Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies
University of Sistan and Baluchestan
Print ISSN: 2008-5494 Online ISSN: 2322-3650
Homepage: https://ijals.usb.ac.ir
Uppsala University

The Impact of Culture-bound Content on Learning Productive Skills within CBLT Program in EAP Classrooms

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Abstract

Despite the determining role of culture-bound materials in the enhancement of EFL learners' productive skills, a scarcity of investigation on the influence of culture-oriented content on their productive skills is staunchly perceived. This gap can be partly filled by implementing Content Based Language Teaching (CBLT) program which contrives the EFL content especially in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms. In this respect, a culture-oriented EAP course book was designed based on Tomlinson's (2001) materials development framework. A total of 100 participants were recruited according to their language proficiency results, and were fractionated into two productive EAP task groups embracing Oral Presentation and Systematic Writing as the two befitting techniques to strengthen productive skills. After practicing and teaching the developed course book in each class in twenty treatment sessions, the participants were given a posttest. Correspondingly, a paired samples t-test indicated that culture-oriented content affected the EFL students' speaking and writing skills separately. Similarly, an independent samples t-test revealed the influence of culture-oriented content on their speaking skill than the writing skill. The findings suggest the significance of the first culture as the benchmark for incorporating second culture contents in EFL teaching arenas.

Keywords: culture-oriented content, CBLT, productive skills, EAP, first culture

Received: August 10, 2021 Revised: October 17, 2021 Accepted: January 15, 2022

Article type: Research Article DOI: 10.22111/IJALS.2022.38521.2159

Publisher: University of Sistan and Baluchestan

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How to cite: Hassannejad, E., Ghaemi, F., & Pourdana, N. (2022). The impact of culture-bound content on learning productive skills within CBLT program in EAP classrooms. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, *14* (1), 109-128. https://doi.org/ 10.22111/IJALS.2022.38521.2159

1. Introduction

Investigating socio-cultural confrontations in the current academic ambiences can be regarded as one of the most challenging subjects for language policy makers upholding human language prerogatives. Miscellaneous facets are thought to affect the permanence of human languages, foremost among them are the geographic dissemination of speakers and their socio-cultural stature (Van der Jeught, 2015). These are notably regulated by a comprehensive policy which centers around either lubricating or aggravating the two aforementioned characteristics.

Habitually, attempts are made to consolidate official and political endorsement of a language use in propagating specific language skills. This enhances the possibility of achieving national concession via accrediting the utility of individuals' languages (Arzoz, 2007). Based on socio-cultural states of affairs in societies in question, an extensive continuum of language policies can be contemplated with regard to potential historical grounds. Be that as it may, the intertwinement of language and culture as two sides of the same coin should be taken into consideration.

As a right path to knowledge consolidation, language controversially determines its users' value systems and plays an indispensable role in expanding communicative skills that terminate in metamorphic cultural development. In this respect, Brown (2007) stressed the significance of second language as a prominent factor in cultural intrusion of the society concerned. Bearing this theoretical scheme in mind, some learners may be concerned about the influences of target language on their native culture (Rezaeifard & Chalak, 2017). This phenomenon, that matches Taylor's (2007) perspective of cultural imperialism, leads to some social predicaments which seemingly contradict the socio-cultural norms of societies concerned. In fact, the extent of language spread, according to Damen (1987), hampers the learners' cultural identity.

Sprouting propensity of language policy makers for discerning cultural intrusion which seems to be on the horizon can beget political perturbation that substantiates systematic analysis. By conceding the significance of this circumstance, a deductive approach to divulgence of such current issues can result in bringing Spichtinger's (2000) notion of appropriation that utilizes English for local purposes into focus. It can also correspond to Damen's (1987) perspective of enculturation that accentuates first culture acquisition as the determining yardstick for incorporating materials attributed to the second culture in EAP language teaching arenas, the cornerstone of ethnocentric value systems and socio-cultural identity generally, and trust in the native's power particularly. Nonetheless, a paucity of scrutiny on the influence of such culture-oriented contents on the Iranian EFL learners' productive skills can be highly sensed. That is, scrutinizing the impact of culture-oriented content on the Iranian EFL university students' productive tasks within CBLT program has not been taken into consideration in any of the previously performed studies. Bearing these theoretical concepts in mind, the paper aims at developing a conceptual framework for the Iranian EFL policy makers to corroborate and

actualize the aforementioned approaches. That is expected to pave the way for developing a universally pragmatic and coherent socio-cultural CBLT program. These approaches can be materialized by implementing English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at university level that focuses on productive skills in all types and contents.

2. Literature Review

Any pertinent perception about the essence of language is expected to encompass contemporary consideration of the ontogeny and practices of social interactions. The efficacy of acquiring the first culture in constructing social identities along with a nexus of ethnocentric values and their incorporation into culture-oriented materials development has been acknowledged in both theory and practice. A range of conceptual perspectives triggering the scrutiny of language policy as the major solicitude in endorsing or vitiating the evolvement of a language (Spolsky, 2004) and developing culture-bound contents which facilitate language acquisition with convergent operation of a thorough spectrum of issues (Labiste Jr., 2019) were discussed below.

