#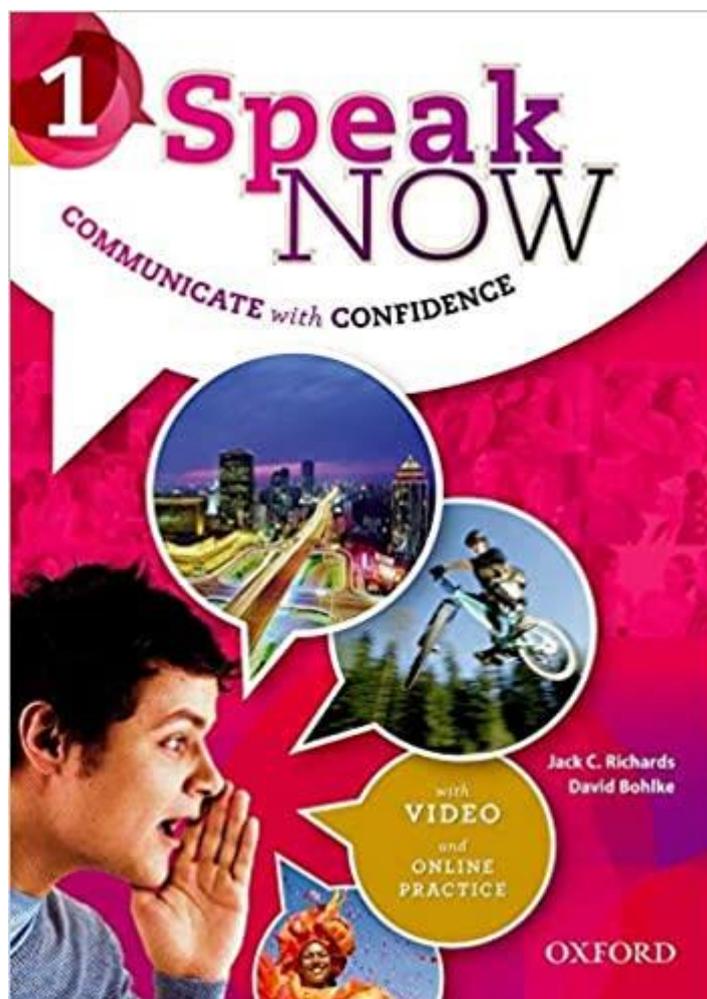 A Study of the Representation of Culture in the *Speak Now* and *Stretch* Textbooks Used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand

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Courtesy: https://www.amazon.com/Speak-Now-Student-Online-Practice/dp/0194030156

Abstract

The current research considers that language, context, and culture are inextricably linked as their starting point, and this viewpoint has two significant consequences for foreign language teaching. Textbooks have historically been essential in influencing English

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classrooms. The present research has concentrated on the methods and practices linked to context and culture found in *Stretch 1A, Stretch 1B,* and *Speak Now English* textbooks currently used at Chonburi Technological College in Thailand. Content analysis was used to answer the research questions and derive meanings from words or images selected in the *Stretch 1A, Stretch 1B, and Speak Now English* textbooks to determine the context in which they are used and understand their relationship to one another to draw inferences about the underlying culture. The present study has found concrete links between the English textbooks used by the Chonburi Technological College and various elements of culture employed to facilitate a better understanding of the Thai students' English-speaking countries. All three textbooks under analysis use different cultural teaching methods for non-native learners in interactive classroom activities that allow them to practice English as a communicative, interactive process. Furthermore, the study found that the *Speak Now Student Book* is more focused on improving students' communication skills, stimulating them to speak confidently and effectively. Through *Speak Now Student Book* - Online Practice, the students can enhance their listening, speaking, and pronunciation abilities outside of class by allowing them to talk, record, and submit to instructor activities. In contrast with *Stretch 1A* and *Stretch 1B*, the *Speak Now Student Book* is the first English learning book to introduce dialogue videos to provide real-life models of English communication while emphasizing the native English culture.

Key Words: Foreign Language Teaching, English textbooks, Stretch 1A, Stretch 1B, and Speak Now, Chonburi Technological College Thailand

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the representation of culture in two textbooks, *Speak Now* and *Stretch* used by one of Thailand's colleges. The aim is to provide Thai students with multicultural awareness that will enable them to be interculturally competent English language learners. The close relationship between language and culture have been widely studied and argued that culture is one of the most important aspects in the field of language education. Knowing the content of the textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College will be able to address specific pedagogical issues.

The majority school sets English as a mandatory subject so that the learner can gain more knowledge of English language. It is a compulsory second language in schools and in tertiary education. Most Thai teachers (52 percent) have low English proficiency, and more than 80 percent of English teachers did not have English major. The presence of cultural content in textbooks is also important for the development of students' communication process to be able to strengthen their intercultural communicative competence.

It is vital for English language teachers to understand how culture is represented in textbooks. When it comes to language learning, culture and language are inextricably linked. Each student's desire to improve intercultural communication may emphasize the importance

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of investigating authentic cultural representations. Students should be aware that textbooks used in teaching and learning aid in communication to develop linguistic and intercultural competency (Lopez-Rocha, 2016). Cultural content is critical in English textbooks since studying English as an international language entail knowing about the cultures of English-speaking societies in addition to their language. Not only from native English-speaking countries, but also from Thailand, should cultural knowledge be included in publications. Additionally, this study can aid in the development of fundamental integrated abilities where culture plays a role in language teaching and learning. This will aid both public and private schools when selecting English textbooks. Develop activities for learners that encourage active participation while creating intercultural competency, hence assisting them in acquiring cultural awareness and interaction. Selecting textbooks that are appropriate for the local context should be a practice. To appreciate cultural diversity, it is vital to understand how culture is represented in Chonburi Technological College textbooks.

