in their teacher education at university, if cultural issues were not properly taught or accurately presented. In addition, as mentioned earlier in this Chapter, many teachers had no university level teacher education and were graduates of other aspects of English language studies. Consequently, based on the findings, it is suggested that the Ministry of Education take into consideration teachers' knowledge of different aspects of the EFL curriculum and try to remedy weaknesses by providing in-service training for teachers. Additionally, the Ministry of Higher Education should take into consideration the need for increased provision of specialised English language teacher training, since at present many posts are filled by English studies or translation graduates who, while they are eligible to teach, have neither experience nor knowledge of teaching.

In addition, as the findings revealed, the changes and reforms implemented by the Ministry of Education were undertaken without reference to teachers' opinions. Accordingly, the textbook materials and content were weighty and impossible to cover in the allotted time of 45 minutes, four times a week. In addition, ignoring the teachers' voice also resulted in difficulties created by presenting non-local cultural content in a local context, as described in Chapter 5. The results of this study, therefore, imply that the Ministry of Education should include the input of EFL teachers in any plans to change or develop textbooks. Teachers are the first to use the textbook and deal directly with the students in the classroom. In addition,

they provide the link between the Ministry of Education and families, through both the students and the textbook in the classroom. Consequently, teachers are able to give a clear picture of what is needed for their classroom and teaching. The importance of the teacher's role in such changes and developments is acknowledged by Wedell (2009) who, in suggesting the importance of certain groups when developing programmes, highlighted the role of teachers.

As the findings showed, classroom teachers have only limited freedom to make decisions on what is best for the students; they follow both the Ministry's teaching plan and their supervisor's guidance. Teachers did show, however, that they want to have the choice to apply their professional judgment in the classroom. Teachers should be given the freedom to make their own decisions and to use their own teaching materials; this would solve the difficulties created by an over-heavy curriculum and by inappropriate cultural content in the current textbooks. As long as the main goals and objectives are attained by the end of the course, teachers should have at least some scope to decide and modify the textbook materials; their progress towards curriculum goals can then be monitored by their supervisors.

Based on the findings of this study, in order for teachers to reach the goals of the EFL teaching in their context and to be able to get the outcomes as a result of what they are doing, it is recommended that they act locally in their classrooms in order to maintain their students' local values and beliefs. Additionally, they need also to widen their knowledge and seek for openness to other cultures by thinking globally. Accordingly, by doing so, as Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) claimed, they may be able to have an appropriate pedagogical EIL teaching that suites their local and global demands.

From the findings, it is clear that teachers seek some freedom in order to make their own decisions inside the classroom dealing with the textbooks they use. In addition, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 3 with regards to the significance of teachers' views and beliefs, as maintained by Borg (2003), it is recommended that the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia and also in any global context consider

the significance of teachers' views and engage their voice in any steps to develop or adapt the curriculum.

Moreover, as the findings showed, EFL teachers in the Saudi context lack sufficient training to deal with different and new techniques of their teaching. Based on the literature reviewed in this study and also taking into account the work of Wedell (2009) that highlights the importance of teacher training and development, it is recommended that teachers should not rely on the Ministry of Education to offer this kind of training; rather they should find themselves the best way and opportunities in order to undertake any programme or course that may improve their skills in language teaching. In other words, if the Ministry of Education does not give teachers the needed in-service courses to aid their teaching skills and to improve their teaching proficiency, then teachers themselves should find qualified trainers inside Saudi or even in different parts of the world. This can be done whenever they have the time, especially during summer holidays as in Saudi, teachers' summer break mostly ranges between 8 to 12 weeks.

6.5.3 Implications and recommendations for Saudi EFL textbooks

Part of the rationale for undertaking this study was a belief that Saudi teachers may have attitudes towards target or other non-local cultural models for EFL materials that result from the way the Saudi or Islamic culture is presented in the western media, and from the comments of prominent Saudis such as Nourah El-Khereiji (2005) (as stated in chapter 1, 1.2), who claimed that Muslims are seen to be terrorists in many Western communities. Moreover, personal experience showed that teachers sometimes have difficulty in dealing with the presentation of westernized values in their course books, an opinion which was borne out by the findings of this study as reported in Chapters 5 and 6.

However, the results also suggest that while most participants claim that some factors have impacted on their views on appropriate cultural models (see Chapter 5), contrary to expectation; these seem to lead many to recognise the need to present cultural models that represent diversity in the EFL. On the one hand it

seems that participants separate culture from politics showing, for example, an interest in travelling to English speaking countries; on the other hand they subscribe to the Islamic values of openness to other cultures and languages. Thus, participants' opinions generally correlate with the goals of teaching English language set by the Saudi Ministry of Education that appreciate other cultures and view learning their language as an opportunity to exchange knowledge, as reported in Chapter 2. Teachers' opinions may also have been reinforced by the official government endorsement of the need for Saudi Arabian students to be more interactive and tolerant, expressed in the views of His Royal Highness, the Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal in discussion with the US Foreign Secretary Condoleezza Rice in 2006:

The education reforms in Saudi Arabia go beyond textbook rewriting. And they go into teacher training, directions or the messages that are given to children in the formative years and this is done for our own security and our own education and standard and the ability of our young people to compete in the marketplace with anybody else in productivity. They have to be educated in the proper system of education. And so the whole system of education is being transformed from top to bottom. Textbooks are only one of the steps that have been taken by Saudi Arabia.

First, as the findings of this study suggest, it is strongly recommended to modify textbooks which show Saudis enacting western values, and replace them with Saudis interacting with non-Saudis, people who might in reality hold the values that are portrayed. Secondly, as Prince Saud Al Faisal (2006) mentioned, it is not only textbooks which need to change. There is a need to develop activities in the classroom which promote greater intercultural awareness (Holliday, 2011). Merely changing the course book content will not necessarily in itself brings about the greater cross-cultural understanding that the government and many teachers appear to seek.

In addition, based on the findings of this study, with accordance to any newly reformed or modified textbook, it is recommended that this new textbook should be introduced to the EFL teachers before officially applying it in the educational system. Therefore, workshops and training on how to deal with the new

techniques and materials should be adopted by the authorities in the Ministry of Education.

6.6 Contribution to Knowledge

The current study has played a part in building knowledge and bringing to light further evidence about the appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks both locally, in the Saudi case, and globally, in similar contexts, in line with teachers' views on the cultural models and with social constructivism, the theoretical framework of this study. Hence, from a non-essentialist point of view, the study of the creation of culture is significant as it reflects the values, beliefs, ways of thinking, practices, habits and perceptions of each person in different nations at one level. As a consequence, whatever differences exist between nations or cultures in life practices and beliefs, these differences can lead to valuing and appreciating others.

