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Whose English, whose culture? A Kachruvian analysis of source-culture dominance, representational depth and interaction in Türkiye's secondary EFL textbooks

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Abstract

Studies applying Kachru's Three Concentric Circles model to English textbooks have largely examined globally marketed coursebooks and counted how often each circle appears. Far less is known about locally produced, state-approved series, about how deeply each circle is represented, and about who is shown talking to whom. This study analyzed the complete series of four English textbooks approved by the Turkish Ministry of National Education for Grades 9–12. Using quantitative content analysis, 425 page-level cultural references were coded for circle (with the Expanding Circle split into Türkiye and other countries), Moran's cultural dimensions, and depth (token, surface, deep). In addition, 55 named interaction episodes and 172 fictional character names were examined. Inter-coder agreement was almost perfect (κ = .888–.933). Contrary to the Inner Circle dominance reported for global coursebooks, Türkiye was the most represented country (27.76%), ahead of the Inner Circle (26.59%), while the Outer Circle remained marginal (6.59%). Depth differed sharply by circle, $\chi^2(6) = 92.29$, $p < .001$, $V = .33$: Türkiye supplied 60% of all deep references, the Inner Circle was represented superficially, and other Expanding Circle countries appeared mostly as tokens. Yet 78.18% of interactions took place among Inner Circle speakers, and no Turkish character interacted with an Outer or non-Turkish Expanding Circle speaker. The series thus makes Türkiye the main topic of English while retaining the Inner Circle as its main voice. Implications for materials development and English as a lingua franca pedagogy are discussed.

Keywords: Kachru's three concentric circles, cultural representation, EFL textbooks, source culture, English as a lingua franca

Kimin İngilizcesi, kimin kültürü? Türkiye'deki ortaöğretim İngilizce ders kitaplarında kaynak kültürün baskınlığı, temsil derinliği ve etkileşime dair Kachruvian bir analiz

Özet

Kachru'nun Üç Çember modeline dayanan ders kitabı çalışmaları çoğunlukla küresel ölçekte pazarlanan kitapları incelemiş ve her çemberin ne sıklıkla temsil edildiğini saymıştır. Yerel olarak üretilen ve devlet onaylı serilerde çemberlerin ne derinlikte temsil edildiği ve kimin kiminle konuştuğu ise yeterince bilinmemektedir. Bu çalışmada Millî Eğitim Bakanlığınca 9–12. sınıflar için onaylanan dört İngilizce ders kitabından oluşan seri incelenmiştir. Nicel içerik analiziyle sayfa düzeyinde 425 kültürel referans; çember (genişleyen çember Türkiye ve diğer ülkeler olarak ayrılarak), Moran'ın kültürel boyutu ve temsil derinliği (sembolik, yüzeysel, derin) açısından kodlanmış; ayrıca 55 adlandırılmış etkileşim epizodu ve 172 kurgusal karakter adı incelenmiştir. Kodlayıcılar arası uyum neredeyse mükemmeldir (κ = ,888–,933). Küresel kitaplar için bildirilen iç çember baskınlığının aksine, en çok temsil edilen ülke Türkiye'dir (%27,76); iç çember %26,59, dış çember ise %6,59 düzeyinde kalmıştır. Temsil derinliği çemberlere göre belirgin biçimde farklılaşmıştır, $\chi^2(6) = 92,29$, $p < ,001$, $V = ,33$: Derin

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referansların %60'ı Türkiye'ye aittir; iç çember yüzeysel, diğer genişleyen çember ülkeleri ise çoğunlukla sembolik düzeyde temsil edilmiştir. Buna karşın, etkileşimlerin %78,18'i iç çember konuşucuları arasında gerçekleşmekte; hiçbir Türk karakter, dış çember ya da Türkiye dışındaki genişleyen çember konuşucularıyla etkileşime girmemektedir. Seri, Türkiye'yi İngilizcenin başlıca konusu yaparken iç çemberi de başlıca sesi olarak korur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kachru'nun Üç İç İçe Çember Modeli, kültürel temsil, İngilizce ders kitapları, kaynak kültür, ortak dil olarak İngilizce

Introduction

English is now used far more often between speakers for whom it is an additional language than between native speakers and their learners (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011). This sociolinguistic reality has prompted calls to teach English as an international language and to prepare learners for encounters with speakers from many backgrounds, rather than for assimilation into a single native-speaker culture (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Matsuda, 2012; McKay, 2002). Textbooks are central to this question. In many English as a foreign language (EFL) settings they are the main, and sometimes the only, source of cultural input, and they carry implicit messages about whose English counts and whose culture deserves attention (Gray, 2010; Risager, 2018; Weninger & Kiss, 2013).

Kachru's (1985, 1992) Three Concentric Circles model offers a widely used lens for examining these messages. The Inner Circle includes countries where English is the primary language, such as the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland. The Outer Circle includes post-colonial settings where English has institutional functions, such as India, Nigeria, Singapore and Kenya. The Expanding Circle includes countries where English is learned and used as a foreign language, such as Türkiye, Japan, Germany and Brazil. The model has been criticized for its nation-based categories and its static view of speakers (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Nevertheless, it remains a practical instrument for asking which parts of the English-using world a textbook brings into the classroom (Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020; Ulum, 2023).

Culture in EFL textbooks

Research on culture in language textbooks has long distinguished between the learners' own culture (source culture), the cultures of Inner Circle countries (target culture) and other cultures (international target culture) (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Early critiques warned that materials built around target-language culture can alienate learners and limit their ability to talk about their own world in English (Alptekin, 1993, 2002). Later work showed that the cultural content of textbooks also varies in kind and depth. Kramsch (1991) criticized reducing culture to the "four Fs" of foods, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts. Moran (2001) proposed five dimensions of culture: products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons. Yuen (2011) applied a related framework to Hong Kong textbooks and found that products dominated, perspectives were rare, and English-speaking countries were favoured over Africa and Asia.

