

**The Representation of Culture in Portuguese Produced
English Language Teaching Coursebooks (1981-2006)**

Nicolas Robert Hurst

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thesis supervised by

Professora Doutora Maria de Fátima de Sousa Basto Vieira

Resumo

Esta tese de doutoramento descreve, analisa e discute a forma como a cultura é representada em manuais escolares de Ensino de Inglês (ELT) produzidos em Portugal e publicados entre 1981 e 2006. O corpus da investigação é composto por manuais concebidos para os 7.º, 8.º e 9.º anos do ensino obrigatório (3.º ciclo), perfazendo um total de doze manuais, que representam quatro momentos diferentes no desenvolvimento de ELT em Portugal desde a Revolução de 25 de abril de 1974.

O contexto histórico do tema da tese é estabelecido através de uma breve referência ao período pré-1974 e por referência mais alargada às várias alterações que sofreram os regulamentos que regem o ELT em Portugal no período pós-1974, com o objetivo de situar o corpus da pesquisa no quadro legislativo que regula a prática da ELT em Portugal. O papel dos manuais escolares nos sistemas de ensino é discutido com especial referência às mudanças políticas recentes em Portugal, bem como ao contexto histórico geral da política de produção do livro didático, a sua avaliação, adoção e utilização. A definição do conceito de “cultura” é em grande parte abordada a partir de uma perspetiva sócio-antropológica, tendo em conta a maior ênfase que chegou a ser colocada em 'competência comunicativa' no início do período da pesquisa.

A tese explora a forma como a cultura é representada em manuais escolares de Ensino de Inglês (ELT) produzidos em Portugal de três ângulos distintos. Diferentes quadros analíticos são desenvolvidos e aplicados em cada uma das três principais linhas de pesquisa. A análise e discussão (tanto quantitativa como qualitativa) abrange, em primeiro lugar, a cultura no âmbito dos diálogos, tendo como exemplos o modo como a cultura é representada em conversas e interação de serviços; em segundo lugar, o conteúdo, tipo e forma dos textos para leitura encontrados nos manuais escolares e o modo como eles funcionam em relação à criação de significados culturais; e, por último, a forma como as ilustrações são usadas, principalmente em relação às atividades de aprendizagem de línguas que podem implicar (ou não) que os alunos reajam, interpretem e construam significado através da língua inglesa.

Palavras-chave.

Ensino de Inglês (ELT); Manuais Escolares; Representação Cultural; Diálogos; Textos de leitura; Ilustrações.

Abstract

This doctoral thesis describes, analyses and discusses how culture is represented in Portuguese produced English Language Teaching (ELT) coursebooks published between 1981 and 2006. The research corpus under consideration consists of coursebooks which were all designed for the 7th, 8th and 9th years of the state compulsory education system (*3º ciclo*); in total, there are twelve coursebooks, representative of 4 different moments in the development of ELT in Portugal since the April 25th Revolution of 1974.

The historical context of the thesis is established by brief reference to the pre-1974 period and more extended reference to the various post-1974 changes in the regulations which govern ELT in Portugal. The aim is to situate the research corpus in the legislative framework which governs the practice of ELT in Portugal. The role of coursebooks in education systems is discussed with particular reference to recent policy changes in Portugal as well as the general historical background of the politics of coursebook production, evaluation, adoption and use. Defining the notion of ‘culture’ is approached from a largely socio-anthropological perspective, taking into account the greater emphasis that came to be placed on ‘communicative competence’ at the beginning of the research’s time frame.

The thesis incorporates three different angles on the way culture is represented in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks. Different analytical frameworks are developed and applied in each of three main research strands. The analysis and discussion (both quantitative and qualitative) covers firstly, culture within dialogues, taking as prime examples the way culture is represented in conversations and service encounters; secondly, the content, type and form of the texts for reading found in the coursebooks and how they function in relation to creating cultural meanings; and lastly, the way illustrations are used in coursebooks, principally in relation to language learning activities which require (or not) the learners to react, interpret and then construct meaning through the medium of English.

Key-Words

English Language Teaching (ELT); Coursebooks; Cultural Representation; Dialogues; Texts; Illustrations.

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Introduction

The present study was carried out within the broad context of the history of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Portugal. While there is evidence for the teaching of English in Portugal that goes far back into early modern history, it became firmly established from the 18th century onwards (Gomes da Torre, 1995), more particularly in association with the establishment of secondary level high schools (*‘liceus’*) in 1836 (Guerra, 2005). The favoured ELT methodology varied over time, from the ‘direct method’ at the turn of the 19th century to ‘Audiolingualism’ in the mid-20th century. In the educational reform of 1947, the importance of English, as having growing international significance, was recognised and incorporated into the reorganization of education into three distinct cycles (*‘ciclos’*). Yet, the education system was highly conservative and subject to strong centralised control; for example, from the late 1940s until the late 1960s was the time of the *‘livro único’*, a scheme enforced by the Ministry of Education which allowed for only a single, approved coursebook¹ to be used for the teaching of a particular subject for a period of 5 years. In the early 1970s, under the influence of a more functional/notional approach to language teaching (and its subsequent communicative offspring), some Portuguese coursebook writers began to produce more varied teaching materials. However, a more diverse range of coursebooks does not necessarily mean that the actual teaching of English changed in the classrooms, as Gomes da Torre pointed out:

Some textbook writers were quick to design books within the new philosophy, sometimes without the necessary understanding of the essence of communicativism. The adoption of foreign communicative manuals was more frequent than not, but teachers used them as grammar translation materials. Fashion had again dictated its rule and Portuguese learners were the victims to the too quick resignation to what came from abroad. (Gomes da Torre, 1995: 147)

However, the aim of this study is not to examine the connection between teaching materials and teaching methodologies, but rather to see “what came from abroad” in terms of the cultural representations incorporated in the content of locally produced ELT coursebooks through the language of dialogues (see Chapter 3), the choice of texts (see Chapter 4) and the use of illustrations (see Chapter 5).

Clearly, the year of 1974 is crucial in any historically based study of education in Portugal. Prior to the April 25th Revolution, the population was characterised by very

¹ The terms ‘coursebook’ and ‘textbook’ are here taken to be synonyms. No distinction is made in terms of whether a specific or general audience or time frame is implied, as is the case in some definitions.

high levels of illiteracy (25.7%) and very low levels with a higher education qualification (0.9%).² In the years following 1974, successive governments and their ministries of education have invested hugely in the constitutionally enshrined principle of free, universal education for all the country's citizens (Benavente, 2001) while maintaining centralizing tendencies with respect to ELT curricula (national programmes) and the politics of coursebooks (see Chapter 1). The education system has been gradually modernised and expanded to similar levels of development as its European partner states (OECD/PISA, 2009). Overall, these investments have reduced illiteracy to 5.2% and increased the levels of adults with a higher education qualification to 14.8% in 2011. However, this study deliberately does not seek to analyse any current publications (that may still be in use), as this could be interpreted as being commercially sensitive and ethically dubious.

There have been several major reformulations of curricula and changes in school organization over the period from 1974 until 2006. The teaching of the English language has been broadened to include young learners from the 5th and 6th years and most Portuguese school-goers now have seven years of curricular ELT experience. However, this has not always been the case and, for ELT, the most constant sector of the education system has been the 3rd cycle (3.^o *ciclo*), the 7th, 8th and 9th years/grades. Throughout the period in question, Portuguese learners in these years have consistently received formal English instruction, which includes both language and culture (see Chapter 2). In addition, in this cycle of education, learners are not 'streamed' or given choices as to the subjects they should take, except for isolated cases which may have to do with individual schools being unable to offer subjects like music or drama. Thus, this cycle was considered to be the one which offered the greatest opportunity for producing consistent data in relation to taught content across time.

For the purposes of this study, key legislative moments were identified (see Table 1 below) and coursebooks which were produced following these changes were chosen as being representative of these moments. The choosing of the coursebooks was effectively limited by availability, an aspect very much dependent on the goodwill of numerous teaching colleagues from the state sector who answered my appeal for 'old' Portuguese

² Figures for 1970 from INE: PorData, quoted in an article in the 'Expresso' newspaper of 13.07.2013, pp.20-21.

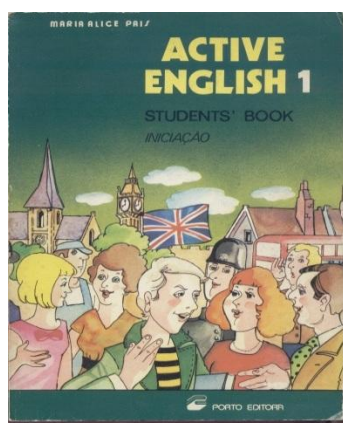
produced ELT coursebooks. In this way, the research corpus consists of 12 coursebooks from the 7th, 8th and 9th grades (illustrated in Figure 1 below).

Table 1. Coursebooks at key moments of programme change.

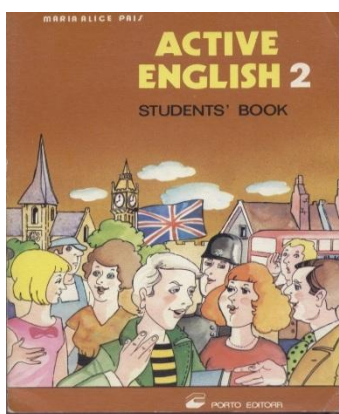
Date	Reform/Legislation	Coursebooks
1973	Lei 5/73 de 25 de Julho	general background
1974	Decreto-Lei 489/73, de 2 de Outubro 25 th April Revolution	
1979	Decreto-Lei 538/79, de 31 de Dezembro Portaria 572/79 (programas curriculares)	“ Active English ” series 1981/1981/1982
1986	Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo Lei 46/86, de 14 de Outubro	“ Passport ” series 1987/1988/1989
1989/90	Decreto-Lei 286/89, de 29 de Agosto Decreto-Lei 369/90, de 26 de Novembro Despacho 124/ME/91, de 31 de Julho (homologação de programas curriculares)	“ Aerial ” series 1998/1999/2000
2001	Decreto-Lei 6/2001 de 18 de Janeiro Decreto-Lei 209/2002, de 17 de Outubro (alteração)	“ Extreme ” series 2004/2005/2006

In 1964, compulsory education in Portugal was extended to 6 years and included both males and females for the first time (*Decreto-Lei 45.810, de 9 de Julho*), a reform which undoubtedly resulted in a progressive lowering of levels of illiteracy but only came fully into force in 1968/1969 (Mendonça, 2006). In the 1970s the Minister of Education, José Veiga Simão, encouraged innovations with the declared objective of including a wider range of students into a merit based system independent of their social-economic background (Stoer, 1983). These reforms included curricular innovations, proposals for teacher support and training and dealing with school-family connections and responsibilities, as well as a further extension to 8 years of compulsory primary and ‘basic’ education combined. However, his policy was set in the political context of a conservative, decrepit ‘*Estado Novo*’ regime, itself a contradiction at a time of “social and economic aspirations, increasingly re-oriented towards Europe” (Teodoro & Anibal, 2007: 16).

Figure 1. The coursebooks in this study.



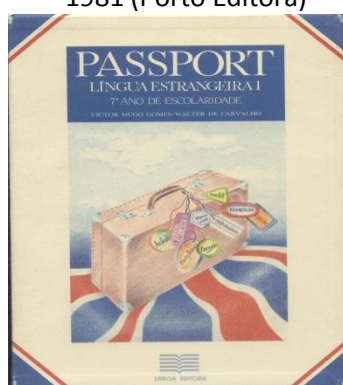
1981 (Porto Editora)



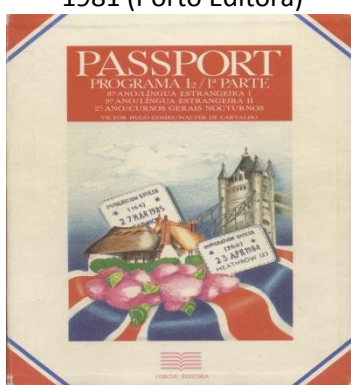
1981 (Porto Editora)



1982 (Porto Editora)



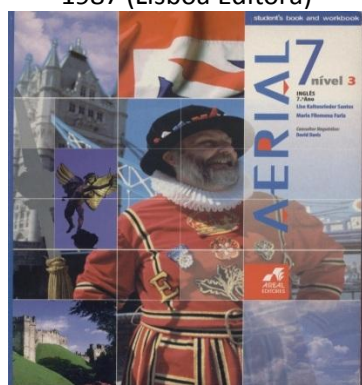
1987 (Lisboa Editora)



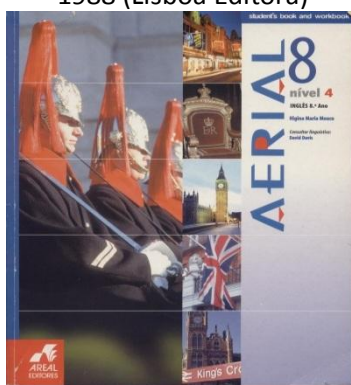
1988 (Lisboa Editora)



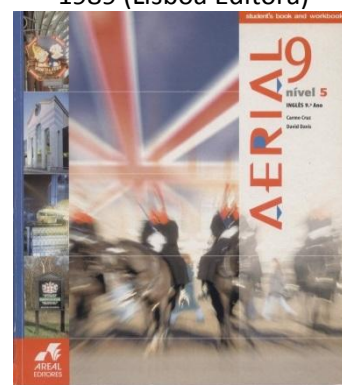
1989 (Lisboa Editora)



1998 (Areal Editores)



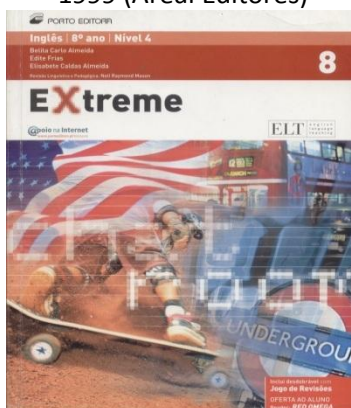
1999 (Areal Editores)



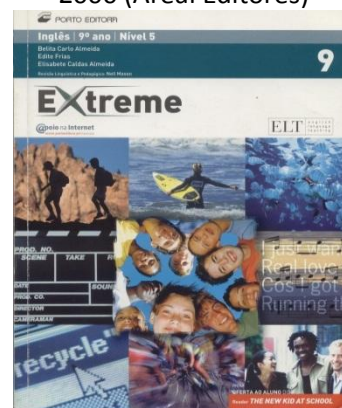
2000 (Areal Editores)



2004 (Porto Editora)



2005 (Porto Editora)



2006 (Porto Editora)

The political and social atmosphere in the period immediately following the 25th April Revolution was highly conducive to the promotion of educational reforms.³ There were various institutional attempts to create a clear break/rupture with the past, “in both symbolic and formal terms” (Barroso, 2003: 66⁴). These reforms aimed at going beyond the concept of ‘equal opportunities for all’ in education to the extent of attributing schools with the function of promoting democracy through eliminating social inequalities in the general push for an emancipated, classless society. Two pieces of legislation (*Decreto-Lei 191/79 de 23 de Junho* and *Decreto-Lei 61/80 de 7 de Abril*) dealt specifically with regulations for coursebooks to follow in order to be approved, in line with the new orientations of the national programmes. The new national programmes for different school subjects in different school years established the principal objectives, course content guidelines, basic competences and learning outcomes under the umbrella of a more dynamic, active, participative methodological approach to teaching-learning process (Mendonça, 2006).

The organisation of the Portuguese education system was reformulated in 1986 through a fundamental piece of legislation (*Lei 46/86, de 14 de Outubro*) which divided the system into three levels: ‘basic’, secondary and higher education. For schools, the system of evaluation was also overhauled⁵ as were the responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the system: local authorities, schools, parents and students; additional legislation promoted administrative reforms producing a more de-centralised, regionally based system. These changes have been interpreted as being a mark of the end of a ‘normalisation’ process in the education system (Teodoro, 2001a) which coincided with internal political changes and the accession of Portugal to the then European Economic Community (EEC). Following the introduction of new national programmes (*Decreto-Lei 286/89 de 29 de Agosto*), the specific issue of coursebooks was directly addressed in further legislation in 1990 (*Decreto-Lei 369/90 de 26 de Novembro*), whereby the government/state made explicit its responsibilities with regard to guaranteeing the pedagogical and technical quality of coursebooks. The legislation included regulations concerning coursebook selection procedures to be adopted in schools and time limits of

³ There are reports of teaching professionals who had returned from ‘exile’ being seen by some as potential agents of change for the better and by others as mere opportunists with dubious ‘foreign’ qualifications (Gomes da Torre, 2013: personal communication).

⁴ Translated quotation. All translations in this thesis by this author unless otherwise stated.

⁵ Tests and assessment had largely fallen into disarray in the post-revolutionary period. The reform also included the provision of a school leavers’ diploma for assiduous students.

the use of individual coursebooks with the overall aim of making the evaluation-selection process part of the teacher-school dynamic (as one of the functions of each school's 'pedagogic council') and creating a sense of responsibility and stability (Teixeira et al, 2006).

The development in learners of 'social and personal values', which constituted the underlying principles of the legislation of 1986 (see articles 2, 3, 7 and 47) and 1989/1990, laid the foundations for the development of 'civic education' (*Educação Cívica*), which itself more recently evolved into 'citizenship and intercultural education'. The increasing social, ethnic, cultural and linguistic heterogeneity of the local school population was not anticipated in the legislation of the 1980s and re-focussed educational thinkers and planners (Freire-Ribeiro, 2008). Various ministerial despatches and recommendations from the National Commission for Education (CNE) in the mid/late 1990s began to 'speak' in terms of encouraging 'mutual respect', 'acceptance of diversity' or 'multicultural literacy'. Formal consultations, which began in 1998, resulted in a further reorganization of the 'basic' education curriculum in Portugal in 2001 (*Decreto-Lei 6/2001 de 18 de Janeiro*). The aim was to promote transversal "education, citizenship and integration" across the curriculum and in school organisations. Various techniques, such as project work and student generated activities, were to be encouraged to cross over traditional subject boundaries and be interconnected while taking into account various different types of knowledge. Nonetheless, regardless of the legislation and the potential repercussions this has in teaching materials, it should be noted that the implementation and practical consequences may not always correspond to what the legislators intended (Benavente, 2001).

There can be no doubt that the coursebook is of central importance in the teaching-learning process of any educational system (see Chapter 1). This fact is recognised in Portugal in copious pieces of legislation (see above) which define the term 'coursebook', describe its purpose and propose evaluation/selection and certification procedures. Similar importance is recognised by other national educational institutions and by international institutions such as the Council of Europe (2000 & 2001) or UNESCO (2001, 2005 & 2010). Coursebook research in Portugal has rarely focussed on locally produced ELT publications, and while there is some body of research in the fields of Philosophy, Maths, the Sciences and Portuguese (as a 'mother tongue'), these

studies tend to focus more on educational policy and methodological considerations.⁶ In contrast, this study recognises the coursebook as a social construct which is, at the same time, a commercial product, subject to market constraints and considerations. The study is contextualised both synchronically (at particular moments) and diachronically (through time) to provide as full a description/discussion of the relevance of cultural representations in the development of ELT in Portugal as possible, by reference to a clearly defined research corpus and a clearly defined research topics (see below).

It could be said that, in Portugal, the coursebook does more to define a perspective of how knowledge is re-contextualized in the classroom than any other educational instrument; coursebooks have a normative function which has strong implications in the development of teacher and learner autonomy (Vieira et al, 1999). In addition, there is a very strong tradition of using coursebooks in Portugal not just as a source of learning content but also as a tool of classroom management (for example, the frequently employed technique of ‘reading aloud’, which actually has very little pedagogical value). Both teachers and learners experience the influence of this educational instrument with great frequency and great ‘weight’. The functions of a coursebook are varied and widely discussed in ELT literature as are the relative merits and, more often, de-merits of using a coursebook. Different approaches to evaluating the quality of coursebooks have also been proposed, often based on the use of more or less sophisticated checklists. But largely lacking in this literature is much discussion of the role of coursebooks as a source of cultural information.⁷ How culture is represented in the locally produced ELT coursebooks, which dominate the Portuguese market, may be a crucial factor in any learner’s approach to learning English. Each individual learner will interact with the coursebook in a unique manner just as each teacher will too.

Just what is meant by ‘culture’ in relation to FL teaching has been widely debated. With respect to ELT, the context to the debate changed dramatically with the advent of concern for developing the communicative competence of learners in the late 1970s and early 1980s and the resultant ‘Communicative Approach’ to ELT (see Chapter 2). The various models of communicative competence that have been developed make reference

⁶ One notable exception is the work carried out by a research unit at the *Universidade do Minho* since the mid-1990s.

⁷ As a result of Council of Europe sponsored research, Zarate (2004) reported on cultural mediation in language learning and teaching in relation to intercultural communication.

to the importance of socio-cultural elements in connection with language: FL teaching inevitably involves some kind of cultural transmission and transformation. What exactly the form cultural content should take in teaching materials has been discussed in various teaching manuals and so on, but little researched. This is especially true in the case of Portuguese produced ELT materials and/or coursebooks: this study is a modest attempt to redress that imbalance. The study explores how Portuguese students of the 7th, 8th and 9th grades are required to interact with representations of culture in three main areas which are often integrated into the ‘normal’ language based activities proposed by the coursebook. These three areas are: language in use as part of social interaction, in the form of dialogues (Chapter 3), the themes/topics of texts for reading, including different genre types (Chapter 4), and the use made of visual elements/illustrations, in terms of both content and learning purpose (Chapter 5).

With respect to dialogues, this study views this form of text as an attempt by coursebook writers to situate the foreign language in question in a context of social interaction (see Chapter 3). It is claimed that dialogues incorporate pragmatic aspects of the language in use and provide a communicative context for learners to experience how language ‘plays out’ in the real world. However, what is found in coursebooks remains distant from this ideal, starting from the perspective that these dialogues are representations of spoken language in a written form and written norms tend to overwhelm the intention to provide examples of spoken language. The main issue here is one of authenticity, a key concept in much of the discussion surrounding ELT materials since the advent of the ‘Communicative Approach’, which pre-dates (in the UK) all the coursebooks in this corpus.

Spoken language is of primary importance in terms of how people enact their feelings, beliefs, values and so on in their everyday lives, it is a powerful channel for modifying relationships, behaviours and identities; as such, it is of crucial importance to FL learners. Chapter 3 describes and discusses two sub-types of dialogues - conversations and service encounters - these sub-types being taken as situations where significant socio-cultural factors (setting, topic, participants, etc.) were more likely to be present. The two sub-types of dialogues are analysed from two distinct perspectives: firstly, from a syntactic-linguistic perspective focussing on the ‘grammar’ of spoken English (with seven different key characteristics analysed), and secondly, from a text/discourse

analysis perspective (with nine key discourse features analysed). These dialogues were seen as being useful pedagogical devices (the heritage of the era of ‘Audiolingualism’) and very often produced to exemplify specific language learning objectives (target structures); in addition, the language employed was often ‘graded’ or ‘simplified’ to ease comprehension (for example, the exclusion of idiomatic or vernacular language) and situated in a very limited range of socio-geographical settings (more often than not, young people in the UK). Taking into account these factors, the analysis focusses on the accuracy, appropriacy and authenticity of these spoken texts.

A similar approach is taken to the analysis of texts for reading which occur in the corpus (see Chapter 4). Reading texts constitute a quantitatively important source of input in ELT coursebooks, being used as a stimulus not only for developing FL reading skills but also a point of departure for various other learning activities (often related to vocabulary or grammar practice). Learners interact with and interpret these reading texts according to a wide range of individual strategies, as well as the complex array of features of the text itself. For these learners, reading a text in a coursebook is also a cultural experience; reading the text should encourage the learners to discover the meaning(s) it contains in order to create a new individually meaningful re-interpretation. However, there is much more evidence of coursebook writers showing more concern for traditional style ‘reading comprehension questions’ which require the learner to ‘mine’ the text for a fixed, correct answer.

Coursebooks usually try to include a variety of texts in order to cater for the range of interests (and background knowledge) that a group of learners may have in the belief that greater learner motivation and subsequently learning may result. This study examines three key features of the reading texts that are present in the corpus: the content of the text (six different cultural categories are employed), the type of text (five different functions are attributed), and the form of the text (an extensive range of genres are identified). The aim is to discern how far the coursebooks in the corpus actually present a view of the English speaking world (as represented in the texts) that is both inclusive and appropriate. The discussion has not only a quantitative element (tables which innumerate the occurrences of the various criteria/functions mentioned above), but also a qualitative element which seeks to examine the way less obvious, implicit, underlying cultural meanings are represented in the reading texts. It is important to

bring to the attention of Portuguese learners knowledge/information about how the values and beliefs that are fundamental to the identities of English speaking people are assembled and enacted in order that these same learners may integrate such insights (cultural awareness) into the construction of their own communicative competence.

The use of illustrations in coursebooks is a feature which requires a rather different analytical framework, since there may be no accompanying language (verbal text) present at all (see Chapter 5). It is necessary to take into account how images function in respect of their audience and the kind of emotional, cognitive and cultural responses they provoke. Images appear to represent a certain reality but, in fact, their meaning(s) should be seen as being socially constructed; in a similar way to that which defines reading texts' meaning(s) to be part of an interactive dynamic with the reader, the same can be said of visual texts. Different types of illustrations have been increasingly used in ELT coursebooks over time, with a shift in emphasis from mainly black and white images at the beginning of the research timeframe to almost exclusive use of colour images at the end of the period. An abundantly illustrated, full colour coursebook has come to represent the ELT industry norm, with local and international publishers investing heavily in the visual 'attractiveness' of their products. This powerful commercial momentum may obscure the need for coursebook illustrations to be relevant and appropriate in relation to the designated teaching aims and learning outcomes defined for learners in the 7th, 8th and 9th grades.

This study makes use of a three-fold categorization of illustrations/images: drawings, figures and photographs. In order to explore issues related to the frequency of use of each type of illustration and the overall 'density' of illustrations in each coursebook, quantitative data was produced and is discussed in relation to the four different historical moments of the study and each individual coursebook. In addition, the key issue of whether the coursebook illustrations actually have any identifiable pedagogical purpose or are a simple decorative device is similarly tabulated. The discussion of the latter data takes the form of considering the implications of how selected illustrations serve to construct cultural meanings on their own or in tandem with their accompanying language activities. Important issues here include how the 'population' of the coursebook is represented (e.g. ageism and gender bias), what kind of locations are present (e.g. only the UK and/or the USA?), value systems and beliefs (e.g. family

issues and consumerism) and dealing with prejudice and cultural stereotypes in general (e.g. social and racial diversity), as well as more ‘technical’ issues related to the use of speech bubbles, ‘*fotonovelas*’ or cartoon strips. The key to unlocking the potential of these highly visual materials lies in the way that the learners are required to react, interpret and ultimately construct an FL based response to the meanings they find through making use of their individual levels of visual literacy.

Understanding, in a deep sense, what the use of a coursebook implies, from a cultural perspective, is at the heart of any consideration of how ELT instruction in Portugal operates and, as such, should also be central to any pre-service training course for FL teachers. Since the curricular reorganization prompted by the ‘Bologna Process’, the Faculty of Letters, the University of Porto (FLUP), has included within its ‘Masters in English and other Foreign Language Teaching’ course (*Mestrado em Ensino de Inglês e de Alemão / Francês / Espanhol no 3.º ciclo do Ensino Básico e no Ensino Secundário*) the optional, one semester subject called “Production of Didactic Materials” for each of the foreign languages. Teaching this subject (since 2008/2009) was a major reason for undertaking the present study, and, hopefully, this study will serve to inform the teaching of the subject in the future.

Chapter One: Policies, Politics and Coursebooks.

General context of coursebooks in education/ELT

For more than two hundred years the coursebook has been seen as a central element in the teaching-learning process: “The idea of the modern textbook dates back to the French Revolution, and the first examples could be found at the beginning of the 19th century. The textbook is therefore the exactly contemporaneous with the birth of the modern educational institution” (Moeglin, 2006: 17). Where there is classroom, there is a teacher, there are learners and there is a coursebook; hence, according to UNESCO (2005), the coursebook is “the core learning medium composed of text and/or images designed to bring about a specific set of learning outcomes, traditionally a printed and bound book including illustrations and instructions to facilitating sequences of learning activities”. In Europe, it is hard to even imagine a classroom with a teacher and full of learners without a coursebook also being present. The educational publishing industry is a major business activity at both an international and local level.⁸ Indeed, publishing houses go to great lengths to maintain their influence within the education system, employing local teachers as ‘delegates’, offering sample copies, organizing ‘seminars’ for local teachers, giving access to web-based supplementary materials, and so on.

Not a few teachers would say that it is impossible to teach without a coursebook and for not a few learners (with limited economic resources) coursebooks may provide their only opportunity to read and be in touch with the printed word (with literacy being among the highest rated values in contemporary European society). This chapter describes and discusses the ideological and educational implications of the centrality of coursebooks in the FL teaching-learning process, both in general terms and with specific reference to the context of ELT provision in Portugal. What is the role of coursebooks in the education system and the classroom? How do coursebooks influence the work of FL teachers? Is there any relationship between coursebooks and methodology? How is ‘culture’ dealt with in coursebooks? Questioning the inevitability of coursebook use has become something of a hallmark in British academic writing on the subject, but such a rejection is simply not on the agenda on Portugal. This chapter acknowledges this reality and through analysis seeks to provide insights in where coursebook could be ‘improved’, in particular, with respect to cultural representation.

⁸ Bruillard (2011) mentions the figure of 50-60 million school books being sold in France each year, which may account for around 15-20% of all book sales. Moeglin (2004) refers to the French textbook market in 2000 being worth some 235.6 million euros. Unofficial estimates put the size of the Portuguese school book market at 10 million copies or 100 million euros (ORE report 2011) or 56 million euros in 2004 according to one report by the Portuguese publishers association APEL (2005).

Among the general public, great trust is placed in the authority of the coursebook, perhaps even to the extent that what the coursebook says may well have more validity than what the teacher says. Indeed, many families pay out large sums of money each year to corroborate this status (perhaps some 200 euros per child). Research in Portugal (Dias de Carvalho & Fadigas, 2009) indicates that coursebooks play an important role in the relationship between schools and parents: the results of an online survey indicated that 59.48% of parents considered coursebooks to be ‘very important’ in helping them to accompany the schoolwork of their children (ibid: 8) and 94.61% of parents actually consult their children’s coursebooks to ascertain what their children are doing at school (ibid: 9). This research further demonstrates that parents also learn from the children’s coursebooks, that the subject matter of coursebooks provides topics of conversation among family members, that parents usually use the coursebook if they want to help their children study, that most parents (79.17%) prefer coursebooks to other educational resources (ibid: 14) and concludes that Portuguese parents consider the coursebook is “a learning resource which cannot be dispensed with in the education of their children” (ibid: 23)⁹. However, it may be less true to say the same about the attitudes of today’s learners (the ‘Net Generation’ according to Tapscott, 1998), who have far more electronically mediated information resources available to them via the Internet, meaning that textual power is less likely to go unchallenged (Kress, 2003). In any case, coursebooks are still generally viewed as necessary to the smooth functioning of the educational system; they should assist in the empowerment of learners rather than confine or confuse them.

In an attempt to delimit the areas in which coursebooks influence educational systems, Choppin (1996) identifies a four-fold functional description of coursebooks. First and foremost, coursebooks are the embodiment of the formal curriculum, the main and sometimes only support of the subject contents: a referential function; secondly, coursebooks delineate methods, offer activities and structure progress: an instrumental function; thirdly, coursebooks are part of the process of socialization and acculturation of learners transmitting values and ideologies: a cultural function; and finally, coursebooks are a resource for texts/discourses which may be critically confronted by learners: a documentary function. This description gives a clear indication of the

⁹ Translated quotation.

significance and range of influence of coursebooks in educational systems. To cite one example in relation to the cultural function mentioned above, Ndura concludes, in the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in the USA, that

[i]nstructional materials significantly affect students' development of knowledge and their perceptions of self and others (Hirschfelder, 1982). Such influence is even more critical in the acculturation processes of students of ESL who use the materials as trusted resources for the skills necessary to negotiate the required school curriculum content as well as the complex meanings of peer and community interactions.

(Ndura, 2004: 143)

While the context of instruction in Portugal is not the same as it is in the USA¹⁰, perhaps it is not too far-fetched to include the concept of “peer and community interactions” referred to above to the Portuguese context as young people become increasingly more ‘globalised’ in their range of experiences, playing games online against rivals anywhere in the world, or ‘chatting’ or initiating ‘friendships’ on internet social networking sites. In any case, the quotation above helps to highlight the key issues concerning the role of coursebooks in the field of education as a whole: for example, their relationship with the curriculum and learners, their status, their function with regard to knowledge and skills acquisition. Indeed, it is these same issues that are at the heart of UNESCO’s ‘A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Teaching Materials’ (2005) which describes the historical background and current range of the organisation’s interventions on the ground with respect to coursebooks, from a ‘handbook’ publication in 1949, through numerous conferences, to recent developmental projects in Iraq and the Balkans and its new thrust: to encourage ‘sustainable’ provision of ‘quality’ educational resources in underdeveloped countries, for example, in Africa. UNESCO views coursebooks as a significant and far-reaching agent, inside and outside classrooms: in the words of Peter Smith (Assistant Director-General for Education), they “form an authoritative source of not only information, but also function as primary tools for shaping attitudes and behaviours” (2005).

Coursebooks are a representation of the prevailing educational ideology. They have come to occupy a prominent, prestigious position in the educational system: “Textbooks also typically reflect society’s values and aspirations of a nation. These are the visible, tangible and practical manifestation of the curriculum, designed to teach students what

¹⁰ Portugal is usually defined as being a context where English is taught as a ‘foreign’ language rather than a ‘second’ language. See Richards and Schmidt (2002: 472) for further discussion of this issue.

the governmental authorities believe must be taught” (Mahmood, 2009: 159). This ideology defines what the purpose of schooling is, how learning can be achieved, the behaviour and the roles and relationships of the agents involved, and is expressed in the contents of the National programmes. Coursebooks relate to all these elements as visible instruments of the ideology in question: “The textbook guarantees the promotion of political and ideological strategies, in combination with the organisational project, that, during the 19th century [...] gave birth to the present school system” (Moeglin, 2006: 17). The ubiquitous nature of their function(s) in the educational system is not challenged even when doubts are expressed as to the quality of the product. Indeed, the opposite is more likely to be the case: for example, there are awards/medals attributed to the best European coursebooks every year¹¹, which aim to confirm the quality of the coursebooks entered for consideration (they are judged by an international jury of ‘outstanding experts’) and assist in their marketing (guaranteed web-presence, winner stickers, etc.). In Britain, there has been ‘The Duke of Edinburgh English Language Book Award’ organised by the English Speaking Union since the 1970s, which aims to recognise innovation and good practice in the field of the English language and English language teaching.¹²

The role of the state (ministries, regional authorities and schools) in imbuing coursebooks with authority is a reflection of these institutions’ right to exercise their power to mediate the discourse/texts in question, thus asserting their own authority. This is a situation further reinforced by the administration of national exams throughout the school system, which focuses very much on what has been laid down in the national programmes, to be taught through the medium of coursebooks: “Government prescribed and authorised texts constitute a common, almost universally shared experiential and linguistic basis upon which each generation’s fundamental literacy and knowledge are based” (Luke et al, 1983: 121). Coursebooks, in general, may also gain further authority from the type of language in which they are couched. The materials/texts are designed to be clear and precise, explicit and unequivocal, objective and impersonal, well-formed and logical, and as such may appear to above criticism (Olson, 1980); these are books which are for studying (and not just reading) by what is, in fact, a guaranteed and

¹¹ For example, the Best European Schoolbook Award (the BESA competition winners are announced at the Frankfurt Book Fair). See <http://www.schoolbookawards.org>.

¹² In 2011 the overall winner was *Speakout*, by Antonia Clare, Frances Eales, Steve Oakes & J.J. Wilson; Pearson ELT.

participative audience. Any particular coursebooks may, however, be the subject of great dispute since what is presented as knowledge (in a text) is a socially constructed version of reality. M. W. Apple, in a series of different articles and books, has examined the cultural politics of texts and textbooks and has concluded that

[t]hey are at once the results of political, economic and cultural activities, battles, and compromises. They are conceived, designed, and authored by real people with real interests. They are published within the political and economic constraints of markets, resources, and power. What texts mean and how they are used are fought over by communities with distinctly different commitments and by teachers and students as well. (Apple, 2000: 180-181)

To substantiate this view, two examples from the USA¹³ (Yucaipa, California and Kanawha County, West Virginia) are discussed, where local communities were thrown into conflict over the issue of the content and design of coursebooks. In relation to the latter case, Apple states that coursebooks became the focus of “school boycotts, violence, and a wrenching split within the community” (ibid: 182). Within the broad context of cultural politics, coursebooks are naturally never neutral.¹⁴ They embody and signify, in content and form, what power-holders select (include and exclude) to be legitimate, official knowledge. In terms of recognizing the importance of coursebooks/texts in educational systems and society as a whole, Apple concludes that “[a]s part of the curriculum, they participate in no less than the organised knowledge system of society. [...] They help set the canons of truthfulness and, as such, also create a major reference point for what knowledge, culture, belief, and morality really are” (ibid: 182). Yet the real agents in this process are, of course, people: all the stakeholders in education bear responsibility for the coursebooks that are in use at any given time.

The status of coursebooks within any educational system is also subject to a further powerful influence: commercial publishers, whose most obvious purpose is to have as many titles in as a great a quantity as possible circulating in the educational system. What gets published and what is in what gets published is subject to severe market constraints: the contents, structure and format of a coursebook are all undoubtedly impacted by the need to generate high sales and produce profit. This objective implies

¹³ Further examples could be cited to relation to Japan, Germany, Israel and other American states (e.g. Texas).

¹⁴ More recently in the USA, in the sphere of the biology and life science, the “Creationist” perspective as opposed to the “Evolutionist” perspective has led to the revision and counter-revision of many coursebooks. This issue in the USA is well-documented by the National Center for Science Education.

targeting teachers by producing coursebooks which require as little as possible preparation time, targeting learners by basing materials on the experiences of a locally identifiable peer group, targeting both with exercises that are easily achievable (with a low level of intellectual challenge) with definite ‘right answers’ and swamping the coursebooks with as much as ‘youth culture’ content (verbal and visual texts, with a special predominance in relation to pop song-based ‘listening comprehension’ work) as possible (Dendrinos, 1992: 35). This implies an almost industrial element to education and coursebooks, whereby the teachers distribute the product to the consumers: “The generalisation of textbook, produced and reproduced industrially, are based on a pedagogy and an administration which are semi-industrial and that require the presence of the textbook, industrial product, in return” (Moeglin, 2006: 25).

The pressure to create a saleable ‘product’¹⁵ and achieve commercial success is also felt by the coursebook writers. Publishers are more likely to increase their profits if they are able to simply ‘update’ existing materials and raise the cover price regardless of what the author may think: “From a publishing perspective, the voice of the author has to be measured to suit the commercial imperatives of the situation – to maximise sales but limit costs” (Issitt, 2004: 5). Most current ELT coursebook writers in Portugal are practicing teachers from the state system (sometimes working in conjunction with ‘native speaker’ co-authors but usually not) who have a very acute sense of intuition about what their colleagues want, which is combined with years of practical experience in the classroom; Horsley (2010), in his discussion of local teacher education policies and their generally negative attitudes towards coursebooks, notes:

In Australia (and in other countries) it is often not recognised by teacher educators that textbooks are written by practicing teachers, who in many cases have prepared texts based on developing knowledge sources, activities, tasks and case studies for their own students, evaluating these sources, and activities with students and classroom practice and developing them further in a textbook. In this way textbooks represent a distilled pedagogic content knowledge of teaching and learning strategies that have been successfully used with some students, (Horsley, 2010: 49).

On the other hand, this is by no means the same thing as having a sound knowledge of language learning theory, of the latest developments in methodology or recent

¹⁵ The idea of education as a ‘product’ whereby individuals are taught the skills and attributes that others (politicians, employers) have identified as desirable is sometimes contrasted with ‘informal education’ or ‘process’ education, which are seen as more democratic and dialogic. See Jeffs & Smith, 2005.

significant insights into the way English is used around the world¹⁶: “[...] although the pro-textbook lobby claim research goes into textbook writing, the findings from textbook studies suggest that most of this research does not involve a review of the applied linguistics literature” (Harwood, 2005: 156).

Coursebooks are a powerful representation of the curriculum in schools and in many cases are seen as the principle vehicle for the construction of knowledge: “They have acclaimed for themselves a unique position of power, claiming a voice of authority on knowledge” (Caukill, 2011: 59). This is true for school subjects across the school curriculum and ELT is no exception. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) suggest, “[the] textbook is an almost universal element of teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them [...] No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook” (ibid: 315). Nobody can deny that coursebooks have a crucial role in education systems worldwide, since they are generally used as the core of the subject work to be covered in classrooms throughout a whole school year. For example, “The Czech educational system is traditionally tied to textbook use. Even though usage is not obligatory, teachers and students are expected to work with textbooks extensively” (Sikorova, 2011: 2).

Studies have indicated that working with the coursebook may occupy as much as 75% of class-time and 90% of homework time (Apple, 1992) or 90% of instructional time (Woodward et al, 1986) or even 97% of all teaching time for English in Iceland (Sigurgeirsson, 1992). Littlejohn, in his discussion of ELT coursebooks produced for the global market, notes that

[n]ow materials frequently offer complete packages for the language learning and teaching, with precise indications of the work that teachers and students are to do together. The extent to which materials now effectively structure classroom time has thus increased considerably. (Littlejohn, 1998: 190)

This is certainly true in Portugal, where the most recently produced “packages” for ELT teachers offer more and more. Along with the teachers’ book comes the key, lesson

¹⁶ And many academics with this type of knowledge prefer not to get involved in such a low status event as ‘school book’ writing. See Swales, 1995.

plans, suggestions for further activities and further sub-packages of ‘fun activities’ and progress tests¹⁷.

The coursebook “fulfils a need, a purpose, it performs a function, conveys meaning [...] language and coursebooks do not exist in a vacuum - they exist for and are shaped by a purpose within a particular context of use, culture and ideology” (Wala, 2003: 60). One of the needs that coursebooks fulfil is that they provide structure; they provide structure in a context which is often unstable and subject to hierarchically imposed change, which can be a disruptive and even threatening process. One key function of coursebooks is as a tool of management, they help manage a complex array of social and educational interactions in the classroom; coursebooks reduce levels of potentially unsettling unpredictability (and stress?) for the learners and the teachers: the coursebook helps to establish routines, which in themselves also provide structure. This is true at the level of individual lessons but also across time, at the level of a whole course or a term in the school calendar, a much-valued attribute of most educational cultures and ideologies. While diversity in approach exists, many teachers view the coursebook as their basic tool of teaching, especially with regard to organising/structuring what their learners are doing, according to research from the Czech Republic: “Most teachers set the tasks and exercises and asked questions suggested by the textbook. They used the textbook especially for practicing and testing” (Sikorova, 2011: 19). Thus the classroom experience of both teachers and learners is heavily coloured by coursebooks. It should also be recognized that classrooms are generally very much closed environments populated only by learners and teachers but there are other educational stakeholders (with their own cultures and ideologies) who may find the coursebook a useful instrument through which they can gauge the what, the how and the why of classroom practices they are generally excluded from. There is a complex interplay of role interpretations at work concerning the content and use of coursebooks among the different stakeholders in education, particularly among teachers: “Textbooks can be fought against because they are part of a system of moral regulation. They can be fought for both as providing essential assistance in the labor of teaching or as part of a larger strategy of democratization” (Apple, 2000: 187).

¹⁷ For example, the recent ‘package’ for “Be the change” (Porto Editora, 2012), a coursebook for the 7th grade includes seven different elements: student’s book, grammar and vocabulary workbook, extensive reading, lesson plans, games, digital resources and a teacher’s book with tests.

Tandlichová (2003) explores the issue from the perspective of those who make most use of coursebooks - teachers and learners - and in appeal for a more learner-centred approach, points out seven chief roles coursebooks should fulfil: they should be informative (presenting information, such as social-cultural aspects, uses of the English language, acculturation development); developing (stimulating activity, independence and creativity); integrating (of learners' knowledge and experience, of other skills, such as dictionary use); educating and motivating (developing pupils' personality and intrinsic motivation); contrastive-transformational (presenting a contrastive approach to linguist material of target and local cultures); facilitating and relating (facilitating the teacher's role and pupils' active and independent work by means of tasks, activities, exercises); finally, testing (of productive and receptive acquisition of linguistic and communicative competence). The range of functions assumed here gives a clear indication of just how significant coursebooks are at a macro-level. With respect to procedures in the ELT classroom, Cunningsworth (1984: 7) also identifies seven roles for the coursebook: a coursebook can serve as

- A resource for presentation material (spoken and written).
- A source of student practice activities for interactive communication.
- A reference source for students on grammar, vocabulary etc.
- A source of stimulation and ideas for classroom activities.
- A syllabus for the pre-determined learning objectives.
- A resource for self-access or self-directed learning.
- A source of support for less confident learners and teachers.

Concerning whether coursebooks are fulfilling these expectations, in a later work, Cunningsworth (1995) establishes four broad categories which should provide the bedrock for any principled approach to coursebook evaluation: they should match the learners' needs and the objectives of the national programme¹⁸; they should reflect the use the learners will make of the language and equip them effectively for these purposes; they should facilitate learning without imposing a strict methodology, and they should clearly support learning, mediating positively between the target language and the learners.

¹⁸ Portuguese produced coursebooks are subject to an accreditation process which strongly reinforces the need for the books to conform to the National Programmes. See *Lei nº 47/2006, de 28 de Agosto* and *Decreto-Lei n.º 261/2007, de 17 de Julho*.

A different approach to accessing the relative merits of a coursebook may be derived from the world of ‘business’ and ‘management studies’, which deal explicitly with the concept of a ‘quality product’. Mahmood (2009: 165-169), in his discussion of what constitutes a ‘quality product’ in the context of evaluating coursebooks in Pakistan, invokes an eight dimension framework developed by Garvin (1988) and adapts it to the world of coursebook publication:

Performance: that the coursebook achieves the learning outcomes laid down by the curriculum and learner needs

Features: that the coursebook contains activities and suggestions to encourage learner thinking

Reliability: that the coursebook is clear, accurate and understandable in the information it contains

Conformance: that the coursebook meets pre-defined standards, as set by the local educational authorities

Durability: that the coursebook meets economic and technical expectations over a period of time and its content does not become obsolete or invalid before the end of this period

Serviceability: that the coursebook and its inherent delivery of content are valid for local teachers

Aesthetics: that the coursebook has an attractive and acceptable visual aspect which is relevant to the content and context

Perceived quality: that the coursebook is perceived by the stakeholders as being positive in terms of appearance, content and publication quality.

Furthermore, these dimensions may be expanded to create a list of ‘identified indicators’ to provide for systematic evaluation of coursebooks, by any educational body which has responsibility for coursebook approval (in Pakistan, the Curriculum Wing of the Ministry of Education).

From a more utilitarian perspective, the experienced coursebook writer¹⁹ O’Neil (1982) discusses the merits of using an ELT coursebook in relation to a specific group of learners and concludes that the coursebook provides a great deal of suitable material to their needs, provides the opportunity to review and plan ahead (which is also true for the learners), provides well-presented, cost effective material and provides a bank of materials to adapt and improvise while teaching (ibid: 105). He further notes that “[a]lmost always a textbook can be found which will provide the core language which is necessary and useful for a group who at first sight seem unique” (ibid: 106).

Whether produced nationally or overseas, coursebooks nowadays are well-presented in terms of their quality and appearance and avoid the need for expensive and time

¹⁹ For example: “Situations in English” 1970; “Kernel Lessons, Intermediate” 1971; “English Works” 1993; “Classic English” 1995.

consuming use of photocopies²⁰, which also require immense care in their production if they are to possess the same kind of credibility that coursebooks tend to have in the eyes of their users. Learners using a coursebook do not have to take responsibility for organising and storing large numbers of texts, worksheets and such like; instead they have a bound, convenient to carry, easy to use resource: the coursebook.²¹ Thus the default position in most school contexts is to use a coursebook:

The sheer labour-intensiveness of developing classroom materials, the pressures of heavy timetables, and the highly restrictive nature of most teaching situations nevertheless force the teacher (or educational purchaser) to rein in his or her reservations, and to choose a book which only approximates to the needs of the local context. (Sheldon, 1988: 238)

However, as the quotation above implies, there is no such thing as a perfect coursebook, In this light, the role of coursebooks in ELT has come under increasing critical scrutiny in recent years, dating back perhaps to the seminal book by Cunningsworth (1984) or even the key article, cited above, by Sheldon (1988). Both authors discussed evaluating and selecting ELT materials and very much aligned with the increasing influence of various trends in ELT, such as the advent of the Communicative Approach to ELT, much in vogue since the 1970s/1980s. For example, concerns have been raised about how coursebooks ‘fit’ with the nature of the teaching-learning process, as defined by recent work in the field of Applied Linguistics:

Having recognized the dynamic and interactive nature of the learning process, and having taken on board the individuality of any teaching-learning situation, we might reasonably expect the textbook to wither away in favour of negotiated syllabuses backed up by materials produced by teachers and learners working together. (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994: 316)

Further disquiet relates to the nature of what is found within the coursebooks themselves i.e., their contents: “Despite the bounteous harvest of ELT materials which the past decade and a half has provided, published materials do not always provide types of texts and activities that a teacher is seeking for a given class” (Block, 1991: 211). Block goes on to identify three main factors which lie at the heart of the inherent weakness of commercially, non-teacher produced materials and/or coursebooks according to the same author: boring and irrelevant contextualisation of core language; dated and practically unusable texts; and the lack of a personal investment from the

²⁰ Horsley (2010: 44) refers to the extent of photocopying carried out in schools in the state of New South Wales, in Australia, in 2006: 449 million pages.

²¹ The Portuguese state is unique in Europe in determining criteria for durability, paper quality and weight in its coursebook accreditation procedure (Dias de Carvalho & Fadigas, 2007).

teacher which allows for any engagement with the learners (ibid: 213-215). The fact that coursebooks have become so sophisticated in the way they are produced also distances many teachers from what a coursebook is and what it stands for. Masuhara (1998) suggests that the role division between textbooks producers (e.g. professional textbooks writers and publishers) and the users (e.g. teachers, educational administrators and learners) seems to be becoming more and more evident. The huge amount of time, and energy, as well as an increasing range of required expertise, must discourage many teachers from becoming coursebook writers, given also their heavy timetable load in increasingly large classes, in widely varying teaching contexts (ibid: 246-247).

Notwithstanding the arguments mentioned above, the coursebook continues to exert a considerable influence over the teaching/learning process: “The reasons why textbooks continue to dominate teaching and learning especially in classrooms in developing countries could be attributed to the considerable advantage they offer both teachers and learners” (Opoku-Amankwa, 2011: 305). However, all ELT coursebooks need to be approached with much caution and a critical eye. One crucial consideration is that the aims, values and methodology of the national teaching programmes must be respected. This consideration is at the heart of the central dilemma teachers are faced with when employing coursebooks: their need for support (Point 7 mentioned by Cunningsworth above) while exercising **choice** and at the same time not being subject to too much **control**. This is especially true given the high number of contact hours most teachers are expected to deliver, and not forgetting that teachers also have another ‘life’ outside the classroom: a personal life with perhaps all the demands of raising a family, maintaining a home and so on, as well as all the non-teaching professional duties that consume an increasingly large part of their work time outside the classroom.

In some teaching contexts coursebooks maintain an almost biblical status: teachers may assume “that any item included in a textbook must be an important learning item for students, and that explanations (e.g. of grammar rules or idioms) and cultural information provided by the author are true and should not be questioned” (Richards, 1998: 131) whereas other experts in the ELT field urge the abandonment of coursebooks and pre-packaged materials: “Teaching should be done using only the resources that teachers and students bring to the classroom i.e. themselves – and whatever happens to be in the classroom” (Thornbury, 2001: 14). What is true for ELT

is also echoed throughout the British educational system: “The negativity surrounding textbooks in terms of use and status as both literary objects and vehicles for pedagogy is profound. There is very deep-seated ‘anti-textbook ethos’ witnessed throughout the education business” (Issitt, 2004: 683). However, it is likely that most teachers tend to be less fundamentalist²² in their use of coursebooks: “Occupying the space between the two extremes are teachers who might be said to base their teaching on a book or a number of books and those who only make use of a book for limited and specific purposes” (McGrath, 2002: 9).²³ Whatever the intentions of coursebook writers (or curriculum planners) are is generally subject to the needs of individual learning contexts, as interpreted by the class teacher:

[...] teachers’ understanding of the material, their beliefs about what is important, and their ideas about students’ and teacher’s role all strongly shape their practice. [...] Developers’ designs thus turn out to be ingredients in – not determinants of – the actual curriculum. (Loewenberg Ball & Cohen, 1996: 6)

Arguments against the use of coursebooks may focus on the teacher, implying that more often than not coursebooks fail to provide real help to teachers and teachers become dependent and de-skilled: “even the best textbooks take away initiative from teachers by implying that there is somewhere an ‘expert’ who can solve problems” (Brumfit, 1979: 30). It has also been argued that the idea that there is a ‘one size, fits all’ kind of solution available is inherent in many coursebooks which is counter-intuitive given the complexity and variety of needs, goals and methodologies that exist in widely differing ELT contexts: “the management of language learning is far too complex to be satisfactorily catered for by a pre-packaged set of decisions embodied in teaching materials” (Allwright, 1981: 9). Or the ‘problem’ may be traced back to the nature of the contents of the coursebook itself:

The contents of EFL/EIL coursebooks (including lexical contents) often come under criticism for their limitations and stability. [...] coursebooks are so static that they are frequently predictable in content. This is because coursebooks for all proficiency levels are based on a limited number of ‘general interest’ topics. (Reda, 2003: 262)

As implied above, coursebooks are restrictive by nature, imposing learning objectives on learners and instructional formula on teachers which may, in fact, be being promoted

²² Thornbury himself recognises the radical nature of his proposals, likening them to the minimalist approach to cinema advocated by the Dogme movement from Denmark and uses the same nomenclature: Dogme ELT.

²³ See Harewood, 2005:154 for a table summarising the pro-, weak anti- and strong anti-coursebook views.

as a function of the needs/interests of the publishers. Perhaps for these reasons the use of coursebooks by pre-service student teachers of ELT has been discouraged. Horsley (2010: 42) comments that teacher education programmes in Australia promote the idea that good teachers do not use commercially produced resources or published coursebooks (which are widely available in the schools in which they are training), but rather should produce their own materials. Furthermore he cites other research from the USA (Loewenberg-Ball & Cohen, 1996) where teachers, aligning themselves with the tradition of American individualism and some kind of idealisation of professional autonomy, are encouraged to reject commercially produced teaching materials. He adds that the higher education institutions in question (in Australia and the USA) provide few opportunities for their student teachers to develop skills in evaluating and selecting good teaching and learning resources.²⁴ However, many in-service ELT teachers view coursebooks as a convenient form of assistance and where suitable coursebooks exist, it makes sense to use them: coursebooks save time in terms of lesson preparation; coursebooks provide a kind of roadmap, so the teacher (and others agents in education) know where she has been and where she still has to go in terms of lesson content (this is also true for the learners) and this kind of orientation is extends to providing teachers and educational administrators with a secure sense of what is expected, accepted and assessable in the world of FL education; coursebooks can provide both structure and variety in terms of linguistic input, activities and cultural contents.

Recently published, good quality coursebooks²⁵ may also be a vehicle for innovation, giving teachers access to new techniques, approaches or methodologies with which to experiment and modify their practice that they would otherwise not encounter. Indeed, Loewenberg-Ball & Cohen (1996) make an appeal for teaching materials to have this kind of positive approach to improving educational practice/teacher development incorporated so that teachers, learners and materials combine and interact in a process of “curriculum enactment” (ibid: 7) appropriate to individual learning contexts. From the point of view of the learners, a good coursebook may arouse the learners’ sense of progress, purpose and security, allowing for self-access work and private study, thus

²⁴ Student teachers at Faculty of Letters, Porto (FLUP) have the opportunity to develop these specific skills in a 30 hour ‘Production of ELT Materials’ course as part of their pre-service training. The course includes practical work on analysing coursebooks and the production of supplementary materials.

²⁵ The issue of ‘quality’ is not widely defined in the educational policies. One exception are the 2006 guidelines issued by the Ontario Ministry of Education which offer four key quality criteria within a framework of seven major analytical aspects concerned with coursebook approval.

enlarging learner autonomy, improving a capacity for a more self-directed learning, and contributing to an increase in learner independence (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994).

Ur (1996), in the paperback edition of what has become almost a ‘handbook’ on the theory and practice of ELT (the book’s 16th edition was published in 2008), summarises the advantages and disadvantages of using a coursebook. According to her analysis, coursebooks may have a positive influence due to factors like, they provide a framework, “a sense of structure and progress” (ibid: 184)), a syllabus which incorporates a “carefully planned and balanced selection of language content” (ibid: 184), “texts and learning tasks that are likely to be of an appropriate level for most of the class” (ibid: 184). Furthermore, “a book is the cheapest way of providing learning material for each learner” (ibid: 184); a book is convenient, portable and independent of other resources (hardware or electricity, for example); a book may be supportive of and guide “teachers who are inexperienced or occasionally unsure of their knowledge of the language” (ibid: 184). And lastly, learners may become less teacher dependent and thus more autonomous if they want to learn “new material, review and monitor progress” (ibid: 184). On the other hand, Ur (1996) also draws attention to arguments against using a coursebook, such as the fact that learner needs vary almost infinitely and no single coursebook can meet those needs satisfactorily, “the topics dealt with in the coursebook may not necessarily be relevant or interesting” (ibid:185), the limitations imposed by the book may reduce teacher initiative and creativity and demotivate and bore learners, coursebooks are homogeneous by nature and “do not usually cater for the variety of levels of ability and knowledge, or of learning styles and strategies that exist in most classes” (ibid: 185), and lastly that teachers, when working exclusively with a coursebook, may become uncritical and uninspired, “functioning merely as mediators of its content instead of teachers in their own right” (ibid: 185). By way of conclusion, this author recommends a criterion based approach to coursebook assessment, emphasising the need to look closely at what coverage the coursebooks demonstrates in relation to content skills and tasks.

Working with a coursebook is a pro-active process, since there is no such thing as the perfect coursebook teachers inevitably have to make decisions about which coursebook to use and what to teach from the book and what to not. Very often, the former decision

is outside of the control of teachers but the latter most certainly is within the scope of all teachers' responsibilities:

Teaching a book is very different from basing a course on a book. A book should not be a course in the sense that it determines the totality of learning experiences for those using it. [...] teachers need to think carefully about how the book can contribute to the aims of their course. (McGrath, 2002: 58)

Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) describe what amounts to a transformation of a coursebook by a local context teacher (in Vietnam) when faced with a British produced commodity, where the teacher is the mediator of what is appropriate and meaningful to incorporate into the local teaching-learning context. This is true for Portuguese produced materials being used in Portugal just as much as is in the case of Vietnam, since there will always be variation in the teaching-learning contexts in which a coursebook is employed. As stated by McGrath above, it is the teachers who are the crucial agents in any adaptation of published materials; here then is a crucial distinction: "[they] are agents by changing textbooks, by using them not as solutions for adoption, but as resources for adaptation" (Seidlhofer, 1999: 236). The process of deciding what to teach directly from a coursebook implies a series of different procedures. The criteria for such decisions need to be locally defined, according to the local teaching and learning context and social setting and to a series of variables associated with the profile of the teacher and the learners who would be using the coursebook. These variables include factors like the learners' needs, age, sex, background, interests, learning styles, experiences, level of knowledge, proficiency, objectives, expectations and the teacher's personal and biological circumstances, professional goals, and institutional constraints.

In relation to teachers, there is research evidence from Australia of considerable variation in the way 'novice' and 'expert' teachers use coursebooks: Horsley and Walker (2006) report major differences with respect to teacher-learner and learner-learner collaboration, modification of learning materials and scaffolding techniques (ibid: 267-268). A good coursebook should be able to address effectively the teacher's responsibility, creativity and investment and the learners' initiative and receptivity. "Coursebooks are tools which only have life and meaning when there is a teacher present. They are never intended to be a straightjacket for a teaching programme in which the teacher makes no decisions to supplement, to animate or to delete" (Bell & Gower, 1998: 118). There is a huge range of readily available additional resources for

ELT teachers beyond the coursebook, including electronic materials, graded readers, skills practice books, grammar practice books, DVDs, websites, teacher resource books and so on, any or all of which can be employed if the teacher feels that the coursebook contains unsuitable materials or has gaps or lacks variety or feels to meet a specific need or provide sufficient practice (Spratt et al, 2005: 114-115). Coursebooks have limitations thus while they may provide a framework or systematised support: “A great deal of the most important work in a class may start with the textbook but end outside it, in improvisation and adaptation, in spontaneous interaction in the class, and development from that interaction” (O’Neil, 1982: 110). In fact, the personalisation and humanising of the coursebook is in the individual teacher’s hands²⁶, adapting materials to the needs of the class, making use of other sources, setting up alternative activities, and omitting, replacing or changing the content of the coursebook (Harmer, 2001: 301-306). There is an in-built ambiguity in the nature of all educational resources, including coursebooks:

Whilst as teaching vehicles textbooks are scorned by many in the teaching profession as poor and insufficient and as assuming a basically passive learning style, studies show that they are extensively used – a fact easily confirmed by examination of school budgets as well as by cursory observations of school and university life. (Issitt, 2004: 683)

The reasons behind this duality may lie in the fact that coursebooks both conserve and challenge, replicate and replace, and that this compounds the complexity of their function in the educational system:

Because of the values that it transmits, and through the instrumentation that it offers to the master and to the pupil, it highlights the professionalism of both, it testifies to their specialisation and becomes one of the factors of their social recognition. But, while the textbook officialises and consolidates, it also introduces changes, encourages innovations and facilitates reforms. (Moeglin, 2004: 20)

The role of the teacher in mediating the content suggested by the coursebook makes the FL/ELT coursebook different from other subject coursebooks (which often view the coursebook primarily as a content resource); yet other factors also play a fulcral role. Theories of language and language learning dictate the instructional objectives and the content and form of the instructional texts included in any coursebook. Prodromou (1992) points out how ‘early’ methodologies, such as the Grammar–Translation Method, the Direct Method and Audiolingualism, all had only a superficial interest in

²⁶ See, for example: Rinvolutri, M. (2002). “Humanising your Coursebook”, Peaslake, Delta Publishing.

situating the language in a cultural context. Within the Behaviourist paradigm of learning which underpinned these methodologies, coursebooks were seen as vehicles for knowledge transmission, providers of information and exercises to help ‘understand’ that knowledge/information. The focus of attention in the teaching-learning process was on the analysis the formal properties of the foreign language, very often confined to sentence level. These FL methodologies have been challenged and replaced: learning was re-conceptualised in a constructivist paradigm in which learners, through exposure to multiple sources, create their own understanding, helped by coursebook based activities (Horsley & Walker, 2006). As an example, it is possible, with reference to ELT, to suggest 1976 as a major turning point with the publication of David Wilkins’ seminal book “Notional Syllabuses”.²⁷ Coursebooks that had basically reflected a Behaviourist/Structuralist view of language and language learning were challenged by a Functionalist view.

