BEYOND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: INTEGRATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN PRIMARY ESL CLASSROOM

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Abstract In recent years, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has become one of the goals of English language teaching in several countries in view of its emphasis on developing learners' ability to communicate with people from various cultural backgrounds. In Malaysia, the implementation of CEFR-aligned curriculum has brought about the introduction of imported textbooks. Delving into the primary ESL classroom context, this study aimed to investigate the components of ICC in Get Smart Plus 4 and explore activities that contribute to learners' ICC development. A content analysis was carried out to analyse the content of the textbook based on the listed components of intercultural competence. The findings revealed that Get Smart Plus 4 contained activities that contribute to the development of learners' intercultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This study suggests that utilising the content in the imported textbooks is beneficial in promoting learners' ICC in the primary ESL classroom.

Keywords: English language teaching, textbook evaluation, intercultural communicative competence, ICC, culture.

INTRODUCTION

In the fast-changing world, communication technology has developed dramatically, and communication is becoming more efficient. Geographical distance is no longer a physical barrier for communication. The evolution of transportation has increased people's mobility, and the development of the

Internet has connected people virtually. Statistics presented in 2021 shows that 4.66 billion, which is about 59.5 per cent of world population has access to the Internet (Johnson, 2021). People are now living in a global village where they can interact with each other physically or virtually to perform various tasks including socialising, marketing, education, job applications and research.

In relation to this, cultural dimension is now recognised as an important element in language learning and teaching (Atay et al., 2009). The recognition has brought upon major changes in English language education, especially in second language and foreign language teaching. Unlike past decades where communicative competence is the main focus, the end goal of English language teaching nowadays is to produce language users who can communicate with people of diverse cultural backgrounds (Byram, 2013; Bailly et al., 2001). In responding to global demand, several countries such as the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), Denmark, Japan, Thailand and Vietnam (Aguilar, 2007; Duyen, 2019; Sercu, 2020; Thongprayoon et al., 2020; Tolosa et al., 2018) find intercultural communicative competence important and set it as one of their English language teaching goals. This is due to the emphasis of the notion to develop the ability to interact with people from different social and linguistic background, which is very much needed in the current world (Nadrah Zainal Abidin & Harwati Hashim, 2021; Brunsmeier, 2017; Byram, 1997). The significance of teaching intercultural communicative competence can also be observed in the highlight of the notion in the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) in recent years (Council of Europe, 2020; North, 2020; Coste et al., 2009; Byram et al., 2002) . The CEFR provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks and others (Council of Europe, 2001).

In Malaysia, since the launch of Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, various initiatives has been taken in improving learners' English language proficiency to accommodate the current situation. One of the major steps taken is the inclusion of CEFR in the English language curriculum (Savski, 2021; Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013).

Subsequently, imported CEFR-aligned textbooks were introduced to be used in both primary and secondary schools (Ponnusamy & Gunasegaran, 2021; Shak et al., 2021). The implementation of European English language textbooks provides a great opportunity for educators to promote intercultural communicative competence as the CEFR-aligned textbooks contain rich information and knowledge about culture in various countries (Hajar Abdul Rahim & Ali Jalalian Daghigh, 2020; Mohamad Lukman Al Hadi & Parilah Mohd Shah, 2020). This can be observed when the imported textbooks such as Get Smart Plus 4 include 21st century competencies especially intercultural awareness to provide learners with a deeper understanding of cultures around the world (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2019). These textbooks play the role as mediators in transferring intercultural information to the learners and are the dominant source to develop learners' knowledge (Pasand & Ghasemi, 2018).

However, contrary to the expectations of the Ministry of Education, research indicates that many teachers do not grasp the gist of utilising imported textbooks and implementing the curriculum as they were unaware of the essence of implementing the CEFR-aligned curriculum and foreign materials in producing global citizens (Nadrah Zainal Abidin & Harwati Hashim, 2021; Norshaidatul Md Nawawi et al., 2021; Nurul Farehah Mohamad Uri & Mohd Sallehhudin Abd Aziz, 2018). When CEFR-based textbooks were used in the classroom initially, the intercultural elements found in the textbooks were questioned by some stakeholders. Studies reveal that some teachers viewed the foreign cultural content was inappropriate in the local context and it might hinder effective learning among the learners (Mohamad Lukman Al Hadi & Parilah Mohd Shah, 2020; Ngu & Azlina Abdul Aziz, 2019)is aligning the English language courses in Malaysia to the Common European Framework of References (CEFR. In relation to the issues, this study seeks to provide an overview of ICC. More importantly, it aims to evaluate the content of the imported textbook and the extent to which the content in imported textbook can promote learners' ICC. Hence, this study is significant to provide an insight into ICC and how it is represented in the textbooks. By exploring the textbook content, the findings also provide an exposure among teachers on how to develop learners' ICC. In evaluating the imported textbook, the Primary Year Four textbook, Get Smart Plus 4 was