Studies of globally marketed coursebooks have repeatedly reported Inner Circle dominance. Shin et al. (2011) found that international EFL textbooks represented mainly Inner Circle cultures and treated culture mostly as traditional knowledge. Syrbe and Rose (2018) showed that English textbooks used in Germany relied on UK models and presented static images of language users, even though most learners would use English as a European lingua franca. Tajeddin and Pakzadian (2020) reported that Inner Circle accents dominated the audio

material of three global textbooks, even when references to other countries were frequent. Similarly, Ulum (2023) found that 71.00% of cultural references in a globally published resource book belonged to the Inner Circle, and only 3.01% to the Outer Circle.

The Turkish context

In Türkiye, English is a compulsory school subject, and state schools use textbooks approved or produced by the Ministry of National Education [MoNE]. The secondary-level curriculum adopted in 2018 frames English as a means of international communication and integrates values education across subjects (MoNE, 2018). Research on Turkish textbooks has produced mixed findings. Kırkgöz and Ağçam (2011) found that locally published primary textbooks represented source, target and international cultures in a fairly balanced way. Çelik and Erbay (2013) reported that state-issued coursebooks included a range of cultures but gave Europe more attention than other regions. Böcü and Razı (2016) found that a global series used in Türkiye covered many cultures but included few references to Turkish culture. Ulum and Köksal (2020) showed that both global and local textbooks carry ideological messages about English and its users. More recently, Çalışkan (2022) found that target culture was the most frequent category in a MoNE secondary series, whereas products dominated and perspectives were the least represented aspect.

The gap and the present study

Three gaps emerge from this literature. First, most Kachruvian analyses examine global coursebooks. Locally produced, state-approved series are rarely examined as a complete grade sequence. Second, studies typically report how often each circle appears but not how deeply it is represented. A country that appears only as an answer option in a grammar exercise is counted in the same way as a country whose values are discussed. Third, few studies ask who is shown interacting with whom. This question matters because English as a lingua franca (ELF) pedagogy depends on whether learners see speakers like themselves using English with speakers from other circles (Matsuda, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2011). A further conceptual issue arises when the model is applied to an Expanding Circle country's own materials. Treating the learners' own country as one more Expanding Circle member may hide source-culture dominance behind an apparently diverse profile.

To address these gaps, the present study extends Kachru's model in two ways. It separates Türkiye from the rest of the Expanding Circle, and it combines circle membership with representational depth and interactional positioning. The study examines the complete Grade 9–12 English textbook series approved by MoNE and addresses the following research questions:

1. How are cultural references distributed across the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles when Türkiye is treated as a separate category, and does this distribution change across grades?
2. Through which cultural dimensions and at what depth is each circle represented, and how does depth change across grades?
3. Which circles do the speakers and characters in the textbooks belong to, and with whom are Turkish characters shown communicating in English?
4. To what extent does the circle profile of what the textbooks talk about (content) correspond to that of who does the talking (voice)?

Method

Research design

This study employed a descriptive design based on quantitative content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019), supported by qualitative examination of the coded excerpts.

Corpus

The corpus consisted of the four English textbooks approved by the Board of Education of MoNE for use in Grades 9–12 of state secondary schools (Table 1). Each book was analysed from the first page of its first theme to the last page of its last theme. Front matter, word lists, irregular-verb lists, answer keys and bibliographies were excluded. A total of 505 pages were analysed. This series was selected because it is the most recent complete Grade 9–12 sequence developed under a single curriculum. Textbooks prepared under the Türkiye Century Education Model have been introduced one grade per year since 2024 and do not yet form a complete secondary series. Analysing the 2018–2019 series therefore allows the whole grade sequence to be examined and provides a baseline against which the new textbooks can be compared.

Table 1. Textbooks analysed

Grade	Author(s)	Publisher, year	Pages analysed
9	Karamıl & Birincioğlu Kaldar	Pasifik Yayınları, 2019	120
10	Genç Karataş	Gizem Yayıncılık, 2018	146
11	Akgedik Can & Atcan Altan	Cem Web Ofset, 2019	144
12	Çimen et al.	MEB Devlet Kitapları, 2019	95
Total			**505**

Note. All four books were approved by the MoNE Board of Education for five years of use in state secondary schools.

Unit of analysis and data extraction

The unit of analysis was the page-level cultural reference. A reference was defined as one country, or a person, place, product, or practice attributable to it, appearing on one page. Repeated mentions of the same country on the same page were counted once. This decision prevented unit titles such as *Facts about Turkey* or long reading texts on a single country from inflating the counts. Raw mention counts were also recorded. Candidate references were extracted with a gazetteer of countries, nationalities, cities, landmarks and real persons, and each candidate was then examined and coded manually in context. The Grade 9 book was available only as page images and was digitised with optical character recognition before extraction. Of 434 candidate references, nine were excluded as false matches (for example, the idiom “like a China shop”) or as duplicates, leaving 425 valid references.

Coding scheme

Each reference was coded on three layers. The first layer was circle membership based on Kachru (1985, 1992). The Expanding Circle was divided into Expanding–Türkiye (the source culture) and Expanding–Other. The second layer was the cultural dimension in Moran’s (2001) framework: products (places, artefacts, food, works), practices (customs, festivals, behaviours), perspectives (values, beliefs, attitudes), communities (social groups, institutions, historical collectives) and persons (named real individuals). The third layer was depth. A *token*

reference was a mere mention, such as a country name in a grammar exercise, an answer option or a list. A *surface* reference was descriptive or touristic content, including the "four F" type (Kramsch, 1991), landmarks and celebrity facts. A *deep* reference engaged with values, norms, beliefs, social issues or historical and ethical meaning. References presenting national groups through fixed character traits were also flagged as stereotyped generalisations. Each reference received a single code on each of the three layers, so that all 425 references were coded for circle, cultural dimension and depth. The dimension and depth layers were coded independently. Typical examples from the corpus illustrate the categories. Products included places to visit, landmarks and dishes, such as the Taj Mahal or the sari, and persons included named real individuals such as Aziz Sancar, Canan Dağdeviren and Naim Süleymanoğlu. Token references included sentences such as "Jack wants to go to Rome, Paris, and Moscow" and answer options such as "a. Italy b. Germany c. France". Surface references included landmarks, safari destinations in Kenya, Zambia and South Africa, and celebrity facts about Inner Circle figures. Deep references included tipping norms in the USA, the meaning of the two Eids and helping the poor during Ramadan, and the forced renaming of the weightlifter Naim Süleymanoğlu in Bulgaria.