Finally, the findings of this study can assist scholars in evaluating English textbooks to have a better understanding of how to teach intercultural competency. That is why this study evaluates how Chonburi Technological College's year 1 textbooks *Speak Now* and *Stretch* convey culture. These books are approved by the Ministry of Education textbooks for HVC. In this article, I use *Speak Now 1, Stretch 1A,* and *Stretch 1B* as data gathering instruments. This will be a qualitative study. The checklists will be used to gather, analyze, and evaluate the data.

Objectives

The objectives of the study:

1. To identify the different types of cultural information represented in *Speak Now* and *Stretch* Textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand.
2. To determine the different senses of culture represented in *Speak Now* and *Stretch* Textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand.
3. To classify the different elements of culture represented in *Speak Now* and 'Stretch' Textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand

Literature Review

Writing is creative. According to Prowse (1998), writers' hands cannot keep up with their brains when inspired. But when the ideas do not arrive, it's disheartening (Tomlinson, 2003). Many material producers describe ad hoc and spontaneous material writing procedures that rely on intuitive feelings for activities that work (Tomlinson, 2003). Despite this, writers like Tomlinson and Masuhara (2011) state that understanding a writer's language learning concepts, target students, and teachers is important before writing a textbook. No matter how beautifully written a textbook is, it will never be suitable for all teaching and learning situations. Choosing one textbook over another or using portions of a book in whole while supplementing others, is often regarded one of the most essential

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variables in the success or failure of teaching and learning. The most effective teaching materials support both teachers and students' need and levels of proficiency. Thus, textbook evaluation should include assessing how well it aligns with teachers' teaching ideas and students' learning needs. Moreover, textbook evaluation can assist publishers decide on publication and teachers build their own textbooks or supplemental resources to publish (Tomlinson, 2003).

In Thailand, educators must prepare pupils for the world of global communication. Students should have the ability to utilize English as an international language, cultural awareness, and intercultural communicative competence. Using culturally relevant texts in the English language classroom helps students develop intercultural communication competence. Knowing that English is not only about the inner circle countries' culture, but also other countries that utilize English as an international language or lingua franca, would help students build intercultural communication skills and broaden their cultural horizons.

English as a *Lingua Franca*

English is becoming the global language as more people use it. Worldwide, 1.75 billion people speak English. By 2020, two billion people were expected to speak it (Robson, 2014). This implies English is mostly utilized to communicate with people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As an international language, English is a recent phenomenon, according to McKay (2012). It is used globally for inter-country communication and locally for inter-language communication. English is defined as an international language by McKay (2018) in terms of communication and cultural expression. It allows speakers to express their thoughts and culture with others, she says (McKay 2002). Meaning, English is part of the culture of the country it is used in. Language and culture are intimately related in the sense that language is the carrier of culture. People used language to express their ideals and attitudes as part of their identity (Kaewsakul & Teo, 2016). According to McKay (2002), teaching English as an international language requires cultural content, notably in the instructional materials. It is important to note that as English becomes more worldwide, students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds should be aware that learning the language is not enough; they must also know how to utilize it culturally. According to Kramsch (2008), the purpose of utilizing English as an international language is enabling speakers to communicate with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. These ideas should be incorporated in instructors' instructional materials to help pupils respect different cultures and their norms and ideals. Thus, cultural competence is required and should be emphasized in language courses to improve cultural understanding and avoid misunderstandings among people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As a result of this, the language instructor should educate students how to communicate beyond words, through a language of understanding and tolerance, of respect for the other's values, beliefs, and cultures (Tulpan, 2017).

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In Thailand, educators must prepare pupils for the world of global communication. Students should have the ability to utilize English as an international language, cultural awareness, and intercultural communicative competence. Using culturally relevant texts in the English language classroom helps students develop intercultural communication competence. Knowing that English is not only about the inner circle countries' culture, but also other countries that utilize English as an international language or lingua franca, would help students build intercultural communication skills and broaden their cultural horizons. Historically, the educational policies of numerous countries around the world vary. The ideal name for English used to communicate across linguistic and cultural divides is 'English as a lingua franca' (House, 2003).

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Due to the globalization of English, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has become a hot topic. World Englishers are influencing its diffusion. As the globe becomes a global village, understanding not only how English is spoken and utilized by different speakers of English is vital. Understanding how English is used is another way to understand a speaker's culture. As a result, conversations regarding culture in English classes must include not only native speakers but also non-native speakers or other English speakers. Since many individuals use English to communicate with people from various cultures, it is critical that ICC be integrated into language teaching, especially ELT. Recently, the Council of Europe's (2018) Common European Framework of Reference for Languages promotes integrating cultural components in language training. Interculturality aims to "help language learners connect with speakers of other languages on equal terms and be aware of their own and interlocutors' identities" (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002).