2.1. Language Policy and Materials Development

There is an omnipresent perception about the exigency of language as an influential medium of social interactions that plays a pivotal role in the contemporary era. Irrespective of the speakers' socio-cultural sates of affair, language is indispensable in institutionalizing the social infrastructure of speech communities in the present age. As a paramount hallmark of language, dynamicity impacts on social milieus and precipitates cultural metamorphosis. The change in recipient culture, as contended by Knowels (2010), gives rise to institutionalization of cultural intrusion which prompts fluctuations in the balance of foreign language use in favor of the domineering culture. Such cultural dominance which is coined, according to Knowles (2010), as linguistic imperialism is in consonance with Mackenzie's (2022) notion of sovereignty in power and ideology which attests the institutionalization of power in capitalist communities. In this vein, English is still viewed as a domineering language by Anglophone super-ordinate powers. This supremacy, as contended by Phillipson (1992), stems from the preponderant cultural injustice between English as the prevailing interaction modality and other languages. Due to the inadvertent role of language in the cultivation of socio-cultural dynamism, as asserted by Goode et al. (2000), language dissemination is expected to boost cultural dominance. This ascendancy matches Phillipson's (1992) conception of language autocracy which, according to Baker (2001), incorporates the supremacy of one culture over another.

Such societal apprehension, argued Spolsky (2004), has been pivotal in language policy-making throughout history. For instance, the literary masterstroke of Ferdowsi Tousi (935-1020),

the trailblazing epitome of Persian poetry, manifested language as a robust interaction tool for maintaining cultural heritage and national identity. Ferdowsi's eminent contribution was a turning point in safeguarding the Persian language from the immanent incursion of the intruding languages. The astounding affluence of the Persian language, as stipulated by Ahmadi (2012), was contemplated as an indispensable adhesive agent for social solidarity. This was, according to Najmabadi, (2005) indicated in the Iranian emergence of ethnocentric integrity, methodology, and political history. The remarkable synergic aftermath of the superior Persian language of the time on worldwide dissemination of Islamic belief should not be undervalued. Likewise, the contiguity of such language propagation and literary supremacy, as contended by Marszałek-Kowalewska (2011), with the exoteric Shiite faith has been strikingly postulated as the most conspicuous cohesive symbols of solidarity in the manifold Iranian ethnolinguistic terrains of that time. Such an outcome of conceptual achievement has noticeably been pivotal in tackling the potential hazard of socio-cultural disintegration which was posed by unstable Iran of the Ferdowsi's time.

Based on such concerns, article 15 of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979) states that all renderings and educational texts must be necessarily delineated in Persian script. One approach to alleviate the impacts of perceived cultural encroachment, argued Andrade (2014), is to enjoy the Content Based Language Teaching principles that, according to Mahardika (2018), precipitate the attenuation of the potential impact of emerging cultural encroachment on recipient culture through embracing the local culture. Such development, as held by Labiste Jr. (2019), undertakes a more comprehensive language efficiency which caters for the teachers and the students similarly. In fact, the native culture, held by Kramsch (2013), is postulated as the building block for institutionalizing foreign culture in the language education period. This manifestation of the native culture attests Gray's (2013) conception of cultural appropriateness which necessitates operating socio-cultural and ethnocentric contents while communicating with English speaking societies. From the abovementioned researchers' viewpoint, the prominent culture aims to facilitate language acquisition with concurrent operation of a whole continuum of issues. This seems to match the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) objectives, as contended by Brinton (2003) that enhances learners' inside-the-class motivation and their attention (Mede & Yalçın, 2019).

Due to the fact that EAP, according to Kavaliauskiene and Uzpaliene (2003), accentuates communicative skills through needs analysis, performing effective productive tasks, systematic writing and oral presentation, which are enhanced by socio-cultural contents (Subroto et al., 2019) should be taken into consideration (Hyland, 2006). More specifically, systematic writing, according to Shukri (2014), delves into enhancing culture and evolves university students' humanistic dimension. Similarly, oral presentation, as held by Bennett (2019), upgrades university students' speaking skill through socio-cultural dimensions (Kelly, 2018; Malmir & Bagheri, 2019). Such contents, as contended by Zabawa (2001), intensify the effects of socio-cultural setting on

productive skills and, as contended by Kirschner and Wexler (2002), emphasize the significance of utilizing them in the textbook as a hidden curriculum or covert manifestation of linguocultural pedagogy (Tomlinson, 2013).