Interaction and character analysis

To examine interactional positioning, we identified all dialogues, telephone calls, letter exchanges, interviews, and comment threads with at least two named participants. This yielded 55 interaction episodes. Participants were assigned to circles according to their stated nationality or, when no nationality was stated, the cultural origin of their names. Dialogues with role labels only (e.g., A/B) were excluded. In addition, all distinct fictional character names were classified as Anglo, Turkish, or Other after real persons were removed.

Reliability

A second coder independently coded all 425 valid references on the three layers using the same coding manual. Cohen's (1960) kappa coefficients, with bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals, indicated near-perfect agreement across all layers (Landis & Koch, 1977), as shown in Table 2. Kappa values exceeded .84 for every layer in every grade. Interaction episodes and character names were coded by the researcher only.

Table 2. Inter-coder reliability

Coding layer	*n*	Agreement (%)	Disagreements	Cohen's κ	95% CI
Circle	425	95.29	20	.933	.902–.959
Cultural dimension	425	94.12	25	.917	.883–.947
Depth	425	93.18	29	.888	.846–.924

Note. CI = bootstrapped confidence interval (2,000 resamples).

Data analysis and ethics

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for all categories. Associations between categorical variables were tested with Pearson's chi-square test, and effect sizes were reported as Cramér's *V*. Adjusted standardized residuals ($|r| \geq 1.96$) were used to identify cells that departed significantly from expected values. Because the textbooks are publicly available documents and no human participants were involved, ethics committee approval was not required.

Results and Findings

Distribution of cultural references across the circles

The first research question concerned the distribution of cultural references across the circles. As Table 3 shows, the Inner Circle did not dominate the series. It accounted for 26.59% of references, behind the non-Turkish Expanding Circle (39.06%) and close to Türkiye alone (27.76%). The Outer Circle was marginal, at 6.59%.

Table 3. Cultural references by circle and grade

Circle	Grade 9		Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12		Total	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
Inner	22	27.16	29	22.31	49	30.25	13	25.00	113	26.59
Outer	5	6.17	13	10.00	7	4.32	3	5.77	28	6.59
Expanding–Türkiye	26	32.10	32	24.62	49	30.25	11	21.15	118	27.76
Expanding–Other	28	34.57	56	43.08	57	35.19	25	48.08	166	39.06
Total	**81**	**100**	**130**	**100**	**162**	**100**	**52**	**100**	**425**	**100**

Note. Percentages are calculated within each grade (column %).

The distribution did not differ significantly across grades, $\chi^2(9, N = 425) = 10.26$, $p = .330$, $V = .09$, and no adjusted residual reached $|1.96|$. The circle profile was therefore a stable feature of the series rather than of a single book. The Outer Circle reached its highest share in Grade 10 (10.00%), but six of its 13 references in that book came from one reading text that listed beaches and safari destinations.

Türkiye was the single most represented country in the series (Table 4). It accounted for 118 references (27.76%), more than the USA and the UK combined (96; 22.59%). When raw mentions rather than pages were counted, Türkiye's share rose to 48.01% (616 of 1,283 mentions).

Table 4. The twelve most represented countries

Rank	Country	Circle	*f*	%
1	Türkiye	Expanding–Türkiye	118	27.76
2	USA	Inner	57	13.41
3	UK	Inner	39	9.18
4	France	Expanding–Other	22	5.18
4	Italy	Expanding–Other	22	5.18
6	India	Outer	16	3.76
7	Germany	Expanding–Other	15	3.53
8	Spain	Expanding–Other	12	2.82
9	Japan	Expanding–Other	11	2.59
9	Greece	Expanding–Other	11	2.59
11	Russia	Expanding–Other	10	2.35
12	Australia	Inner	8	1.88
–	44 other countries	Mixed	84	19.76
Total	**56 countries**		**425**	**100**

Note. Percentages are calculated out of 425 references.

Each circle was represented through a narrow core. The USA and the UK supplied 84.96% of Inner Circle references (96 of 113), and India supplied 57.14% of Outer Circle references (16 of 28). The non-Turkish Expanding Circle was the most diverse category, with 38 countries, but five Western European countries (France, Italy, Germany, Spain and Greece) accounted for

49.40% of its references (82 of 166). Had Kachru's original three circles been used, the Expanding Circle would have appeared to dominate the series (66.82%). The extended model shows that 41.55% of this Expanding Circle share (118 of 284) was the learners' own country.

Cultural dimensions and depth of representation

The second research question concerned how each circle was represented and whether the depth of representation changed across grades. Products dominated every circle (Table 5), while practices and perspectives together accounted for only 13.41% of references.

Table 5. Cultural dimensions by circle

Circle	Products		Practices		Perspectives		Communities		Persons		Total
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*
Inner	49	43.36	5	4.42	7	6.19	25	22.12	27	23.89	113
Outer	12	42.86	3	10.71	2	7.14	8	28.57	3	10.71	28
Expanding–Türkiye	40	33.90	9	7.63	10	8.47	23	19.49	36	30.51	118
Expanding–Other	85	51.20	11	6.63	10	6.02	43	25.90	17	10.24	166
Total	**186**	**43.76**	**28**	**6.59**	**29**	**6.82**	**99**	**23.29**	**83**	**19.53**	**425**

Note. Percentages are calculated within each circle (row %).