As mentioned above in Chapter 1, no study has so far investigated the Saudi EFL teachers' views about the appropriate cultural model for EFL in the Saudi Arabian public schools or in the Middle East; although there were some small scale studies have been conducted in the Saudi context, as described in Chapter 3. The main contribution made by this study therefore, is that it used a mixed methods approach with both qualitative (close-ended questionnaire) and quantitative (interviews and open-ended questionnaires) data in order to both examine the teachers' views about the appropriate cultural models for the EFL textbooks for the Saudi public schools and to gain in depth information. The study also contributed an understanding of the non-essentialist view of culture and whether this view is currently appropriate for the global context and teaching English as an international language. Saudi teachers showed their openness to other cultures, maintaining this non-essentialist perspective and accepting cultural practices from all over the world that are not contradictory to local Islamic values.

Copies of this study are to be sent directly through the Saudi Cultural bureau in London to King Fahad National Library in Riyadh and also to the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education. This will give more opportunities for the authorities in the

Ministry of Education to access this study. In addition, I will send copies to the developers of the Saudi EFL curriculum in the Saudi Ministry of Education. In this way, the study has given the teachers' voice a valuable opportunity to reach the decision makers in the Ministry of Education, which will help in the formulation of further decisions determined by the Ministry concerning English language teaching. Accordingly, the gap between teachers and the curriculum developers is to be narrowed and, hopefully, abolished. As the study reported, it was the absence of teachers' voices that resulted in problems with textbooks materials and cultural content. As a consequence, there have been very disappointing student outcomes where the goals of teaching the subject were not achieved.

The study helped to deepen understanding of how TESOL practitioners in different settings around the world live with, and develop responses to, certain global forces. In other words, it contributed to the still limited knowledge of the different ways in which language teachers and learners negotiate and manage their understanding of global forces, such as the spread of western cultural values via the growth of English as an international language; an investigation of cultural models used in textbooks serves, therefore, as a suitable way of focusing on this topic.

This study is only one step further towards building an understanding of what cultural content can be used for the EFL textbooks, bearing in mind the needs of the global markets and the need for any context around the world. In other words, the 'ready-made' textbooks mentioned in Chapter 3 are no longer appropriate for English language teaching. Therefore, programme developers and textbook publishers should take into consideration that different contexts need different textbooks that suit their local and global needs. Globalising the textbooks, as the findings suggest is the answer for this. In addition, according to Holliday (2011) intercultural awareness has to exist in accordance with the methodology of teaching.

6.7 Further Research

Finally, I end this study by stressing how it has been invaluable to me in providing me with an opportunity to gain some in depth knowledge and deeper understanding of an important issue facing Saudi English teachers, which can only enhance my professional career. It is my hope that others will also find it a relevant and thought-provoking study. It is also hoped that this study can pave the way for other research to be carried out in the near future as; inevitably, a study like this has only scratched the surface. In order to examine the relationship between politics and English language teaching and how political factors can have an impact on teachers' attitudes towards English, in particular, there is a need for more research to focus on a detailed understanding of how teachers believe politics to have impacted on their attitudes and practice with regard to cultural issues in the EFL classroom in Saudi Arabia. Namely, what precise effects do politics have on teachers' perceptions of culture and EFL teaching?

It should also be possible to produce a very good understanding of the extent to which Saudi EFL teachers are able to apply what they think is appropriate in their classroom, and their teaching in general, by using methods such as classroom observation along with the other methods used in this study. In addition, this could be undertaken not only in the Saudi context, but also in other different contexts around the world.

Furthermore, it is very important to study the work of the decision makers in the Ministry of Education, and the curriculum developers, to determine how their decisions are made with regard to the EFL textbooks and the cultural models employed within them. This may provide a wider picture of the process of adopting a new curriculum or of developing a current one. Although this study only investigated Saudi EFL teachers, the need for other voices and opinions on the processes they undertake and the quality of their decisions in this regard was apparent.

It is important to conduct a study similar to the current study on the basis of the Arab Spring currently spanning the entire Arab World. Indeed, political decisions

in different Arab countries will be influenced by vast changes. This may help to understand whether Arabs will still have the same policy towards the English language and whether it will have the same importance, or whether something new might come to the fore.

6.8 My Personal Research Journey

The first step towards my life's ambition was in 2006 during my masters studies in TESOL at Exeter University. When I discussed applying to continue my studies with a Ph.D at the University with my supervisors, Dr. Sarah Rich and Dr. Salah Troudi, they told me to get a good result in my dissertation. I then did my best and got a good score. I had in mind that a good score would not only get the master's degree, but also give me the chance to work for my dream and get a Ph.D. Dr. Rich and Dr. Troudi supervised the Ph.D, and gave me all the support I needed during the years of my research, not only academic but also moral support whenever I needed it.

As a Saudi student in participating in academic research, I found it very difficult to deal with the area of this study that emerged from major sources. Firstly, there has not been much research conducted in the area of language and culture, particularly in Saudi Arabia, especially at the time I first started. This aroused my interest as a TESOL specialist. In addition, teachers' views and practices with regards to cultural models in EFL classrooms play an important role in the process of language learning. Furthermore, I found that the research was beneficial in giving me the chance to meet experts who gave me helpful comments and views which would assist with future research.

Looking ahead, I will continue to acquaint myself with new research and theories on language and culture and the impact they have by globalization. In addition, I will also seek any opportunity which can help me widen my knowledge with reference to TESOL and English language teaching in general, and also improve my skills as regards both research and pedagogy.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Sample of a Unit from the Textbook

Unit 11

At the Doctor's

In this unit you are going to :

- talk about illness and health problems.
- give advice.
- make appointments.
- listen to people, talking about their illnesses.
- read someone's diary.
- write your diary.



Unit 11 Lesson 1

Discussion

- Do you know these places?
- Why do people go there?
- What is the difference between them?
- When was the last time you went to a hospital? Why?



Conversation

A. Listen and practise.

1. Receptionist: Dr. Habeeb's clinic.

Talal: Hello, this is Talal Asa'ad. Can I make an appointment with Dr. Habeeb on Monday the 16th?

Receptionist: When would you like to come?

Talal: In the evening.

Receptionist: Can you come at five?

Talal: That'll be fine.



2. Dr. Habeeb: Hello, Mr. Asa'ad. What's the problem?

Talal: I have a terrible earache. It really hurts.

Dr. Habeeb: Let me take a look. Your ear is infected.

You should use these ear drops thrice a day.

You shouldn't use your cell phone. You'll feel better soon.

Talal: Thank you, doctor.

B. Before going to the doctor, do you give charity or ask Allah to cure you?

Grammar

Should as Advice

Should	Shouldn't
You should stay at home.	You shouldn't talk on the cell phone.
You should go to bed.	You shouldn't go to work.

Appendix 1 continued...

Lesson 1

A. Complete the conversation between Lama and her little brother Sari. Use should / shouldn't.

Lama: You _____ eat chocolate. You must lose weight.

Sari: I can't. I love chocolate. Maybe I _____ eat too much.

Lama: You _____ also exercise.

Sari: Exercise? You know I don't like to exercise.

Lama: But you like playing football. Maybe you _____ play it more often.

Sari: You're right. I really should.

Lama: Last but not least. You _____ eat junk food.