chosen. The textbook highlights 21st century competencies which include intercultural awareness. The research questions were as below:

1.   What are the ICC components represented in Get Smart Plus 4?
2.   What activities in the Get Smart Plus 4 contribute to the development of learners' ICC?

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Historical Overview of Communicative Competence and Intercultural Communicative Competence

In the 1960s, Hymes introduced the idea of communicative competence in responding to Chomsky's linguistic competence (Banjongjit & Boonmoh, 2018)linguistic competence has typically been the main curricular focus. However, in this era of globalization, in which people from all over the world are interconnected, simply equipping learners with linguistic competence may not be sufficient. In addition, the effectiveness and appropriateness of communication play important roles in language learning. As a result, promoting intercultural communicative competence in the language classroom has become of interest to many scholars. This study was conducted to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers towards promoting intercultural communicative competence (ICC. According to Chomsky, competence was defined as grammatical knowledge that a native speaker of a language has internalized while performance was the actual application of language in concrete situation. His focus on linguistic competence was opposed by many other applied linguists and researchers including Hymes. Rather than separating the idea of competence and performance, Hymes united the concepts and brought in the sociolinguistic aspect into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007; Hymes, 1972; Rydell, 2018). He argued that individuals would not be able to communicate with only linguistic competence without knowing the rules of language use in various context, as an innate language mechanism was insufficient for first language acquisition (Potenko, 2019). Therefore, in Hymes' point of view, communicative competence refers to the ability to use grammatical

competence appropriately in a variety of communicative situations (Byram, 1997, 2020; Hymes, 1972).

Many applied linguists and language teachers enriched the concept of communicative competence and integrated Hyme's concept into language teaching and one of the most renowned models was developed by Canale and Swain. In their model, it was proposed that communicative competence consisted of grammatical competence, strategic competence and sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004). The model was then further developed by Canale by adding discourse competence and extracting some elements from sociolinguistic competence (Bagarić & Djigunović, 2007; Banjongjit & Boonmoh, 2018; Montiel, 2019; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004; Usó Juan & Martínez Flor, 2008)linguistic competence has typically been the main curricular focus. However, in this era of globalization, in which people from all over the world are interconnected, simply equipping learners with linguistic competence may not be sufficient. In addition, the effectiveness and appropriateness of communication play important roles in language learning. As a result, promoting intercultural communicative competence in the language classroom has become of interest to many scholars. This study was conducted to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers towards promoting intercultural communicative competence (ICC. The components of the model include grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence (Canale, 1983). This model has been widely adopted by other scholars and educators in the field of second and foreign language acquisition and language testing for its simplicity (Bagarić & Djigunović, 2007).

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found in the textbooks were questioned by some stakeholders. Studies reveal that some teachers viewed the foreign cultural content was inappropriate in the local context and it might hinder effective learning among the learners (Mohamad Lukman Al Hadi & Parilah Mohd Shah, 2020; Ngu & Azlina Abdul Aziz, 2019). In relation to the issues, this study seeks to provide an overview of ICC. More importantly, it aims to evaluate the content of the imported textbook and the extent to which the content in imported textbook can promote learners' ICC. Hence, this study is significant to provide an insight into ICC and how it is represented in the textbooks. By exploring the textbook content, the findings also provide an exposure among teachers on how to develop learners' ICC. In evaluating the imported textbook, the Primary Year Four textbook, Get Smart Plus 4 was chosen. The textbook highlights 21st century competencies which include intercultural awareness. The research questions were as below:

Models of ICC
There are a few intercultural communicative competence models introduced by scholars from various disciplines. In this study, the models of intercultural communication competence reviewed includes Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence and Sercu's Listed Components of Intercultural Competence.