The association between circle and dimension was significant but weak, $\chi^2(12, N = 425) = 25.60$, $p = .012$, $V = .14$. Two of 20 cells had expected counts below five. Adjusted residuals showed that Türkiye was over-represented through persons ($r = 3.54$) and under-represented through products ($r = -2.54$). The non-Turkish Expanding Circle showed the reverse pattern (products $r = 2.48$; persons $r = -3.87$). Turkish culture was thus personified through figures such as Aziz Sancar, Canan Dağdeviren, Nene Hatun, Matrakçı Nasuh, Naim Süleymanoğlu and Nasreddin Hodja. Other Expanding Circle countries, by contrast, appeared mostly as places to visit or dishes to eat.

Differences between the circles were much sharper for depth than for frequency (Table 6). Circle and depth were strongly associated, $\chi^2(6, N = 425) = 92.29$, $p < .001$, $V = .33$, which was the largest effect in the analysis. Nearly half of all references (47.29%) were tokens.

Table 6. Depth of representation by circle

Circle	Token			Surface			Deep			Total
	f	%	*r*	*f*	%	*r*	*f*	%	*r*	*f*
Inner	58	51.33	1.00	50	44.25	1.14	5	4.42	−3.15*	113
Outer	13	46.43	−0.09	14	50.00	1.14	1	3.57	−1.53	28
Expanding–Türkiye	18	15.25	−8.20*	67	56.78	4.44*	33	27.97	5.72*	118
Expanding–Other	112	67.47	6.67*	38	22.89	−5.69*	16	9.64	−1.62	166
Total	**201**	**47.29**		**169**	**39.76**		**55**	**12.94**		**425**

Note. Row %. *r* = adjusted standardised residual; $|r^*| \geq 1.96$.

Each circle showed a distinct profile. Türkiye was rarely a token (15.25%; $r = -8.20$) and was the only circle significantly over-represented at the deep level (27.97%; $r = 5.72$). Türkiye supplied 60.00% of all deep references (33 of 55). Examples included the meaning of the two Eids and helping the poor during Ramadan, Turkish proverbs, collectivist values in the *Values and Norms* theme, a charity foundation for children in need, and the forced renaming of the weightlifter Naim Süleymanoğlu in Bulgaria. The Inner Circle was frequent but shallow (deep: 4.42%; $r = -3.15$). It appeared mainly through celebrity facts, landmarks, and university names. Its only deep references were tipping norms in the USA, Oppenheimer and the ethics of the

atomic bomb (two references), *Oliver Twist* and child poverty, and Hyde Park as a space for free speech.

The non-Turkish Expanding Circle functioned mostly as a vocabulary of place names. Two-thirds of its references were tokens (67.47%; $r = 6.67$), as in "Jack wants to go to Rome, Paris, and Moscow" or answer options such as "a. Italy b. Germany c. France". The Outer Circle never went beyond the surface level except once, in a Grade 12 listening text on Indian body language and eating manners. Otherwise, India appeared through the Taj Mahal, the sari and Diwali, and Kenya, Zambia and South Africa appeared only as safari destinations.

Depth also changed across grades (Table 7). The share of deep references rose from 1.23% in Grade 9 to 30.77% in Grade 12, $\chi^2(6, N = 425) = 50.71$, $p < .001$, $V = .24$. Deep content was significantly under-represented in Grade 9 ($r = -3.49$) and over-represented in Grade 12 ($r = 4.09$), and Grade 9 was significantly surface-heavy ($r = 5.50$).

Table 7. Depth of representation by grade

Depth	Grade 9		Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
Token	26	32.10	69	53.08	84	51.85	22	42.31
Surface	54	66.67	50	38.46	51	31.48	14	26.92
Deep	1	1.23	11	8.46	27	16.67	16	30.77
Total	**81**	**100**	**130**	**100**	**162**	**100**	**52**	**100**

Note. Percentages are calculated within each grade (column %).

Türkiye led this deepening. Its deep references increased from 1 of 26 in Grade 9 to 19 of 49 in Grade 11 and 6 of 11 in Grade 12. For all other circles combined, the corresponding figures were 0 of 55 in Grade 9 and 8 of 113 in Grade 11. Grade 12 was the only book in which non-Turkish content was treated in depth and sustainedly (10 of 41 references), mainly through its *Human Rights* and *Manners* themes.

Ten references (2.35%) presented national groups through fixed character traits. Seven of these appeared in a single Grade 9 unit, *Bridging Cultures*: "German people: punctual, cold, hard-working, disciplined", "Italian people: cheerful … They love talking in a loud voice or shouting", "Americans would easily start conversations" and "If you have a problem in New York, no one will help you". Grade 11 contained a positive auto-stereotype in the same register: "Turkish people are not only hospitable but also generous." Thus, the unit designed to build intercultural understanding relied most heavily on national stereotypes.

Interaction: who talks with whom

The third research question concerned the circle membership of the speakers and characters in the series and the interlocutors with whom Turkish characters were shown communicating. Although Türkiye dominated what the textbooks talked about, Inner Circle speakers dominated who did the talking. Of the 55 named interaction episodes, 43 (78.18%) took place entirely among Inner Circle or Anglo-named speakers (Table 8).

Table 8. Named interaction episodes by participant circles and grade

Participants	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total *f*	%
Inner – Inner	8	19	1	15	43	78.18
Türkiye – Inner	1	0	2	1	4	7.27
Expanding–Other – Inner	2	1	0	0	3	5.45
Expanding–Other – Expanding–Other	2	0	0	0	2	3.64
Inner – Outer	0	0	1	0	1	1.82
Multinational (without Türkiye)	0	1	0	0	1	1.82
Türkiye – Türkiye	1	0	0	0	1	1.82
Türkiye – Outer	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Türkiye – Expanding–Other	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Total	**14**	**21**	**4**	**16**	**55**	**100**

Note. Expected frequencies were too small for a chi-square test, so the table is reported descriptively.