Structuralist coursebooks are characterised by texts (mainly dialogues, but also longer passages) created to illustrate a particular syntactic structure or grammatical pattern which, in turn, must be extensively practiced or drilled. Meaning resides in these structures, which are incrementally learned before being synthesised by the learner at a later stage of learning. The Functionalist view of language and language learning, which later evolved into the Communicative approach to ELT, gave rise to coursebooks exploring meaning by situating it in contexts, language in operation, as part of a social phenomenon. Medium, settings and interpersonal relations are given priority over the simplicity of a sequence of pre-determined structures. Learners must experience and practice the language through a wide range of communicative events: this is a sociocultural perspective on learning. The coursebook should ‘scaffold’ learning, providing support for collaborative learning experiences, as well explicit teaching (Horsley & Walker, 2006). So, coursebooks came to include a greater variety of exercises and texts, placed more emphasis on the authenticity of the language modelled and employed, used more visuals to help transmit meaning and construct meaningful contexts and the use of the mother tongue is effectively abolished/banished making the object of learning (the L2), the same as the medium of teaching (the L2): again, something unique in terms of subjects within the school curricula. Thus, FL

²⁷ See Hurst (1997) for a comprehensive discussion of the content and impact of ‘Notional Syllabuses’.

coursebooks are characterised by their use of the target language to organise and direct the way the learners (and teachers) approach the proposed classroom activities aimed at teaching the target language. The instructions, the exercises rubrics, and so on, are formulated in the L2 in such a way as to be clearly understandable and ‘doable’; there can be no room for doubt otherwise the lesson will not proceed smoothly. Here, then, is a further element of authority, a voice of authority which decides on the learners’ needs and guides them towards the desired knowledge using an L2, which is both insistent and devoid of any linguistic features related to uncertainty or politeness, but at the same time fails to take any responsibility for the success or failure of individual learners.

What further sets FL coursebooks apart from other subject coursebooks is the nature of the texts contained within each chapter/unit of the coursebook. Coursebooks in other subject areas may include a large number of expository texts, written in the familiar schoolbook style, framed by their relatedness to the educational purpose assigned and defined by an educational institution (Dendrinos, 1992: 48). FL coursebooks contain texts that originate from outside the world of classrooms and schools and are drawn from different sources, newspapers, magazines, and so on, that cover a huge variety of topics (not just ‘Language X’, the subject) or social events; they are written in a wide variety of different registers/styles, and many of them may be categorized as ‘authentic’ in the sense they have a communicative purpose outside the classroom setting. These texts gain some form of authority precisely because they represent the discourse of a communication system and social milieu which is real: a world which has recognized English as the prestige form of international communication, this being somewhat in contrast to other subjects where prestige and authority come from recognition of being important within their field of study. FL coursebooks make considerable use of a great variety of graphic devices and representations (fonts, type sizes, symbols, emoticons etc), for example, to help distinguish different source genres for texts, different functions (examples, explanations, exercises, etc) and activities (grammar practice, vocabulary building, skills work, etc) within the coursebook, and which also serve as a way of ‘bridging’ the content/texts back to the real world from which they came (supposedly).

Yet the nature of the beast, namely, a foreign language being taught through the medium of that same foreign language, has prompted several authors (for example,

Rinvoluceri, 2002, mentioned above, or Meddings and Thornbury, 2009) to argue that where coursebooks often fall down it is in their failure to address the multi-dimensional resources that the learners bring with them as human beings. This is because they focus primarily and almost exclusively on linguistic and analytical aspects of language learning and not on the whole learner. What is being brought into doubt here is the ability (or not) of coursebooks to 'engage' learners: to connect with learners at a psychological and/or emotional level, so that they are cognitively and affectively involved. If learners are to be expected to participate in real communication, then they must feel positive and be genuinely interested in what they are doing, and only then will learning be facilitated: "The integration of new knowledge into the learner's existing language system occurs with certainty only when the language is used spontaneously in a communicative (purposeful) situation to express the learner's own meaning" (Crawford, 2002: 87). The majority of language work in coursebooks should therefore be on contextualised language in use, where the focus is on meaning, i.e., language which is far from the contrived and artificial language often found in coursebooks. The need to accommodate learners' motivational and attitudinal backgrounds, in the selection of language learning materials and tasks, is also reflected in the need to take into account learners' varied learning styles and multiple intelligences, so that as many learners as possible have the chance to receive, process and retain information (Tomlinson, 1998).

The importance of having a learner based philosophy to FL teaching has been highlighted by the work of Howard Gardner (1999), who proposes a rationalist model of nine different intelligences: mathematical-logical, verbal-linguistic, musical-rhythmic, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual-spatial, naturalist and existential intelligences. Each of these should be addressed in FL materials and tasks, so that the greatest number of learners (with their individual varying degrees of the various intelligences) may feel motivated in the learning context: "These different intelligences reflect a pluralistic panorama of learners' individual differences; they are understood as personal tools each individual possesses to make sense out of new information and store it in such a way that it can be easily retrieved when needed for use" (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004: 120). As an example, ELT has long recognised the role of 'visual aids' in the teaching-learning process, particularly to present new vocabulary in a way which clarifies meaning but also facilitates information retrieval. Work has also been done in

relation to how visualising helps learners formulate meaning in relation to reading texts (Tomlinson, 1998). Further examples could be referred to in relation the other intelligences: James Asher proposed an approach to EL teaching, which he called “Total Physical Response”²⁸, based on the idea that when children and parents interact (the context of language acquisition), they do so through both physical and verbal actions, and this may be incorporated into a language learning context: learners need to move and do/perform actions (bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence) in response to verbal commands. Similarly, the use of music in the FL classroom is nothing new (musical-rhythmic intelligence); many teachers use background music to help their learners concentrate and be creative, since it cuts out other distracting noise and generally promotes a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom; indeed, “Suggestopedia” as elaborated by Georgi Lozanov, in both its original guise and its subsequent offshoots, represents another approach to ELT from the ‘Humanistic’ stable, which makes integral use of classical and/or baroque music as a means of reducing anxiety and tapping into sub-conscious level of the brain’s reserves (in this respect there are ties here with some of the practices of both yoga and Soviet style psychology).²⁹ In any case, the overriding implication is that ELT and education in general should move beyond giving so much consideration to just pure cognitive activity, a view supported by work in the field of neuroscience which identifies ‘affect’ and ‘emotion’ as being integral to brain processing systems. Arnold & Fonseca (2004: 130) conclude that

[i]n the second language classroom it is possible to motivate learners by activating multiple ways of meaning-making through the use of tasks relating to different intelligences. Providing a variety of language activities that stimulate the different *tools* or intelligences proposed by Gardner (1999) makes it possible to engage multiple memory pathways necessary to produce *sustained deep learning*. (Schumann, 1997)

It is necessary to bear in mind the fact that no coursebook is culturally neutral:

If they have any subject content, coursebooks will directly or indirectly communicate sets of social and cultural values which are inherent in their make-up. This is the so-called ‘hidden curriculum’ which forms part of any educational programme, but is unstated and undisclosed. (Cunningsworth, 1995: 90)

In this day and age, it is imperative for teachers to be aware of these values and even concepts of social order, implicitly or explicitly, present in coursebooks and make a

²⁸ TPR has become something of an industry, Asher has published many ‘kits’ and ‘handbooks’ and written several review articles over the years., most of which are documented at the official website: <http://www.tpr-world.com/>

²⁹ For a critical analysis of Suggestopedia, see: Richards, J.C. & Rodgers, T.S. (2001) pp.100-107.

coursebook choice based on principles of inclusivity, appropriacy and cultural sensitivity, and only make use of coursebooks which display a disposition for respect for multiculturalism and multilingualism, in line with the ethos of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference. For example, any ELT coursebook should accurately depict current social realities and be very careful with its use of 'pop culture' icons: it should be a bridge between the learners' world and the world of English speaking communities (Gray, 2002: 151-167).

The Portuguese government exercises considerable control over both the content and method of educational practices, including coursebooks where the accreditation and/or adoption, the pricing and the 'shelf-life' of coursebooks are all subject to state intervention. This is in contrast with France, for example, where there is a tradition of a very high degree of freedom of production, choice and use of coursebooks; or the situation in the Czech Republic, where only officially approved coursebooks qualify for state subsidies (Sikorova, 2011: 2); or Denmark, where the state plays no role at all in determining any time limit, or finally with Britain, where these decisions are usually taken at school level (Dias de Carvalho & Fadigas, 2007). This interventionist role in Portugal is very much at odds with general practice in Europe (for example, Spain abolished its accreditation procedure in 1986) and it has been the subject of some criticism within the country; for example, in the field of the teaching of philosophy, The Portuguese Society of Philosophy appealed in 2005 for the abolition of the six year period of coursebook utilisation highlighting seven main arguments. Such state intervention may indeed become pointless in the light of developments in the field of multi-media and digital resources for education, combined with the general accelerated pace of the production and spread of knowledge which has been identified as a characteristic of our post-modern world (Giddens, 2002).

Various different publishers operate in the Portuguese market producing different ELT coursebooks, but they all have in common one dominant theme: the need to be successful in the market. Only in the rarest of circumstances is the 'no coursebook' option ever exercised within the Portuguese state school system, so publishers go to great lengths to ensure sales of their particular product, their marketing techniques adding indirectly to the endowed authoritative status of coursebooks, almost without reference to the intrinsic qualities (or not) of the merchandise in question: "Publishers

who spend money on elaborate advertisement of their textbooks, and for training teachers how to use them, sell; those who do not spend, do not sell, no matter what the quality of the textbook is” (Dendrinos, 1992, 34). Coursebook publishers are always present at ELT conferences, sponsoring keynote speakers (their authors), providing hospitality and, most of all, launching their new coursebooks in ‘workshops’. This is a prime opportunity to get their newest publications directly into the hands of teachers, very often literally by giving away ‘inspection copies’. The costs of such activities, combined with the expense of actually producing a full colour learners’ coursebook with its sophisticated design and layout (along with all the ‘accessories’ that accompany the modern product, especially the teacher’s book and the digital resources), may in fact mean that publishers are less able to invest in the pedagogical quality of the commodity.

The Portuguese ELT coursebook market is in some ways unique in that both international and local publishers compete for the same sales; international publishers have by no means the upper-hand in the Portuguese market, but at the same time exercise considerable influence over the type of coursebook made available to the local market. The levels of competition and demands of the international market mean an international coursebook has to evidence very high quality production values and an almost ‘teacher-proof’ approach to the use of coursebooks (USA/UK publishers often assume a low level of linguistic and methodological expertise in the ‘international branch’ of the ELT profession). These characteristics, along with the implied de-prioritising of pedagogical values, are then replicated in Portuguese products since they are competing within the same national market.

In the literature there are various authors who draw attention to the importance of having a clearly defined cultural perspective on the cultural contents of coursebooks. A central concern is always the concept of ‘authenticity’ in relation to what learners are being required to do by coursebooks in the context of classroom learning and how that relates to the world outside. Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) suggest a set of demands for a coursebook: that it expands understanding of culturally-conditioned behaviour and of influence of social variables, that it arouses awareness of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target language community, that it represents stereotypes in a fair way, and that it widens learners skills to evaluate the cultural connotations of words and phrases and to organise information about the target culture. Hinkel (1999), on the

other hand, states that a coursebook should provide the learner with accurate and current data information, avoid stereotypes, present realistic pictures, be free from ideological tendencies, present phenomena in context, relate historical and contemporary material, and make it clear how personalities are products of their age. It is within this context that that this present study aims to examine the issue of cultural content in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks.

Chapter Two: Content, Culture and Coursebooks.

Defining culture, discussing culture in coursebooks

It is indisputable that anyone in the business of producing materials for the teaching of the English language must embrace some conception of the symbiotic relationship that exists between language and culture, as Kramsch³⁰ states:

Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them. (Kramsch, 1993: 1)

What can be derived from this statement is that, outside the classroom, the real world demands that language users are in some way culturally competent to an equal degree that they are linguistically competent and perhaps that one (language) cannot exist without the other (culture) and that this reality should therefore be mirrored in language teaching materials produced for the classroom context. It could be said that “[...] foreign language learning is foreign culture learning [...] What is debatable, though, is what is meant by the term ‘culture’ and how the latter is integrated into language learning and teaching,” (Thanasoulas, 2001: intro.).

There exists a general consensus within the English Language Teaching (ELT) fraternity that teaching culture is an important element to consider, but what that culture consists of and how to include this in the teaching-learning process is less well defined. This chapter will examine various definitions in order to construct a framework that will enable the analysis of the cultural elements in subsequent chapters. Questions will be raised in respect of the relationship between culture and identity; the connections between the English language’s function as a ‘world language’ and culture; and the kind of impacts that implicit and explicit cultural content may have in relation to FL learners, especially here in Portugal. Issues related to the choice of cultural content to be included and how these materials function in respect of developing the learners cultural understanding and awareness are also discussed.

Since the mid-1960s, and especially in the 1970s, many writers have sought to include a socio-cultural perspective into their definitions of language knowledge. More specifically, the notion of communicative competence, popularised by Hymes (1972),

³⁰ In “Language and Culture” (1998), Kramsch discusses the connection between language and culture in great depth according to an extensive range of linguistic criteria. More recent books by the same author have focused more on interculturality.

described language use beyond the more narrow confines of a Chomskian³¹ approach which sees individual language users as having some kind of mental blueprint which enables them to process and generate language, using a form of an innate, implicit knowledge of the principles, conditions and rules of their language system.

The ethnographic research data cited by Hymes focussed on language in use: language in the world rather than language in the mind, and as such led to a definition of communicative competence that involves language, people, context and culture:

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

Since the initial model (with its components of grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic knowledge) proposed by Hymes, many developments and additions have occurred in the field of applied linguistics and curriculum design, which have been reflected in the materials produced for language teaching.³²

Celce-Murcia et al (1995) propose a model of communicative competence with five different inter-related areas of competence: linguistic, sociocultural, strategic, discourse and actional. At the core of this model is discourse competence, which includes both elements of linguistic and pragmatic (actional) knowledge and the ability to use these resources in both oral and written contexts, as well as knowledge of the socio-cultural norms, conventions and expectations involved in language as a communicative activity, i.e. as social behaviour. The inclusion of a top-down influence of socio-cultural knowledge and abilities is crucial. This model (and its subsequent revisions) implies that successful communication must take into account the participants (their age, gender, social status and distance, their relations of power and affect), the existence of stylistic conventions (that relate to genres, politeness strategies and registers and also background information related to the target language group), major language varieties

³¹ Since the late 1950s (with “Syntactic Structures” in 1957) and 1960s (a series of published works), Chomsky’s ideas concerning the innate capacity of all children to acquire language and the infinite capacity humans have to create language (through Transformational Grammar) have become highly influential in the theorizing of language teaching practices.

³² Tseng (2002: 11-12) describes these developments succinctly: “From a sociolinguistic perspective, competence in language use is determined not only by the ability to use language with grammatical accuracy, but also to use language appropriate to particular contexts. Thus, successful language learning requires users to know the culture that underlies the language.”

and cross cultural awareness (1995: 23-24). When these insights are related directly to the topic of materials development for language teaching, the importance of the role of culture as content has been clearly identified:

General knowledge of the literature and arts that are integral to the target culture should be part of language instruction as should basic knowledge of the history and geography associated with the target language community. The social structure of the culture should also be covered (e.g. family, kinship relations, child rearing, courtship and marriage, gender roles) especially if the target culture differs in important ways from the learner's culture. Political and educational systems should be introduced as should major religion(s) and holidays, celebrations and important customs. (Celce-Murcia, 2007: 51)

Here then is a clear description of the kind of cultural content that language teaching should embrace as a means to facilitate the acquisition of communicative competence: content which would logically be reflected in the teaching materials and/or coursebooks designed to facilitate the FL teaching-learning process.³³

Language and culture are social phenomena which are shared by all humanity and lie at the centre of our social life; as Risager has noted, “[h]uman culture always includes language, and human language cannot be conceived without culture. Linguistic practice is always embedded in some cultural context or other” (ibid, 2006: 4). Culture is a social context in which people live out their lives in the real world: from the point of view of language teaching, any interest in the culture (and the language) is not derived from a desire to understand these phenomena as mental processes or abstract structures, but rather to include an anthropological perspective within our understanding: culture is a “historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and their attitudes toward life” (Geertz, 1973: 89). According to the same author, the human and social aspects of the interrelatedness of language, culture and life can be equated to a highly complex network of significance that is real and meaningful: “Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative in search of meaning.” (ibid: 5) Geertz, following

³³ Ihde (2000), in his survey of what teachers thought should be included in coursebooks for the teaching of Irish in the USA, concluded that “most respondents interpreted ‘culture’ to mean the way of life and traditions of the speakers of the language” (ibid: 7).

Wittgenstein's stance on language³⁴, believes that culture is not something that occurs in the heads of humans: "Culture is public, because meaning is" (ibid: 12).

English language learners across all possible learning contexts are being asked to deal with other people's meanings (cultural knowledge); they are participants in a diffusive process. Hannerz (1992) argues that this is social distribution where culture exists both at an internalised locus (ideas and modes of thought) and an externalised locus (different forms and ways in which meaning may be accessed and made public). In addition, it is true to say that knowledge or generating meaning is "constructed as a result of a transaction between an individual's conception of the world (individual culture) and the world outside that individual" (Tseng, 2002: 11). Participation and diffusion are key words here. Our contemporary era of globalisation implies the need to understand how cultures may spread across languages (and vice versa: how languages may spread across cultures) and what changes this cultural complexity may provoke in the way individuals structure their personality and cognition.

Cognition can be described by largely the same characteristics throughout humanity, while the symbols that people use to communicate are different. Symbols are not to be studied to gain access to mental processes, but as formations of social phenomena. These insights from the field of Anthropology find an echo in earlier work associated with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham. In a clear break from any notion of the pre-eminence of 'high culture', Raymond Williams states culture is "a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values, not only in art and learning, but in institutions and ordinary behaviour" (cited in Hall, 1993: 351). Social behaviour is conditioned by culture and language and it is both an agent of this dynamic and a component of it at the same time. In essence, culture controls and guides how the members of a social unit behave and provides the means how to make sense of the other members' (and outsiders') behaviour (including language). Language is construed as a vital socio-cultural practice.³⁵

³⁴ Wittgenstein was concerned in his later work (*Philosophical Investigations*, 1953) with "ordinary language", which he defined as a series of "language games", and how within this context the meaning of words is derived through their public use: the words are moves in a game and grammar is the rules of the game.

³⁵ Within this approach to 'Cultural Studies', an overriding concern is to examine the practices of everyday life and their meanings, how these meanings relate to objects and behaviours, and particularly to explain relationships of power: subordination and resistance, production and consumption.

More recently, Bourdieu emphasized the importance of language not as an autonomous construct but as a system determined by various socio-political processes. For him, a language exists as a linguistic habitus (1990: 52), as a set of practices that imply not only a particular system of words and grammatical rules, but also an often forgotten or hidden struggle over the symbolic power of a particular way of communicating, with particular systems of classification, address and reference forms, specialized lexicons, and metaphors for politics, medicine, and ethics (Bourdieu, 1982: 31). Bourdieu (1990) also coined the term “cultural capital” as part of his explanation for educational underachievement. Parents and the family, schools and other institutions can impart knowledge and attitudes which make success more likely: this cultural capital can include ways of behaving or communicating effectively (embodied), ‘high culture’ objects which are owned and understood (objectified) or qualifications obtained (institutionalized). In this context, adding a second linguistic and cultural code through the learning of a foreign language could provide these learners with enhanced “cultural capital” by providing them with a wider range of resources, both material and symbolic (Pierce, 1995).³⁶ This may change both their expectations in life, their perspectives of life and their prospects in life.

The importance of the interplay between socio-cultural factors and cognitive factors in learning contexts lies also at the heart of the work of Vygotsky (1978), more specifically in his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) wherein the learner is not fully independent and requires non-intrusive assistance or ‘scaffolding’ to be provided. Variation in academic performance may be explained by the linguistic, social and cultural disparity between the learners’ school and home environments. Here, the learning environment is the crucial factor, a learning context which has its own history, its own culture. These factors shape the learners’ cognitive development. Language shapes cognition and at the same time cognition is a resource for language. Educational settings are not natural settings and associated educational structures and practices may not enhance effective learning unless their culture is recognised and valued.

³⁶ For Bourdieu, symbolic power involves the use of concepts, ideas and beliefs to achieve goals. In society, symbolic power operates in a field called ‘culture’ whose logic, in turn, is such that it maintains class structures that are inherently iniquitous.

Cultural transmission is an inevitable result of the cultural contact always present in FL classrooms and materials, since it is the site of non-static negotiations of representations and meanings: they provide opportunities to “enter into other frameworks of understanding” (Risager, 2006: 154). Foreign language learners’ identities are challenged as their notions of the world and their relationships with it formed through time and space become modified by an ‘other’ culture. As Stuart Hall makes clear, “[i]dentities are constructed through, not outside, difference” (1996: 4), and it is the target culture in ELT procedures which provides the most substantial point of reference in determining difference. In all learning contexts, coursebooks and other learning materials related to the English language play a role in the construction of the learner’s self-identity as much as any identity associated with any English speaking community. Wang is perhaps not overstepping the mark when he states that

[t]o speak a language well, one has to be able to think in that language, and thought is extremely powerful. A person’s mind is in a sense the centre of his identity, so if a person thinks in English way in order to speak English, one might say that he has, in a way, almost taken on an English identity. That is the power and the essence of a language. Language is culture. (Wang, 2008: 59)

Investment in learning an additional language is also an investment in a learner’s own social identity (Pierce, 1995). Indeed, operating at both the local and global levels, what happens at both the national and at the international level with regard to individuals in classrooms and the production of coursebooks contributes directly to the influence of and role of the English language (and culture) as an agent in the construction of learners’ identities around the world. Giddens, right at the outset of his discussion, makes this quite clear:

The self is not a passive entity, determined by external influences; in forging their self-identities, no matter how local in their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications. (Giddens, 1991: 2)

Exposure to different ways of life (social and psychological meanings) in coursebooks will certainly affect younger learners’ constructive process related to self-identity. Coursebooks are agents that enable social relations to be relocated across time and space, so, as Marcus (1992) has argued, “[l]ocal identity emerges as a compromise between a mix of elements of resistance to incorporation into a larger whole and elements of accommodation to this larger whole” (ibid: 313). This is perhaps especially

true with respect to the English language given the dominant (hegemonic?) role it plays in the world population's need for an additional or second or foreign channel of communication (depending on your choice of terminology). Coursebooks may be the agents of bringing geographically distant cultures into a proximity with learners that borders on the intimate, either through private reading or participation in classroom related activities based on the coursebook.³⁷

The forces at work within globalization challenge the boundaries of national cultures and identities, leaving no local context unconnected or independent, and yet not creating a new global alternative. According to Bhabba, the connections or relationships created may be both tense and temporary:

We have entered an anxious age of identity, in which the attempt to memorialize lost time, and to reclaim lost territories, creates a culture of disparate 'interest groups' or social movements. Here affiliation may be antagonistic and ambivalent; solidarity may be only situational and strategic: commonality is often negotiated through the 'contingency' of social interests and political claims, (Bhabba, 1996: 59).

Thus, all cultures become partial and subject to a process of "cultural hybridization" and characterized by their "baffling likeness and banal divergence" (ibid: 54). Our identity is established in relation to others (others who are different and these relations may be conflictual or contradictory), and as Woodward has rightly emphasized, identity is "given meaning through the language and symbolic systems through which they are represented. [...] Representation works symbolically to classify the world and our relationships with it" (1997: 8-9). This is the heart of the matter: language is a representational system, using signs and symbols to convey concepts, feelings and ideas (meanings), allowing for communication between participants on the basis of a shared understanding and vision of the world (Hall, 1997). Whether today's world is labelled 'post-modern' or 'high modern', these considerations are crucial to understanding our identity, our human experience: "In modernity, identity becomes more mobile, multiple, personal, self-reflexive, and subject to change and innovation. Yet identity in modernity is also social and Other-related" (Kellner, 1992: 141).

³⁷ And there can be few ELT classrooms in Portugal where there is not a strong reliance on the coursebook as the dominant teaching resource given the high number of contact hours that Portuguese teachers of English are currently expected to administer.

The current generation of English language learners could therefore be said to be ‘open’ to the significance and influence of different cultures in a way that was not previously true.³⁸ References to distant events throughout any local mass media mediate the local population’s experience of everyday life and help form a reality which, while being both virtual and phenomenal in some ways, negates any notion of place. Giddens makes this very point in relation to the print media, describing what results from the juxtaposition and/or co-existence of stories and news items: “the ‘separate’ stories which are displayed alongside one another express orderings of consequentiality typical of a transformed time-space environment from which the hold of place has largely evaporated” (1991: 26). Something similar can be ascribed to coursebooks (which may also be categorized as a form of print media) if the term ‘stories’ is replaced with ‘texts’: the cultural content is disembedded from its original setting: this results in a kind of “collage effect” (idem: 26), an equally apt metaphor to describe how ‘culture’ is dealt with in ELT coursebooks which contain greater or smaller texts (spoken or written) and illustrations (diagrams, drawings or photographs), all of which represent elements of the target language/culture in a displaced learning context.

What constitutes the culture in the teaching materials of an English language teaching context requires particularly sensitive consideration, given the connection that was traditionally firmly established between the nation state of the United Kingdom³⁹ and the culture and language most clearly associated with that political and/or geographical entity:

Culture is a concept which needs to be handled carefully. Nowadays it is much used, often far too loosely. One of the problems is that the most common use of the word - as national culture - is very broad and conjures up vague notions about nations, races and sometimes whole continents, which are too generalised to be useful, and which often become mixed up with stereotypes and prejudices. (Holliday, 1994: 21-22)

Within the context of research into any potential connection between nations and cultural characteristics, Geert Hofstede, the Dutch psychologist, designed and carried out extensive research into cultural differences and similarities of over 116,000 employees of International Business Machines (IBM) in over 50 countries and in 20

³⁸ The recent refurbishment of many Portuguese schools has further enhanced this ‘open’ door to other cultures by means of technologies such as the Interactive White Board and connections to the Internet.

³⁹ Since the late 1980s, the USA has also begun to feature more frequently in Portuguese produced coursebooks as the location of the ‘target culture’. See below.

languages. The findings of his research were initially published in 1980. He identified four dimensions of culture and mean scores for each country on each dimension. The research relates to large, national groups working in a business context and not individuals. A consequence of the research is that the broad cultural tendencies of countries/nations can be compared. Hofstede used the metaphor of culture as the “software of the mind” with large groups sharing a collective “mental programming” (1991: 4). The four dimensions identified by Hofstede are described below bearing in mind that these descriptions represent extremes and it is more realistic to think of each country situated somewhere between, on a continuum (Ellison & Hurst, 2007):

Power Distance: The degree to which a society accepts power may be distributed unequally. In educational terms power distance could be expressed in the relationship between teacher and student.

Individualism versus collectivism: The degree to which a society is individual or group-oriented. In education this may be reflected in the extent to which a teacher encourages individual ideas or group work and to the preferences of students to work alone or within a group.

Uncertainty Avoidance: This is the extent to which a society feels threatened by ambiguity and tries to reduce or prevent this by providing more structure, bureaucracy and explicit rules. In the classroom, a tendency to high uncertainty avoidance manifests itself in the need for specific information e.g., course programmes, detailed hand-outs, clearly defined objectives for tasks.

Masculinity versus femininity: This relates to the degree to which a society distinguishes between male and female roles. In the classroom, this relates to how competition, assertiveness, and success and failure are viewed.

While this kind of research has been contested as being somewhat flawed, it does serve to show how the concept allied to ‘national cultures’ occupies a position of some power and influence in diverse fields. It could be said that the Eurocentric perspective encouraged by the various treaties and institutions of the European Union and its predecessors further emphasises this socio-cultural association: if we are dealing with the English language, then we need to deal with British culture. In practical terms, the traditional location of ELT coursebooks was generally the U.K.; for example, in 1988 it was possible to state that “globally designed textbooks have continued to be stubbornly Anglo-centric: appealing to a world market as they do, they cannot by definition draw on local varieties of English” (Prodromou, 1988: 73).

More recent developments in materials production in Portugal have broadened the cultural horizon to include North America and much more recently other varieties of English language (‘World Englishes’), and consequently culture, from around the

Anglophone world. This broadening of perspective is perhaps fruit of the greater, contradictory force of globalization:

One result [of the present intensified phase of globalization] has been a slow, if uneven, erosion of the ‘centred’ nationalisms of the Western European nation-state and the strengthening of both transnational relations and local identities – as it were, simultaneously ‘above’ and ‘below’ the level of the nation-state. (Hall, 1993: 354)

In this light, processes such as deterritorialization and fragmentation make it absurd to think of “British Culture” as existing as a unified, whole, identifiable, geographically defined organism. This does not mean that ‘culture’ is no longer used as an instrument of national promotion or propaganda or that concepts of national identity and national culture are not present in encounters of an intercultural nature, both inside the classroom and outside in the ‘real’ world. However, studies in Sociology and Anthropology during the last fifty to one hundred years have re-conceptualized culture as being related to social practice and world construction and not a thing or instrument. Individuals, communities and nations are not situated in mono-cultural locations: neither ‘culture’ nor ‘identity’ may be neatly packaged in geographically recognizable boxes. Since the 1990s “[i]t has also become clear that single persons do not enact just ‘one culture’, but rather is influenced by, and participates in, a plurality of “cultural streams” (Thomassen, 2008: 13). In no way is culture to be considered static: it flows and it shifts in ways which may create either greater coherence or greater diversity depending on its location, both in terms of time and in terms of circumstances: “If culture is not an object to be described, neither is it a unified corpus of symbols and meanings that can be definitively interpreted. Culture is contested, temporal and emergent” (Clifford, 1986: 476).

Culture provides the reference system by which individuals make sense of the world in which they live: it provides rules and regulations at all levels of society: these are in turn shared and understood so that any individual behaviour may be evaluated as appropriate or inappropriate in accordance with the shared norms and values. Having this kind of cultural knowledge provides the society’s members with a certain degree of comfort and stability. ELT coursebooks should be a two way bridge to connect the learners’ world to the world of English (language and culture) remembering that

[a]ccurate intercultural communication is built on fluency in the target language, insight into what people are imagining when they speak, and the ability to decipher non-linguistic symbols such as gestures and icons. Because people use language to aid and complement other behavioural purposes, language cannot be understood in isolation from a larger context of

behaviour – all of which is culturally filtered and most of which is culturally originated. (Seelye, 1997: 24-25)

Yet coursebooks can never be adjudged to be neutral in terms of their cultural content; content will always communicate at least some attitudes, ideas, beliefs or values⁴⁰ related to concepts, at the macro level, such as individualism, egalitarianism, universalism, and so forth. A more refined description would include aspects such as how people are defined by their work or achievements, what motivates people positively, how people view the world in terms of problems and solutions, and what value people give to common goals, as well as other similar concepts (Dunnet et al, 1986, 153-154). Indeed, until recently, it has been true to say that “[t]raditional thought in foreign language education has limited the teaching of culture to the transmission of information about the people of the target country, and about their general attitudes and beliefs” (Kramsch, 1993: 205). Here then is the heart of matter, the inappropriateness of accepting and reinforcing as natural and necessary a linkage between a language-culture and a particular country-nation. As mentioned above, there is a common, almost automatic association between ‘culture’ and ‘country’ which then further associates with notions to do with race, history and geography, notions which may, in some cases, be badly informed or prejudiced (Holliday, 1994). This is the fertile ground in which stereotypes have come to flourish.

Learners of English are faced with the tasks of learning not only a linguistic code but also a cultural code. For example, the “accepted” way for young women to dress in the U.K. or the U.S.A. may not conform to the dress code in different societies around the world: these cultural codes are representative of different opinions, beliefs or attitudes. The significance of this line of argument cannot be overstated, for example, within the very recent political and legal developments related to the use of a hijab in various European countries:

These dress examples, that symbolise deeply held beliefs, show how intensely emotional cultural tenets can be, and how much culture is a matter of the heart and not just the head. This explains why cultural misapprehensions can sometimes lead to argument, violence and, in extreme cases, the killing of individuals. (Johnson & Rinvolutri, 2010: 11)

And it is precisely this kind of cultural representation that is very likely to be found in ELT coursebooks, whether they are produced for the Portuguese or an international

⁴⁰ Cunningsworth (1995: 90) refers to this phenomenon as the “hidden curriculum”, it being interpreted as a crucial feature in any educational programme.

market. For example, contemporary ELT coursebooks are largely ‘populated’ by pseudo-real teenagers in various guises for various instructional purposes, both at the levels of illustrations/images and as the supposed authors of texts. Any kind of thematic content or ‘topics’ in the ELT classroom automatically implies a situation in which “[...] a multidimensional linguistic and cultural contact will, under all circumstances, be involved, one in which sex, social class, life experiences and mastery of the language will be able to play a role” (Risager, 2006: 24).

Each and every learner may construct and/or provide a different interpretation, a different representation of the cultural content in question. This is true across the whole spectrum of classroom language learning experiences, even at the most basic level of instruction, for example when teaching a vocabulary item of such apparent simplicity as the word ‘breakfast’. From this cue a Portuguese learner will make various associations but would probably not include items such as ‘tea’ or ‘eggs’ or ‘toast’ or ‘marmite’, which someone from an Anglophone background might be more likely to associate. The point is that it is very often taken for granted that cultural correspondence exists when there is an apparent lexical correspondence. In addition, consideration needs to be given to further unstated or undisclosed meanings; for example, further considerations associated with the item ‘breakfast’ might include aspects such as economic power (How much can you afford to pay for a breakfast?), social class membership-relationships (Who prepares the food? Who is supposed to take part in its consumption?) or even religion (Are there any limitations on what can be eaten?). Reference here should be made to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis⁴¹, which identified two crucial attributes of language in that it “influences the way we construct our model of the world (determinism). And if this is so, other languages convey differing visions of the same world (relativity)” (Fantini, 1997: 11).

In terms of coursebooks, it is important to establish criteria for examining cultural content, in the light of nuances of the kind described above, and avoid resorting to binary distinctions of an ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ type grounded in spurious notions associated with countries/nation states. At the forefront of this approach, in association with the

⁴¹ Based on several 20th century publications (e.g. 1929, 1956), the hypothesis has both ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ versions and held great sway in language education into the 1970s. Today, it is widely accepted that more than just language shapes the thoughts, worldviews and perception of reality of language users.

Council of Europe, Byram (1993a: 3-16) posited a framework based on a seven-fold categorisation:

Social Identity and Social Groups (social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities)
Social Interaction (levels of formality, as an outsider and an insider)
Belief and Behaviour (moral, religious beliefs, daily routines)
Social and Political Institutions (health care, law and order, social security)
National History (historical and national events as markers of national identity)
National Geography (factors seen as significant by members)
Stereotypes and National Identity (what is 'typical', symbols of national stereotypes)

This framework embraces a broad set of components, drawing heavily on what used to be termed 'low culture' to the detriment of 'high culture'⁴², and, as such, may be considered more inclusive. Furthermore, Byram, as well as providing a framework, makes a strong case for any approach to include not only actively enhancing cultural awareness but also incorporating some form of cultural experience in his model of foreign language learning:

Learners need to be prepared for experience of the daily rhythm of the foreign culture, of the behaviours which are different and those which are the same but have a different significance. Such phenomena are verbal and non-verbal, and learners need both the skills of accuracy and fluency in the language and the awareness of the cultural significance of their utterances. (Byram, 1989: 145)

The emphasis here is on understanding culture as being both a part of and the result of dynamic, interactive forces that operate in a social context which have an impact on individual practices.

Several institutions have issued guidelines aiming to establish standards for the teaching of culture in foreign language education.⁴³ These documents are influenced by the work of many scholars who have attempted to define culture in relation to educational programmes. Recent descriptions of culture in relation to ELT have focussed on a three-way distinction within its composition: products, behaviours and ideas (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993), or artifacts, sociofacts and mentifacts (Fantini and Fantini, 1997), or form, meaning and use (Larsen-Freeman, 1987). Moran (2001) introduced a five

⁴² High culture is usually defined as the works of writers, artists and composers who have gained the epithet 'great' through academic and critical appreciation. Works from this category are also considered superior and less accessible.

⁴³ These have been issued in the USA by the National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project (1999). In Europe, the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) has a section on socio-cultural contents. In the UK, The National Curriculum (2007) includes content definitions for different 'keystage' levels of language learning.

dimension interactive model into the discussion, which were products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons. He states that “[c]ulture is the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts” (ibid: 24). This is a comprehensive attempt at a definition which sits well with the five-fold model suggested by Byram (1993a) and described above. What is added here is a direct reference to the human aspect of culture: it is people who either alone or in groups, are the agents of making culture part of the real world. In this way, it also echoes the approach advocated by members of the Birmingham school of ‘Cultural Studies’ (Hoggart, Williams, Hall et al) by directly referencing the fact that culture should be seen as fundamentally a “way of life” phenomenon: “Culture is thus both individual and collective – psychological and social (ibid: 25)”.

To illustrate the usefulness of this framework, it may be useful to take one of Moran’s examples, the cultural phenomenon of ‘law enforcement’, and examine it in the context of the appearance of a British police officer in a coursebook (not an infrequent occurrence). Is the police officer in the coursebook male or female? Experienced or a novice? [persons] Does the officer have a baton? A gun? A name badge? [products] Is the officer arresting someone? Giving a tourist directions? Doing nothing? [practices] What is the officer’s ‘place’ in this society? Who and what does the officer represent? [perspectives] Is the officer alone or with other officers? With a member of the general public? [communities]. What becomes abundantly clear here is that not all the cultural implications of including a British police officer in ELT materials are immediately obvious: there is inherent complexity and also a great deal that is not explicit; the image of an iceberg⁴⁴ is often referred to as a means of illustrating this point and undoubtedly it is easier to understand what you can see (literally and metaphorically) than what you cannot (as a foreign language learner). Shaules (2007) argues that much of the difficulty and confusion surrounding ‘culture’ in an educational setting has to do with a failure to understand a further three way differentiation: “1) culture as a form of personal or social identity 2) culture as something that influences behaviour and 3) culture as shared

⁴⁴ Just as 90% of an iceberg is invisible, then so it is with culture: how people conceive of time, how people handle emotions, how people view leadership issues, and so on. This idea derives largely from the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall’s seminal work “Beyond Culture” (1976).

meaning that acts as a framework for interaction ...” (ibid: 115). According to this author, it is the third dimension which is less explicit and less easy to grasp and is, in fact, what he terms “deep culture”. Here it is also possible to detect the ripples of influence emanating from Birmingham.

What is crucial here in relation to coursebooks is how to embody the con-joined, interactive and yet separate nature of language and culture in FL learning materials. For example, foreign learners of Portuguese have a need to understand the how and the when of the use of the pronouns “tu” and “você”, which takes them into the realm of the deep, the invisible: How do speakers of Portuguese view their relationships with other people? What is at stake is the appropriate use of language for self-expression, for communication and for social interaction (within the same linguistic domain, learners of English need to understand the how and the when (if ever?) of the use the impersonal pronoun “one”). Thus it is possible to state that:

Culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted ... Culture ... is the foundation of communication. (Samovar, Porter and Jain, 1982: 24)

However, language and culture have tended to be dealt with as separate entities in many coursebooks. These coursebooks will have a “Culture Spot”, “Culture File” or a “Facts and Trivia” page or something similar. This separation perhaps results from the desire, on the part of educators and teachers, to give their learners the means to be able to participate in pedagogical activities (largely focussed on dealing with linguistic forms and meanings) which improve their general levels of language production and comprehension before they tackle the more complex demands of improving their cultural competence (Hymes, 1972).

In order to interpret culture, respond to culture or participate in culture, the foreign language learner requires language for communicative and expressive purposes; this view sees language from a functional perspective. Several authors have noted the importance of categorising and understanding language in terms of communicative functions, which became very influential of which in ELT in the European sphere, was probably the seminal work of David Wilkins (1976). Stern (1983) summarises the work

of five different linguists of the 20th century, from Bühler in the 1930s through to Halliday in the 1970s, characterising their approaches under the broad heading of “functional categories of speech acts” (ibid: 224). Contemporary ELT methodology makes use of all kinds of pedagogic activities in the classroom that replicate the social interactions that require language use in the real world (speech as action). These activities include role plays, simulations, dialogues, interviews and so on, which encourage the use of language for communicative and expressive purposes, albeit in a modified or adapted form, depending on the national programme or the learners’ level or the physical limitations of the classrooms itself, among other factors. Some coursebooks include items described as a “function bank” (see Gonçalves & Torres, 2005) or similar, acknowledging the relevance of linking the form which the language takes and the purpose for which it is used: greeting people, making promises, giving advice, etc. This is the specific language that is used in specific social contexts for specific purposes, which also depends on the people involved, the topic area in question and many other non-linguistic factors: the role of silence, physical distance, eye contact, etc (Moran, 2001: 40). Knowledge and choice are critical here.

It would be impossible for any coursebook to take into account all realisations of socio-cultural practices or interactions since they are almost infinite by definition, but guidance may be found in the work of Carol Orwig (1999), who developed a list of categories which included: functions used when socializing (greetings/addressing, taking leave, introductions, etc), functions used in establishing and maintaining relationships (sharing personal information, etc), functions involving barriers, functions involving influencing people (requests for action, requests for information, giving permission), functions involving feedback (compliments, responding to requests), functions involved in arguing (agreeing/disagreeing, convincing, persuading, threatening) and functions involving avoiding trouble (denials, accepting responsibility, explaining, making excuses, etc). Taking as an example the function of ‘introductions’, which frequently appears in coursebooks at the level of initial FL learning, it is possible to state that this function of language is something of immediate usefulness, but which is very often presented in the false paradigm of “Hello, what’s your name? My name is X”. It is relevant to question: how often people introduce themselves to each other compared to how often introductions are made by a third party? Under what circumstances do people have to make such abrupt introductions? Do the young people

into whose mouths these words are often placed use the language in this way? This line of argument serves to illustrate the need for a deeper examination of how participation in language learning involves culture learning even when the learning experience is in the classroom and not embedded in the culture itself. As stated above, language and culture in the classroom are subject to a process of adaptation and modification for pedagogical reasons, but this does not mean that the learners' experience has to be distorted to the extent that it becomes inaccurate and/or inappropriate.

Research into the cultural content of coursebooks is a relatively recent phenomenon. Scrivener (2005), in his prize-winning, self-styled 'essential guide to English Language Teaching' (originally published in 1994), makes no direct reference to cultural content in relation to materials production or evaluation in a book of 17 different chapters, covering more than 400 pages. Ur (1991) lists nine⁴⁵ "different kinds of content" (ibid: 198) that can be found in coursebooks: zero or trivial content; the language; another subject of study (other curriculum subjects; home culture (institutions, places etc); culture associated with the target language (discussion of the latter); literature of the target language; world or general knowledge; moral, educational, political or social problems (issues, dilemmas, etc); and the learners themselves (experiences, feelings, etc). She suggests that coursebooks should be analysed to identify where the coursebooks stands in relation to values, social orientation, ageism and sexism (ibid: 199). Moreover, other more generalist 'how to teach' type books give some consideration to materials evaluation (for example, Harmer, 2001 or Hedge, 2000), but they stay very much within the evaluative framework originally proposed by Sheldon (1988) and generally rely on their being some form of implicit evaluation of the cultural content in their checklist questions if the topic is approached at all (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999: 201). This is the case with Harmer (2001) where explicit consideration is given to the appearance of stereotypes in coursebook materials, but where further analysis is dependent on what is implied by questions related to the content and language of the materials being 'realistic' or 'appropriate' or 'relevant' in relation to learner needs: these notions are defined in terms of language skills, use and level rather than any cultural perspective. With Hedge (2000), there is a consideration of how the target language's culture relates to the learners' culture and whether the term 'culture'

⁴⁵ In this study, numbers under 10 are presented in words, numbers 10 and over in numerals.

includes the possibility of variation beyond the bounds of one nationality, but these considerations play only a minor role in her overall scheme for materials evaluation.

One of the original coursebook evaluation checklists was developed by Cunningsworth (1984); in his scheme of six general categories, through which evaluation may occur, he explores the significance of cultural content from the perspective of motivation and the learner. He makes reference to the importance of “social and cultural factors” (ibid: 61) such as setting, age and class, as well “psychological factors” (ibid: 59), which concern how the materials motivate learners to talk about themselves and important topics which interest them. While this could be interpreted to be a kind of humanistic approach, there remains an identification of culture with specific aspects of the target language community, more specifically speakers of English in the USA and the UK. It also makes mention of how a language incorporates a specific vision of the world and how languages can vary in the representation of different notions, such as ‘time’.

Later, Cunningsworth (1995) takes into account a much more overtly anthropological interpretation of ‘culture’ to include values and attitudes, as well as settings and characters. He lays out a more detailed discussion in a chapter entitled ‘Topic, subject content and social values’, which seeks to explore the non-linguistic aspects of coursebooks and makes specific reference to the likely existence of a “hidden curriculum” (ibid: 86). Here then is recognition that ELT materials, including coursebooks, “can never be neutral in terms of their cultural content” (Hurst, 2008: 71), which in itself increases the significance of the role of FL teaching within the education system and within society as an agent of cultural transmission and mutual understanding.

In this light, Cunningsworth recommends a six-point checklist of criteria for the analysis of coursebooks: range of topic; inclusion of sensitive social/cultural topics; characters depicted; social relationships; expressions of personal feelings and interactions (ibid: 93-96). What is noticeable here is a preoccupation with establishing that FL learning should take place in a context which emphasises ‘people’ (taking the four latter criteria in his checklist): language learning should be seen as a human activity rather than merely a school subject. In response to this, it is worth considering what the ‘population’ of coursebooks actually is: is it comprised of ‘real’ people? What are their motivations, attitudes, relationships, interactions (personal and functional) and feelings?

All these aspects need to be present if these ‘people’ are to be considered ‘complete’ or ‘whole’. Care is required in having a balanced population which reflects that of the real world, in terms of gender, occupation, ethnicity, age, social class and physical capacities. It is through the words and deeds of these ‘people’ that FL learners experience the target language and culture in action. Such considerations are of crucial importance, given their centrality to the concept of self-identity, and, in turn, the role of identity in defining concepts such as ‘the learner’ and ‘culture’ itself.

It is important to analyse the way culture is represented in coursebooks, in broad areas such as language in use (dialogues), the themes/topics of texts (including genres) and the visuals/illustrations. Through such an analysis it may be possible to judge to what extent these teaching materials contribute to ‘learning about’ the target culture(s) in a manner integrated with other more overtly linguistic work done in the FL classroom, as recommended by some authors, for example, Prodromou (1992), on the basis of his survey of Greek FL learners. The texts (spoken and written) and illustrations employed in coursebooks are the cornerstones of a representational construct that is constant across all levels of FL learning and through time, even if there may be variation in the typologies and balance of these elements. The authors of ELT coursebooks in Portugal naturally reflect a concern for language and culture that is dependent on the constraints of the national programmes of their time and their own interpretation of how best to represent that programme on the pages of a coursebook. Some authors may adhere to a modernist approach which would emphasize knowledge of true and realistic facts and structures or some may be more inclined to a post-modernist approach whereby culture is dependent on the view of the ‘receiver’ (Risager & Chapelle, 2012). In either case, the decision making process is guided much more by what the authors view as being content the learners should ‘know’ rather than by a reflection of what the learners’ interests (or needs) might be.

Since the early 1990s, several studies have been conducted in Europe with regard to cultural content in FL coursebooks: Doyé (1991) reported on representation of Britain in German produced coursebooks, Byram (1993) conducted a project on representations of Germany in British coursebooks, Wenger (1998) looked at German teaching in France and England over a hundred year period, Serçu (2000) worked on the teaching of German in Belgium, and Risager (1991) analysed general trends in European

coursebooks. All FL teaching is nowadays operating within a paradigm that reaches beyond national boundaries, that should strive to include a post-colonial, global perspective that offers opportunities for the learners to explore the linguistic and cultural diversity associated with the target language; for example, for learners of French to have exposure to Canadian and Quebecois cultural content (Chapelle, 2009) or learners of Russian to have access to cultural content related to the 'Asian Republics' (Azimova & Johnston, 2012). Great care needs to be taken with the representation of the cultures and peoples of the target language. With reference to various types of coursebooks used in Argentina, "the people from the target culture are characterized by at least three traits that make them distinct from that of the source and international cultures. They are technologically advanced, culturally rich and geographically expansionist" (Basabe, 2006: 66).

A similar, if less dramatically overt description could be made of Portuguese produced coursebooks. Contemporary information and communication technology tends to be seen/presented as being under the control of the USA, with figures such as Bill Gates or Steve Jobs assuming almost hero status in some cases. American or British music or films or TV programmes and pop/film/TV stars are frequently treated as being exemplary carriers of culture, worthy of study and emulation. International locations are often the backdrop to tourist style exploration by members of the target culture communities with little real cultural interaction in fictitious, non-problematic, trivial situations.⁴⁶ There is a danger that this heavily anglicised representation becomes transformed into an accepted 'international' or 'universal' norm, supported by the justification that English is the default international language (EIL or ELF). Rather than promoting an acquiescent uncritical acceptance, coursebooks need to foster a reflective, critical evaluation of the products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons of the target culture (Corbett, 2003). However, there has been very little research in the area of ELT in Portugal where educational research has tended to cover mainly the teaching of Portuguese (Dias de Carvalho & Fadigas, 2007). Cabral (2005) provides ample theoretical background, extensive advice and numerous examples of instruments to use in the analysis of coursebooks without actually applying these tools to a particular coursebook corpus.

⁴⁶ See Wajnryb (1997) for a detailed discussion of the lack of jeopardy in the 'world' within ELT coursebooks.

Language education should provide practical help to learners so that they may be able to communicate interactively with others from society in general; this would usually involve two dimensions: a reflection on the learners' own multiple identities and a comparative perspective on the cultural identities of the communities that use the target language (Byram & Risager, 1999). As such, the teaching of a foreign language is not a neutral process, since it necessitates cultural interaction, a socialisation into new ways of viewing and behaving. Thus, FL coursebooks must take account of this reality and provide materials that explicitly develop cultural awareness and understanding, for example, by combatting existing stereotypes or by learning about 'otherness'. The focus should not be exclusively on differences but also feature examples of the commonalities that bring people together: an idea which can be traced back to the early 20th century and the writings of the American educational reformer, psychologist and philosopher, John Dewey⁴⁷. In Europe, these ideas are also discernible in the contemporary concern institutions show with regard to 'citizenship education', an important element of which is to become plurilingual. Language teaching materials (and teachers) are agents in the on-going process of European integration and recognition of this political dimension, and while it may create tensions it also serves as a stimulus to progress.⁴⁸ Recent local research has stressed the need for learners to develop facets of "critical citizenship" (Guilherme, 2002: 50), a task made more difficult by teaching materials that are traditionally, heavily biased towards the Britain-North America-Australasia axis.

The diachronic nature of this study means that the politico-historical context of the cultural representations formed in the coursebooks needs to be considered. The series of coursebooks under consideration here were chosen to exemplify relevant moments of relevant policy change in the Portuguese educational system. It should be noted that "the general political atmosphere and prevailing norms and values that we are surrounded by often obstruct contemporary insights into tendentious materials" (Ulrich, 2004: 166). Only recently has there been a shift away from a knowledge based approach to cultural content; an approach which considered it was possible to provide learners with correct knowledge about a 'culture' or a 'country', and that this approach "would have some beneficial effect on pupils' attitudes towards and perceptions of the foreign

⁴⁷ Dewey wrote extensively on the role of education in function of the need to diminish national isolationism in the context of the political instability and military conflicts which dominated the early 20th century. Key works include *Democracy and Education* (1916) and *Experience and Nature* (1925).

⁴⁸ It may be that the horizon should now be 'global' rather than European. See Kumaravadivelu (2008) or Byram (2011) on global cultural consciousness and intercultural citizenship.

people(s)/culture(s) of which they are learning the language” (Serçu, 1998: 275). Nowadays, the focus has shifted somewhat away from this more descriptive approach to a more intercultural stance: a stance which is more skill oriented, seeking to engage the learners by making explicit reference to their own experiences and contexts. This kind of engagement is seen as being more likely to promote successful learning (Vygotsky, 1994). The inclusion of materials related to the learners’ perspectives and the receptivity of these same materials is now seen as being crucial but is little in evidence in the corpus of coursebooks considered in this study.

FL teaching has to do with much more than vocabulary and verb tenses, it has to do with the development of the personal and social identities of the learners (Neuner, 1997). Materials and methodologies need to take into account that FL learners need help in not just gaining linguistic and cultural knowledge, but also to develop positive attitudes, to encourage an analytical/critical stance with respect of oneself and the ‘other’ and the relationship between them, as well as using the resultant enhanced awareness to guide their actions (Manjarrés, 2009). This competence is a form of socialization than involves adjusting values, beliefs and concepts as part of the learning process; it incorporates the view that cultural content (when it is identified as a learning objective) is more than ‘knowledge’ about the institutions, geography and history of a very limited range of target communities. The latter superficial approach has an operational appeal for both teachers and learners in that it is not difficult to quantify what has to be taught and tested in order to achieve ‘success’. However, it does little to foster the kind of cultural interaction which is at the heart of the recent drive towards giving learners the skills to grow up and live in a multicultural, plurilingual environment. This view is supported by documents such as the report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for 21st century, which emphasised the role FL teaching could have in reducing confrontations and conflicts by encouraging mutual recognition and respect.

Most ELT coursebooks present their learners with a variety of texts (spoken and written) and illustrations under the heading of topics with a cultural focus. There are clear pedagogical and linguistic reasons for such an approach: to appeal to different types of learners, through different types of verbal and visual means (texts) with different degrees of difficulty, exemplifying different types of communicative contexts

(Risager, 1998). But research in this area has tended to be aimed at deciding on whether the coursebook may be classified or evaluated as being ‘good’ or not, by means often of different schemes, series of criteria or checklists (Sousa & Hurst, 2011). The focus of this study is not to make an overall evaluation of any particular coursebook or series of coursebooks, but rather to describe and discuss to what extent the cultural content of the coursebooks assists learners in understanding the complexities of the target culture. It could perhaps be described as an ethnographic approach, an attempt to de-construct and interpret the representation of culture, and the social meanings therein, as they are construed in the dialogues, texts and illustrations of Portuguese produced coursebooks. This procedure does not encompass the way in which coursebooks are produced (by publishing houses or writers) nor the way in which the coursebooks are received/used (by learners or by teachers). The principle aim under discussion in this present study is rather “to consider language textbooks as one of the many forms of text which represent culture” (Risager, 1998: 60).

To that effect, this study makes use of both quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis. The relative frequencies of occurrence of certain verbal or visual tokens of culture are considered in various tables/figures throughout the main body of the study (without wishing to imply that cultural meanings are fixed in such a way as to make them empirically quantifiable); in addition, specific examples (instances) are criticised from the point of view of meaning or interpretation. The overall aim is to gain an insight into cultural representation in different series of coursebooks at different moments in the development of ELT in Portugal since the 1970s. This approach examines the materials as carriers of cultural information and also seeks to explore the meaning potential that may be present in these same materials: a view which takes into account the opportunities the coursebooks provide for learners (and teachers) to “explore and exploit those (*meanings*) as part of the learners’ dynamic engagement with texts and images in textbooks” (Weninger & Kiss, 2013: 3). Also of interest is not only what is included in the coursebooks, but also what is excluded: what cultural meanings are kept outside of the experience of FL learners, which may, in fact, dis-empower learners when faced with the pragmatics of real-world interactions (Wajnryb, 1997). Exclusion of opportunity to ‘explore and exploit’ may be the result of a coursebook writer/publisher making an editorial decision, but it could result from the fact that any interpretative

activities actually included in the coursebook are subject to the control of the classroom teacher who may directly limit the meaning-making process.

Portuguese producers of coursebooks, through their dominance of the local market, are in a strong position to provide their local FL learners with a context sensitive approach to language learning, a position which could challenge the familiar packaged version of the culture of English being something largely monolithic and associated with a limited number of ‘native speaker’ nation states (Goldstein, 2009).⁴⁹ Yet, the covers of the two most recent series of coursebooks in this study resort to stereotypical images (for example, flags, Beefeaters, skateboards, castles and happy smiling youths) at the very first moment the learner makes contact with materials. While some of the contents (verbal and visual) may attempt to promote a more ‘open’ or ‘global’ vision, there is not enough flexibility built into the learning-teaching process that would allow learners to construct their own cultural meanings, to in some way appropriate the content/language and make it their own (Kramsch, 1983). There is an urgent need to move beyond a largely superficial treatment of the cultures of English with its implied aspirational, promotional model of the language, a need for coursebooks “to be attuned to the cultural sensibilities of their users” (Harmer, 2001: 10): a task which should not be beyond the abilities of the usually highly experienced Portuguese teacher/authors of Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks.

⁴⁹ Given the relatively low levels of use of ‘imported’ coursebooks, the struggle to ‘nativize’ coursebooks and resist the imposition of pedagogical practices and values from a different, perhaps inappropriate educational context, is not so immediately relevant in Portugal (Canagarajah, 2005).

Chapter Three: Dialogues, Culture and Coursebooks.

Discussing how culture is represented in dialogues

In recent years, the development and findings of what has become known as ‘Corpus Linguistics’ (CL) has led to an extensive reappraisal of what the defining characteristics of English discourse/texts really are. While not denying the importance of earlier research carried out under the banners of Conversation Analysis (e.g. Sacks et al, 1974) or Systemic Functional Linguistics (e.g. Halliday, 1985), the availability of huge databases of real language (The British National Corpus consists of over 100 million words⁵⁰) which can be electronically stored and analysed provides a unique resource for ELT professionals. Perhaps the greatest impact has been in the area of lexicography and dictionary production but there are also wider implications for ELT. For example, the traditional distinction between lexis and syntax has been brought into doubt (see Hunston & Francis, 2000 or Hoey, 2005) and the way that language is described has been radically overhauled and re-focussed (see Hakulinen & Selting, 2005 or Sinclair & Mauranen, 2006).

More and more people in the ELT ‘world’ are becoming aware of the insights gained from CL studies and the ELT coursebook, as a ‘space’ where the interests of learners, teachers, researchers, writers, publishers, and parents all come together, must surely adapt and change. In particular, the field is eminently relevant to one of the major challenges that coursebook writers always face, which is: what kind of spoken English should be present and/or represented in their books? This is a crucial decision given that the language is both a building block of and a vehicle for the target culture in question. This chapter will examine the dialogue format has evolved in locally produced coursebooks and how, within these dialogues, cultural elements are represented. Generally speaking, the current status of coursebooks remains discouraging:

The compilation of corpora in recent years has provided us with databases of authentic language use, making it possible to investigate this issue systematically, and the results are not encouraging: It would seem that much of the language taught in commercial materials differs markedly from the language that is used in spoken and written discourse. (Harwood, 2010: 9)

Here in Portugal, while recent locally produced coursebooks (following the lead of the national programmes) have taken some account of the notion of ‘language varieties’ or ‘World Englishes’⁵¹ (Australian English, Indian English, Irish English, etc) and

⁵⁰ For further information on available corpora, see: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>

⁵¹ The term ‘World Englishes’ first came to the fore in the late 1970s and has since become firmly established through institutions such as *The International Association of World Englishes* (1992) and

included texts sourced from (or, generally, to be heavily adapted from) beyond the USA/UK axis, there remains an implicit acceptance of the existence of a ‘Standard English’ as the ultimate reference point (Hurst, 2007). It remains true to say that in many cases

... the language used in EFL coursebooks has been based on an idealised native speaker model, existing above regional varieties and cultures (Alptekin, 2002). Such a native speaker, though, is a non-existent abstraction. ... Unless coursebooks expose learners to real language, it will be impossible to foster communicative and sociolinguistic competence. (Thanasoulas, 2005: 30)

In addition, while Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks have undoubtedly moved away from being filled with discourse/texts that were largely literary in inspiration (as promoted by the ‘Grammar-Translation’ method), it is true to say that a narrow range of non-authentic discourse/texts predominate: “The contrived materials of traditional textbooks have often presented learners with a meagre, and frequently distorted, sample of the target language to work with and have failed to meet many of their communicative needs” (Gilmore, 2007: 103). Current ELT methodology places great worth in the concept of “authenticity” at various levels of the teaching/learning process. For example: “I recommend that teachers of adult EFL to beginners try appropriate authentic materials in their classroom, as they may increase their learners’ levels of on-task behaviour, concentration, and involvement in the target activity more than artificial materials” (Peacock, 1997: 152). Generally, it is argued that the use of authentic materials containing authentic language, as well as providing good models of real language in use, has a positive effect on learner motivation, provides cultural input, is more likely to relate to learner needs and gives support to a creative approach to ELT. The data presented in this chapter will assist in determining how closely Portuguese produced coursebooks have adhered to this ‘principle’ of authenticity (or not).

With reference to cultural content in coursebooks, Szymanska-Czaplak (2012) claimed that the inclusion of cultural topics may motivate students to self-study and improve their critical thinking skills. The same is true with regard to receptive skills development: “In many reading and listening classes, there is too much focus on making what happens in the classroom as authentic as possible and not enough on helping learners to develop their skills so that they can read and listen independently

publications such as *‘World Englishes: Journal of English as an International and Intranational Language’* (since 1981).

(Badger & MacDonald, 2010: 581). However, not all authors agree with this position, for example, with regard to language learning tasks: “The whole point of language learning tasks is that they are specially contrived for learning. They do not have to replicate or even simulate what goes on in normal uses of the language. Indeed, the more they seem to do so, the less effective they are likely to be” (Widdowson, 1998: 714).