Language learners who develop intercultural awareness can communicate successfully and build human relationships with persons from other languages and cultures (Byram, Adam & Stevens, 2001). Effective communication occurs when a speaker is aware of their interlocutor's linguistic and cultural background. As he/she can effortlessly project themselves. Ho (2009) and Kramsch (2008) agree with Byram (1997) that the non-native speaker paradigm is no longer objective for ESL students. Also, teachers found it difficult to integrate cultural content into ELT if the traditional viewpoint is utilized to prevent promoting intercultural communicative abilities. Deardoff (2008, 2016) built on Byram's (1997) ICC paradigm to construct the Process Model of Intercultural Competence.

English Education in Thailand

Thailand's first education plan was created in 1932. Various governments have since described national programs as crucial duty to generate quality citizens for the country. Since the first plan in 1961, education has been one of the primary components of the national economic and social development plan. Thailand has two educational tracks: academic and vocational. Those seeking higher education would choose academic track, while those seeking employment would choose vocational track (Muller & Funnell, 1991). Both curricula

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cover language, math, science, social studies, arts, and physical education. The educational program's framework has a gap.

Aside from basic education, vocational tracks include civil construction, auto mechanics, machine shop mechanics, electrical engineering, electronics engineering, and welding. Both public and private schools provide vocational and academic education. In most nations, vocational education is provided after primary education. However, most Thais believe vocational education lacks intellectual exposure. Vocational education is perceived to focus on technical studies, machines, and shop labor (Pasawanoo, 2019).

In 2010, out of a total population of almost 66 million, over 14 million students were enrolled in Thai schools, 4.8 million in secondary and 2.5 million in higher education (Michael & Trines, 2018). There are several formal routes into vocational education and training. Some subjects are included in the secondary school curriculum. However, pupils might choose to study in one of the country's vocational colleges after high school. The general stream has a 60:40 student to vocational student ratio. Currently, the Office of Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) has 415 colleges separated into 13 specialties. Their technical credentials covered a larger range of subjects. Alternatively, students can finish their regular secondary education and then transfer to a vocational school to get a technical or higher diploma. A diploma can be upgraded to a bachelor's degree after two years of study in a higher education institution. Understanding that people are our most significant resource and the drivers of sustainable economic success, Thailand places emphasis on education and training. The government's current policy focuses on better technology, productivity, and skills among a better paid workforce With only three years until the ASEAN Economic Community is established (Michael & Trines, 2018), education policies and programs targeted towards Education for Employment are increasingly important (Senkrua, 2019; Tumthong, Sirasoonthorn, Humphrey, Lincharoen, & Siripornpaibul, 2019).

The Teaching and Learning of English

Teaching and learning are intertwined. Understanding of teaching and learning ideas may contribute to the success of language teaching and learning. According to Tomlinson (1998), learning is a conscious activity that involves committing to memory significant information. Learning skills, values, and worldviews are influenced by cognitive, emotional and contextual factors. To study is to gain knowledge, whereas to teach is to impart knowledge. Brown (2000) described teaching as directing and assisting learners to learn. Language is one of them. In spite of its limited use in Thailand, English has played an essential part in Thai education for over a century. It is important to consider numerous elements while teaching English as a foreign language, including the learning environment, appropriate content and materials, evaluation criteria and student level (Graddol 2006).

There are a few reasons why learning a foreign language like English is difficult in Thailand. Many students are learning First English to improve communication between

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people from other nations who do not speak English (Marshall, 2019). The language of education and business is English. In this era of globalization, learning English is vital for economic competitiveness (Prescott, 2009). Third, learning English can help people learn about various cultures and extend their horizons (Marshall, 2019; Prescott, 2009).

The 2002 National Education Curriculum is based on the 1997 Thai Constitution, which guarantees all Thai citizens 12 years of free education. From 1 to 9th grade, this is required, and from 10th to 12th grade, According to the National Educational Act of 1999, lifelong education is defined as education for self and social development (Wongsothorn , Hiranburana & Chinnawongs, 2002). School officials, parents, students, and businesses are concerned about Thailand's English-language teaching and learning (Saengboon, 2019). According to Wongsothorn, Yordchim, Thitivesa, and Pongsurapipa (2019) in the LEARN Journal, the Ministry of Education and the Office of the Higher Education Commission should increase the English language standards of students, teachers, and educational employees. According to them, this standard is for improving English teaching and learning to help students compete with other ASEAN communities (Wongsothorn, Yordchim, Thitivesa, & Pongsurapipa, 2019). Higher education institutions must define strategies and targets for improving English language proficiency in all courses and levels of education. Using English for students to graduate with academic, professional, and communication abilities in English. The higher education institutions must design a strategy to meet the objectives and goals including indicators and evaluation.

According to the Higher Education Commission's announcement on boosting English language standards in higher education institutions, universities must improve teaching and learning management. The government has a policy of education and learning to improve Thai teachers' skills to cope with the rapidly changing environment and develop their full potential. Higher education institutions should organize extracurricular activities, media processes, and/or environments that encourage students to acquire English language skills on their own. Higher education institutions must assess all students' English proficiency using a tertiary standard test developed by the institution or other standardized English language assessments comparable to the CEFR or other standards. From the academic year 2016 forward, higher education institutions may consider include the results of the English language competency test in the certificate (Wongsothorn, Yordchim, Thitivesa, & Pongsurapipa, 2019). The Ministry of Education mandates the incorporation of culture in teaching and learning to promote students' communicative proficiency and intercultural awareness.