1.   *Byram's Model of ICC*
Generally, Byram's model of Intercultural Communicative Competence focuses on developing intercultural speaker who can mediate between people from different cultures (Byram, 1997). It consists of the linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence. Among the competences, Byram views that intercultural competence is the most significant element in the model. The competence comprises five dimensions which affect people's ability to communicate interculturally, as explained below.

i.   Knowledge (*savoirs*): Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.

ii.   Attitudes (*savoir être*): Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own

iii.   Skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/ faire*): Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices, and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

iv.   Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre):* Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own

v.   Critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*): 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.

Based on Byram's model, an intercultural speaker is able to build relationships while speaking in the foreign language. He is able to communicate effectively, be considerate of the other interlocutor's opinions and needs, as well as mediate interactions between people from different backgrounds and continue developing communicative skills (López-Rocha, 2016). His model has become the reference of many scholars in their studies (Coperías Aguilar, 2002; Liu, 2021; Tiurikova, 2021). Despite that, it also receives numerous critiques for its oversimplified model which does not meet the complex nature of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009; Hoff, 2020; Matsuo, 2012).

Sercu's Listed Components of Intercultural Competence

Based on Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence and intercultural competence, Sercu (2005) summarises the components and categorise them into three groups, namely knowledge, skills and attitudes, as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 Sercu's listed components of intercultural competence

Knowledge	Skills/ Behaviour	Attitudes/ Traits
- Culture specific and culture general knowledge - Knowledge of self and other - Knowledge of interaction: individual and societal - Insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language and communication. *Savoirs*	- Ability to interpret and relate. *Savoir-comprendre* - Ability to discover and/ or interact. - Ability to acquire new knowledge and to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. - Metacognitive strategies to direct own learning. *Savoir-apprendre/ savoirs-faire*	- Attitude to relativize self and value others. - Positive disposition towards learning intercultural competence. *Savoir-eˆtre* - General disposition characterized by a critical engagement with the foreign culture under consideration and one's own *Savoir-s'engager*

Similar to Sercu's list of intercultural communicative competence components, this study explores the notion from three perspectives, which are knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Studies on Analysing ICC components in Textbooks

Over the years, considerable research attention has been devoted to evaluating the components of ICC found in the textbooks. Pasand and Ghasemi's (2018) conducted a study on English Prospect Series textbooks used in Iran and discovered that the cultural content found in these textbooks was very limited, in which Prospect 1 contained the least number of cultural topics. The study also found out that there was an absence of foreign cultures in these textbooks. Their findings were similar to Maghsoudi's (2020) research to examine the integration of ICC in both Indian and Iranian high school English textbooks. The Indian textbook, Standard English, and the Iranian textbooks, Prospect and Vision, were analysed via content analysis. The study revealed that there was a lack of intercultural competence represented in these textbooks. The Indian textbook included ICC in a little extent where it included the elements of critical cultural awareness. Meanwhile, the Iranian textbooks were found to be deprived of ICC components.

In another study, an Indonesian English textbook, was analysed by Ali Rosyidi and Oikurema Purwati (2018) to investigate intercultural competence embedded in Indonesian textbook learning tasks. Similar to the aforementioned studies, the findings indicated that this textbook contained only local cultural materials and the learning tasks were limited. There was an absence of target culture and international culture. In relation to this, the author concluded that the material was not able to develop learners' intercultural competence due to the lack of opportunities for learners to practise the competence by comparing or contrasting the cultures (Ali Rosyidi & Oikurema Purwati, 2018).

On the other hand, the findings were different in Song's (2019) study. In exploring cultural content in Chinese ELT textbooks from intercultural perspectives, it was shown that the English textbook, New Concept English, contained more target culture (46 per cent) than source culture (2 per cent). Meanwhile, general culture (68 per cent) was the dominant culture represented in this textbook. It can be observed that there was an uneven cultural representation between source culture and target culture in the textbook.