From the point of view of this study, it is perhaps useful to state what, in fact, constitutes ‘authenticity’ in relation to ELT practices: the degree to which the real world enters the confines of the classroom; it is, in fact, “a term which implies as close as approximation to the world outside the classroom, in the selection of language materials and of activities and methods used for practice in the classroom” (McDonough & Shaw, 2003: 40). Further perspectives on authenticity could also include to what extent the receiver/reader perceives the qualities of the discourse/text and how the receiver/reader engages with the discourse/text as well as giving some consideration as to whether the language is socially situated and/or validated by L1 users or norms (Gilmore, 2007: 98). This chapter will analyse the language and cultural content of one of the more popular genres of texts with a long history of use and abuse in ELT coursebooks (including Portuguese produced ones), which is the dialogue.

Dialogues are perhaps one the most commonplace elements of ELT coursebooks of an older provenance, as they were seen as a way of creating or contextualising a situation/setting within which there would be a focus on some element of meaning (grammar or lexis), whether to be newly introduced or already familiar from a previous learning context. Some teachers view the dialogues included in ELT coursebooks as valuable aids in providing a carefully structured model, which can be a starting point for further more creative language work leading to an improvement in the their learners’ communicative competence. They are seen as useful for presenting functional language, such as the language of greetings, invitations, requests and so on, and create a connection with importance of having some awareness of social and cultural skills in combination with linguistic skills (Çakir, 2009). In a discussion of sexism in discourse roles, Poulou summarises the usefulness of coursebook dialogues, referring to a three-pronged role: “They provide knowledge about the form of the language, the pragmatic aspects of the language and form the basis for further communicative activities in class”

(ibid, 1997: 71). But before analysing the dialogues/texts themselves from the Portuguese produced coursebook series, it is worth remembering that by their very nature these are representations of the spoken language in a written form and that this contradiction may, in fact, be the heart of the matter: coursebook writers conceive of these texts as being within the written domain: so

... language pedagogy that claims to support the teaching and learning of speaking skills does itself a disservice if it ignores what we know about the spoken language. Whatever else may be the result of imaginative methodologies for eliciting spoken language in the second language classroom, there can be little hope for a natural spoken output on the part of language learners if the input is stubbornly rooted in models that owe their origin and shape to the written language. (McCarthy & Carter, 2001: 51)

Two sub-sets of discourse/text types may be identified as being generally present in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks, usually to an overwhelming extent; they are: conversations and service encounters. Table 2 below shows the distribution of these two sub-sets within the four series of coursebooks under consideration in this study.

Table 2. Conversation and service encounter distribution.

	7th grade			8th grade			9th grade		
A. Active English	Total dialogues	98	100%	Total dialogues	61	100%	Total dialogues	40	100%
	Conversations	82	83.7%	Conversations	53	86.9%	Conversations	38	96.0%
	Service Encounters	10	12.2%	Service Encounters	8	13.1%	Service Encounters	2	4.0%
B. Passport	Total dialogues	18	100%	Total dialogues	7	100%	Total dialogues	11	100%
	Conversations	8	44.4%	Conversations	4	57.1%	Conversations	1	9.1%
	Service Encounters	9	50.0%	Service Encounters	0	0%	Service Encounters	3	27.3%
C. Aerial	Total dialogues	10	100%	Total dialogues	5	100%	Total dialogues	8	100%
	Conversations	9	90.0%	Conversations	5	100%	Conversations	6	75.0%
	Service Encounters	0	0%	Service Encounters	0	0%	Service Encounters	0	0%
D. Extreme	Total dialogues	6	100%	Total dialogues	2	100%	Total dialogues	1	100%
	Conversations	3	50.0%	Conversations	0	0%	Conversations	0	0%
	Service Encounters	2	35.0%	Service Encounters	0	0%	Service Encounters	0	0%

In the light of diverse changes (improvements?) that have occurred in ELT methodology in recent years, most significantly the development and widespread adoption of a “Communicative Approach to Language Teaching” (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979), it would be as well to also examine changes that occurred in the field of ELT materials. The use of dialogues assumed a crucial importance in the “Active English” series of coursebooks of 1980/1981 (a total of 199 dialogue/texts in the three books), but in the “Extreme” series of coursebooks from 2004/2006 this total had fallen to a mere nine dialogue texts. In between these dates, already in 1988/1989 in the “Passport” series the total had fallen to 36 and in 1998/2000 in the “Aerial” series the total was 23. The totals for different types of dialogues show similar patterns of decline, with “Active English” having more dialogues of various types than the other three coursebook series put together: what had been the predominant text/model present in coursebooks in the space of 25 years approached virtual extinction. Part of the explanation undoubtedly lies at the feet of the changes in methodology referred to above, which would not yet have been felt in Portugal in time to have influenced the production of the “Active English” series. The inside cover of the 7th grade book in the series carries a quotation, attributed to David Wilkins (the author of ‘Notional Syllabuses’ in 1996) which anticipates a communicative approach to language learning; in addition, the ‘blurb’ on the back cover also makes some claims related to “communicative aims”, “real life contexts”, and “using English in a realistic way”, but as has been said on many an occasion: you should not judge a book by its cover.

Within the broad context of ELT materials, dialogues may be seen as exponents of spoken English in the form of a written text. It is therefore relevant to explore exactly what characterises the dialogues present in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks, to seek evidence (or not) in support of Brian Tomlinson’s statement that “[m]aterials aiming at explicit learning usually contrive examples of the language which focus on the feature being taught. Usually these examples are presented in short, easy specially written or simplified texts or dialogues, and it is argued that they help the learner by focusing their attention on the target feature” (Tomlinson, 2003: 5). While Tomlinson highlights the relationship between explicit language learning and specific target language features, a further perspective also bears consideration: the sociolinguistic context in which the language interactions take place. In fact, consideration also needs

to be given to the extent the cultural context is also contrived through its dependence on specific target language features being the focus of the learning.

Much has been written in an attempt to categorise the characteristic features of the grammar of spoken English (i.e., English you would expect to find in a coursebook dialogue): famous examples from the 20th century include the classic “Grammar of Spoken English” (1924), by H.E. Palmer, and more recently the award winning “Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English” (1999), by Biber, Johansson, Leech and Conrad, and in which Chapter 14 is devoted to “The Special Grammar of Conversation” in contrast to the other three written registers examined.

3. 1 Conversations: Analytical Framework.⁵²

Conversation is an important human activity, since “it is the primary location for the enactment of social values and relationships. Through talk we establish, maintain and modify our social identities” (Thornbury & Slade, 2006: 1). In relation to the ELT classroom, research has shown that interaction is crucial to successful learning (e.g. Van Lier, 1996), and many learners themselves demand the inclusion of conversation as part of their courses. Leech⁵³ (1998) offers a comprehensive description of the conditions operating in conversations, as part of his more general discussion of the grammar of spoken English. The seven key characteristics of conversations in English he identified are:

They share context [personal pronouns, substitute forms, front ellipsis, ellipsis across independent clauses, inserts, non-clausal material].

They avoid elaboration or specification of meaning [low lexical density, very low mean phrase length, independent elliptical genitive, general hedges/imprecision adverbials].

They are interactive [first and second person pronouns, peripheral (stance or discoursal) adverbs, vocatives, questions and imperatives, attention signals, adversative negation].

They express personal politeness, emotion and attitude [polite formulae and indirect requests, familiarising vocatives, interjections, expletives, other exclamations, evaluative adjectives in intensifying coordination].

They are real time events [normal disfluency, morphological reduction, syntactic reduction, prefaces, phrasal and clausal tags].

They have a restricted and repetitive repertoire [clause initial prefabricated locutions, low type-token ratio, limited range of lexical items].

⁵² Full transcripts of these dialogues can be found in Appendix One p. 342)

⁵³ Geoffrey Leech is considered by many in the field of English Linguistics to be the U.K.’s foremost grammarian, having published extensively since the mid-60s, especially with respect to the spoken language.

They display a vernacular range of expression [morphological, morpho-syntactical, syntactic]
(Leech, 1998: 6-8)⁵⁴

Much has changed in the ELT world since the publication, in 1967, of “First Things First” by L.G. Alexander (Longman), a coursebook which was hugely successful all around the world. The book relied almost totally on the presentation and practice of model dialogues, such as this: “Excuse me! Is this your handbag?” “Yes, it is. Thank you very much”. A dialogue like this, and its associated cartoon illustrations, would occupy a single page in the book, and on the opposite page would be a series of substitution drills, prompted by further cartoon pictures. Indeed, this coursebook format remained prevalent for many years; for example, at an international level, the number one bestseller for a considerable period of time was “Streamline English Departures” by Peter Viney and Bernie Hartley (1978, Oxford, O.U.P.).

3. 1. A. The Active English series: Conversations

In Portugal, in the early 1980s, the “Active English” series of coursebooks for the 7th (1980), 8th (1980) and 9th (1981) grades also followed a similar format to “First Things First”. The books consist of 60 units, with each unit occupying a single page except for the opening unit of the book, which has a double page format. The pages are generally illustrated with cartoon like drawings and the occasional photograph⁵⁵ and the discourse/text present in each unit is generally a dialogue. The format of each unit varies little, each unit/page includes a section which introduced the main language structure to be focused on, generally occupying the top half of the page, and then has a series of practice exercises in the lower half of the page. While the exercises associated with each unit vary in type (sentence construction, gap filling, table filling, crossword puzzles, and so on), they can be broadly characterized as ‘pattern practice’; a kind of ‘drilling’, which as a classroom technique, had dominated ELT⁵⁶. The dialogues themselves vary in length: sometimes there is one longish continuous text and more often two or three smaller texts on the same page.

⁵⁴ Thornbury & Slade (2006: 8) provide a strikingly similar seven item list of the characteristics of conversations.

⁵⁵ The visual aspect of coursebooks is discussed in Chapter 5.

⁵⁶ Deriving its legitimacy from Behaviourist Psychology and Structural Linguistics, this practice involved multiple repetitions of the target structure by learners in the belief that this would fix these structures in the learners’ memories and would constitute a bank of available language for the learners to subsequently employ. See Rivers, W. (1968) *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*, Chicago, Chicago University Press.

Table 3. Distribution of Dialogues: Active English series

The Active English series: Distribution of Dialogues						
	7th grade: 1980		8th grade: 1980		9th grade: 1981	
Conversations	82	83.7%	53	86.9%	38	95.0%
Service encounters	10	12.2%	2	13.1%	2	5.0%
Total	98	100%	61	100%	40	100%

The type of discourse most in evidence is conversations (never less than 80% of the total number of dialogues); there are very few service encounters, except in the 7th grade book. It seems rather counter-intuitive that there should be a wider range of discourse models made available to the learners at a lower level than to the learners at the higher levels. However, this is only true with respect to dialogues, since the higher level books do include a greater variety of other types of text, whereas the 7th grade book relies almost exclusively on dialogues⁵⁷.

Given that these three books include so many dialogues (199 in all, of which 173 or 86.9% are conversations), in practical terms, it would be approaching impossible to offer an analysis of all of the dialogues that make up the core texts of these three books. Hence there is a need to discuss a limited sample of conversation dialogues, taken from near the middle (Unit 29) and near the end (Unit 59) of each book.

Table 4. Active English series: sample of conversations.

Active English series: limited sample of conversation dialogues		
7th grade: 1980	8th grade: 1980	9th grade: 1981
Unit 29, p.33 Conversation: 3 young people <u>Exchange style:</u> Informal <u>Turns:</u> 13 + 3 <u>Topic:</u> Daily routines <u>L2 work:</u> making questions <u>Task type:</u> dialogue completion	Unit 29, p.33 Conversation: 3 young people <u>Exchange style:</u> Informal <u>Turns:</u> 11 <u>Topic:</u> (Female) Football <u>L2 work:</u> structural pattern practice (past simple)	Unit 29, p.35 Conversation: 2 young people <u>Exchange style:</u> Informal <u>Turns:</u> 15 <u>Topic:</u> Amsterdam <u>L2 work:</u> comprehension + requests <u>Task type:</u> wh-questions + jumbled

⁵⁷ Other types of text more associated with the skill of reading are analysed in Chapter Four.

	<u>Task type</u> : jumbled sentences	requests
Unit 59, p.63 Conversation: 2 young people <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 7 <u>Topic</u> : Summer holidays <u>L2 work</u> : structural pattern practice <u>Task type</u> : sentence/question completion	Unit 59, p.63 Conversation: 2 adults <u>Exchange style</u> : Semi-formal <u>Turns</u> : 10 <u>Topic</u> : Casual chat <u>L2 work</u> : structural pattern practice (passive?) <u>Task type</u> : jumbled sentences	Unit 59, p.71 Conversation: 3 young people <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 12 <u>Topic</u> : Population/pollution problems <u>L2 work</u> : discussion + structural pattern practice (indirect speech?) <u>Task type</u> : open questions + jumbled sentences

These conversation dialogues are a good sample of the more extended dialogues that appear in the books (they all have more than seven turns with two or three participants), and as such should be more likely to display the characteristics described by Leech (1998), which refer directly to conversational English.

3. 1. A. 1 Active English 7th grade: sample conversations.

With regard to the two sample dialogues from the 7th grade book, Table 5 below shows the absence/presence of the conversational characteristics under consideration.

Table 5: Active English 7th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Active English 7th grade, Unit 29, p.33.	Active English 7th grade, Unit 59, p.63.
Shared context	High frequency of personal pronouns; zero substitute form; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; 1 non-clausal material.	High frequency of personal pronouns; 2 substitute form; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; 1 non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; 1 attention signal; zero adversative negation.	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; 1 tag/non-clausal question; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal	1 polite formulae or indirect requests;	Zero polite formulae or indirect

expressiveness	zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.	requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 1 interjection; zero expletives; zero exclamations; 2 evaluative adjectives.
Real time constraints	Zero disfluency; 4 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	Zero disfluency; 3 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; 1 phrasal or clausal tag.
Restricted repertoire	2 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	1 prefabricated locution; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	1 vernacular expression	zero vernacular expressions

It is immediately apparent that the most common entry/result in this scheme of analysis is ‘zero examples’, and that where these language indicators are present, it is only in very small numbers. For example, the category of “personal expressiveness” for Dialogue p.29 consists entirely of ‘zero examples’, except for one polite formula, namely: Bruce 7: Would you like to ...? The only indicators that conform in any substantial way to the norm are the personal pronouns, in both “Shared Context” and also in “Interactiveness”. It is perhaps no coincidence that these language items normally can operate in a relatively non-complex syntactic pattern within a dialogue context. The low differential frequencies present in these two and the other categories indicate that these dialogues do not conform to the expected linguistic characteristics of conversations. In relation to more specific examples, for instance, the total lack of general hedges (the use of imprecision adverbs like ‘sort of’ or ‘kind of’) which are virtually restricted to the spoken channel is a further indication of these dialogues being non-representative of conversations. Indeed, the specific characteristics associated only with spoken English are almost totally absent: there is only one vernacular expression (Dialogue p.29: Julie 7: Great) and one injection (Dialogue p.59: Kay 3: How beautiful!) included and there are no expletives or exclamations. There are examples of an expected characteristic, like morphological reductions (in Dialogue p.29 there are four and in Dialogue p.59 there are three); these occurrences are limited by the

‘question and answer’ format that actually makes these conversation more like interviews than should really be the case.

3. 1. A. 2 Active English 8th grade: sample conversations.

The table below shows the results from the sample conversation dialogues of the 8th grade book.

Table 6. Active English 8th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Active English 8th grade; Unit 29, p.33.	Active English 8th grade; Unit 59, p.63.
Shared context	High frequency of personal pronouns; 6 substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 2 inserts; zero non-clausal material.	High frequency of personal pronouns; 6 substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 2 inserts; 2 non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; 1 tag/non-clausal question; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; 2 tag/non-clausal questions; 6 attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 1 interjection; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.	2 polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.
Real time constraints	Zero disfluency; 3 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	5 disfluency; 7 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal/clausal tags.
Restricted repertoire	zero prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	1 prefabricated locution; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	zero vernacular expressions

Many of the absent characteristics noted in relation to the 7th grade conversation dialogues also apply in the case of the 8th grade sample: zero examples is the most frequent entry/result. One major difference is the presence of several examples of functional elements related to the category of “Real time constraints” in Dialogue p.63: there are five occurrences for “disfluency” (the existence of hesitations, breakdowns, repairs, misunderstandings, repeats and so on), as well as seven morphological reductions. This conversation is between two adult males at an airport. The men have met each other before and they are catching up on news. Mr Naylor takes the lead in the conversation and Mr Stewart is clearly ill at ease providing updates on his private life: his recent marriage and the fact he is going on honeymoon without his wife! It is these most extraordinary (unbelievable?) circumstances which give rise to a concentration of characteristics that do not appear in any substantial way in any of the other conversations, such as, non-clausal material and attention signals. The implicit connection created is that only under exceptional circumstances (in relation to content and situation) do these conversational features occur, whereas the truth of the matter is that they should occur in virtually all conversational contexts. It is not just a case of situation and content either, the actual wording in Dialogue p.33 creates a mismatch in the category of “Lack of elaboration”: Kay 1 asks a straightforward question: “Did you enjoy the football match?” (although you could argue that the topic of “football” should be established by the context and need not be stated) and Bruce 1 answers: “Yes. We did. England played against Scotland. Both are good teams.” Here Bruce is being over-specific and over-elaborating in the information he is providing: since Kay 1 asked about THE football match, she must already know which teams were playing, and she makes no indication as to requiring a comment from Bruce on the quality of the teams. The main issue here is actually not so much to do with more technical aspect associated with the characteristics outlined by Leech (1998), but rather a sense the reader has of these conversations/dialogues being punctuated with abrupt, illogical, unexpected and unnatural sequences/turns. There is a good example in Dialogue p.33, immediately following on from the question and answer cited above:

Kay 2: What was the result?

Joe 1: England won 1- 0. Wow, what a fantastic goal in the second half. I’m so glad ...

Kay 3: More and more women are playing football. They’ll be better than men.

Joe 2: Do you think so?

Kay 4: Of course I think so.

Firstly, the questionable inclusion/over-elaboration of Joe 1 including “*in the second half*” in his answer and his rather limp expression of contentment: “*I’m so glad ...*”, but more strikingly the almost absurd jump from there to Kay 3 changing the subject of the conversation to the role of women in sport/football. In addition, the linguistic forms chosen could be considered inappropriate: in response to the question in Kay 2 - “What was the result?” - the default reply would most likely be formed by saying: “*One nil to England*”; likewise, a much more natural response to the question “Do you think so?” in Joe 2 would be: “*Yes, I do. And I...*” rather than the stated reply in Kay 4: “Of course I think so.”

3. 1. A. 3 Active English 9th grade: sample conversations.

The table below shows the results from the sample conversation dialogues of the 9th grade book.

Table 7. Active English 9th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Active English 9th grade Unit 29, p.35.	Active English 9th grade Unit 59, p.71.
Shared context	Low frequency of personal pronouns; 5 substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; 1 ellipsis across units; 3 inserts; 2 non-clausal material.	Very low frequency of personal pronouns; zero substitute form; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; 1 non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	Medium lexical density; average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	High lexical density; Above average phrase length; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	Low frequency of first and second person pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; two attention signals; zero adversative negation.	Low frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal question; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	1 polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; 3 exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.	Zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 2 interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.
Real time	2 disfluency; 3 morphological	Zero disfluency; 2 morphological

constraints	reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.
Restricted repertoire	3 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	zero prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; very wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	1 vernacular expression

Similar kinds of inappropriacy of language occur in the 9th grade sample conversations. For example, in Dialogue p.35, after 10 turns exchanged between Mark and Jill on the subject of the origin and development of the city of Amsterdam, including references to geographical and engineering aspects, Mark 6 changes tack and introduces a new topic (other interesting things in the Netherlands??) by saying: “Dutch windmills and gardening are well known ...”, which Jill 6 confirms with “Yes, They are.” before changing topic again (Mark’s next proposed trip to the Netherlands). The imbalanced way in which topics are launched, developed and dropped demonstrates insensitivity to the pragmatics of conversational flows, including concepts related to the need of participants to be polite and show interest in other participants’ contributions.⁵⁸ Some the exchanges in this dialogue seem more like a test in which Jill is trying out Mark’s knowledge of the topic, which finally culminates in Jill acknowledging Mark’s authority (wisdom??) by simply agreeing with his statements rather than challenging them. Ultimately, she adopts an almost supplicating tone, and in her final turn asks Mark a favour: Jill 7: “Will you bring me some postcards, please?” This is an extraordinary turn of events, perhaps resulting from the principal illustration of this page being a postcard of Amsterdam.

Dialogue p.71 has three participants which makes it a more complex matter to track the conversational flow, but here again we find several examples of formally inappropriate turns; one example right at the start of the conversation:

Kay 1: Dear me! Air, land and water pollution are increasing.
Joe 1: Experts don’t say our present troubles are difficult to explain.

⁵⁸ Grice (1975) posited a series of ‘four maxims’ to logically describe how conversations work under an overriding ‘co-operative principle’, which states: “Make your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.”

Mark 1: World population growth is one of the causes.

What is particularly striking is the use of the negative verb form in Joe 1. This formulation/structure makes the effort required to understand the sentence much greater, and may be justified solely on the grounds that the authors wished to include a negative example of an introductory verb in this indirect speech type of context to link with the follow-up exercise. The expected form of the sentence would contain no negative (*Experts say our present troubles are easy to explain*). The increased cognitive load demanded by this negative structure is then immediately deemed irrelevant, as Mark takes on the role of expert and provides an easy explanation! Indeed, the whole concept of ‘expert’ in this conversation is rather skewed as the dialogue closes with:

Joe 5: Yesterday an expert said that things wouldn’t get out of control.

Mark 4: He assumed people wouldn’t go on spoiling the environment. The earth is our home.

The obvious concern here is to include different verb forms in the indirect speech context without much relevance being afforded to the meaning of the statements which seem incongruously naïve and inaccurate even for 1981.

3. 1. B Passport series: conversations.

In the “Passport” series of coursebooks there are a total of 36 dialogues of which 25 fall into the two sub-categories of conversations and service encounters: there are 13 conversations and 12 service encounters. Other types of dialogues occur in this series: for example, there are seven interview style dialogues in the 9th grade book which fall outside of the remit of this analysis but illustrate that the authors felt a need to move away from the more frequently used pattern of conversation, and service encounter dialogues for less experienced learners in the 7th grade when dealing with 8th and 9th grade learners.

Table 8. Passport series: dialogue distribution.

The 'Passport' series: Distribution of Dialogues						
	7th grade: 1991		8th grade: 1987		9th grade: 1989	
Conversations	8	44.4%	4	57.1%	1	9.1%
Service encounters	9	50%	0	0%	3	27.3%
Total	18	100%	7	100%	11	100%

However, in these three books, some of the dialogues are included exclusively as listening comprehension texts/exercises, which means that the actual text/tapescript is not available to the learners, and is not included in any appendix at the back of the coursebook either. Not having access to the Teachers' Book (where the texts/tapescripts were presumably provided) means that several dialogues are not available for analysis. This is especially significant in the case of the 9th grade book, since the only conversation dialogue in the book is indeed intended only for listening comprehension and is not available.

Table 9. Passport series: sample of conversations.

Passport series of coursebooks: limited sample of conversation dialogues		
7 th grade: level 3 (1991)	8 th grade: level 4 (1987)	9 th grade: level 5 (1989)
p.72 Conversation: 2 teens <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 7 <u>Topic</u> : Making arrangements <u>L2 work</u> : reading comprehension <u>Task type</u> : write a similar dialogue	p.183 Conversation: not known <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 6 <u>Topic</u> : Rules about smoking <u>L2 work</u> : reading comprehension <u>Task type</u> : role play/speaking	p.131 Conversation: Family of 4 <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : ? <u>Topic</u> : Wasting money <u>L2 work</u> : listening comprehension <u>Task type</u> : T/F questions
p.145 Conversation: three teens <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 18 <u>Topic</u> : ways of making requests <u>L2 work</u> : reading comprehension <u>Task type</u> : role play with fixed expressions	p.185 Conversation: 1 adult, 1 teen <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 2 <u>Topic</u> : rules about cycling <u>L2 work</u> : reading comprehension <u>Task type</u> : role play/speaking	

A similar limitation also exists in relation to the 8th grade sample of conversation dialogues: what appears to be an extended conversation of a family talking about what

to watch on television on pp.106/107 is only for listening comprehension and is not available; in addition, a major writing activity, based on a text on p.114 about the history of the well-known U.K. shop, W.H. Smith,⁵⁹ is presented as a dialogue, where the learner has to write one ‘half’ of the dialogue while the coursebook provides the other ‘half’. Here the activity is exclusively focussed on the learner writing questions based on the given factual information about W.H. Smith. The coursebook implies that this is a conversation, but really the dialogue resembles much more closely a pseudo-interview and is thus excluded from the current analysis. The remaining dialogues in the 8th grade book come from the same unit, Unit Six, “Warning. Handle with care”, which while limited in scope will be analysed below.

3. 1. B. 1 Passport series 7th grade: sample conversations.

The table below shows the results from the sample conversation dialogues of the 7th grade book.

Table 10. Passport series: 7th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Passport 7th grade, p.72.	Passport 7th grade, p.145.
Shared context	High frequency of personal pronouns; 2 substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 1 insert; 1 non-clausal material.	High frequency of personal pronouns; 3 substitute form; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 2 inserts; zero non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	High lexical density; Average phrase length high; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	High lexical density; Average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; two attention signals; 1 adversative negation.	Medium frequency of first and second personal pronouns; 1 peripheral adverb, zero vocatives; 1 tag/non-clausal question; 1 attention signal; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives;	4 polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 2

⁵⁹ W.H. Smith is a retailer of books, newspapers, games, stationery, etc, which dates back to the late 18th century and has grown to have over 1,000 shops on British high streets, railway stations and other locations.

	zero interjections; zero expletives; 1 exclamation; zero evaluative adjectives.	interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.
Real time constraints	zero disfluency; 7 morphological reductions; 1 syntactic reduction; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	1 disfluency; 8 morphological reductions; 1 syntactic reduction; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.
Restricted repertoire	zero prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	2 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; medium range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	zero vernacular expressions

The first dialogue here (a phone conversation planning a weekend away camping), Dialogue p.72, contains little evidence that the authors have taken into account the features of “Shared Context” and “Interactiveness” beyond the inclusion of a high frequency of personal pronouns. The tendency to over-elaborate the individual turns of the dialogue is, however, clear right from the outset: the initial turn at Henry 1 consists of four separate phrases, all of which might demand some kind of immediate response from the other speaker/listener, but which are presented as a continuous uninterrupted/unacknowledged stream of information:

Henry 1: Have you heard the weather forecast? I think they said it will rain in the East Midlands all the weekend! We can't go there this time. We can go to Norwich instead.
Helen 1: It can't be the East Midlands, it must be the West Midlands. I was listening carefully. You've made quite a big confusion.

The later turns of the dialogue (Henry 3, Helen 3 and Henry 4) are less elaborate and contain limited examples of attention signals and non-clausal material, more indicative of a conversation: perhaps the authors, in their concern to ‘set the scene’ early in the dialogue are more focussed on loading the dialogue with ‘content’ and less concerned with the ‘code’ in which this ‘content’ is embedded. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that the opening turns (cited above) also contain language that can be classified as being far from ‘standard’: at Henry 1 “it will rain ... all the weekend” where we might expect *‘the whole weekend’* and at Helen 1 “You’ve made quite a big confusion!” where we might expect *‘You really are confused!’*. The same observation can also be made concerning the language of the introduction to the dialogue: “... go camping all

Spring week-ends” where we would expect ‘... *go camping every Spring weekend*’. A lack of attention to the details of the ‘code’ is also evident in the use of determiners in the text when the location of a potential camp site on a farm in Norwich is first mentioned in Henry 2 as being “not far from the train station” and then in Henry 4 as “near a train station”.

Beyond the challenge of how the ‘code’ is constructed, the authors also have difficulty in dealing with the cultural component. One example is the use of the terms “East Midlands” and “West Midlands”: it is doubtful that these terms, derived from political, governmental or administrative functions, would serve as the basis of everyday conversation when the regions themselves contain so many well-known large cities (in the case of the East Midlands: Leicester, Nottingham or Derby) and other more immediate/significant reference points, (it might also be true that these terms would not be used in anything other than a local weather forecast). It is also hard to imagine the relevance of the West Midlands in a discussion of potential places to go camping: since it is a largely industrial region (based around Birmingham), and since Henry is located in Cambridge (more than two hours away by car), it would be more likely that they would look eastwards to the largely rural region of East Anglia (although once again without using this term). The difficulties associated with how to encompass cultural content into model language contexts is perhaps in best illustrated at turn Henry 2 (the most elaborate, lengthy and least conversational turn of the whole dialogue):

Henry 2: Are you sure? Anyway, do you remember my new roommate, Mark, the boy you met in the pub? He said he knows a farm not far from the train station, where we can camp. He’s a friend of the people who live there. Moderate wind, and the sun usually shines brightly at this time of year. And if something goes wrong, we can go into the house. It’s such a nice farm!

Having dismissed Helen’s doubts over his confusion of the terms “East” and “West”, Henry proposes a potential camping location based on his roommate Mark’s recommendation, but by the end of the turn it is Henry who is doing the recommending. There is a pragmatic disfunction here, since the switch occurs within the same turn, whereas normally a speaker would seek some kind of confirmation/reassurance. In between, the dialogue contains what seems to be an insert from the weather forecast that both Henry and Helen claim to have listened to: “Moderate wind, and the sun usually shines brightly at this time of year”. Here there is kind of textual/stylistic disfunction within the turn to which might also be added a doubt regarding the collocation of

“brightly” in this phrase. The subsequent affirmation “If something goes wrong ...” should not be associated with the weather, but rather mechanical devices or other contexts to do with making arrangements/plans (we might expect ‘... *if the weather changes*’.) Further doubts may be raised concerning the choice of “boy” to describe someone in a pub and with whom you share a room. There may also be a factual weakness in attempting to locate a farm near Norwich station since Norwich is a large provincial city and the railway station is located relatively near the city centre.

The two dialogues/texts are distinct in style and tone. Dialogue p.72 exhibits few of the features expected of conversational English, while Dialogue p.145 exhibits more (for example, less elaborate phrases, more “interactiveness”, more personal expressiveness and signs of real time constraints). However, this does not make Dialogue p.145 more natural, even though the content is centred on the correct manner in which to be polite in English. Indeed, the text contains several fixed phrases highlighted in bold, which are supposed to be the focus of the follow-up exercises that are artificially ‘forced’ into the text. These phrases are not actually related to the formulation of polite requests or offers (useful functional exponents of English), but are rather to do with how learners can seek clarification of meaning when they do not understand a sentence or vocabulary item. Confusion arises between the content/context of the dialogue and the purpose of the dialogue, which makes it hard to comprehend what exactly the learning objective is here: the cultural ‘background’ related to politeness or the practice of fixed phrases to seek clarification.

In Dialogue p.145, one of the participants (“Chris” from Liverpool) is the designated informant, and there are two further participants “I” (i.e., the learner) and “Friend” (i.e., a classmate): the latter assume the role of uninformed foreigners. After being told that he must speak slowly, Chris ‘explains’ that “would you care” is the same as “would you like” in the early part of the dialogue:

Chris 3: “Would you care” means “would you like”. You know this, don’t you?

It is debatable whether Chris has in fact told the full story to his bemused audience of two: the phrase “would you care” is incomplete as it requires the inclusion of “*for*”, so that it can function in the same way as “would you like”. But this is perhaps peripheral

in the eyes of the authors, since by this stage of the dialogue they have already highlighted in bold four fixed phrase for use in seeking clarification. Some of the highlighted phrases in the dialogue have what some ELT methodologists refer to as ‘high surrender value’, i.e., are immediately useful and learnable with little effort; for example: How do you say ‘X’ in English? or What does ‘X’ mean? But, in this dialogue, there is also an example which demonstrates a lack of socio-linguistic insight:

Friend 1: Yes, **you must speak slowly**.

In this context, it would be much more natural for an L2 user of English to formulate a request, in a more tentative manner (*Please, could you speak a bit more slowly?*), rather than, as is the case here, to sound like she/he is making some kind of demand (implying obligation). A further example which also lacks any real usefulness for 7th grade learners occurs within the same dialogue:

Friend 3: **Isn’t it possible to say** a cup of coffee?

Chris 5 (still laughing): **You could say** so, but that’s

Seeking clarification through the use of negative question form (Friend 3) implies a degree of grammatical sophistication that goes beyond what is normally associated with the 7th grade even if the phrase are designed for memorization rather than comprehension. In the reply there is another problem, in that the highlighted element “You could say” is incomplete and should really be followed by ‘*that*’ and not “so”.

Within the same sequence of turns in the dialogue, Chris is described as finding his foreign partners’ conversation amusing (at turn Chris 4 he is “laughing” and at turn Chris 5 he is “still laughing”). This amusement is provoked by the learners’ lack of knowledge about the difference between “a cup of coffee” and a “coffee cup”:

I 3: Oh, yes, we know the meaning of “would you like”. But ... do you say a “cup of coffee” or a “coffee cup”?

Chris 4 (laughing): A cup of coffee.

Friend 3: **Isn’t it possible to say** a coffee cup?

Chris 5 (still laughing): **You could say** so, but that’s just the cup, with no coffee inside. See?

The fact is that his amusement is tinged with the attitude that he also finds his partners in some way lacking intelligence, since when he is asked to confirm that the same ‘rule’ about cups also applies to tea he replies disdainfully: “Obviously”. Chris is clearly not an experienced informant of L2 learners/users, which is reinforced by his final turn in

which he cheerfully makes no reference to cups at all, thus negating the sociolinguistic value of all that has gone before:

Friend 5: I don't like coffee or tea. I'd like a ... how do you say in "Cacau" in English?

I 5: "Cacao", I believe.

Chris 8: Yes, it is. So, coffee for you and cacao for your friend.

As well as devaluing the language learning content of the dialogue (mention could also be made here of the strange use of the short answer "Yes, it is." in Chris 8), there is a 'role assignment' problem, since "I" (the learner) has become an information giver at turn I 5, whereas previously this participant was presented as being in need of L2 explanations and assistance. Furthermore, there is the cultural perspective regarding cacau/cacao because, in fact, "I" gets it wrong: the chocolate based hot beverage which the dialogue is referring to is usually called '*cocoa*' in British English (pronounced 'ko-ko') and not "cacao" (the latter term from the text being highly likely to mislead Portuguese learners' pronunciation). In addition, it was usually an evening/bedtime drink in British culture (unlike the tea and coffee on offer in the dialogue) until comparatively recently, when the consumption of a whole range of hot beverage became more diverse and less restricted. It is nowadays often known as '*hot chocolate*'.⁶⁰

3. 1. B. 2 Passport series 8th grade: sample conversations.

As mentioned above, the 8th grade coursebook in the Passport series contains a very limited sample of conversation dialogues. The table below shows both a description of the dialogues and the actual dialogues themselves

Table 11. Passport series: 8th grade: sample of conversations.

Passport series of coursebooks: 8 th grade conversation dialogues	
Conversation: 8 th grade p.183	Conversation: 8 th grade p.185
<u>Conversation participants</u> : not known	<u>Conversation participants</u> : 1 adult, 1 teen
<u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 6	<u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 2
<u>Topic</u> : Rules about smoking	<u>Topic</u> : rules about cycling

⁶⁰ There is some debate as to their being a difference between 'hot chocolate', based on prefabricated mass consumption products and 'drinking chocolate', a more home-made, additive free drink. Where the cocoa bean fits into this debate is still in dispute.

<u>L2 work</u> : reading comprehension <u>Task type</u> : role play/speaking	<u>L2 work</u> : reading comprehension <u>Task type</u> : role play/speaking
Dialogues	
<i>Read this conversation!</i> A 1: Excuse me! B 1: Yes? A 2: You mustn't smoke. B.2: I beg your pardon? A 3: You're not allowed to smoke in here. Can't you see the sign? B 3: oh dear, I am sorry. <i>Have similar conversations about the following notices</i>	<i>Look at the pictures. Ask and answer like this.</i> Peter 1: Excuse me, could we cycle here? Official 1: No, I'm sorry, you can't. Look at the notice. It says you aren't allowed to cycle.

Given that these dialogues are so short, in terms of the characteristics outlined by Leech (1998), they do not produce any relevant data. But what is apparent is an inconsistency in the language employed to construct the dialogues, both of which are designed to serve as models for subsequent language work (producing similar mini-dialogues based on signs/pictures/notices). Both dialogues are attempting to deal with the notion of modality: here prohibition and permission.

In Dialogue p.183 the focus is on the prohibitive function of the contracted negative form “mustn’t”, which implies that Speaker A is in some kind of position of authority and has the power to give orders, to tell someone not to do something⁶¹. However, without further specification, for example, by saying ‘*in here*’ (as in A 3), the order/prohibition has no context, very much warranting the response made by B 2, which seeks clarification. The clarification is forthcoming and clear, reformulating “mustn’t” as “not allowed to”, but goes on to use a different modal-auxiliary (“can’t”) to admonish Speaker A for an apparent inability to see the sign prohibiting smoking in that place. At play here are relations of power implied within the language of modality: these are complex notions which depend both on social relationships and language availability, i.e., they are culture specific: the general focus of meaning of the modal-auxiliary ‘can’ is associated with an idea of freedom, gained from a physical capacity or

⁶¹ See Swan (1980) 394-395 for a fuller discussion of the forms/meaning of ‘must’.

through learning or by having authority/permission. This is not an area of language learning that can be dealt with adequately in a six turn dialogue even granting that this item may have been introduced/taught in the 7th grade.

Dialogue p.185 introduces further unwelcome complexity by equating “can’t” in Official 1 with the function of prohibition, when Dialogue p.183 has just used “mustn’t” for the same function. While this kind of laxity of respect to the complexities of modal-auxiliaries is perhaps understandable, more care could be expected with respect to the language forms employed. Form is absolutely fundamental to the expression of meaning when dealing with modality: in Dialogue p.183 the reformulation of “mustn’t” is given as “you’re not allowed to ...”, whereas in Dialogue p.185 the reformulation of “can’t” is given as “you aren’t allowed to ...”, shifting where the contraction takes place. Providing these 8th grade learners with two different modal forms to illustrate prohibition alongside two different reformulations is not likely to ease understanding. Reference should also be made to the use of “Could” in Peter 1.⁶² This modal auxiliary is usually employed to ask permission to do something and includes the notion of politeness, as in ‘*Could I borrow your phone to make a quick call, please?*’ In the context of Dialogue p.185 it would be more usual to introduce the request with the much more frequent form ‘Can’ or the more formal ‘May’. Indeed, the logical choice would be ‘can’, so that the learners could practice the forms ‘can/can’t’ as one unit of meaning/learning, this bearing in mind also that ‘could’ is also often taught to be the past form of ‘can’.

3. 1. C The Aerial series: sample conversations.

In the “Aerial” series of coursebooks there are a total of 23 dialogues, with a clear predominance of conversation dialogues (87%). There are no service encounters at all in any of the coursebooks. This can be interpreted as a lack of connection between the ‘characters’ in the books and anyone outside their immediate social circle: language based social interaction does not occur in shops, restaurants and streets of the ‘real world’.

⁶² See Swan (1980) 125-132 for a fuller discussion of the form/meaning of ‘can/could’.

Table 12. Aerial series: distribution of dialogues.

The 'Aerial' series: distribution of dialogues						
	7th grade: 1998		8th grade: 1999		9th grade: 2000	
Conversations	9	90%	5	100%	6	75%
Service encounters	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	10	100%	5	100%	8	100%

A sample of six conversation dialogues, taken from similar positions in each of the three books, has been selected for analysis. They offer a variety of different topics and participants and are largely representative of this type of dialogue as found in this series of coursebooks.

Table 13. Aerial series: sample of conversations.

Aerial series of coursebooks: limited sample of conversation dialogues		
7 th grade: level 3 (1998)	8 th grade: level 4 (1999)	9 th grade: level 5 (2000)
p.18 Conversation: 2 teens <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 9 <u>Topic</u> : Making arrangements <u>L2 work</u> : vocabulary and listening comprehension <u>Task type</u> : antonyms + sentence completion	p.19 Conversation: 2 parents <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 6 <u>Topic</u> : Their children <u>L2 work</u> : listening comprehension <u>Task type</u> : gap filling	p.14 Conversation: 6 young people <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 15 <u>Topic</u> : Deciding what to do in Atlanta <u>L2 work</u> : vocabulary + comprehension <u>Task type</u> : M/C questions + definition matching
p.28 Conversation: two teens <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 11 <u>Topic</u> : Describing a house <u>L2 work</u> : listening comprehension <u>Task type</u> : picture labeling + T/F questions	p.30 Conversation: 2 adults <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 8 <u>Topic</u> : complaining about teens <u>L2 work</u> : listening comprehension <u>Task type</u> : error correction	p.23 Conversation: 6 young people <u>Exchange style</u> : Informal <u>Turns</u> : 11 <u>Topic</u> : Olympic Games <u>L2 work</u> : assorted vocabulary <u>Task type</u> : gap filling

3. 1. C. 1 Aerial series 7th grade: sample conversations.

The table below shows the results from the sample conversation dialogues of the 7th grade book.

Table 14. Aerial series: 7th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Aerial 7th grade, p.18.	Aerial 7th grade, p.28.
Shared context	Medium frequency of personal pronouns; zero substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; zero non-clausal material.	Low frequency of personal pronouns; 4 substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; 1 non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length high; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length low; 1 independent genitive; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; 1 tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signal; zero adversative negation.	Low frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	2 polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; 1 exclamation; zero evaluative adjectives.	4 polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 1 interjection; zero expletives; zero exclamations; 3 evaluative adjectives.
Real time constraints	1 disfluency; 9 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	Zero disfluency; 3 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; 7 prefaces; 1 phrasal or clausal tag.
Restricted repertoire	2 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	5 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; average range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	zero vernacular expressions

While the most common entry/result remains ‘zero examples’, there are several indicators where values are higher than in earlier publications; for example, Dialogue p.18 boasts nine morphological reductions in the category of “Real time constraints”, while Dialogue p.28 exhibits five prefabricated locutions in the category “Restricted

repertoire”: both higher frequencies than previously encountered and could be considered indicative of a more ‘natural’ discourse. Such an impression is, however, only superficial given some of the other indicators present.

Dialogue p.18 opens promisingly with a series of short phrases (important in the category of “Lack of Elaboration”) but quickly reverts to type: a short turn (either a statement or a question) followed by a turn of extended length and increased complexity with a high lexical density (all untypical of real conversations) which serve only as fodder for the subsequent comprehension and vocabulary exercises:

Helen 1: Hi, Michael!

Michael 1: Hi, Helen!

Helen 2: Look, Michael. Are you free next Saturday?

Michael 2: Next Saturday? ... Let me think! ... Oh, yes, I’m free. Why?

Helen 3: Well, it’s my brother’s birthday and, as usual, we’re having a party at my grandparents’ place in Upton. I’d like you to come. Then you can meet my whole family and also make new friends. My grandparents adore having young people over for the weekend and there’s always room for one more. When it isn’t raining, the party is outside in the garden, where we can play lots of different games.

Michael 3: I’d love to but first I must ask my parents. By the way, how do I get to Upton?

The language of the dialogue creates a rather strange tone: the use of the expression “Are you free....yes, I’m free” would be more appropriate in making an appointment, perhaps in a business context, rather than two teens talking. Helen is very much in charge of these arrangements but it is her (younger) brother’s party and her grandparents’ house (and then she offers her father’s services as driver). To what extent do teenagers want to meet someone else’s “whole family”? To what extent is Helen’s brother’s party an opportunity for Michael to make “new friends” given that the guests are likely to be younger kids or older adults? All these topics are implicit in this single very extended turn of 71 words which is complimented by a further single very extended turn of 64 words whereby Helen concludes the travel arrangements and offers suggestions as to Sunday morning activities that these teens might enjoy: walking and fishing and to which there is the reply: Michael 4: That would be wonderful.

In Dialogue p.28 there are very low frequencies of personal pronouns in the category of “Shared context” and of first and second person pronouns in the category of “Interactiveness”, both values which contradict any seeming increase in naturalness. The dialogue is merely a vehicle for a listening comprehension exercise where the

learners have to label pictures of a house with 12 different room types in the coursebook. Indeed, calling this a ‘dialogue’ is stretching our understanding of this text type, since while Helen describes her house in four extended turns, the character Michael barely speaks (just to cue opportunities for Helen). This device also explains the other unusually high value of seven prefaces in the category “Real time constraints”. Helen (or rather the coursebook writers) has to resort to rather distorted language forms to squeeze as much description into her turns as possible:

Michael 3: Oh, that’s nice. Shall we go upstairs?

Helen 4: Ok. Upstairs we have three bedrooms, a study and a bathroom. Here, on the right is my parents’ bedroom. As you can see, it has a balcony which overlooks the garden. Over there on the right, is the study. Between the study and my parents’ room there is a bathroom.

Michael 4: I see. And whose rooms are these on the left?

Given that we are working here with 7th grade learners, one of the key priorities of any language programme would surely be to establish the English syntactic pattern of **Subject-Verb-Object-Complement-Adjunct**, with a special emphasis on the first three elements. As this dialogue presents not a single example of this pattern, the learners have to struggle with all kinds of word order issues (not to mention complications of punctuation) which would likely cloud their ability to decode a meaning. Lexical complexity may also be an issue here: learners need to know the use of “overlooks” and about prepositions of place as well: “between”. Furthermore, there is no clear indication of from what perspective Helen is speaking: where is she? What is left and what is right? It is actually only possible to understand where Helen is at the end of the dialogue section, upstairs. We have to assume that Michael is standing in the same place from his follow-up question/cue for more description and also have to hope that the 7th grade learners will understand the meaning/function of ‘whose’. The cultural content is also a major issue here: Helen lives in a large detached house with a garden, in which everyone has their own bedroom and there are separate spaces downstairs denominated ‘living room’ and ‘dining room’, as well as a separate space upstairs called a ‘study’. Here, then, is affluent 20th century England (Michael is an American being introduced to British society, as by default the 7th grade users of this coursebook are). In fact, in 1999, there were far more people in England who lived in semi-detached houses (31%) or purpose built low-rise flats than who lived in detached houses as described in this

coursebook⁶³. The notion of affluence is bound to be reinforced by the association Portuguese learners would make with this house type: a rare and rarely affordable item in context of contemporary urban life in this country; is Portugal, thus, by implication, somehow ‘poorer’ than England?

3. 1. C. 2 Aerial series 8th grade: sample conversations.

The table shows the results from the sample conversation dialogues of the 8th grade book.

Table 15. Aerial series: 8th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Aerial 8th grade, p.19.	Aerial 8th grade, p.30.
Shared context	High frequency of personal pronouns; zero substitute forms; 1 front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; zero non-clausal material.	High frequency of personal pronouns; zero substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; zero non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length high; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	High lexical density; Average phrase length high; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; 1 peripheral adverb, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signal; zero adversative negation.	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.	zero polite formulae or indirect requests; 1 familiarizing vocative; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; 4 evaluative adjectives.
Real time constraints	zero disfluency; 7 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	zero disfluency; 3 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.

⁶³ From “A Century of Change: Trends in UK statistics since 1900, Research Paper 99/111, 21 December 1999; available at <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons/lib/research/rp99/rp99-111.pdf>

Restricted repertoire	zero prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	2 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	zero vernacular expressions

In Dialogue p.19 the parents of two English children (Fiona and William) who are visiting Porto (to stay with the Santos family) are wondering how their children are getting on. The activity is basically a short gap filling exercise (answers in italics and underlined below) with the aim of introducing ‘Type One Conditional Sentences’ (If – clauses), which are then practiced in the independent grammar section of the coursebook (pp.128-131)

Father 2: there’s nothing you should worry about. Anyway, *why don’t you give them a ring* if you feel like it?

Mother 2: And what *if they aren’t at home?*

Father 3: Take the risk. *I know you too well.* You won’t sleep if you don’t phone them.

Interestingly, of the six gaps in the text only two of them relate directly to the supposed grammar topic and both of those examples are ‘non-standard’: both are in the form of questions, one containing a negative verb form in a structure which would normally be categorised as a “zero conditional”, the other example being also in the form of a question exhibiting “front ellipsis” while being categorised as a First Conditional. Learners from the 8th grade require a much more controlled context from which to draw their own conclusions about this grammar point than is provided here: even the more standard example in Father 3 has both main verbs in the negative form which makes decoding the meaning more complex. The whole context is further muddled by use of modal auxiliary verbs in the opening turns:

Mother 1: *I wish I could* talk to them now.

Father 1: There’s nothing you should worry about.

The learners’ attention is drawn in the very first gap to be filled to the structure introduced by “I wish”: so the mother would like to speak to her children now, but cannot. Here we are dealing with something hypothetical, so the standard grammar required is “wish + subjunctive”, but here the subjunctive is substituted by a conditional modal-auxiliary, rather difficult concepts to be being introduced alongside Type One

Conditional Sentences. The use of the modal-auxiliary “should” in the following turn adds to the degree of grammatical complexity already present in such a short dialogue. The dialogue closes with the additional of yet another layer of complexity:

Mother 3: *I bet they're expecting* our phone call.

Father 3: I don't want to disappoint you, but *I bet* they are too busy to miss us.

Again the positioning of the gaps focuses the learners' attention on another new structure: the use of “I bet” as an introductory verb, indicating a particular stance or attitude on the part of the speaker. Here, the use of this particular lexis/structure is also an indicator of a relevant cultural perspective: the father uses the “I bet” structure to either contradict (or comfort?) the mother; in fact, the father has been attributed the dominant position throughout the short dialogue, representing the rational and objective, while the mother represents the unrealistic and emotional: this type of implicit dominance of male characters over female characters is made real through the language employed.

In Dialogue p.30 the pedagogical framework in which the language work occurs is slightly different: the learners are presented with a dialogue in which Mr and Mrs Santos discuss their teenage house guests. The dialogue in the coursebook contains misinformation which the learners have to correct by listening to the ‘real’ conversation on tape (given in brackets, in italics below). What is striking about the language employed is that it bears no relation to the degree of intimacy and informality that we could assume exists in the language employed by a married couple who have teenage children of their own:

Mr Santos 2: I couldn't agree more with you! She has no respect for anyone. (*She is very polite to us all.*)

or

Mr Santos 4: Why don't you talk to them about that? (*Why don't you suggest that to our children?*) They are the kind of people one doesn't miss at all. (*They are the kind of people one never gets tired of.*)

Since there are only two people present, there is no need to use the personal pronoun “you”, so while a high frequency of personal pronouns is seen as a strong indicator of conversational naturalness in the category of “Shared context” or “Interactiveness”, their use cannot be indiscriminate.

The inclusion of the indefinite personal pronoun “one” may potentially create all kinds of problems for FL teachers and learners, as this one small item brings with wide ranging socio-cultural implications and whose normal parameters of use lie very far from this relaxed, domestic, conversational context⁶⁴. The fact that the activity requires the learners to focus on complete chunks of (mis)information in the form of complete sentences means that most of the characteristics from the various other categories are automatically excluded, and that the task of listening for precise information would become far too difficult (and inappropriate methodologically) for learners at this level if there was any significant disfluency, hedging or ellipsis. Perhaps the most inexplicable section of this text, even accepting that this is a listening training activity rather than a language work activity, comes towards the end of the dialogue when a complete sentence has to be re-written:

Mr Santos 3: I can't stand his hostile look when he is talking to Manuel.
(Have you watched how well he and Manuel get on together?)

The affirmative cue sentence in the coursebook veers from an informal register with its use of “can't stand” and immediately shifts to a different register with the use of “his hostile look” within the same clause: a highly improbable structure, to say the least; furthermore, the suggested correction contains a semantically inappropriate use of the verb “to watch”, which would more likely be the verb “to see” in this sentence: a sentence in the form of a question which includes the multi-part lexical item “to get on well together”, which becomes obscured by the interrogative word order, this without drawing attention to the use of the Present Perfect Simple verb tense in the correction: a verb tense which always causes learners difficulties. The positioning of this heavy load of listening/correction in the exercise could result in the final two corrections being ‘lost’ unless the teacher stopped the tape, thereby further invalidating the choice of a dialogue as a context for this work.

The issues of register and grammaticality also arise with the opening turns of the dialogue:

Mrs Santos 1: I regret having allowed our kids to invite their English friends.
(I don't regret at all having allowed our kids to invite their friends.)

⁶⁴ “One and you can both be used to mean *people in general*. ... One is used in conversation mostly by ‘careful’ speakers, especially, perhaps by middle and upper class people and intellectuals” Swan, 1980: 439.

Mr Santos 1: You are right, darling. Our house has turned into a madhouse.
(Our house is a lot more quieter.)

In terms of register, the use of “kids” in Mrs Santos 1 contrasts with the use of “children” in the ‘correction’ of Mr Santos 4, and the use of “darling” in Mr Santos 1 occurs in such an isolated and unrepeatable fashion that it contributes nothing to the context. The correction suggested for Mr Santos 1 contains an ungrammatical form of the comparative structure: quiet/quieter, which should not be “more quieter”. One final issue with what is stated in this opening sequence is concerned with how meaning/language is related to the real world: is it really possible that having two extra teenagers in a household would result in having a quieter house? Are the resident teenagers better behaved because they have guests in their house: after all, Mrs Santos 2 does state that Fiona is a very positive influence on their (only) daughter, Paula. But then why would Mrs Santos, when talking to Mr Santos about Paula, refer to her as “our daughter”? This dialogue is full of incongruences at the level of logic, register, lexical choice, grammar and the culture of parenthood.

3. 1. C. 3 Aerial series 9th grade: sample conversations.

The table below shows the results from the sample conversation dialogues of the 9th grade book.

Table 16. Aerial series: 9th grade: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Aerial 9th grade, p.14.	Aerial 9th grade, p.23.
Shared context	low frequency of personal pronouns; zero substitute forms; 2 front ellipsis; 1 ellipsis across units; zero inserts; zero non-clausal material.	Low frequency of personal pronouns; 1 substitute form; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; zero inserts; zero non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	High lexical density; Average phrase length high; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	High lexical density; Average phrase length high; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	Low frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-	Low frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-

	clausal questions; two attention signals; zero adversative negation.	clausal questions; 4 attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.	zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.
Real time constraints	zero disfluency; 5 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	zero disfluency; 4 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.
Restricted repertoire	1 prefabricated locution; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	3 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	zero vernacular expressions

Dialogue p.14 opens with the use of the attention signal “Well” in Kazuo 1, which is repeated in Bill 2, and exhibits a more frequent use of elliptical devices in several places in the dialogue. However, the most striking characteristic is the low frequency of personal pronouns, relevant to the categories of “Shared context” and “Interactiveness”, as well as the now well established almost total absence of nearly all the characteristics listed by Leech (1998). The explanation for this lies in the fact that the coursebook authors are using this dialogue as a vehicle to include some ‘real world’ content in the form of background information about the city of Atlanta. This means that all the turns in the dialogue, ‘spoken’ by various members of this multicultural teenage group (with the exception of one: Clare 1), are used to deliver fragments of information about the past and present of Atlanta. Kazuo 1 explicitly states that he has been doing some background reading and wants to share some “curious facts”:

Kazuo 1: Well. I’ve been reading something about Atlanta. There are some really curious facts. For instance: do you know that Atlanta was first called Terminus, in 1837?

Catarina 1: *Terminus*? Because it was the last railway station, at the end of the line!

Bill 1: I don’t know if you noticed it but there is a real cult of peachtrees, though no peachtree thrives here.

Clare 1: Why do you say so?

The positive conversational use of “Well” and “For instance” in Kazuo 1 is counter-balanced by the phrasing, vocabulary choice and discourse structure of what follows in the segment of the dialogue quoted above. For example, “I’ve been reading something about Atlanta” would be better phrased as *‘I’ve been doing some reading about Atlanta’*, avoiding the vagueness of the direct object “something”; “There are some really curious facts” should include some reference as to where to find these facts or be phrased differently, perhaps: *‘I’ve got some curious facts for you!’*; and the entire question about the first name of the city appears to be to a certain extent ungrammatical and unbalanced, with the date 1837 appended after the main information focus, and could be phrased: *‘For instance: did you know that back in 1837 Atlanta was called Terminus?’* At the level of discourse structure, when Catarina 1 responds to this question about the name of the city, she opens with “*Terminus?*” with the old name in italics (while it wasn’t in Kazuo 1’s question) and a question mark, indicating that she has some doubts about the old name whereas, in fact, she has no doubts since she then tells the group exactly why the city was called Terminus, ending with an emphatic exclamation mark. In any case, whether she knew previously or not immediately becomes irrelevant, as Kazuo offers no follow-up comment on her contribution, and neither does any of the other members of the group except Bill 1, who immediately launches into an entirely different topic (or “curious fact” that he has also been reading something about?) related to a local “cult of peachtrees”: where the two lexemes ‘peach’ and ‘tree’ are bonded together into one lexical item, not usually found in standard usage but apparently common in Atlanta⁶⁵. Regardless of the factual or cultural merits of this arboreal information, the use of the verb “thrives” in Bill 1 is somewhat curious, given that nowadays this verb is more associated with the idea of being successful or prosperous, doing well financially rather than related to the plant kingdom, so it would be more usual to use the verb ‘grows’ or perhaps ‘is planted’. This section of the dialogue finishes with a further mismatch in terms of vocabulary and discourse: Clare 1: asks “Why do you say so?”, which should really be *‘Why do you say that’*, or perhaps even the more colloquial *‘How come?’*, and in any case logically is an anaphoric reference back to the last clause spoken “though no peachtree thrives here”,

⁶⁵ There are more than 65 streets in Atlanta that make use of a variant of peach tree in their name including the city’s main street where the main landmarks and sites of historical interest are located.

See <http://www.atlanta.net/visitors/folklore.html>

The main historical facts in this dialogue are confirmed by the state public service broadcaster GPB.

See <http://www.gpb.org/peachtree-street>

when in fact Bill 2 goes on to explain the “peachtree cult” and not the absence of peach trees. The final section of this dialogue displays similar weaknesses in terms of referencing, vocabulary choice and grammatical accuracy, particularly, although not exclusively, in the Gina 1 turn:

We watch CNN in Sydney too and I know who you are referring to. We could try, because, if we are lucky, we can get a ticket for a CNN tour and peek at live broadcasts. By the way – who knows what CNN stands for?

Some of the problems here include: the use of “too” where ‘*as well*’ would be more frequent; the switching between the modal-auxiliary “could” and “can” in the same sentence; the repeated use of the plural “we”, which is linked to getting “a ticket” in the singular; the degree of formality of “I know who you are referring to”, where something like ‘*I know who that is*’ or ‘*I know who you mean*’ would be more appropriate; the use of the verb “peek”, which has a very specific meaning and which few 9th grade students would be familiar with, or the use of “live broadcasts” without being qualified by any determiner like ‘*some*’ when, in any case, it might be more natural for Gina to be talking about watching a show being taped or recorded rather than “live broadcasts”.

In Dialogue p.23 (a listening comprehension exercise to fill in gaps: the answers are shown below in italics and underlined) there is more frequent use of attention signals and also some prefabricated locutions and substitution forms which add to the conversational tone. But here again there is a certain pressure to include information in a way that the density of the content distorts the language used, as happens in the opening four turns of the dialogue:

Catarina 1: What do you know about the Olympic flame?

David 1: Well, I learnt that during the ancient Games a flame always burned in honour of the goddess Hera. The organisers just try to keep the spirit of classical Greece.

Bill 1: There are more and more problems involved in the Games too. It’s not only terrorism, as it happened at the Munich Games and that bomb in Atlanta, in 1996. Sometimes they are used for political purposes, and there are the problems of drugs, money and so on.

David 2: Yes, and in my opinion, the Olympic Games have become too commercialised.

We move from the ancient origins of the Olympic flame, through selected examples of terrorism into the topic of over-commercialisation in the space of four turns: hardly enough ‘space’ to do justice to any of these topics. Perhaps the coursebook authors did not conceive of this cultural content as ‘topics’, but rather just a dialogic context for a gap filling exercise, with gaps/answers that bear only a tenuous or no relation to each

other (all ten answers are presented in a box above the exercise, in alphabetical order: ancient, another century, budget, ever, in honour of, involved, purposes, sponsor, too commercialised, why not). The choice of vocabulary again reveals itself to be idiosyncratic: the use of “too” in Bill 1, when there has been no previous mention of problems prior to this turn, David 1; the use of “that” to pre-modify “bomb in Atlanta”, when it is being mentioned for the first time; the questionable semantic value of “Sometimes” in Bill 1, when ‘*nearly always*’ would be nearer the truth. The use of “and so on” after referring to the serious problems of “drugs, money” creates a deflation of meaning which is the result of having to move on to the next topic: over-commercialisation.

Syntax is also a problem: the first sentence in Bill 1 talks of “There are more and more problems involved in the Games”, when there should be a connection with the previous turn by making use of the Games as the subject of the sentence; the inclusion of “it” in “as it happened at the Munich Games” in the following sentence is non-standard (incorrect?) grammar; the use of a comma before “and” is quite unusual in standard English. The most obvious discrepancy of meaning relates to the whole dialogue being ‘fixed in time’, its relevance and ‘truth’ values very much depend on the text being processed at the right moment of history. What is also striking is the negativity inherent in the text, when perhaps the Olympic Games could perhaps be seen as something more positive, something which, from a Portuguese perspective, provides opportunities to explore aspects of the human experience like success and failure, pain and glory, or indeed some local role models among the array of Portuguese Olympic champions. Strangely, it is Catarina, the Portuguese character in the group, who is the most pessimistic, saying Portugal will never host the Games because it couldn’t raise the finance, and who suffers a stunning linguistic slap in the face at the closure of the dialogue, at Kazuo 3 when she questions his ability to predict the next host city:

Catarina 2: How do you know? It will be another century, remember!

Kazuo 3: Well, I usually read newspapers and magazines, and watch TV ...

Not perhaps how you would expect a conversation among a group of teenage friends to end.

3. 1. D Extreme series: sample conversations.

A survey of the three coursebooks in the “Extreme” series revealed a limited variety of dialogues (and other genres of spoken interaction) to be present. The distribution of conversation and service encounter dialogues is presented in Table 17 below:

Table 17. Extreme series: distribution of dialogues.