2.2. Empirical Studies

Few empirical studies reflected the potential association between culture-bound content and the productive skills. In this regard, Namaziandost et al. (2018) scrutinized the influence of culture-oriented materials on Iranian upper-intermediate EFL students' listening comprehension. To achieve such an objective, 96 Iranian EFL male and female students were selected via administering an Oxford Placement Test and were randomly stratified into four equal groups; group A stood for Target Culture, group B indicated International Target Culture, group C revealed Source Culture, and group D revealed Culture-Free. Before the treatment, all students were given an equal pre-test. Afterward, the treatment was executed on the experimental groups. Each group was given listening comprehension materials corresponding to a particular culture. The post-test findings revealed that culture-oriented materials enhanced the Iranian EFL students' listening comprehension. More specifically, the male students indicated more adequate performance than the female members.

Karimi and Nafissi's (2017) investigation delved into scrutinizing the impacts of culture-bound materials on the Iranian intermediate EFL students' reading comprehension. Two classes of intermediate male and female EFL learners majoring in TEFL were provided with the same pretest. Later, they partook in one year treatment embracing two project-oriented reading comprehension courses. The posttest results reflected the Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension enhancement caused by culture-bound materials.

In contrast to the aforementioned studies which incorporated one receptive skill, the two productive skills (speaking and writing) were accentuated in the present study encompassing larger quantity of participants. Likewise, none of the abovementioned empirical studies delved into the impacts of culture-bound contents on the Iranian university students' productive skills. The purpose of the present study was to scrutinize the relative effects of culture-bound materials on the Iranian university students' speaking and writing skills, and analyzing the aforementioned literature, a gap in the literature was perceived, and that could be filled through the current research via responding to the following research questions:

1. What is the Iranian EFL university students' attitude toward culture-oriented content?
2. To what extent does Culture-oriented content affect Iranian EFL university students' productive skills?
3. What productive skill is more influenced by culture-oriented content among Iranian EFL university students?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design

A mixed-methods research design (Dörnyei, 2007) was utilized in the current research design, and thanks to the two experimental groups' random sampling, this study had the features of an experimental design (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). First and foremost, since this research aimed at scrutinizing the effects of culture-bound content on the EFL university students' productive skills via designing a culture-bound textbook, a checklist through which the EAP course book topics were selected was developed. Similarly, a course book evaluation checklist was employed, followed by validating and piloting procedures, to ascertain the EFL university students' attitudes toward this EAP course book. Further, it incorporated an experimental research design in order to collect numerical data to respond to the aforementioned research questions within an analytical framework.

3.2. Participants

This study enjoyed 100 Iranian EFL intermediate university students as the participants whose proficiency scores ranged from 31 to 40 on the basis of Oxford Placement Test (OPT) (2001). In addition, 30 homogeneous intermediate EFL university students other than the abovementioned participants were recruited to participate in piloting the pretest, posttest, and checklists. These 130 students were elicited from a pool of 300 (eighteen to thirty-two year-old) male and female university students who had selected the General English course in four General English classrooms, and majored in different fields of study at the Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch, in the southwest of Iran. All students practiced English inside their General English classrooms via the pertinent assignments and tasks outside the classrooms. Thanks to investigating the influence of culture-bound content on the two productive skills, the sample incorporated two groups. Each of the two groups, Oral Presentation and Systematic Writing, embraced 50 male and female Iranian EAP university students between the ages of 18 and 32 years (M=25.26). Both of the two intermediate group members were Persian native speakers and experienced a 12-year educational period.

The recruited participants were considered equal according to their gender, age, and educational background. Before implementing the treatment, it was figured out that all participants did not ever have any chance to travel abroad nor they partook in any English classes in language institutes. Instead, they learned the English at school in EFL context. Based on such assumptions, the abovementioned participants were contemplated homogeneous in acquaintance with the target culture and language. Correspondingly, all students volunteered to participate in the study, and the written consent was received from them. Similarly, the researcher who was postulated as the instructor took the responsibility of coordination and troubleshooting inside and

outside the classroom. Moreover, two knowledgeable applied linguists were employed in this to rate the participants' performance as required by the study.

Table 1

Participants' Biographical Data

Group	Gender	N	Age	Age Mean	OPT Mean	OPT Std. Deviation
Oral Presentation	Male	23	18-32	25.26	34.24	2.37
	Female	27				
Systematic Writing	Male	21	18-32	25.62	34.50	2.78
	Female	29				

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. The OPT

The participants of this study were given an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) (2001) encompassing sixty items as their proficiency test, and its reliability turned out to be 0.85 that was achieved by piloting 30 EFL university students other than OPT test-takers, using Cronbach's alpha for the scores internal consistency.

3.3.2. Pretest

Given the fact that this study emphasized the effects of culture-bound content on the Iranian EFL university students' productive skills, a pretest embracing an interview rated by Brown's (2001) oral proficiency scoring classifications and a composition which was rated by Brown and Bailey's (1984) analytic scale for rating the writing tasks were regarded appropriate in this study. The pretest was disclosed to be 0.86 via Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 (KR-21). Besides, a panel of six ELT faculty members at Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch reviewed the modified pretest to ascertain the content validity of this instrument. Accordingly, the pretest was initially piloted on a similar EFL university students group (n=30) other than the participants of in this study, and the reliability index was proved to be 0.87 that exceeded 0.7. Based on the pertinent item analysis, the ambiguous items were modified, the malfunctioning items were excluded, and the functional items were substituted for the final version.