The Roles of Textbook in ELT

Materials might be informative, instructional, experiential, eliciting, or exploratory, depending on the learner's needs (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2011, 2017). In other words, textbooks should contain everything students need to know. Richards (2001) stated that textbooks are important in most language programs. A textbook can help teachers prepare

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and teach lessons, as well as provide content, practice, and activities for students. Using textbooks saves time, directs lessons, guides discussions, facilitates homework, makes teaching easier, better organization, convenience, learning easier, faster, better, and most importantly, provides confidence and security. Textbooks can be used as a teaching and learning tool to help students fit their needs (Cunningsworth, 1984; Graves 2008). According to Allwright and Hanks (2009), textbooks can provide ideas and activities for teaching and learning if they are appropriate for students. Thus, textbooks are recognized as crucial components in most language programs.

Textbooks are vital in language education, say educators (Richards, 2001). However, due to potential restrictions, textbooks have been questioned in EFL settings (Richard, 2010). According to Richards, textbooks give a structure and syllabus for a class, allowing the teacher to teach the student systematically. According to Hutchinson and Torres (1994), most textbooks used as teaching materials are so broad that it is almost universal in ELT classrooms. Teachers should be able to chose textbooks and learning materials that best meet their students' needs. While textbooks may provide a variety of teaching and learning materials for teachers and students, it is the teacher's skill that makes these resources meaningful and beneficial to students. English language textbooks are required in Thai schools for both teachers and students. To reach the goal of having interculturally and linguistically aware students, the instructional materials should reflect this. These English textbook/textbooks should reflect learners' needs, such as cultural contexts. Cross-cultural components can strengthen Thai learners' awareness to improve intercultural communication (Laopongharn & Sercombe, 2009; Nipaspong, 2011).

According to Baker (2008), Thai students should be taught to compare cultural diversity in textbooks. These commercially ready-made international textbooks are suitable for learners who learn cultures other than the target language culture (Wongbiasaj, 2003). Thus, basic textbooks used in Thai education should be culturally suitable and allow young Thai learners to reflect on their own cultural experiences to better comprehend their Thai cultural heritage and others (Ratanaphruks, 2012). Although textbooks can provide valuable language models and input for less experienced teachers, their benefits and drawbacks should be evaluated.

Textbook's Evaluation Criteria

The textbook is a major component in influencing student success in language classes. So, teachers or curriculum developers should choose wisely. Experts typically use checklists to evaluate and pick textbooks. A dependable instrument makes evaluation easier, more objective, and more valid. Most published checklists lack expected validity or reliability (Mukundan & Ahour, 2010). This involves the development of a checklist with high concept validity, consistent item scores, and low cost.

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Language teaching is intimately related to the textbook when there is a teacher shortage. That doesn't mean the teacher's method always mirrors the textbook's method. Oddly, the textbook-heaviest teachers are least qualified to analyze or evaluate its content and manner. The textbook can be a dictator to the instructor who feels compelled to explain every item in the exact same order and context as the textbook author. A textbook should be utilized sparingly, as it cannot meet all teaching needs. The amount of English language training via textbook is restricted in bilingual and multilingual contexts. The textbook can show general problems, but problems specific to distinct language groups are left to the teacher.

A textbook may potentially lose its relevance due to changes in the community's linguistic policy.

Many textbook selection procedures have been proposed to choose the best textbook for each teaching and learning setting. Cunningsworth (1995) presented two evaluations. The first is "Impressionistic Overview," where teachers swiftly assess textbooks based on their cover design. Unsuitable textbooks can be filtered away (McGrath, 2002). The second is "In-depth Evaluation", which examines specific areas such as language abilities and provides activities. McGrath (2002) argued that reviewing textbooks requires using the impressionistic, checklist, and in-depth methods. Similar to Cunningworth's impressionistic overview, the overall impressions after reading the blurb, contents, and then skimming the book to assess organization, subjects, layout and aesthetics. It entails ticking off a list of criteria in a specific order. This method is quick and easy to compare textbooks.

English teachers are expected to select textbooks, which is part of the evaluation process. Choosing a book requires decision making because it affects financial and pedagogical outcomes. Inappropriate book selection leads to negative consequences on teaching and learning, as well as cost waste. One reason why items on a textbook evaluation checklist do not achieve their intended functions is as follows. The evaluation checklist items are too localized and intended for a certain community of teachers for a specific time period. Developing items can be difficult to assess objectively. Despite its comprehensiveness and excellent rate reliability (Mukundan, 2010), the Skierso (1991) checklist has some tough to answer items. Items might be confusing for teachers, especially those unskilled or undertrained. While textbook quality has increased, most instructors and administrators still struggle to choose the right material.

Program administrators and classroom teachers are frequently forced to adopt new reading textbooks on short notice. Even if publisher personnel are knowledgeable, their desire to market new products influences their advice. Because classroom teachers use readers frequently, the checklist offered here will help streamline the evaluation process. Some teachers ask so many questions when evaluating textbooks that they never finish. A reading textbook with little or no evaluation may become the focus of the curriculum until another

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reader is randomly picked to replace it. With the checklist, administrators and classroom teachers will be able to evaluate reading textbooks more thoroughly while also saving time (Miekley, 2005; Figueroa Caas et al. 2010; Wen-Cheng et al. 2011).

Method

This chapter outlines the study's methodology. The introduction will be followed by a description of the research design. Then the population and sampling methodologies, and finally the instruments. The instrument's validity and reliability will be justified, as will the intended data collection and analysis. This chapter summarizes the study's research process.