The ‘Extreme’ series: distribution of dialogues						
	7th grade: 2004		8th grade: 2005		9th grade: 2006	
Conversations	3	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Service encounters	1	15%	2	100%	0	50%
Total	6	100%	2	100%	1	100%

There is the highly uneven distribution of dialogues across the book series both in terms of the types of dialogues and the number of dialogues (a further inconsistency is the type of language work associated with each text, but this aspect will have to be to one side for the purposes of the present discussion): “Extreme 7” has three conversation texts and two service encounters; “Extreme 8” has no conversations, no service encounters; and “Extreme 9” has only one dialogue, an interview. Part of the explanation for this distribution may lie in the fact that “Extreme 9” employs a more creative approach to the use of texts. The coursebook aims to take a more learner-centred approach whereby dialogue-like texts are generated by the learners in guided production, with tasks similar to role plays. On the other hand, “Extreme 8” opts for a unit opening text in the form of a “chat”, an electronically mediated interaction between online users of English. These texts seem to be designed to serve as some kind of introductory activation of the unit theme. For example, Unit Two is called “Get in Shape” and the “chat” at p.40 is:

Kix-san 1: I’m beat!!! I have just arrived from a friendly football match and I feel as if I’ve run around the world twice!

Sports Kid 1: You should do as I do and practise sport regularly, not just at the weekend. You would lose weight and feel better about yourself.

Kix-san 2: I can see you’re not from Japan ... not every sports person must be fit and agile. Quite the opposite, over here in order to practice our national sport you have to put on a lot of weight, not the other way around.

It is hard to imagine a more contrived and artificial context in which to introduce cultural content. But what is most pertinent to note is the quality of language: to what extent does this language represent an accurate and appropriate model for interactions of this nature in the real world?

The lack of any major presence of conversation type dialogues in the 8th and 9th grade coursebooks is highly significant. It seems that with the turn of the century these ELT coursebook authors no longer considered conversation dialogues to be sufficiently worthy of inclusion, beyond the three examples in their 7th grade book. Furthermore, the same applies across all categories of dialogues: the total of nine dialogues in all three coursebooks contrasts very starkly with the total number of 199 dialogues in the three book series “Active English” in the early 1980s. In the space of approximately 20 years the dialogue has gone from a predominant position as a potential ELT resource to virtual invisibility. It is difficult to posit a reason for this sea-change but it may have its foundation in some of factors described above in relation to general lack of naturalness and authenticity (representativeness?) displayed by the conversation dialogues in question. If this were the case, then it could be assumed that the conversation dialogues that are present in the “Extreme” series would not suffer from these deficiencies and/or inconsistencies and would display more of the features identified by Leech (1998), already described in relation to previous coursebook series.

3. 1. D. 1 Extreme series 7th grade: sample conversations.

It is in the first book of the series, “Extreme 7”, that there are three texts (see Table 18 below) identified as being conversations.

Table 18. Extreme series: sample of conversations.

“Extreme” series of coursebooks: conversation dialogues		
7 th grade: level 3 (2004)		
p.41 Conversation 2 adults <u>Exchange style</u>: informal exchanges <u>Turns</u>: 9 <u>Topic</u>: gossip: family neighbours <u>L2 work</u>: possessive adjectives <u>Task type</u>: gap filling	p.105 Conversation 2 teens <u>Exchange Style</u>: Q&A <u>Turns</u>: 4 <u>Topic</u>: CDs <u>L2 work</u>: possessive pronouns <u>Task type</u>: gap filling	p.140 Conversation 2 adults <u>Exchange Style</u>: informal exchanges <u>Turns</u>: 13 <u>Topic</u>: holidays <u>L2 work</u>: comprehension + vocabulary <u>Task type</u>: chart filling + synonyms

In fact, the first two conversations (p.41 & p.105) are rather limited in their extension (nine and four turns respectively) and were specifically produced to provide a context for two specific grammatical items: possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns, respectively. Dialogue p.41 is a gap filler exercise for listening comprehension and Dialogue p.105 is a written gap filler exercise. Dialogue p.41 consists of two female villagers gossiping about the goings-on in the local vampires’ castle and Dialogue p.105 is two children talking about who owns a particular CD they have found. Neither of these two texts is exploited in any way further than from the perspective of grammatical recognition and reproduction, but the texts may still be analysed from the point of view of the seven key characteristics outlined by Leech (1998). The results are shown in Table 19 below.

Table 19. Extreme series: sample of conversations.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Extreme 7: p.41	Extreme 7: p.105
Shared context	High frequency of personal pronouns; 1 substitute form; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 3 inserts; zero non-clausal material.	High frequency of personal pronouns; 6 substitute forms; zero front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 2 inserts; zero non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length not low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.	Medium lexical density; Average phrase length low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second	High frequency of first and second

	personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.	personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; zero tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	Zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 1 interjection; zero expletives; 1 exclamation; frequent evaluative adjectives.	2 polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; zero interjections; zero expletives; zero exclamations; zero evaluative adjectives.
Real time event	Zero disfluency; 5 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.	Zero disfluency; 5 morphological reductions; zero syntactic reductions; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.
Restricted repertoire	3 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis	zero prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	zero vernacular expressions	zero vernacular expressions

The lack of a close approximation between these dialogues and the seven characteristics is perhaps unsurprising since the intention of the authors was clearly to highlight/practice one particular grammatical item in each text within the general context of the storyline that permeates the entire book (the life and times of a modern vampire family). However, this lack also means that only the grammatical item can be taken as useful in the sense that the learners are not getting any accurate/authentic/appropriate language (or cultural) input from the text/context itself. Indeed, in relation to the teaching of grammar, the provision of a context is one element in a more complex methodological matrix: there is also a need to take into the construction (form), the content (meaning) and the communicative purpose (use): this can only be achieved by providing teaching materials through which the learners “can make use of the language item in question in meaningful contexts: authentic language use with a communicative purpose” (Hurst, 2010: 75).

Dialogue p.41 opens with a series of turns which are characterised by verb tense switching that implies a grasp of the many complexities associated with the different uses of two verb tenses in particular, the Present Perfect Simple and the Past Simple, as well as the Present Simple:

Mrs Onoff 1: Have you heard the news?

Mrs Romov 1: Yes, I have but it wasn't a surprise. I've always suspected there was something weird about that family. The castle seems very dark and mysterious.

Mrs Onoff 2: You're right ... and its windows are always closed. But isn't your son a friend of one of the children?

Mrs Romov 2: Yes. He's Erip and Mav's friend.

So while the grammatical item being focussed on (possessive adjectives) could be described as being relatively simple to grasp (the same item in Portuguese behaves in much the same way), the context in which the item is located is grammatically very complex. The meanings in the text are also not helpful: there is a contradiction in having established the weirdness of the castle's occupants, especially through the turn Mrs Romov 1, when she says her son is a friend of the vampire family; Mrs Romov 1 also establishes the characteristics of the castle as being "dark and mysterious", to which Mrs Onoff 2 adds a further negative characteristic, "and its windows are always closed", which is hardly at the same level of spookiness/threat. The reply of Mrs Romov 2 is lacking the usual short form of confirmation ('*Yes, he is.*') and continues by using a full form of the genitive "Erip and Mav's friend", when we could normally expect the more concise form '*their friend*', which is indeed the grammatical point in focus: so, 7th grade learners may become confused as to when to use the fully referenced expression and when to use the possessive adjective, which is surely counter-productive. Later, the dialogue continues and continues to challenge the learners' notion of common sense:

Mrs Onoff 4: Do you know that all their brothers and sisters work together in the basement of the castle?

Mrs Romov 4: Just our luck! They work only during the night. We have to protect our families and our village.

From discussing the children and then their parents, the conversation now moves to the uncles/aunts of the children since the "their brothers and sisters" in Mrs Onoff 4 is referring to the parents' relatives. This rather confusing family structure had already been introduced earlier in the unit (the title of which is "What a family!"), so perhaps there is a chance that 7th grade learners would be able to follow this mid-dialogue switch in perspective. Mrs Romov 4 presents further challenges, as she does not respond

directly to the question posed in Mrs Onoff 4, but rather, indirectly (“Just our luck!”), before adding further information about the suspicious vampire family working at night. It is hard to tell if Mrs Romov is here being sincere or ironic: in what sense is it lucky that the vampire family “work only during the night”? Given that she feels some sort of protection against the family is required, is she suggesting/planning some form of raid: presumably during daylight? Is there a clear and imminent threat? This hardly seems to be the case. In addition, the dialogue opened with a reference to hearing “the news”, which most likely refers to the fact that there is a vampire family living in the castle. But, a reading text on p.36 of the same unit talks of the Alucard family being in the castle for two hundred years, since it was first built, and the son of Mrs Romov is a friend of the family, so where is the “news” element here?

Dialogue p.105 is very brief indeed, intended to provide some kind of context for an exercise on possessive pronouns after the presentation of a complete table of the eight available items and two example sentences (which have nothing in common with the book’s vampire family storyline):

Mav 1: I found this CD under my bed. Its cover is broken. Is it yours?

Chani 1: No, it’s not mine. It’s Erip’s.

Mav 2: Are you sure it’s his? I think it could be Cilgar’s.

Chani 2: No, it’s not hers. I have just remembered Mobiez gave it to Gotsh and Noffic last Christmas. It’s theirs.

The coursebook authors have managed to create a dialogue that includes all but two possessive pronouns (there is no plural ‘yours’ or ‘ours’), but unfortunately the very first gap/answer is incorrect since “its” in this case is in fact a possessive adjective. The focus on cramming in as many as possible forms of possessive pronoun has obscured the need to focus on meaning (the same comment could perhaps be made about the example sentences). The artificiality of stretching this dialogue to include so many people (and thus different possessive pronouns) means that the fact that this is a daughter (Mav) talking to her mother (Chani) is completely ignored. There is no indication of any kind of sentimental attachment between the speakers or the people they are talking about. In order to complete this exercise, the 7th grade learners would most likely have to go back to p.37 in Unit 2 and consult the Alucard family tree that they previously completed. So while the exercise is clearly designed to focus on a single grammar point, most of the learners’ energy will be focussed on the ‘brain teaser’ aspect

of having to cross reference the gap filling exercise with the background information (a much more complex processing task). A further indication of this dialogue's removal from any approximation to any social reality is the conclusion of these enquiries concerning the ownership of a CD: the mother remembers it is the joint possession of the two siblings, twin boys, a Christmas gift from another aunt. How likely is that? And in any event, how is it that Mav has no knowledge of how the item came to be under her bed, surely that is worthy of comment?

The more extensive conversational Dialogue p.140 is intended for more general comprehension and vocabulary work. The text is followed by a chart filling exercise based on information from the text and by an exercise where definitions that are given have to be matched to vocabulary items from the text. The text itself consists of a dialogue where two adults discuss their holiday plans. Table 20 below shows the text in relation to the seven key characteristics:

Table 20. Extreme series: sample conversation.

Leech (1998) Key Characteristics	Extreme 7: Dialogue p.140
Shared context	High frequency of personal pronouns; 2 substitute forms; 1 front ellipsis; zero ellipsis across units; 2 inserts; zero non-clausal material.
Lack of elaboration	High lexical density; Average phrase length not low; zero independent genitives; zero general hedges.
Interactiveness	High frequency of first and second personal pronouns; zero peripheral adverbs, zero vocatives; two tag/non-clausal questions; zero attention signals; zero adversative negation.
Personal expressiveness	Zero polite formulae or indirect requests; zero familiarizing vocatives; 1 interjection; zero expletives; 2 exclamations; frequent evaluative adjectives.
Real time event	Zero disfluency; 11 morphological reductions; one syntactic reduction; zero prefaces; zero phrasal or clausal tags.
Restricted repertoire	4 prefabricated locutions; high type-token ratio; wide range of grammar and lexis
Vernacular range of expression	1 vernacular expression

While this conversation dialogue contains more examples of language which correspond to the seven key characteristics, it still remains far from ‘natural’ speech in many ways: for example, there are opportunities within the conversation for far more verb contractions, a lot more ellipsis and many more implicit meanings rather the continual stating of information laden utterances. Above all, the dialogue proceeds along an unbroken path of ‘dense’ language which never falters, in which the turns are never incomplete or overlap. In a truly interactive dialogue, the participants would make use of the shared context to take short-cuts. In fact, the opposite occurs as the participants tell each other what they surely should already know, as illustrated by the following extract:

Chani 2: ... Going sightseeing through countries that we don’t know has been our dream since we got married, remember?

Flow 2: How could I forget? We have been planning this trip for so long and read so many guidebooks about Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic, that I feel I already know them.

Ckani 3: That is going to be very useful as we have decided to travel by car.

While it has become customary to place great emphasis on the productive side of language learning, focusing on verbal/ linguistic skills, it is also important to think of the receptive: “communication is never achieved by the mere decoding of linguistic stimuli; communication includes interpreting contextual clues and using them as evidence toward the correct inference of speaker intentions” (Taguchi, 2005: 544). It is hard to imagine a husband and wife conducting a conversation on the topic of choice of holiday without having any kind of linguistic and/or pragmatic breakdowns or which has so little in the way of interpersonal and affective features as part of the communicative event:

Chani 5: Do you think that is a good idea? Don’t forget we are in the middle of the high season and we might find the hotels fully booked.

Flow 5: Don’t worry!! We can always find a bed and breakfast or a motel.

Particularly absent in these samples is any vernacular range of expression which is strange, since “the use of vernacular or non-standard grammar frequently conveys speakers’ solidarity as members of a group” (Leech, 1998: 8). Much more in line with the kind of language that Leech describes would be something like Chani 5 opening with *‘Are you sure about that? It’s high season don’t forget ... the hotels get really full.’* Beyond the question of language, we might also wonder about whether “a bed and breakfast or a motel” would really be options for non-package tourists in the context of

Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic in 2004. Indeed in dealing with the concept of tourism, the cultural value of this whole dialogue is completely undermined by Chani's final spoken turn:

Chani 6: Let's hope you're right. All I know is that I want to do a lot of sightseeing, visit every tourist attraction in every town, take heaps of photographs and spend lots of money on souvenirs.

Leaving aside the sudden use of vernacular vocabulary ("heaps of photographs") and the duplication of ideas implied in "do a lot of sightseeing, visit every tourist attraction" the kind of values being expressed here do nothing to contribute to the role of tourism as a form of intercultural activity, but rather embody the activity as an ephemeral, consumerist experience of the shallowest kind.

3. 2 Service Encounters.

Alex Gilmore approaches the problem of the authenticity of coursebook dialogues not from a grammatical/structural perspective but rather from a 'discourse analysis' stance⁶⁶. He set out to compare how much socio-linguistic equivalence there was between real-world 'service encounter' dialogues (naturally-occurring language data) and those which appeared in a selected corpora of Japanese coursebooks. He concluded that nine separate discourse features could be isolated:

- length of text (total number of words, words per turn, etc);
- lexical density (the ratio of content words to grammatical/function words);
- false starts (where the speaker re-considers, re-starts, gets stuck, etc);
- repetition (repeated words or fragments to guarantee comprehension/clarity or maintain participation);
- pauses (time to formulate, consult documents, etc);
- terminal overlap (two people speaking at the same time: e.g. one turn hasn't finished before the next one starts;
- latching (where turns are continuous, unbroken);
- hesitation devices (fillers like 'um' 'erm' to gain time or show involvement);
- back-channels (short verbal fragments to acknowledge comprehension).

(Gilmore, 2004: 366-370).

⁶⁶ Discourse analysis (DA) is a general, somewhat ambiguous, term for a number of socio-linguistic approaches to analyzing written, spoken or signed language in use as a communicative event. DA analyzes naturally-occurring language (above clause level) and aims at revealing socio-psychological and cultural norms rather than text structure (Stubbs, 1983).

In order to create a more consistent sample within the category of ‘service encounters’, wherever possible the sub-category of dialogues set in restaurants and shops will be examined across the range of coursebooks that have been analysed. The objective then is to analyse sample texts for dialogues in restaurants and shops on the grounds that these dialogues might reasonably be assumed to have been included in the coursebooks with a view to their utilitarian value for the learners, both in the sense of providing a model of language in use and contextualising that language in real life situations.

3. 2. A The Active English series: sample of service encounters.

In the “Active English” series of coursebooks there are a total of 20 ‘service encounter’ dialogues, some of which occur within the same unit, i.e., there are multiple dialogues within one unit. For the purposes of this study the dialogues under consideration are limited to: Unit 42 “Can I help you?” p.46 from the 7th grade coursebook, set in a clothes shop; Unit 54 “Black coffee stops me sleeping” p.58 from the 8th grade coursebook, set in a restaurant and Unit 4 “Fares, please” p.46 from the 9th grade coursebook, set in two public transport situations (bus and train), which is the only unit in the 9th grade book with any kind of service encounter. Given that a certain amount of exposition of shopping situations, as well as functions like “Asking for directions”, had already been covered in the 7th and 8th grades, perhaps it was felt that there was no further need for more models/examples. The total number of dialogues present in the “Active English” series declines steadily from 98 dialogues in the 7th grade, to 61 dialogues in the 8th grade, to 40 dialogues in the 9th grade, indicating that the authors were perhaps seeking to include a wider range of text genres into their coursebooks as their learners ‘progressed’.

Table 21 below shows the results using the discourse features identified by Gilmore (2004) to analyses the three texts.

Table 21. Active English series: sample of service encounters.

Gilmore (2004) Discourse features	Active English 7: 46 Clothes Shop	Active English 8: 58 Restaurant	Active English 9: 46 Public Transport
Length of text	12 turns: 60 words Average: 5 w/turn Info. Giver: 3.3 w/turn Info. Getter: 7.4 w/turn	15 turns: 136 words Average: 9.1 w/turn Info. Giver: 7 w/turn Info. Getter: 9.6 w/turn	16 turns: 67 words Average: 4.2 w/turn Info. Giver: 2.3 w/turn Info. Getter: 6.1 w/turn
Lexical density	LD = 51.7%	LD = 49.3%	LD = 53.7%
False starts	Zero examples	Zero examples	Zero examples
Repetition	Zero examples	Zero examples	Zero examples
Pauses	Zero examples	9 examples	Zero examples
Terminal overlap	Zero examples	Zero examples	Zero examples
Latching	Zero examples (?)	1 example	Zero examples (?)
Hesitation devices	Zero examples	3 examples	Zero examples
Back-channels	Zero examples	Zero examples	1 example

What is immediately apparent is the rarity of any of the features identified as being salient by Gilmore (2004): only the service encounter in Active English 8 displays any significant occurrences. Indeed this dialogue, in the category of ‘length of text’ also produced distinctly different values. This is likely to be a result of the fact that much of the dialogue is, in fact, largely a conversation between a married couple about what to order in the restaurant combined with some brief interactions with a waiter. The fact that there are pauses (nine), hesitation devices (three) and latching (one) in evidence can be attributed almost exclusively to one interaction sequence, which is a reflection of the social context associated with the dialogue: a submissive, indecisive wife deferring to her husband:

Mr Bryant 3: What about melon and grapefruit to begin with?
Mrs Bryant 3: Right. Er ... to follow ... perhaps a grilled lamb chop or a mushroom omelette ...
Er ... How about eating trout?
Mr Bryant 4: That sounds good. Trout and salad for both. As for dessert ...

While it is Mrs Bryant who suggests the trout, as a third option, it is Mr Bryant who decides. The deference shown by Mrs Bryant is further amplified by her absence from the final sequence of the dialogue where the waiter takes their order: Mr Bryant orders for her as well as for himself. Her indecisiveness is exemplified early in the dialogue

when the couple are beginning to choose their food having been given the menu by the waiter:

Mrs Bryant 1: Uhm ... It's a bit difficult to choose ... So many dishes ... No roast beef ... I'll cook it tomorrow.

Mr Bryant 2: Why?

Mrs Bryant 2: Because Mark is going away tomorrow. And he loves it.

The contribution of Mrs Bryant is marked by hesitations and pauses in a way that does not occur in the other sample dialogues/texts. She is 'distracted' by thoughts of Mark (her son) and his preference for roast beef; however, Mr Bryant pays no attention to his wife's comment about their son and moves on with his suggestion for starters (Mr Bryant 3). In addition to the married couple 'tone' set in the dialogue also has to be added a further inappropriate aspect: that the knowledge they should share as part of their relationship seems to be missing:

Mr Bryant 5: I don't feel like dessert. Just black coffee.

Mrs Bryant 5: I can't drink black coffee in the evening. It stops me sleeping.

We could expect that Mr Bryant would already know this, their marriage must have lasted quite some years having produced teenage children, and they must have shared thousands of dinners, at home and in restaurants, and yet Mrs Bryant seems to stating her aversion to black coffee for the first time (the same could perhaps be said of her statement concerning Mark's preference for roast beef, mentioned in a different context above). The choice of this reference to black coffee is given undue prominence, since it is the title of this unit as well. The way this dialogue is conducted in terms of its sociolinguistic context makes its cultural content rather abstract and potentially less meaningful for learners.

From a more linguistic perspective, there are also problems in the choice of language. For example, when Mr Bryant places their order:

Waiter 2: Can I take your order, sir?

Mr Bryant 6: Yes, please. Melon, grapefruit, 2 trouts, 1 piece of cheesecake and a black coffee.

The listing of their chosen items of food without any reference to who is going to eat what is unusual in its brevity and should really include some reference to starters, main course and dessert to be considered a model of this type of interaction. Within the list, the use of numerals rather than words is stylistically clumsy (also "melon" and

“grapefruit” are not pre-modified whereas “black coffee” is preceded by “a”) and grammatically inaccurate when it comes to the fish element: we usually teach that ‘fish’ is both the singular and the plural form⁶⁷, and the same applies to names of fish. This aspect of vocabulary embraces a very complex area of usage (countable/uncountable nouns) and having the example “1 piece of cheesecake” can only add to the (confusing?) complexity inherent in this particular context. Similar doubts may be raised as to the way that Mr Bryant orders their drinks:

Waiter 3: Have you decided on the drinks, sir?

Mr Bryant 7: Yes. One lager and one bitter, please.

Apart from not consulting his wife as to what she wants to drink (perhaps this is shared knowledge?) Mr Bryant orders their drinks without referring to what size/quantity they require as is customary in the U.K. (there is also the issue of the use of numbers here rather than determiners, as well as the fact they are now words, not numerals). Generally speaking, the use of ‘*A pint of lager*’ or ‘*A half of bitter*’ or vice versa, would be expected in this situation. It is also open to question as to whether 8th grade learners could or should be aware of what is the difference in meaning between “lager” and “bitter”, as it is a distinction that is generally only found in British (drinking) culture.

There are additional ‘small scale’ problematic items in this dialogue indicating an inconsistency in the writing of the dialogue: the use of the verb “eating” and not ‘*having*’ in Mrs Bryant 3 where ‘*How about having the trout?*’ would be expected, as it is used in Mrs Bryant 4 where we would also expect the inclusion of a determiner as in ‘*I think I’ll have the cheesecake.*’ since she has seen the item on the menu and is referring to that defined item; the choice of the verb “cook” and its use of the future simple form in Mrs Bryant 1, when she excludes the option of roast beef from her food choice because her son Mark loves that dish and he is going away the next day. Since “roast beef” already includes the notion of how it is to be cooked, it would be more usual to say ‘*I’ll make it tomorrow*’: this accepting that the future simple verb form is appropriate in this context whereas perhaps this verb form should ‘mirror’ the subsequent verb form, in the present continuous, to give a stronger notion of a plan or intention that has some substance (not something usually associated with the future simple), so we would have an amended dialogue sequence more like:

⁶⁷ See Swan, 1980: 429 on ‘number’.

Mrs Bryant 1: Uhm... It's a bit difficult ... So many dishes to choose from ... Not the roast beef: we're having that tomorrow.

Mr Bryant 2: Why?

Mrs Bryant 2: Because Mark's going away tomorrow. And he just loves roast beef!!

It is possible to imagine that the choice of the future simple form was conditioned by the sequence (and manner) in which grammatical items are presented to the learners in accordance with the National Programme. The use of the present continuous form is usually taught 'early', but not with the meaning suggested in the re-written dialogue fragment above, and, thus, might not be seen as appropriate, but then again, it is used in this way in Mrs Bryant 2. So, the question here is again one of consistency.

With regard to the other two dialogues from the "Active English" series, similar observations may be made. The 7th grade service encounter (Unit 42 p.46) takes place in a clothes shop, where Kay is looking to buy a dress, nothing unusual here except that Kay doesn't say what kind of dress she wants (long, midi, mini, formal, informal?) nor for what purpose she wants the dress (work, party, general leisure wear?):

Assistant 1: Can I help you?

Kay 1: I'd like a dress.

Assistant 2: This one is beautiful.

You would expect a greater degree of specificity to Kay's search for a dress, her request is too vague. This contrasts with the 'sharpness' of the language employed. The shop assistant is very economical with her language to the extent of being perhaps curt or impolite:

Kay 3: What size is it, please?

Assistant 4: Size 14.

Kay 4: What is it made of?

Assistant 5: Cotton.

Since the aim of the shop assistant is surely to sell clothes, you would expect some degree of 'salesmanship': an attempt to 'connect' with the customer, an attempt to make the product seem attractive, 'worthy' of being bought. Nothing of the kind occurs; instead, there is a series of minimalist turns, which result in an unknown outcome: the dialogue ends before we find out if Kay definitely pays £30 for the dress, although she does state the dress is "fine" before asking the price. A little more enthusiasm on the

part of Kay might be more natural if indeed she has been successful in her search for a dress.

It is curious how service encounter dialogues in shops always result in the customer finding exactly what s/he wants: in the world of coursebooks, shopping is a straightforward and easily accomplished task where there are no product shortages or such like, and no problems finding the money for whatever priced item is being sought. There is no need to really negotiate, no problems to overcome, no sign of any emotional-sociological jeopardy or threat to face (Goffman, 1961) which means that these dialogues do not reflect the reality of the pragmatics⁶⁸ that social interactions inevitably involve. Wajnryb (1997) made the point that between two participants in any exchange opening and closing there exists a great deal of scope for breakdowns to occur: exchanges are often not as smooth as they are portrayed in ELT coursebooks. And even when, as in this case, there is a minor bump in the smooth flow of the interaction, concerning the size of the dress, the language employed in the dialogue betrays a lack of logical cohesion and cultural sensitivity:

Kay 2: I'm afraid it's a little big. What size is it, please?

Assistant 3: Size 16. Well try this one. It's smaller.

Kay 3: What size is it, please?

Assistant 4: Size 14.

If the first dress is “a little big” and is a size 16, then logically Kay wants the next size down, a size 14, so there is no real need for these facts to be stated in an exchange such as this, and in any case Kay would not have tried on the first dress without first knowing its size.

The kind of curt language from the sales assistant described above is also present in the 9th grade dialogue, set in the context of public transport (Unit 4 p.8); in this case, it is a railway “clerk” providing information and tickets. The clerk employs heavily truncated language in her/his replies, only one reply is a ‘full’ sentence and this turn is a simple sentence using a copula verb:

Clerk 4: No, it's a through train.

⁶⁸ Barón & Celaya (2010) discuss the concept of pragmatic fluency in relation to ELT referring to factors such as openings/closings, turn taking, use of gambits, routines and patterns and response time.

The clerk's simplistic, elided replies mean that Joan has to ask a series of questions, one question for each snippet of information, since the clerk volunteers no more information than that specifically asked for, but this would not be the case in the real world: "Analysis of the transcripts showed that the authentic conversations generally had a complex structure, with the simple question-answer pattern disrupted by a number of factors" (Gilmore, 2004: 366). The clerk's degree of terseness again borders on the impolite and is in stark contrast to Joan's repeated use of "please" throughout the dialogue (Joan uses "please" five times and "thank you" once in her eight turns). We would expect corresponding degrees of politeness to be modelled in a coursebook situation. The pattern here contradicts what we would normally expect to find in this type of service encounter where the 'Information Giver' typically offers more information than requested, predicting what the 'Information Getter/Receiver' may require (next) on the basis of fairly well established patterns of behaviour in such situations or offering alternatives to what is initially requested (Gilmore, 2004). In Table 21 above, within the category of 'Length of text', the values for words per turn for the 'Information Giver' are consistently lower than those for the 'Information Getter/Receiver' for all three service encounter dialogues here being examined.

The degree to which the 'real world' is ignored can be seen in the opening section of this unit, when Joan is taking a bus to the railway station (where she interacts with the clerk as discussed above):

Conductor 1: Fares, please.

Joan 1: British Rail, Oxford Street, please.

Conductor 2: 25 pence.

Joan 2: Could you tell me where to get off, please?

There is no British Rail office on Oxford Street in London, anyone wishing to get information about trains to Windsor from London would probably go to an actual railway station⁶⁹, of which there are many in London: for example, Paddington has a stopping service to Windsor and Waterloo has a through service. Perhaps also, if there was a station on Oxford Street, it would be well signposted and easy to spot, thus making it unnecessary to ask when to get off the bus, but in any case this is useful language employing a common phrasal verb in a clear context. What is also striking

⁶⁹ There are several Tube stations serving the London Underground along Oxford Street which could also act as real destinations for Joan's bus journey and might also provide information about 'Overground' services.

about this dialogue is that it also somewhat inconclusive in a similar vein to Kay's purchase of a dress in the 7th grade dialogue. Joan gets all the information she requires and then the dialogue ends without her actually paying for/receiving a return ticket to Windsor. As well as being unrealistic and frustrating, this can be considered a missed opportunity in terms of language practice: the act of paying would surely involve useful money related vocabulary (cash, change and so on), as well as useful structures (*'Do you take credit cards?'*, *'I've only got a £20 note'*, *'I'm afraid not'*, and so on) in addition to other culturally bound items, such as the way to say particular amounts of money: for example, British people tend to say the pounds element (often in the singular) but just the number for the pence element (£2.50 = two pound fifty).

3. 2. B The Passport series: sample service encounters.

In the "Passport" series of coursebooks there are a total of twelve identifiable service encounter dialogues; nine in the 7th grade book, none in the 8th grade book and three in the 9th grade book. Service encounters make up exactly one third of all the dialogues in this series: in comparison, the "Active English" series contained 199 dialogues, of which 20 were service encounters (10.1% of the total), which indicates a sharp decline in the inclusion of dialogues in general and in the proportion of those which are service encounters in the intervening period of approximately 10 years. However, the Passport 7th grade book does include a sizeable sample; two dialogues from this book as well as one from the 9th grade book will thus be analysed below.

Table 22. Passport series: distribution of service encounter dialogues.

The Passport series of coursebooks: service encounter dialogues		
7 th grade	8 th grade	9 th grade
9 = 56% of dialogues in book	0 = 0% of dialogues in book	3 = 27.3% of dialogues in book
Service dialogues represent 33.3% (12) of all dialogues in the series (36)		

The selection of which dialogues/texts to analyse is limited by some of the factors already mentioned in relation to conversation dialogues in this coursebook series, namely that the dialogues are not available because they were designed for listening comprehension tasks and no tapescript is available. Priority has been given to dialogues/

texts that fall within the same kind of locations/situations as with other dialogues from other coursebooks (shops and restaurants).

Table 23 below shows the results using the discourse features identified by Gilmore (2004) to analyse three selected service encounter dialogues/texts.

Table 23. Passport series: sample of service encounters.

Gilmore (2004) Discourse features	Passport 7: p.144 Shop	Passport 7: p.186 Restaurant	Passport 9: p.40 Phone call
Length of text	15 turns: 110 words Average: 7.3 w/turn Info. Giver: 8.6 w/turn Info. Getter: 5.9 w/turn	4 turns: 45 words Average: 11.3 w/turn Info. Giver: 6.5 w/turn Info. Getter: 16 w/turn	22 turns: 123 words Average: 5.6 w/turn Info. Giver: 6.0 w/turn Info. Getter: 5.3 w/turn
Lexical density	LD = 41.8%	LD = 62.2%	LD = 57.7%
False starts	1 example	Zero examples	Zero examples
Repetition	Zero examples	1 example	Zero examples
Pauses	4 examples	3 examples	Zero examples
Terminal overlap	Zero examples	Zero examples	Zero examples
Latching	3 examples (?)	1 example (?)	Zero examples (?)
Hesitation devices	1 example	Zero examples	Zero examples
Back-channels	Zero examples	Zero examples	Zero examples

The three selected dialogues from this series of coursebooks are characterised by a general lack of the discourse features identified in Gilmore (2004), there are no examples at all of terminal overlap and back-channels and only single examples of repetition and hesitation devices. While it is understandably difficult to include/show terminal overlap and back-channels, the same cannot be said of repetition and hesitation devices, which especially would prove most useful to all levels of learners seeking time to formulate responses and maintain their active role in this type of social interaction.

Given the extended nature of Dialogue p.144 (15 turns and 110 words) and the fact that the dialogue is clearly set-up as a model of a transaction in a shop where the customer is a foreign tourist, it would be natural to expect higher values for these discourse features. While four pauses are indicated in the text (combined with one hesitation device: “Mm

...” at Customer 5), and the distribution of words per turn seems appropriate (according to values reported in Gilmore’s 2004 study) and the turn lengths are relatively short for both participants, the usefulness of the dialogue is undermined by the deliberate highlighting in bold of three key phrases by the coursebook authors, which are then supposed to be employed in subsequent role play activities (p.146). The three phrases are:

Customer 2: **Pardon ... could you say it again?**

Customer 3: **Excuse me, but I can’t understand.**

Customer 6: that round thing over there... **how do you say it in English?**

Each of these three phrases appears to be inaccurate/inappropriate for various reasons. The first phrase should really include a final ‘*please*’ and should probably use ‘*that*’ instead of “it”: so it should read: ‘*Pardon ... could you say that again, please?*’ The second phrase should probably read ‘*Excuse me, but I don’t understand*’ or perhaps ‘*Excuse me, but I didn’t understand that*’. The use of a modal auxiliary “can’t” implies a (lack of a) general ability rather than something just happening at a specific moment. In the third phrase, a more likely formulation would include a reference to the already established element of “over there” and would ask for the name of the item already identified as “that round thing” leading to ‘... *what do you call that in English?*’ But this phrase has a more limited coverage (it is governed by the type of context described above) compared to the more open ‘How do you say **X** in English?’ The struggle of the authors to include supposedly useful fixed phrases in the learners’ language input and subsequent practice is indicative of a view of language and language learning whereby pre-selected items are identified by breaking down the language into a sequence of ‘chunks’ which can be memorised and then used often without significant regard to the finer points of the socio-linguistic and cultural context.⁷⁰

Further evidence of a lack of sensitivity to a socio-cultural perspective occurs in the same text, Dialogue p.144. The main ‘content’ in question in this dialogue revolves around whether it is better to buy a map of London (as requested by the customer) or to buy an A to Z⁷¹ (as suggested by the shop assistant). The customer/foreign tourist seems

⁷⁰ However, Lewis (1993) strongly advocates including phrasebook style language in ELT courses as a prefabricated and memorized resources for learners which aids their oral fluency,

⁷¹ Published since 1936, The London A to Z is a pocket sized book of approximately 320 pages which illustrates nearly the whole of the metropolitan area in individual paperback page-sized maps.

unaware of the existence of such a book as an A to Z and even ‘mishears’ it as the number “eight” when she/he first hears the Shop Assistant’s suggestion:

Shop Assistant 4: No, not eight. It’s A to Z, it’s a small and very useful book. I’ll show you one ... Here it is, see?

Customer 4: Yes, it’s really useful. I’ll take it.

Despite having no previous knowledge of an A to Z the customer, without any sign of a pause, readily agrees to buy the book and forget about the map. But, the truth is that A to Z books require some skill in negotiating how they actually function and are not really useful unless you have a particular location or address in mind which you wish to find; in short, they are not really a primary tourist resource. Perhaps the authors were deliberating trying to introduce some cultural content relevant to a London experience, but their choice was somewhat misguided and the speed at which the customer/tourist changes her/his purchasing plan is unconvincing; this leaving aside the superfluous use of “and” in the Shop Assistant’s description of the item as a “small and very useful book”.

Dialogue p.144 is described in the table above as having three instances of “latching” where the transition in turns appears to be seamless. This description is in some doubt, however, since it is based on the fact that where one turn ends in a question the next turn/reply is an immediate “yes” or “no”, or in one case, at Customer 7, the phrase “That one!” The difficulty in being sure about this feature also applies to the one example noted for Dialogue p.186 at a restaurant:

Mrs. Stewart 1: Could I have the menu?

Waiter 2: Certainly ... here you are. Thank you.

It is possible to imagine the waiter has approached Mrs. Stewart (already carrying a menu?) and is able to respond in words immediately and, after a pause, in action. This dialogue exhibits two further pauses, both in Mrs. Stewart 2 (which follows on directly from the turn Waiter 2 cited above), the longest turn in this short dialogue and the turn which accounts for the highest value in terms of turn length (which also accounts for the higher average value for turn length among the three selected dialogues/texts):

Mrs. Stewart 2: Thank you ... I’d like to have a lamb chop and vegetables.

For dessert I’ll eat fruit salad with cream.

... And a glass of wine, please. Thank you.

The use of “Thank you” by Mrs. Stewart, as she initiates her turn, accounts for the one example of repetition in this dialogue, but this politeness marker is somewhat overplayed, being re-stated at the closing of the dialogue, immediately after she has already said “please”. The whole issue of when and how often to use politeness formula in specific contexts is complex⁷² and rarely approached in coursebooks; the situation in this series of coursebooks is characteristically inconsistent.

The manner in which that Mrs. Stewart gives her order to the waiter is similar to other restaurant located dialogues in other coursebooks: a basic listing of food items, (often lacking specification: here, the type of wine is not defined) the whole meal being ordered at one moment and the waiter not participating except as a passive listener: there are never examples of the waiter commenting in any way with phrases like: ‘*Good choice*’ or ‘*Yes, that’s fresh today*’ or something similar. Indeed, in this dialogue there is no further intervention from the waiter after Mrs. Stewart has placed her order, this despite the fact that the learners are expected to practice similar dialogues as a follow-up on p.187, based on choosing different food from the same menu, and where the coursebook instructs the learners to produce similar dialogues and “Ask for the bill and pay” as their first practice activity and as a second practice activity learners are instructed to “Ask how much it is and pay with a £10 bill”. Beyond the obvious pedagogic weakness of expanding the practice activity outside of the previously modelled input (the 4 turn Dialogue p.186), the instructions for these practice activities illustrate an element of cultural confusion in the use of the term “bill”. When referring to British currency (pounds sterling) in paper form, the lexical term is generally ‘*note*’ and not “bill”, so an unnecessary confusion is being created here, since the first instruction includes the word “bill” in relation to what you have to pay in a restaurant.

There are further inconsistencies in Dialogue p.186 related to the use of determiners: the inclusion of “a” to pre-modify “lamb chop” where ‘*the*’ would be normally used and the lack of ‘*the*’ to pre-modify “fruit salad with cream”. The use of “eat” as the main verb governing “fruit salad with cream” is also unhelpful, since normally ‘*have*’ would be used, as had occurred in relation to “lamb chop”. These examples serve to illustrate how

⁷² For example, see Wierzbicka (2003) on cross-cultural pragmatics or see Brons (2011) for a critical review of recent comparative research on English and German.

important it is to apply both grammatical knowledge (in relation to the use of determiners) and cultural knowledge (in relation to the choice of main verb) in the creation of model sentences/dialogues for learners. From a cultural perspective, it is also possible to argue that the item “lamb chop” from the menu should really be in the plural, since usually lamb chops are small (given the nature of the animal) and few restaurants would ever serve a single lamb chop. The menu purports to be from a real hotel restaurant in London, the Royal National Hotel in Russell Square, so it may be that the menu is an authentic text that has misled the authors of the coursebook.

Dialogue p.40 from the 9th grade book is rather different from the previous two dialogues/texts for various reasons. Firstly, it is a phone conversation and not a face-to-face encounter, so the structure and content of the conversation may vary; for example, in a phone conversation feedback, functions have to always be verbal and not facial, so the same task will require more words and utterances⁷³. In Dialogue p.40 this may be the explanation for the greater overall length and number of turns. Also, the kind of service encounter here is somewhat different in that both main participants act as both information givers and receivers, since they are negotiating the details of a part-time job applicant’s background and availability for a face-to-face interview. This may be the explanation for the much shorter average turn length (5.6 words) and the near equivalence in average words per turn for the information giver and information receiver/getter. But what really makes this dialogue different from the previous two discussed above is the total lack of any of the discourse features. However, in the study by Gilmore (2004) no distinction is made between service encounters that occur on the telephone and those which occur face-to-face, the coursebook corpus in question contains four telephone interactions and three others.

Dialogue p.40 from the 9th grade coursebook, in fact, reads very much like a ‘real’ conversation to the extent that it is characterised by features such as:

- ellipsis in the responses to information requests

Miss Alina 5: ... When can you come in and see me?

Liane 7: Any time after school.

- questions formed in affirmative structures

⁷³ For example, see Doherty-Sneddon et al (1997) for comparisons of task completion when face-to-face compared to when audio only or video mediated or see Bavelas et al (2002) on how “gaze” governs listener responses in face-to-face contexts.

Miss Alina 3: You're still at school?

Liane 5: Yes. I go to Southmead Comprehensive.

- generally short turns

Miss Alina 6: How about tomorrow then?

Laine 8: Yes, that's fine.

The complexity and difficulties facing coursebook writers are apparent in the nature of this data: the range and variety of linguistic (code) and socio-cultural (content) factors that have to be born in mind when trying to produce a coursebook dialogue are almost innumerable. It is also important to note that the nature of the dialogue in the coursebook may vary according to its pedagogic purpose; with Dialogue p.40 from the 9th grade coursebook the follow-up language work is not related with speaking practice: the text is used as a source for a reading comprehension task rather than as a model for oral production. As such, the authors may have felt more inclined to include a dialogue/text which was less simplified or adapted than would be the case if the dialogue/text had a different intended learning outcome.

3. 2. C The Aerial series: sample service encounters.

In the "Aerial" series of coursebooks there are, in fact, no service encounter dialogues. Clearly the authors of the series did not consider this type of text/input worthy of inclusion even though, within the general format of the series, there are many plausible opportunities for such dialogues to arise, since the books feature young people from Portugal, Britain and the U.S.A. 'exploring' each other's respective cultures. The social interactions that are modelled in this series revolve around the teenage characters created/featured and their families, which severely limit the range of situations and registers in which language is produced/practiced.

3. 2. D The Extreme series: sample service encounters.

In the "Extreme" series of coursebooks there are only two identifiable service encounter dialogues, both of which appear in the 7th grade book: one in a shop where two teens are buying a pair of trainers (Dialogue p.124) and one in a restaurant where two teens are deciding what to order (Dialogue p.130). Table 24 below shows the results using these discourse features to analyse the two texts.

Table 24. Extreme series 7th grade: sample of service encounters.

Gilmore (2004) Discourse features	Extreme 7: 124 Shoe Shop	Extreme 7: 130 Restaurant
Length of text	16 turns: 131 words Average: 8.2 words/turn Info. Giver: 10.9 words/turn Info. Getter: 6.1 words/turn	24 turns: 251 words Average: 10.5 words/turn Info. Giver: 6.6 words/turn Info. Getter: 14.3 words/turn
Lexical density	LD = 41.9%	LD = 32.3%
False starts	Zero examples	Zero examples
Repetition	One example	Two examples
Pauses	Zero examples	Two examples
Terminal overlap	Zero examples	Zero examples.
Latching	Two examples	Two examples
Hesitation devices	Zero examples	Two examples
Back-channels	Zero examples	Zero examples

Taking the two dialogues together, in terms of length of text it is difficult to reach any firm conclusion, since there is no comparative ‘real world’ data available in this case, but the structure of the two texts is much less complex and rather too straightforward than could be expected in the given situations, much as reported in other similar studies, for example in relation to the function of ‘giving directions’ which “invariably has a much more complex structure than the textbook dialogues” (Myers-Scotton & Bernsten, 1988: 376); or more recently in relation to a corpora based study:

The language of some coursebooks represents a ‘can do’ society, in which interaction is generally smooth and problem free, the speakers cooperate with each other politely, the conversation is neat, tidy and predictable ... the questions and answers sequenced rather in the manner of a quiz show or court-room interrogation. (Carter, 1998: 47)

This is very much the case with the shorter Dialogue p.124, where two teenagers deciding on a pair of trainers is presented as being entirely unproblematic: they see a pair in a shop window; then they go in and buy a pair. It is so uncomplicated that they only ask the price after having chosen a colour and tried them on. However, in Dialogue p.130 the context is much less “smooth and problem free”: the two teenagers walk out of the restaurant having failed to find the kind of food they wanted. In actual fact, the way this dialogue evolves is evocative of a music hall comedy routine where the

restaurant is unable to provide the service it is supposed to, since it has no food (an Italian restaurant which has no lasagne, no spaghetti and no pizza). This sense of the ridiculous is made almost unavoidable by the inclusion of a sequence of turns based on the old (Primary school? Music hall?) joke about there being a fly in the soup:

Waiter 9: Here are the soups.

Mobiez 5: Excuse me! What's this fly doing in my soup?

Waiter 10: I think it's swimming, miss.

Mobiez 6: How disgusting!! Just take it back.

This sequence appears 'out of the blue' between the act of ordering their food and the arrival of the main courses without any further comment or development: not by either teenager or by the waiter. The 7th grade learners are left 'in the dark' as to the meaning and significance of this mini-episode within the dialogue, since there is no parallel tradition of 'fly in my soup' jokes in the local Portuguese culture.

Further evidence in support of the quotation above from Carter (1998: 47) comes from the total absence of any 'terminal overlap', that is to say, each turn at speaking ends before the next one begins. While this may be convenient for the publishers, it is very far from what almost always happens in 'real world' dialogues, where interruptions and incomplete turns of all kinds are commonplace. The almost total absence of any of the other discourse features identified by Gilmore (2004) may serve to create an impression among the learners of a quasi-perfect model of language interaction which is neither accurate nor, worse still, attainable. Pauses or hesitations provide, in real conversations, breathing space for the participants to collect their thoughts, judge their message's comprehension and formulate responses: removing these features from the text increases the processing burden and furthermore discourages the acquisition of the listening skills (for example, recognizing and/or ignoring elements of redundant language that frequently occur in real conversations) that are required effective participation in 'real world' dialogues. The total absence of back-channels, defined as "noises (which are not full words) and short verbal responses made by the listeners which acknowledge the incoming talk and react to it, without wishing to take over the speaking turn" (Carter & McCarthy, 1997: 12) could be seen as contributing to an illusion that foreign language users of English are being cold, unresponsive or even uninterested in participating in a dialogue. The use of just a few of these easy to understand language fragments in coursebook dialogues/texts would certainly serve to

increase learners' awareness of this important discourse feature. Furthermore, the high lexical density of these texts is more consistent with written texts than spoken texts, which is again unsurprising, given that these texts are all produced by the coursebook authors for overt pedagogical purposes and are not samples of 'real world' language. While the texts may be lexically dense, they are also graded to suit what the authors consider to be the language level of the target readership and rely more on explicit, concrete language which, in some way, mitigates the greater cognitive demands inherent of these texts.

On the other hand, the way the turns are structured is not helpful. This is true both in terms of the code as well as the content. For example, in Dialogue p.124 (buying some trainers) there is the following exchange:

Shop Assistant 5: Here's a size 8½. I'm sorry but I haven't got this size in black, only in dark blue or grey.

Scott 5: This size is perfect. They're very comfortable. I think dark blue suits me, don't you agree Mobiez?

In Scott's reply there seems to have been an unmentioned 'trying-on' of the trainers (so that he can say they are the right size and comfortable) before he asks for a second opinion, but the way his request is phrased seems odd: do people talk of trainers in terms of 'the colour suits me' and would the request for a second opinion be formed in this way (a question designed to prompt only a positive confirmation)? Perhaps *These blue ones look good on me, don't they, Mobiez?* would be a more natural formulation. In addition, Scott's raising of three different sub-topics related to the trainers (size, comfort and colour) within one turn is rather content heavy. The same happens in Dialogue p.130 when Scott orders the same starter and main course for both teenagers (despite their having been no previous consultation on the topic) all within one turn:

Waiter 3: Are you ready to order?

Scott 2: Yes, we are. We would like the tomato soup for a starter and Lasgana Verdi for the main course.

Mobiez 1: And two cokes to drink, please.

The turn Scott 2 may be an example of 'latching' where the turn follows directly on from the previous one (Waiter 3), but the turn is formulated using the uncontracted form "We would like" and fails to make use of any notion of redundancy: it is not necessary to state both "for a starter" and "for the main course". This dialogue does exhibit a

limited number of pauses, hesitation devices and repetitions, but falls down dramatically from both a linguistic and cultural perspective, especially at the closing sequence of turns:

Waiter 11: Here are the steaks. Rare, as you asked.

Mobiez 7: Rare? We said well-done. And they're so small ...

Waiter 12: Didn't you say you don't want to miss your session? You wouldn't want to have a big one, would you?

Scott 5: That's it, Mobiez. This used to be a decent place! Let's go to a fast food place instead ...

The language of this final exchange also requires revising at the level of vocabulary: the use of "ask" in Waiter 11 and the use of "session" in Waiter 12; and at the level of grammar: the two negative verbs in the first part of Waiter 12 followed by a hypothetical question formed with a question tag; and at the level of discourse: the steaks are plural in Waiter 11 and Mobiez 7 and then become singular in Waiter 12. Furthermore, the final recommendation in Scott 5 to give up and go and get some fast food is hardly the cultural choice that 7th grade learners need to be illustrated, even within the context of this pseudo-comic context; indeed, one of the main topics of the national programme for this cycle of formal education is to do with healthy lifestyles.

These far from perfect conversation and service encounter dialogues/texts are perhaps easier to comprehend (condone?), given that coursebook authors generally strive to highlight particular lexical or grammatical features of the language (to provide easily teachable/learnable 'chunks' of language?) and one way of doing this is to remove any (what they consider to be) peripheral or non-essential content from the presentation context. However, the perceived need to focus on grammatical patterns or lexical sets fails to take into account other important considerations in relation to spoken language; for example, the discourse features of how topics are initiated, developed or exchanged, how the 'flow' is managed, which turn-taking mechanisms are employed, how coherence and cohesion are achieved and so on. This also means learners do not have the opportunity to develop their 'bottom up' processing skills (Gilmore, 2004: 366-367). Learners are not given the chance to notice language features that are not being focused on, to gain increasing confidence in dealing with 'real world' language. For example, the almost total lack of vernacular language in coursebook dialogues negates learners the opportunity to experience how different socio-cultural identities are negotiated as it is through such informal talk that degrees of solidarity with social groups are

established and maintained (Thornbury & Slade, 2006). Learners need to become increasingly aware of the importance of how ‘meaning’ (in its broadest sense) is conveyed and not just how ‘form’ is constructed. The idea that a simplified non-authentic dialogue/text gives the learners a better chance of achieving full comprehension, while superficially appealing is also not necessarily productive in the long term, since full comprehension is rarely required in ‘real world’ contexts:

As long as students are developing effective compensatory strategies for extracting information for difficult authentic texts, total understanding is not generally held to be important; rather the emphasis has been to encourage students to make the most of their partial comprehension. (Guariento & Morley, 2001: 348)

By shying away from authentic texts which contain real language, coursebook writers are failing to draw upon the richness and variety that is inherent in English language use on a global scale. Perversely, this avoids having to deal with the problematic notion of ‘cultural hegemony’ where the texts selected for use represent a highly restricted range sources: the ‘mother tongue’ cultures of Britain and the USA, which on occasion may be extended to include Australia, under the ‘BANA’ acronym (Holliday, 1994). Any focus on these ‘inner circle’ cultures (Kachru, 1985) fails to take account of how ‘ownership’ of the English language has moved on since the 20th century so that nowadays it is possible to state that “[t]he ownership of English and hence of English language texts has already shifted geographically and demographically from the centre to the periphery” (MacDonald et al, 2006: 254).

The kind of dialogues traditionally found in Portuguese produced coursebooks, with texts grounded largely in almost mono-cultural settings, are bound to reflect socio-cultural patterns which are increasingly less likely to be relevant in contemporary, globalized contexts where, whether through a spoken or a written channel, a Portuguese user of English may well be seeking to communicate with a Japanese user or a Turkish user of English (Alptekin, 2002). Whether considering the selection or the writing of texts for inclusion in a coursebook, the needs of the language learners should always be born in mind:

... a text should be an appropriate sample of language use and a model, in some of its features at least, for student production. ... Good texts tell us something we do not know; they contain interesting content; they provide a reaction. They are multiply exploitable because they lend themselves readily to tasks which are interesting as well as useful. (McGrath, 2002:107)

Crystal & Davy (1975) provided potential coursebook writers (and other ELT professionals) with an analysis of a collection of naturally occurring spoken language (as did more recently Carter & McCarthy, 1997) highlighting the discourse, grammatical, lexical and prosodic features of spoken English. How much more useful would it have been (be) for ELT coursebooks produced in Portugal to include dialogues which recognise the importance of this data, respect the principles outline by Leech (1998) and Gilmore (2004) discussed above and which are situated within the local, target or international cultural triangle, rather than the inaccurate, inappropriate and non-authentic examples from the coursebooks discussed above?

Chapter Four: Texts, Culture and Coursebooks.

Discussing how culture is represented in texts for reading

One of the most crucial elements of the FL bookscape⁷⁴ is the ubiquitous ‘reading text’. Unit upon unit, in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks, opens with a text for reading which may serve several purposes (simultaneously?): for example, to introduce the unit theme or topic, or to provide a source for comprehension or interpretation questions or a context for vocabulary development or grammar work. Indeed, it could be said that the reading texts are ‘there’ as a result of language motivated decision making: the choice of text is language driven. This chapter will seek to describe and analyse the importance of the choice of reading texts and the implicit and explicit meanings which that choice and those texts give rise to. The aim is to explore the interface between the code employed and content contained and, more specifically, question in what kinds of ways representations of the target culture are constructed. What is considered to be relevant cultural knowledge in these texts? What kinds of views of culture are presented? Is there any allowance made for learners to explore and negotiate their own cultural experiences in relation to the target culture (Ilieva, 2000)?

Consideration will also be given as to the range of text forms and functions that the reading texts represent. Since reading texts constitute a large part of the language input that many learners receive, FL teachers need to be sure about how to best approach making those texts comprehensible: “It is a profound problem for teachers of English [...] to determine how to approach the teaching of those aspects of background knowledge which their students will find necessary in the interpretation of the language they will encounter” (Brown, 1990: 14). The scale of the ‘problem’ is perhaps amplified by the fact that most FL teachers in Portugal have themselves received their “background knowledge” through the medium of the local education system and have not been immersed (in terms of upbringing and education) in the ‘target culture’.⁷⁵

Given the universality of reading texts in coursebooks, they are a highly significant feature of this educational macro-genre and are imbued with legitimacy through this very same omnipresence: “Textbooks are generally taken as a kind of genre presenting the fact objectively, and materials included are usually assumed to be true and hence, do

⁷⁴ The term “bookscape” is coined here with due regard to the work of Appadurai (1991), who proposed five different ‘scapes’ as identity carrying structures that may have become more significant than national communities in an era of (post?) globalisation.

⁷⁵ See Hurst (2010) for a discussion of the advantages/disadvantages of being a ‘native speaker’ FL teacher.

not usually encourage critical thinking” (Amalsaleh et al, 2010: 2052). This legitimacy (and lack of criticality) is in turn passed on to the language and content of the reading texts, and it is the content which is both a focal point for the L2 teaching process as well as a vehicle for transmitting certain cultural representations. Notwithstanding, the main agents in the classroom, individual teachers and learners, certainly condition and transform the meaning(s) of what is in the texts so that it is difficult to equate the text itself with what is actually taught or learned: “[o]ne cannot determine the meanings in a text by a straightforward encounter with the text itself because readers do not passively receive texts, but actually read them on the basis of their own classed, raced and gendered cultural experiences” (Ilieva, 2000: 53).⁷⁶ Reading is an interactive process which depends not only on the formal features of the text itself (genre, structural complexity, lexical range and so on), but also on the ability of the reader to relate to or analyse those same features. The fact that all the learners in a FL class may have their coursebooks open at the same page which presents the same text to all of them is, to a certain extent, immaterial, since the meaning of a reading text does not reside in the words on the page alone: “[s]ynergy occurs in reading, which combines the words on the printed page with the reader’s background knowledge and experiences” (Anderson, 1999: 1).

Early studies in this area⁷⁷ made much use of schema theory (Bartlett, 1932) and concluded that the existence of relevant cultural/content schemata⁷⁸ was an important part of the ability of L2 readers to comprehend and recall information in a reading text. For instance, Malik (1990), in a psycholinguistic study using expository texts and proficient EFL readers, concluded that cultural schemata significantly affected reading comprehension and strategies; more recently, Erten & Razi (2009), in their study with nativized texts, concluded that cultural familiarity facilitates comprehension and a lack of relevant cultural schema cannot be compensated for by other reading strategies. One possible conclusion here is that cultural unknowns may be a source of difficulty or misunderstanding for L2 readers; however, this impediment has to be weighed against one of the great benefits of reading: to provide readers with access to ‘new’ information,

⁷⁶ Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator, in his discussion of a ‘critical pedagogy’ approach to literacy refers to reading the world rather than reading the word. See Freire & Macedo (1987).

⁷⁷ See, for example, Pearson, Hansen & Gordon (1979) or Steffenson & Joag-Dev (1984).

⁷⁸ Ketchum (2006) argues that cultural schema are a culture specific extension of content schema since they refer to the role of cultural membership that is required to fully understand the intended meaning of a text.

cultures or worlds and take them beyond the bounds of their previous experience (David & Norazit, 2000). FL teachers and the coursebooks they employ are responsible for more than just the linguistic abilities of FL learners: they also impinge on learners' psychological, moral and interpersonal development (Stubbs, 1982); there is a 'life' element to this process, as well as a language element. Arkian (2008) concludes that "[...] coursebooks are not instructional materials only, but they are sources of knowledge and information on various aspects of individual and societal phenomena" (ibid: 71). He reports that Turkish learners view their coursebooks as resources for information on British and American culture and that this happens "especially through reading passages and through exercises which aim to improve their reading comprehension" (ibid: 72).

The concept of experience is clearly central here: central to how learners confront FL reading texts⁷⁹ and central to what they come away with having worked on a given text. Understanding is based on experience, and our experiences are limited by our social position; we have a vision of the world from a particular vantage point, which makes our understanding inherently subjective and results in a plurality of cultural horizons (Gadamer, 1989). In the field of communication studies this insight has proved highly valuable, helping to define models of interpretation for the dynamics of intercultural exchanges (Yoshikawa, 1987; Jandt, 1995). While research in this field generally deals with the context of dialogues, its scope could be broadened to include reading texts as discourse, a context in which there is a communicative channel open between 'text producer' and 'text receiver'. However, the way in which 'discourse' may be conceived goes beyond a linguistic definition, i.e., passages of connected writing or speech:

A discourse is a group of statements, which provide a language for talking about – i.e. a way of representing – a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. When statements about a topic are made within a particular discourse, the discourse makes it possible to construct the topic in a certain way. It also limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed. (Hall, 1997: 201)

Indeed, this type of 'constructive' limitation to discourse is particularly true of reading texts in coursebooks as the language and ideas the texts contain are frequently used by FL teachers as a starting point for further written production (compositions?) or oral

⁷⁹ Parry (1996) presents data showing very different reading strategies being employed by one group of secondary students in northern Nigeria when compared to another group of university graduates in China when dealing with academic reading tasks.

work (discussions?). The language and content of the texts themselves limit and shape the kind of reaction/interpretation a learner may construct, a fact which is most definitely true of the traditional kind of post-reading activity: answering comprehension questions, where learners often are obliged to reproduce what the text states (more or less exactly) in order to have the unique ‘correct’ answer. This approach pays little heed to the notion that FL reading should be a matter of both accessing and adding meaning through individual reinterpretation: “[i]n the classroom, however, this tends not to happen: learners are typically required to respond with ‘correct’ responses to classroom texts, whose forms and meanings remain fixed, unyielding to new inflections or resonances” (Wallace, 2006: 75).

A key thinker in this sphere is the French philosopher Foucault (1926-1984), for whom discourse never consisted of a single statement or text or action, the issue being one of language and practice: it is as much about what we do as what we say. From a Foucauldian perspective, this entails that discourse (including texts) should be examined as to not only how they reflect reality but also as to how they produce reality: discourse is a particular way of representing knowledge about any given topic at any given time. Meaning and meaningful practices are constructed within discourse: this is a concept of discourse focussed on meaning rather than on whether things exist or not (Hall, 1997). This is a constructionist theory of meaning and representation, whereby physical things/actions exist “but they only take on meaning and become objects of knowledge within discourse” (Hall, 1997: 203). To study or understand a topic, it is necessary to consider various elements: statements or texts which provide a certain kind of knowledge about the topic; ‘rules’ which include or exclude ways of thinking and speaking about the topic; people or ‘subjects’, who in some way personify the topic; what constitutes the ‘truth’ about the topic at that historical moment; the practices associated with institutions dealing with the topic and an understanding that the discourse is rooted in its own time and may evolve through time into a new discourse which regulates social practices in new ways. Of particular interest to this study is how knowledge is related to power and truth. For Foucault, knowledge has real effects in the real world through the regulating, disciplining, constraining of practices, and this, when linked to systems of authority, may, in turn, create a ‘truth’. Whether or not this is an absolute or accurate truth is of little importance:

Truth isn't outside power (...) Truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. ... Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned ... the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, 1980: 131)

There is some equivalence and/or connection here with what might be termed 'the discourse of education', and more specifically when dealing with the cultural content (topics) of ELT coursebooks. Knowledge is presented within texts, made available to learners through certain practices (thought and spoken about in clearly defined ways) and exemplified by recourse to examples of famous people linked to the topic, given some kind of institutional validity by the classroom setting, and thus becomes, effectively, a kind of 'truth'. This then is a potent network of knowledge, power and truth which individuals (learners) must subject themselves to, before they can take meaning from the discourse.

Many consider reading is one of the cornerstones of our education system and Western European society as a whole, and it certainly occupies a great deal of the available ELT coursebook space⁸⁰. Coursebook writers/publishers generally try and include a variety of text topics, types and forms so as to be able to cater for as many learners' interests as possible (Harmer, 2001). However, defining what kind of reading texts learners find interesting or uninteresting is infinitely more elusive; an important distinction may be made here between the personal interest that a learner may have in a topic or subject and a situational interest which derives from the learner's reaction to the text itself (Alexander & Jetton, 2000). Brantmeier (2006), in an in-depth study conducted with advanced level, young adult learners of Spanish, reported that the most significant factors in relation to learners' interests were, in descending order of importance: text cohesion (organisation and clarity), prior knowledge (content familiarity), engagement (stimulating and up-to-date content) and emotiveness (provocative and vivid content). These are certainly important indicators for those responsible for reading text selection (or writing?) in Portuguese produced coursebooks.

⁸⁰ In ELT methodology it is believed that well developed reading skills can also aid vocabulary extension (and vice versa), improve listening skills and encourage the development of learning strategies that have a wide range of applications. Cameron (2001) makes a case for the importance of phonological awareness and pronunciation skills in the development of foreign language literacy skills among young learners.