3.3.3. Posttest

Since the impacts of culture-oriented content on the EFL students' productive skills were taken into consideration and both productive (speaking and writing) skills were incorporated and practiced in the treatment, a posttest encompassing an interview rated by Brown's (2001) oral proficiency scoring categories, a systematic paragraph and a 5-paragraph essay rated through Brown and Bailey's (1984) analytic scale for rating the writing tasks were contemplated to be

convenient for this study. The posttest reliability was estimated to be 0.84, utilizing Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 (KR-21). In addition, six ELT faculty members at Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch investigated the modified posttest to ascertain the content validity of this instrument. It is of note that the posttest was initially piloted on a similar EFL university students group (n=30) other than those who took part in this study, and the scale's KR-21 value (0.85) exceeded 0.7 that indicated a convenient reliability index. In this respect, the malfunctioning items were excluded, and the functional items were added for the final version on the basis of the item analysis. It is to be noted that both pre and posttest equally emphasized the productive skills assessment.

3.3.4. Checklist for the Course Book Topics Selection

To select the EAP textbook topics, a 30-item 5-point Likert scale checklist was developed. This checklist incorporated ten topics, and each encompassed three items. These topics were elicited on the basis of 60 EFL university students' viewpoints in an ethnographically-oriented research. These topics embraced Greetings in Iran, New Year's Celebrations, Persian Souvenirs, Tourist Attractions in Iran, Iranian Dishes, Traditional Clothes Nationwide, Persian Wedding Customs, Religions in Iran, Iranian Lifestyle, and the History of Iran. Later, the participants answered a 5-point Likert-scale through their levels of agreement (5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). To accredit this checklist reliability and internal consistency, the Cronbach's Alpha was applied, and its estimated alpha came out to be 0. 82 that reflected appropriate reliability index. Further, a panel of six ELT faculty members at Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch scrutinized the checklist to assure this instrument's content validity. Respectively, this checklist was primarily piloted on a similar EFL university students group (n=30) other than the participants in the study, and the Cronbach's alpha stood at 0.84, which revealed highly acceptable reliability. Accordingly, the vague items were modified, the malfunctioning items were crossed out, and the operational ones were included on the basis of the item analysis.

3.3.5. Textbook Evaluation Checklist

To scrutinize the EFL university students' attitudes towards the developed EAP textbook, a modified version of Mukundan, Hajimohammadi and Nimehchisalem's (2011) textbook evaluation checklist was utilized. This textbook evaluation checklist incorporated two sections. The initial section comprising five subdivisions and 11 5-point Likert-type items stressed the general attributes of the developed textbook. The second section embracing nine subcategories and 27 5-point Likert-type items emphasized the learning-teaching content. Correspondingly, the students were committed to rate each statement by their level of agreement ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. In this study, the items were initially piloted by administering to an

indistinguishable EFL university students' group (n=30) other than the participants in this study, and the pilot test indicated a reliability of 0.82. In this regard, the ambiguous items were modified, the malfunctioning items were excluded, and the applicable ones were included in the final version based on internal consistency. The scale's Cronbach value (0.87) exceeded 0.7 that was proved to be an appropriate reliability index, and a panel of six ELT faculty members at Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch scrutinized this textbook evaluation checklist to accredit the pertinent content validity.

3.4. Materials

The EAP textbook, English through Culture, which was contemplated as the main material for this study was developed for Iranian EFL university students to supply them with a culture-oriented CBLT content. With regard to the model and design of the textbook, attempts were made to reflect the local concepts of teaching and learning of a foreign language. This course book was organized in 80 pages comprising 10 units, and each unit incorporated 8 pages. Accordingly, a 30-item checklist which was developed based on an ethnographically-oriented research to determine the topic of each unit. These topics encompassed Iranian Greetings, New Year's Celebrations, Souvenirs in Iran, Tourist Attractions Nationwide, Iranian Dishes, Iranians' Traditional Clothes, Persian Wedding Customs, Religions in Iran, Persian Lifestyle, and A History of Iran.

This culture-bound textbook followed Tomlinson's (2001) materials development framework embracing a) Enhancing interactions between the readers' emotions and the texts by collecting the user-friendly texts comprising culture-bound contents, b) Selecting provoking texts through which students act idiosyncratically inside the classroom, c) Reflecting the participants' experiences and encouraging them to figure out the other members' personal experiences d) Checking vocabulary which activates individual engagement, f) Intensifying Students' productive skills in real life situations through implementing the intake response and development tasks embracing oral presentation, discussion, essay writing, and role- play, g) Taking the students back to the selected texts by activating input response tasks. Then, the content validity of the developed textbook was checked by six faculty members at Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch and it indicated the conformity between the textbook sections and the abovementioned Tomlinson's (2001) criteria.