Sari: No way! I like hamburgers. You know something. Maybe I _____ diet, I like the way I am.

B. In pairs:

1. Look at the complaints. Then give advice using should or shouldn't.



e.g.

A: I have a bad cough.

B: You should drink lemon and honey.

C. Choose an illness. Make an appointment with a receptionist, using time expressions.

The receptionist fills the cards. Exchange roles.

Illness:	
Doctor:	
Date:	
Time:	

Illness:	
Doctor:	
Date:	
Time:	

Unit 11 Lesson 2

Vocabulary

A. Match the pictures with the words.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> chicken pox | <input type="checkbox"/> food poisoning | <input type="checkbox"/> dizzy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sunstroke | <input type="checkbox"/> swollen ankle | <input type="checkbox"/> cough |

1.



He has a _____

2.



She feels _____

3.



She's got _____

4.



He has _____

5.



He's got a _____

6.



He has a _____

B. **In pairs:** Choose an illness. Describe it to your partner (don't name it). Your partner guesses the illness and gives you an advice.

Listening

A. Listen to some people describing their health problems. Match each person's name with the problem and time. Write the numbers in the boxes.

Name	Problem	when
1. Basil	<input type="checkbox"/> dizzy	<input type="checkbox"/> this morning
2. Asim	<input type="checkbox"/> sunstroke	<input type="checkbox"/> last week
3. Ibraheem	<input type="checkbox"/> chicken pox	<input type="checkbox"/> yesterday
4. Dalal	<input type="checkbox"/> food poisoning	<input type="checkbox"/> last month

B. Compare your answers with a partner.

Appendix 1 continued...

Lesson 2

Reading

A. Do you write a diary?

B. Read Mariam's diary. What is the main idea? Choose the right answer.

- Mariam's week at home.
- Mariam's school day.
- Mariam's little brother.



C. Name the day.

- Mariam didn't go to school. _____
- Mariam felt her parents cared more for her brother. _____
- Mariam was happy to go to school. _____
- Mariam's father brought her flowers. _____
- Waleed hurt himself. _____
- Mariam got a box of chocolate. _____

D. Match the words to their meanings.

1. pharmacy - a written instruction by the doctor for a medicine.
2. prescription - some thing for keeping flowers.
3. a vase - a place where you buy medicine.

Appendix 2

Conversation

A. Listen and practice.

Turki : Look at the picture of my family . These are my parents.
 Sami : Who's this ?
 Turki : That's my sister . She's one year old .
 Ahmad : What's your sister's name ?
 Turki : Lateefa .
 Sami : And who are these boys ?
 Turki : My brothers , Fadi , Adnan and Badr .



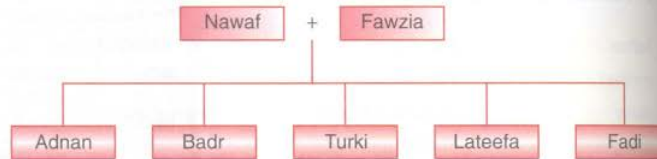
B. A family gathering is a blessing . Why ?

Grammar

Possessive nouns

Turki has a sister .	Turki's sister is one year old.
My brother has a car .	My brother's car is new .

This is Turki's family tree. Complete the sentences with the correct possessive noun.



Turki is Badr's brother .

Fadi is _____ son .

Fawzia is _____ wife .

Lateefa is _____ daughter .

Nawaf is _____ father .

Lateefa is _____ sister .

Speaking

In pairs : Take turns asking about your partner's family .

- How many brothers do you have?
- How many sisters do you have?
- What are their names?
- What are your parents' names?

Appendix 3



Dear teachers,

This present questionnaire is a part of ongoing research under the supervision of Sarah Rich and Salah Troudi, by Abdulrahman Alfahadi, a PhD student in Education at the University of Exeter, UK. I am exploring the Saudi teachers' views on appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks: insights into TESOL teachers' management of global cultural flows and local realities in their teaching worlds

I would be very grateful if you could please complete this questionnaire – it will take approximately 15 minutes of your time. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. All your answers will be anonymous and will be treated confidentially.

The study has been approved by the Chair of the Ethics Committee, School of Education & Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter.

If you are happy to take part in the study, please read the consent form next page to sign.

اعزائي المعلمون ،

هذا الاستبيان الحالي هو جزء من بحث مستمر تحت إشراف سارة ريتش وصلاح طرودي ، بواسطة عبدالرحمن الفهادي ، طالب دكتوراه في التربية والتعليم بجامعة اكستر ، المملكة المتحدة. وأعمل على استكشاف الرابط بين العالمي والمحلي في عملية صناعة القرار لمعلمي اللغة الانجليزية لغير الناطقين بها: مع التركيز بشكل خاص على تصورات المعلمين السعوديين حول المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب لتعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالتعليم العام بالمملكة العربية السعودية.

سأكون في غاية الامتنان لمشاركتكم ملء هذا الاستبيان - سيستغرق حوالي 15 دقيقة من وقتك. علماً بأنه ليست هناك اجابات "صحيحة" أو "خاطئة". جميع إجاباتك ستكون مجهولة المصدر ، وسيتم التعامل معها بكامل السرية.

هذه الدراسة قد أتمدت من قبل رئيس لجنة آداب المهنة ، كلية التعليم والتعلم مدى الحياة ، جامعة إكستر.

إذا كنت ترغب بالمشاركة في الدراسة ، يرجى قراءة استمارة الإقرار و التوقيع بالصفحة التالية.

Abdulrahman Alfahadi

University of Exeter

School of Education & Lifelong Learning

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this questionnaire by placing a cross (x) in the appropriate box for each item or by typing or writing your response in either Arabic or English.

الرجاء اكمال الاستبانة بوضع علامة (x) في المربع المناسب لكل فقرة أو بواسطة طباعة اجابتك سواء باللغة العربية أو الإنجليزية.

Section (A) Background information:

معلوماتك الشخصية:

1- Please write the name of the city where you work in the space below.

الرجاء كتابة اسم المدينة التي تعمل بها في الفراغ التالي:

.....
.....

To answer the following questions please place a cross (x) in the relevant box.

للإجابة على الاسئلة التالية الرجاء وضع علامة (x) في المربع المناسب.

2- Are you:

male ذكر ☐ or female أنثى ☐ ?

3-How long have you been teaching English?

كم المدة التي قضيتها في التدريس؟

3 years or less	ثلاث سنوات أو أقل <input type="checkbox"/>
Between 4 to 10 years	بين 4-10 سنوات <input type="checkbox"/>
More than 10 years	أكثر من 10 سنوات <input type="checkbox"/>

4- What level do you teach? (you can choose more than one)

ما المراحل الدراسية التي تدرسها؟

The 6th grade of elementary ☐ Intermediate ☐ Secondary ☐

5- Have you ever been to a native English language speaking country?