The Study

The study will take place at Chonburi Technological College in Amphoe Meung district, Chonburi province. The college was picked because the researcher is currently employed there. This college's priority is improving teacher and student education. The Basic Education Core Curriculum 2008 makes English a mandatory subject in Thailand. The Ministry of Education has allowed the use of the *Speak Now* and *Stretch* textbooks in Thai colleges, and Chonburi Technological College now uses both. The socio-cultural settings of the textbooks that an institution may employ become significant since intercultural education is being emphasized in 21st century teaching and learning. These recommended texts are frequently utilized at Chonburi colleges. The head of the foreign language department proposed that these textbooks be evaluated.

Research Design

This study will be based on textbooks. The aim is to examine the cultural content of Thai students' English textbooks at Chonburi Technological College. A methodology that blends quantitative and qualitative methodologies is used in this work (Creswell & Clark, 2011; O'Cathain et al., 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). According to Tashakkori and Creswell (2008), in a single study or program of inquiry, the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates findings, and develops conclusions utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Tashakkori et al, 2008). Mixed methods use both quantitative and qualitative methods to counterbalance one another's flaws (Creswell, 2003). Using combined techniques, Dörnyei (2007) states that "words may bring meaning to numbers and numbers can provide precision to words." Because of the nature of this investigation, this design was chosen. In this design, quantitative research will be used to synthesize large volumes of data and reach conclusions based on statistics (Babbie, 2008).

In qualitative research, the researcher examines the data's contents for cultural representation, evaluates them, and delivers thorough findings (Creswell, 2007). To put it another way, qualitative researchers analyze phenomena like textbook evaluations in their natural environments, trying to make sense of or interpret them in terms of human meanings.

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Generally, mixed techniques combine qualitative and quantitative methods. 'The qualitative should direct the quantitative and vice versa.

Research Population and Sampling

Purposive sampling will be used with the *Speak Now* and *Stretch* multipack. Jack C. Richard and David Bohlke wrote the *Speak Now*, while Susan Stempleski wrote the 'Stretch.' This study will analyze every series. Oxford University Press produced both textbooks. These textbooks are for Chonburi Technological College first year Diploma students. The *Stretch* has 2 series and the Speak Now has 1. Susan Stempleski of Oxford University Press wrote *Stretch 1A*. It has 6 units. Each unit contains the following.

Unit 1: "Jobs" topic. This unit discusses job terminology and responsibilities. This section is designed to teach new terminology related to various jobs. This lesson includes exercises including listening for major ideas, reading, and writing. Other parts deal with Wh-Questions in the simple present.

Unit 2: "Daily Activities" subject. This unit discusses daily routine. This course teaches students how to ask Yes/No questions in the present tense (stressed). This topic has two reading and writing assignments.

Unit 3: "Now" is the topic. This course is designed to teach pupils about life experiences and careers. A grammar focus on Present Continuous questions will also be taught. This course includes activities for three skills: specialized listening, reading (language central), and writing (learning a language).

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Unit 4 is about "Feelings". This subject teaches students about taking notes, happiness surveys, and creating plans. This unit includes tasks for three skills: listening, reading, and writing.

Unit 5: "On the Weekend" is the topic. This unit's goal is to teach kids about meeting people, watching movies, and visiting family. This unit's grammar discourse is Past Simple. This lesson teaches three skills: listening for main ideas, speaking (turn-taking) and writing (Free writing). Unit 6: "Downtown" subject.

The aim is to teach students three skills: speaking (repeating for understanding and pronunciation), reading (iTravel Vacation Rentals passage) and free writing. Jack C. Richards and David Bohlke from Oxford University Press wrote Speak Now 1. It has 8 lessons. Each lesson has the following:

Lesson 1: "New Friends": Listening and Speaking are the only two skills in Speak Now. This lesson's goal is to teach pronunciation and communication.

Lesson 2: "interests": To learn how to describe time difference and contrastive stress in questions and compound nouns.

Lesson 3 "People": This lesson's goal is to teach students how to identify conversational tensions. This lesson includes activities for three skills: listening, pronunciation, and conversation.

Lesson 4: "Daily Life": It includes 4 mini-topics on pronunciation, listening, and conversation. Lesson 5: "My Hometown": This session focuses on pronunciation, listening, and conversation skills.

Lesson 6: "Shopping": It has 4 subtopics. Listening and speaking stress intonations.

Lesson 7: "Food": This session focuses on three skills: listening, pronunciation, and conversation.

Lesson 8: 'Past and Future': There are four main topics: listening, pronunciation, and communication.

Findings

There are three types of textbooks: (1.) *Speak Now* (2.) *Stretch 1 A*, and (3.) *Stretch 1 B*. At each level of analysis, constant comparison was used to distill the data further, until themes emerged from the data. In addition, included in the chapter are tables and graphics used to present the details of each textbook used in Chonburi Technological College.

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1. What are the different types of cultural information represented in 'Speak Now' and 'Stretch' Textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand?
2. What are the different senses of culture represented in 'Speak Now' and 'Stretch' Textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand?
3. What are the different elements of culture represented in 'Speak Now' and 'Stretch' Textbooks used in Chonburi Technological College, Thailand?