Further, the number of types and tokens and the Standard Type/Token Ratio (STTR) that reveals the text lexical diversity in the whole corpus was scrutinized via the Web-VP BNC-20 tool so as to investigate the vocabulary size systematicity in the constructions of the selected texts. The total number of running words (tokens) was 10302 and the total number of different words (types) was 4407. Moreover, STTR turned out to be 42.77% which reflected average possibilities of the repetition of words. Likewise, the tool illustrated the word Range that counted and categorized

vocabulary in three groups of frequency matching the utilized tokens in the developed textbook corpus with K1 revealing the 1,000 most widely used words, K2 disclosing the second 1,000 most frequent words and K3 manifesting the third most frequently utilized words (K1–K3) in English (Nation, 2006). Respectively, K1 (Range1) turned out to be 4533 (46.34%) that reflected the elementary level tokens (A2, based on the CEFR, 2001). K2 (Range 2) incorporated 4217 intermediate level running words (43.09%) (B1, according to CEFR, 2001), and K3 (Range 3) encompassed 444 advanced level tokens (4.54 %). The remaining tokens corresponded to off-ranges that were beyond the 3000 widely occurring words in English.

To designate the difficulty of the texts, readers' age, and grade and user level of the abovementioned textbook, seven readability formulae (Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Linsear Write Formula, SMOG Index, Flesch Reading Ease score, Automated Readability Index, Coleman-Liau Index, and Gunning Fog) were taken into consideration. Accordingly, the grade level pertained to college, the reading level was proved to be almost average, and the reader's age turned out to be 18. Therefore, this textbook matched the EFL intermediate university students.

Table 2

English through Culture (ETC) Textbook Corpus-based Analysis

	Running Words	Types	STTR	K1	K2	K3	Text Level	Grade Level	Reader's Age	User Level	Text Number
ETC	10302	4407	42.77%	4533	4217	444	Almost Average	College	18	Intermediate	10

3.5. Procedure

After designing a General English culture-bound textbook that aimed to supply the EFL university students with a socio-cultural CBLT program, 300 EFL university students partook in a proficiency test at the Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch, Dezful, Iran, on the basis of Oxford Placement Test (OPT) (2001) that was initially piloted on 30 EFL university students other than the OPT participants. Afterward, among the 300 EFL university students pool, 100 intermediate participants with the proficiency scores of 31 to 40 (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012) that matched the developed textbook level were assigned as the participants in this research. By the same token, 30 homogeneous intermediate test-takers other than the aforementioned experimental group participants were selected to participate in piloting the pretest, posttest, and checklists.

This study was postulated to be true experimental thanks to the random sampling. Hence, on the basis of the two productive skills, the students were randomly stratified into two General English class groups comprising two 50-student class groups (systematic writing and oral presentation), and all participants were given a pretest incorporating the two productive skills. This test was initially piloted on similar EFL university students group members (n=30) other than the participants in the study. Then, each class participants were told to get engaged only in

one productive skill which was specifically practiced after teaching the designed textbook in every treatment session.

Regarding oral presentation as a productive EAP technique which based on Bennett's (2019) perspective intensifies the students' speaking skill, each of this textbook units were divided into culture-oriented issues and the participants in the 50-member oral presentation class group were told to teach their classmates by providing them with the expert analyses. Moreover, they were asked to present information on each culture-oriented issue as a short talk.

With regard to the 50-member systematic writing class group, the participants were taught how to write two systematic writing tasks. Corresponding to the first task, the participants were given maps, graphs, and flowcharts on the basis of some culture-oriented topics pertaining to the ones in each unit comprising Persian Dishes, Occasions in Iran, Regional Dialects, Funeral Ceremonies in Iran, Iranians' Family Relationships, and the students were told to write the gist, to compare their data, to clarify contrasts, to highlight remarkable trends, and to dwell on a process. They were committed to write 150-word systematic paragraphs during 20 minutes (Pauk, 2001). It is of note that before writing the first systematic writing task, the participants learned how to write a systematic paragraph incorporating a topic sentence, support sentences, and a conclusion.

Similarly, they were told how to develop cohesion and coherence during the initial four systematic writing treatment sessions. Likewise, the developed EAP textbook embraced some guidelines about systematic writing which simplified the ambiguities in the treatment sessions. From the tenth treatment session onwards, the systematic writing class participants were taught how to write a systematic 5-paragraph essay including an introduction along with its components (motivator, thesis statement, and blueprint), three central paragraphs (topic sentence and support sentences), and a concluding paragraph (clincher and reworded thesis statement).

After passing twenty sessions, the participants of the two productive skills groups were provided with Mukundan et al. (2011) textbook evaluation checklist such that the EFL university students' attitudes toward this EAP textbook were investigated. Correspondingly, a 5-point Liker-scale was used, where 5 indicated strongly agree and 1 represented strongly disagree. This checklist was initially piloted on an EFL university students homogeneous group (n=30) other than the participants in this study.