هل سبق وأن زرت إحدى الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية؟

No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes then please indicate which country you have been to? (You can choose more than one)

إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، الرجاء اختيار الدولة التي سبق لك زيارتها (يمكن اختيار أكثر من دولة)

USA ☐ UK ☐ Canada ☐ Australia ☐ Any other ☐

If you chose other, please write the name of one or more countries in the space below:

إذا اخترت (أخرى)، الرجاء كتابة اسم دولة أو أكثر من دولة في الفراغ التالي:

.....
.....

6- Would you be happy to visit any of the English native speaking countries in the future?

هل ستكون سعيداً بزيارة أي من الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية في المستقبل؟

No ☐

Yes ☐

If no, then please choose one or more reasons for your answer from the following:

إذا كانت الإجابة (لا)، الرجاء اختيار أحد الاسباب التالية. (يمكن اختيار أكثر من سبب)

Religious

ديني ☐

Political سياسي ☐

Financial

مالي ☐

Cultural ثقافي ☐

not interested

غير مهتم ☐

Please indicate any other reasons in the space below:

الرجاء ذكر أسباب أخرى في الفراغ التالي:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section (B): Your views about cultural content for the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom in Saudi Arabian public schools.

انطباعاتك حول المحتوى الثقافي فصول اللغة الانجليزية بصفتها لغة أجنبية بتعليم المملكة العربية السعودية العام.

1. What do you think is the most appropriate way to describe the local culture in Saudi Arabia?

ما المحتوى الثقافي الأكثر توافقاً لشرح أو وصف الثقافة المحلية بالمملكة العربية السعودية في نظرك؟

Islamic

اسلامي ☐

Arabic

عربي ☐

Middle Eastern

شرق أوسطي ☐

All of the above

كل ما ذكر أعلاه ☐

Other

أخرى ☐

If you chose other, please indicate how you would describe the local culture in the space below:

إذا اخترت (أخرى)، الرجاء الإشارة إلى كيفية وصف الثقافة المحلية بالفراغ التالي:

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. What do you perceive the cultural content that is currently promoted in English language teaching in Saudi Arabian public schools to be? Please choose only one answer.

ما تصورك عن تكوين المحتوى الثقافي المدرج حالياً بتعليم اللغة الانجليزية بمدارس المملكة العامة؟ الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة.

Target Language culture

الثقافة المستهدفة ☐

(i.e. the culture of the native English speaking countries such as UK or USA)

Local culture

الثقافة المحلية ☐

(i.e. Saudi Arabian culture)

A combination of target and local cultures مزيج من الثقافتين المستهدفة والمحلية ☐

A variety of cultures from both, English speaking countries and non-English speaking countries

خليط من الثقافات المتحدثين باللغة الانجليزية وغير المتحدثين باللغة الانجليزية ☐

(e.g. UK, France, Japan, India and Saudi Arabia)

Unsure

غير متأكد ☐

Other

أخرى ☐

If you choose other, please explain in the space below:

في حال اختيارك ل أخرى, الرجاء التوضيح بالفرغ التالي:

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Generally, how important is it to address target language culture in English language teaching in public schools in Saudi Arabia? Please choose only one answer.

بشكل عام, مامدى أهمية ادراج الثقافة المستهدفة في تعليم اللغة الانجليزية بالمدارس السعودية العامة؟ الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة فقط .

Very important

مهم جداً ☐

Quite important

مهم قليلاً ☐

Not very important

غير مهم جداً ☐

Not important at all

غير مهم إطلاقاً ☐

Unsure

لست متأكد ☐

4. Are you happy with the cultural content that is currently being promoted in English language teaching in Saudi Arabia?

هل أنت سعيد بمحتوى النموذج الثقافي المطبق حالياً في تعليم اللغة الانجليزية بالمملكة؟

A) Yes ☐

B) No ☐

If you answered no, please provide your reasons in space below.

إذا كانت الاجابة (لا), الرجاء ذكر السبب في الفراغ التالي:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section (C): Your views on aspects of English speaking culture and their suitability to Saudi Arabia.

انطباعاتك عن جوانب ثقافة اللغة المتحدث أهلها بالانجليزية وملاءمتها للمملكة العربية السعودية:

Please indicate how far you agree with each of the statements below by placing a cross (X) in the appropriate box. 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = unsure, 4 = disagree, 5= strongly disagree

الرجاء توضيح مدى تأييدك للمقولات التالية بوضع علامة (X) في المكان المناسب. مؤيد بشدة=1, مؤيد=2, غير متأكد=3, معارض=4, معارض بشدة=5

Statements:	1	2	3	4	5
1.Cultural practices of English speaking countries (e.g. UK and USA) predominate in all western cultures. الممارسات الثقافية للدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية (مثل: المملكة المتحدة والولايات المتحدة الامريكية) سائدة على كل الثقافات الغربية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.Cultural practices of English speaking countries are widespread around the globe. الممارسات الثقافية للدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية (مثل: المملكة المتحدة والولايات المتحدة الامريكية) منتشرة حول العالم.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.English speaking countries ways of presenting the world and other nations and cultures are widespread around the globe. (e.g. the presentation of Arabs and Muslims in American media) نظرة الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية للعالم ولغيرها من الشعوب والثقافات منتشرة حول العالم. (مثال: نظرة الاعلام الامريكي للشعوب العربية والاسلامية)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.The value systems and ideologies of English speaking countries are widespread around the globe. القيم الأخلاقية والأفكار للدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية منتشرة حول العالم.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.The cultural practices of English speaking countries are acceptable to Saudi Arabians. الممارسات الثقافية للدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية مقبولة لدى السعوديين.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.English speaking countries' ways of presenting the world and other nations and cultures are acceptable to Saudi Arabians. (e.g. the presentation of Arabs and Muslims in American media) نظرة الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية للعالم ولغيرها من الشعوب والثقافات مقبولة لدى السعوديين. (مثال: نظرة الاعلام الامريكي للشعوب العربية)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

والاسلامية)					
7.The value systems and ideologies of English speaking countries are acceptable in Saudi Arabians. القيم الأخلاقية والأفكار للدول المتحدثة باللغة الانجليزية مقبولة لدى السعوديين.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.Language and culture cannot be separated, and have to be taught together. اللغة والثقافة لا يمكن فصلهما, ويجب تدريسهما معاً.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.The English language is no longer related to any specific culture or country. اللغة الانجليزية لم تعد مرتبطة بثقافة أو دولة بعينها.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.It is not possible to generalize about the cultural practices of people in an English speaking country such as the UK or USA. من غير الممكن التعميم حول الممارسات الثقافية للشعوب كما في المملكة المتحدة والولايات المتحدة الامريكية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.It is not possible to generalize about the values and ideology of people in an English speaking country such as the UK or USA. من غير الممكن التعميم حول القيم الأخلاقية والأفكار للشعوب كما في المملكة المتحدة والولايات المتحدة الامريكية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section (D): your views on the most suitable cultural content for English language teaching in public schools in Saudi Arabia and factors influencing your views

نظرتك عن المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب لتدريس اللغة الانجليزية في مدارس المملكة العامة والعوامل المؤثرة في انطباعاتك

1. In your view, what is the best cultural content for English language teaching in public schools in Saudi Arabia?

ما المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب لتعليم اللغة الانجليزية بمدارس المملكة العامة في نظرك؟

- British ☐ البريطاني
 North American ☐ الأمريكي الشمالي
 Local culture ☐ الثقافة المحلية
 (e.g. Saudi Arabian culture only)
 A variety of cultures ☐ خليط من الثقافات
 (e.g. UK, France, Japan, India and Saudi Arabia)
 Cultural-free ☐ مجرد من الثقافة

Unsure
Other

غير متأكد ☐
أخرى ☐

If you choose other, please explain in the space below:

في حال اختيارك ل أخرى, الرجاء التوضيح بالفرغ التالي:

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Which of the following do you think have an influence on your views of the appropriate or suitable cultural content for the EFL classroom in Saudi public schools?