Turkish characters took part in only 5 of the 55 episodes (9.09%). In four of these, the partner was an Inner Circle speaker: Selma introduced by her husband Michael, Mehmet arranging a job interview with Stella Stone, Emre talking with Melanie from San Francisco, and Mina talking with Judy. No Turkish character ever interacted with an Outer Circle or non-Turkish Expanding Circle speaker. These are the lingua franca encounters that Turkish learners are most likely to have outside the classroom.

Other cultures were more often talked about than heard. In a Grade 10 festival blog, Indian, Chinese, Canadian, American and Mexican commenters described their festivals to one another. Turkish learners did not join the thread and were instead asked afterward to describe the Eids to their classmates. In Grade 12, two Anglo-named speakers, Michelle and Kevin, discussed the manners of China, India and Brazil, and no speaker from those countries took part.

The same pattern held for the characters who populate the series as a whole, not only for those who appear in named interactions (Table 9). Three-quarters of the 172 distinct character names in the series were Anglo. Grade 11 was the only book with a substantial Turkish cast (31.91%), but most of those names appeared in grammar review pages rather than in communicative texts.

Table 9. Distinct fictional character names by cultural origin

Grade	Anglo		Turkish		Other		Total
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*
9	38	79.17	5	10.42	5	10.42	48
10	76	88.37	4	4.65	6	6.98	86
11	27	57.45	15	31.91	5	10.64	47
12	51	89.47	2	3.51	4	7.02	57
Series	**129**	**75.00**	**24**	**13.95**	**19**	**11.05**	**172**

Note. Row %. Real persons were excluded. The series row counts distinct names across all four books.

Topic versus voice

The fourth research question compared the circle profile of the content with that of the speakers. Table 10 brings together the relevant figures from Tables 3, 6, 8 and 9. Because the units differ (page-level references, interaction episodes and distinct character names), the comparison is descriptive.

Table 10. Share of the Inner Circle and Türkiye in content and voice

Indicator	Unit	Inner Circle (%)	Türkiye (%)
Cultural references	425 references	26.59	27.76
Deep references	55 references	9.09	60.00
Interaction episodes with at least one participant from the category	55 episodes	92.73	9.09
Interaction episodes entirely within the category	55 episodes	78.18	1.82
Fictional character names	172 names	75.00 (Anglo)	13.95

Note. Percentages are calculated within each unit.

The two profiles diverge. As a topic, Türkiye was represented as often as the Inner Circle and far more deeply, supplying 60.00% of all deep references. As a voice, however, it was nearly absent. Turkish characters took part in fewer than one in ten interaction episodes and made up about one in seven fictional names. The Inner Circle showed the reverse profile: it was the subject of about a quarter of the references, was rarely treated in depth, and supplied at least one participant in nearly all interaction episodes and three-quarters of the cast. The Outer and non-Turkish Expanding Circles were weak on both dimensions, but they were more present as content (45.65% of references combined) than as voice. When they did appear in interactions, they were mostly described by others or speaking among themselves, never with a Turkish character.

Discussion

The first finding challenges the assumption that Inner Circle dominance is a general feature of EFL textbooks. In the global resource book examined by Ulum (2023), 71.00% of cultural references belonged to the Inner Circle. In the MoNE series, the Inner Circle accounted for only 26.59%, and the learners' own country was the most represented single country. This result differs from studies of global coursebooks (Shin et al., 2011; Syrbe & Rose, 2018; Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020; Yuen, 2011) and from Böcü and Razı's (2016) finding that a global series used in Türkiye largely ignored Turkish culture. This aligns more with Kırkgöz and Ağçam's (2011) observation that locally published Turkish textbooks give source culture a substantial place. A similar pattern was reported by Yiğit and Dolgunsöz (2023), who found that the cultural content of a Turkish EFL textbook was dominated by Turkish culture and that its conversations centred on Türkiye and popular culture. Taken together, these studies suggest that source-culture prominence is a recurring feature of locally produced Turkish materials rather than a characteristic of a single series. The concentration of non-Turkish Expanding Circle references in Western Europe also echoes Çelik and Erbay's (2013) finding that Turkish coursebooks gave Europe more attention than other regions. Çalışkan (2022) reported target culture as the most frequent category in a MoNE secondary series. The difference may reflect the unit of analysis: the present study counted each country once per page, whereas mention-based counts favour long texts about single countries. Indeed, Türkiye's share nearly doubled when raw mentions were counted.

This shift towards the source culture can be read positively. Alptekin (1993, 2002) argued that learners need to be able to talk about their own world in English, and McKay (2002) proposed that local culture should be a legitimate content of English teaching. The prominence of Turkish scientists, athletes and cultural figures also fits the 2018 curriculum's emphasis on values education (MoNE, 2018). However, the findings also show that a three-circle count would have concealed this pattern. Under Kachru's original categories, the series would have

appeared oriented toward the Expanding Circle (66.82%) and therefore toward international diversity. Separating the source culture showed that much of that profile was national self-representation, and that the remaining diversity was concentrated in Western Europe. For Kachruvian analyses of locally produced materials, treating the learners' own country as a separate category therefore seems necessary.

The second finding concerns depth. The dominance of products and the scarcity of perspectives replicate earlier findings (Çalışkan, 2022; Yuen, 2011) and illustrate the "four F" reduction criticised by Kramsch (1991). The present analysis adds that depth is distributed unequally across circles. Turkish culture was represented through values, beliefs, history and named people, whereas other cultures were represented through landmarks, food and tokens. This asymmetry can be described as a form of domesticated interculturality: the Self is explored in depth, while the Other is visited as a tourist. This pattern offers learners few opportunities to develop knowledge of others' perspectives and the critical cultural awareness that Byram (1997) identified as central to intercultural communicative competence. The national-character stereotypes found in the *Bridging Cultures* unit are especially problematic. They present cultures as fixed and homogeneous, an essentialist view that intercultural education is meant to challenge (Holliday, 2011). Classroom evidence from Türkiye suggests that this matters in practice. Saygı and Köksal (2024) found that ninth-grade students' views of other cultures initially centred on surface features and national stereotypes, and that a five-week intercultural training broadened these views and increased learners' intercultural knowledge and awareness, although not their attitudes or behaviours. Textbooks that represent other cultures mainly through tokens, landmarks and national character traits may therefore reinforce, rather than challenge, the perspectives learners bring to the classroom. The increase in depth from Grade 9 to Grade 12 is encouraging. However, it was driven by Turkish content and a few themes in Grade 12, suggesting that the deepening reflects thematic choices more than a planned intercultural progression.