In addition, the EFL students were committed to partake in a posttest incorporating a 15-minute interview rated through Brown's (2001) oral proficiency scoring classifications based on their recorded voices, and the writing tasks including a 150-word systematic paragraph and a 250-word 5-paragraph essay rated through Brown and Bailey's (1984) analytic scale for rating the writing tasks. The first writing task was to be implemented within 20 minutes, and the second was expected to be executed within 40 minutes. This test was primarily piloted on a similar EFL university students group (n=30) other than the participants in this research. To investigate the raters' agreement, two applied linguists were asked to rate the aforementioned test as the inter-

raters, and the obtained inter-rater reliability turned out to be 80%, utilizing Intraclass Correlation.

Accordingly, the nature of the content was contemplated as the independent variable, and the Iranian EFL university students' learning productive skills embracing speaking and writing skills were postulated as the dependent variables in this study. Further, the EFL university students' productive skills development was proved to be achieved from the aforementioned treatment since their available knowledge was primarily assessed based on the pretest that was held right before the intervention time span and the posttest; afterward, the differences between the pretest and posttest mean scores revealed such a treatment-based conversion. Likewise, the students were carefully supervised by the researcher during the treatment sessions so that they merely applied the materials corresponding to the research plan in terms of the pertinent instructions.

3.6. Data Analysis

To analyze the collected data in the current study, the SPSS software version 19 was utilized, and the proceeding results were obtained: Descriptive statistics embracing standard deviations and means was provided. Inferential statistics incorporating a paired-samples t-test and an independent samples t-test were employed.

4. Results

According to the qualitative research question that sought to know the Iranian EFL university students' attitudes toward culture-bound content, the Mukundan et al. (2011) textbook evaluation checklist pertaining to the developed EAP textbook was responded after passing the treatment sessions. Correspondingly, the researcher implemented Brown's (2008) item content congruence and applicability to investigate the extent to which an item measured what it was developed to assess. Respectively, the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (where 5 meant strongly agree and 1 reflected strongly disagree) was applied in this research.

Table 3

Learners' Attitudes Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	SD	SEM
Attitudes	100	126.11	12.99	0.96

Regarding Table 3, all participants' mean score came out to be 126.11 that was higher than the ordinary mean (test value=114) and the standard deviation was 12.99. In table 4, the *p* value below the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column reflected the EFL university students' positive attitudes towards the culture-bound content that were statistically significant.

Table 4

One-Sample t Test Results Pertaining to the Learners' Attitudes towards Culture-bound Content

	Test Value =114					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Attitudes	12.50	179	0.00	12.11	10.20	14.02

As p was proved to be lower than 0.05 and the mean score came out to be 126.11 that was higher than the test value=114, the EFL university students were shown to have positive attitudes towards the developed EAP culture-bound content. Further, the posttest descriptive results in the present study embracing the standard deviation and mean pertaining to all participants are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics Pertaining to the Pretest and the Posttest Scores

		Pre- test		Post- test	
Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Oral Presentation	50	8.90	1.69	18.98	0.78
Systematic Writing	50	9.10	1.59	16.63	0.48
Total	100	9.00	1.64	17.80	0.63

Concerning Table 5, the students' pretest scores were shown to be homogeneous, yet the mean scores were different significantly in their posttest thanks to each group's treatment. This indicated that both groups' pre and post-test scores were distributed normally.

Accordingly, based on One-Sample Kolmogrov-Smirnov test, the oral presentation group' pretest scores (z pretest=0.19, α=0.20) and those of posttest (z posttest=0.21, α=0.20) were proved to be normal; similarly, the systematic writing group' pretest (z pretest=0.21, α=0.20) and posttest scores (z posttest=0.25, α=0.20) came out to be normal.

Table 6

Paired Samples t-test Results on the Two Groups Mean Scores

Group	Pair	N	Mean	SD	MD	Df	T	Sig.
Oral Presentation	Pretest	50	8.98	0.78				
	Posttest	50	8.90	1.69	10.08	49	0.51	0.00
Systematic Writing	Pretest	50	16.63	0.48				
	Posttest	50	9.10	1.59	7.53	49	30.72	0.00

The presented data in Table 6 reflected the paired samples t-test results on the mean scores differences of the Oral Presentation and Systematic Writing groups in the pretest and posttest that were significant statistically at P<0.05; hence, it can be summed up that culture-bound

content significantly influenced the EFL students' Oral presentation and Systematic Writing separately. That is, the mean score difference pertaining to Oral Presentation group (10.08) indicated the extent of culture-oriented content impact on the EFL students' speaking skill development as a result of the abovementioned treatment. Similarly, the obtained mean score difference of Systematic Writing group (7.53) revealed the extent of culture-bound content impact on the EFL students' writing skill development as a result of the aforementioned treatment.