أي من التالي تعتقد بأنه ذو تأثير على انطباعاتك حول المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب أو الأكثر ملاءمة لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بمدارس المملكة العامة ؟

Please place a tick (X) in the appropriate box. 1 = strongly Influenced, 2 = Influenced, 3 = Not Sure, 4 = Not Influenced, 5= strongly not Influenced

الرجاء وضع علامة (X) في المكان المناسب. متأثر بشدة=1, متأثر=2, غير متأكد=3, غير متأثر=4, غير متأثر إطلاقاً=5

Factors influencing my view:	1	2	3	4	5
1.The wide spread nature of English speaking countries' cultural practices. طبيعة الانتشار الواسع للممارسات الثقافية لدى الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.The acceptability of English speaking countries' cultural practices. المقبولية (تقبل) الممارسات الثقافية للدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.The acceptability of English speaking countries' ways of looking at the world. المقبولية (تقبل) نظرة الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية عن العالم.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.English speaking countries' views of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis. نظرة الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية إلى المسلمين, العرب والسعوديين.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.English speaking countries' representations of Muslims, Arabs and Saudis in the media. تصوير الإعلام في الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية للمسلمين, العرب والسعوديين.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Local Saudi Arabian cultural values and beliefs. القيم الثقافية والمعتقدات المحلية للسعوديين.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Your own values and beliefs. القيم الاخلاقية والمعتقدات الخاصة بك	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Your own ethnic background. خلفيتك العرقية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Islamic values and beliefs. القيم والمعتقدات الاسلامية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The attempt of English speaking countries' governments to influence policy-making in the Middle East. المحاولة من قبل حكومات الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية للتأثير في صناعة القرار السياسي بالشرق الأوسط.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The attempt of English speaking countries' governments to influence policy-making in Saudi Arabia. المحاولة من قبل حكومات الدول المتحدث أهلها باللغة الانجليزية للتأثير في صناعة القرار السياسي بالملكة العربية السعودية.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate any additional reasons for the view on suitable cultural content for Saudi Arabian public schools in the space below you gave in D1.

الرجاء الإشارة إلى أي أسباب إضافية حول نظرتك عن المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب للمدارس السعودية العامة في D1: الفراغ التالي كما ذكرت في

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section (E): The application of your views on suitable cultural content for language teaching to your teaching practice.

التطبيقات حول نظرتك عن المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب لتدريس اللغة من خلال ادائك بالتدريس.

1. Are you able to apply your beliefs about suitable cultural content in your teaching?

هل باستطاعتك تطبيق ماتعتقدته المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب في ادائك للتدريس؟

To a large extent.

الى حد بعيد ☐

To a limited extent.

في نطاق محدود ☐

No, not at all.

لا، أبداً ☐

Please indicate factors that impact on how far you can apply your beliefs about suitable cultural content in the space below:

الرجاء الإشارة إلى العوامل التي تؤثر في مدى إمكانية تطبيق المحتوى الثقافي الأنسب - في نظرك - في الفراغ التالي:

.....
.....
.....
.....

If you would be happy for me to contact you to undertake a face to face, telephone or on-line interview with you at a future date, please provide details of your email address in the space below, or kindly send me your approval directly to my email. This interview would be approximately 45 minutes in duration.

في حال كنت لاتمانع التواصل لاجراء مقابلة معك مستقبلاً بالوسائل التالية: وجهاً لوجه، بالتلفون أو بالمقابلات عن طريق الانترنت، الرجاء كتابة عنوانك الالكتروني في الفراغ التالي، أو فضلاً ارسال الموافقة مباشرة الى بريدي الالكتروني. مدة المقابلة ستكون تقريباً 45 دقيقة.

.....
.....
.....
.....

This is the end of the questionnaire. I would like to thank you very much for taking the time to complete it. If you would like to know more about the study or receive any feedback about the research I will be very happy to provide such information.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

هذه نهاية الاستبيان. ومن خلاله أشكركم جزيل الشكر لكل الجهد والوقت الذي بذل لإكماله. وفي حال كان لديكم الرغبة بالتعرف أكثر على الدراسة أو ارسال بعض الملاحظات عن البحث ساكون سعيد بتوفير المعلومات. جزيل الشكر والامتنان.

Appendix 4

الرقم :
التاريخ : ٢٥ / ٧ / ١٤٣٠ هـ
المرفقات :


وزارة التربية والتعليم
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

الإسلامية العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
الهيئة العامة للتعليم
الابتدائي
الرياض ٢٨٠
التخطيط والتطوير

بالمشاركة الفاعلة نبني نهضتنا الحضارية على أسس علمية

إلى من يهمه الأمر

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد:

نفيدكم بأن الطالب المبتعث/ عبدالرحمن بن محمد عبدالرحمن الفهادي وبناءً على خطاب الوزارة رقم ٣٠٢٠٤٤٣٤ وتاريخ ٣٠/٥/١٤٣٠ هـ حصل على موافقة إدارة التربية والتعليم بالخطاب رقم ١٧/٣١٢ وتاريخ ١٤٣٠/٥/٩ هـ بشأن تطبيق أداة بحثه (استبانة ومقابلات) بعنوان (انطباعات المدرسين السعوديين عن النموذج الثقافي الأنسب لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مدارس التعليم العام بالمملكة العربية السعودية) على عينة من مشرفي ومعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية وبعض المسؤولين في إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة وبناءً على الاستبانات الواردة من المدارس بتطبيق المذكور لدراسته من تاريخ ١٤٣٠/٥/٩ هـ ولذا أعطى هذا المشهد.