Findings for the Research Question 1

The cultural information in Stretch 1A Multi-Pack is provided on each unit of the textbook. The textbook has six units and eight categories. Idiomatic expressions-collocations-etc, realia and pseudo-realia, graphic illustration, and sound recordings are the eight categories found. As shown in the table above, cultural information is most abundant in sounds and recordings, followed by visual illustrations, and least abundant in instructive text, idiomatic expressions, collocations, etc. The sounds and recordings are vital in teaching specific phrases and expressions. The art of pronouncing requires more than just repetition. Pronunciation includes language (vocabulary and grammar) and pronouncing talents (speaking and listening). Like vocabulary and grammar, students are encouraged to pronounce by observing and understanding the laws and patterns that govern speech. In English, the first syllable is generally stressed for nouns and adjectives, while the second syllable is often stressed for verbs. Pronunciation is a physical motion because it is part of speech. To properly pronounce a new language, pupils must retrain their speaking muscles. Vocabulary and pronunciation also require paying attention to how the language is spoken. Listening to the noises and voice recordings in the book can help students improve their English pronunciation.

The sounds and recordings are vital in teaching specific phrases and expressions. The art of pronouncing requires more than just repetition. Pronunciation includes language (vocabulary and grammar) and pronouncing talents (speaking and listening). Like vocabulary and grammar, students are encouraged to pronounce by observing and understanding the laws and patterns that govern speech. In English, the first syllable is generally stressed for nouns and adjectives, while the second syllable is often stressed for verbs. Pronunciation is a physical motion because it is part of speech. To properly pronounce a new language, pupils must retrain their speaking muscles. Vocabulary and pronunciation also require paying attention to how the language is spoken. Listening to the noises and voice recordings in the book can help students improve their English pronunciation. Visual illustrations appear 29 times in the *Stretch 1A* book and have cultural importance. Images are frequently utilized in foreign language training materials to help students grasp the text. In *Stretch 1A*, the text conveying foreign attitudes and opinions was identified as the third cultural element of importance.

Findings for the Research Question 2

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Stretch 1A Multi-Pack divides culture into four categories: Aesthetic (culture with big C), Sociological (culture with little c), Semantic (culture with s) and Pragmatic (culture with p). The table also reflects 6 textbook units. As seen in the table above, the most frequent sense is pragmatic, followed by aesthetic (culture with big C) and sociological (culture with little c). The lowest frequency is Semantic sense. *Stretch 1A Multi-Pack* textbook had 17 instances of pragmatic sense. Language textbooks are well-known for their benefits to teachers of all levels. Pragmatic sense infographics are found on practically every page of the textbook and provide short but clear instructions for certain assignments. Teachers and students can use this information. The pragmatic function provides input for classroom education, including texts, activities, and explanations. So, for example, teachers using the *Stretch 1A Multi-Pack* textbook can use the authors' suggestions rather than making daily decisions. This is beneficial because textbook writers are assumed to be more expert in this topic. This saves time and money for teachers who would otherwise have to prepare educational materials for their students. Third, educators may easily control the class (Akutso, 2008).

Textbooks assist with the teaching process by guiding lessons and guiding class discussion after the input presentation. Textbooks make instruction more pleasant, simple, and structured. As a result, less experienced instructors rely on textbooks for information and technique (Bagaric & Djigunovic, 2007). The aesthetic sense (culture with a capital C) appears 16 times in *Stretch 1A*. To some, culture's aesthetic sense is just the top of the iceberg. These cultural references are typically encountered in textbooks while discussing films, plays, concerts, and other large-scale entertainment. They appear in practically every chapter, usually at the start of each lesson, followed by text or dialogue exercises.

Findings for the Research Question 3

How do the *Speak Now* and *Stretch* textbooks at Chonburi Technological College, Thailand, reflect culture? *Stretch 1A Multi-Pack* organizes culture into four categories: Aesthetic, Sociological, Semantic, and Pragmatic (culture with p).

The most common sense is pragmatic, followed by artistic (culture with a capital C) and sociological (culture with little c). Semantic sense is the lowest. A Multi-Pack textbook featured 17 pragmatic cases.

Language textbooks are well-known for their value to all teachers. They are included on almost every page of the textbook and provide quick instructions for assignments. This data can help teachers and students.

The pragmatic function provides texts, activities, and explanations for classroom education. Instead of making daily decisions, teachers utilizing the *Stretch 1A Multi-Pack* textbook can use the authors' ideas. This is good because textbook writers are regarded to be more knowledgeable. This saves teachers time and money by not having to produce

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educational materials for their students. Books help teachers by guiding lessons and class discussion after input presentation. Textbooks make learning fun, easy, and structured. Because of this, novice instructors rely on textbooks for information (Bagaric & Djigunovic, 2007).

Stretch 1A uses the aesthetic sense (16 times). This is simply the tip of the iceberg for some. Films, musicals, concerts, and other large-scale entertainment are frequently discussed in textbooks. They appear in almost every chapter, usually before text or dialogue exercises.

Discussion

Culture is a social process that deals with how people communicate in various contexts. They tend to study multiple languages to satisfy their academic and professional communication needs. Intercultural communication requires students to practice linguistic forms and become familiar with the target language's culture. Thus, in order to develop intercultural communication skills, ESL students should use textbooks that provide cultural context and awareness throughout their language learning process. Specifically, ELT research has aided the industry by giving vital insights into adding cultural awareness into ELT programs.