In addition to learners' interests, consideration must also be given to the notion of appropriateness, in the sense that the reading texts should be both appropriate in terms of age/educational level and in terms of the topic/subject matter. It is at the level of topic that the reading texts (as language in discourse) both reflect and create ideologies and social structures and interact with the social and cultural identity of the learners (Kramsch, 2000). Neuner & Hunfeld (1993, cited in Arikan, 2008) claim that there may be some topics which are universally appropriate across all cultures; among them, are more mundane topics like education, free time activities, the media, housing, working life, transport and tourism, but also less obvious topics like social identities in private life, needs, relationships or mental and psychological processes. While this type of list displays a rather Eurocentric bias, it also fails to take into account how topics such as these are realised on the page in coursebooks: all are mediated by the values and beliefs that the local coursebook writers and publishers have; these are in turn further delimited by the 'guidelines' of the Portuguese national programmes: " [...] the National Programme for English itself defines the general topics and sequences them according to the criteria of familiarity, proximity and relevance" (Cabral, 2005: 58)⁸¹. This accounts for the high degree of uniformity of topics dealt with at each level of the educational system in Portugal, regardless of publishing house.⁸² For example, under the Neuner & Hunfeld (1993) banner heading of 'social identities in private life', it would be possible to predict that ELT coursebook writers/publishers would reduce this to 'The Family' and that family would be a prosperous, white, middle-class family with their own home and car, whose members hardly ever, if not never, express any significant range of emotions, and certainly nothing like anger or even frustration, or behave in any unexpected way at all. Cunningsworth (1995) found just such a non-inclusive panorama in the six elementary and pre-intermediate general ELT coursebooks he studied and also drew attention to factors such as the existence of gender bias, a lack of cross-disciplinarity and a lack of prominence of ethnic minorities.

Further difficulties arise when coursebook writers attempt to provide topics which do not offend or shock their supposedly sensitive learners (and teachers?). Coursebook writers themselves explicitly consider these issues in their approach to materials

⁸¹ Translated quotation.

⁸² Dendrinos (1992) offers a detailed discussion of how choices of reading texts serve to position readers as both learners and social subjects.

production; experienced writers of ELT coursebooks for the international market have commented on this dilemma:

In terms of content we realised that we could not please everyone. We did compromise and not include some texts we would have used with our own students, on the grounds that they would not go down well in such and such a country. We did not want to fight shy of sex, drugs, religion and death (still THE taboo subjects in EFL coursebooks) but found ourselves doing so and being expected to do so. (At the higher level we got away with more) There was also the great influence of political correctness at that time, particularly the men vs. women debate, which was US/UK-teacher/publisher driven rather than student driven. Certain texts were avoided, others were encouraged – women in important jobs, for example – and others toned down. (Bell & Gower, 1998: 128)

The two basic concepts that should guide any discussion of the cultural content of reading texts are: firstly, inclusivity: which refers to issues such as gender roles as well as age, class, ethnicity or ability/disability. In terms of gender roles, this means the way in which women/men are represented may directly reflect on students' motivation to learn. How often are women depicted as being self-assertive or taking the initiative or men depicted as being emotionally open? Current linguistic norms should also be taken into account: the use of “men” as a generic to mean both women and men. Secondly, heed must be paid to appropriacy, which implies that a certain topic/subject should not be included in a coursebook because it is perceived to be offensive. In this ‘avoidance’ context, an acronym may prove a useful guide:

P - politics
A - alcohol
R - religion
S - sex
N - narcotics
I - ‘-isms’
P - pork

(Gray, 2002: 161)

If all such subjects are excluded, the world representation that remains is an idealised one, where everyone is healthy and wealthy and dedicated to consumerism and the pursuit of pleasure. But mundane or bland does not mean ideology free (Wallace, 2006).

The importance of being sensitive to potential misinterpretations of the cultural content of reading texts is also raised by Ur (1991); she identifies four areas which merit special attention with reference to the notion of an “underlying message in a coursebook”⁸³

⁸³ A ‘stronger’ interpretation of this point, the idea that a ‘hidden curriculum’ exists in relation to the cultural content of ELT coursebooks, is explored more fully in Hurst (2008).

(ibid: 197): sexism, ageism, social orientation and values. Furthermore, she also suggests analytical strategies that (student) teachers might employ; for example, for sexism:

[I]f your book is illustrated, look at the first 30 pictures. Count the number of men and the number of women featured in them. If there are no pictures, look at the grammar and vocabulary exercises, and do the same count on pronouns or nouns of clear gender. In either case, was there a significant difference? If so, what is the implication?

(Ur, 1991: 200)

However, restricted exposure of students to ‘safe’ content and topics may, in fact, be demotivating, as it reduces levels of engagement. Likewise, over-familiarity creates an element of disinterest (not to say boredom) among learners, since they are presented with cultural content (facts/information) which have long been part of the readers’ general knowledge (Nuttall, 1989); this means that learning opportunities are lost. Social settings in ELT coursebooks tend to represent a clean, affluent social environment and focus on leisure activities, entertainment, holidays and shopping. An even more reductive approach to cultural content in reading texts as being more a reflection of coursebook writers’ interests than the readers’ interests has been described in terms of “the 3 Ds of consumerist EFL culture: dinner parties, dieting and dating” (Wallace, 2002: 109).

As well as choice of topic and learner interest, there are several other factors (for example, readability or exploitability) which influence the selection of reading texts for ELT coursebooks. Not unconnected with the above factors, the notion of authenticity, as compared to ‘simplification’⁸⁴, is relevant here. Whether authenticity is related to authorship (a traditional definition) or reader response (Widdowson, 1976) or associated tasks chosen (Guariento & Morley, 2001) or the social situation of the classroom (Rost, 2002), the use of authentic texts has been consistently supported by those who favour a communicative approach to FL teaching, since a working definition of authenticity includes, by default, real language with a real message being produced for a real audience (Gilmore, 2007 after Morrow, 1977).⁸⁵ Most ELT researchers now view language learning as an organic process which involves many ‘movements’ rather than a steady, linear digestion of pre-defined language blocks (Nunan, 1998), and an

⁸⁴ Young (1999) investigated linguistic simplification in reading materials and tentatively concluded that a simplified text is not necessarily easier to understand for FL learners.

⁸⁵ Bernhardt (1991), viewing reading as an interactive process, links the use of authentic texts also to the interest levels of learners (as discussed above).

approach to FL teaching fuelled by authentic texts provides learners with sufficiently 'rich input' that they can 'learn' (notice?) what they want/need and incorporate it into their individual language development systems (Tomlinson, 2001; Mishan, 2005). Wardman (2009) reviewed the current state of ELT research in the area of authenticity and concluded that "it is possible to suggest that authentic materials may have real benefits in certain areas of language learning, particularly in reading comprehension, and the level of enjoyment learners experience from working with authentic materials" (ibid: 17).

Authentic texts can be selected from a wide variety of sources: newspapers, literary works, and so on: Rivas (1999), in her discussion of reading in coursebooks, elaborated a taxonomy of 15 text forms/genres that she concluded were present in the three coursebooks she analysed in relation to the Spanish ELT market. In addition, it is important to consider the functions/types⁸⁶ of the reading texts that are included (and excluded) from coursebooks in order to establish what kind of discourse limitations are present in the learners' experience of this kind of educational genre.⁸⁷ In addition to the text type and form, a critical analysis should include some idea of what kind of content is confined within the reading texts in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks (what kinds of topics are covered by). The CEFR provides an extensive list of features associated with socio-cultural knowledge as part of its discussion of learners need to develop their general and communicative competences (2001: 102-103). Stern (1992) discussed his not unproblematic belief that a 'cultural syllabus' should be based on people (rather than language as such), a community of language users: "the dynamic system of its beliefs, values and dreams and how it negotiates and articulates them" (Corbett, 2003: 19), and proposed six categories (Geography; History; Art, Music and Literature; Institutions; Individual Persons and Way of Life; People and Society in General) through which FL learners could explore cultural meanings. Byram (1993) examined the cultural content of coursebooks used for the teaching of German in the UK and produced an eight point categorization:

⁸⁶ Paltridge (1996) discusses the terminological distinctions related to genres and text types and reviews various perspectives on category membership as well as FL classroom implications.

⁸⁷ However, the same news item/article, when found by a reader in a newspaper and when found by a learner in a coursebook, does not provoke the same reaction/interaction: this 'recontextualization' introduces an element of mediation that is not present in the 'authentic' experience of the text (Lahdesmaki, 2009).

Social identity and social group (social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities)
 Social interaction (differing levels of formality; as outsider and insider)
 Belief and behaviour (moral, religious beliefs, daily routines)
 Social and political institutions (health care, law and order, social security, local government)
 Socialization and life cycle (families, schools, employment, rites of passage)
 National history (historical and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity)
 National geography (geographical features seen as being significant by members)
 Stereotypes and national identity (what is 'typical' symbol of national stereotypes)
 (Byram, 1993: 5-10)

This categorization has been used in several evaluative studies of coursebook content in recent years. Juan, for example, concluded, in her analysis of a Chinese produced ELT coursebook, that cultural content input had “not received the due attention in designing and organising” (2010: 143) and made several recommendations with regard to expanding the cultural horizon to include more content related to the local and other international cultures. However, this study seeks to take into account not only a ‘frequency of occurrence’ type of quantitative analysis, but also some degree of qualitative evaluation of the cultural ‘load’ of the reading texts: the inscribed or implied meanings and “the identifications that these seek to create in readers” (Gray, 2010: 715)⁸⁸; for example, such identifications might include whether there is any notion in the reading text/coursebook that the target culture seems to represent values or standards that are in some way superior to the local culture, or whether the learners/readers are being asked to simply ‘accept’ (digest?) the target culture, or whether there is some idea of developing a critical (inter)cultural awareness; notions related to ‘integration’ and ‘assimilation’ or even ‘absorption’ need to be approached with great caution: “[...] students need to be helped to become more critical of these aspects so as to evaluate the way in which cultures are represented in textbooks used by the international community” (Banegas, 2011: 81).

For the purpose of this study, the socio-cultural content of reading texts will be analysed according to a simplified scheme of six broad categories (adapted from the CEFR, 2001, Stern, 1992 and Byram, 1993) which serve as a more practical basis for analysis when the emphasis is on cultural content rather than intercultural communication (as with Byram, 1993) or a more traditional capital ‘C’ notion of culture (as with Stern, 1992):

⁸⁸ In this 2010 article, Gray analyses representations of the world of work in ELT coursebooks produced for the international market and concludes that “[...] students are repeatedly interpellated in these materials to the subject position of white-collar individualism in which the world of work is overwhelmingly seen as a privileged means for the full and intense realization of the self along lines determined largely by personal choice” (ibid: 714).

Social IDENTITY⁸⁹ of an individual or group, stereotypes, etc

BELIEFS/ideals: moral, religious, political, social perspectives, etc

Private/public BEHAVIOUR: daily routines, at school, at home, sports/hobbies, etc

National INSTITUTIONS or systems: law courts, schools, the media, etc

National/international ICONS: influential historical or contemporary people or events, etc

GEOGRAPHY and tourism: regional, national, international cities, amenities, etc

With regard to the categorization of the reading texts according to text type/function, this scheme takes into account insights from several authors, such as Werlich (1976) or Bloor (1998) in the field of text linguistics⁹⁰, which point to a ‘classic’ five-fold functional distinction and where the distinctions are analysed accordingly to the linguistic features present in the text. Here, the scheme remains the same, but the analytical emphasis is on what the distribution and frequency of text functions means to FL learners:

Narrative: shows changes through time, through reports, anecdotes, bio-pieces

Descriptive: describes locations, events or facts from a personal perspective

Argumentative: changing or challenging existing beliefs or expected perspectives

Instructive: what or how to do something in concrete terms: rules, regulations

Expository: explains, informs, lays out information

However, to say that a text has a narrative function/type does not mean that there are no descriptive elements in the texts; likewise, a descriptive text may also contain expository elements; these categories are not hermetically sealed, their boundaries are fuzzy and there is also the potential for some degree of overlapping. Taking Rivas (1999) as a starting point for the category of text form/genre, the study identifies additional multiple text forms which are present in the Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks in question and pays particular attention to the issue of authenticity,

⁸⁹ The words in CAPITALS are the used as ‘key words’ in the analysis grids.

⁹⁰ López Medina (2002) provides background discussion and a case study of the application of text linguistics in the pedagogy of an FL class.

contrasted to a predominance of reading texts specifically authored for inclusion on a specific page, of a particular unit, for that individual coursebook (the ‘class text’⁹¹).

4. 1. A The Active English series of coursebooks.

There is a steady increase (approximately 50%) in the number of texts for reading included in this series, from six (7th grade) to 11 (8th grade) to 19 (9th grade), making a total of 36 texts. This is perhaps an indication that the authors consider that working with texts is something that requires ‘more’ English or is perhaps a skill which develops (or needs to be developed) later. This is the lowest total of texts in any of the coursebooks under consideration in this study, and is also a reflection of the fact that this series relies heavily on the use of dialogues to provide input and a context for language practice (see Chapter 3 on Dialogues). In addition to being very few in number in the 7th grade, the texts themselves are generally quite short: there is only one text which reaches 100 words⁹². In the 8th grade the texts are generally over 100 words (except three) and reach a maximum of 320 words in a text about the services available at a British Post Office (8th grade: 45-9). The majority of texts in the 9th grade book are over 100 words (five texts have fewer words) with one text (the last one in the book) reaching 225 words. Curiously this text is a song about the environment (9th grade: 72-3) rather than a ‘class text’.

⁹¹ Here, the ‘class text’ is taken to be a reading passage that has been specifically produced for inclusion in an ELT coursebook, often manipulated so as to provide a context for subsequent comprehension, vocabulary or grammar work.

⁹² The number of words is approximate, calculated on the basis of average number words per line of text.

Table 25. Active English series: distribution of texts for reading.

Active English : Overall: texts for reading: Total = 36					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	2.8% (1)	Narrative	22.2% (8)	Class Text	33.3% (12)
Beliefs	2.8% (1)	Descriptive	61.1% (22)	Letters etc	33.3% (12)
Behaviour	77.8% (28)	Argumentative	0.0% (0)	Lit. extract	13.9% (5)
Institutions	0,0% (0)	Instructive	2.8% (1)	Newspaper	8.3% (3)
Icons	0.0% (0)	Expository	13.9% (5)	Advert	2.8% (1)
Geography	13.9% (5)			Recipe	2.8% (1)
				Song	2.8% (1)
				Bio-piece	2.8% (1)

More than three quarters of the texts (77.8%) deal with the behaviour of the characters who ‘inhabit’ the coursebook: learners are witness to the way these characters play out various aspects of their fictitious lives. Curiously, while these lives are very clearly located in England, the coursebooks contain no texts related to past or present famous people or events (0% ICONS), nor any reference to the systems and institutions of Britain (0% INSTITUTIONS). The 7th grade book has no texts about where these characters live (0% GEOGRAPHY), the 8th grade book has only one text, and only in the 9th grade book is there any more substantial input with four texts (21.1% GEOGRAPHY). In the whole series, there is only one text directly related to IDENTITY and one text related to BELIEFS, both of which are included in the 9th grade book. So, for two school years, these issues are not addressed in any way.

In terms of ‘type of text’, this series exhibits a clear preponderance of descriptive texts (61.1%) and narrative texts (22.2%). There are no argumentative texts, so learners are not asked to make judgements or give opinions based on what they read. The five expository texts are all in the 9th grade book (26.3%) and are concerned with GEOGRAPHY (3 texts) and BEHAVIOUR (2 texts). The one instructive text is a recipe for hamburgers (9th grade: 59). So here again, for two school years, learners are not required to work with any text functionality except descriptive or narrative.

The range of text forms found in this series is narrow: only seven different forms beyond the ‘class text’ (33.3%, 12 texts). There is an equal proportion of texts of the ‘Letters’ genre, which is perhaps an indication of how this series is very much a product of its time: nowadays, letter writing is almost a forgotten skill in the new era of

electronically mediated communication, based on emails and, especially for teenagers, text messaging. In a similar vein, the inclusion of five literary extracts⁹³ (13.9%) is something less likely to be found nowadays with the socio-cultural focus having shifted: in all the other nine coursebooks in the other series in this study there no other literary extracts and only two poems. The three newspaper extracts (8.3%) appear only in the 9th grade book and consist of an entertainment guide in tiny print which gives rise to a summary of a TV programme (9th grade: 46), the beginning of an article about food aid for Tanzania (9th grade: 66) and two short paragraphs from an article reporting on anti-pollution plans in Britain (9th grade: 69). In none of these cases are the learners confronted with a full scale newspaper article.

It is important to highlight that only four of the 36 texts are authentic⁹⁴: some may appear to be original texts, but there are no sources referenced and closer examination reveals that all of the texts contain language that is not typical of the text form (genre) in question. The exceptions are three texts from newspapers (mentioned above) and one song in the 9th grade coursebook.

4. 1. A. 1 Active English 7th grade: texts for reading.

The main emphasis in the limited provision of texts for reading in the 7th grade coursebook (six texts only) lies in the representation of behavioural aspects of daily life in certain people/characters located Britain (four texts). Two of the texts are in the form of letters and two are in the form of 'class texts'. There is also a very short (25 words) single text (letter/card) which is focussed on Easter (7th grade: 44) and a single text (55 words) where a young adult female provides a brief 'life story' as a kind of bio piece (7th grade: 29).

⁹³ The authors of these extracts are John Steinbeck, L.P. Hartley, D.H. Lawrence, W. Somerset Maugham & Ernest Hemingway. All the extracts are in the 9th grade book.

⁹⁴ Transcriptions of key reading texts from the coursebooks are available in Appendix Two, p.363.

Table 26. Active English series: 7th grade: texts for reading.

Active English : 7th grade: texts for reading: Total = 6					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	0% (0)	Narrative	50% (3)	Class Text	33.3% (2)
Beliefs	0% (0)	Descriptive	50% (3)	Letter/card	33.3% (2)
Behaviour	100% (6)	Argumentative	0% (0)	Letter/note	16.7% (1)
Institutions	0% (0)	Instructive	0% (0)	Bio-piece	16.7% (1)
Icons	0% (0)	Expository	0% (0)		
Geography	0% (0)				

The longest text for reading in the 7th grade book comes in Unit 30, “Consolidation” (p.34), and deals with the daily routine of ‘Jill Clark’, who is a school age girl who lives in London. Her day, basically at school, consists of 15 sentences, which tell the learners what she does at different times of the day. Nothing of what she does is likely to be any different from what happens in Portugal, except perhaps that she goes to school by bicycle: the text thus limits any kind of reader response to the most mundane level. The events are temporally sequenced but unconnected: there is no use made of any linking devices (no purpose, contrast, concession, coordination, manner or result ‘relationships’ are established in the text) and there is no use of descriptive language, to add any kind of comment or critical perspective: the text is constituted by a series of events which just happen. The reader learns nothing about Jill, except what her daily/school routine is, and there is no further mention of London after the first sentence of the text: “Jill Clark lives in London”. The text seems to be a practice context for the grammar item, the Present Simple in the 3rd person singular, as all the sentences contain such a verb form (only one of the 15 is in the negative and only two sentences do not begin with “Jill/She”, they begin with “School”), so this is a clear case of the content and form of the text being constrained by largely linguistic considerations.

The simple syntax and the predictability of the content of this text for reading are somewhat compromised by a use of time references, which complicates rather than simplifies the way ‘telling the time’ is done in English. The events of Jill’s daily routine are generally associated with a specific time. However, the way the time is referred to in

the text is realised in three different ways, introducing a degree of complexity that would perhaps be counter-productive in relation to follow-up activities: the use of “o’clock”, the use of “a.m. or p.m.” or the use of just numerals (e.g. “at 4.15”). The authors use “a.m.” and “p.m.” to ‘frame’ the beginning and end of the sequence of events in the text, so:

She gets up at 7.30 a.m. every day.
She goes to bed at 9.30 p.m.

Leaving aside the issue of punctuation in the second sentence, it could be argued that these two actions are so clearly set in everybody’s daily routines that the addition of “a.m.” and “p.m.” here is rather superfluous and does nothing to encourage learners to use the general context to establish meaning rather than rely on every single word. The use of “o’clock” with exact times (e.g. 8 o’clock) is more frequent in the text, and there are two examples of numerals with other times (e.g. 4.15 and 8.30). While it is true that in places like school events can take place in the way covered by the cases above, there is a strong likelihood that less precise times have to be referred to in the ‘real world’, and this text makes no use of the ‘ten to eight’ or ‘ten past eight’ kind of time references. The information related to this apparently simple item of content (‘telling the time’) in this text is partial, unexplained and imbalanced, the text having been written to be a vehicle for a grammatical item which is then associated with a socio-behavioural context as a matter of convenience.

At a more implicit level, this text reinforces the stereotypical notion that British life is organised according to exact times, so that people get up, eat, travel, go to bed, and so on, all at precise times, that there is little space for flexibility in this daily routine. Perhaps there is a reinforcement here also of the supposed British obsession with punctuality, with one of the non-time referenced sentences in the text being: “She arrives in time for lessons”. Beyond this, what the times for the different events are in Jill’s day and what they imply about how people live in Britain are areas of interest that are left untouched, in the language of the text and in any of the follow-up work (a crossword puzzle and a “game”): things like the school day running from 9 till 4 in the afternoon or Jill going to bed at 9.30, or even whether children usually have lunch at school or at home.

The other three texts for reading in the 7th grade book take the form of two short letters or cards which are presented as such graphically in the coursebook and a 'class text'. Unit 45 (p.49) tells of a shopping expedition to "town" during which some "new books" are bought. The letter is signed by 'Mary', who seems very adult and addressed to 'Amy', but this is the first time these names are used in the book, so there is no way for readers to 'attach' this letter to any previous learning context (this despite the unit being "Consolidation"). The idea is perhaps to make reference to previous units which covered aspects of shopping and restaurants, but the text is too short and 'light'.

Unit 50 (p. 54) is a letter/card addressed to Joe (again a new character) from Kay, a teenage character who appears often in the book. In this text for reading, Kay is giving Joe her news: she has been ill but is better now. The text refers to her parents having been "a bit worried" about her, the fact that her "Granny" is staying with them and that they are "going to spend the weekend in the country". The semi-colloquial use of "Granny" and "a bit worried" contrasts with the formal lay-out of the letter and some of the other language: "Please give my love to everyone" and to the closure of the letter: "Yours, Kay". What we learn is that Kay has caring parents and a grandmother and that they are sufficiently 'comfortable' in life to be able to have weekends in the country: the kind of idyllic family settings that occur frequently in coursebooks to the exclusion of almost any other type of domestic setting.

In Unit 55 (p. 58) Kay is on her way somewhere by bus and train (probably to the countryside, since the trip is also mentioned in Unit 51, a dialogue between Mark and Kay), but not with Joe: she is now with Mark, who seems to be her brother. Cultural references here seem to be accidental and rudimentary, unconnected with any notion of 'context' or 'purpose'. This text is again linguistically constrained; it focusses on a single grammar item, the Past Simple of irregular verbs, although the text does contain two regular verbs in addition to the eight irregular verbs (all the verbs are in a list at the bottom of the page). There are no linking devices in the text, and the sequence of events is described in a very 'matter of fact' simplistic way, until linguistic constraints again create a false step; the authors clearly wanted to have one negative form of the past simple in the text:

Kay bought the tickets and they took the train. Mark didn't have his magazine on the train. It was at home.

There is no context to tell the reader what kind of magazine we are talking about and why Mark would want to take it on the train: it appears from nowhere. The language employed is conditioned by the fact that the authors wanted to include a good variety of irregular verbs, and since 'get on' and 'catch' have already been used earlier in the text in relation to the bus ride to the station, then the verb 'take' has to be used with the train; this explanation is also likely to be true for the final sentence quoted above ("It was at home"), which allows the past simple singular form of 'to be' to also be placed in the text. This text is a prime example of how the language and content of 'class texts' are moulded by coursebook authors to meet the demands of a structural approach to FL teaching. Instead of a text being seen as a source of language, specific language is forced into a 'class text' with little heed being paid to the issues of the coherence and cohesion of the text itself.

4. 1. A. 2 Active English 8th grade: texts for reading.

While the 8th grade book in this coursebook series has more texts for reading (11), the form of text present is highly restricted (class texts or letters) and they are exclusively descriptive in their function. The narrowness of reading experience for the learners is further compounded by the fact that only two texts belong to any socio-cultural category other than BEHAVIOUR.⁹⁵ The texts are longer than in the 7th grade book (the average length is about 150 words) and contain a lot of 'background' information about the USA, London, Scotland and Wales, largely by using the topic of what people do when they take holidays as a device to include descriptive texts (as mentioned above); another common topic is often sports. For the purposes of this study, three texts from the 8th grade coursebook will be analysed.

⁹⁵ One text (Unit 35: 39) which describes the parks of London (GEOGRAPHY) and another text about space travel (Unit 60: 64) which defies any categorization.

Table 27. Active English series: 8th grade: texts for reading.

Active English : 8th grade: texts for reading: Total = 11					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i> *		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	0% (0)	Narrative	0% (0)	Class Text	54.5% (6)
Beliefs	0% (0)	Descriptive	100% (11)	Letter	27.3% (3)
Behaviour	81.8% (9)	Argumentative	0% (0)	Letter/tags	9.1% (1)
Institutions	0% (0)	Instructive	0% (0)	Letter/note	9.1% (1)
Icons	0% (0)	Expository	0% (0)		
Geography	9.1% (1)	* There is one reading text which defies categorization.			

Unit 10 (p.14) is a letter to “Joe” (a son?), who is in London, from his “Mum”, the first part describing her daily routine in New York and the second part giving news of his cousin, “Gladys”. The mother describes the main activity that she has planned for that day (November 10th): she is “going to do the shopping and spend [her] dollars as usual” while her husband (“Dad”) is out at work where he “is working hard all the time. He gets up early every day and arrives home late”. Leaving aside the rather strange collocation of “spend my dollars”, the clear attribution of the ‘breadwinner’ role to the man and ‘housewife’ role to the woman reinforces an already powerful stereotype associated with many English speaking societies. There is a sharp contrast with the second part of the letter/text which describes a recent visit from their cousin Gladys and what Gladys is doing with her life:

She lives quietly in the suburbs and has got a useful occupation, helping lonely people. Some people don’t understand her new occupation but it doesn’t matter. Really it makes little difference to her.

The substance here then is woman who is doing something non-typical with her time and is prepared to face criticism for it. The text excerpt itself is curiously worded (the use of “occupation”) and the reference to “lonely people” generates something of a ‘weak’ reader response (perhaps a euphemism for something more shocking?), but nonetheless it is hard not to question the blatant stereotype in the first part of the text for reading even more forcefully: clearly the authors were aware that it is possible to present women in roles which mean ‘more’ than the acquiescent housewives that often

populate ELT coursebooks, but chose instead to maintain the stereotype and include a kind of mitigation as well.

Unit 15 (p.19) is again a letter, this time from a daughter, “Sue”, to her “Mum”, describing her stay in Scotland with her aunt, “Mary”. In order reach Edinburgh, Sue travelled by coach from London, a journey which nowadays takes almost ten hours and which must have taken even longer at the time this coursebook was written (1980), and perhaps even longer since, as Sue notes, “The coach was not a quick one”. The use of “quick” instead of fast belies a lack of natural collocation; indeed, the whole text contains a series of instances of non-standard language use as well as cultural content of dubious value. At the level of language, there is a total absence of any linking devices (this seems to be recurrent in this series of coursebooks), so a whole series of unconnected events appear in a continuous sequence of 11 sentences or the over-use of the determiner ‘the’ is striking (for example: “Aunt Mary is pleased with the children” instead of ‘her children’, or “I am on the farm”, when this is the first mention of any farm), and each sentence, while making use of various verbal forms (some not correctly), barely goes beyond the syntactic level of ‘simple sentence’, all of which clearly identifies this text as non-authentic. Non-authentic in its representation of relationships as well: Sue is presumably adult enough to take a coach from London to Edinburgh, but at the same time in her letter to her mother seems to be very juvenile indeed: “I like the plants and the animals. There are a lot of horses, cows and pigs.” This apart from the fact that Sue is probably telling her mother things she already knows. The whole ‘tone’ of the text is false.

With regard to the details of the socio-cultural content, the text presents an almost idyllic picture of the Scottish countryside (Aunt Mary must live outside Edinburgh, we suppose). The text describes the climate as “a bit dry”, which is surprising given that it usually rains in Edinburgh on 17 days in November and there is only two hours of sunshine per day.⁹⁶ The scene in the text is further described: “The leaves of the trees are falling to the ground” and “There was ice on the river”. There is some kind of seasonal confusion in evidence here: since the letter is dated November the 26th, it is safe to assume that the autumn drop of deciduous leaves has long since been completed

⁹⁶ According to one weather website: <http://www.holiday-weather.com/edinburgh/averages/november/>

and that winter is well installed (hence the ice on the river). Notwithstanding the geo-climatic details, what Sue is doing is visiting her far-away aunt and telling the reader about the scenery and what she does (“Yesterday I crossed the bridge to visit some friends of mine” – the most complex sentence in the whole text); she seems to have friends everywhere and furthermore her cousins are also ‘good’ children, since “They have got good school reports” (with the wrong verb form). So, all is well in the ‘world’ of Aunt Mary, Sue, the cousins and Scotland in general, again a feature of many ELT coursebooks, not just of this era.

Unit 55 (p.59) is actually two texts on the same theme: “You can turn your cooking into profit”. Both texts describe different ways to make money out of tourists by supplying them with something “traditional”: either “a traditional English tea” or “traditional Welsh food”. The Morgans (curiously a family name with strong Welsh connections) sell tea and cakes to tourists in their home by getting customers from a travel agency (a somewhat unlikely commercial relationship) and at “The Dolphin”, a family-run hotel in Wales, special evenings, which include “clog dancing, singing to the harp and traditional Welsh food”, are sold. While the text makes specific reference to the latter type of event being “no myth”, the idea that you can package and sell ‘tradition’ is something that perhaps should be contested rather than praised.⁹⁷ The perpetuation of such ways of seeing the behaviour of people in England and Wales as something that can be distilled into tourist palatable events is far from praise-worthy.⁹⁸

The language of the texts shows signs of greater syntactic complexity; for instance, the English Tea text includes an unusual anaphoric referencing device “on top of that”. In addition, the sentences are fewer and longer; for example, the final sentences in each text:

As they decided to find visitors through a travel agency, they have customers visiting their house every weekday.
Nowadays they also cook for up to a hundred guests who come specially [sic] for the traditional Welsh evening.

⁹⁷ The initiation or creation of traditions has for some time been the subject of academic debate, most notably in Hobsbawn, E. J. & Ranger, T. O. (Eds.) (1983). *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, C. U. P.

⁹⁸ In the field of post-modern fiction, Julian Barnes, in his novel *England, England* (1998), alludes to simulated representations of various elements of British culture which are repackaged, relocated and sold as tourist consumables.

While features such as these help to give the texts a more authentic feel, they remain very distant from true authenticity. Indeed, there is some confusion at the level of lexis: in the English Tea text the items “tourists”, “guests”, “visitors” and “customers” are all used in the space of one paragraph: so how do the Morgans (British people, in general?) view people from overseas who are in the UK for a holiday? How might these attitudes be reflected in the way British people interact with foreign holiday makers? The texts imply that the British are fair and generous: the first text refers to a “fair profit” and that the tea takers, as well as tea and cakes “[o]n top of that they each receive a small souvenir of their visit”); and are also resourceful and hard-working: as the second text says:

The owners knew nothing about running a hotel or catering when they decided to open it. As they became interested in the job, they learned a lot about it.

Success comes from hard work, being fair and generous and being prepared to learn by doing.⁹⁹ How does the reader ‘measure up’ to these standards of behaviour? There is implicit here some kind of behavioural role model, something that is perhaps not naturally present in the readers’ community. The lack of any reference to any other culture, either local or international, creates an idea of ‘goodness’ or superiority that the reader may take as something to be emulated or imitated.

4. 1. A. 3 Active English 9th grade: texts for reading.

The 9th grade book in this series offers learners yet more texts (19) with a wider variety of text forms/genres (seven) which include, for the first time, literary extracts and material from newspapers, both of which qualify as authentic texts. There are examples of text function beyond the descriptive (42.1%), with expository and narrative texts both well represented (five texts each, 26.3%). London features quite strongly as a cultural reference, being the focus of four texts in the coursebook, while Paris, Amsterdam and the USA are also given consideration in single texts. The greater variety mentioned above does not extend to the categorization of socio-cultural content, since 13 of the texts (68.4%) are in the category BEHAVIOUR.

⁹⁹ In an extensive study, Hadley (2006) discusses the potential influence of four key American cultural constructs (Progress through practical improvement, America is special, Expansion is safety and Healthy competition stimulates progress) in relation to US-produced ELT materials.

Table 28. Active English series: 9th grade: texts for reading.

Active English : 9th grade: texts for reading: Total = 19					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	5.3% (1)	Narrative	26.3% (5)	Class Text	21.1% (4)
Beliefs	5.3% (1)	Descriptive	42.1% (8)	Letter	21.1% (4)
Behaviour	68.4% (13)	Argumentative	0% (0)	Lit. extract	26.3% (5)
Institutions	0% (0)	Instructive	5.3% (1)	Newspaper	15.8% (3)
Icons	0% (0)	Expository	26.3% (5)	Advert	5.3% (1)
Geography	21.1% (4)			Recipe	5.3% (1)
				Song	5.3% (1)

The three newspaper derived texts are all from newspapers: the authentic extracts are from *The Daily Telegraph* (Unit 36: 46), *The Times* (Unit 54: 66) and *The Guardian* (unit 57: 69), all ‘quality’ broadsheets from the UK at the time of publication. This fact is not made use of in any way in the coursebook, and there are no other examples of texts from any other kind of print media, the ‘popular’ or tabloid press. The latter two texts are accompanied by reading comprehension exercises of the kind that require learners to ‘mine’ information from the text and vocabulary extension exercises. The first extract does, however, demand more personalised responses from the learners as all five follow-up questions are based on the individual learner’s existing knowledge of films (‘City Lights’ by Charlie Chaplin), programme TV preferences and radio listening habits. This is an all too rare example of how texts for reading can call on learners to interact with the socio-cultural content in a personal and meaningful manner (although the choice of film here is rather obscure for the 9th grade); this is a pedagogical approach which has gained great currency in ELT methodology in recent years, since it allows learners to connect how they behave in their world to the material being used in the classroom, but is largely absent from this series of coursebooks.

The presence of content related to the USA is also a rarity in this series, which is very firmly located in the UK (as evidenced by the number of texts which feature London in this book). Unit 24 (p.30) is a literary extract, from ‘*Travels with Charley*’, by John Steinbeck¹⁰⁰. The extract focusses on issues related to identity in the USA in the early 1960s and asks readers to question their objectivity when reporting events such as those

¹⁰⁰ This 1962 fictionalised travelogue has Steinbeck driving across the USA in a camper van/truck in an attempt to characterize what he saw as a new kind of America. Charley is his canine companion that serves as a sounding board for his thoughts and opinions.

he witnesses on his road trip. The cognitive load required of learners here is great as they are asked to both interpret the text as well as ‘mine’ information from the text: this is a text of some linguistic (syntactical and lexical) complexity, and it opens with two extended conditional sentences:

If an Englishman or a Frenchman or an Italian should travel my route, see what I saw, hear what I heard, their stored pictures would be not only different from mine, but equally different from one another. If other Americans read this account should feel it true, that agreement would only mean we are alike.

The extract is the third in a series of four units about the USA (the others are dialogue based), but here readers are offered very little cultural information, except that the population of the USA has many immigrant communities (those mentioned are all European but Portugal is not included). It is hard to imagine how a teacher could make good language learning use of this text with a 9th grade class as the pre-reading activity provided involves labelling American cities on a map (using the learners’ pre-existing geographical knowledge?) and the post-reading activity is a grammar exercise focussed on the use of ‘might’ to indicate suggestions or possibility. The latter exercise perhaps connects with the opening paragraph quoted above and may indeed be the reason for the inclusion of this rather opaque text, an additional indication of content being subservient to code.

The other literary extracts in the 9th grade book deal not with any reference to identity but are rather to do with behavioural aspects, specifically: playing the piano (from L. P. Hartley’s *The Go-Between*, Unit 33: 43), a child having an accident (from D. H. Lawrence’s *England my England*, Unit 39: 49), tea drinking (from W. Somerset Maugham’s *The Round Dozen*, Unit 42: 53) and learning to fish (from Ernest Hemmingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*, Unit 45: 56). While all the authors could be considered significant figures in the Anglo-American literary canon¹⁰¹, what is at stake here is not any such consideration, but what kind of socio-cultural input is being provided for these 9th grade learners. None of these extracts sheds any light on the novels/sources from which they are drawn; for example, in Unit 33 (p.43) both central characters, Marian and Ted Burgess, are mentioned, but there is no hint of their ‘illicit’ relationship or any of the main themes of the 1953 novel: loss of innocence, social class

¹⁰¹ As such, the extracts might reasonably be expected to have something to say on fundamental human issues and be able to ‘speak’ to readers, transcending both time and culture.

distinctions, empty family/marital relationships or even nostalgia. The novel has a huge amount to say about how the British people behaved at the outset of 20th century (and possibly how that explains contemporary British society/culture). But this coursebook fails to make use of one of the strongest arguments for using literature in the FL classroom: “This vivid imagined world can quickly give the foreign reader a feel for the codes and preoccupations that structure a real society” (Collie & Slater, 1987: 4). Unit 39 (p. 49) narrates an episode where a child has hurt herself while playing in the garden and needs comforting. The extract is rather confusing in that there are several people present in the episode, but it is quite hard to follow who is doing what, since there is a lot of pronominal referencing that is not clear. Here, 9th grade learners get no socio-cultural input at all and may, in fact, be left frustrated by the tantalizing final line of the extract:

But his heart was burning with pain and with guilt.

Similar criticism could be applied to the remaining two literary extracts. Unit 39 seems to be providing some kind of context for some grammar practice: an exercise on the 3rd Conditional, whereas Unit 45 (p.56), a text of about 110 words, merits two lexically based follow-up exercises and a reading comprehension exercise consisting of 10 separate questions: clearly a linguistically driven use of a text for reading. In none of the units are the learners required in any way to react with personal opinions or recount similar experiences or make any connect with the text at any level other than as a prompt for further exercises and questions. The use of literature in FL teaching can act as a counterbalance in a “process of learning [that] is essentially analytical, piecemeal, and at the level of the personality, fairly superficial. Engaging imaginatively with literature enables learners to shift the focus of their attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign language system” (Collie & Slater, 1987: 5). The fact is that this series of coursebooks makes scant use of this genre of text, an area of ELT which is rich in possibilities provided that the text in question is appealing, interesting and relevant.

The texts about London in the 9th grade book cover a variety of topics: transport (Unit 9: 13), sightseeing (Unit 12: 17), parks (Unit 15: 20) and a “firm in the City”. The latter text is a literary extract (already mentioned above), a narrative about tea and tea drinking, while the other texts are descriptive. The socio-cultural content most directly

related to BEHAVIOUR is the text about transport (Unit 9: 13), which ‘informs’ learners about the best way to travel and how the bus system works. The type of information provided concerns aspects of safety (“For safety’s sake, standing is never allowed on the platform or on the upper deck of double-decker buses”), how to pay (“On some buses you must enter by the front doors and pay the driver”) and taking the correct bus (“You choose your bus by the number and destination shown on the front”). The extent to which these kinds of public transport procedures differ from what a learner might find in the local Portuguese context is not great: while potentially relevant to a person who might be visiting London, it is hard to see how this information adds anything ‘extra’ to a 9th grade learner’s knowledge of how British people behave; what could be more relevant would be content about queuing conventions or formulaic expressions and/or vocabulary often associated with the social context of taking a bus.

While admitting that any approach to socio-cultural content should include comparative aspects that indicate ‘sameness’, there should also be opportunities to explore ‘differentness’: to interpret and speculate about why people from different communities behave in different ways. Here the learners are not given any such opportunity, both in terms of the text itself and with the follow-up reading comprehension exercise, which again involves matching the question to the corresponding exact text excerpt and the two additional ‘language practice’ exercises which ask learners to re-order groups of words to make sentences about transport/travel (except one sentence: “Both the books are interesting”, which is included for no apparent reason)¹⁰². The extremely limited ‘post-reading’ phase in this unit has further pedagogical implications, confirming that the absence of “opportunities for learners to relate creatively and imaginatively to the texts [...] hinders, in particular, the integration of reading and writing” (Rivas, 1999: 18).

4. 1. B The Passport series of coursebooks.

This series includes a large number of texts for reading (111 in total), almost double the total present in the Active English series. The number of texts per year also increases: from 23 to 39 to 49, indicating an increasing importance being attributed to this form of

¹⁰² Both exercises are, in fact, rather confusing, since each group of words contains one which is underlined, but it is not clear why this word is underlined. In some examples, it should be the first word in the reconstructed sentences, but not in all cases.

language input by the coursebook authors. The Passport series of coursebooks contains many examples of texts for reading which are subdivided in order to present different perspectives/‘voices’ on the same topic (for instance, with advertisements for different restaurants (7th grade: 187-8) when the activity is based on choosing where to eat out. In terms of maximum text size, the 7th grade book includes one narrative text (p.118) of 320 words about a coach tour (the same size as the maximum in the entire Active English series), the 8th grade book opens with a descriptive text of 495 words about the islands of Britain and contains a further 10 examples of texts of between 200 and 350 words. The 9th grade book, as well as having many more texts than the whole Active English series (49 to 36), makes greater use of longer texts: there are 16 texts of over 320 words (the Active English maximum). There is a dramatic distinction here in the pedagogic ‘weight’ ascribed to texts for reading by the various authors of the respective series.

Table 29. Passport series: distribution of texts for reading.

Passport: Overall: texts for reading: Total = 111					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	4.5% (5)	Narrative	6.3% (7)	Class Text	47.7% (53)
Beliefs	0.9% (1)	Descriptive	44.1% (49)	Leaflet	7.2% (8)
Behaviour	46.8% (52)	Argumentative	10.8% (12)	Bio pieces	6.3% (7)
Institutions	14.4% (16)	Instructive	0.9% (1)	Adverts	5.4% (6)
Icons	9.0% (10)	Expository	37.8% (42)	Figures	5.4% (6)
Geography	21.6% (24)			Mag extract	3.6% (4)
*				Guidebook	3.6% (4)
				Songs	3.6% (4)
				Interview	1.8% (2)
				Brochures	1.8% (2)
				Quiz	1.8% (2)
				Poem	0.9% (1)
				Newspaper	0.9% (1)
				Film review	0.9% (1)
				Comic strip	0.9% (1)
				Monologue	0.9% (1)
				Card/letter	0.9% (1)
* Three texts defy categorization				Comic strip	0.9% (1)

The texts are distributed more evenly across the categories of socio-cultural content: while BEHAVIOUR still accounts for almost half the texts in the series (46.8%), there are significant numbers of texts dealing with the categories of GEOGRAPHY (21.6%,

24 texts), INSTITUTIONS (14.4%, 16 texts) and ICONS (9.0%, 10 texts). However, the categories of IDENTITY (4.5%, five texts) and BELIEFS (0.9%, one text) remain almost absent, indicating a lack of concern for the less ‘concrete’ aspects of cultural content.

In terms of types of text/function, the Passport series is dominated by descriptive texts (44.1%, 49 texts) and expository texts (37.8%, 42 texts). The high percentage of expository texts seems to be a result of the authors’ keenness to include information/content about the GEOGRAPHY (more in the 7th grade), BEHAVIOUR (more in the 8th grade) and INSTITUTIONS (more in the 9th grade) of the UK. The distribution of text types is more balanced in the 7th grade coursebook, which also includes the single instructive text of the whole series - how to call for an ambulance in England (Passport 7: 214) - whereas the distribution of types of text in the 8th grade is distinctly uneven: almost 95% of the texts are descriptive or expository, a situation mirrored in the 9th grade book, where over 80% of the texts are either descriptive or expository.

There are 18 different forms of text (genre) in the Passport series, a far wider range than the eight forms present in the Active English series. Here again, the dominant genre present in the series is the ‘class text’ (47.7%, 53 texts in the whole series), a dominance which is even more noteworthy in the case of the 8th grade, where 28 of the 39 texts for reading (71.8%) are ‘class texts’ and there are mostly only single examples of other genres (if the genre of ‘Figures’ is sub-divided). The form of text denominated ‘bio piece’, while consistently present in all the coursebooks, is here only represented in the 9th grade book, which also accounts for the higher percentage in the ICONS category (18.4%, 9 texts) in the same book. Of note is the presence of four songs (3.6%), all in the 9th grade book. The most recently published Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks make very frequent use of songs, largely as means to promote listening comprehension (and learner interest/motivation), but often in truncated or adapted form (to avoid problems with copyright?), whereas here the songs are used for reading comprehension (for example, *Thriller*, by Michael Jackson, 9th grade: 137-8) in their full form.

Songs therefore fall into the category of ‘authentic’ texts in this case. The Passport series contains 16 texts for reading, which are definitely authentic (i.e., the source is

referenced), and a further 17 texts which look like they are authentic but are not referenced; so, perhaps 29.7% of the texts are authentic, a huge increase in what was found in the Active English series. These texts are often leaflets or advertisements, but there are also a sprinkling of newspaper articles, magazine extracts, guidebook extracts, maps/charts and even a menu. There was an effort to include a range of authentic texts from a variety of genres; however, the distribution in the series is not consistent with that of the 8th grade book, having only six non-referenced examples (15.4% of that book's total number of texts for reading).

4. 1. B.1 Passport 7th grade: texts for reading.

Two features which distinguish the 7th grade book is the comparatively high percentage of texts for reading, which deal with GEOGRAPHY (eight texts: 34.8%), and the relatively high number of texts which are classified as argumentative (five texts: 21.7%) in the overall total of 23 texts. The topic of 'Holidays' and associated activities looms large in this coursebook: perhaps 13 of the 23 texts identified are directly or indirectly related to this topic, and these holidays are very definitely located in the U.K. Whereas there was a tendency in the Active English series to focus on the behaviour of individuals, in this series there is a more 'birds' eye' view of Britain and its associated cultural manifestations as a nation.¹⁰³ This may also be evidenced by the high percentage of expository texts in the series as a whole (42 texts: 37.8%).

Table 30. Passport series: 7th grade: texts for reading.

Passport: 7th grade: texts for reading: Total = 23					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	13.0% (3)	Narrative	13.0% (3)	Class Text	21.7% (5)
Beliefs	0% (0)	Descriptive	34.8% (8)	Advert	17.4% (4)
Behaviour	43.5% (10)	Argumentative	21.7% (5)	Leaflet	17.4% (4)
Institutions	8.7% (2)	Instructive	4.3% (1)	Figures*	13.0% (3)
Icons	0% (0)	Expository	26.1% (6)	Letter	4.3% (1)
Geography	34.8% (8)			Menu	4.3% (1)
				Brochure	4.3% (1)
				Newspaper	4.3% (1)
				Tickets	4.3% (1)
				Mag cover	4.3% (1)
* Figures = Maps, tables, charts, diagrams, i.e., not 100% textual.				Guidebook	4.3% (1)

¹⁰³ Implicit here is the historical view that a homogeneous culture may be associated with a homogeneous nation or society of native speakers and a comparable situation exists in the domain of the FL learners (Byram, 2002).

The main body of texts concerned with holidays in Britain begins in Unit 5 with a seemingly authentic but unreferenced text about appropriate tourist attractions for children in London (Unit 5: 88); however, much of the preceding teaching/learning materials in this unit have also dealt with the topic without resorting to texts for reading (the unit begins on p.77). Indeed, Unit 4 also contains a lot of material related to the weather in the U.K., which might also be said to be ‘paving the way’, especially an extensive 400 word expository text (Unit 4: 67-8) that consists of a combination of maps and charts combined with table filling and gap filling exercises. The topic continues to be developed throughout the book, with texts focussed on bus information, hotel choices, coach tours, food and restaurants, amongst others; the sequence ends in the penultimate unit of the book with a text on duty free offers (Unit 11: 196).

The text entitled “Children’s London” (Unit 5: 88) is the longest (1750 words approximately), most dense (the font size appears to be 8 or less) text in any of the coursebooks in this study. It occupies a full page in the coursebook and is designed to be the source of information about 20 different tourist attractions for a follow-up writing activity (an informal letter to your parents telling them of a day out in London, p.89). The learners are supposed to choose two attractions to include in their letter, so they would have to employ two useful reading techniques: to skim the text to make a preliminary selection and then to scan the chosen paragraphs/sub-texts to see they were indeed a good choice. The quantity and density of the text are perhaps an attempt to maintain a degree of authenticity to the text, like a full page from a guidebook (or a newspaper?) and authenticity in the task of selecting two from many options, just as a ‘real’ tourist would have to. But perhaps the central question here is one of appropriacy: this is after all a 7th grade book: the range of vocabulary in the text would challenge the best students at this level; for example, one of the attractions is the Tower of London, which includes the following information:

Parts of the battlement walk and several previously out-of-bounds towers are now included in the wall-walk for which there is no extra charge.

The combination of archaic and obscure vocabulary along with neologisms set in the context of a complex sentence, formed in the Passive, with an extended multi-word noun phrase for sentence subject and with a sub-ordinate clause, would surely baffle a

7th grade reader and make the chances of task fulfilment slim. But the ability to understand this type of descriptions is also heavily dependent on having sufficient background knowledge; for example, the attraction, “Hampton Court Palace”:

Built in 1514 for Cardinal Wolsey this great house then became one of Henry VIII’s royal palaces.

What is the difference between a palace and a “great house”? If the palace is “royal” does it then mean Henry VIII is a king? When and why did England stop having Cardinals? Where did Wolsey go to live? The doubts generated by a small piece of text may be many (frivolous or serious), but all potentially block comprehension and therefore task fulfilment and, consequently, learning. This could be cited as an example of the disadvantages of using authentic texts in a less than careful manner: as well as being authentic, the texts should be accessible to the learners in relation to the task associated with the text.

A further dimension to the difficulties inherent in making appropriate use of authentic materials may be found in Unit 6, called “Have fun!”. There is a two page spread consisting of a class text, a letter (Unit 6: 102) and seven short texts (Unit 6: 103) which are authentic tickets or leaflets (from theatre shows or London transport). Dealing first with the letter, it purports to be from “one of the pupils” who “wrote to a friend of hers, a Londoner who is working in a travel agency in Portugal”. This pupil is staying in a London hotel. It narrates what the pupil, Ana, has been doing in the U.K. Some of the descriptions include, for example, the weather:

It’s getting very cold, and I’m drinking a glass of hot milk. I was reading the newspaper and I know it’s a lovely weather in Portugal. Here the weather is changing constantly, but my interest in London is growing day after day.

Aside from the language misuse (for example, “reading the newspaper”, “a lovely weather” and “day after day”), the text resorts to a stereotypical description (“the weather is changing constantly”) based on dubious climatic information: the letter is dated March 31st 1985, so while it is possible that the weather in Portugal is “lovely” and the weather in London “is getting colder”, it is equally possible that the opposite is true in both cases. The lack of clear logic in the descriptions extends to Ana’s comments on the hotel, which is described as “comfortable enough to stay at” but also “too crowded” and “sometimes too noisy to sleep in”. Ana also happens to meet the letter’s

recipient's (Helen) cousin (Rose) in Hyde Park. The letter finishes with Ana saying that she has to return to her room "right now" to watch a "musical programme on TV", presumably part of the evening programme schedule, but that she will return to Portugal on April 3rd. Given that the letter will be posted on April 1st, at the earliest, it is difficult to imagine how Helen will receive it before April 3rd, knowing the vagaries of the British postal service. The point is that the text, as well as containing frequent problems of expression, is not sufficiently coherent in the way it constitutes the socio-cultural content, a failing of many 'class texts'.

The same cannot be said of the page immediately facing the letter (p.103), where the seven tickets and leaflets, related to the events described in the letter, are displayed. Their content is coherent (if in very small font/print), being drawn from real sources (in London, Oxford and Stratford, the only places many short stay tourists visit in Britain). However, the problem here lies in how the learners are asked to interact with these texts for reading: there are 25 comprehension questions to be answered. Of all these questions, there are 16 related to the letter and nine related to the tickets/leaflets. The sequence of the questions (10 of which contain language problems) appears to follow the letter's chain of events closely, but is largely random in terms of the authentic texts. This lack of balance in terms of what is required of the learners in relation to the texts and the order in which the texts are to be dealt with could be counter-productive: the learners are required to focus more (and in a more guided way) on a non-authentic, inaccurate (linguistically and culturally) text than they are on the authentic materials which provide the opportunity to interact with genuine information. The writers of this coursebook seem to have difficulty in finding an appropriate way to 'accommodate' these authentic texts.

There are at least 11 examples of authentic texts in the 7th grade book and there are examples of a more effective use being made of these texts. In Unit 10, called "Eating Out", there is a three page sequence of texts and exercises (Unit 10: 180-2) where the learners are faced with menus and room service forms from London hotels. Much of what the learners have to do falls into the usual 'reading comprehension questions' category, but there is a large scale exercise which requires them to make decisions based on personal preferences (their own food likes/dislikes) so that they can order a meal. The inclusion of an opportunity for a more personalized response is however

rather degraded if the fact that the learners in question are in the 7th grade is taken into account: young learners are not likely to be in the position of being in the “Royal Carver” restaurant in a London hotel where they have to “[c]hoose a two course meal and black coffee. You will also drink a Liqueur Coffee”. The main issue here is one of appropriacy with reference to the learners’ age, language level and socio-cultural context.

4. 1. B. 2 Passport 8th grade: texts for reading.

The 8th grade book contains almost double the number of texts for reading (39) in comparison with the 7th grade book (23), but exhibits a much narrower range of types of text: descriptive texts (19 texts, 48.7%) and expository texts (18 texts, 46.2%) dominate; an overwhelming majority of the texts are class texts (28 texts, 71.8%), without any of the texts being clearly authentic (six texts may be authentic but are not referenced). Much of the socio-cultural content of this coursebook is concerned with what may be ‘traditional’ or ‘typical’ features of British culture.

Table 31. Passport series 8th grade: texts for reading.

Passport: 8th grade: texts for reading: Total = 39					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural *</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	0.0% (0)	Narrative	0.0% (0)	Class Text	71.8% (28)
Beliefs	0.0% (0)	Descriptive	48.7% (19)	Figures +	7.7% (3)
Behaviour	56.4% (22)	Argumentative	5.1% (2)	Leaflet	2.6% (1)
Institutions	15.4% (6)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Contract	2.6% (1)
Icons	2.6% (1)	Expository	46.2% (18)	Leaflet	2.6% (1)
Geography	25.6% (10)			Menu	2.6% (1)
				Brochure	2.6% (1)
* One text defies categorization				Interview	2.6% (1)
				Mag extract	2.6% (1)
+ Figures= Maps, tables, charts, diagrams: not 100% textual				Guidebook	2.6% (1)

The entire book places the learners very much in a British setting: successive units cover “thematic areas”¹⁰⁴, such as the capital cities and countries of the U.K. (Unit 1), “principle festivities and public holidays” (Unit 2) or “more characteristic games, sports, shows and entertainment” (Unit 3). Indeed, the coursebook authors in the “Introduction” make specific reference to their giving “great importance” to providing

¹⁰⁴ These items are translations of what appears in the coursebook’s contents page (8th grade: p.4)

“coverage of British society” while at the same time including topics directly called for by the national programme.

The seven texts for reading of Unit 2 are all expository texts concerned with food/restaurants after a kind of introductory selection of 11 mini-texts on a single page, headed “Traditional Britain” (Unit 2: 43), with a sub-heading of “[a] guide to some familiar, and perhaps unfamiliar, British customs and traditions”. While the “familiar” events are indeed predictable (St. Valentine’s Day, Halloween, April Fool’s Day, and so on), there is also a definite attempt made here to ‘cover’ more than just English events: two particularly Scottish events are also included (Up Hell Ya and First Footing/Hogmanay). On the other hand, there is also an emphasis on events with a connection to the British monarchy (The Queen’s Official Birthday and Swan Upping) which, while curious, tell the learners nothing about how British people relate to the monarchy (or vice versa). There is tendency in Portuguese coursebooks to overemphasise the significance of the British Royal Family, conferring on them a centrality in British society and British people’s lives which bears little resemblance to the contemporary reality, and furthermore attribute the members of the royal family with almost ‘pop star’ status.¹⁰⁵ In the follow-up work on these mini-texts (on the next two pages in the book), both of the texts related to the monarchy are among the 6 topics developed further: the other four are St. George’s Day, Halloween, St. Valentine’s Day and First Footing; this additional work even includes the opening of the National Anthem complete with an extract of sheet music. There is no systematised attempt in the book to ‘connect’ these events with what goes on in the local Portuguese culture (or other cultures around the world): both April Fool’s Day and St. Valentine’s Day have some currency in Portugal (especially among younger people), but may have different nuances that could be discussed or, at the least, the learners could be asked to identify any similar local events or local events happening on the same dates; the fact that St. George’s Day ‘exists’ on the calendar but is not a public holiday in England might be worthy of comment, but it is about this event where the one and only question which mentions Portugal is included: “Who is the patron saint of Portugal?” However, while this question appears to have no easy answer, the emphasis on events with either regal

¹⁰⁵ Hurst (2001) discussed this bias towards the Royal Family in relation to several different Portuguese and British coursebooks. For example, Prince William is included in a section called “Our Heroes” in the coursebook ‘New Free Way 2’ by Maria de Carmo Ribeiro and Maria Regina Oliveira (Porto Editora, 1999).

or religious overtones in all the follow-up exercises brings the inclusivity of the socio-cultural content into doubt.

Much of the rest of Unit 2 is taken up with food, including the eminently predictable full “traditional” English breakfast (p.51), the “traditional Sunday lunch” of Roast Beef and Yorkshire pudding, “traditional” tea (p.54), the “important tradition” of fish and chips (p.55). Here, ‘tradition’ bears no resemblance to reality as, for example, very few people ever have the time to prepare and consume for such a breakfast, and while fish and chips was certainly the initiator of the take-away food industry, sales figures have been steadily declining and show that this dish accounted for only 3% of ‘food outside the home’ sales in 2008¹⁰⁶. From a pedagogical perspective, these short ‘input’ texts are supposed to initiate speaking practice activities of various kinds, some of which involve the learners in giving opinions, expressing preferences, asking for further information and other useful functions of language.¹⁰⁷ This way of using texts for reading is ignored in Unit 3, which deals largely with sports and reverts to the more ‘traditional’ technique of reading comprehension questions, gap filling and sentence completion exercises and writing summaries. Several well-known sporting events in Britain are described in fairly lengthy texts for reading; for example, the University Boat Race (pp.75-6, 120 words), Wimbledon (pp.73-4, 255 words). In addition, the sports of cricket (p.77, 125 words) and horse racing (p.78, 210 words) are covered, while the longest text (470 words) is devoted to Wembley Stadium. From one point of view, there is a range of sports which is reasonably representative of the interests of British people (leaving aside any possible social class bias in the choice of sports included): even the Highland Games is covered in a briefer text (p.70, 70 words), but here again much of the descriptive language is tinged with stereotypes and predictable implied meanings; for example, with regard to cricket, the text begins:

Cricket: the national game. A type of cricket was first played in England in the twelfth century, and sometimes it seems as if that match is still going on. Totally incomprehensible to the outsider, but a way of life to thousands of English people.

¹⁰⁶ From a survey by the UK Foods Standards Agency reported in *The Independent on Sunday* on 23.11.2008.

¹⁰⁷ However, there is an unreal (surreal?) element to some of the activities which ask 7th grade learners to imagine they are in a smart London restaurant with a “gentleman” who is friend of your father and mother. Also included here are some of the rubrics: “Offer to cook Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and invite him/her. He/she will accept gladly”.

Just why this sport is described as “the national game” is mysterious, since it is a game which has very limited expression outside England and even *Sport England*, an official body, fails to mention cricket in its 2010 report into levels of sports participation within England.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps more disturbing is the latter part of the quoted text, which equates cricket with a way of life, and a way of life which is exclusive to the English. The idea is that the game is too complicated for any non-English person to understand (although the text does go to mention how “Commonwealth countries play too”)¹⁰⁹. So logically the parts of the world that are not British or have never been British are excluded from this sporting “mystery”, which has rules which are “almost impossible to explain”. This kind of mythologizing is at best mischievous or misleading and at worst condescending or insulting. The vision of culture as whimsical exotica, as something that can be considered according to the duality of ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’, is not helpful to learners at any level when it is not conditioned by any further exploration or discussion.

The lack of any multi-layered, contextualised appreciation of socio-cultural content is most evident in two short texts related to other ‘sports’, presented on the same page: Fox Hunting (Unit 3: 71) and Grouse Shooting (Unit 3: 71). The latter text describes when the shooting occurs and the fact that “[g]rouse tastes very good and hunters obviously hope to be able to satisfy those who like it”; there is an implicit ‘acceptance’ of this ‘sport’ in the description, whereas the text about fox hunting adopts a more argumentative form, making reference to an element of cruelty in the ‘sport’:

Some people refuse to accept foxhunting as a game or sport. They find it cruel. Have you ever thought about it?

No questions about cruelty or the fact that this is a ‘sport’ reserved almost exclusively for the upper classes in Britain are raised about grouse shooting at all (and there is no follow-up work on this text), given that this ‘sport’ provides a tasty meal. While the text about fox hunting explicitly asks the learners to question or challenge their beliefs, it goes no further into the subject, despite this being a topic that could have provoked lively debate among the learners (just as it did in British society, until 2004, when fox

¹⁰⁸ In 2006, Sport England’s Active People Survey confirmed the most popular sport and recreational activities in England were recreational walking, swimming, going to the gym, recreational cycling, football, running/jogging and golf. None of these sports are referred to in this book, except football, indirectly in the text about Wembley.

¹⁰⁹ In fact, in addition to the Commonwealth countries mentioned, the Netherlands and Afghanistan have well established international teams as do, to a lesser extent, the USA, the UAE and Argentina.

hunting, deer-hunting and hare-coursing with dogs were outlawed in England and Wales, following the lead of Scotland, two years earlier). The ‘hand’ of the coursebook writer is clearly visible in the way these two texts are presented: there is an obvious attitudinal orientation (Liu, 2005) which deserves to be more explicitly explored.

4. 1. B. 3 Passport 9th grade: texts for reading.