والله الموفق ،،،

مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير



أ. محمد بن خليل الحجيري

الرقم : ١ / ٢١٠
التاريخ : ١٤٣٠ / ٥ / ٩ هـ
المرفقات :



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
الرمز (٢٨٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة تبوك
(بنات)

إلى من يهمه الأمر

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد :-

نفيدكم بأن الطالب المبتعث / عبدالرحمن بن محمد عبدالرحمن
الفهادي وبناء على الوزارة رقم ٣٠٢٠٤٤٣٤ وتاريخ ١٤٣٠/٥/٩ هـ قد حصل
على موافقة إدارة التربية والتعليم للبنات بمنطقة تبوك على تطبيق أداة بحثه
(إستبانة ومقابلات) بعنوان (إنطباعات المدرسين السعوديين عن النموذج
الثقافي الأنسب لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية في مدارس التعليم
العام بالمملكة العربية السعودية) على عينة من مشرفي ومعلمي اللغة
الإنجليزية وبعض مسئولي إدارة التربية والتعليم بالمنطقة وبناء على الإستبانات
الواردة من المدراس بتطبيق المذكور لدراسته وذلك إعتباراً من ١٤٣٠/٥/٩ هـ
وحتى ١٤٣٠/٦/٢٤ هـ وبناءً عليه أعطي هذا المشهد

والله الموفق،،،

مدير عام التربية والتعليم للبنات

بمنطقة تبوك

د. محمد بن سعيد القحطاني

Appendix 5



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING CONSENT FORM استمارة الموافقة

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

- there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation
- I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me
- any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications
- If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form
- all information I give will be treated as confidential
- the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

أقر بأنني على علم تام عن أهداف ومقاصد المشروع.

وأفهم أن :

- لا يوجد إكراه لي أن أشارك في هذا المشروع البحثي ، وفي حال اختياري المشاركة ، فباستطاعتي الانسحاب من البحث بأي مرحلة من مراحلها.
- يحق لي رفض السماح بنشر أي معلومات عني.
- أي معلومات أعطيها ستستخدم فقط لأغراض هذا المشروع البحثي ، والتي قد تشمل المنشورات.
- من الممكن استخدام المعلومات المعطاه من قبلي للمشاركة بين الباحثين الآخرين المشاركين بهذا المشروع بصيغة المجهول.
- جميع معلوماتي المعطاه ستعامل بسرية.
- سيبدل الباحث كل جهد للحفاظ على اخفاء هويتي.

I agree to take part in the study أوافق على المشاركة بهذه الدراسة

☐

I decline

لا أوافق ☐

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form

Appendix 6



School of Education and Lifelong Learning

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS

You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, then have it signed by your supervisor and by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guides.php> and view the School's statement in your handbooks.

**READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON
YOUR COMPUTER** (the form will expand to contain the text you enter).
DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: Abdulrahman M. Alfahadi

Your student no: 540027947

Degree/Programme of Study: PhD in Education

Project Supervisor(s): Sarah Rich

Your email address: abb606@hotmail.com, aa245@exeter.ac.uk

Tel: 07796674041

Title of your project:

The interface between the global and the local in TESOL teachers' decision-making processes : an exploration of Saudi teachers perceptions of

appropriate cultural models for teaching EFL in public schools in Saudi Arabia.

Brief description of your research project:

The study will investigate Saudi teachers' perceptions of appropriate cultural content for teaching EFL in public schools in Saudi Arabia, factors impacting on their perceptions, and how far and in what ways teachers feel able to apply their perceptions of appropriate cultural models in their teaching and their reasoning for this.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

Participants will comprise male and female public school teachers and key educational decision makers impacting on teachers work. Namely, supervisors, authorities at the Ministry of Education and also the Directorate of Education in Tabouk region in Saudi Arabia and Prince of the Tabouk, HRH prince Fahd bin Sultan.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs)

a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents: Approval to present my study and do all the needed work has already been obtained from both the Ministry of Education and also the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia. In addition, a consent form will be given to each participant in which they will be informed in writing of their anonymity, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study at any point. In addition, the names of the schools where the study takes place will not be disclosed.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

A number of steps will be taken to ensure that no harm, detriment or unreasonable stress is placed upon the participants. After my participants agree and accept on the consent forms the Questionnaire then to be distributed via the internet site Saudienglish Forums (an internet forum for Saudi Arabian English language teachers), employing the same procedures successfully used to obtain data for my Master's study in 2005-2006. This would cover both, male and female Saudi English language teachers teaching the three public schools' levels: primary, intermediate and secondary from all over the country. In their answers, the Saudi teachers at this forum mostly use nicknames therefore, they will have more freedom to answer the questionnaire confidentially and without any stress. In addition, I will assign every participant a number to indicate his answer and no name nor nickname would be used for analysing my data. I will also go to Tabouk city by the 25th of April and stay there for three months. As soon as I arrive there, I will give copies of my questionnaire to the Directorate of Education in order to be distributed to all Saudi male and female English language teachers in the city. In approximately two weeks time the questionnaires are expected to be handed in back to me after completion. Here again, participants will be ensured that their answers will be dealt with anonymity by giving each participant an envelop with my address written on it to send it back directly to me, or they could have the choice returning it back sealed to the directorate of education in Tabouk and also they will have my email if they want to email it to me. I would then start analysing the data as quick as possible in order to have a clear vision and idea about the answers of my participants, and then select the most appropriate

samples to be interviewed later on by the third month of my trip. All interview participants will be in Tabouk only. In the questionnaire given to Tabouk teachers they will be asked if they will accept an interview if needed or chosen, and if they accepted, they will be asked also about the best method they prefer and suit them to be contacted and interviewed: *1- face to face. 2- by phone. 3- by msn messenger*. I chose the three options to give my participants more freedom and relaxation when being interviewed, this is due to the cultural background in Saudi where women are separated from men which may make it harder for me to interview female teachers, the internet could be one solution. Also even for some men they may prefer not to be interviewed face to face. These different ways may help to keep the participants away from harm or stress. The decision makers will be interviewed on the second month of my trip. When starting the data analysis, the identity of participants in interviews will be protected by employing pseudonyms in all reference I make to them in the thesis.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

As I mentioned earlier, storage of questionnaire data will be ensured that they will be secure in which they can send their answers directly to my address in Tabouk using an envelope given to them with my address written on it. They have also other choices where they can sealed the envelope and return it back to the directorate, also they can send it to my email.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

None currently anticipated.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you below and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:  date: 21.04.09

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: 01/05/09 until: 30/09/09

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): Sarah Rieh date:

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

SELL unique approval reference: 2/09/10/20

Signed:  date: 15/6/2010
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

This form is available from

<http://www.education.ex.ac.uk/students/index.php> then click on On-line documents.

Appendix 7

Interview Sample

Abdulrahman: Let me assure you that all interviews will be anonymous and no personal information will be made public. Symbols or numbers will be used to replace actual names of the participating teachers. Before we start, I want to know your experience in the field of teaching.

Participant: I have three years of teaching experience. I graduated from Imam University, Riad.

Abdulrahman: What are the stages you are teaching at the moment?

Participant: I taught the intermediate stage. I am teaching the secondary stage at the moment.

Abdulrahman: Which grades in the secondary stage?

Participant: Grade III and grade II.

Abdulrahman: Good. What do you think of English language teaching in the Kingdom? I mean from your experience of the current curriculum?

Participant: There are many shortcomings. The aims have not been achieved completely.

Abdulrahman: With regard to the current aims, do you think that students after graduation or those who completed the secondary stage reached the level they should have reached?