Table 7

Independent Samples t-test Results on the Two Groups Posttest Mean Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	19.69	.00	18.08	98	.00	2.35	.12	2.09	2.60
	Equal variances not assumed			18.08	81.56	.00	2.35	.12	2.09	2.60

According to the results in table 7, one can figure out that since P was lower than 5% (P<5) p=0, the difference between the means obtained from the t – test was statistically different. Regarding Levene's test for variances equality, as F=19.69, p>0.05, the identical variances assumption was accepted. Further, t (98)=18.08; p<0.05 .Similarly, since the first hypothesis was shown to be one-tailed, P value ,which was obtained by dividing Sig.(2-tailed) by two, equaled 0.00, so it could be deciphered that the first hypothesis was verified; hence, culture-bound content had a stronger impact on the EFL learners' speaking skill than their writing skill.

4.1. Discussion

The Iranian EAP university students' positive attitudes towards culture-bound content based on Mukundan et al. (2011) textbook evaluation checklist, reflected Kavaliauskiene and Uzpaliene's (2003) notion of utilizing needs analysis as an analytic tool to prognosticate the students' forthcoming demands. Culture-bound contents, similarly, were shown to be efficacious on learning productive skills. This finding has already been affirmed by Subroto et al. (2019). They concluded that socio-cultural contents influence university students' productive skills. Further, this finding seems to match Kramsch's (2013) notion that postulates the utility of native culture as the bedrock of institutionalizing foreign culture in the language education period. In other words, as held by Labiste Jr (2019), application of native culture, as the reflection of native language, leads to language efficiency as well as ethnolinguistic (Marszałek-Kowalewska, 2011) and social (Ahmadi, 2012) solidarity. Moreover, it corroborates Mahardika's (2018) conceptual viewpoint

that EFL materials developers are expected to emphasize the native culture to attenuate the impacts of cultural intrusion. This testifies Andrade's (2014) perspective of neutralizing the potential threats of cultural intrusion by utilizing Persian culture-bound contents, for developing user-friendly EAP textbooks.

Likewise, the result obtained from Table 6 that strongly endorsed the effect of culture-bound content on the Iranian EFL university students' productive skills is congruent with Hyland's (2006) opinion regarding the pivotal role of productive skills in manifestation and development of culture-bound EAP materials. That is, Iranian EFL university students' speaking skill was significantly affected by Persian culture-oriented content in oral presentation treatment sessions. This result is congruent with Bennett's (2019) viewpoint of enhancing university students' speaking skill via oral presentation which is promoted, according to Kelly (2018), through socio-cultural dimensions. Similarly, Iranian EFL university students' writing skill was significantly influenced by Persian culture-bound content in systematic writing treatment sessions. This finding attests Shukri's (2014) perspective of promoting university students' writing skill through promoting their socio-cultural and humanistic dimension. Moreover, this result is a testimony to Zabawa's (2001) notion of highlighting the effects of socio-cultural setting on productive skills and the significance of applying them in the textbook. Correspondingly, Kirschner and Wexler's (2002) achievements which stress the impact of culture-centered contents on the course design endorse the effect of Persian culture-bound content on the Iranian EFL university students' productive skills. More specifically, the Persian culture-bound contents, as argued by Najmabadi (2005), enhance Iranian EFL university students' productive skills. A wide range of culture- bound issues was utilized for designing and developing the abovementioned EAP textbook. One of these culture-bound premises pertained to Gray's (2013) concept of cultural appropriateness which emphasizes the function of socio-cultural and ethnocentric contents while communicating with English speaking societies. This conception verifies Tomlinson's (2013) notion of hidden curriculum which contemplates textbooks as covert manifestation of linguocultural pedagogy. In this respect, the aforementioned EAP textbook which was indicated to reflect inside-the-class motivation (Brinton, 2003) and attention (Mede & Yalcin, 2019) in the culture-oriented treatment sessions was developed and practiced on the basis of cultural appropriateness and its hidden curriculum. In addition, the result obtained from Table 7 indicates the superiority of Iranian EFL university students' enhancement of speaking skill thanks to the noticeable influence of culture-bound content through oral presentation. This verifies Bennett's (2019) notion of applying oral presentation, as a panacea for developing the university students' speaking skill. This, as contended by Kelly (2018), may stem from the oral presenters' multi-faceted socio-cultural traits, the oral presentation time span, and the degree of shared knowledge that can enhance the students' speaking skill.

5. Conclusion and Implications

The present study aimed at investigating the influence of culture-bound content on the Iranian EFL university students' productive skills within CBLT program. In this respect, the results obtained from table 6 illustrated the effect of such contents on speaking and writing skills separately.