The texts for reading in the 9th grade coursebook display a less polarised distribution of content, type and form. Almost 60% of the texts deal with socio-cultural content that is not in the category of BEHAVIOUR, with the texts focussed on three main topic areas: the world of work (Units 1 and 2), the world of activity holidays and sports (Units 3 and 4) and the world of entertainment (Units 5 and 6); the function/type of the texts remains predominantly descriptive (44.9%, 22 texts) and expository (36.7%), but there are a few narrative texts (8.2%, four texts) and significant examples of argumentative texts (10.2%, five texts). The form of the texts includes 14 different genres, but more than half of these are class texts (40.8%, 20 texts) or bio pieces (14.3%, seven texts).

Table 32. Passport series: 9th grade: texts for reading.

Passport: 9th grade: texts for reading: Total = 49					
<i>Content of text: Soc-Cultural*</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	4.1% (2)	Narrative	8.2% (4)	Class Text	40.8% (20)
Beliefs	2.0% (1)	Descriptive	44.9% (22)	Bio pieces	14.3% (7)
Behaviour	42.9% (21)	Argumentative	10.2% (5)	Leaflet	6.1% (3)
Institutions	16.3% (8)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Mag extract	6.1% (3)
Icons	18.4% (9)	Expository	36.7% (18)	Songs	8.2% (4)
Geography	12.2% (6)			Adverts	4.1% (2)
				Guidebook	4.1% (2)
				Quiz	4.1% (2)
				Poem	2.0% (1)
				Interview	2.0% (1)
				Film review	2.0% (1)
				Comic strip	2.0% (1)
				Monologue	2.0% (1)
* Two texts defy categorization				Card/letter	2.0% (1)

The locus of the material in the 9th grade book is again the U.K., with very few exceptions: for example, there is an extended text (225 words) about the Seoul Olympic Games (Unit 4: 101-2), a similar length text about Beethoven (Unit 5: 136), a text about Tina Turner (Unit 5: 145-6) and two long texts about Michael Jackson (Unit 5: 137-8,

420 words and 139-40, 295 words). Only four of the texts are referenced as authentic, although a further 10 texts may be assumed to be from authentic sources. While the frequency of authentic texts is low (only 14 of 49 texts, 28.6% of the total), there are more texts in this coursebook and the frequency of lengthy texts is the highest of the series, indicating an increasing degree of challenge being presented to the learners as they progress. Among the assumed to be authentic texts are three examples of leaflets in Unit 1, expository texts dealing with aspects of how the British state deals with the question of the employment market for young people. This content is perhaps determined by the idea (implicit in the National programme) that the 9th grade would be the final year of schooling for many learners in the Portuguese system in 1989 as, indeed, there is specific reference made to this being the case in Britain: “The majority of teenagers in Britain leave school at the earliest age they are allowed to, sixteen” (Unit 1: 25).

The assumed to be authentic reading texts of the unit consist of a leaflet about “Jobstart Allowance” (p. 29), a leaflet about “Job Splitting Scheme” (p. 30) and a leaflet about “Job Release Scheme” (p. 32), all of which deal with government sponsored attempts to create more employment. Learners respond to the first two texts with dialogue building activities (written, then spoken) and a reading comprehension exercise aimed at producing a summary (written). The relevance/appropriacy of the first and last texts is open to doubt, since the first only applies to people over the age of 18 and the last applies to people wanting to retire early, and the same kind of doubts may also be related to the second text, since it is aimed at employers rather than prospective employees. The subject matter and the follow-up work make the inclusion of these texts questionable, perhaps even more so because the unit opens with some dense interviews with five school leavers working in the first jobs (Unit 1: 22-4) and further class texts on the role that “training or past experience” had in the employment prospects of another group of five young people. This being the opening unit of the coursebook, the inclusion of such a quantity of reading material which obliges the learners to confront complex choices and experiences may have proved to be somewhat de-motivating. The first group of young people consists of a veterinary nurse, a shop assistant, a violinist, a police constable and a journalist, all of whom are pursuing the career they wanted to, and the second group all experienced difficulty having left school at sixteen. Within the discourse here there seems to an implicit message, that staying at school and getting

qualifications is the best option, otherwise unwelcome, though not unexpected, difficulties may lie in wait. One of the second group (Nicki) remains unemployed and comments: “I was sick of being treated like a kid at school”; another (Phil), who works on a building site, comments: “I’m just doing it for the money”; a third (Eileen) had an experience which “shows the particular difficulties girls have if they want to start a career”; the other two young people are happy in their jobs: a “motorcycle messenger” and a “postman”.

The range of jobs and the way these young people got their jobs (or not, in the case of Nicki) paints a picture of British society in 1989 (now?) which could be said to include “uncomfortable social realities” (Sheldon, 1988: 244), but is hardly informative or inspirational. The fact that the less successful group is dealt with in second place may also leave the learners with a negative impression of what the future holds for them. Perhaps fewer cases, dealt with in a ‘text lighter’ way, could have allowed the learners to focus more on the topic (its significance and their response to it) and less on the need to deal with large quantities of text and follow-up work: they are so busy dealing with the linguistic/language learning demands that there is no space left for interpretation and reflection. The seriousness of the topic of youth (un)employment demands a more considered approach aimed at providing the learners with examples of successful strategies beyond the obvious stressing of the importance of qualifications and training.

One striking example of the use of authentic texts in the 9th grade book is a poem: the only poem in the whole series (indeed there is only one other poem in any of the coursebooks under consideration in this study). The poem is “*The Unknown Citizen*”, by W. H. Auden (Unit 4: 107-8).¹¹⁰ The poem is a satirical critique of an unnamed man who lives his life according to external criteria, a standardised form of behaviour imposed by the bureaucracy of state agencies. The poem is introduced as a piece on “modern civilisation”, but is presented in the unit which focuses on the Olympic Games and sports: it follows immediately after a reading comprehension text and exercise “Technological Tennis”. Learners are asked to respond to this text with an exercise consisting of five sentence transformations based on lines from the poem, i.e., they have

¹¹⁰ The poem was first published in 1939 and is said to be a reaction of Auden moving to the USA. It makes allusions to a kind of Big Brother state which seeks to control and know everything about its citizens except things that really matter, like happiness.

to rewrite Auden's words for the sake of syntactic manipulation. In this case, it matters little if the learners 'understood' the poem or not, since the focus is purely on whether they can perform the five transformations, no further reaction being required of the learners. Clearly, it is essential that any use of poetry should include some kind of (emotional?) response to its metaphorical, cultural and ethical meanings (Finch, 2003), its implications, its relevance to the individual readers of the piece: it is a form of text which invites 'argument'. Using a poem should include some kind of appreciation of what the poem is saying and probably also of the poem's sonority (its use of rhyme and rhythm) which would in both instances help make the text memorable. Nothing of the kind occurs here.

Also categorized as argumentative in the 9th grade book is one of the later texts (Unit 5: 163-4) which is concerned with video violence, a text about young people's viewing habits/behaviour in the UK, under the suggestive title of "Dangerous Visions". The text contains comments that some people ("including politicians, church leaders and teachers") are worried about children watching horror films/videos, whereas the two children quoted in the text say they enjoy watching such videos. The coursebook also asks the learners to consider three questions:

How will exposure to video violence affect these children?

Will they enjoy violence so much that they'll become violent adults?

Will they see so much violence on film, that real violence will lose its power to shock them?

The learners are then instructed: "DEBATE the topic VIDEO VIOLENCE in your class" (p.164). Here there is an indication of the coursebook authors seeking to include a more interactive type of activity in which the learners can state their opinions and have their beliefs challenged, based on the input (content and language) from a text for reading. Indeed, the immediately preceding authentic text in this book on TV magazines (pp.161-62) also provided some 'space' for personalised responses from the learners (in three of the six follow-up/comprehension questions). These rare examples come from towards the end of the 9th grade book; a more widespread and consistent use of this type of approach to the skill of reading would validate the texts for reading employed throughout the series in the sense of being much more in line with 'best pedagogical practice' and theories of reading.

4. 1. C The “Aerial” series of coursebooks.

In this series of coursebooks there are 68 texts for reading, 43 fewer than in the Passport series but 32 more than in the Active English series. The Aerial series makes use of different formats to open each unit: often a kind of dialogue, mainly for listening comprehension or picture based sequences, where the people/characters play out a social situation to do with daily life (this especially so in the 7th grade book), so the number of texts for reading in each book varies from 18 (7th grade) to 26 (8th grade) to 24 (9th grade).¹¹¹ In terms of text length, there seems to be a steady increase across the years: the 7th grade texts are generally about 120/150 words, the 8th grade texts are generally about 350/380 words and in the 9th grade there are 9 texts (out of 24) over 400 words: learners here have to deal with much longer texts than in the Active English series, but the texts are less frequent than in the Passport series. In the 7th grade book the longest text (250 words) is a letter describing what happened at the school sports day; in the 8th grade the longest text (480 words) describes the return of the group of teenagers to Portugal from a trip to Britain; in the 9th grade the longest text (480 words) describes possible ways for teenagers to get involved in ‘social activism’: none of these texts is authentic, they all are ‘class texts’ written specifically for the coursebook series.

Table 33: Aerial series: distribution of texts for reading.

Aerial: Overall: texts for reading: Total = 68					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	4.4% (3)	Narrative	13.2% (9)	Class Text	67.6% (46)
Beliefs	5.9% (4)	Descriptive	69.1% (47)	Letter	11.8% (8)
Behaviour	67.6% (46)	Argumentative	7.4% (5)	Bio piece	5.9% (4)
Institutions	2.9% (2)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Mag article	4.4% (3)
Icons	5.9% (4)	Expository	10.3% (7)	Testimony	4.4% (3)
Geography	13.2% (9)			Diary entry	1.5% (1)
				Web extract	1.5% (1)
				Timetable	1.5% (1)
				Opinions	1.5% (1)

The language learning (input and output) context of this series of coursebooks is based almost exclusively on the lives/activities of groups of teenagers/characters who ‘inhabit’

¹¹¹ The 8th and 9th grade books in this series have separate, additional sections devoted to extensive reading, cultural “curiosities” and project work which will be analysed below when each book is considered individually.

each of the books, a feature which explains the socio-cultural content being dominated by BEHAVIOUR (67.6%, 46 texts). The locations in which these lives are fictionalised changes from England to Portugal, to the USA at various moments in the series; this allows for 'space' to include the topics of GEOGRAPHY (13.2%, nine texts) and ICONS (5.9%, four texts) and INSTITUTIONS (2.9%, two texts). The categories of IDENTITY and BELIEFS are absent from the 8th grade book entirely and only present in a very limited way in the other two books in the series.

The format described above also goes a long way to explain the overwhelming predominance of descriptive texts for reading in this series: what the teenagers do and where they go forms the basis of most of the texts. This approach is also reinforced by the expository texts which largely provide additional input in the category of GEOGRAPHY, mainly in the 9th grade book (five texts). Most of the argumentative texts also occur in the 9th grade book (four of the five texts in the series), so the proportion of descriptive texts falls to exactly 50% in the 9th grade. There are no instructive texts at all in the whole series, which seems paradoxical, since these teenagers are acting out their lives in the 'real world' in socio-cultural contexts that imply new experiences, new ways of doing things, and so on.

The series presents quite a narrow range of nine different forms of text (genres)¹¹², with more than two thirds being 'class texts' (67.6%, 46 texts). The genre of 'letters' is represented by eight texts (11.8%) which occur in all three coursebooks, whereas other genres are distributed unevenly, so the pattern is that each book has 'class texts' and 'letters' and two or three different genres in each different book, the exception being 'bio piece', which is in both the 7th and 9th grade books. The series introduces the (new) genre of personal 'testimony' (4.4%), but only in the 8th grade, and all three texts come together in a 'bunch' (8th grade: 66-71) when six supposedly British teenagers comment on aspects of Portuguese life/culture.

As mentioned above in relation to the longest texts in this series, none of the texts are authentic. In fact, this is true for all of the texts in all three books in this series, except

¹¹² Bauer (2009) coined the term "additive literacy" to encourage and make use of learners' natural curiosity about different genres and allow learners to transfer their existing L1 reading strategies and skills rather than ignore them or try and replace them.

one. In the 9th grade book there is a *Time Magazine* article which narrates the events surrounding the mass shooting perpetrated by Mark Barton at an Atlanta office in July 1999. The text, called ‘The Atlanta Massacre’ (p.9), serves as a kind of back-up text in establishing the initial context of the book. A teenage Portuguese girl is visiting the USA and making friends with other teenagers in Atlanta. While clearly the authors feel that authentic texts are not generally worthwhile, the choice of this single authentic text (among a total of 68 in the whole series) begs many questions. Is it the seriousness of the topic that demands an authentic text? Is the idea to introduce a model of the narrative function of texts, since the associated exercise requires the learners to “narrate an unexpected event that you happened to share, or else, invent one”? In any case, there are no further examples of authentic texts in the entire series.

4. 1. C. 1 Aerial 7th grade: texts for reading.

The total number of texts for reading in the 7th grade book in the Aerial series (18 texts) is lower than the 7th grade book from the Passport series (23). The format of the coursebook is based on the use of a lot of staged photograph cartoon-like sequences where the main teenage characters ‘act out’ the storyline (teenage behaviours) of the book: this feature, combined with a fairly extensive use of dialogues, means there is little ‘page space’ left for numerous texts for reading. This lack of emphasis (concern?) for reading texts is reflected in a narrow range of content (77.8% BEHAVIOUR), type (83.2% descriptive) and form of text (72.2% class text) being present: in all three cases there is a single predominant category. As mentioned above, the 7th grade book contains no authentic texts at all.

Table 34. Aerial series: 7th grade: texts for reading.

Aerial English : 7th grade: texts for reading: Total = 18					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	5.6% (1)	Narrative	5.6% (1)	Class Text	72.2% (13)
Beliefs	5.6% (1)	Descriptive	83.3% (15)	Letter	11.1% (2)
Behaviour	77.8% (14)	Argumentative	5.6% (1)	Bio piece	5.6% (1)
Institutions	5.6% (1)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Timetable	5.6% (1)
Icons	0.0% (0)	Expository	5.6% (1)	Opinions	5.6% (1)
Geography	5.6% (1)				

There is particular emphasis on ‘teenage culture’ in this coursebook, as the 12 young people identified in Unit 1 (p.6) ‘experience’ their day-to-day life - their homes, their school, their leisure activities and their families - throughout 26 separate units. The family is an ever-present topic in the 7th grade book. “Helen”, a teenage girl, is the focus of many of the early texts for reading (and other learning tasks): her Monday morning routine (p. 12) and her weekend in the country (p.14). The “Monday morning” text features the parents, “Mary” and “John”, both of whom work, but it is Mary who prepares the breakfast for everyone while John “goes jogging in the park” despite the fact she then “runs to catch the train to London”. Naturally enough (?) both parents, for breakfast, “drink a cup of tea and eat two or three pieces of toast and marmalade”. The only variation on the predictable stereotypes described in the text is “John and the children do the washing-up”, since Mary is running for the train (the husband runs for pleasure while the wife runs to work?). In the following text the family then visit Helen’s grandparents for the weekend. The grandparents have retired and “spend most of their time playing the piano, playing chess, gardening, cycling and travelling”; the fact that they worked as a photographer and a shop assistant seems to have afforded them a comfortable retirement in “a very peaceful village in the country”, far from the “noise and pollution of London”. They are “very kind and understanding people” and play a role in the social unity of this family unit as stressed by the final sentence in the text: “The whole family get together at their place as they all enjoy one another’s company and have a lot of fun together.” This idealised portrait of Helen’s family (and her teenage life) is never in doubt. The only adversity that Helen faces in this book occurs at the end when her best friend/boyfriend “Michael” has to return home to the USA at the end of the school year. However, in Unit 10 (p.34) the word “divorced” does appear in connection with a “miserable” teenage girl, “Debbie”, whose mother has re-married and had more children. The learners are asked for their reaction to this (and 3 further short texts on “My life”) in one of the follow-up speaking exercises (Exercise E, p. 35), but in a blunt fashion:

Who do identify with? Steve, Dan, Betty, Debbie or none of them?
 Tell us about your life.
 Mention where you live, how you get on with your parents/family.

The next exercise (to write a paragraph along the same lines) stresses the need to include some kind of emotional reaction: “Don’t forget to mention how you feel about all of this.” With respect to both these exercises, many young teens are extremely

reluctant to publically discuss their feelings about personal issues (even in Portuguese), and given the sensitivity of this topic, the statistical fact that many of learners may be living in a non “idealised” family, a more oblique approach would perhaps be more likely to be productive.

Since Michael, an American teen, is in England because of his father’s work, the coursebook also has a chance to explore elements of American culture, but there are only two real occasions when this opportunity is taken up: firstly, Unit 18 (p.58) is basically a monologue from Michael, which seems to have been extracted from a guidebook and sprinkled with a few facts and figures and devoted to “New York, New York” and consequent follow-up work; secondly, Unit 15 (p.50) is entitled “Arnold Schwarznegger¹¹³ (A true success story)” which narrates the basics of his life story and recommends him, in the text’s sub-title, as a kind of role model in the category of IDENTITY and in the way the text closes:

He is a good example of a man with talent, both physical and mental. Unless he changes his lifestyle, we will hear more about him in the future.

His ‘skills’ as a body builder, actor, family man and businessman are all mentioned in the text. This coursebook was published in 1998, which means that this text pre-dates the man’s subsequent political career (38th Governor of California from 2003 until 2011) and later scandals in his private life. Notwithstanding, the choice of person/celebrity to represent the main American cultural ‘focus’ in the entire book is questionable, as is the way the text constructs such an uncritical narrative, ignoring potentially interesting sub-topics; for instance, the fact that he is an immigrant to the USA, which is covered by a single sentence “When he was 20 he went to live in the USA”, or the power of Hollywood in relation to other commercial activities (the restaurant business he co-owned is mentioned in the text).

The issue of whether to include famous people or celebrities in coursebooks has been the subject of debate ELT materials writing circles: arguments in favour point to the learners being able to associate with such personalities readily and being consequently motivated to find out what the coursebook has to say about their lives; opponents stress

¹¹³ His family name is misspelt in the title above the text but spelt correctly in the text below.

the transitory nature of fame and the often dubious lifestyles of celebrities.¹¹⁴ In this case, the follow-up work based on the text “A true success story” requires the learners to compose a questionnaire (the book actually provides the questions) and conduct a survey among both young people and adults based on the initial statement: “Schools exist to help you become someone in life”. While ‘worthy’ in its objective, it is difficult to connect this activity to the text about Arnold Schwarzenegger, since that text tells the reader nothing of school years in Austria, nor does it mention anyone who had a special influence on his life (the two main elements to be explored in the survey). The problem is that some celebrities seem to be introduced into coursebooks for no real pedagogical reason; they are there to catch the attention of the learners by dint of their high media profile or photogenic qualities. While some celebrities contribute to the work of charities or aid organizations, this angle is rarely emphasised; instead, we find the more usual associations of happy, successful, comfortable people, emissaries of an expanding global celebrity culture that functions both to sell and to beguile (Cashmore, 2006).

4. 1. C. 2 Aerial 8th grade: texts for reading.

The total number of texts for reading in the 8th grade book in the Aerial series (26 texts) is a substantial increase compared to the 7th grade book (18). The format remains very similar, using a lot of staged photograph cartoon-like sequences, but here the main teenage characters ‘act out’ a kind of ‘inverse’ storyline: much of the book is focussed on a group of teenagers from the U.K. visiting Portugal (late in the book they exchange roles with their Portuguese counterparts). The 8th grade book has a similar kind of distribution of content, type and form of texts, but with a much higher incidence of GEOGRAPHY (19.2%, five texts) in terms of content, a greater percentage of narrative texts (19.2%, five texts) and a slightly less predominant proportion of class texts (61.5% (16 texts), largely due to four texts being ‘letters’ (15.4%) and three texts (11.5%) being ‘testimonies’, a genre new to this series of coursebooks.

¹¹⁴ A newspaper article called “Coursebooks and the curse of celebrity” outlines some of the basic arguments. The article appeared in the *Guardian Weekly* of 21.05.2010 and was written by Lindsay Clandfield, author of the successful ‘*Global*’ coursebook series for MacMillan.

Table 35. Aerial series 8th grade: texts for reading.

Aerial: 8th grade: texts for reading: Total = 26					
<i>Content of text: Soc-Cultural</i>			<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>
Identity	0.0%	(0)	Narrative	19.2%	(5) Class Text 61.5% (16)
Beliefs	0.0%	(0)	Descriptive	76.9%	(20) Letter 15.4% (4)
Behaviour	76.9%	(20)	Argumentative	0.0%	(0) Testimony 11.5% (3)
Institutions	0.0%	(0)	Instructive	0.0%	(0) Mag article 7.7% (2)
Icons	3.8%	(1)	Expository	3.8%	(1) Diary entry 3.8% (1)
Geography	19.2%	(5)			

Analysing a GEOGRAPHY text in the form of a class text (Unit 11: 46-7) and a GEOGRAPHY text in the form of a letter (Unit 20: 94) provides a useful insight into just what kind of content the coursebook authors chose to include at this level. Unit 11 describes a day spent sight-seeing in Porto¹¹⁵ and Unit 20 describes a day trip to York. Given that this coursebook is Portuguese produced for a Portuguese readership, it is unsurprising that there is less information in the way of ‘guidebook’ style description of Porto/Gaia: the authors assume a good level of local knowledge among their readers; in comparison, the text about York is full of details about the museums, the cathedral, the city walls, and so on. The text about Porto/Gaia is illustrative of how factors beyond the usual pedagogical considerations ‘shape’ the content of a coursebook and, in this case in particular, construct a ‘portrait’ of the local culture (viewed through teenage eyes), both by what is said and by what is not said.

The Porto of this text is one where young people have to pay special attention when travelling by bus: the English students must count the number of bus stops in order to get off in the right place: Praça de Liberdade. The implication is that there is some inherent complexity in taking a bus in Porto, but quite why students would have trouble in recognising when they had arrived at that particular location is hard to imagine. One student then suggests “walking across the bridge and having a look at Gaia” without actually naming THE bridge in question; the reader would then have to call on background knowledge and the text which says it is a “high bridge” to make sense of which bridge the students go over (the 19th century Dom Luís I bridge). One student,

¹¹⁵ The city of Porto is always referred to as ‘Oporto’ in this coursebook series without ever the two denominations being explained, even at the usual anecdotal level, which might appeal to the local learners.

“William”, is “delighted” because he can then indulge in the archetypical tourist activity of taking photos, and another student, “Peter”, is in playful mood:

Peter offered his arm to Fiona and said in a naughty way he just wanted her to feel comfortable and safe when she looked at the river from that high bridge.

So the gallant male is able to comfort the nervous female as one of 3 main episodes in this experience of Porto. In the final episode the students have an encounter with another group of teenagers in Gaia:

In Gaia they met a group of teenagers from a private school, wearing their uniforms. Though their English was not very good, they chatted for a while before getting back to Oporto, eager to share with their friends the experiences of the day.

The reasons why this group of local teenagers have to be from a private school and uniform wearing (both socially and economically ‘marked’ conditions in the local context) are unclear unless it is to somehow be implicitly included in one the follow-up speaking tasks: one which involves recreating the conversation between a local and an English teenager and one which involves re-telling the story of the day out from either a local or English perspective. Whatever the reason, the text oscillates across a highly subjective spectrum of implicit and explicit meanings from the mundane and obvious to the sexist and quirky, which contrasts with the information/fact heavy documentary/guidebook style text about the day trip to York, which itself reads very unlike any letter any teenager would write home.¹¹⁶

Quite how to deal with the local culture is a challenge which the authors approach in a different way later in the coursebook: the use of personal testimonies in 3 consecutive texts to describe various different aspects of Portuguese culture: people and food (Unit 16: 66-7), shops and climate (Unit 16: 68-9) and routines and places (Unit 16: 70-71). In the first text, according to “Fiona”, Portuguese teenagers are described as being very like English teenagers (concerned about clothes) and family life is harmonious, people stay up late “to have a chat about their day”, and the local people are friendly and helpful:

¹¹⁶ The letter in English by “Carla”, a Portuguese girl, to her parents in Portugal starts with the salutation “Dear parents,” and continues in docu-guide style to describe the day trip, filling almost two thirds of a page. It includes one section where her group receive ‘special’ treatment: the ticket-seller at the York Dungeon, who won’t allow them to enter without an adult but sells them brochures “when we said we were a group of Portuguese students” (Unit 20: 94).

As for the welcome we received, nearly everybody had a kind word and a friendly smile for anyone around and was quite helpful despite not knowing the person who requested their help. I myself was repeatedly assisted by a taxi driver who had never seen me before.

The language employed borders on both the absurd and the archaic. The first sentence here is 32 words long, the syntax convoluted and the register inappropriate for a teenage girl. Aside from the rather crass ‘praise’ it contains, the coherence of the text is questionable, both sentences incorporating incoherent elements. Who would ask for help from a stranger if they already had someone they knew with them to ask for help? Who would expect a taxi driver to know the customer getting into the cab? The next five texts on the various topics listed above display the same kind of characteristics: a largely non-critical ‘summary’ of the topic peppered with predictable stereotypical elements where anything distant from the British norm is explained by local tradition or quirkiness. Curiously, all these descriptions are written from the perspective of a British visitor/writer for a British reader, so details of Portuguese culture that all the learners would be likely to know already are described to them through the medium of English. The local culture in the 8th grade book is given the kind of treatment here that might be more appropriate for much younger learners or learners NOT based in Portugal.

At the end of the 8th grade book there is a section entitled “Curiosities: Update your knowledge” (pp.104-109), which contains information on The English Language, The City of London, The Union Jack, Capital Cities, Festivities, Food and meals, Sports and Education. There is no indication, in the students’ book, of how these topics are to be dealt with, but from the point of coursebook design the fact they are even present in this format (descriptive and/or expository non-authentic class texts in a separate section) means that these topics will fall outside any kind of activity or task based approach to cultural content. The same is not true of this book’s use of texts for extensive reading. There are two separate sections devoted to extensive reading; after Unit 10, two literary extracts are included from Oscar Wilde’s “*The Happy Prince*” and Mark Twain’s “*The Prince and the Pauper*” (pp.42-45), and after Unit 16, two further literary extracts from Robert Louis Stevenson’s “*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*” and Oscar Wilde’s “*The Picture of Dorian Grey*” (pp.74- 77).

The literary extracts in the first case are paired by together by topic/theme, “poverty/wealth and justice/injustice”. The learners are given various tasks to do: some

traditional comprehension type exercise, but also to gather information from the texts on the topics/themes and then to compare this to how contemporary royalty are portrayed in the press and how people like these live compared to “the poorest people in the world”. This task certainly involves the learners in close reading of the texts for the purpose of making a connection with the real world and commenting on real contemporary issues. A further exercise requires the texts to be compared to each other and there is some writing to be done to create a bio-piece for each author based on a table of biographical information, as well as the possibility of re-writing the stories in a personalised version. Whether or not this approach actually qualifies as “extensive reading” is open to question¹¹⁷, but there is certainly an attempt to engage the reader in an interpretative and creative manner. The second pair of texts also makes similar demands of the learners: the initial exercise requires the learners to interpret, explain and speculate about different topics drawn from the texts. There are also more of the traditional comprehension type questions before further exercises invite the learners to “fill in” the middle of the each story so as to explain the endings provided in the coursebook. The last exercise proposes that the learners transform part of the prose story (their own ‘middle’ part) into a cartoon sequence. This approach is much more challenging and creative, allowing the learners to call upon skills from outside the ELT classroom to respond to authentic literary extracts; it is activities such as these that are largely missing from the rest of the coursebook series when dealing with the generalist texts for reading.

4. 1. C. 3 Aerial 9th grade: texts for reading.

All six categories of socio-cultural content are present in the 9th grade book for the first time in any of the coursebooks already discussed, this despite the fact that there are fewer texts for reading in this book (24 texts) than in the 8th grade book (26 texts). This wider range also applies to the types of text in the book; though there are no instructive texts, the percentage of descriptive texts is low (12 texts, 50%) compared to the other two books in the series. However, this is not the case with the forms of the texts/genre, where only seven texts (29.2%) are not class texts. Among these seven texts are three texts categorised as bio-pieces (12.5%). The 9th grade coursebook makes use of seven

¹¹⁷ Generally, extensive reading is taken to be reading for pleasure, for familiarity, without working towards any particular linguistic target. See Charles (2011) for a research based discussion of this issue.

separate ‘extensive reading’ sections in a similar fashion to the 8th grade book (based on two literary extracts, one bio piece , one recipe and three class texts) and also includes four themes for “project work”: The Olympic Games (p.24), Job seeking (p.44-5), Views on food (p.68) and Technology (p.88-9).

Table 36. Aerial series: 9th grade: texts for reading.

Aerial English : 9th grade: texts for reading: Total = 24					
<i>Content of text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	8.3% (2)	Narrative	12.5% (3)	Class Text	70.8% (17)
Beliefs	12.5% (3)	Descriptive	50.0% (12)	Bio piece	12.5% (3)
Behaviour	50.0% (12)	Argumentative	16.7% (4)	Letter	8.3% (2)
Institutions	4.2% (1)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Mag article	4.2% (1)
Icons	12.5% (3)	Expository	20.8% (5)	Web extract	4.2% (1)
Geography	12.5% (3)				

A major theme in the 9th grade coursebook is the Olympic Games, with more specific references to the Games of Atlanta (1996) and Sydney (2000). The Games, in general, and the Atlanta Games, in particular, are explored through a historical perspective, whereas the Sydney Games are treated from a more geographical perspective. Early in the book, Atlanta serves as the meeting place for a group of six international teenagers including a Portuguese girl from Coimbra, “Catarina” (Unit 2: 10-11). This device, along with the American and Australian locations, gives the book the potential to explore culture/language more widely, since the previous two books in the series were very much based in Portugal and the U.K. The idea of diversity is trumpeted by the title of the unit, in which the teenagers are introduced - “All different, all equal”¹¹⁸. Indeed the group members are socially diverse, with different family backgrounds, different educational interests and different ‘other’ interests: vegetarianism, ‘Green’ support, football, and so on. However, the coursebook writers fail to avoid the pitfalls of an oversimplified concept of culture, and the texts include several quasi-stereotypes; for example, the American male teen is “not very selective about what he eats”, and the Japanese male teen is “22 years old but he looks younger”. The way that coursebook writers develop the biographies of the fictional people in their books needs to be very

¹¹⁸ This unit title is a translation of a well-known slogan in Portugal (and the rest of Europe) which has been used in various campaigns related to minority rights and was also the name of a TV programme on TVI.

delicately handled, as the way that these teenagers interact and what they do may be seen by learners as some kind of model of acceptable behaviour.

The 9th grade book makes use of bio-pieces to develop a topic of real importance in teenage lives: drug abuse. The topic is introduced in an extended class text (Unit 20: 78) before being exemplified by three bio-piece texts related to three celebrities: Elvis Presley, Boy George and River Phoenix (Unit 20: 80-81). The texts here serve to illustrate the theme of “victims and survivors”, which is worked on in one exercise (after the learners re-order the jumbled paragraphs of the bio-pieces in Exercise C, p.80). Presumably the “victims” are the two celebrities who died and the survivor is Boy George. With reference to Elvis Presley, the text gives more emphasis to his supersized eating habits rather than any particular drug addiction (the text says only: “After his death doctors found traces of 11 different drugs in his body”). With River Phoenix, the text gives quite a lot of information about his supposedly healthy lifestyle and attitudes (sports, veganism, and environmental campaigns) before the learners' are told: “Despite this, he made increasing use of cocaine and valium in the last months of life” before reading a graphic account of his death. It is difficult to equate the stories of these two celebrities with the role of victim: wealthy and successful, their problems were largely self-generated. While the text refers to the fact that Boy George's autobiography explains “how much harder it is to cope with problems like drug addiction when you are constantly hounded by the media”, the whole notion that celebrities with problems which they fail to deal with are worthy examples to be included in any discussion of this topic is clearly questionable.

This is an example of the rather confused way the ‘message’ of this whole section is developed, the main aim of which is to encourage the learners to consider the dangers of drug abuse. In fact, the potential for confusion is further enhanced by other factors; for example, in another exercise the learners have to first “Make a list of the possible results of becoming a drug addict” and then “Make a list of the reasons usually given for someone becoming a drug addict” (Exercise A: p.80). So, the learners consider the results before they consider the causes. The learners are then told, in a section called “Did you know?”, that there are “three main kinds of drugs: hard, soft and legal”, and are given examples of each before they are told (in bold print): “No matter what sort they are, drugs are dangerous – they can all cause addiction, serious illness and even

death.” The point of interest here would be some kind of debate of what is legal (the examples given are “Tobacco¹¹⁹, alcohol and certain tranquillisers”) and what is not. Also the learners are informed: “Some countries have tried to reduce drug consumption by making them legal, but it has not proved effective. When a drug is made free, its abuse tends to increase” (p.81). The authors here use the terms ‘legal’ and ‘free’ as synonyms, which would surely confuse the learners and also have lumped together all kinds of drugs when they have just made the distinction between hard, soft and legal. There is also some doubt as to the veracity of the statement itself as the “[s]ome countries” are not specified or verifiable. Further confusion arises from the final activity in this section, which tries to widen the scope of the topic (away from celebrities?) and connect it with the learners’ own socio-cultural context by promoting a class discussion:

In class discuss the drug problem in Portugal, or in your area. Ask and give opinions about how serious the problem is, who is affected by it, what can be done to reduce it, the role of governmental and private organisations, whose responsibility it is, the places where a cure can be found, money involved, anything you can think of.
Support your views and agree or disagree with others’ opinions. Ask for reasons.

This is an almost classic example of how not to deal with socio-cultural content: the instructions are vague, the range of the discussion ill-defined (“anything you can think of”), the expected response/output unstructured in any way. Such a topic with the potential to motivate the learners, engage with them at a personal level, and relate to the realities of their world is wasted. The facile use of celebrities, the confusing information presented, the dubious pedagogical design and the inconsequential end product all leave a lot to be desired.

4. 1. D The Extreme series of coursebooks.

There are 85 texts for reading in this series of coursebooks, more than in the Active English series (36) or the Aerial series (68), but some way fewer than the Passport series (111), which means that over the approximately 25 years in question no consensus on an ‘ideal’ number of texts is discernible. The distribution of texts in the series is skewed: the 8th grade book has 39 texts compared to only 17 in the 7th grade

¹¹⁹ This item is misspelt in the coursebook.

(which might be expected) and 29 in the 9th grade.¹²⁰ In this case, the imbalance is counter-intuitive as, quantitatively, teachers/learners would not expect the 8th grade to be the most ‘text heavy’ of the series. A similar imbalance can be found in relation to text length: 25.6% of the individual texts in the 8th grade are over 300 words in length, whereas 17.2% of texts in the 8th grade book fall into the same category. There seems to be evidence that the 8th grade book is asking for ‘more’ from the learners than the 9th grade book. Imbalance is also evident in the fact that the longest text in the whole series appears in the 7th grade book: a quiz about shopping habits (7th grade: 118).

Table 37: Extreme series: distribution of texts for reading.

Extreme: Overall: texts for reading: Total = 85					
<i>Content of Text: Soc-Cultural</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	10.6% (9)	Narrative	4.7% (4)	Class Text	42.4% (36)
Beliefs	4.7% (4)	Descriptive	62.4% (53)	Quiz	12.9% (11)
Behaviour	65.9% (56)	Argumentative	15.3% (13)	Mag Article	10.6% (9)
Institutions	2.4% (2)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Web text	8.2% (7)
Icons	2.4% (2)	Expository	17.6% (15)	Interview	5.9% (5)
Geography	9.4% (8)			Bio piece	5.9% (5)
	*			Testimony	4.7% (4)
				Email	1.2% (1)
				Web advert	1.2% (1)
				Anecdotes	1.2% (1)
				News report	1.2% (1)
				Monologue	1.2% (1)
				Song	1.2% (1)
				Poem	1.2% (1)
* Four texts defy categorization				Anecdotes	1.2% (1)

The category BEHAVIOUR accounts for almost two thirds of the socio-cultural content of the texts for reading in this series (65.9%), largely because the 8th grade book in this series presents almost no other kind of content: of its 39 texts, only six do not fall into this category. An additional factor here relates to the 7th grade book, which features as its core context the life and times of a family of vampires, an apparent attempt to create a kind of storyline in the book with a cast of characters that younger learners would find perhaps appealing/amusing. The inclusion of the topic of the environment in

¹²⁰ The 8th grade book in this series has separate, additional sections devoted to extensive reading about Anglophone countries and special festivities. The 9th grade book has separate, additional sections about famous people, places and festivities: these will be analysed below when each book is considered individually.

the 7th grade book allows for the inclusion of a mini-block of GEOGRAPHY texts for reading. As well as one text in the 7th grade book, in each of the 8th and 9th grade books there are four texts about IDENTITY, which means that the Extreme series has the highest overall percentage of all the series. Here learners are specifically asked to deal with bio pieces about other teens (7th grade: 14) and famous people who have/had problems (Kate Moss, 8th grade: 103), as well as examine their own personalities (8th grade: pp.77-8 & 82); the kind of texts that have not appeared in previous series. INSTITUTIONS and ICONS account for less than 5% of all the texts for reading in this series, indicating a much less Britain (or the USA) located approach to the content of the series than was the case in earlier series; further evidence for this interpretation comes from the 9th grade book, where all of the three GEOGRAPHY texts for reading refer to a 'world' context, related to the topics of rainforests, overpopulation and recycling.

While instructive types of text remain entirely absent from this series and narrative texts are very few (4.7%, four texts), there is more 'space' given to both expository texts (17.6%, 15 texts) and argumentative texts (15.3%, 13 texts). The expository texts seek to inform learners about 'world' problems (as in the case of the 9th grade GEOGRAPHY texts mentioned above and also in the 7th grade book: another mini-block on global warming, pollution and environmental curiosities: 107-110), but also about issues that have a more immediate relevance for teenage learners; for example, eating disorders (8th grade: 106) or vegan facts (8th grade: 51) or teen acne (9th grade: 15) or job hunting (9th grade: 95). The combination of these topics and the expository type of text may be seen as an attempt by the authors to approximate the content of the book to the likely concerns/interests of the learners by laying out information such as mentioned above in these reading texts. The presence of a larger percentage of argumentative texts here, rather than in any of the other series, adds weight to this notion. This is especially the case in the 9th grade book, which has six argumentative texts (20.7%) rather regularly distributed throughout the book, but contrasts starkly with the 7th grade book which only presents one argumentative text (about pollution: 110). However, despite these signs of a more considered approach to text selection, the dominant type of text remains the descriptive text: 53 texts (62.4%).

The forms of text present in this series exhibit quite a wide variety (15 different genres), which compares favourably with the other coursebook series (only the ‘text heavy’ Passport series has more: 18); yet eight of these genres are represented by a single text. Once again, ‘class texts’ dominate the panorama (42.4%, 36 texts). The next highest percentage of the texts for reading are quizzes (12.9%, 11 texts), mainly in the 8th grade book (8 texts), where there seems to have been a deliberate policy to include at least one quiz per unit, again implying a more considered approach to bringing the learners into closer ‘contact’ with the content of the coursebook: here each learner can make an individual, personal response to the text for reading. And this type of reading may correspond to the kind of activity learners indulge in outside the classroom with respect to magazines or online forums aimed at the teenage market. Indeed, the next most represented categories of this series, magazine articles (10.6%, nine texts) and web texts (8.2%, seven texts), can also be logically accounted for in the same manner.

The Extreme series, while containing only 85 texts for reading in the main body of its unit design, demonstrates a greater concern for the inclusion of ‘authentic’ texts: this is especially true of the 9th grade book, which has 29 texts, of which only three are definitely not authentic; the other 26 texts are referenced as authentic. However, there is a key detail here, which is: of these 26 texts, only four are not described as being “adapted” or as “adapted and abridged”. According to some scholars in the ELT field, this fact means that these texts are not, in fact, authentic, since they are not exactly the same as the original text. Further weight to this argument could be added by examining the sources from which the texts are taken: they are in many cases teen magazines written specially and graded for different CEFR levels in the ELT market.¹²¹ The 7th grade book, having at its core the Alucard family of vampires, contains only three texts that may be authentic but are not referenced. Thus, it is possible to posit that there was a clear change in editorial policy in the Extreme series in this regard.¹²²

¹²¹ Mary Glasgow Publications has a stable of such ‘magazines’, which are reasonably well known (and used) by FL teachers and coursebook writers in Portugal. The main titles for ELT are: Click, Crown, Team and Club. See: <http://maryglasgowplus.com/subscribe/english>

¹²² Sometimes Portuguese publishers will only commission further books in a series if the initial 7th grade book proves to be successful and this allows for quite substantial changes to be made to the substance of the subsequent books in the years between publications.

4. 1. D. 1 Extreme 7th grade: texts for reading.

The total number of texts for reading in the 7th grade book in the Extreme series (17 texts) is low compared to the other books in this series and the two previously discussed coursebook series. Part of the explanation for this lies in the fact that this book contains a storyline based on the lives of the Alucard family, and part because this book makes use of ‘extra’ reading activities not fully integrated in the unit structure (see below). More than half of the texts are focussed on BEHAVIOUR (55.9%), and most of the other texts (23.5%) are GEOGRAPHY. Descriptive texts also predominate (58.8%); there is only one argumentative text (about pollution) and two of the expository texts also cover similar topics (global warming and the environment). In terms of genre, there are seven different single examples of different forms of text, but mainly the learners are exposed to class texts (41.2%, seven texts). Additional socio-cultural information in this book stems largely from its use of three separate sections devoted to “Facts and Trivia” related to the USA (pp.28-29), the UK (pp.84-87) and London (pp.132-135). The book also has three separate cartoon-based ‘extensive reading’ double page “chapters” with the title of “X-kids”, which tell the story of a small group of teens at summer camp.

Table 38. Extreme series: 7th grade: texts for reading.

Extreme: 7th grade: texts for reading: Total = 17					
<i>Content of text: Soc-Cultural</i>			<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>
Identity	5.9%	(1)	Narrative	17.6%	(3)
Beliefs	5.9%	(1)	Descriptive	58.8%	(10)
Behaviour	52.9%	(9)	Argumentative	5.9%	(1)
Institutions	11.8%	(2)	Instructive	0.0%	(0)
Icons	0.0%	(0)	Expository	17.6%	(3)
Geography	23.5%	(4)			Quiz
					Monologue
					Song
					Anecdotes

The 7th grade book opens with an overt attempt to deal with issues of identity (Unit 1 is called “What an ID!”) and introduces a set of four international teenagers, who will share the experience of being at the “Brit School for Performing Arts”, located just outside London, with one of the book’s main characters, Mobiez, the teenage daughter

of the Alucard family. From this group, two teenagers are introduced through class texts for reading (Unit 1: 15), Caroline, from California, and Scott, from Scotland. While both texts contain a lot of information about their respective socio-cultural backgrounds (their attitudes to school, their personal preferences, their lifestyles and so on), there is no real focus on these aspects in the follow-up work; there is a vocabulary exercise (a crossword) and a reading comprehension exercise with eight questions that seek to confirm the ‘facts’ presented in the class texts rather than interpret, evaluate or develop any kind of comparative aspect related to these two teenagers’ lives. Quite why these two young people have won scholarships to study “the arts” in Britain is left rather unclear: Scott says “By the way it’s because of a science project that I have this scholarship” at the close of his class text, which seems somewhat illogical, whereas Caroline makes no explicit reference to the issue, saying about her scholastic background only that “It’s a wonderful school and I love studying, especially English and Geography”.

The main character in this experience of the “Brit School” is Mobiez., the teenage female vampire from Romania. It would be possible for her character to act as a kind of surrogate for the reader/learner, as she is also from ‘outside’ the target culture in question so that issues to do with identity, beliefs and behaviour could be explored from a teenage perspective that might engage the local Portuguese readers/learners. The main ‘input’ from Mobiez is in Unit 3, called “What a school!”. The text for reading (p. 64) is graphically modelled in the form of an email: an extended text (440 words, the second longest in the book), it covers none of the issues mentioned above, but instead describes more the institutional aspects of life in a boarding school. The pre-reading activity focusses on the formal aspects of an email (how it is different from a letter), asks the learners to speculate as to the possible contents of the message (the subject header of the email is “About my school”), and to discuss their own experience of sending/receiving emails. Having worked through these pre-reading items, the learners are then confronted with the text of the email: they find a text formatted/laid out exactly as if it were a letter, written in a very adult register (complex syntax, logically structured, use of description combined with exemplification), displaying none of the characteristics you might expect from a teenage e-mailer, except perhaps the informal closing/signing-off of “kisses and hugs” (the order of which is usually the reverse in English). The email is full of information that the recipients would surely know already; clearly the text is aimed at

the reader/learner and not her family, starting with an explanation of why she didn't go home for Christmas and what she did instead (surely her concerned parents would have already found this out for themselves). Further examples abound in the text, citing only one:

The school is magnificent and the drama course really fulfils my needs. I was fortunate enough to meet some wonderful people and I now have a special group of friends who also come from other countries. Some subjects are interesting and completely relevant for what I'd like to become - a famous actress.

At the level of use of descriptive language, for example, the adjectives (magnificent, fortunate, wonderful, special, interesting and relevant) are all from an adult register. The concept of having our needs fulfilled is rather a high level educational consideration and unlikely to be among the first things that a teenager would mention in relation to any taught course. The idea that Mobiez should have to tell her family that it is her ambition to become a famous actress several months after having left home to attend an overseas school for the performing arts does not ring true at all. The fact of being at a boarding school is barely explored either from the point of view of this being of some importance in British society or the educational system or from the point of view of Mobiez's personal experience of this kind of educational regime (largely alien to the local learners). The readers/learners get a long list-like description of the school's facilities (including "the five-star tennis court" or "the indoor or outdoor swimming pool" or "the biggest library I've ever seen"), but very little in the way of how she or the other 'outsiders' feel or are treated. The text contains phrases like "the best days of my life" and "my dream come true", but there is no reason provided for these observations other than the material comforts afforded by what seems to be an exceptionally well-endowed boarding school. The only negative chord struck concerns a lack of freedom, Mobiez not being allowed to leave the premises of the school, but this issue is not developed either. Several pages later there is a discussion activity (p.69) related to the learners' own school which could implicitly incite the learners to make comparisons (Britain/Portugal or boarding/day schools or private/state schools), but the book does not specifically encourage this way 'into' the socio-cultural content.

The fact that one of Mobiez's companions at the boarding school, Caroline, is also an 'outsider' from the USA is not developed through any kind of culture-based or language based activity, but is used as a justification for the "Facts and Trivia" section at the end of the unit about the USA (pp.28-29). The "facts" presented relate to the geographical

and political organisation of that country (two large maps and picture of the flag); the “trivia” are presented through an exercise which requires the learners to match 10 excerpts with 10 pictures. The socio-cultural material here is of the most obvious kind: about cowboys, the Big Apple, Las Vegas, Hollywood, and so on. A critical perspective of the language of the USA and the immense socio-cultural diversity of that country are never brought to the foreground in the book despite the fact that the structure of the book and its storyline(s) would provide a natural ‘setting’ for some kind of cross-cultural content. Instead, the book falls into the trap of providing predictable (already known?) content which can also have the negative function of reinforcing stereotypes; for example, one piece of ‘information’ in the “trivia” section: “3. Alaska is the biggest but least populated state in the USA. Its inhabitants are the Eskimos. They live in igloos and they fish and hunt for a living”. What is at stake here is both the veracity of what is stated in the text and what kinds of meanings this constructs for the learners; for example, Alaska¹²³ is not the least populated state of the USA, it is the least densely populated state; also less than 20% of the population are indigenous natives (Eskimos?), and the implied ‘image’ of a vast area of territory populated by people living in houses constructed from ice-blocks who “fish and hunting for a living” (in truth, largely a subsistence activity for a minority) can only serve to perpetuate a myth rather than provide a context for enhancing (inter)cultural awareness.

One of the other “Facts and Trivia” sections, about the UK later in the 7th grade book, consists of two pages about Scotland in its “Trivia” part (pp. 86-87). This section is also less than accurate in the ‘information’ it dispenses. The main activity is again a picture matching exercise, citing only one paragraph from the six provided:

The kilt is the most important part of Scotland’s national dress. It is made of tartan, a kind of cloth with coloured squares. You need about 8 metres to make one. Each tartan corresponds to a family/clan. Most of the family names begin with Mac, such as Mackenzie, Macdonald or Macleod.

The idea that eight metres of cloth is required to make one kilt is absurd when you consider the shape and function of the garment which at most wraps around the waist twice. The idea that “[m]ost family names begin with Mac” is simply untrue, as the most frequent family names in Scotland are very similar to those in England (for

¹²³ See: <http://www.alaska.gov/>

instance, Smith, Brown or Wilson), and a survey by the Registrar General for Scotland in 1990 reported that the first ‘Mac’ appeared in 10th place on the list of family names, and it was Macdonald not Mackenzie (only one in eight family names begin with Mac or Mc). What is stated in this paragraph, that Scotland has a “national dress”, is also very factually dubious, given that the vast majority of the population of Scotland is urban and lowland (as much as 80% according to a 2003 official report), and in all likelihood has little connection with this predominantly rural, Highland ‘tradition’. Perhaps it should also be noted that the highlighting of the kilt as a kind of cultural marker or emblem excludes the entire female population of Scotland by definition. The packaging of culture, in general, and here specifically with respect to Scotland, into something that can be described as “national” is also unhelpful, just as much as is the tendency to generalise about cultural practices or perspectives through reference to race or ethnicity (Holliday, 1994).

4. 1. D. 2 Extreme 8th grade: texts for reading.

The 8th grade book in this series contains 39 texts for reading, dealing overwhelmingly with BEHAVIOUR (76.9%, 30 texts), leaving no space to explore much more other than IDENTITY (10.3%, 4 texts). The texts are largely descriptive (64.1%, 25 texts), but there is a notable presence of argumentative texts (15.4%, six texts), which has not been the case in other coursebooks in this study. These texts focus mainly on the more difficult side of teenage life (such as eating disorders and stress in Unit 4), and have the potential to offer the learners insights into their own lifestyles and life choices. These texts are all authentic, which may add further value to their inclusion, given the general absence of such texts in this series. The forms of text represented offer a rather limited variety as in the other coursebooks, with class texts accounting for over half of the total (51.3%, 20 texts) among the seven different genres. Almost half of the texts have around 300 words, which indicates a concern to present fairly sizeable texts to these learners, more than was the case in the 7th grade book.

Table 39. Extreme series 8th grade: texts for reading.

Extreme: 8th grade: texts for reading: Total = 39					
<i>Content of text: Soc-Cultural*</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	10.3% (4)	Narrative	2.6% (1)	Class Text	51.3% (20)
Beliefs	2.6% (1)	Descriptive	64.1% (25)	Quiz	20.5% (8)
Behaviour	76.9% (30)	Argumentative	15.4% (6)	Mag article	15.4% (6)
Institutions	0.0% (0)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Testimony	5.1% (2)
Icons	0.0% (0)	Expository	17.9% (7)	Web advert	2.6% (1)
Geography	2.6% (1)			Bio piece	2.6% (1)
* Three texts defy categorization				Interview	2.6% (1)

As implied above, in relation to the argumentative texts, there is quite a strong emphasis in the 8th grade book on the world of the learners (or how young people live in the real world), an attempt to connect the socio-cultural content of the coursebook to real concerns and real areas of interest of this age group. Unit 4 is an important example of this approach, having opened with a bio-piece text about Kate Moss (p.103, including references to problems with drugs and alcohol and anorexia), which is then used as a stimulus for a section of “Reported Speech”; next, the unit moves to an expository text on eating disorders (p.106). The unit then adopts a more argumentative/speculative slant with three texts which develop the topic of eating disorders further before concluding with a section based on the theme of stress. At various points in the unit the learners are invited to give their personal opinions and provide evidence to support various interpretations of the causes and effects of such problems (for example, the pre-reading activity on p.106).

However, the unit also has a very strong bias towards ‘language work’ based on the texts for reading: at the level of vocabulary, the learners are required to choose the correct definition of various lexical items, to check their dictionaries for other lexis, to do a word-search exercise, to work on phrasal verbs; and at the level of grammar to do sentence transformations and to do an exercise on the use of gerunds. There is tension here between providing the learners with texts for reading which can be used to ‘open’ or ‘expand’ the learning process into the realms of real language use (to express their own thoughts and opinions) and the need to have some kind of structured, controlled language input in the form of lexis or grammar; the connections between these two tendencies are often neither very clear nor very convincing, with the overall impression

being that the ‘language work’ is the element which dominates teaching-learning processes.

A similar pattern is evident in relation to the texts in Unit 3 which deal with IDENTITY. The learners are presented with short class texts for reading (pp.77-78); focusing on six “Teen Types” (such as The Square, The Geek, The Lad and so on), which are basically psycho-sociological profiles, including an element of physical description. The learners do some analytical work on these texts (filling in a chart and matching descriptions to the texts), but the main workload falls on defining and associating adjectives with these profiles and on exercises devoted to the grammar topic: degrees of adjectives (p.81). At no stage are the learners asked to move ‘out’ of the book and make any connection to the real world or their own interpretation of the validity/accuracy of the profiles. Only much later in the unit (p.89), after further texts and exercises, are the learners confronted with a quiz about “How fashionable are you?” and a more profound text (four personal testimonies). A debate activity on body piercing (pp.90-91) rounds off this thematic area, but again with a distinct ‘language work’ bias. The learners have to create a bank of exponents for giving opinions/agreeing and disagreeing/expressing likes and dislikes which is accompanied by the instruction:

“Don’t forget you’ll have to use the sentences/expressions in the columns above. So, before the debate starts, study them carefully”.

It seems that activating the ideas and opinions of learners in relation to socio-cultural content is only permissible if there is some kind of identified, restricted language focus.

A further option is explored in the 8th grade book in an attempt to expand the horizons of the learners to a wider world of English speakers beyond the USA and the UK: there are “Facts and Trivia” sections in this book related to Australia (pp.66-71), New Zealand (pp.96-99) and Canada (pp.146-149).¹²⁴ One example with regard to New Zealand: what the learners encounter is a lot of geographical and historical input (pp.96-97) followed by an activity which combines paragraph re-ordering with picture matching, finishing with a page of general knowledge questions and extension activities (p.99). Leaving aside issues related to the unreferenced sources used in collating the

¹²⁴ Recent sociolinguistic research places great store in describing and accounting for the role of English as an international language and these three countries would normally be described as falling into the same “Inner Circle” category (Kachru, 1985), i.e., in the same category as the USA and the UK.

background information, these texts should show a greater concern with the accuracy of the information they contain; for example, the first sentence in the main text states that “New Zealand is situated Southeast of Australia, just across the Tasman Sea” (p.96), completely distorting the geographical reality of there being over 2,000 kilometres of ocean separating Sydney from Auckland (a three and a half hour flight). Or, to say that “New Zealand is famous for its kiwi fruit, and its avocados, that’s why New Zealanders are often called ‘Kiwis’” (p.97) is simply not true.¹²⁵ Both of these examples are taken from the “Facts” pages about New Zealand.

Further examples of inaccurate information in the 8th grade book can be discerned in the sections devoted to Australia and Canada. For example, in relation to Australia, among the “Trivia” it states that Mel Gibson was born in Australia, when he was born in New York; it also states that Ayers Rock is “in the southwest part of the Northwest Territory”, when no such territory exists and the site is renowned for being at the centre of Australia and no mention is made of the adoption of dual naming policy in 1992 to include Uluru as the official name of this world heritage site (since 1987). The section on Canada opens with the statement “The Native Indians call themselves ‘The People’” when, in fact, since the 1970s/80s, most official references to these peoples use the term ‘The First Nations’ - quite where the term “The People” comes from is a complete mystery. The section also states that “The Edmonton Mall in Edmonton, Alberta, is the world’s largest shopping complex ...” whereas, at the time of the publication of this book, there were at least five larger malls around the world.¹²⁶ When dealing with culture perhaps the least evasive and shifting elements are those that would fall into the category of verifiable facts and all coursebooks should be able to represent those facts accurately.

Another issue here relates to the careless way some of the actual text is phrased, which could leave the material open to a charge of providing the learners with a kind of ‘revisionist’ style history. In the case of New Zealand, in the paragraph re-ordering exercise in the “Trivia” section (p.98) it states that “[i]n 1840 the Maoris signed the

¹²⁵ The description of New Zealanders as ‘Kiwis’ dates back to very early use of the Kiwi bird as a pictorial element of the insignia used on military uniforms which later, after World War Two, became a generalised term to describe New Zealanders.

¹²⁶ The authors may have been using information relating to the status of this mall when it was opened in 1981.

Treaty of Waitangi. The Maoris agreed to sell their land only to Queen Victoria and the British promised to protect the Maori land". The Treaty of Waitangi is a highly controversial event in New Zealand history whose most recent consequences (since 1975) have been the payment of millions of NZ dollars in reparations for settlements of land disputes, but in this text it is presented as a kind of favour bestowed by a protective British crown. But perhaps the most insidious paragraph relates to the contemporary situation in New Zealand, the last paragraph that the learners read: "Now, New Zealanders and Maoris live and work together peacefully". Here, the learners are told that there are two communities in New Zealand: New Zealanders and Maoris, so despite the fact that the Maoris arrived in New Zealand at least 500 years before the Europeans they are still not to be considered New Zealanders. The coursebook writers fall into the trap of trying to define and categorise in an attempt to provide a multicultural perspective, when a more critical post-modern cosmopolitan approach would be more appropriate (Holliday, 2009).

4. 1. D. 3 Extreme 9th grade: texts for reading.

The 9th grade book contains fewer texts than the 8th grade book (29 compared to 39), but a key difference is that nearer all appear to be authentic texts (very few are referenced). The balance of BEHAVIOUR texts remains high (58.6%, 17 texts), but there is a significant number of IDENTITY texts (13.8%, four texts). There are also two (very rare) examples of texts dealing with BELIEFS. This book exhibits a narrow range of types of text, almost two thirds being descriptive (62.1%, 18 texts), but provides six argumentative texts (20.7%) at key moments of the book, so there are regular opportunities for the 9th grade learners to challenge or change their beliefs. Indeed, this book has a very strong teenage bias, in the sense that there is a very deliberate attempt for the whole book to have some kind of teenage slant, as can be discerned from the presumed sources of many of the texts for reading (web-texts, magazine articles and a newspaper advert). The percentage of class texts is the lowest in this series (31.0%, 9 texts) and lower than in any other book in this study, except the Passport 7th grade coursebook. Most of the texts are of between 250 and 350 words, although there are a few longer texts distributed unevenly throughout the book.

Table 40. Extreme series: 9th grade: texts for reading.

Extreme: 9th grade: texts for reading: Total = 29					
<i>Content of text: Soc-Cultural*</i>		<i>Type of Text: Function</i>		<i>Form of Text: Genre</i>	
Identity	13.8% (4)	Narrative	0.0% (0)	Class Text	31.0% (9)
Beliefs	6.9% (2)	Descriptive	62.1% (18)	Web text	24.1% (7)
Behaviour	58.6% (17)	Argumentative	20.7% (6)	Mag article	10.3% (3)
Institutions	0.0% (0)	Instructive	0.0% (0)	Bio piece	10.3% (3)
Icons	6.9% (2)	Expository	17.2% (5)	Quiz	6.9% (2)
Geography	10.3% (3)			Testimonies	6.9% (2)
				Interview	3.5% (1)
				Poem	3.5% (1)
* One text defies categorization				N.pper advert	3.5% (1)

This coursebook offers its additional socio-cultural content related to the English speaking in slightly different format, abandoning the “Facts and Trivia” sections used in the 8th grade book and reverting to three sections styled in a similar way to the 7th grade book: “X-Meeting” (pp.58-59) which has bio-pieces about famous people, “X-Travelling” (pp.107-109), which has three main texts on Hawaii, India and South Africa, and “X-Celebrating” (pp.155-157) which has three main texts on Pancake Day, Pancake Races and St. Patrick’s Day. This is a narrow interpretation of what constitutes socio-cultural content in ELT coursebooks: the existence of separate sections in a coursebook could be viewed as providing ‘space’ to explore different aspects of culture to do with identity and beliefs rather than utilize the less challenging categories of well-known people, places and festivities. In the case of people in “X-Meeting”, the authors opted for Agatha Christie, Abraham Lincoln, Elvis Presley, Charlie Chaplin, King Henry VIII and Shakespeare. Perhaps there is a deliberate attempt here to counterbalance to overwhelmingly youthful population of this coursebook (see below), but it seems unlikely that 9th grade learners would be very interested in any of these figures, all of them dead for at least 25 years before this book was published. The English speaking world can surely provide some figures that would be both more appropriate and more motivating. The associated task of matching pictures to the bio-pieces is entirely mundane. The follow-up work is similar: from one bio-piece the learners have to guess who the famous figure is (it is David Beckham) and then using a table of information the learners have to write a bio-piece for Rowan Atkinson. The contrast here, of two living, high media profile figures from the contemporary era is

curious, reinforcing the previous point about the endless possibilities of people who could have been included here.

The issue is really one of appropriacy, in relation to the learners' level of language, in relation to the learners' age, in relation to the learners' own cultural background and in relation to the expectations of the local educational system (Gray, 2002). Certainly, the text describing Hawaii (p.107) in the section "X-Travelling" falls short in respect of these criteria. It is possible that 9th grade learners already have some notion related to Hawaii from TV shows (volcanos, the hula dance) or the surfing culture, but this text fails to add much more information. The text can be considered a kind of tourist brochure summary, one which includes a single historical reference:

As it is a tourist attraction, nobody leaves the island without going to the beach or visiting Pearl Harbor, the most important historical place. Here the Japanese bombers attacked the Americans by surprise during 2nd world war.

If you want to know more about this historical fact watch the film 'Pearl Harbor'.

Leaving aside the poor English employed and the implication that Hawaii is one island, the highlighting of the Japanese military attack in 1941 without any context or further development is not appropriate in this kind of section, nor for these learners. The idea that the historical facts could be checked by watching a film that has the reputation for being highly inaccurate in historical terms¹²⁷ is not the kind of educational strategy that should be recommended.

The 9th grade book is very much set in the world of teenagers. From Unit 1 called "Spotlight", the learners are presented with texts (and many pictures) about young people, how they behave, what they do to occupy their lives; for example, the first theme is about skin care in relation to sun exposure (tanning) and acne, which moves along into social life and sleep habits. This book shows some concern for developing more controversial topics, exploring issues which are much 'closer' to the learners. For example, Unit 2 is called "A quick fix" and deals with addictions first from the point of view of a teenager (p.37) before citing examples of famous people with addiction problems (pp.46-47). The first text links the idea of advertising to teenagers starting to smoke, but is followed by the usual kind of true/false exercises and reading

¹²⁷ Suid (2001) details the major factual misrepresentations of the film as did many newspaper film critics at the time of the film's release.

comprehension questions to check the information in the text. In this case, it is the pre-reading activity which provides the learners with their main opportunity to give their opinions, describe their experiences, and so on: the learners are instructed to “comment on the following statements” in relation to two nearby photos of people smoking:

Advertising is the strongest causer of addictions.
Films incentivate [sic] people to smoke and drink.
Cigarette advertising shouldn't be allowed.
Everyone has the choice to smoke or not.
People shouldn't smoke in restaurants.