Participant: No, No. The reality is that of the student's mere graduation. There are still many aims to be achieved.

Abdulrahman: From your own point of view, what is the percentage and what is the minimum level of mastery of English language?

Participant Those who reached the minimum level are 80%. It is a good percentage. However, with regard to achieving the aims of the content, the percentage is between 50% and 60%.

Abdulrahman Generally speaking, from your own point of view, are you satisfied or not with the educational outcomes?

Participant I am 80 % satisfied.

Abdulrahman What makes you satisfied 100%?

Participant Achieving all knowledge at school and achieving the aims of the school.

Abdulrahman Do you mean this is to achieve the best educational level? I am talking about English language in general? What are the positive points in your point of view?

Participant It was because of knowing English language well and reading English language well that our students were able to join the science departments in the university such as medicine and have scholarships outside the Kingdom.

Abdulrahman Do you think that it is because of for example the programme provided in the Faculty of aviation and the Faculty of medicine that they reached this level or is it because of general education?

Participant There courses had a role, but it won't be effective without the good general educational outcomes.

Abdulrahman In your point of view, which culture is dominant in our curricula?

Participant The international one.

Abdulrahman You mean that the international culture is more than the local and the target ones.

Participant No. Perhaps the local culture is more. It doesn't mean we have nothing else, but the local is very dominant. I talk about the culture included in our current educational curricula. The local one, I think that the local culture is highlighted more.

Abdulrahman Are there any examples you can refer to? Any examples to reveal that the local culture is highlighted more?

Participant Yes, the lessons included are derived from history. It is derived from the history of Muslims talking about the traveller Ibn Batota, the famous Muslim traveller both for us and the west. The lessons also talk about the holy month of Ramadan and the achievements of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the fields of roads, transportation, communications,...etc.

Abdulrahman These are clear examples. Excellent. These are examples of the local culture. What about the international? What do you think?

Participant There is one topic which talks about medicines, overcoming some illnesses, using medicinal drugs and discovery of medicinal drugs. I could call this international.

Abdulrahman And discoveries like this. This is clear of the international culture. What about the target. Can you give us examples to represent the target culture?

Participant Conversations exemplify this. For example, there is a Saudi person, the local side is there, it is not hidden, and who talks to another person from the target culture represented by being named as John, for instance. This is a clear example. It means a conversation between the local and the target. From my point of view, I guess this is an indication of the possibility of culture, the possibility of speech with the other nations, and the ability to communicate and learn with good manner.

Abdulrahman Excellent, What about your extent of satisfaction? We have been talking about the extent of your agreement on education such as English

language education or English language curriculum. What about your extent of satisfaction with the cultural content itself? I mean, do you really think that it is suitable or not? I mean what is your extent of satisfaction with it?

Participant I am happy with the current cultural content, it is suitable, and it is suitable for our students and their context. The students are happy with it as well, but perhaps it is overloaded and cannot be covered in time given.

Abdulrahman Do you think that it may have an effect on the students' motivation? I mean whether the content is coherent with traditions and customs or against traditions and customs. Do you think that this cultural content may motivate the students with the presence of traditions and customs? These are western traditions. They may be inappropriate or appropriate.

Participant Of course, it is great; it has a positive effect on the students. When the content deals with local issues, general and familiar to the student's culture, it can be expressed and expanded and also understood. When the culture is from outside the local cultural values in which irrelevant to the students, the students are unable to participate in this issue. The student's reaction is disapproval of these issues. We should master their local identity through learning and education. There are so many who call for the importance of not teaching English language because of its negative effect of the Islamic culture. There are so many western cultural values which are against our believes, it is impossible to have them in our textbooks.

Abdulrahman in what ways do you think it is against the local culture?

Participant There are some who support this view. When we are talking about the western culture and call for the spread of this culture, the students feel shy and do not accept some of the information. They reflect their families' views towards the western culture.

Abdulrahman so. In your point of view, what is the most suitable culture? I mean, are you satisfied with the current culture existing at the moment and think that it needs modification?

Participant It needs more.

Abdulrahman More of what?

Participant I prefer to have more of the Islamic culture in general first or Middle Eastern culture, then the international comes next. The aim of English language teaching, we witness, is to acquire western or foreign cultures in order to making use of western or foreign technology.

Abdulrahman Well, in your point of view, what is the culture which is most suitable to our students, our environment or our traditions?

Participant As long as we are after developing the abilities of our sons to be able to produce medical modern technology...etc., then the most suitable culture is the Middle Eastern or Eastern cultures. For example, Malaysia is an Islamic country in which English language is taught. Also, Singapore, if I am not wrong, has no political aims or a religious agenda that is communicated through English language.

Abdulrahman How about the western?

Participant Yes. The western culture is sometimes in conflict with our culture, our religion, and sometimes it carries political interferences.

Abdulrahman Do you think that we can use some forms of the western culture or the target culture? Do you think that these forms of culture could be suitable for us?

Participant Yes, it is possible. New Zealand is not in conflict with us neither in religion nor in politics. At the moment, Canada's culture is also suitable. I do believe that the culture of Australia may be problematic especially lately.

But, the American culture is problematic to a large extent. The British culture is somehow problematic.

Abdulrahman I can understand now, based on your point of view

Participant look, the cultural perspective is mainly based on the local culture because it is the nearest to our culture. It is the most suitable to our culture and our religion. We can include the international culture to make use of the other sciences. It is also possible to take from the target culture provided that it is not in conflict with our religion or our culture. These cultures constitute your choice of the cultural model that you see is most suitable. I may see it as a combination of cultures which are not in conflict with our religion or our culture.

Abdulrahman If I ask you about the factors which have helped in choosing this model. In other words, what are the factors that have an influence on your conceptualisation?

Participant One of these factors is our aims of English language teaching.

Abdulrahman Are these aims the ones you state or the ones stated by the Ministry?

Participant It is clear that the aims stated by the Ministry have a big control on our teaching and the way we act to certain issues related to our own cultural identity. The second factor is our religion, our religious aims which are also stated in our curriculum as to teach the language to deliver pure message about Islam and the Islamic values and believes. The third factor is the obvious policy of some conservative countries such as Saudi Arabia which spreads an atmosphere of fear from accepting certain cultures.

Abdulrahman Do you think that adopting other cultures is against our curriculum?

Participant I think it represents a source of danger, which is either political, religious or even social to our students and the society as a whole. Educational should be careful with these sensitive issues.

Abdulrahman Now, lets' talk about some of the students in your classroom. With regard to the curriculum, did you find any problematic issues regarding the examples provided in the textbook you teach? Did you, for example, find that anything which is in contrast with the culture of the student with regard to the examples you are giving?

Participant Yes, I came across some of those contradicting examples. I can't remember concrete examples. However, I am sure that I come across examples of western culture. I can refer to my textbook if you need it now to bring some of them.

Abdulrahman Are there any examples to be mentioned? Please do?