Furthermore, the EFL university students' inner satisfaction was highlighted by their pertinent feedback to the aforementioned Mukundan et al. (2011) textbook evaluation checklist. Based on such an analytic framework, the EFL teachers are provoked to provide their students with a wide range of productive tasks in their EAP courses. More specifically, classroom oral presentation as a functional speaking provoking technique can be appropriately implemented through culture-bound content. Hence, Iranian EFL university students are recommended to play their linguistic transferring role in the aforementioned plane and to put authentic interactive skills in practice (Kavaliauskiene & Uzpaliene, 2003). This is postulated to materialize through developing productive skills especially by executing oral presentation in such CBLT programs.

Moreover, regarding this analysis, Iranian EAP material developers are supposed to notice the privilege of the native culture, argued Kramsch (2013), as the distinguishing yardstick for determining the degree to which the second culture materials are incorporated in EFL teaching and learning arenas. Vitiating or neglecting cultural awareness, as held by Mahardika (2018), may beget the endorsement of a super-ordinate Western culture-bound contents development. It is due to this theory of conspiracy that its advocators consider content synthesis of this nature to be affected noticeably by cultural imperialism. From such a viewpoint, argued Philipson (1992), such manipulation of language contents, lay a foundation for ascendancy of the Western fundamental value systems and social stereotypes. To consent with the abovementioned argument, common English language functions can be postulated as 'Lingua Tyrannosaura' (Swales, 1997; Ammon, 2001; Phillipson, 2002) thanks to its zero sum extent of implications. That is, the higher a particular material content weighing, the further Persian linguocultural marginalization.

As a 'damage-neutralization' strategy, the Iranian EAP textbook designers and material developers are expected to encompass the Persian liguocultural settings in their educational texts. That approach, as Zabawa (2001) pinpointed, are contemplated to designate the manners of adopting language skills and sub-skills along with their functions in textbooks and other academic contents. The achievements of this research like any other are not deplete from limitations. Initially, the utilized sampling method in the current study was based on the presence of 100 EFL university students at Islamic Azad University, Dezful Branch. Similar researches incorporating a more comprehensive sample can depict more generalizable outcomes. Further, those EFL university students whose age was between 18 to 32 partook in this study and responded to the pre and posttests and the aforementioned checklists. Since age is considered a significant factor in L2 learning, replicating the current study with other age groups may result in new results. Similarly,

the intermediate level EFL university students were recruited for the present study on the basis of the EAP textbook level of development. Forthcoming studies can delve into the influence of such treatments across a wider range of proficiency levels based on the pertaining levels of other EAP textbooks.

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Appendix

Checklist for Selecting Culture-oriented Topics

	Culture-oriented Topics Based on Ethnographically-oriented Research		2	3	4	5
	A. Greetings					
1.	Iranians pay a lot of attention to greetings in their communications.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The most widespread type of greeting in Iran is having a handshake.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Having warm greetings reflects our politeness in Iran.	1	2	3	4	5
B.	**Nowrouz**					
4.	Nowrouz is rooted in the Persian culture.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Nearly all Iranian people enjoy celebrating Nowrouz.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Nowrouz seems the best time to visit relatives and friends.	1	2	3	4	5
C.	**Souvenirs**					
7.	Each city in Iran is famous for at least a special souvenir.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Iranians are expected to buy souvenirs after a journey.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Iranian souvenirs are known all over the world.	1	2	3	4	5
D.	**Tourist Attractions**					
10.	Visiting tourist attractions in Iran seems enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Many tourist attractions in Iran are rooted in history.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Tourists realize the Persian civilization by visiting Iranian tourist attractions	1	2	3	4	5
E.	**Dishes**					
13.	You can find a myriad of delicious ethnic foods in each province.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Ethnic foods and drinks in Iran reflect a strong socio-cultural identity	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Iranian Kebob, Dizi, and Qorme Sabzi stew are served in other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
F.	**Traditional Clothes**					
16.	Iranian young generation is fond of knowing about traditional clothes	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Different types of traditional clothes exist in each province.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The old generation still prefers to appear in public by traditional clothes	1	2	3	4	5
G.	**Wedding**					
19.	Iranian wedding customs are eye-grabbing to a great extent.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Wedding customs in Iran are intertwined with the Persian culture.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Regional wedding ceremonies add to the beauties of national wedding customs in Iran.	1	2	3	4	5
H.	**Religion**					
22.	Iranian culture is interwoven with religion, especially Islam.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Iranian people adore the Infallible Shiite Imams and respect them.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	The love of the Infallible can be manifested through holding special ceremonies like Ashura, and Imam Ali's (P.B.U.H) martyrdom anniversary.	1	2	3	4	5
I.	**Lifestyle**					
25.	Visitors enjoy knowing more about the Iranian lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	To know Iran better, one is recommended to study the Iranian lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Complementation (Ta'arof) has a significant role in the Iranian lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5
	J. Ancient Iran					
28.	Each era in the history of the Persian culture represents the Persian civilization.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Nationalism (Love of Country) is intertwined with the Persian culture	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Iranian people are proud of their past.	1	2	3	4	5