The imbalance proportion of cultural representation in textbooks was also discovered in the study carried out by Putra, Rochsantiningsih and Slamet Supriyadi (2020). Their analysis on cultural representation and intercultural interaction in English textbooks in Indonesia showed that there was an uneven distribution of cultural contents represented in the textbook, where the source culture (Indonesian culture) and target cultures outweighed international cultures in the textbooks. Meanwhile, other cultures, namely Asian, non-English speaking western countries and Africans were under-represented in all of the three textbooks.

In Malaysian context, Hajar Abdul Rahim and Ali Jalalian Daghigh (2020) scrutinised a study to analyse the content of a locally developed English textbook and a CEFR-aligned imported course book prescribed by the Ministry of Education. It was discovered that the local textbook, English Form 1, focused on source culture (67 per cent) more than other cultures (21 per cent) and target culture (12 per cent). Meanwhile, the imported

textbook, Pulse 2, focused on target culture (more than 55 per cent) and other cultures (45 per cent). Despite the lack of source culture represented in the textbook, the learning tasks drew learners' attention to own cultural context through awareness-raising tasks, such as comparing source culture and target culture. It was also discovered that both books did not place much emphasis on intercultural attitudes.

To sum up, considerable research has been conducted to analyse ICC in various textbooks used around the world, including Malaysian secondary school textbooks. Research findings reveal that ICC was represented in the textbooks to various extents. However, the ICC components represented in Malaysian primary ESL textbooks remains underexplored. In order to bridge the gap of the previous studies, the present study analysed the content of an imported textbook used in Malaysian primary ESL classroom.

METHODS

This study adopted qualitative research design. The textbook material chosen for this study was Get Smart Plus 4 as it highlights 21st century competencies which include intercultural awareness. This book was written by H.Q. Mitchell and Marileni Malkogianni. It was first published in UK by MM Publications. In Malaysia, it was first published in 2019 and was used in Primary Four in all public primary schools in Malaysia since 2020. Overall, Get Smart Plus 4 encompasses 10 core modules. In addition to that, the textbook includes extra sections, specifically Cursive Writing, Phonics, Cross-curricular, Life Values, and Video Worksheets. These materials are integrated in different units in the textbook. There are Grammar References, Play and Picture Dictionary as well.

Regarding the data analysis, content analysis was employed to analyse the content of the student's book qualitatively. Initially, the researcher read through the material to grasp the understanding of the content, specifically passages, values, and activities provided in every module.

Then, the relevant information was coded based on the listed components of intercultural competence, namely knowledge, attitudes, and skills. The component of knowledge was coded based on the types of cultural content in the textbook, which were source culture, target culture and international culture (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Source culture refers to learners' own culture, which is Malaysian culture while target culture refers to cultures of country where English is used as a first language (such as the US, the UK and Australia). International culture includes a variety of cultures from English and non-English speaking countries (such as France, Germany, and China), where English language acts as an international language. Meanwhile, the component of attitudes included curiosity, openness, and respect towards other cultures. This component was analysed based on the values presented in the textbook. Lastly, the component of skills included observing, interpreting, relating, analysing, and evaluating cultures. After analysing the data, the data was interpreted to answer the research questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section begins with study's findings which are classified into four themes, namely the components of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and activities. The ICC content in each theme was explored to answer the research questions.

The Component of Knowledge

As aforementioned, the component of knowledge was analysed based on the types of cultural content represented in Get Smart Plus 4. The types of cultural content include source culture, target culture and international culture. The findings of the component of knowledge represented were as depicted in Table 2 as below.

Table 2 The component of knowledge represented in Get Smart Plus 4

Topic	Types of Cultural Content
Module 1: Where are You From?	Source Culture; Target Culture; International Culture
Module 2: My Week	International Culture
CLIL 1: Modules 1-2	Target culture; international culture
Module 3: In the Past	International Culture
Module 4: Celebrations	Target culture; International culture
CLIL 3: Modules 5-6	Target culture; international culture
Module 5: Eating Right	Source culture
Life Values 1	Source culture
Module 6: Getting Around	Target culture; international culture
Module 8: Amazing Animals	Source culture
Module 9: Get Active!	Target culture; international culture