Statements such as these (ignoring the dubious use of English in the first two statements) have the potential to provoke the learners into serious thought, an obvious prerequisite to any language production. What seems strange is that these statements are not used to follow-up some kind of ‘content’ input (the teenage smoker text?) but what the learners get for input is a function bank of language, 12 items for “Hesitating, preventing interruptions and interrupting politely”. While the text about the teenage smoker is inherently argumentative in that the act of reading obliges the learner to condemn/not condemn this kind of behaviour, there is no real structured activity which demands a real response/reaction before the learners have to move on and consider problems associated with other addictions, like alcohol.

Further argumentative class texts challenge the learners on the topics of unemployment (Unit 4: 85) and zoos and animal welfare (Unit 5: 116) before the final text in the book, a quiz (Unit 6: 151), which is specifically aimed at getting the learners to consider their own position in relation to human rights: “In a multicultural society it is important not to be prejudiced. Try your personality quiz and find out if you’re tolerant of people who are different from you.” The learners are asked to make up their minds according to multiple choice options about five questions which deal with mixed race relationships, immigrant neighbours, people who speak with a strong accent, racist behaviour towards a classmate and possible emigration. The form of the text is highly accessible to the learners, the type of the text provides the opportunity for some critical thinking and the socio-cultural content of the text is likely to create real interaction among the learners. This text also serves as a prompt for a class debate and a further suggestion of doing a school survey about the experience of other learners who have come to Portugal from other countries (p.152). It seems strange that, only as the 9th grade is closing is it

possible to encounter this kind of stimulating and inclusive pedagogical approach to the use of texts for reading, which can be used to ‘stretch’ learners’ conceptions about their own identity/other identities and their own beliefs/other beliefs.

The lack of any clear pattern in the way that coursebook writers include texts for reading in this form of ELT teaching materials is surprising, given the importance usually attributed to developing the skill of reading in most FL syllabi, especially since the fact is tasks/exercises aimed at the development of other skills also rely heavily on the learners having the ability to read (the instructions for tasks or exercise/test rubrics, for example). This analysis may be confirmed when considering the three main analytical categories (types, form and content of text) from a historical perspective.¹²⁸

Table 41. Chronology of coursebooks; texts for reading: types of text.

Historical Analysis: Types of Text					
Coursebook Series	7th grade		8th grade		9th grade
Active English	Descriptive	50%	Descriptive	100%	Descriptive 42.1%
	Narrative	50%			Expository 26.3%
Passport	Descriptive	34.8%	Descriptive	48.7%	Descriptive 44.9%
	Expository	26.1%	Expository	46.2%	Expository 36.7%
Aerial	Descriptive	69.1%	Descriptive	76.9%	Descriptive 50%
	Narrative	13.2%	Narrative	19.2%	Argumentative 6.7%
Extreme	Descriptive	58.8%	Descriptive	64.1%	Descriptive 62.1%
	Expository	17.6%	Expository	17.9%	Argumentative 0.7%

What remains common throughout the period in question is the predominance of descriptive texts which largely relate to the everyday experiences of the selected coursebook characters. While predominant, the distribution of descriptive texts is highly uneven, except in the case of the Extreme series, another indication of a lack of any clear editorial/authorial policy. This type of texts allows for few opportunities to develop any kind of critical awareness, events and actions happen without comment, any kind of comparison either with the local culture or world cultures. The choice of the Aerial series authors to feature a strong storyline goes some way to explaining the unusual resurgence of narrative texts in the first two books of this series. Argumentative

¹²⁸ The three tables in this section show only the two most statistically frequent occurrences in the original data.

texts appear recently only as a 9th grade option, an indication that coursebook writers consider this type of text implies some kind of greater linguistic difficulty or perhaps is more age-related, with respect of cognitive maturity, since the more ‘controversial’ topics are placed in the 9th grade, according to the National Programme. Only then are learners challenged to interpret and evaluate.

Table 42. Chronology of coursebook;: texts for reading: forms of text.

Historical Analysis: Form of Text					
Coursebook Series	7th grade		8th grade		9th grade
Active English	Class texts	33.3%	Class texts	54.5%	Lit extracts 26.3%
	Letters	33.3%	Letters	27.3%	Class texts 21.1%
Passport	Class texts	21.7%	Class texts	71.8%	Class texts 40.8%
	Leaflets	17.4%	Figures	7.7%	Bio-pieces 14.3%
Aerial	Class texts	72.2%	Class texts	61.5%	Class texts 70.8%
	Letters	11.1%	Letters	15.4%	Bio-pieces 12.5%
Extreme	Class texts	41.2%	Class texts	51.3%	Class texts 31%
	Interview	17.6%	Quiz	20.5%	Web texts 24.1%

The form of text which figures most frequently across the whole range of coursebooks in this study is class texts. Coursebook authors clearly prefer to ‘control’ the kind of texts that learners are presented with, perhaps seeing this form as the most ‘educationally appropriate’ in the sense that the development of the reading skill is taken to be a function of information checking rather than text interpretation. This choice, by definition, reduces the availability of authentic texts for learners and reduces the level of real experience that learners can achieve in relation to the target culture. The Extreme series offers greater variety, the statistics are less ‘dominated’ by a single form in both the first and the second most frequent form of texts. This perhaps indicates a recognition in more recent times of the need for learners to work with various, different forms of texts for reading. The disappearance of letters which marked the Active English series (and corresponded to the scenario of teens travelling away from home to the UK and the USA in the Aerial series) reflects an ‘external’ change prompted by the rise of computer mediated information and communication technology which has led to the virtual extinction of letter writing (especially among young people) and, at the same, time fuelled the spread and importance of English around the world (Guilherme, 2007).

Providing a wider range of texts would mean much more being required of the learners in terms of training in different real-life styles of reading (Rivas, 1999).

Table 43. Chronology of coursebooks; texts for reading: content of texts.

Historical Analysis: Content of Text						
Coursebook Series	7th grade		8th grade		9th grade	
Active English	Behaviour	100%	Behaviour	81.8%	Behaviour	68.4%
			Geography	9.1%	Geography	21.1%
Passport	Behaviour	43.5%	Behaviour	56.4%	Behaviour	42.9%
	Geography	34.8%	Geography	25.6%	Icons	18.4%
Aerial	Behaviour	77.8%	Behaviour	76.9%	Behaviour	50.0%
	Geography	5.6%	Geography	19.2%	Geography	12.5%
Extreme	Behaviour	52.9%	Behaviour	76.9%	Behaviour	58.6%
	Geography	23.5%	Identity	10.3%	Identity	13.8%

The overwhelming dominance of texts which present aspects of private and public behaviour (only twice falling below 50%, both in the Passport series) represents a rather simplistic approach to cultural content: it is deemed sufficient to show/describe what people do (in order to ‘cover’ the topics laid down in the National programme) but with little regard to the belief/value systems that affect/govern the way people act/live. This is backed up with greater or lesser amounts of information about geography and tourism, the exceptions being the 9th grade book in the Passport series and the 8th and 9th grade books in the Extreme series. Rarely are learners confronted with issues related to identity and beliefs, the fundamental elements of any inclusive approach to cultural understanding and interculturality.¹²⁹ This lack means that learners are denied the opportunity to “become intuitively aware of something experienced before trying to achieve conscious understanding of it” (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004: 7). The coursebooks, through their texts for reading, present a restricted perspective, basically dealing with a kind of lifestyle where English is used but without bringing out/considering the values that underpin that lifestyle (western? consumerist?)¹³⁰ or without clearly indicating the extent to which that lifestyle is nowadays dynamic and

¹²⁹ Liu (2005) reports 89 out of 308 texts in his corpus of Chinese language coursebooks could be identified as constructing a discourse of cultural values and beliefs, categorized under 5 different headings.

¹³⁰ Taki (2008) critically analysed coursebooks used in Iran and concluded that they represented a particular discourse: that of western economic power and consumerism.

international (Caukill, 2011) and is no longer the domain of a particular nation. Holliday (2009: 146) points out that “the notion of British national culture is in decline because of the way in which the old idea of ‘English identity’, which can no longer be tied rigidly to a Protestant ethic, is being moved on by ‘mass global culture’”, and so the Britain-based foundations of the cultural content in the Active English and Passport series are no longer valid.

What this study of texts for reading clearly shows is that while Portuguese ELT coursebook publishers and writers are aware of the need to have teaching materials checked to ensure some kind of linguistic accuracy, insufficient attention is paid to the cultural content (facts, meanings, messages, and so on). The role of the ‘linguistic reviser’¹³¹ of a forthcoming ELT coursebook is often attributed to an experienced native speaker teacher of English, resident in Portugal, but consists largely of going through the texts/exercises checking their spelling, lexis and syntax. Occasional methodological input may be requested and/or supplied, but little else and certainly nothing systematically related to ‘culture’.

¹³¹ Active English was “revised by Judith Wilson and Kathy Rulon”; the authors of Passport thank “Mrs Leonora Dismore Dias de Lima pela revisão linguística”; Aerial had David Davis as “consultor linguístico”; and Extreme had “revisão linguística e pedagógica” by Neil Mason.

Chapter Five: Illustrations, Culture and Coursebooks.

Discussing how culture is represented through illustrations

In our shared heritage of western European thought (and linguistic origins), the concept of ‘knowing’ or ‘understanding’ has usually been considered as concomitant with ‘seeing’ (Mota Santos, 2004). This standpoint is relevant in relation to images/photographs which themselves may be constituted as a form of knowledge of the world (Sontag, 1979) and increasingly the form of knowledge of the world in the today’s current era of image-mediated high modernity (Giddens, 1991). It has become something of a truism to state that we are living in a hugely visual society; exposure to visual imagery seems to be ever-increasing in volume and incessant in nature: “[n]owadays, we are moving into an era in which visual literacy is as important as language/textual literacy. In this new reality, our ability to communicate ideas visually is as important as our ability to conceive them” (Kang, 2004: 58); it may even be the case that images will take over from the written word as our default means of communication (Gombrich, 1998). Given the increasingly important role attributed to the visual, this chapter will explore the ‘purposes’ or ‘uses’ that illustrations in coursebooks serve: whether the drawings, figures and photographs employed serve any clear objective in relation to the FL teaching-learning process must surely be a key pedagogical consideration and, in addition, the meanings that these illustrations impute should also be carefully examined.

In the field of education, recognition of the importance of the visual element in instructional materials can be traced back to the early 20th century (Thorndike, 1912) as well as, more recently, to the early part of the timeframe of this study (Wright, 1976, or Salomon, 1979):

[since the 1970s] ... increasing focus was placed on the visual presentation of the ESL textbook, as opposed to the grammatical or textual content. ... Clearly, the focus has shifted; images have become an integral component of the presentation of the language and [...] of the culture. (Giaschi, 2000: 34)

Pereira (2007), in a longitudinal study of primary level coursebooks for Portuguese, reported an increase in the amount of space occupied by images from 30/40% in 1952/1958 to 80% in 2005. In their study of coursebooks in Spain, Perales & Jiménez (2002) referred to about 50% being devoted to illustrations. However, only three out of their 150 criteria for evaluation referred to illustrations which led them to describe the

importance attributed to their role as being “almost anecdotal” (ibid: 369).¹³² In her research into coursebooks and user attitudes¹³³, Carvalho (2011) found that having ‘too much’ text and ‘not enough’ illustrations were significant factors in learners’ dislike of certain coursebooks. Among the teachers questioned, the existence of appropriate images was also considered a significant factor in coursebook selection. At the very least, images/illustrations/photographs provide a different way of “preserving, storing or representing information” (Emmison & Smith, 2000: 2) from the written texts that historically have been seen to be at the heart of the educational system.¹³⁴ Images may also be seen as functioning as a stimulus to provoke an emotional reaction, to influence social behaviour, and to encourage a rational response as well as having more explicit roles in pedagogical practices (Badanelli, 2012), stimuli which operate in different ways in different coursebooks. For today’s learners and teachers it is no surprise that both international and locally produced ELT coursebooks are replete with full colour photographs, often to the extent that that they occupy a considerable proportion of the page space available and resemble more a table top magazine than an educational instrument.. Researchers in Spain concluded, in relation to science coursebooks, that “[t]he trend towards the beautification of the books through illustrations is not justified and adds difficulties for readers who are faced with more complex representations where a proliferation of distracting elements increases the risk of erroneous interpretations” (Perales & Jiménez, 2002: 383).¹³⁵

Publishers and writers of ELT coursebooks logically must consider that the investment required to produce such a glossy, full colour, product, with dense use of visual representations, is worth the return. Indeed, the decision to produce coursebooks of this nature must rest solely with the publishers (Machado, 1996), although it would clearly be of interest to find out what the consumers/learners think (Prowse, 1998). Any initial, superficial, ‘flick through’ evaluation of any coursebook would conclude that this colourfulness adds to the product’s attractiveness (Bell & Gower, 1998), which might, in turn, lead to higher rates of adoption by schools and thus increased sales. Photographs in particular have gained a ‘special’ status in relation to other forms of data

¹³² Translated quotation.

¹³³ Carvalho researched the three most popular ‘second cycle’ coursebooks for Portuguese, Maths, History, Geography and Natural Sciences from the academic year 2007/2008.

¹³⁴ In science subjects, in England, the visual mode may already be the central source of information, transforming the nature of the teaching-learning channel (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, 30-31).

¹³⁵ Translated quotation.

which means their inclusion in coursebooks is generally taken to be reasonable and positive: “[U]nlike other forms of storing information, photographs are signs which bear an iconic resemblance to the reality they represent” (Emmison & Smith, 2000: 3). In this way visuals create an aura of authenticity, i.e., what the learners see is somehow more ‘real’, albeit a two-dimensional version of reality: “[v]isuals can bring today’s world into the language learning environment by serving as a reflection of what exists outside the foreign or second language classroom” (Canning-Wilson, 2001: n.p.g.).

There is then a powerful commercial perspective to the use of colourful illustrations and/or photographs, but there should also be a pedagogical benefit, so that learning becomes more effective when the coursebook/materials are well illustrated. Care is required, since misuse of images may interfere with learning¹³⁶: images may be unclear, distracting, overwhelming or irrelevant; for example, too many charts and diagrams might be off-putting and therefore de-motivating for learners in the Humanities stream of secondary education in Portugal. There is a strong need for any images to correspond to the interests and sense of taste of the learners: “[t]he illustrations, in turn, must be colourful and always, whether cartoons or other drawings, must have due regard for the preferences and tastes of the target audience” (Santo, 2006: 110).¹³⁷ Notwithstanding the potential benefits and pitfalls, the cultural component of the illustrations must also be born in mind: for example, a cartoon may serve to provoke discussion prior to a reading activity, thus providing contextual support for the subsequent information (i.e., be pedagogically valid), but it may equally reinforce a stereotype (i.e., be culturally inappropriate).¹³⁸

Without doubt, images create meaning, at a surface level and also as a deep structure¹³⁹; in much the vein as a Chomskian approach to language (Hall, 1997), these structures create a representational system, a visual grammar with similar components to a verbal grammar: a model which would include ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning

¹³⁶ However, it is also true to say that there are coursebooks in different educational cultures (e.g. Japan) with very few illustrations which produce just as good results, if not better, as those in the USA or the UK.

¹³⁷ Translated quotation.

¹³⁸ In this context of ‘pre-activities’ or ‘advance organisers’, visual materials have been identified as providing an organisational framework to delimit possible meanings whereby learners can formulate hypotheses which are more likely to be correct.

¹³⁹ See Alexander (1994) for an exploration of the deep and surface meanings of images in the context of advertising.

(Halliday, 1994). The combination of the image's content, referent and context creates meaning (Ball & Smith, 1992), a meaning which may be decoded through a careful 'reading' of the image. Research with young children's literature (picture books) has shown¹⁴⁰ that the reading of visuals is a very different process to the reading of words (speech or writing), involving a different logic, the logic of space and simultaneity (Kress, 2003; Arizpe & Styles, 2003). However, this present study is primarily focussed on how images are used within the context of the FL teaching-learning process and not on analysing the images as such.¹⁴¹ It is important to be able to understand not only the denotation, the obvious/literal meaning, but also the connotation:

[m]eanings that occur when the denotation interacts with the dominant cultural values associated with the signs and attitudes, feelings and emotions of the audience/users. Connotations are ideological and mythological in that they (re)present cultural values as being natural when they are actually socially constructed. (Emmison & Smith, 2000: 75)

Thus the meaning of an image/photograph is dependent on who is doing the 'looking' and not the visual sign itself, on "the articulation between the viewer and the viewed, between the power of the image to signify and the viewer's capacity to interpret meaning" (Evans & Hall, 1999: 4). The audience (viewers) in this study consists of young Portuguese people, learners being confronted with images (and texts) linked to a foreign language/culture within the context of an educational process. All of them will have differing individual capacities to interpret what they see, which determines that each image may have many different meanings or shades of meaning, a fact compounded by the way in which the images are placed on specific pages of coursebooks:

[b]eyond what is seen in the image, however, there are many stories to be construed from what is seen. [...] The photographic image can carry a large number of different meanings. It is 'polysemic'. Generally the polesemy of the image is controlled by its juxtaposition with a verbal text. (Burgin, 1999: 48)

The analysis and interpretation of visual data, in the European semiotic tradition, construes photographs as being a kind of text. The key thinker here is Roland Barthes, who, in various publications concerning semiology (1977a, 1977b, 1981), took the central issue of photographs to be their interpretation and its position in a system of

¹⁴⁰ Walsh (2003: 129) concluded that with very young children "[t]he pictures evoked a variety of responses that were not merely literal as they incorporated different levels of cognitive, affective and cultural understandings."

¹⁴¹ For this reason the usual 'toolkit' of close analysis of images/photographs that includes concepts such as 'frames', 'identification', 'signifier/signified' or 'subject position' will not be employed in this study.

cultural representation (Emmison & Smith, 2000). Barthes stressed the importance of any accompanying verbal text in the construction of meaning: as the meaning of visual images is too indefinite, it needs to be fixed by linguistic elaboration. However, more recently, this emphasis on the co-dependence of images and verbal text has been ‘loosened’: “the visual component of a text is an independently organized and structured message, connected with the verbal text, but in no way dependent on it – and similarly the other way around” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 18). In relation to ELT coursebooks, this is especially significant as images/photographs can occur independently of just such an accompanying text, and therefore can be interpreted as having a non-text dependent meaning: words may create meanings which visual representations cannot, but the inverse is also true. Further work on photographs as indicators of underlying cultural forces (mainly in newspapers) by Hall (1973) demonstrated the open-ended nature of any ‘reading’ of a photograph; any interpretation depends on individual responses to the actions, gestures and expressions contained in the image. Photographs can be said to have an ideological force;¹⁴² this force may help to mould behaviours and principles or encourage specific activities:

The relevance of images and illustrations in school textbooks lies not only in the fact that they serve to consolidate the teachings of a given discipline, but also because they represent an entire world of values, beliefs, norms and dogmas. [...] Illustrations evoke sentiments and emotions while they incite the observer’s identification for the purpose of creating, dispelling or maintaining certain attitudes and conducts.

(Badanelli, 2012: 333)

The kind of illustrations/images that appear in ELT coursebooks may vary considerably within three broad categories: figures (maps, charts, diagrams, and so on), drawings (line drawings, single or strip cartoons, and so on), and photographs (featuring people, places, and so on). Historically, these elements could be reproduced either in colour or in black and white, although the most recent coursebooks make exclusive use of colour reproduction¹⁴³. As the type of illustrations employed is not the only visual element of a coursebook, any evaluation process would also recognise the importance of taking into account the layout (for example, the ratio of text to illustrations, mentioned above), the use made of icons/symbols (to classify activities and guide learners to reference materials, extra exercises, and so on) or the use made of different font types or headings.

¹⁴² See Hamilton (1997) for an exploration of the ideological implications present in French post-war humanist photography (Cartier-Bresson, Doisneau, etc.).

¹⁴³ The connection between the use of colour and the transmission of cultural and conceptual information will be discussed below.

With drawings considerable variation is possible in terms of thickness of lines (bolder or thicker) or deliberately ‘warm’ colours or varying degrees of grey to create a positive focus (Badanelli, 2012). Ellis & Ellis (1987) suggest evaluation criteria to be applied when dealing with the visual material of textbooks. They organise their criteria into three groups: relevance, accessibility and cohesion. Included within these criteria are considerations such as whether the illustrations help to define, consolidate and contextualise, whether there is enough variety at the right level for the learners, whether the illustrations are accurate representations (mimesis), whether the illustrations are relevant to the learning materials or a distraction and whether the illustrations help guide learners through the materials in a systematic, coherent manner. If the answer to these questions is affirmative, then there is strong likelihood that both teachers and learners will feel happy to be working with the materials and therefore increase the possibility of successful learning outcomes.

Other authors, within the context of a more generalist discussion of practices and procedures to do with ELT materials evaluation, have commented on the need to analyse the visual elements present. McDonough & Shaw (1993: 66-77) discuss what kind of visuals are included and what use is made of them, as part of an extensive list of 22 criteria, sub-divided into external and internal. Ur (1996: 186) lists 19 examples of what she terms general criteria, including the rather vague item of “appropriate visual materials available” (ibid: 186). Tomlinson (1998: 5-22) aligns Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research with 16 items that materials should exhibit, where visual content is mentioned in relation to learning styles. In addition, there is also a significant body of psychological research focussing on the use of visual elements as part of a multi-media approach to learning based on a constructivist view in which learners can make better sense of materials presented to them if there is more than purely verbal input provided (Mayer, 2003). Furthermore, this is an area of special importance in the development of computer mediated FL learning, as the use of images encompasses a more active dynamic than the frequently passive role in a traditional ELT coursebook where learners were not required to consciously formulate any kind of response to the images (Eyles, 1998). Although in the 21st century, technology and new media are relegating the medium of text among adolescents to a position of less cultural significance, FL classrooms remain largely constrained by printed word based methodologies. Walsh (2009) proposed (and enacted) a re-thinking of this position

based on his learners' technologically founded multi-modal creativity which allows learners "to constantly re-configure their representational and communicational resources" (ibid: 126) and concluded about his group of learners in New York:

This new set of literacy practices, which works to include and put to work their out-of-school digital literacy practices, also helps them to re-represent curricular knowledge in sophisticated and eloquent ways. Many of my students were second-language learners and would have struggled to produce such provocative and disruptive work through traditional print literacies. (Walsh, 2009: 135)

However, a contradiction remains within this educational shift. In the Humanities, the use of visual representations is considered appropriate if they support the transmission of information/knowledge, but they are not made use of as a means of evaluation/assessment: "materials provided for children make intense representational use of images; in materials demanded from children – in various forms of assessment particularly – writing remains the expected and dominant mode" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 16).

The visual aspect has also been recognised as being relevant at governmental level; for example, in Malaysia, the Ministry of Education coursebook vetting guidelines (2009) make specific reference to the function of 'graphics' in coursebooks emphasising the need to support, complement and add to the meaning/information in written texts, to function according to the pedagogical requirements of the subject matter in a manner suitable for the target learners rather than the just fill empty spaces on the page (Mahmood, 2010). In Portugal, as part of the process in which schools consider which coursebooks to adopt, the Ministry of Education provides a single sheet A4 feedback form which teachers fill in and return. In 2011/2012 the evaluation criteria were presented in 4 categories: 'organisation and methods', 'information', 'communication' and 'physical characteristics'.¹⁴⁴ Under the heading of 'communication', three criteria are elaborated:

The graphic design and organization of the coursebook are easy to use and motivate students to learn.

The texts are clear, accurate and appropriate to the level of education and the diversity of the students they serve.

The different types of illustrations are accurate, relevant and relate appropriately with the text.

¹⁴⁴ These headings and the criteria (given below) are translated from the original document available at <http://www.dgdc.min-edu.pt/>

Here, communication is seen as being a matter of layout, text and illustrations. The specific reference to illustrations makes a clear demand that they should be associated with a text, but offers no indication of how the concept of “correct” is to be dealt with. There is no guidance provided as to the role that cultural content might play in relation to the illustrations. In different educational contexts, this issue has been recognised as relevant and made explicit; for example, in relation to adult education programmes for TESOL in the USA (2002), the second required standard lists 9 criteria for instructional materials, including aspects related to visual clarity and appropriacy, but also that they should be “culturally sensitive.”

What may or may not be “culturally sensitive” is, however, hard to determine. Hewings reported on an exploratory survey with Vietnamese students in a multilingual, U.K.-based classroom context where misinterpretation of coursebook illustrations was significant and culturally marked. His conclusion was that

[f]or those learners who came from an educated, European background, divergence between how publishers and textbook writers intend illustrations to be perceived and how they are actually perceived may rarely be problematic. For those learners with a limited exposure to ‘Western’ conventions of illustration, it may present a barrier to language learning. (Hewings, 1991: 137)

In today’s Portuguese state school classrooms it is increasingly the case that not all the learners will be from an educated European background. The FL teacher in a Portuguese classroom can no longer assume that all her learners are ‘reading’ the illustrations in the same manner, or indeed, that all the learners have the necessary interpretative, ‘reading’ skills. This is an area of teaching-learning that has become known as visual literacy (Debes, 1968). Visual literacy, in the terms of its broader definition, involves the active ability to both interpret/decode and compose/encode visual images for the purpose of communication (Ausburn & Ausburn, 1978), and so it is a set of skills which require both a trained eye and a trained mind. Naturally, this ability is not only relevant to FL learning; the Portuguese national curriculum has included, for more than 10 years, the subject ‘Visual Education’¹⁴⁵ to be taught from the 5th through to the 9th grade, and, its

¹⁴⁵ The (translated) aims of this subject, from <http://www.portugal.gov.pt/media/675633/ev.pdf>:

Within the overall objectives of the 2nd cycle, the goals focus on content, such as basic drawing, the constituent elements of form, communication and visual narrative, color, space, heritage and speech. In 3rd cycle, the goals focus on content as the representation of geometric shapes, expressive design, solid and polyhedra, design, light-color, expression and decomposition, fashion, visual communication, architecture, perspective, visual perception and the construction of image, art and heritage and engineering.

‘status’ has recently been ‘upgraded’. This institutional recognition demonstrates an understanding of the ‘real world’ importance of the visual channel for achieving successful educational outcomes, through obtaining information and/or constructing knowledge (Bamford, 2003). Some authors indicate the existence of a grammar of visual design (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006); however, the ‘rules’ of this literacy change according to purpose and context of the images, so given the highly regulated Portuguese educational circumstance, the use of images in local ELT coursebooks represents a well delimited domain in which to try and explore their meaning.

In recent years, coursebooks from various subject areas have been analysed. For example, Belmiro (2000) researched the use of images in Portuguese coursebooks in Brazil dating back to the 1960s and concluded that “[a]fter the visual pollution indicative of the 1970s, we are living, today, at a time of a greater and better quality of co-existence between the verbal and the non-verbal in textbooks” (ibid: 22).¹⁴⁶ Other research, related to the use of images in ELT coursebooks, has focussed largely on whether the images served any pedagogical purpose or were merely decorative. For instance, Romney (2012) discussed this issue in relation to ELT coursebooks commonly used in Japan and concluded that 82% of the images served a learning function (as defined by Levin, 1981). However, Hill (2003) concluded that the majority of typical illustrations used in British ELT coursebooks aimed at young adults “are used only for decorative purposes and that those used for language purposes tend to concentrate on low-level language skills related to basic language manipulation” (ibid: 181). In his research data, Hill (2003) makes a distinction between black and white photos/drawings and colour photos/drawings, but does not discuss this distinction in his article; however, there is an issue here of how much the representational image converges with reality: photos that are over-saturated or under-saturated with colour (according to current technology) in relation to the ‘standard’ representation are deemed to be “more than real” or “less than real” and not “naturalistic” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 159). ELT coursebook publishers are generally aiming to re-create/represent as much of the ‘real world’ (or at least as many connections as possible) in their products as possible to provide foundations to the argument that learning English through this medium has add-on ‘real world’ value and it is not just another school subject. The fact that black and

¹⁴⁶ Translated quotation.

white images fall at one extreme of a colour continuum may serve to explain their almost total absence from today's crop of ELT coursebooks; in addition, digital technological advances have reduced the complexities and costs associated with colour printing and have combined with the online availability of banks of 'stock' photos to make the use of black and white images both obsolete and undesired: the way in which a colour image is represented has become "a marker of naturalistic modality" (ibid: 160).¹⁴⁷

Any analysis of the use of illustrations in ELT coursebooks will therefore have to contemplate a multiplicity of factors; for instance, the type of illustration (figure, drawing or photo, but excluding icons and logos), whether the illustration is reproduced in black and white or in colour, the existence or not of any specific language practice pedagogical connection and, if so, what kind of L2 learning activity, as well as the nature of the cultural content that the illustration represents. Collating such data may provide conclusions as to whether the publishers/authors of the coursebooks in this study made any distinction between a 'decorative' use of illustrations (Harmer refers to this use of illustrations as "ornamentation", 2001: 135) or were indeed using their illustrations to support pedagogical aims. Levin (1981) subdivides this distinction, allowing for the concept of non-pedagogical illustrations to include images that simply decorate, others which are directly aimed at increasing sales by making the books more attractive to look at and others whose purpose is to increase learner interest in the accompanying text. He also subdivides the pedagogical side; images may repeat what is in the text as a kind of generic picture dictionary function, or directly represent something specific from the text (a photo of person mentioned), or may help organize information from a text (a family tree or a bar chart), or may have an interpretative function, clarifying concepts or ideas (a picture of a clock showing 'noon'), or may transform information to help learners remember ideas/facts better (Romney, 2012). However, Levin (1981) was primarily interested in exploring the reading skill from a neuropsychological and cognitive processes point of view and not the actual cultural content to be gleaned by learners from the images.

¹⁴⁷ Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) also discuss the power of colours to 'communicate': "[...] colour represents, projects, enables or constructs social relations – it is interpersonal. It is not just the case that colour 'expresses' or 'means' things such as 'calm' or 'energy'; rather, people actually use colour to try to energise or calm down other people" (ibid: 230).

In this present study, the broader definitions of ‘decorative’ or ‘pedagogical’ can serve as a basis for discussing the cultural impact of the use of illustrations in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks. The key issue is the educational value of the illustrations which can only be achieved through the proposed kind of analysis in same vein as the verbal texts of coursebooks may be analysed (Perales Palacios, 2006). While some authors take an almost exclusively positive line on the use of illustrations/images to convey content¹⁴⁸, a critical perspective requires data driven conclusions. This data should include information on the relative frequency of illustrations, the type of illustrations (figures, drawings or photographs), and whether these illustrations are in colour or in black and white. Furthermore, in order for illustrations to be considered as having any pedagogical value, consideration must be given as to whether the illustrations are directly linked to any language work or not, and, when there is some kind of linkage present, what is the learning purpose/outcome envisaged.

5. 1. A. The Active English series of coursebooks.¹⁴⁹

This series is highly visual in nature, almost every page has an illustration incorporated and this pattern is consistent across all three books so that only six pages out of a total of almost 200 pages do not have any kind of image (only 3.2%). There is an almost equal distribution in the use of colour and black and white in the illustrations, the colour illustrations being slightly less in evidence (46.5%) than the black and white ones (53.5%). At this time, colour printing had not yet assumed its present-day hegemony. Almost three quarters of the illustrations in this series are drawings (72.2%); far less represented are photographs (19.6%) and figures (8.2%). The most frequent format is cartoon-like drawings of various kinds of people in social contexts who may be supposed to be using the language that is written in the accompanying texts (very often dialogues; see Chapter 3 of this study). In the 7th grade coursebook, the fact that these characters are performing a dialogue is often reinforced visually by the use of ‘speech bubbles’ (six instances) where parts (or all) of the text are represented in balloons within the main drawing.

¹⁴⁸ “With regard to content, there can be no doubt that illustrations are an efficient tool for the acquisition of knowledge, and that this is true regardless of the subject; all disciplines make use of images and benefit from the possibilities of both graphic and literary representation” (Badanelli; 2012: 318).

¹⁴⁹ A page by page inventory of all the illustrations in all the coursebooks from the corpus is available in Appendix 3, p. 381.

Table 44. Active English series: variety and density of illustrations.

Active English: Percentages. Total number of pages with illustrations = 184 of 188 pages				
Colour variation of illustrations	Black & White		Colour	
	100	53.5%	87	46.5%
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No		83	45.1%
	Yes		101	54.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 194				
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [16]		8	50.0%
	Drawings [140]		91	65.0%
	Photographs [38]		7	18.4%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?			106/194	54.6%

The heavy reliance on drawings in this series goes some way to explaining the relatively high number of illustrations that are directly linked to language development work (106/194), making it possible to claim that the majority of illustrations in this series (54.6%) are indeed not simply decorative and perform a pedagogical function: they provide a stimulus for controlled practice exercises (normally at the foot of the page) of the language items featured in the model texts (at the top of the page): the model texts are illustrated with contextual drawings and the follow-up language work is cued by further illustrations. Drawings provide a more flexible format than photographs when coursebook writers are seeking to make this connection; it is perhaps also significant that at this time the availability of databases of images was not what it is in today's Internet era. Indeed, drawings account for nearly all of the instances where there is a link (85.8%) and within the category itself almost two thirds of the drawings are linked to language work. There are no such values present for either figures or photographs; in fact only seven photographs in the entire series are linked, representing less than 4% of all the illustrations in the series and only 18.4% within the category of photographs.

5. 1. A. 1 Active English 7th grade: illustrations.

This coursebook is unique in this study's corpus in that every page has some kind of illustration (often various instances). The illustrations are evenly divided in terms of the use of colour or black and white printing, with the vast majority of the illustrations being drawings. Photographs are limited to three instances (4.5%) and figures are limited to seven instances (10.4%).

Table 45. Active English series: 7th grade illustrations, general data.

Active English: 7th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 60									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 60 (100%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 0 (0%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 67						Total Colour Variation = 60			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
7	10.4%	57	85.1%	3	4.5%	30	50.0%	30	50.0%

The photographs in question here depict a groom kissing his bride on the cheek outside a church on their wedding day (colour, p.9), a family relaxing in front of the fire in their living room (colour, p.16) and three images of different types of housing in London (black and white, p.19). These photographs all occur in the initial third of the coursebook after which there are no further instances. The use of colour combines with the positive values depicted (affection, warmth, family unity etc.) in the first two photographs to produce a positive connotation which is absent from the drab, black and white depiction of the London houses. However, in general, the use of colour in this coursebook seems to be more related to technological considerations: the colour pages are usually face-to-face double page spreads, for example on pages 16/17 or pages 20/21.

Table 46. Active English series: 7th grade illustrations, language link data.

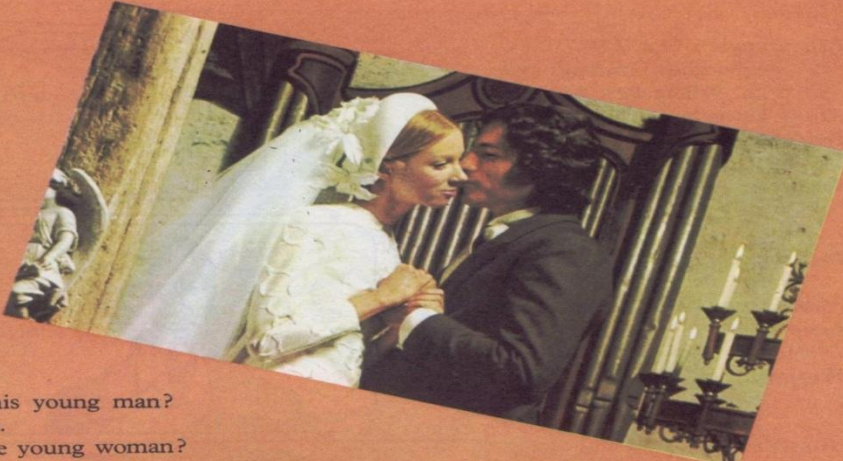
Active English: 7th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 60 of 60 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	7	11.7%
	Yes	53	88.3%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 67			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [7]	6	85.7%
	Drawings [57]	50	87.7%
	Photographs [3]	3	100.0%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		59/67	88.1%

The principal technique employed for any kind of productive language work is that of substitution exercises, where an illustration and a short written prompt encourage the learners to produce similar language structures to those of the model text (dialogue). The theoretical/methodological underpinning is evidently Structuralist, presenting language as a series of grammatical strings which have to be carefully manipulated in order to achieve learning. A good example of this technique is on page 7, where the matter of possessive adjectives is dealt with in the context of telephone numbers: the

learners have to use the information provided in the illustration in combination with the lexical prompt in the exercise.

Figure 2. Active English 7th grade: wedding photo, page 7.

5 Consolidation



Kay: Who is this young man?
Miles: It's Marco.
Kay: Who is the young woman?
Miles: It's his wife. It's Daisy.
Kay: Your sister... How pretty!

Name: *Daisy Piccoli*
First name: *Daisy*
Surname: *Piccoli*
Initials: *D. G. P.*
Mr / Mrs / Miss: *Mrs*
Marital status: *Married*
Telephone number: *319 2430*

Exercise



Name:
First name:
Surname:
Initials:
Mr / Mrs / Miss:
Marital status:
Telephone number:

This sort of technique and the preoccupation in dealing with grammar instruction blankets the entire book with rare opportunities to break out of this pattern practice. A slight variation is provided with gap filling exercises where slightly larger contexts are provided (often dialogues, again) rather than simple lexical prompts. However, there are two instances in this coursebook of illustrations being used as the basis of information transfer tasks which involve a certain amount of deeper processing on the part of the learners: p.27, where the learners have to use the information contained in the

illustrations (drawings) to build short dialogues about where different people live, and p.38 where the learners have to fill in a school timetable (figure) and talk about their favourite school subjects. There is very little variation/flexibility in the way that the learners are required to relate to the illustrations; this is true both in terms of the type of tasks/exercises associated with the illustrations, but also in degree of control of what language can be produced: always prompted and nearly always at sentence level. There is a single opportunity provided to write an extended text (a short bio-piece on p.29) and only five opportunities for extended spoken discourse termed ‘role plays’, but which are in reality a personalised repetition of the model dialogue. None of these (still controlled) higher level language use activities are related specifically to illustrations.

The ‘population’ of this coursebook is almost entirely made up of young people: they outnumber adults by a ratio of almost three to one. Almost invisible in this coursebook are the elderly¹⁵⁰; in fact, there is only one ‘old person’ featured in the entire book (drawing, p.13). This is ‘Grandmother’ delivering a birthday present to ‘Mark’, her 13 year old grandson, who is very happy to receive a flute: he knows the present is a flute before he opens because his grandmother tells him, preventing the usual element of surprise associated with the habit of giving birthday presents. No comment is made on grandmother ‘ruining’ the surprise, but this sort of contextual allusion in which old people are assumed to be incompetent or in some way less able or weak is part of a process which renders a social misconception. This has important ramifications in an era in which the role of the elderly in society is increasingly statistically (and economically) relevant. Arikan (2005) points out, in relation to age bias in ELT coursebooks, that the stress should be on what the older generation can achieve rather than what they cannot, and learners should be actively encouraged to provide examples/evidence that contradict any negative portrayals that coursebooks may contain. Learners should be given the opportunity to challenge what is both visible and invisible in coursebooks: “[i]nvisibility leads to another form of bias, unreality, which is a technique in which controversial topics such as discrimination and prejudice are avoided in favour of a more idealistic and traditional view of national history or current issues” (Ndura, 2004: 148). Learners should be ‘prepared’ through class activities to be more able to accept the existence of multiple truths and cultural pluralism (Campbell,

¹⁵⁰ Azimova & Johnston (2012) discuss the notion of invisibility as being crucial in relation to the ‘population’ of Russian language coursebooks used in the USA.

2000). Given the fact that many Portuguese abodes¹⁵¹ may include three generations of the same family¹⁵², it would be logical that grandparents especially, and the elderly in general, would be ‘useful’ full members of any coursebook’s population rather than infrequent minor characters. This is not the case here, just as it was also not in a study of two ELT coursebooks used widely in Turkey: “the elderly are not presented as whole persons existing with many qualities other than their ages” (Arikan, 2005: 35). The idea that there is something wrong about growing/looking old (which should be delayed/avoided at all costs) is already heavily reinforced through many media aimed at the younger generations to the extent that ageing has largely become a cultural rather than medical/physiological issue (Coupland, 2007). In much the same way, the few adults in this coursebook are largely depicted in a superficial way, important only in the roles they play: teacher (p.42), shop assistant (p.45), police officer (p.57) or parent (p.16), and what they represent (and what they say) is decidedly predictable. Learners should be encouraged to look beyond the bounds of their own immediate social group and explore/visualise different possibilities in terms of life styles and values to provide a counterpoint to their existing, locally founded knowledge.

The young people who populate the book all seem affluent and exhibit overtly consumerist conduct;¹⁵³ for example, this coursebook makes frequent use of the setting of shopping as a context for controlled language practice. Unit 17 has as its language focus ‘demonstrative pronouns’ which are introduced in the context of buying a pet from a pet shop (black and white drawings). There is a very simplistic, rather distorted dialogue to accompany the illustrations.

¹⁵¹ According to the 2011 Censos (INE), around 80% of the elderly (65 years old +) live in family homes in Portugal.

¹⁵² See Tomassini et al (2004) for a discussion of trends in living arrangements for the elderly in Europe and the USA.

¹⁵³ A recent survey of generalist coursebooks for adults concluded that “there seems to be an assumption that all learners are aspirational, urban, middle class, well-educated westernised computer users” Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2013: 248).

Figure 3. Active English 7th grade: pet shop, page 21.

17 A pet

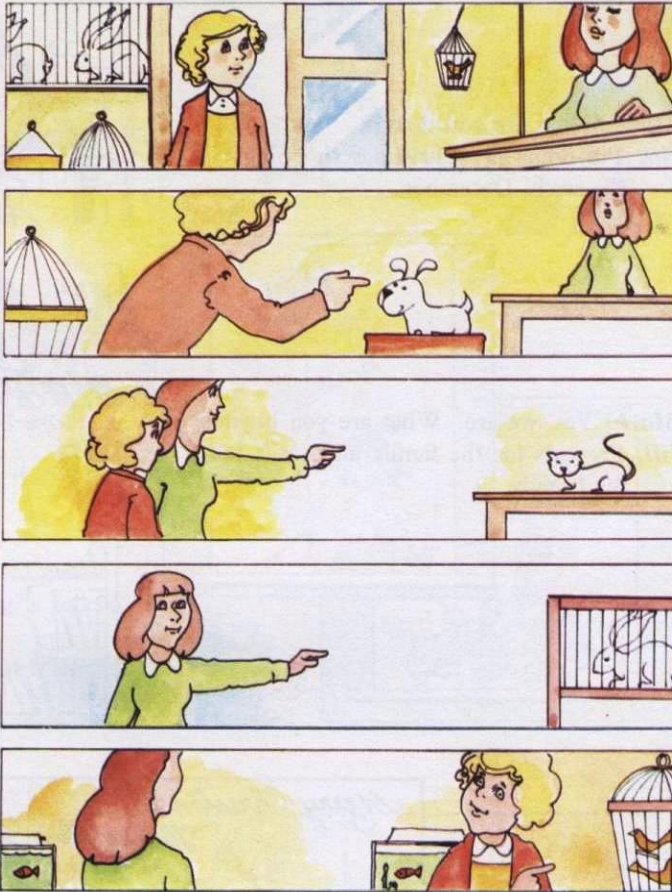
Assistant: Yes?
Jill: I'd like a pet, please.
Assistant: We've got many.

Jill: This is a friendly dog.

Assistant: Yes. And that's a pretty cat.
Jill: Oh, yes.

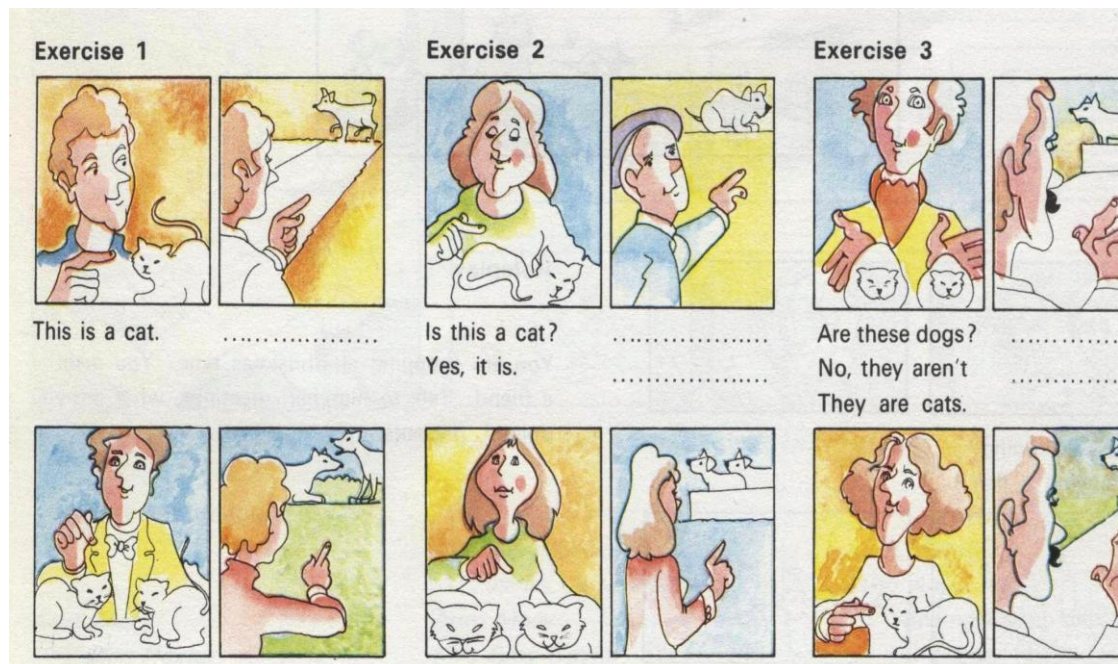
Assistant: Those are lovely rabbits.

Jill: These are beautiful canaries.
Er... I'd like the red fish
How much is it?
Assistant: £3.



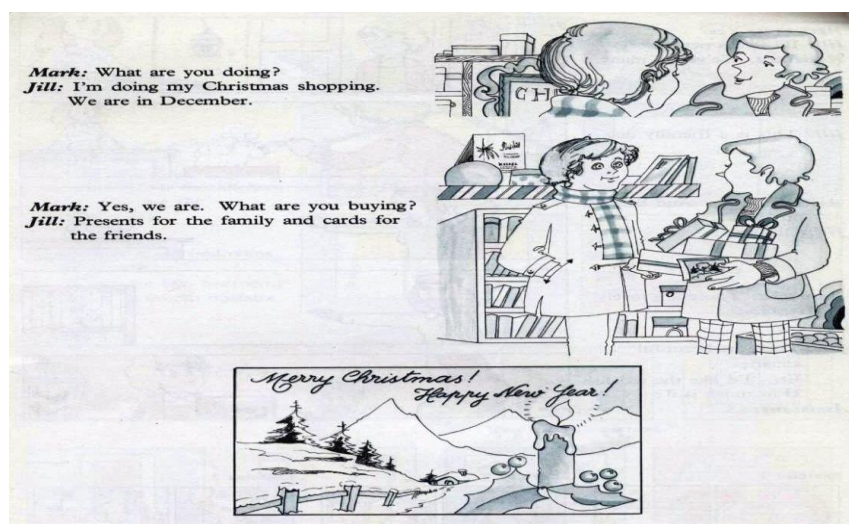
The people pointing and the animals featured in the illustrations (colour drawings) are crucial to establishing the meaning and use of the pronouns in question. But, there are problems here as the fourth drawing does not match the accompanying dialogue (there is only ONE rabbit illustrated). In the follow-up exercise at the bottom of the page there is an element of absurdity in Exercise 3, where the learners are supposed to question whether what are obviously cats and dogs are, in fact, cats and dogs.

Figure 4. Active English 7th grade: exercises, page 21.



In the very next unit the topic of Christmas is introduced (Unit 18, p.22) with two young people meeting in the street.

Figure 5. Active English 7th grade: Christmas shopping, page 22.



The fact that December has arrived means that it is time to do your Christmas shopping and the second drawing shows Mark carrying a small pile of already wrapped presents and one card. Only in the following Unit 19 are other aspects of the culture of Christmas

dealt with: decorations, Father Christmas, presents, food etc. Presents are also part of units that deal with birthdays (pp.10/11/12) and Mother's day (p.40), and the Smith family has the luxury of a four bedroomed holiday home (p.17). Shopping is part of Units 36, 41, 42, 43 and 54, as well as a unit about pocket money (p.36) and a trip to the country (pp.55/56) and a meal in a restaurant (p.50) before everyone departs at the close of the book for their holidays. The predominantly youthful population of this coursebook lives in a world of economic comfort and endless, consumerist pleasure seeking that excludes any kind of images of physical hardships or emotional setbacks of any kind: a similar conclusion to that reached in a study of German as a foreign language coursebooks employed in Belgium:

Textbooks authors seemingly deem it sufficient to present mainly monoperspectival views on a limited range of topics, and throw a predominantly favourable light on the foreign culture. [...] Unimaginative sterile characters never fight, go to the post office, like school or their jobs but do not otherwise show emotions. (Serçu, 1998: 287)

5. 1. A. 2 Active English 8th grade: illustrations.

This coursebook does not quite match its predecessor in that there is a single page (p.54) without any illustrations. The illustrations are almost exactly divided in terms of the use of colour or black and white printing with the vast majority of the illustrations being drawings (80%). Photographs are limited to 10 instances (16.7%) and figures are used on only two occasions (3.3%).

Table 47. Active English series: 8th grade illustrations, general data.

Active English: 8th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 60									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 59 (98.3%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 1 (1.7%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 60						Total Colour Variation = 59			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs			Black & White		+ Colour
2	3.3%	48	80.0%	10	16.7%		30	50.9%	29 49.1%

The single page without any illustration is very near the end of the book and consists of a page from the diary of 'Jill' about her school trip to the Lake District; as such, there is no need for any kind of model dialogue (as input) which would be illustrated with young people conducting the interaction in keeping with the usual technique employed in this series. Here, the input is in the form of a reading text and the proposed output,

categorised as a ‘game’, consists of the learners taking turns to compose a similar text about a holiday sentence by sentence. This type of production is learner-generated and therefore unpredictable and unavailable to be illustrated, a requirement perhaps judged to be unnecessary, since this is a ‘consolidation’ unit.

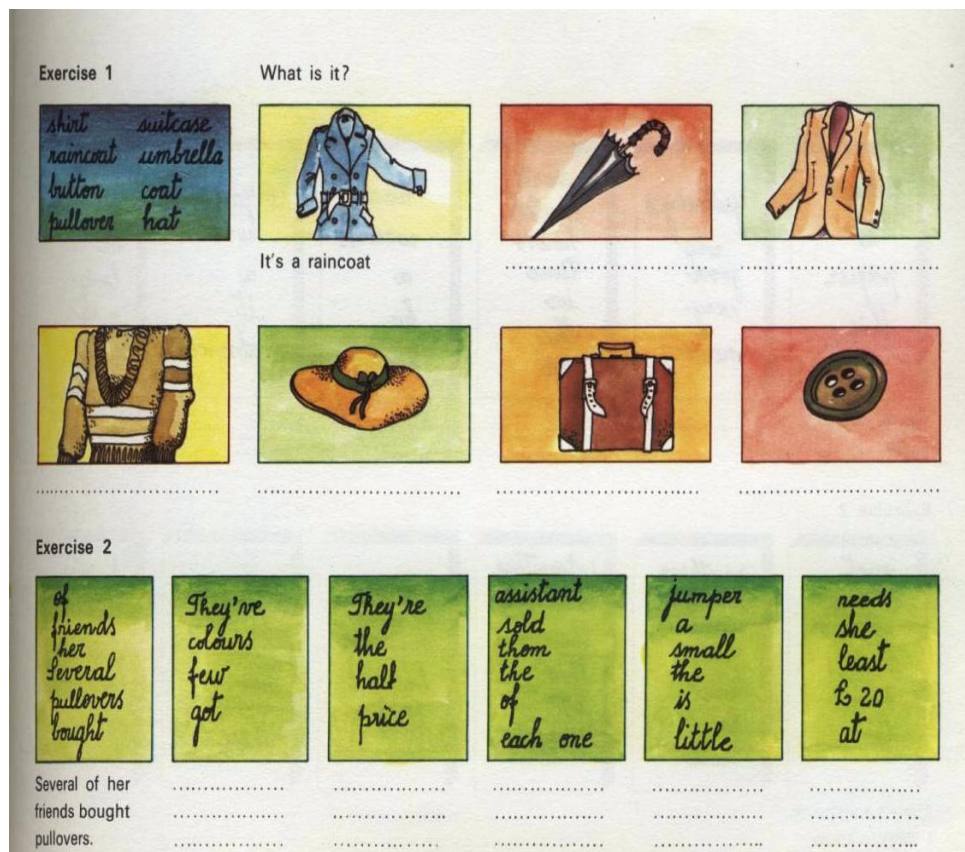
The photographs in this coursebook are nearly all of places in the U.K. (pp.16, 17, 29, 38, 45, 49 and 53) and in the U.S.A. (p.14) with the exception of 3 instances featuring a man fishing and a greyhound (p.34), and stamps (p.38). Perhaps the idea was that real places (the Empire State Building, Piccadilly Circus, etc.) should be illustrated with the most exact kind of representation (in the eyes of the learners), i.e., a photograph, and it would counter-productive (and less cost effective) to employ a technician or draughtsperson to draw pictures of these places.

Table 48. Active English series: 8th grade illustrations, language link data.

Active English: 8th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 59 of 60 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	35	59.3%
	Yes	24	40.6%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 60			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [2]	2	100%
	Drawings [48]	21	43.8%
	Photographs [10]	1	10.0%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		24/60	40.0%

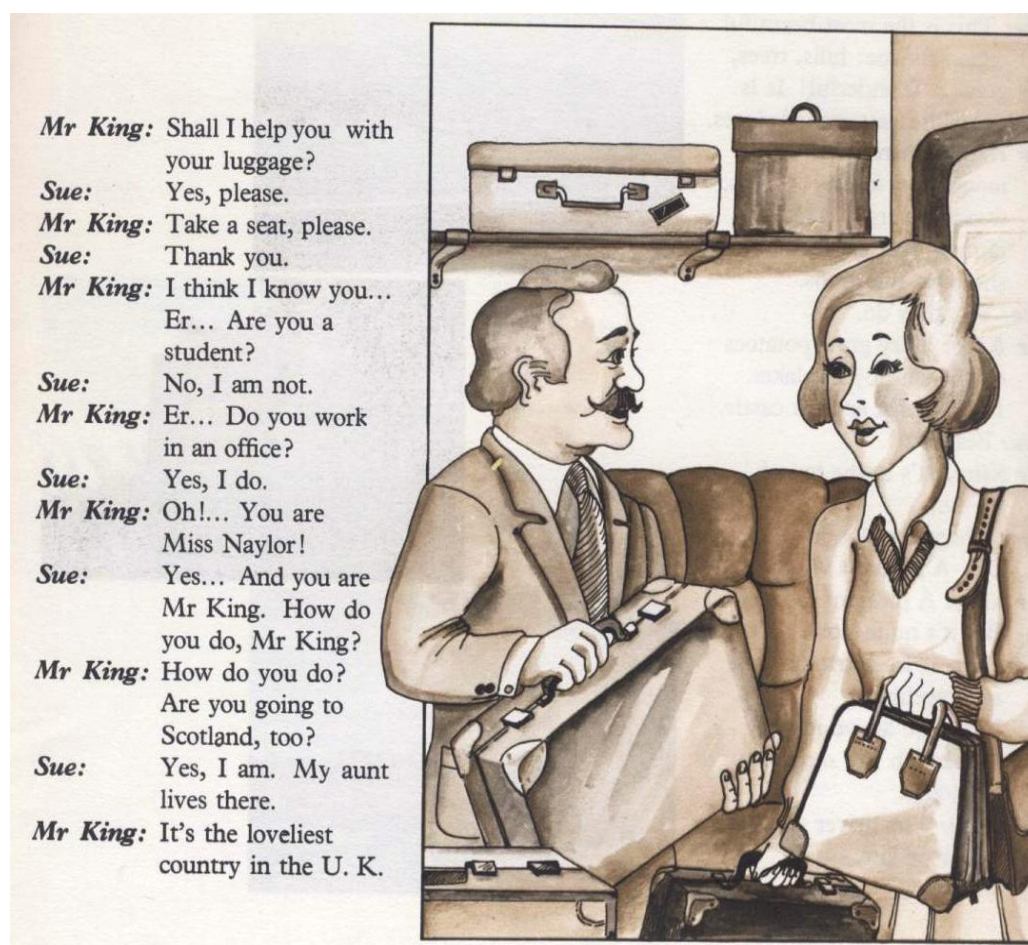
In contrast with the 7th grade coursebook, which employed many visual prompts for follow-up work (largely grammar-based, substitution style exercise), the 8th grade books tends to employ verbal/lexical cues, not visual ones, for its multitudinous substitution exercises. Instead, there is a shift towards providing a lot of illustrated vocabulary in the form of input: 17 of the 25 instances of connections between illustrations and input are directly related to vocabulary development. This is a different form of linkage/connection between the use of illustrations and language development: providing contextual clues for the meaning of lexical items as input. In common with general pattern of this series, these illustrations are nearly always drawings (usually in colour).

Figure 6. Active English 8th grade: lexical input, page 41.



Many of the illustrations are supposed to depict various kinds of social interaction, such as shopping (Units 36/37 on pp.40/41), or in some form of casual social encounter (Unit 59 p.63 at the airport or chatting with friends, Unit 17 p.21); however, the visual does not always match the verbal, as is the case with Unit 11 p.15.

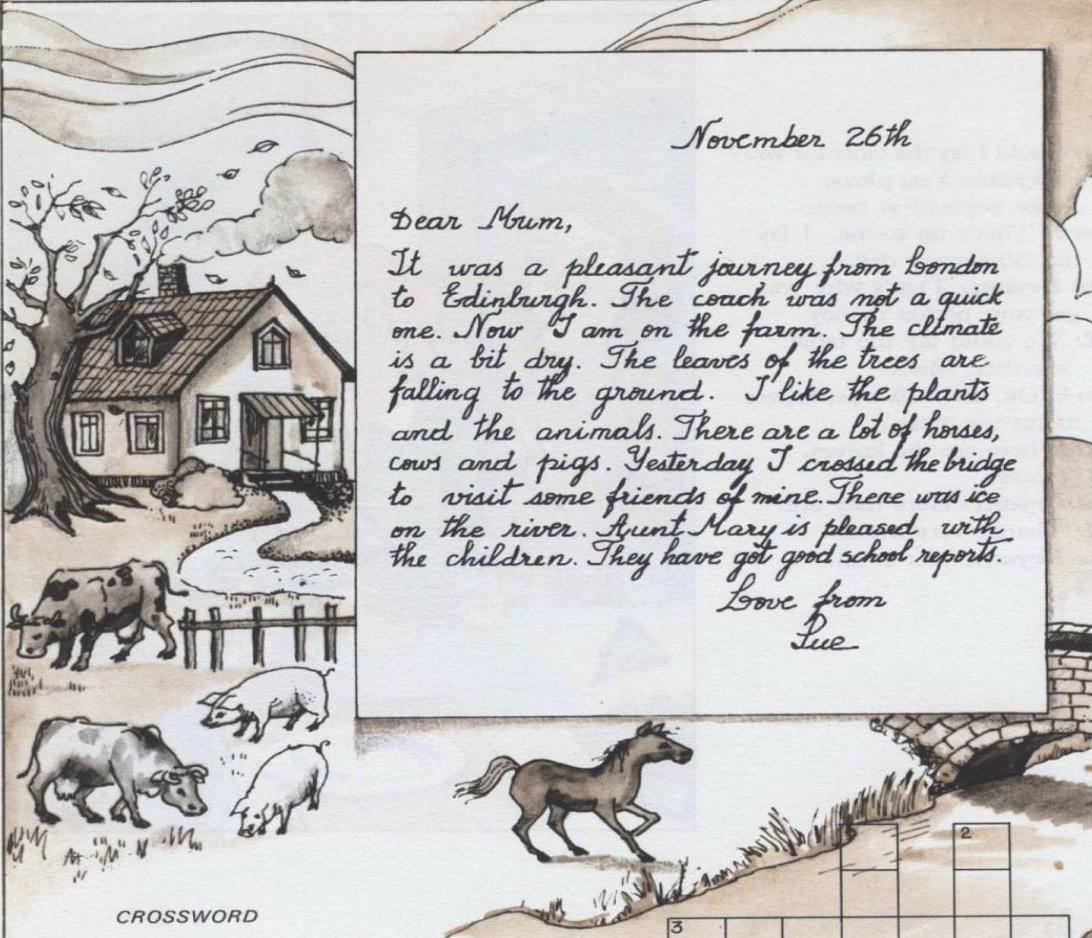
Figure 7. Active English 8th grade: journey to Edinburgh, page 15.



The context of this journey is further developed over the next two units and by the end of the sequence (arrival in Edinburgh) it becomes clear from the conversation that these people ('Sue' and 'Mr King') have travelled by coach (which is also one of the 'answers' to the crossword provided on page 19) whereas the drawing in Unit 11 clearly indicates a compartment on a train. A lack of rigour in the content of some drawings is also apparent in other less obvious contexts (see for example, in Unit 15 p.19). Here an over-zealous draughtsperson has sought to include absolutely everything mentioned in the text (and all the answers to the accompanying crossword) to the extent that the illustration is the worst kind of idealised, unrealistic image of a train carriage with a horse, pigs and cows all in the same field.

Figure 8. Active English 8th grade: farm scene, page 19.

15 Consolidation



November 26th

Dear Mum,

It was a pleasant journey from London to Edinburgh. The coach was not a quick one. Now I am on the farm. The climate is a bit dry. The leaves of the trees are falling to the ground. I like the plants and the animals. There are a lot of horses, cows and pigs. Yesterday I crossed the bridge to visit some friends of mine. There was ice on the river. Aunt Mary is pleased with the children. They have got good school reports.