The third and fourth findings, which together reveal a gap between topic and voice, are perhaps the study's most important contribution. The series talks mostly about Türkiye but makes Inner Circle speakers its main interlocutors. More than three-quarters of the interactions took place among Anglo-named speakers, three-quarters of the fictional cast was Anglo, and no Turkish character was shown speaking English with an Outer Circle or non-Turkish Expanding Circle speaker. In this way, the textbooks position the Turkish learner as a narrator of national culture to an Inner Circle audience, rather than as a legitimate English user among other users. This positioning reflects the native-speakerist assumption that the native speaker is the natural model and target interlocutor (Holliday, 2006). Turkish K-12 learners' intercultural communicative competence and their perceptions of native English varieties have also been examined experimentally (Saygı, 2025), which underlines the importance of the models of English and the interlocutors that learners encounter in their materials. It also aligns with the concern raised by Syrbe and Rose (2018) that textbooks rarely present the actual interlocutors learners will meet. From an ELF perspective (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011), the absence of Turkish–Outer and Turkish–Expanding encounters is a significant omission. It deprives learners of models for the communicative situations in which they are most likely to use English. Furthermore, when Inner Circle speakers discuss the manners of China, India and Brazil, the textbook reproduces a pattern in which some cultures are the subjects of discourse and others its objects (Weninger & Kiss, 2013). Linguistic imperialism may therefore persist at the level of voice even when it has weakened at the level

of content (Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 1992). These findings also bear on the Türkiye Century Education Model. Its English curriculum emphasises learners' cultural identity and their ability to express national and cultural elements in English, alongside global awareness and intercultural understanding (MoNE, 2024). The present results suggest that the first aim was already largely met in the 2018 series, whereas the second was not: other cultures were represented superficially, and Turkish learners were not shown using English with speakers from other circles. The intercultural aim of the new curriculum therefore depends less on how much Türkiye appears in the textbooks than on whether the textbooks change who speaks and with whom.

Limitations

First, the corpus consisted of the 2018–2019 editions approved for five years of use. The Türkiye Century Education Model (TCEM) has since been phased in grade by grade, and by the 2026–2027 school year new English curricula and textbooks were in use in Grades 9, 10 and 11. The TCEM English curriculum places explicit emphasis on learners' cultural identity and national values while also aiming at global awareness and intercultural understanding (MoNE, 2024). Given that Türkiye was already the most represented and most deeply treated country in the 2018 series, the new textbooks are likely to retain or strengthen source-culture representation. Whether they also deepen the representation of other cultures and narrow the gap between topic and voice remains an open question. The present findings cannot be generalised to the TCEM textbooks, but they offer a baseline for a before–after comparison using the same framework. Second, the analysis focused on written text and tapescripts. Visual elements and audio recordings, including accents, were not analysed. Third, the circle membership of fictional characters whose nationality was not stated was inferred from their names, which may not match their intended identities. Fourth, interaction episodes and character names were coded by a single coder, whereas the reference-level coding was checked by a second coder. Fifth, the page-level unit of analysis is conservative. It reduces the influence of long single-country texts but may under-represent the actual exposure learners receive. Finally, the Grade 9 book was digitised with optical character recognition, so a small number of references may have been missed.

Implications

The findings have implications for textbook writers, teachers and policymakers. For textbook writers, the key priority is to redistribute voice, not just content. Dialogues and listening texts could show Turkish characters using English with speakers from India, Nigeria, Japan, Brazil or Germany in realistic lingua franca situations, such as study abroad, international online projects, tourism and work. Other cultures should also be represented beyond tokens and landmarks, with texts that explain the perspectives behind practices and invite comparison with learners' own perspectives. Units intended to build intercultural understanding should avoid lists of national character traits and instead present variation within cultures.

For teachers, the study suggests three practical steps. First, they can turn token references into opportunities for inquiry, for example by asking learners what they know about a country mentioned in a grammar exercise and how they could find out more, building on the strategies that learners already use to extend their English learning beyond the classroom (Saygı, 2026). Second, they can supplement the books with authentic recordings of Outer and Expanding Circle speakers to develop learners' awareness of World Englishes. Third, they can use the stereotyped texts critically, as material for discussing how generalisations are formed. Short

intercultural training components embedded in English lessons have been shown to broaden secondary learners' cultural perspectives in this context (Saygı & Köksal, 2024). For policymakers and textbook evaluation commissions, the results suggest that evaluation criteria should consider not only the presence of different cultures but also the depth of their representation and the range of interlocutors that learners encounter. Teacher education programmes can also include Global Englishes and materials evaluation components that address these issues (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Matsuda, 2012).