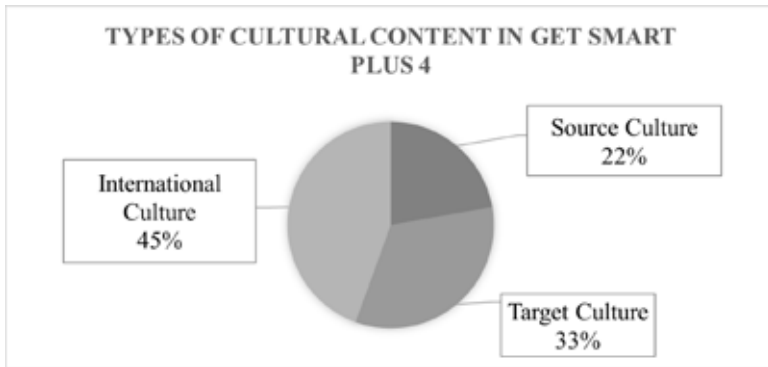**Figure 1** An example of cultural content analysed.

Figure 2 Types of cultural content in Get Smart Plus 4

Table 2 show types of cultural content discovered when exploring passages in Get Smart Plus 4 while Figure 2 depicts the proportions of Source Culture, Target Culture and International Culture based on the data from Table 2. It can be seen from both Table 2 and Figure 2 that international culture (45 per cent) was the focus of cultural content in Get Smart Plus 4, at almost half of the cultures represented in the textbook. These international cultures were not limited to certain countries but regions as well, such as Mediterranean diet found in Module 5: Eating Right. Besides that, it was observed in Table 2 that some topics contained a mix of cultures. For example, in Module 1, the knowledge about Malaysian culture, target culture and international culture were found in topics related to countries, national flags and nationalities. The writers introduced flags from various countries like Malaysia, the US, the UK, Mexico, and Korea. It is also interesting to note that some of the topics contained only single type of cultural content. For instance, in the third module 'In the Past', the only cultural content found was the culture of Egypt.

Being the second largest proportion of cultural content found in Get Smart Plus 4, it was discovered that target culture (33 per cent) was introduced together with international culture. For instance, in Module 9, the passage explained the most popular sports in China, Russia and Australia. Another example was a passage in CLIL 3 about famous buildings around the world. The passage exposed learners to the Sydney Opera House in Australia and Casa Batllo in Barcelona, Spain.

Source culture (22 per cent) was the least commonly found cultural content in the textbook, at about half of international culture. In the first module, Malaysia flag, nationality and sports were briefly introduced. Meanwhile, in Module 5: Eating Right, there was a passage about Malaysia International Gastronomy Festival and learners were exposed to the local culture more in depth. The Malaysian culture was also explored in detail in Life Values 1, where learners were introduced the facts about Malaysia like Independence Day and national flower.

During the analysis of data, it was also discovered that not all modules in the textbook included culture. From Table 2, there was an absence of cultural knowledge represented in Module 7 and 10. These modules contained general knowledge like helping others and safety.

Overall, source culture, target culture and international culture were represented in Get Smart Plus 4. This finding was in contrast to studies in other contexts (Ali Rosyidi & Oikurema Purwati, 2018; Maghsoudi, 2020; Pasand & Ghasemi, 2018), in which there was an absence of other cultures represented in the textbooks. It can be observed that the CEFR-aligned textbook contains various knowledge which can develop learners' ICC. However, the uneven proportion of different cultures was similar to the results obtained from the studies conducted by Putra, Rochsantiningsih and Slamet Supriyadi (2020), and Song (2019), in their studies about Indonesian English textbooks and Chinese ELT textbooks, respectively. Despite that, the dominant culture represented in the textbooks was different. The dominant culture found in Get Smart Plus 4 was international culture while the other textbooks were source culture and target culture.

The Component of Attitudes

The values presented in Get Smart Plus 4 were analysed to explore the component of attitudes in the textbook.