The current study identified similarities between English textbooks used at Chonburi Technological College and cultural aspects used to better comprehend English speaking countries. These textbooks used cultural teaching strategies for non-native learners to practice English as a communicative interactive process. The Stretch and Speak Now textbooks also assist students acquire culturally appropriate conduct and attitudes based on communication patterns in the target language. Thus, before teaching cross-cultural communication skills, educators must be fluent in teaching a foreign language. It explores the cultural material in the *Speak Now* and *Stretch* (1A and 1B) textbooks used at Chonburi Technological College in Thailand, and the problems Thai students may face in learning intercultural communication competency. The study discovered that language is used in the *Stretch* and *Speak Now* textbooks to express personal experiences and recollections between students. Because language is more than just a means of delivering and receiving information, neglecting to understand the cultural background and social behavior of a language's use can result in misinterpretation and breakdown of language communication. It is also a cultural social behavior. Depending on the situation, a suitable cultural entanglement with language acquisition can solve difficulties that are difficult to comprehend for foreign or second language learners (Emitt & Komesaroff, 2003).

Overall, the *Stretch* and *Speak Now* textbooks prioritize exposing students to a variety of perspectives on the English-speaking globe. Selection seems to have prioritized the topic's motivational influence. However, several texts and subjects have been provided to familiarize pupils with specific instances of foreign literature. Language usage in diverse settings is shown in the works. Nonetheless, minimal attempts are made to educate pupils on good

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language usage and how to adapt language to diverse situations and discourse norms. Textbooks today don't seem to place a high premium on building students' international understanding and attitudes toward other cultures. Misunderstandings regarding various books and subjects' goals may result from inconsistencies between how cultural content is presented and followed up in textbook series. Many books, for example, feature conversations with world-renowned authors and literary works. However, the questions and exercises accompanying the texts do not focus on the author and his or her work, nor on the text's literary features. Numerous publications provide critical factual information about various countries, but the practice material reveals that it is irrelevant whether students learn and remember any of it. The seemingly random selection of texts and subjects may also contribute to the impression that the cultural material's objective is unclear. Texts that teach pupils about vital aspects of a foreign culture are contrasted with texts chosen only for their entertainment value. Many texts dealing with incidental issues and events may be considered to diminish the apparent importance of the cultural substance given.

Using sounds and recordings, visuals, ordinary life discussions, and contextualized writing exercises helps students learn the language's cultural context. A sonic and visual emphasis on English culture was observed in *Stretch 1A*, *Stretch 1B*, and *Speak Now* textbooks. *Stretch 1A*, for example, uses sounds and recordings to teach students how to pronounce words and phrases correctly in a certain cultural context. *Stretch 1B* and *Speak Now* both rely heavily on visuals to achieve their goals. Using a variety of cultural components enhances the learning process beyond just listening and repetition. Students can learn English words by seeing and understanding the laws and patterns underneath the surface of speech. Similarly, vocabulary and grammar are used to help students pronounce. Because pronunciation is part of speaking, it might be considered a form of exercise. Students must retrain their speaking muscles to appropriately enunciate a foreign language, which is difficult to understand without an auditory and visual cultural context. It's also important to study vocabulary and hear pronunciation in the local nation. Listening to the noises and voice recordings in the *Stretch 1A* and *Speak Now* textbooks can assist Thai students learn English pronunciation. According to Tomlinson (2007), teaching a foreign language should focus on drawing students' attention to linguistic features influenced by culture, while providing opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative goals through meaningful realistic integra.

There have been several studies on cultural material in English textbooks in Thailand, but none on how different cultures are presented and which are the key selection criteria. The cultural material in the textbooks was divided into two groups based on Lee's (2009) methodology and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001). Both little "c" and big "C" cultures were present in the *Stretch* and *Speak Now* textbooks, but both were more prevalent in the receptive skills of listening and reading than the productive skills of speaking and writing. It sheds light on the forms of cultural knowledge addressed in English textbooks used by Chonburi Technological College in Thailand to help EFL students

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learn about culture and prepare them for communication scenarios in foreign contexts. Aesthetic sense (culture with big C) is mentioned the most (16 times), followed closely by sociological sense (culture with tiny "c"), with 15 mentions across the textbook. Stretch 1B was cited 10 times for sociological sense (culture with a small "c") and 7 times for artistic sense (culture with a big "C"). From this perspective, the *Stretch 1A* and *Speak Now* textbooks introduce a better understanding of culture than the *Stretch 1B* textbook. Long-Fu (2001) found that early tiny "C" culture is better than later huge "C" culture. *Stretch 1B* may be a better alternative for beginners than *Stretch 1A* and *Speak Now*, which are better suited for later stages of study. Regardless, according to Jespersen (1904), the primary purpose of language education is to expose students to the most exemplary ideals and institutions of a foreign country, as well as its literature and culture, or, in other words, the nation's soul. Due to the lack of a well-defined socio-linguistic and socio-cultural theoretical underpinning, cultural material was taught incidentally and secondary to language (Long-Fu, 2001). According to Rajabi and Ketabi (2012), students should be aware of how culture is depicted in textbooks so they may grasp the social standards of language. This helps foreign students, like Thai students, understand cultural frames of reference since they represent the target language and the target speaker's culture (Rajabi & Ketabi, 2012). Additionally, Halliday and Hasan (1985) agree with earlier findings that learners should learn how to use the language effectively in socio-cultural settings. In other words, language teachers should be aware of and adept in cultural circumstances.