Conclusion

This study examined the complete Grade 9–12 English textbook series approved by MoNE through an extended Kachruvian framework that combined circle membership with representational depth and interactional positioning. The series did not reproduce the Inner Circle dominance reported for global coursebooks. Instead, it was localised in content, with Türkiye as the most represented and most deeply treated country. However, depth was distributed unequally: the Inner Circle was frequent but shallow, other Expanding Circle countries appeared mostly as tokens, and the Outer Circle remained marginal and touristic. Most importantly, the series made Türkiye the main topic of English while keeping the Inner Circle as its main voice, and it did not show Turkish learners using English as a lingua franca with speakers from other circles. These findings are relevant to the Türkiye Century Education Model, under which new English textbooks have replaced the series analysed here. As discussed above, the intercultural aims of the new curriculum will be met only if the new textbooks change who speaks, and with whom. Future research should apply the same framework to the TCEM textbooks, using the present findings as a baseline, to test whether this shift has taken place. Such work could also include visual and audio material and examine how teachers and learners use these representations in the classroom.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş

İngilizce bugün anadili İngilizce olan konuşucular ile öğrenenler arasında olduğundan çok daha sık biçimde, İngilizceyi ek dil olarak kullanan konuşucular arasında kullanılmaktadır. Bu durum, İngilizcenin uluslararası bir dil ya da ortak dil olarak öğretilmesi ve öğrenenlerin farklı geçmişlerden gelen konuşmacılarla karşılaşmaya hazırlanması gerektiği yönündeki görüşleri güçlendirmiştir. Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce bağlamlarında kültürel girdinin başlıca kaynağı olan ders kitapları, kimin İngilizcesinin geçerli sayıldığına ve kimin kültürünün ilgi görmeye hak kazandığına dair örtük mesajlar taşır. Kachru'nun Üç Eş Merkezli Çember modeli bu mesajları incelemek için yaygın biçimde kullanılmaktadır. Modelde iç çember, İngilizcenin birincil dil

olduğu ülkeleri (ABD, Birleşik Krallık vb.), dış çember, İngilizcenin kurumsal işlevler üstlendiği sömürge sonrası ülkeleri (Hindistan, Nijerya vb.), genişleyen çember ise İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğrenildiği ülkeleri (Türkiye, Japonya vb.) kapsamaktadır.

Bu modele dayanan ders kitabı çalışmaları çoğunlukla küresel ölçekte pazarlanan kitapları incelemiş ve iç çember baskınlığını rapor etmiştir. Örneğin, küresel bir kaynak kitapta kültürel referansların %71,00'inin iç çembere, yalnızca %3,01'inin ise dış çembere ait olduğu bulunmuştur (Ulum, 2023). Alanyazında üç boşluk dikkat çekmektedir. Birincisi, yerel olarak üretilen ve devlet onaylı seriler bir sınıf dizisi olarak bütüncül biçimde nadiren incelenmiştir. İkincisi, çalışmalar çemberlerin ne sıklıkla yer aldığını raporlamakta, ancak ne derinlikte temsil edildiğini incelememektedir. Üçüncüsü, kitaplarda kimin kiminle etkileşim kurduğu, yani Türk öğrenenlerin İngilizce kullanırken hangi konuşucularla etkileşimde bulunduğunun sorusu yeterince ele alınmamıştır. Ayrıca, model genişleyen çemberdeki bir ülkenin kendi materyallerine uygulandığında, öğrenenlerin kendi ülkesini genişleyen çemberin sıradan bir üyesi sayması, kaynak kültür baskısını gizleyebilmektedir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'yi genişleyen çemberden ayrı bir kategori olarak ele alarak ve çember üyeliğini temsil derinliği ile etkileşimsel konumlandırmayla birleştirerek Kachru'nun modelini genişletmeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışmada, kültürel referansların çemberlere dağılımı ve bu dağılımın sınıf düzeyine göre değişimi; her çemberin hangi kültür boyutları aracılığıyla ve hangi derinlikte temsil edildiği; etkileşimlerdeki konuşucuların hangi çemberlere ait olduğu sorularına yanıt aranmıştır.

Yöntem

Nicel içerik analizine dayalı betimsel bir desenin kullanıldığı çalışmada, Millî Eğitim Bakanlığınca 9–12. sınıflar için onaylanan dört İngilizce ders kitabı (2018–2019 baskıları, toplam 505 sayfa) incelenmiştir. Analiz birimi sayfa düzeyindeki kültürel referanstır; aynı ülkenin aynı sayfadaki tekrarlı anılışları yalnızca bir kez sayılmıştır. Ülke, milliyet, şehir, simge, yapı ve gerçek kişi adlarından oluşan bir sözlükle belirlenen aday referanslar bağlamında elle kodlanmış ve 425 geçerli referans elde edilmiştir. Her referans üç katmanda kodlanmıştır: (1) çember (iç, dış, Genişleyen–Türkiye, Genişleyen–Diğer), (2) Moran'ın kültür boyutları (ürünler, uygulamalar, bakış açıları, topluluklar, kişiler) ve (3) temsil derinliği (sembolik, yüzeysel, derin). Ulusal grupları sabit karakter özellikleriyle sunan referanslar kalıp yargılı genelleme olarak ayrıca işaretlenmiştir. Bunun yanında en az iki adlandırılmış katılımcının yer aldığı 55 etkileşim epizodu ve 172 farklı kurgusal karakter adı incelenmiştir. İkinci bir kodlayıcının bağımsız kodlamasıyla hesaplanan Cohen'in kappa katsayıları neredeyse mükemmel uyuma işaret etmiştir (çember κ = ,933; kültür boyutu κ = ,917; derinlik κ = ,888). Veriler frekans, yüzde, ki-kare testi, Cramér'in *V* katsayısı ve düzeltilmiş standartlaştırılmış artıklar kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir.

Bulgular

Küresel ders kitapları için bildirilen iç çember baskınlığının aksine, seride iç çember referansların %26,59'unu oluşturduğu; Türkiye dışındaki genişleyen çemberin %39,06'yı, Türkiye'nin tek başına %27,76'yı, dış çemberin ise %6,59'u temsil ettiği görülmüştür. Bu dağılım sınıf düzeylerine göre anlamlı biçimde farklılaşmamıştır, $\chi^2(9) = 10{,}26$, p = ,330. Türkiye en çok temsil edilen ülkedir ve ABD ile Birleşik Krallık'ın toplamından (%22,59) daha fazla yer almaktadır; ham anılmalar sayıldığında Türkiye'nin payı %48,01'e yükselmektedir. İç çember referanslarının %84,96'sı ABD ve Birleşik Krallık'a, dış çember referanslarının %57,14'ü ise Hindistan'a aittir. Türkiye dışındaki genişleyen çember referanslarının yaklaşık yarısı (%49,40) beş Batı Avrupa ülkesinde yoğunlaşmaktadır. Kachru'nun özgün üç çemberi kullanılsaydı

genişleyen çember %66,82 ile baskın görünecekti; oysa bu payın %41,55'i öğrenenlerin kendi ülkesidir.