Table 3 The component of attitudes represented in Get Smart Plus 4

Topic	Attitudes
Module 1: Where are You From?	Respect; openness
Module 3: In the Past	Openness; curiosity
Module 4: Celebrations	Openness
Life Values 1	Openness
Module 6: Getting Around	Curiosity; openness
Module 8: Amazing Animals	Curiosity; openness

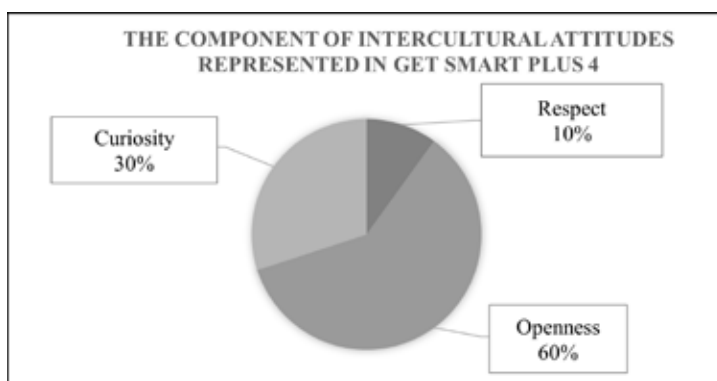**Figure 3** An example of values in Get Smart Plus 4

Figure 4 Intercultural attitudes represented in Get Smart Plus 4

Table 3 indicates intercultural attitudes highlighted in Get Smart Plus 4 based on the analysis of values and activities found in the book. Meanwhile, Figure 4 depicts the percentage of the intercultural attitudes represented based on the finding in Table 3. Based on both Table 3 and Figure 4, all three values, namely curiosity, openness, and respect were represented in Get Smart Plus 4, however, in an uneven representation. The attitude of openness was focused the most (60 per cent) and it was followed by the attitude of curiosity (30 per cent). Meanwhile, the value of respect was the least focused (10 per cent). Similar to the component of knowledge, although these attitudes were included in the textbook, they were not represented in every topic. There were some modules which did not focus on developing learners' attitudes although there was a presence of intercultural knowledge. An example of such topic was Module 2: My Week. The writers exposed learners to the Mediterranean diet but did not focus on developing learners' attitudes. Despite that, teachers can take the initiative to promote intercultural attitudes among the learners by engaging learners in activities such as role play, problem-solving and case study as suggested by Isnaini, Setyono and Ariyanto (2019)many textbook analysts have so far investigated the representations of cultures in EFL textbooks. Most of the previous findings on the study of culture indicate that EFL textbooks contain more about the cultures of inner circle countries compared to the expanding and outer circle countries. In Indonesia, this area of cultural issues in English textbooks appears to be underexplored. To narrow the gap, this study using the visual semiotic theory of Barthes (1977.

Apart from that, it is interesting to note that under the same category of attitudes, some values were actually different with the others. For instance, the attitude of openness was not limited to appreciating the traditions and history of other cultures but also included accepting each other's differences and similarities and understand different cultures. On the other hand, more than one attitude can be inculcated through the teaching of a single value as well. Module 6: Getting Around was a case in point, where the value to understand different cultures could develop learners' attitudes of curiosity and openness towards other cultures.

Overall, intercultural attitudes were represented in Get Smart Plus 4. It can be observed that there was a focus on developing learners' attitudes of curiosity, openness, and respect towards other cultures through the values highlighted in the textbook. This finding is in contrast to the results obtained from Hajar Abdul Rahim and Ali Jalalian Daghigh's study (2020) where there was a lack of emphasis on intercultural attitudes in the imported textbook, Pulse 2, used in Malaysian secondary school. One of the factors identified was that these imported textbooks were from different publishers. Get Smart Plus 4 was originally published by MM Publications while Pulse 2 was first published by Macmillan (Hajar Abdul Rahim & Ali Jalalian Daghigh, 2020). Hence, it is important to note that ICC components represented in each imported textbook may vary.

The Component of Skills

As previously explained, the component of skills analysed in this textbook included observing, interpreting, relating, analysing, and evaluating culture. These skills were not limited to the context of target and international cultures but also included local cultures.