When creating a framework for non-native speakers to learn a foreign language, educational institutions should focus on culture. According to Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a method of teaching language use in everyday situations, where features of speech like pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and culture are chosen and graded according to their importance in real-world communication. The Communicative Approach places foreign language instruction in a social and cultural context. Language is affected by society, economics, culture, and the people who speak it (Long-Fu, 2001). For intercultural communication, defining communicative competence in terms of socio-linguistic norms or a native speaker model seems to be a minimal position, according to Byram (1997). This is because such a model does not consider the learners' social identities (e.g., Thai students).

Classroom activities allow students to apply their different understandings of how the world works, resulting in deeper personal links between group members, more defined individual identities, and a higher sense of belonging to the learning community. When utilized in conjunction with cooperative language acquisition, collaboration towards a common goal can help kids develop emotionally and linguistically (Murphey & Asaoka, 2006). Cooperative learning is a method for extending the cooperative learning process beyond the classroom and school environment into the larger community in which students live and work.

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Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The current study begins with Byram's (2014) ICC framework and Yuen's (2011) four P's, which assert that language, context, and culture are inexorably linked. This idea has two main implications for Thai foreign language teaching. To begin with, it appears that teaching language in context and working with many components of context and culture in addition to the many aspects of language can help Thai students deal with the full meaning potential of a foreign language. Second, foreign language education may help expose Thai pupils to manifestations peculiar to local English cultures. This is because foreign language education introduces pupils to language, situations, and cultures that are different from their own. These insights are crucial components in students' ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language. I wanted to know how to track and apply new ideas in foreign language education to the classroom, namely English at Chonburi Technological College in Thailand. Because textbooks have traditionally influenced Thai schools, the research focused on context and culture-related methodologies and practices present in current textbook series like *Stretch* and *Speak Now*. Possible improvements in the English classroom at Chonburi Technological College have been identified based on the findings of this study and the *Stretch* and *Speak Now* textbooks.

English education has a long tradition of teaching students about other cultures, and there are numerous reasons why this should continue in the future. However, the materials studied in this study reveal significant issues with language and subject selection. The function of cultural aspects in foreign language courses is the most important issue. To learn about the globe and its cultures, pupils may be offered cultural information. It can help pupils enhance their communication skills and understand diverse cultures.

However, foreign language textbooks can inspire pupils to learn more about the globe and its cultures. Another alternative is to integrate English classes with other subjects like history or social studies. Developing foreign language skills for Thai students requires knowledge of cultural subjects not generally covered in other courses. Diverse behavioral standards and speaking patterns are only a few key terms here. Brogger (1992) presented one possible strategy for identifying relevant themes in a foreign language course like English. In English education, focusing on nations and cultures is crucial. A traditional focus on British and American culture has been seen, as has an approach that combines material from other English-speaking nations. For example, both *Stretch* and *Speak Now* textbooks regularly present visual and auditory material with diverse nationalities. The *Stretch* and *Speak Now* textbooks also suggest that showing students enticing images of the English-speaking world will motivate them to study the language. There are several reasons to reconsider the traditional emphasis on the UK and the US in English language instruction. For example, English is important at Chonburi Technological College because it is a language of international communication. From this perspective, knowledge of a diverse range of countries and cultures is essential. Thus, it may be claimed that future English textbooks should focus on specific themes and cultural groups rather than the "obvious" UK/US focus.

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Several dialogues and activities in the studied texts aim to combine instruction and amusement, but the ultimate result often fails to achieve both goals. Books that try to make teaching British and American history more appealing to students by focusing on the historical progression of familiar topics (such as fashion and eating) and on specific, significant events are examples. Students can be delighted and entertained by texts with less information density but high incentive value or educated by texts with more information density but lower incentive value. Many novels try to appeal to adolescents' interests and concerns by tackling adolescent issues like friendship or leisure activities. For example, in both *Stretch* and *Speak Now*, the target learner appears to be a Western adolescent preoccupied with personal matters. To accommodate the student population's diversity and educate them to new ways of seeing and understanding the world, a broader perspective may be required. More difficult and controversial themes may also catch the interest of many Thai students, which may benefit their learning and willingness to utilize the language-finding engaging and motivating material for students will always be a problem. The most obvious approach is to provide pupils with many of choices in books, subjects, and methodologies. The English syllabus also suggests a possible method by asking pupils to discuss cultural concerns with people outside Thailand.

Conclusion

The current study indicated the interconnectedness of language, context, and culture. English as Foreign language teaching in Thailand suffers from two primary aggravations. As a first step, teaching language in context and working with numerous components of context and culture in addition to the many parts of language appears to be needed for Thai students to fully comprehend a foreign language's meaning. Second, foreign language education may expose Thai students to manifestations peculiar to local English cultures by providing new terminology for previously recognized ideas and new methods of thinking about, discussing, and understanding the world, enriching cultural understanding and knowledge for Thai students through English language instruction. These insights are equally crucial to students' ability to communicate in a foreign language. In light of the historical importance of textbooks in Thai schools, English is very important specifically for Chonburi Technological College because it is a language of international communication. An understanding of diverse places and cultures therefore can be considered as equally vital. Finding materials that are culturally engaging and interesting to provide students multiple options on subject matters, activities, and approaches can be the most obvious recommendation to the challenges faced by the teachers and learners.

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