Participant I may mention an example I came across in a textbook. It is an example of two students with local names who were wearing local clothes. There was also a show of photos of a family. One of them was pointing to the photos saying, 'This is my mother. This is my father. This is my sister.' The aim of the topic is to introduce family members. I call this model a local one, but it is mixed with western ideas or interfering ideas in the society's culture. Showing the students a photo of your family members or mentioning their names is against their traditions and customs. I think that this example is a simple one.

Abdulrahman A simple one!

Participant Basically, religion comes before culture and customs. Even if the culture doesn't match with the Islamic values we question it. It is common that people sometimes abandon some traditions after they discover later they contradict with the Islamic regulations. With regards to the example of a boy showing his friends his family's pictures or mentioning their names before his

friends, the prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, was showing proud of the names of his family members. Whereas in our local culture it is against the young boys culture to tell others of a name of his family, the whole class will make fun of it.

Abdulrahman I mentioned that it may be against customs and traditions and not religion.

Participant If I had taught this example, I would not have been too sensitive. On the contrary, I would have explained to my students that prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, was not affected by this. I think, from the students' point of view, that the photos are more than just the names. There is also another example about 'weal' and the game of laurite. This example or this topic was deleted from the curriculum. The author was giving an example of someone who was saying something against Islam or against religion. In this case I will be saying something which is forbidden in Islam and I will be making it easy in the eyes of the students and attracting them to it. Of course, the students will start asking about this information and starts to discuss trying to know. This is another example.

Abdulrahman Well. Lets' talk about the political side of teaching English language. Do you think that English language is still linked to a certain country, a certain culture or certain people e.g. the USA or the UK or it has become international.

Participant Still linked. Even if it has become international, it is still linked. Especially the to the USA. I see that the American people obviously like to spread their language and culture. Moreover, we can see for example; New Zealand, Canada and Australia are among native speaking countries.

Abdulrahman Regarding economy or politics, do you think that there are other countries which are considered native?

Participant I think countries like for example India could be considered as a second language. I think some claim that English is their first language because it was a British territory. The reason for the English language and its culture spread is power of the native speakers.

Abdulrahman are there any other reasons that have let to this spread?

Participant There are reasons?

Abdulrahman Such as?

Participant the vast development in technology and modernity.

Abdulrahman Excellent. Does economy have any relationship?

Participant sure, yes.

Abdulrahman It is evidently known that economy of the west is a competitor to that of the east. We come now to the political interferences such as the interference of the USA and the UK in the Middle East affairs either in Iraq or in Israel. Do you think that these interferences have had an effect on teaching English language whether negatively or positively in the Middle East or elsewhere?

Participant It has had a positive effect since the Islamic *Hadeeth* (the words of the prophet's companions) by Omar "learning the language of a certain people avoids one being fooled". Some people are eager to learn English language because they want to know secrets and ideas.

Abdulrahman As long as there is a positive effect, do you think that this effect includes everyone or is restricted to a certain group of people?

Participant A very limited group of people. I mean that the majority of people are not affected. They are not affected either positively or negatively.

Abdulrahman What about the classroom? Do you think that the effect includes the student in the classroom? I mean with regard to introducing

language learning or not? With regard to whether language is intrinsically important?

Participant The effect regards the importance of language learning the many prospective professional opportunities offered. Exactly. Parents, the society and the Ministry of Education support language learning because of its positive effect on the student.

Appendix 8

An Extract of a Coded Transcript

Code	Data Chunks
CultModel 1B: 1	It seems to me to be completely local at the secondary level, and in other levels as well.
CultModel 1B: 3	The local Islamic model and perspectives is the dominant model. It covers so many issues in the Islamic and local values and behaviours. Hajj [pilgrimage] is a very clear example in which different practices are presented in English. Other example is inside our schools, we find our style of living and clothing presented accurately in the English textbook.
CultModel 1CA: 1	Conversations exemplify this. For example, there is a Saudi person, the local side is there, it is not hidden, and who talks to another person from the target culture represented by being named as John, for instance. This is a clear example. It means a conversation between the local and the target culture.
CultModel 1CB: 1	The example of a boy showing his family's pictures to his colleague doesn't relate to our culture, especially that youth can't show this in the classroom because of the crowd. This idea is western but with our local faces and looks, it is funny in some way.
CultModel 1CC: 2	I could call this international. There is one topic as an example which talks about medicines, overcoming some illnesses, using medicinal drugs and discovery of medicinal

	drugs
CultModel 2: 1	I am happy with the current cultural content, it is suitable, and it is suitable for our students and their context. The students are happy with it as well, but perhaps it is overloaded and cannot be covered in time given.
CultModel 2: 4	Well, being honest, I am totally not satisfied. I think there are some improvements needed for our cultural content. Comparisons between two or more culture are needed to raise the awareness of the students and push them forward to be able to use the language communicatively and in a proper way. For example, we could have our topics about food and at the same time we could bring the food of the western culture and then it should be compared with our food. This can make sense and students can learn something through culture.
CultModel 3: 2	I think somehow that we are fine so far with the curriculum we have but we still need some mixture of cultural values to be introduced like the western people idea of thinking. This for sure helps to go alongside with our culture. Additionally, the way they work and how they reach their success in life. This with no doubt could help and at the same time has no clash with our own cultural values.
CultModel 3: 7	First of all, it should be Islamic and Arabic. It is also possible to be Middle Eastern. Because of the influence of occupation by the United States to some Arabic and Islamic countries, we may have an international culture from Turkey and Iran provided that it does not contradict with religion or customs.

Code Descriptions

CultModel: describes teachers' views about cultural models for EFL textbooks in Saudi public schools.

CultModel 1: describes participants' views on the cultural content of current EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia

CultModel 1B: describes participants' views of the current cultural content as local

CultModel 1B: 1: describes the first extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of the current cultural content as local

CultModel 1B: 3: describes the third extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of the current cultural content as local

CultModel 1C: describes participants' views of cultural content as mixed

CultModel 1CA: describes participants' views of target and local culture evident in the cultural model for the textbook

CultModel 1CA: 1: describes the first extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of target and local culture evident in the cultural model for the textbook

CultModel 1CB: describes participants' views of target cultural values through local pictures

CultModel 1CB: 1: describes the first extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of target cultural values through local pictures

CultModel 1CC: describes participants' views of the cultural model as international

CultModel 1CC: 2: describes the second extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of the cultural model as international

CultModel 2: describes teachers' satisfaction with the current cultural model in the EFL textbook

CultModel 2: 1: describes the first extract in the transcript relating to teachers' satisfaction with the current cultural model in the EFL textbook

CultModel 2: 4: describes the fourth extract in the transcript relating to teachers' satisfaction with the current cultural model in the EFL textbook

CultModel 3: describes participants' views of the most appropriate cultural model for Saudi EFL textbooks

CultModel 3: 2: describes the second extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of the most appropriate cultural model for Saudi EFL textbooks

CultModel 3: 7: describes the seventh extract in the transcript relating to participants' views of the most appropriate cultural model for Saudi EFL textbooks

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