Table 4 The component of skills represented in Get Smart Plus 4

| Topic	Skills
Module 1: Where are You from?	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 2: My Week	Observing; analysing; interpreting
CLIL 1: Social Studies- Strange Schools	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 3: In the Past	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 4: Celebrations	Observing; analysing; interpreting
CLIL 3: Modules 5-6	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 5: Eating Right	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Life Values 1	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 6: Getting Around	Observing; analysing; interpreting; evaluating
Module 8: Amazing Animals	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 9: Get Active!	Observing; analysing; interpreting
Module 10: What's the Matter?	Observing; analysing; interpreting
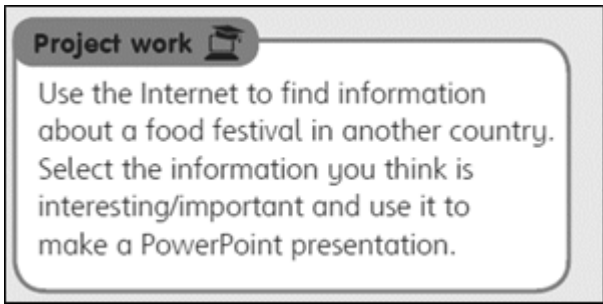
Figure 5 An example of activity that promotes learners'
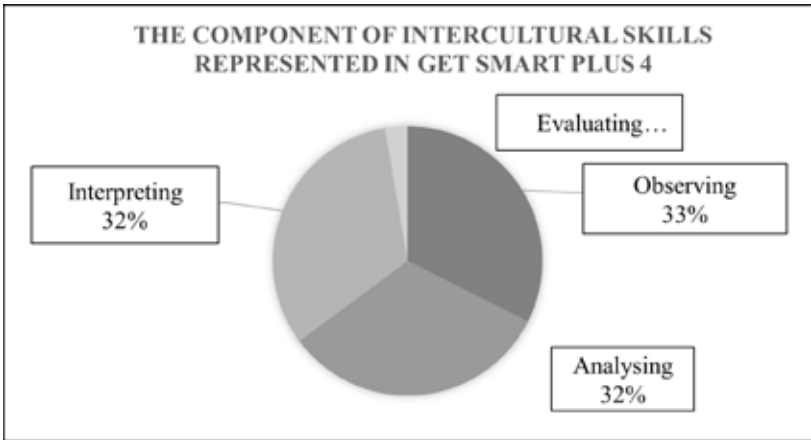intercultural skills.

Figure 6 Intercultural skills represented in Get Smart Plus 4

Table 4 presents intercultural skills represented in the activities found in Get Smart Plus 4 while Figure 6 illustrates the proportion of each skill in the book. From Table 4 and Figure 6, it was apparent that the component of skills was represented substantially in Get Smart Plus 4. Observing (32 per cent), analysing (32 per cent) and interpreting (32 per cent) were the most frequently focused skills. Meanwhile, there was only a topic which involved developing learners' evaluating skill. Besides that, there was an absence of the skill of relating cultures in the textbook. Similar to other components, it was found that some topics did not include the elements of intercultural skills, such as in Module 7, where the tasks in Helping Out was not related to developing learners' intercultural skills.

Observed in Table 4, skills of observing, analysing, and interpreting were integrated in the learning tasks. Inevitably, in the learning tasks, learners were required to notice the details to gain information, examine and interpret the information gained. For instance, in CLIL 1, learners were required to study the title and the pictures of strange schools, read the passage, and answered Yes or No questions based on the passage. This learning task required the learners to observe the cultural information in the textbook, analyse and interpret them to obtain the answers. Another example was in Module 5: Eating Right where the learners had to watch a documentary about the Mediterranean diet, match pictures and circle correct answers based on the video. These activities required learners to observe the video content, analyse the video and interpret the cultural information to obtain the answers. Meanwhile, the activity involved in developing learners' evaluating skill was the task to make sentences about different means of transport based on the words given. For example, 'Travelling by gondola is slow.' The learners had to assess the transports and provide their opinions.

This finding is dissimilar to the research conducted by Hajar Abdul Rahim and Ali Jalalian Daghigh (2020) where the Malaysian secondary school textbook, Pulse 2, contains awareness-raising tasks to enhance learners' relating skills. Meanwhile, activities in Get Smart Plus 4 are beneficial in developing learners' observing, analysing, interpreting, and evaluating skills. This finding indicates that the component of intercultural skills is represented in Get Smart Plus 4 to a certain extent, as there is an absence of activities to develop learners' relating skill and limited activities for the development of evaluating skill.

In summary, the components of knowledge, attitudes and skills are represented in Get Smart Plus 4. In the aspect of knowledge, the material contains a mixture of international culture, source culture and target culture to expand learners' intercultural knowledge. The textbook also contains values to inculcate learners' intercultural attitudes, particularly respect, openness, and curiosity towards other cultures. Meanwhile, the activities in the textbook encourage learners' intercultural skills, specifically observing, analysing, interpreting, and evaluating skills. Although these components were not covered in every topic, it is undeniable that Get Smart Plus 4 is

an appropriate learning material to enhance learners' ICC for its extensive activities and contents.