Tüm çemberlerde ürünler baskın kültür boyutudur; uygulamalar ve bakış açıları birlikte yalnızca %13,41 oranında temsil edilmiştir. Çember ile kültür boyutu arasındaki ilişki anlamlı ancak zayıftır, $\chi^2(12) = 25,60$, $p = ,012$, $V = ,14$: Türk kültürü bilim insanları, sporcular ve tarihsel figürler aracılığıyla kişileştirilirken, diğer genişleyen çember ülkeleri çoğunlukla gezilecek yerler ve yemekler olarak görünmektedir. Çemberler arasındaki farklar en çok temsil derinliğinde ortaya çıkmıştır, $\chi^2(6) = 92,29$, $p < ,001$, $V = ,33$. Derin referansların %60,00'ı Türkiye'ye aittir. İç çember sık ancak yüzeysel biçimde (derin: %4,42), Türkiye dışındaki genişleyen çember çoğunlukla sembolik düzeyde (%67,47), dış çember ise turistik ve sınırlı biçimde temsil edilmiştir. Derin içeriğin payı 9. sınıftaki %1,23'ten 12. sınıfta %30,77'ye yükselmiştir, $\chi^2(6) = 50,71$, $p < ,001$; bu artışa ağırlıklı olarak Türkiye'ye ilişkin içerik öncülük etmiştir. Kalıp yargılı on genellemenin yedisi, kültürlerarası anlayış geliştirmeyi amaçlayan 9. sınıf *Bridging Cultures* ünitesinde yer almaktadır.

Etkileşim düzeyinde ise farklı bir tablo ortaya çıkmıştır. Adlandırılmış 55 etkileşim epizodunun %78,18'i tamamen iç çember ya da Anglo adlı konuşucular arasında geçmektedir. Türk karakterler epizodların yalnızca %9,09'unda yer almakta ve bunların dördünde muhatapları iç çember konuşucularıdır. Hiçbir Türk karakter dış çember ya da Türkiye dışındaki genişleyen çemberden bir konuşucuyla etkileşime girmemektedir. Diğer kültürler çoğu zaman kendi sesleriyle değil, iç çember konuşucularının hakkında konuştuğu kültürler olarak yer almaktadır. Kurgusal karakter adlarının %75,00'i Anglo kökenlidir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Bulgular, iç çember baskınlığının İngilizce ders kitaplarının genel bir özelliği olmadığını; yerel ve devlet onaylı bir serinin içerik bakımından belirgin biçimde yerelleştirilebildiğini göstermektedir. Öğrenenlerin kendi dünyalarını İngilizce anlatabilmesi açısından bu yönelim olumlu karşılanabilir. Ancak üç çemberli bir sayım bu kaynak kültür baskınlığını gizlemekte ve seriyi olduğundan daha uluslararası gösterebilmektedir; bu nedenle yerel materyallerin analizinde öğrenenlerin kendi ülkesinin ayrı bir kategori olarak ele alınması önerilmektedir. Derinlik bulguları, Ben'in derinlemesine keşfedildiği, Öteki'nin ise bir turist gibi ziyaret edildiği "evcilleştirilmiş" bir kültürlerarasılığa işaret etmektedir. Bu durum, kültürlerarası iletişim yeterliğinin gerektirdiği başkalarının bakış açılarına ilişkin bilgi ve eleştirel kültürel farkındalık için sınırlı fırsatlar sunmaktadır. Çalışmanın en önemli katkısı, konu ile ses arasındaki ayrışmayı ortaya koymasıdır: Seri, Türkiye'yi İngilizcenin başlıca konusu yaparken iç çemberi başlıca sesi olarak korumakta; Türk öğrenenleri, İngilizceyi diğer kullanıcılar arasında kullanan meşru kullanıcılar olarak değil, ulusal kültürü iç çember dinleyicisine anlatan anlatıcılar olarak konumlandırmaktadır. Bu durum anadili konuşucusu merkezciliğinin içerik düzeyinde zayıflasa bile ses düzeyinde sürebildiğini göstermektedir.

Çalışmanın sınırlılıkları arasında 2018–2019 baskılarının incelenmesi, görsel ve işitsel materyallerin analiz dışında kalması, uyruğu belirtilmeyen karakterlerin çember üyeliğinin adlarından çıkarılması ve etkileşim verilerinin tek bir kodlayıcı tarafından kodlanması yer almaktadır. Ders kitabı yazarlarına, Türk karakterleri farklı çemberlerden konuşmacılarla gerçekçi ortak dil durumlarında İngilizce kullanırken gösteren diyaloglar ve dinleme metinleri hazırlamaları, diğer kültürleri uygulamaların ardındaki bakış açılarıyla birlikte sunmaları ve ulusal karakter listelerinden kaçınmaları önerilmektedir. Öğretmenler sembolik referansları sorgulama fırsatına dönüştürebilir, kitapları dışa dönük ve genişleyen çember konuşucularının

özgün kayıtlarıyla destekleyebilir ve kalıp yargılı metinleri eleştirel tartışma materyali olarak kullanabilir. Ders kitabı inceleme ölçütlerinin, farklı kültürlerin varlığının yanı sıra temsilin derinliğini ve muhatap çeşitliliğini de dikkate alması önerilmektedir. Gelecek çalışmalar aynı çerçeveyi Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli kapsamında yayımlanan yeni kitaplara uygulayabilir ve bu temsillerin sınıfta nasıl kullanıldığını inceleyebilir.