ICC Activities in Get Smart Plus 4

This section intends to answer the second research question by exploring the textbook activities which contribute to the development of learners' ICC. The activities were analysed and tabulated as presented in Table 5.

Table 5 *ICC activities in Get Smart Plus 4*

Topic	Activities
Module 1: Where are You from?	Video; game
Module 2: My Week	Reading; role play
CLIL 1: Social Studies- Strange Schools	Project work; reading
Module 3: In the Past	Project work; video
Module 4: Celebrations	Project work
Module 5: Eating Right	Project work; video
Module 6: Getting Around	Project work; game; reading; role play
CLIL 3: Modules 5-6	Project work; reading
Module 8: Amazing Animals	Project work
Module 9: Get Active!	Project work
Module 10: What's the Matter?	Reading
Life Values 1	Reading

Depicted in Table 5, it was noticed that project work (as shown in Figure 5) was the dominant activity found in the textbook to develop learners' ICC. There were eight projects related to the development of learners' intercultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills. An example of the project work was to find another means of transport, select important or interesting information, and make a poster. On top of exposing learners' intercultural knowledge, the project work also contributed to the development of learners' skills and attitudes as the activities promote their attitudes to be more curious and various intercultural skills in completing the project.

Besides that, learners' ICC can also be developed via reading activities, video activities and games. The reading activities involved reading passages and answer questions. Pictures or visual aids were provided to support learners' reading. For instance, in a reading activity about Malaysia, learners were required to read the text about Malaysia and images including hibiscus, Malaysian flags and a Malayan tiger were provided to aid learners' reading process. Meanwhile, for video activities, the learners watched documentaries like the Mediterranean diet and answer questions based on the videos. Other activities like role play and games also contributed to the learner's ICC development, where learners had to ask and answered questions during these activities. Similar to project work, learners would not only gain intercultural knowledge but also developing their skills or attitudes through these activities found in the textbook (Banjongjit & Boonmoh, 2018; Fungchomchoei & Kardkarnklai, 2016; Morska, 2018)linguistic competence has typically been the main curricular focus. However, in this era of globalization, in which people from all over the world are interconnected, simply equipping learners with linguistic competence may not be sufficient. In addition, the effectiveness and appropriateness of communication play important roles in language learning. As a result, promoting intercultural communicative competence in the language classroom has become of interest to many scholars. This study was conducted to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers towards promoting intercultural communicative competence (ICC.

In summary, activities in Get Smart Plus 4 were found to promote the development of learners' ICC, as all ICC components were represented in these activities. The tasks may promote one or more ICC components among the leaners, such as the project work and reading activities.

CONCLUSION

As a matter of fact, the study shows that Get Smart Plus 4 contains extensive activities and content to develop learners' ICC, specifically the components of intercultural knowledge, intercultural attitudes, and intercultural skills. These components were represented in Get Smart Plus 4 though not in every

topic. Regarding the component of knowledge, source culture, target culture and international culture were found in the Year Four textbook. Likewise, intercultural attitudes including curiosity, openness, and respect were also represented in the textbook material. Meanwhile, all intercultural skills were represented in the textbook, except the skill of relating. From the evaluation of textbook, it was also concluded that the content of Get Smart Plus 4 contributed to the development of learners' ICC through various activities. Activities including project work, reading activities, role plays, videos, and games found in the textbook could enhance learners' ICC.

Given these findings, some implications are suggested to textbook writers and teachers. Textbook writers may include intercultural components in every module and avoid uneven representation of ICC components in the textbook. Meanwhile, as a mediator in guiding learners to be interculturally competent, teachers may utilise the content of the textbook to develop learners' ICC. The findings can also help teachers in conducting activities to develop learners' ICC. In addition to that, teachers may take initiatives to develop learners' intercultural competence like promoting the skill of relating other cultures to own culture.

As this study only focused on Primary Year Four textbooks, further research is required to evaluate other imported textbooks used in Malaysian Primary ESL classrooms so as to obtain a better picture of the integration of ICC in primary ESL classrooms.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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