*Love from
Sue*

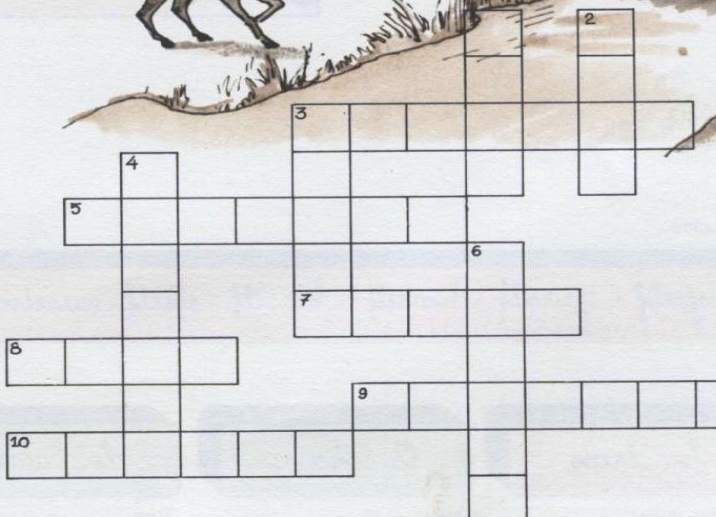
CROSSWORD

Across

3. Scotland is a lovely (7)
5. Sue did not have much (7)
7. There are ... and valleys in Scotland. (5)
8. The coach was (4)
9. It was a pleasant (7)
10. They saw an ancient (6)

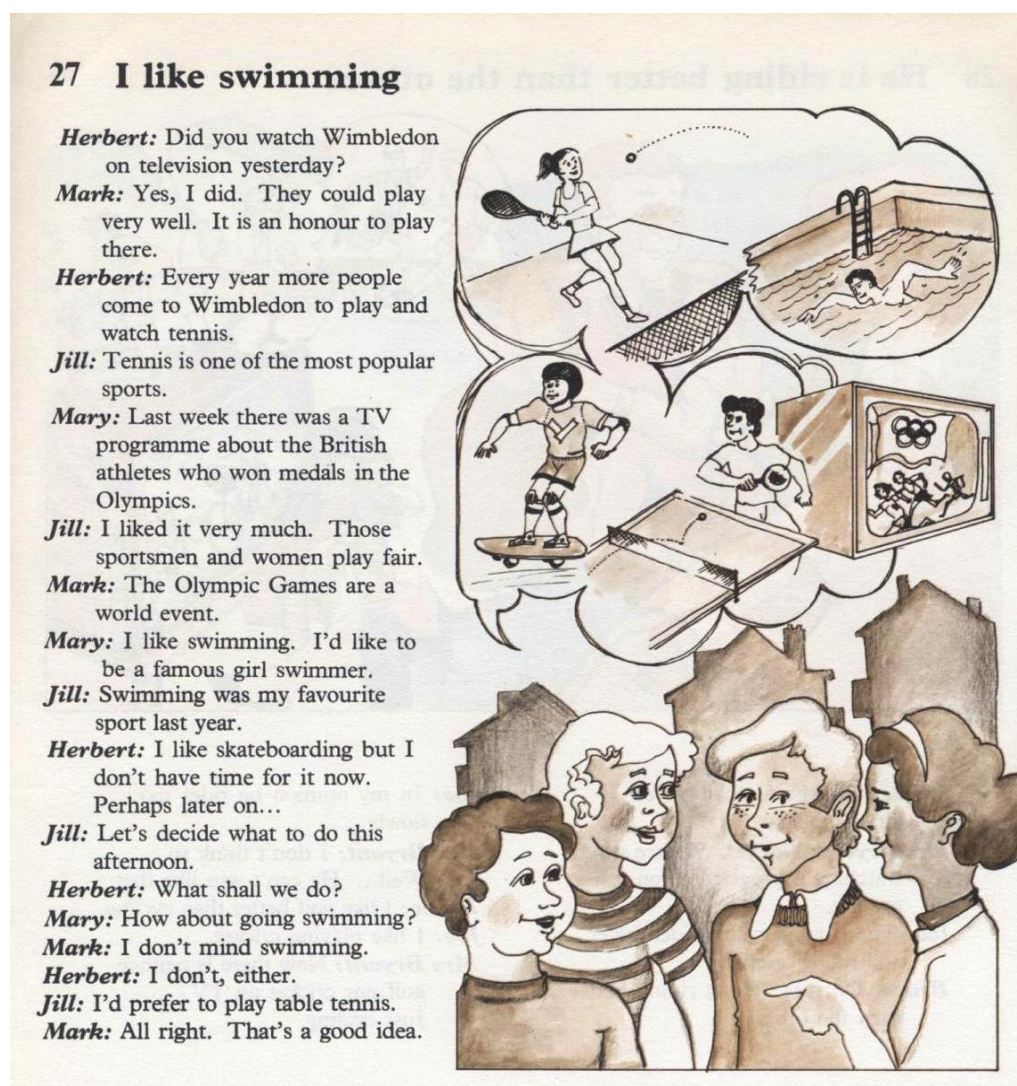
Down

1. They grow potatoes on the (4)
2. Aunt Mary has got a (4)
3. Sue travelled by (5)
4. The passenger was (7)
6. There are ... in the sky. (6)



The 8th grade coursebook makes use of the visual technique of including in 10 of the drawings a variation of cartoon style 'speech bubbles' employed in the 7th grade coursebook of this series, which can be categorised as 'topic bubbles'.

Figure 9. Active English 8th grade: favourite sports, page 31.



Rather than providing the language (vocabulary, structures) through the use of 'speech bubbles', the writers/illustrators make use of the same visual technique to further contextualize the model dialogue which accompanies the illustration. Normally in cartoons/comics there is a distinction between 'speech bubbles' (sometimes also called 'speech balloons') and 'thought bubbles', with the latter often being visually represented with fuzzy edges, to distinguish what is said from what is left unsaid. Here the content of the 10 instances of 'topic bubbles' is entirely non-verbal: it is a drawing within a bubble within a drawing. In comics, the use of visual symbols within bubbles is a not uncommon device to represent swearing, exclamations of surprise/pain, etc, and explosions or suchlike, and there is widespread use of representational images within both speech and thought bubbles (Driest, 2006) to the extent that in extreme cases all

words are excluded, for example in the Dutch *Gutsman* comics.¹⁵⁴ However, the technique is used here not to add new ideas/content through visual representation, but to reinforce existing verbal content contained in the text of the dialogue. Crucially, the learners are not required to interact with this visual content in any way other than as an aid to verbal comprehension. The use of these topic bubbles seems to be associated with more extended dialogues which may imply a heavier processing load for the learners who would therefore benefit from some visual scaffolding (a sound pedagogical reason). However, the more extended length of the dialogues may also make it difficult to provide the more orthodox speech bubbles within the space available for illustrations. Whatever the motivation, the result is a further support for the learners with regard to input, rather than any attempt to use illustrations to stimulate output, any kind of learner generated language production.

5. 1. A. 3 Active English 9th grade: illustrations.

The 9th grade coursebook has a slightly larger number of pages (4.4%) without any illustrations: there are three instances (p.9, p.37 and p.69). The illustrations are however not evenly divided in terms of the use of colour or black and white printing, with the majority of the illustrations being in black and white (58.8%). The number of photographs more than doubles in comparison with the 8th grade coursebook: 25 instances (37.3%), whereas the number of figures being used trebles: 7 instances (10.4.3%).

Table 49. Active English series: 9th grade illustrations, general data.

Active English: 9th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 68									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 65 (95.6%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 3 (4.4%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 67						Total Colour Variation = 68			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
7	10.4%	35	52.2%	25	37.3%	40	58.8%	28	41.2%

Within the context of this densely illustrated series of coursebooks, the 3 examples of pages without illustrations in this coursebook represent different writer/illustrator choices/decisions. The example of Unit 57, p.69 results from the main learning focus of

¹⁵⁴ Driest (2006) discusses verbal/visual combinations and subjective narrative techniques in comics at length in an unpublished MA thesis from the University of Utrecht.

this page being the learners dealing with an authentic extract from the *Guardian* newspaper which refers to British government regulation changes regarding plans for pollution control. This is a hard topic to illustrate, but perhaps more importantly the aim is to get the learners to answer comprehension questions on the text and do a vocabulary development exercise based on the text. None of these features have a strong appeal in terms of requiring visual support. Unit 5 p.9 is an example of the shift (identified above in relation to the 7th grade coursebook) that occurred in this series in relation to the stimulus provided for the all too common substitution exercises: from visual in the 7th grade to verbal in the 8th and 9th grade coursebooks. This page consists entirely of substitution exercises.

Figure 10. Active English 9th grade: exercises, page 9.

Exercise

travels often train she by	never been rocket has a she on	Windsor go tomorrow she'll to

She often travels by train.

the fifty minutes takes every day journey	took two hours it years ago every day

Rewrite this dialogue in the correct order.

A: Yes, fine.	A:
B: When do you want to come back?	B:
A: On December 3th	A:
B: Could the departure be at 6.35 a. m.? Or is that too early?	B:
A: On the 10th.	A:
B: Do you want to leave Paris at 18.10 p. m.?	B:
A: I'd like a return flight to Paris, please.	A:
B: When would you like to fly out?	B:
A: No. That's all right.	A:

Exercise 1

to Windsor went she	she them there met	well child the behaves	German badly speaks he	leaving is she tomorrow	some days ago arrived she

She went to Windsor.

Exercise 2

Tuesday 25th September	10 p.m. tomorrow	March 2nd 1982	in the shop in the morning	home evening	school afternoon

It was on They are arriving at They met on She works We stay He is

Exercise 3

works at home she has all days	behaved he yesterday in the school kindergarten	played in the party has built last week	two days ago the saw pretty birds in the garden	carefully he walked in the street last week	English at school she learned easily last year of

She works hard

GAME

Everybody or each group can have a card with a sentence on it. The sentences include adjectives or adverbs, e.g. it's a slow train, walking slowly, etc. One student mimes the action according to the card. The others try to guess. The one who guesses first, wins.

The example on p.37 forms part of Unit 30 "Consolidation" and represents a borderline case of whether or not the content qualifies as an illustration. Here, the immediately preceding page (p.36) consists entirely of colour photographs of various European tourist destinations which are included as prompts for a composition writing exercise where learners are supposed to describe their holiday touring plans (outlined on p.37). The actual page is a kind of table where learners fill in information (from their general knowledge?) about 15 different countries, their capital cities, languages, nationalities and people, presumably to provide the necessary lexical input for the subsequent 'roleplay'. Since the table provides nothing except the names of the 15 countries and

there is no illustration other than the lines of rows/columns of the table, it is a difficult example to categorize.

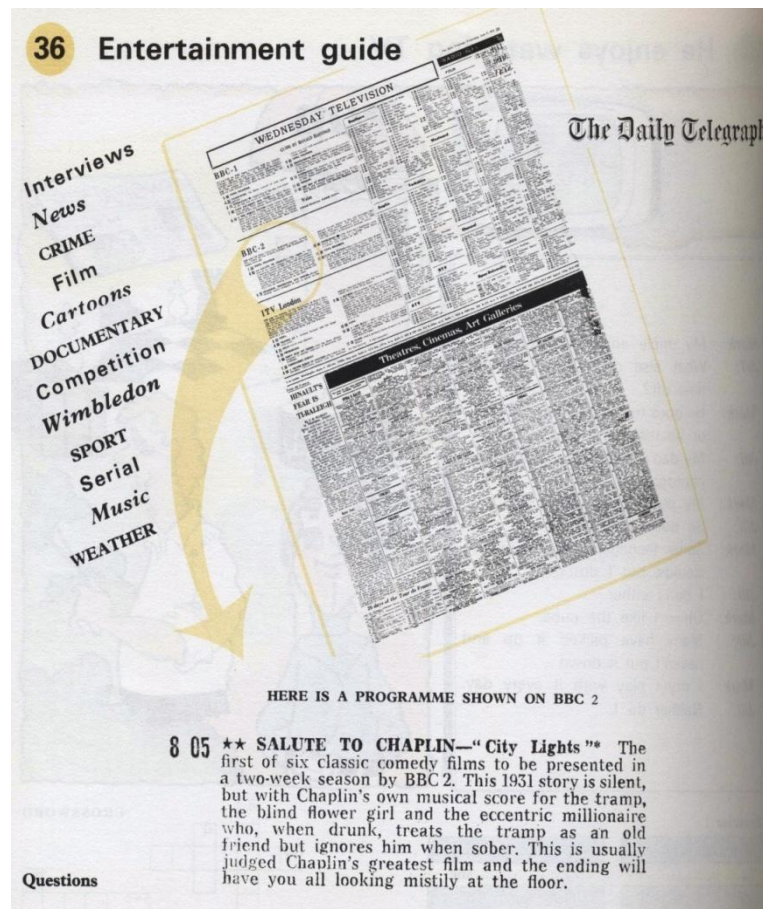
Table 50. Active English series: 9th grade illustrations, language link data.

Active English: 9th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 65 of 68 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	41	63.1%
	Yes	24	36.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 67			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [7]	2	28.6%
	Drawings [35]	20	57.1%
	Photographs [25]	3	12.0%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		25/67	37.3%

The 9th grade coursebook has the lowest percentage of illustrations directly connected with language work (only 25 instances/37.3%). Drawings account for vast majority (80%) of the 25 instances; the use of figures is infrequent (only seven instances) and only two are connected (the borderline case referred to above at p.37 and a similar case at p.51 concerned with hobbies/free time activities); the photographs in this coursebook are overwhelmingly not related to language work, as there are only three instances from the total of 25 photographs. Of these three instances, one example has already been mentioned above in relation to the photographic images of tourist destinations being used as a prompt for a composition (pp.36/37); the remaining two examples introduce a different kind of representational technique: a kind of a scanned image which attempts to reproduce part of a genuine newspaper.

In Unit 36, p.46, “Entertainment guide” nearly half the page is occupied by an image/scan of the entertainments page of the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper.

Figure 11. Active English 9th grade: entertainment guide, page 46.



The visual impact of this scan is augmented by the inclusion of the name of the newspaper in its original font and also the inclusion of various sections of a newspaper in various different fonts (either side of the scan). It is possible to deduce that the intention is to verify visually the authenticity of the “Salute to Chaplin” text (which is the object of the main language work, an attribute also validated through visual means) by the use of an arrow to connect the almost unreadable scan to the text for reading comprehension. This kind of approach to the use of visual devices clearly has pedagogical utility in that it helps to deliver the learning materials to the learner in an efficient and clear manner; however, there remains the impression that these same devices are being used to ‘set the scene’, to manage the teaching-learning process rather than directly inviting the learners to react or interact, using the target language. The final example of a scan being included is Unit 54, p.66 “Food Aid”. Here also may be detected an attempt to visually validate an authentic text: in this case, the first three

paragraphs from a more extensive article from *The Times*, under the headline “West to aid Tanzania over famine”.

Figure 12. Active English 9th grade: newspaper scan, page 66.

54 Food aid

1. Which type of food is essential for survival?
2. When do some countries need to receive free supplies?

West to aid Tanzania over famine

From Our Correspondent
Nairobi, Dec 27

Forecasts of widespread famine in Tanzania, caused by poor crops, have brought offers of nearly 260,000 tons of emergency food aid from western countries.

The United Nations World Food Programme, Britain and The European Community are among those who have responded to recent appeals from President Nyerere and his government.

Tanzanian officials said two months ago that food would run out in December or January, but at the time nothing had been done to seek international aid.

Subsequent appeal for assistance brought many offers of aid, some of which is already on the way to Tanzania.

There may be shortages

Zia to 'Islam'

President Zia Pakistan has named total of 50 men Federal Advisory (Majlis-e-Shoora) said, would be a Islamic democr expected to be February.

The announcement of the formation of the which is to be interim vehicle for transition on Government has been met with criticism by the politicians.

Speaking over television, Gen Zia said that although members would legis which were elected members dissolved Parliament.

Questions

- Why is there famine in Tanzania?
- Which countries helped Tanzania?
- How did they help Tanzania?
- How long ago was famine foreseen?
- Did they seek international aid at that time?

* 1. Will farmers work in the future as they do nowadays?
* 2. Who should advise and help farmers to farm the land?

Exercise

Fill in the boxes with words of the same family formed by derivation or composition.

1	west	
2	aid	
3	famine	
4	cause	
5	poor	
6	offer	
7	official	
8	food	
9	run	
10	time	

The use of a thick black line to circle the opening three paragraphs creates the impression that a real reader has chosen this text as being somehow special and worthy of comment. However, no use is made of this established authenticity in terms of learning. The coursebook resorts to five traditional style comprehension questions dealing with the content/meaning at the level of information to be mined from a close reading of the text without asking the learners to respond in any other way.

The fact that the above text referred to Tanzania is an almost unique example in this coursebook of any consideration being given to locations beyond the traditional U.K.-U.S.A. geographical axis. The role of place in course books is important, since “[r]epresentation establishes individual and collective identities ... Discourses and

systems of representation construct places from which individuals position themselves and from which they can speak” (Woodward: 1997: 14). Gray (2002), in the context of internationally produced coursebooks, refers to the factor of ‘location’ within coursebooks having become increasingly globalised, but this is not the case in this 9th grade coursebook. The pretext for including any location outside the U.K. is generally that created by a topic related to tourism/travel. Several European cities are featured in just such a context (pp.32-36 have photographs of Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam and p.62 features Berlin); the U.S.A. is subject to a similar approach (pp.28-31 with photographs of New York and Washington).

These images are outweighed in number by those devoted to the U.K., where a highly predictable series of locations are visually represented: Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, Stratford on Avon, Westminster Palace, St. Paul’s Cathedral, The Tower of London, 10 Downing Street, as well as a number of equally predictable street scenes related to the Tube or London Bridge. Aside from the fact that these illustrations are generally just for decoration within a broadly touristic thematic framework, it should also be noted the very narrow range of locations within the U.K. that are featured. There is a heavy imbalance in favour of London and the south of England, which, while it admittedly is the economic heart of the nation, excludes a huge range of other interesting possibilities that might serve better to take the learners beyond the obvious (and possibly already known) horizons of the nation’s capital and its immediate surroundings. Most of these locations are represented through photographs, perhaps to create an impression of the learners dealing with the ‘real world’, but then the spectrum of locations that the learners view is so distorted that they might be forgiven for thinking that London is all that matters about the U.K. Learners need to see the cultural content from a truly international perspective in order to have the widest possible range of points of comparison available against which to contemplate the role of English as an International Language (E.I.L.): “...one of the primary reasons for dealing with cultural content is because the use of E.I.L. involves crossing borders, both literally and figuratively, as individuals interact in cross-cultural encounters” (McKay, 2002: 81).

5. 1. B The Passport series of coursebooks.

This series comprises the largest number of pages of material of any of the coursebooks in this study's corpus: over 600 pages of which 369 pages (60.7%) have some kind of illustration. This represents a significant reduction in comparison with the densely visual format of the "Active English" series. There is a clear shift away from the use of black and white images here, with just over two thirds of the illustrations being published in colour (69.9%)¹⁵⁵. Drawings are no longer the predominant type of illustration (falling to 24.9% of the total); in this series, photographs assume greater importance, representing almost two thirds of the illustrations (62.3%), while figures remain underrepresented (12.8%) despite a small increase from the "Active English" series (8.2%).

Table 51. Passport series: variety and density of illustrations.

Passport: Percentages. Total number of pages with illustrations = 369 of 608 pages				
Colour variation of illustrations	Black & White		Colour	
	117	30.1%	272	69.9%
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No		247	66.9%
	Yes		122	33.1%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 414				
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [53]		37	69.8%
	Drawings [103]		51	49.5%
	Photographs [258]		49	18.9%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?			137/414	33.1%

The predominance of photographs in this series (62.3%) may be at the heart of the fact that just over two thirds of all the illustrations (66.9%) have no direct connection with language development. This is borne out by low number of photographs in this series that are connected: only 49 instances (less than one fifth) from the total number of 258 photographs (18.9%), which represents only 11.8% of all the illustrations in the series as a whole. In addition to this aspect, it should also be noted that photographs are far less pedagogically effective (i.e., non-decorative) in the series than the other two categories of figures (69.8%) and drawings (49.5%); so where you find a figure or a drawing, it is much more likely to be useful in the teaching-learning process. While the coursebooks

¹⁵⁵ While there may be aesthetic factors at work here, it is more likely that considerations to do with commerce (and technology) are more crucial. The possibilities and costs of publishing in colour will determine what is seen and what is not, which colours are used and which are not. See McCloud (1993) for a discussion of this issue in relation to comics.

in this series are the longest in this study's corpus, they have the least number of pages with illustrations (60.6%) and the second lowest level of illustrations that are actually linked to language development work (33.1%)

5. 1. B. 1 Passport 7th grade: illustrations.

Almost two thirds of the pages in this coursebook (62.2%) have some kind of illustration, quite a strong dilution in comparison with the “Active English” series. In terms of the use of colour or black and white printing, the percentages show a similar ratio with almost two thirds being in colour (62.5%). Photographs are the main form of illustration (43.6%) but there is a much more balanced distribution than was the case with the previous series: drawings account for 30.1% and figures for 26.3% of all the instances of illustrations.

Table 52. Passport series: 7th grade illustrations, general data.

Passport: 7th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 217									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 135 (62.2%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 82 (37.8%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 156						Total Colour Variation = 136			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
41	26.3%	47	30.1%	68	43.6%	51	37.5%	85	62.5%

The fact that there are 82 pages (37.8% of the total) in this coursebook with no illustrations may be a result of the smaller format of the book (18 cm x 25 cm), compared to the more standard, larger format of the other coursebooks in this study (the Aerial coursebooks are (21 cm x 27 cm)¹⁵⁶, putting pressure on availability of space on the page. In any case, these un-illustrated pages are often used for the presentation of word lists (e.g. p.26 lists presumably ‘important’ words from each section of Unit 1, “Bed and Breakfast”) or grammar summaries (e.g. pp.126-7 provide a summary about the “Present Perfect Tense”). While the density of illustrations diminishes, the use made of these illustrations to directly engage the learners in language work also declines. Slightly over half of the instances of illustrations are connected in this way (56.3%).

¹⁵⁶ This format is slightly smaller than an A4 sheet of paper.

Table 53. Passport: 7th grade illustrations: language link data.

Passport: 7th grade. Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 135 of 217 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	59	43.7%
	Yes	76	56.3%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 156			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [41]	32	78.0%
	Drawings [47]	24	51.1%
	Photographs [68]	32	47.1%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		88/156	56.8%

The relatively frequent use of figures as illustrations in this coursebook (41 instances or 26.3% of the total) is a new feature: there are more figures used here than in the entire “Active English” series (16 instances or 8.2% of the total for the series). The figures employed in Unit 2 “Daily routine at school” serve as good examples of this feature. The figure on p.34 consists of a calendar for the school year for Greater London (1983), containing dates/information which the learners have to comment on (speaking and writing) in terms of their own preferences and those of a classmate. The visual material is used as a stimulus to develop both a personal response and interaction which is guided by topic suggestions in the coursebook. While these tasks combine both verbal and visual input, a follow-up speaking activity on p.37 consists of a floor plan of a secondary school which the learners have to compare to their own school.

Figure 13. Passport 7th grade: school floor plan, page 37.

2. Daily routine at school



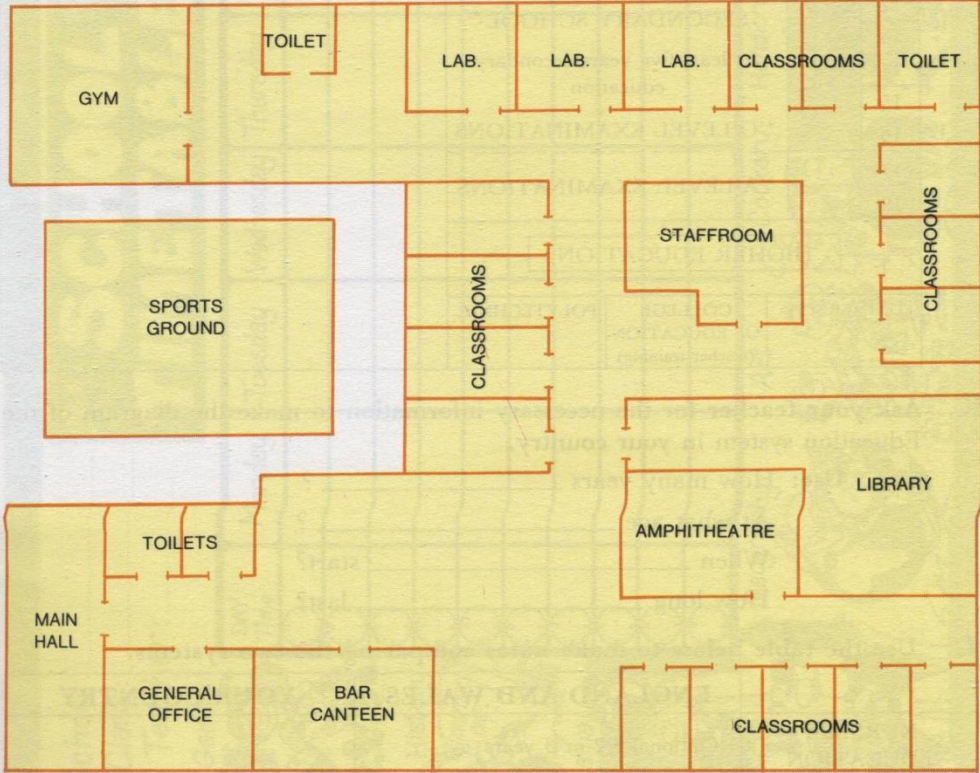
SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

I. After examining carefully the tables on page 34, **talk to your schoolmate** about the dates and length of Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays in both countries.

You'll have to say:

—how long they are;	—which are longer;
—when they begin;	—which are shorter;
—when they finish;	—_____.

J. Look at the following plan of a secondary school.



—In what way is it different from/similar to yours?

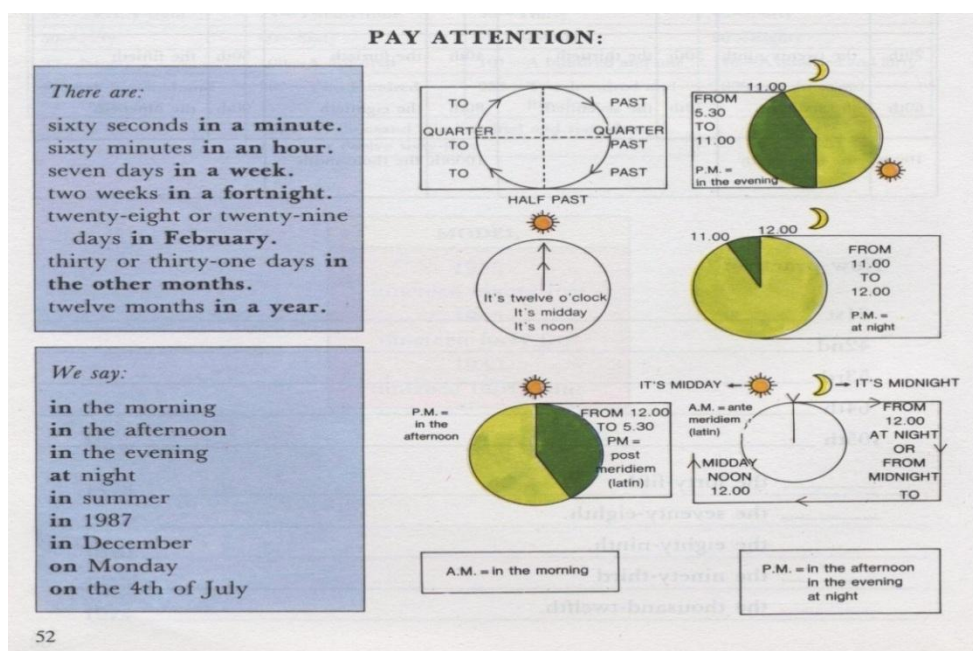
—What do you do in the different rooms/areas?

The activity is relatively ‘open-ended’ or ‘free’, in that the two guiding questions may be developed by the learners according to their own decisions on what requires comment and the language they can employ to make those observations. The way the

figure is used here helps to explain the high incidence of connection between the high proportions of figures that are connected with language work in this coursebook (32 out of 41 instances, 78.0%). Another example of this approach can be found in Unit 4 “Weather report” (pp.66-69), where a series of maps and charts are included, which are used as input for a variety of different tasks: filling in a table, a speaking activity and a gap filling exercise. The coursebook not only includes a variety of figures, but also requires the learners to react in different ways. It seems that the figures included provide a kind of flexibility in terms of both input and output, which is not so much the case with the drawings (51.1% linkage) and photographs (47.1% linkage) in this coursebook.

However, one of the main ways in which illustrations of all kinds are employed here is to provide (often combined but also separately) either specific vocabulary (verbal input) or simply ideas (visual input). There seems to be an effort to provide progressively less specific vocabulary within the illustrations as the learners progress through the coursebook. For example, early on in the coursebook on p.52 there is an illustration that combines both verbal and visual input dealing with telling the time. The learners use this input in a subsequent speaking activity.

Figure 14. Passport 7th grade: telling the time, page 52.



Near the end of the coursebook (p.206) there are two photographs which the learners have to describe (with the help of optional “given topics”) which comes at the end of Unit 11 “Spring shopping”. While the learners can be expected to make use of the language they have learned during their work on this unit (and the more guided speaking/dialogue activity on the previous page), these actual illustrations are entirely visual in content.

Figure 15. Passport 7th grade: picture description exercises, page 206.

N. Look at these pictures and describe them.
You may refer to the given topics.

1.
 - What is being sold.
 - Who is selling what.
 - Where.
 - How they are made.
 - You have bought similar items.
 - When.
 - Where.
 - How much.
2.
 - Things being sold.
 - What they are for.
 - Who is selling them.
 - Where.
 - Are there similar shops in your country?
 - Where.
 - Things they sell.
 - Average prices.

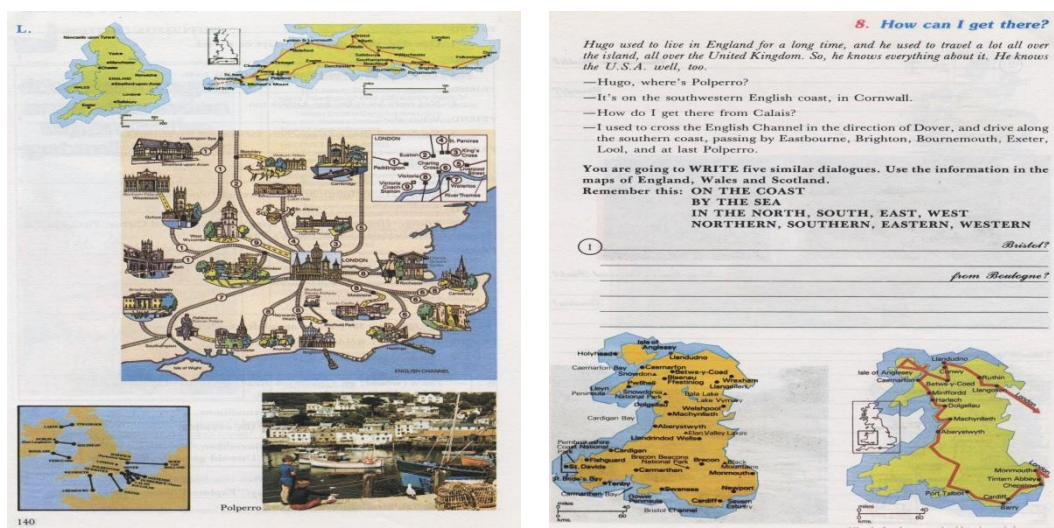



The task of describing a photograph is relatively common in this type of materials, as well as in the use of images/illustrations as opening activities in ELT classrooms but, in fact, leaves a lot to be desired in terms of ‘task authenticity’. How often in the real world do people describe a photograph to someone who can also see the same photograph? This issue, in a general sense, has been under consideration for many years now: “[c]ontrol over linguistic knowledge is achieved by means of performing under real operating conditions in meaning-focussed language activities” (Ellis, 1990: 195). There should always be a real communicative purpose, a clear relationship between the task and the real world needs of the learners and the task should engage the learners

being based on their interests (Guariento & Morley, 2001). But the problem here, beyond accurately defining ‘authenticity’, is to what extent illustrations, in their purest sense, can be linked to language work which supports the learning objectives of the unit/book/programme without being accused of lacking authenticity.

Of all the illustrations that are linked to language work (88/156 instances), the kind of response required from the learners is varied. The response/follow-up work may involve the usual variety of gap filling exercises or comprehension questions, but there should also be opportunities provided for larger scale, more fluency focussed activities. In this coursebook there are examples of tasks related to both productive skills: there are 20 examples related to writing and 23 examples related to speaking. Thus, approximately half of the instances where illustrations are connected, language work involve genuinely productive learner tasks. Yet, this may be categorised as a relatively low number, given that the coursebook is over 200 pages long and has over 150 instances of illustrations. This coursebook may be accused of showing more concern for the look of their materials than the actual substance, in relation to the way illustrations could be used to furnish more opportunities for individualised, creative L2 production. Here, as in the “Active English” series, the majority of illustrations are not providing this kind of stimulus but are instead making use of inappropriate, heavily structurally based, repetitive tasks of the kind found in Unit 8 “How can I get there?”.

Figure 16. Passport 7th grade: giving directions, pages 140-1.



The information load in these illustrations is immense (and often difficult to read), but the learners may only respond through recreating the model dialogue in relation to different locations/geographical situations given on the maps/illustrations. In addition to questioning the authenticity of this task, the learners should also beware of the model dialogue itself: it is a minefield of inappropriate and inaccurate language use.

In this coursebook, the notion of authenticity has another aspect to it: the use of scanned images as the basis of many of the illustrations in tandem with the increase in the number of instances of photographs. This kind of material represents an entirely different approach to the largely drawing based “Active English” series. A good example of the scanned variety of illustration is in Unit 11 “Spring shopping” on p. 201.

Figure 17. Passport 7th grade: writing activity, page 201.

I. Writing a letter

Your friend Pamela, who lives at 61, Mauritius Road, Greenwich, London SE10 0EH, is coming to your country for a holiday. She will be with you for a few days at Easter Time. Write her a letter asking for two of the items shown in the pictures. You want them to be a gift for your parents. It's a surprise and she must keep it secret. She may buy these articles in the Duty and Tax Free Shop at Heathrow. Remind Pamela she can use her voucher on any of those items.



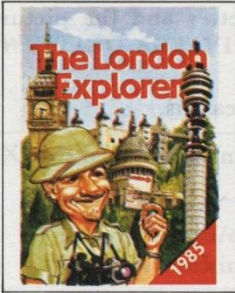
20

Here the learners must respond by writing a letter to request the items illustrated in the scanned images. In fact, this unit is rich in examples of this type of illustration, as it also has a section based around the Argos shopping catalogue and duty free shopping which include scans of catalogue pages, advertisements, vouchers and order forms. The effect is to place the learners into a pseudo-real context (there are several traditional style comprehension exercises and a dialogue build associated with these materials) whereby they are actually dealing with authentic texts that contain genuine information and language. The more dubious omnipresence of consumerist tendencies has already been

mentioned above in relation to the previous coursebooks and needs to be reaffirmed here since these materials are designed for 7th grade learners, hardly a group which has fully developed critical awareness in relation to this sort of material. There are also examples of entire pages being given over to this type of scanned illustration; for example, in Unit 6 “Have fun!” on p.103 the learners are presented with several different images on a single page.

Figure 18. Passport 7th grade: attractions in London, page 103.

6. Have fun!



The London Explorer
1985



30p
ADMIT ONE



Tower Bridge Walkway
60p

It's easier to get around London when you've got an Explorer.

Now you've discovered the London Explorer Pass, you've discovered the easiest way to make the most of one of the world's most exciting capital cities.

Your Pass gives you unlimited bus and Tube travel throughout the London Transport system (including travel to and from Heathrow).

To start you off on your journey of exploration, we've listed many of London's best known tourist attractions.

To reach them, simply follow the bus or Tube instructions that we have listed for you.

Alternatively, you can refer to our free Visitors Guide, or ask at any one of our Travel Information Centres in central London.

[Not beyond Northwood, Queen's Park and Loughton. Not on the Official London Sightseeing Tour.]

Heathrow Connection.
Tube: Heathrow. Airbus: A1, A2, A3.

Sightseeing.
Buckingham Palace/St. James's Park.
Tube: Victoria, Green Park, St. James's Park, Hyde Park Corner. Bus: 2, 28, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 19, 22, 24, 25, 29, 30, 36, 36A, 36B, 38, 39, 52, 52A, 55, 70, 73, 74, 76, 137, 185, 500, 507.

Houses of Parliament/Travellers Square.
Tube: Charing Cross, Westminster. Bus: 3, 11, 12, 24, 29, 53, 70, 77, 77A, 88, 109, 155, 159, 170, 172, 184.

Leicester Square/Piccadilly Circus.
Tube: Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus. Bus: 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 22, 23, 24, 29, 38, 53, 55, 88, 159, 176.

St. Paul's.
Tube: St. Paul's/Mansion House. Bus: 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 22, 23, 25, 76, 141, 501, 502, 513.

Tower of London/St. Katharine's Dock/Tower Bridge Walkway.*
Tube: Tower Hill. Bus: 23, 42, 78.

Museums/Galleries.
British Museum.
Tube: Tottenham Court Road, Goodge Street, Russell Square, Holborn. Bus: 1, 5, 7, 8, 14, 19, 22, 24, 25, 29, 38, 55, 68, 73, 77A, 134, 153, 172, 176, 188.

Maritime Museum/Greenwich.
Tube: Surrey Docks, then Bus 1088 or 188. Waterloo, then Bus 177 or 188.

London Dungeon.*
Tube: London Bridge. Bus: P3, 6A, 10, 18, 21, 35, 40, 41, 44, 47, 48, 70, 133, 501, 513.

London Transport Museum.*
Tube: Covent Garden, Leicester Square. Bus: 1, 6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 23, 27, 77A, 170, 172, 176.

Madame Tussauds*/Planetarium/Laserium.*
Tube: Baker Street. Bus: 1, 2, 28, 13, 18, 27, 30, 74, 113, 159, 176.

Museum of London/Barbican.
Tube: Barbican, St. Paul's, Moorgate. Bus: 4, 8, 22, 25, 141, 277A, 501, 502.

Natural History Museum/Victoria & Albert Museum/Science Museum.
Tube: South Kensington. Bus: 14, 30, 45, 49, 74.

Tate Gallery.
Tube: Finsbury. Bus: 77A, 88.

National Gallery.
Tube: Charing Cross, Embankment. Bus: 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 23, 24, 29, 53, 77, 77A, 88, 159, 170, 172, 176.

Shopping Markets.
Covent Garden.
Tube: Covent Garden. Bus: 1, 6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 23, 27, 77A, 170, 172, 176.

Oxford Street/Regent Street/London Diamond Centre.*
Tube: Oxford Circus, Bond Street, Marble Arch. Bus: 1, 2, 28, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16A, 23, 25, 30, 53, 73, 74, 88, 113, 137, 159, 500.

High Street Kensington.
Tube: High Street Kensington. Bus: 9, 27, 28, 31, 33, 49, 52, 52A, 73.

Knightsbridge.
Tube: Knightsbridge. Bus: 5, 14, 19, 22, 30, 52, 52A, 73, 74, 137.

Portobello Road Market.
Tube: Ladbroke Grove, Notting Hill Gate. Bus: 7, 15, 23, 52, 52A.

Zoo/Parks.
Kew Gardens/Richmond.
Tube: Kew Gardens, Richmond. Bus: 7 (Sundays), 27, 33, 65, 290.

Regent's Park/London Zoo.*
Tube: Baker Street, Camden Town. Bus: 2, 3, 53, 74.

Hyde Park/Kensington Gardens.
Tube: Hyde Park Corner, Marble Arch, Knightsbridge, Lancaster Gate, Queensway. Bus: 2, 28, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 16A, 19, 22, 23, 25, 30, 36, 36B, 38, 49, 52, 52A, 55, 73, 74, 88, 137, 500.

*discount voucher included

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28 Mar-4 Apr	11.50 red. to 10.00
	10.00 red. to 8.50
	8.50 red. to 7.00
11 Apr-13 Jun except Bank holidays	13.00 red. to 11.50
	11.50 red. to 10.00
	10.00 red. to 8.50

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This combination of image, information and text is a powerful resource that allows for an almost infinite variety of consequent tasks. However, having turned the page (a disadvantage for learner ease of access), the learners are confronted with a list of 25 comprehension questions which also cover an entire page (p.104) and relate back to the scanned images (p.103) and a letter which is placed on the previous page (p.102). No attempt is made to engage the learners through the visual aspects of the scanned material on p.103, no personal response from the learners is required, no cultural references are explored or developed in any of the questions and no beyond-sentence language work is demanded. A lot of space is devoted to incorporating these scanned (both colour and black and white) elements, but there is very little ‘yield’. Authenticity of texts/materials should be combined with authenticity of tasks in order to provide the necessary conditions for learning.

5. 1. B. 2 Passport 8th grade: illustrations.

Slightly fewer of the pages in this coursebook (58.9%) have some kind of illustration compared to the 7th grade coursebook, which is again a large variation in comparison with the “Active English” series. There is an increase (77.6%) in terms of the use of colour printing, with black and white illustrations accounting for less than a quarter of the total for the first time. Figures are almost absent from this coursebook (three instances, 2.4%), a sharp contrast to the 7th grade (41 instances, 26.3%); the use of drawings remains close to the same level (28.6%), which means that photographs are by far the main form of illustration (87 instances, 69%).

Table 54. Passport series: 8th grade illustrations, general data.

Passport: 8th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 190									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 112 (58.9%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 78 (41.1%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 126						Total Colour Variation = 125			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
3	2.4%	36	28.6%	87	69.0%	28	22.4%	97	77.6%

The noteworthy increase in the use of colour and photographs does not, however, correspond to any increase in the use of illustrations in connection with language

development: in fact, quite the reverse is true. The low number of figures may be a factor here (as discussed above, they represent a more ‘flexible’ category of illustration), but the use of only 10 photographs (11.5%) from a total of 87 is probably the key factor. Overall, the 7th grade coursebook (56.3%) has more than double the number of pages with illustrations connected to language work than this 8th grade coursebook (25.9%).

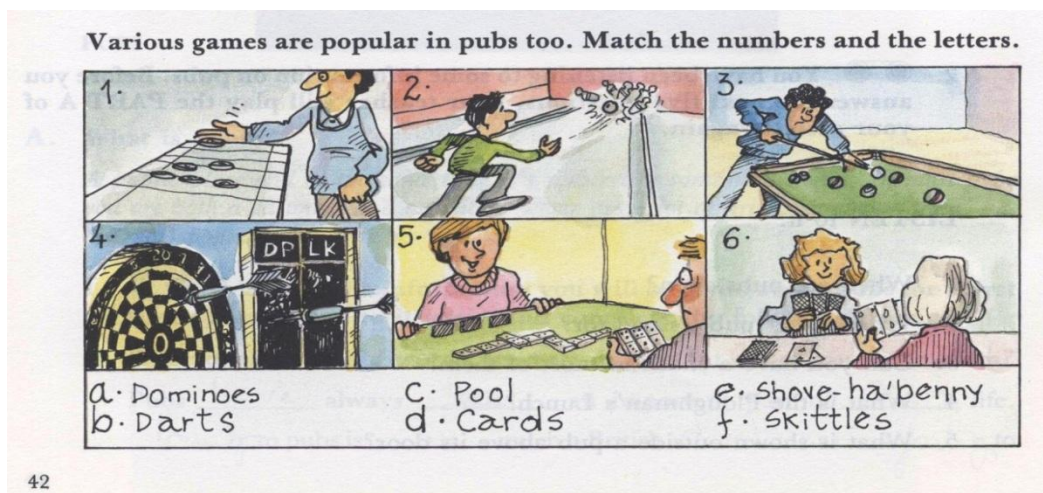
Table 55. Passport series: 8th grade illustrations, language link data.

Passport: 8th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 112 of 190 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	83	74.1%
	Yes	29	25.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 126			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [3]	1	33.3%
	Drawings [36]	20	55.5%
	Photographs [87]	10	11.5%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		31/126	24.6%

The distribution and type of language work when present reveals an imbalance: there is little or no written response required to illustrations in the first half of the coursebook. Prior to Unit 5, p.135, “Fares, please”, there are very few activities (four) derived from illustrations related to speaking or writing, whereas in the later section of the coursebook there many more (14). This may be an indication of the coursebook writers adopting a ‘graded’ or ‘progressive’ approach to the inclusion of more productive activities associated with illustrations (itself of dubious pedagogical validity) but more likely is simply a reflection of an unsystematic approach to this aspect of coursebook design.

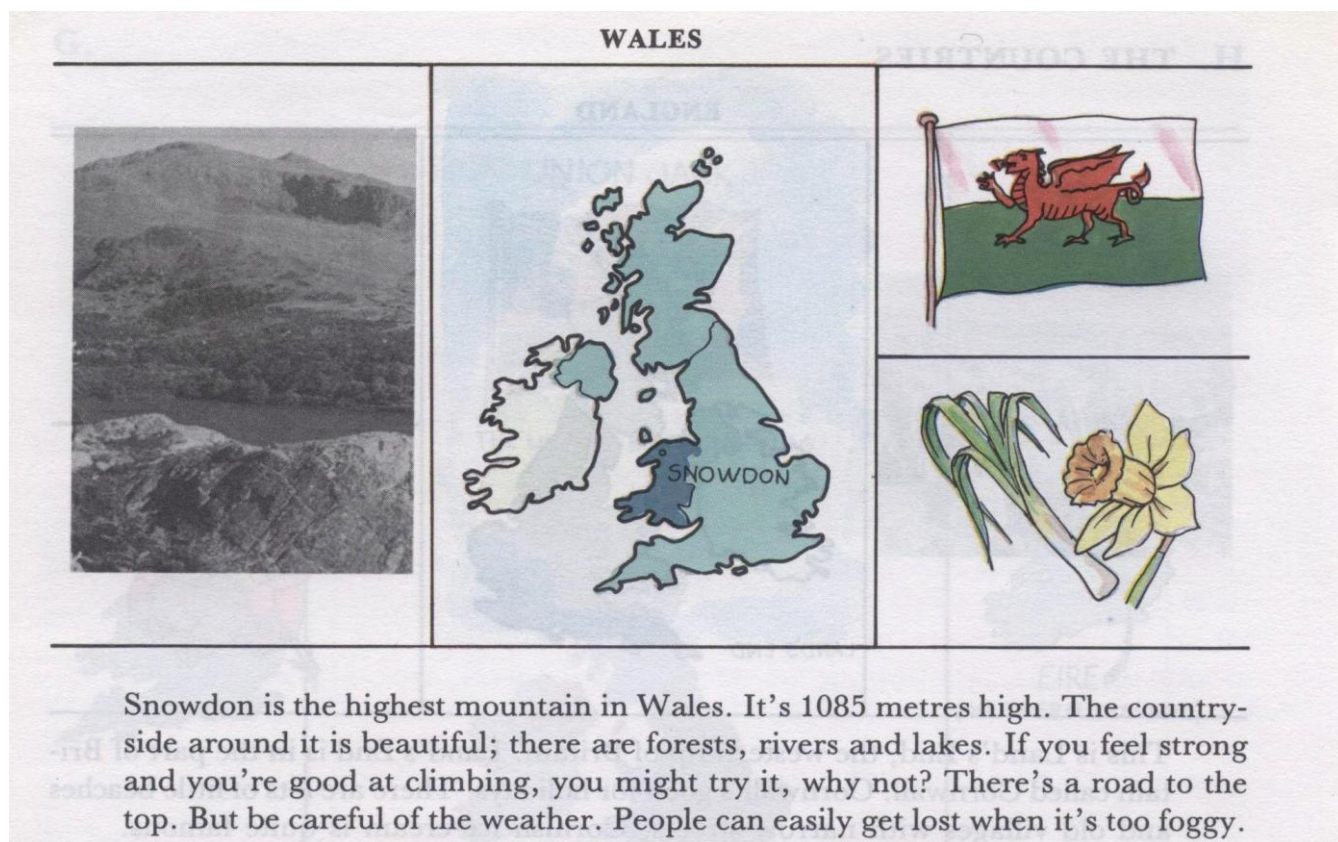
In some cases, the activities are straightforward matching exercises: a format which lends itself well to combining visual and verbal elements; for example, in Unit 2 “Trooping the colour” on p.42 there is an activity on ‘pub games’:

Figure 19. Passport 8th grade: pub games, page 42.



Without wishing to go into the question of cultural appropriacy in relation to this material (pubs and 8th graders?), the technique is one which is frequently employed (further examples here related to sports p.72 or warning signs p.176). The extent to which this kind of matching activity has any positive effect on learning is open to doubt: simple exposure of this kind (recognition only?) does not encourage the deeper level cognitive processing that actually using the language in a learner-centred productive mode does. However, not all the activities are always as easy to categorise, since some involve a kind of ‘mixed’ response; for example, in Unit One “Union Jack” (p.27) there is both a table to fill in and comprehension questions to answer based on input that is both verbal (a short text) and visual (photographs and drawings).

Figure 20. Passport 8th grade: Wales, page 26.



A further example of this 'mixed' category is Unit 6 "Warning. Handle with care" (pp. 178-179) which is denominated "Project Work". Based on visual input concerning six hotels in London, the learners have to respond to comprehension questions (yes/no questions based around Conditional Type Two), state their preferences, do a ranking activity and also some grammar practice (Conditional Type One).

Figure 21. Passport 8th grade: hotels in London, page 178.

HENRY THE EIGHTH HOTEL Leinster Gardens, London W2 3AN Tel: 01 262 0117	
LEINSTER TOWERS HOTEL Leinster Gardens, London W2 3AU Tel: 01 262 4591	
PARK PLAZA HOTEL Lancaster Gate, London W2 3NA Tel: 01 262 5022	
HAREWOOD HOTEL Harewood Row, Marylebone NW1 6SE Tel: 01 262 2707	
RATHBONE HOTEL Rathbone Street, London W1P 1AJ Tel: 01 636 2001	
SHERLOCK HOLMES HOTEL Baker Street, London W1M 1LB Tel: 01 486 6161	

Asking for information

Imagine you are a travel agent.
Would you be able to answer all these travellers' questions about the six London hotels?

1. Would I be able to get a suntan at the Rathbone Hotel? YES/NO
2. Would I have a television in my room if I stayed at the Harewood Hotel? YES/NO
3. Would I be able to swim if I went to the Leinster Towers Hotel? YES/NO
4. Would I be able to make coffee in my room if I stayed at the Harewood Hotel? YES/NO
5. Would they provide any evening entertainment if I stayed at the Park Plaza Hotel? YES/NO
6. Would I be able to get a sauna at the Henry the Eighth Hotel? YES/NO
7. Would they provide an alarm clock for me if I had to get up early at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel? YES/NO
8. Would I be able to get a meal at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel? YES/NO
9. Would my firm be able to hold a conference at the Rathbone Hotel? YES/NO
10. Would I be able to find anyone who spoke French at the Rathbone Hotel? YES/NO

Of interest here is the fact that the learners are required to 'convert' visual based information (the symbols related to the hotel facilities) into different kinds of verbal responses. The use of symbols in this kind of linguistic context is an area of representation that is usually researched as 'Semiotics': the study of signs and their

functions in everyday life¹⁵⁷, which has been integral to the work of scholars, such as Saussure, Chomsky and Jakobson. Here the hotel facility iconic-style symbols, together with a short ‘title’ (bar, restaurant, etc.), combine to create meaningful input which the learners respond to. The combination of the symbol with the ‘title’ ensures that there is a strong connection/association made to the referent and avoids the pitfalls/dangers of more culture specific signs/symbols (Senel, 2007). The kind of activities provided for the learners here makes for a fruitful use of illustrations when compared with the matching exercises often found in use for the presentation of new lexical items.

The location of this coursebook in the U.K. is firmly established in Unit 1, “Union Jack”, which devotes 15 pages to work related to the geo-political make-up of the nation with all the usual symbols (flags, plants and maps) and iconic places (Buckingham Palace, Wembley and Loch Ness all feature in colour photographs) evoked in addition to two less predictable topics: texts/illustrations related to the Channel Islands and the Hebrides. Unit 2 “Trooping the colour” and Unit 3 “That isn’t cricket” continue in a similar vein, evoking obvious concrete and symbolic reference to cultural elements that could be said to construct ‘Britishness’ (here at least the learners get to explore more widely than just London and the South-East). Following these almost 100 pages, the learners can be in doubt as to where the English language finds its most natural ‘home’. What comes next in Unit 4 (p.105) “Megastores” has ramifications that extend beyond the identification of a particular language to a particular nation state. This unit, as its name implies, once again, takes the learners into the world of comfortable consumerism. Several famous stores are named and illustrated over the succeeding pages (Selfridges, Harrods, Woolworths, Marks and Spencer, Boots, and so on) and various types of activities are supplied for the learners to work with; for example, there is an illustrated (colour photograph) text about the history of W.H. Smith which the learners have to use to build a dialogue (pp.114-115) or an illustrated (colour photograph) text about Safeway (complete with store slogan) which is accompanied by a multiple choice reading comprehension exercise (pp.112-113), or a table filling exercise associated with an illustrated (colour photograph) text about Marks and Spencer (p.110).

¹⁵⁷ See Sert (2006) for a discussion of the various strands to Semiotics and their relevance to education in general and ELT in particular.

Figure 22. Passport 8th grade: Marks and Spencer, page 110.

E. Read the information supplied about several well known department stores. Then do the following activities.

1. Fill in this table:

Name: Marks and Spencer
Nickname: Marks and Sparks
Brand name: St Michael
History: 1884: Michael Marks, 21 years old, Jewish, arrives in Britain from Poland.
 1885: Marks spends £5 and buys small things to sell. He walks from village to village with these things in a bag.
 1886: Marks sells his things from a small table in Leeds Market. It's called 'The Penny Bazaar'. A sign above the table says: "Don't ask the price; it's a penny".
 1890: Marks owns five Penny Bazaars in towns in the north of England.
 1894: Thomas Spencer gives Marks £300 and owns half of the eight Penny Bazaars. Their first new shop is called Marks and Spencer.
 1982: There are 252 Marks and Spencer shops in Britain; many others in Belgium, France and Canada. Marks and Spencer export things to forty different countries in the world. 700 firms make things to sell in the shops. They all have the label: St Michael (after Michael Marks).

Fascinating facts: 44,000 people work in the shops.
 1/3 of all British women wear St Michael underclothes.
 1/5 of all British people wear a St Michael jumper or cardigan.
 For every £8 we spend on clothes in Britain, we spend £1 in a Marks and Spencer shop!



Name	Marks and Spencer
	St Michael
Founder	
Age	
Religion	
The Penny Bazaar	
1894	
1982	
Shops in Britain	
Other countries	
The most fascinating fact	

The propensity to name and describe different commercial entities/brands (and ask learners to 'work' on such topics) leads to the creation of a learning context inside the classroom which is clearly linked to a view of life and ways of behaving outside the classroom, a representation of what is 'normal' (a political and ideological significance), a correspondence between education and consumerism. Gray (2010) outlined how such specific meanings are wrought into the structure and content of ELT global coursebooks and Block (2004) discussed how ELT functions globally as an agent of standardisation of learning behaviours and homogeneity of content.¹⁵⁸ More recently, Littlejohn (2012) considered that this process has now reached its zenith with ELT

¹⁵⁸ The original work in this field was Ritzer, G. (1993) *The McDonaldization of Society*. Los Angeles. Sage Publications. A 7th edition to mark the book's 20th anniversary was published in 2012, an indication of its continuing importance as a reference.

materials which “aim to structure in detail almost every moment of classroom and non-classroom learning time” (ibid: 295).

In the case of Portugal, there seems to be an acceptance among coursebook writers of the place of globally commercialized products and brands in locally produced ELT materials that might in the context of television or cinema be referred to as ‘product placement’ or ‘embedded marketing’. A brand name like ‘Starbucks’ or ‘Coca Cola’ signifies far more than a cup of coffee or a fizzy drink; these products/brands are standard bearers for a consumer culture, supported and sustained by massive amounts of advertising often specifically aimed at the youth market, in which the brands themselves may be marks of social status and differentiation associated with notions of ‘fashion’ or ‘lifestyle’ (Khan et al, 2013). The very presence of such brands in ELT materials implies the absence of others brands/products, leaving coursebooks open to accusations of partiality or bias (the visual recognisability of brands is well established as being commercially crucial). For example, the use of the term ‘Coke’ (in fact, a registered trademark) is unnecessary when the generic, commercially neutral, term ‘cola’ may be used in the same way that the generic term ‘trainers’ exists and is usually employed rather than any particular brand: the equivalent care needs to be applied in relation to the illustrations included in the coursebook.

5. 1. B. 3 Passport 9th grade: illustrations.

The number of pages in this coursebook (60.7%) that have some kind of illustration is in keeping with the other two coursebooks in this series (all around the 60% mark), indicating that there is some kind of internal consistency in this respect . There is a slight decrease (70.3%) in the proportion of pages with colour printing, more in line with the 7th grade than the 8th grade coursebook. Figures (6.8%) and drawings (15.2%) together account for around 20% of the instances of illustrations; the predominance of photographs again increases (78.0%): learners could expect to encounter a photograph, on average, on every other page.

Table 56. Passport series: 9th grade illustrations, general data.

Passport: 9th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 201									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 122 (60.7%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 79 (39.3%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 132						Total Colour Variation = 128			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
9	6.8%	20	15.2%	103	78.0%	38	29.7%	90	70.3%

The number of instances of illustrations being linked to language work reaches the lowest of the series (only 18 instances, 13.6%), a great distance from the “Active English” series average of around 50%: the fact that this coursebook contains over a hundred photographs, of which only seven are linked to language work (6.8%), would seem to be determinant. In addition, there is a lower uptake of drawings (35.0%) in the 9th grade than in the other years (around 50%); with respect to figures, this series shows very little in the way of a coherent approach to linking them to language development or, indeed, whether they should be in coursebooks or not: in the 9th grade, nine instances with four linked (44.4%); in the 8th grade, three instances with one linked (33.3%); and in the 7th grade, 41 instances with 32 linked 78.0%).

Table 57. Passport series: 9th grade illustrations, language link data.

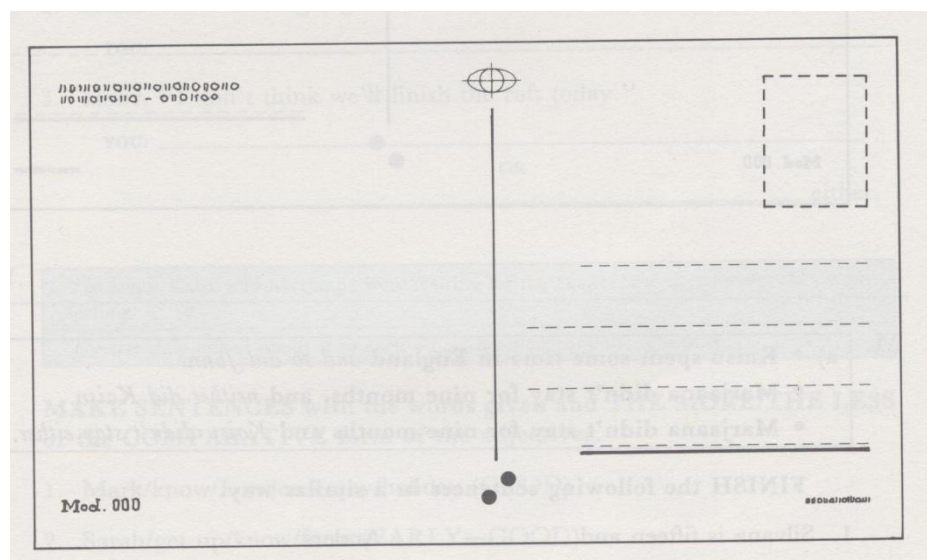
Passport: 9th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 122 of 201 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	105	86.1%
	Yes	17	13.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 132			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [9]	4	44.4%
	Drawings [20]	7	35.0%
	Photographs [103]	7	6.8%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		18/132	13.6%

The inconsistency of approach to the visual aspect of this coursebook can be further exemplified by the way in which the pages without illustrations are distributed, with reference to entirely blank pages being used to delimit unit breaks (for example, pp.52, 128 and 170) but not with all the units. Distribution across units is uneven: some units have fewer pages without illustrations than others: Unit 2 “Saturday Job” (pp.37-52) has eight pages without illustrations, Unit 3 “Activity Holidays” (pp.53-82) has 10 and Unit 4 “The Olympics” (pp.95-127) has 12. Within units, there may be illustration-free pages together in sequences of two or three pages, but there are also sequences of five pages

without illustrations (pp.124-128 and pp. 166-170) and even one sequence of 10 pages (pp.27-36) in the first unit: the first half of the Unit 1 “What job” is illustrated with figures, drawings and photographs, but the second half is not. There is ample evidence, at various different levels, of lack of attention to this aspect of coursebook content/design.

However, there are also examples of the coursebook providing visual input of a different type. In Unit 3 “Activity Holidays” the learners are encouraged to write a postcard as if they were on holiday, and the coursebook (p.69) provides a template of a typical postcard for the learners to do just that.

Figure 23. Passport 9th grade: postcard template, page 69.



The inclusion of the visual element here creates a real world connection that could give the activity greater validity, bearing in mind this coursebook was published before the advent of electronically mediated personal communications (social networks, SMS texts, emails, etc.). But there is a contradiction between the visually supported context of the postcard and the instructions given to the learners: they should treat this piece of writing as if it were an informal letter. The second writing activity, to ask for information from the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges in London (also with a postcard template), on p.70 is a formal letter. Clearly there is a great difference between a formal and informal letter and neither of these is the same as a postcard in terms of layout, style of text, degree of formality and so on. The added value

provided by the visual element is truncated by the ill-advised activities associated with it.

The 9th grade coursebook also contains two examples of a rarely employed form of visual representation: the cartoon (p.103 and p.181). The later example tells the story of the life of James Dean “Movie Lives” and the example on p.103 is a full page cartoon strip used to tell “The Story of the Marathon” as an Olympic sport. It consists of 11 panels, each with a colour drawing and plentiful text within informative balloons (there are only two very short speech bubbles). Given the wide appeal this format of story-telling has among young people, the fact that it is rarely found in coursebooks is perhaps surprising. The existing technique of using one panel drawings (which dominates the “Active English” series) to provide ideas, vocabulary or a dialogue model may mean there is less ‘space’ for this more sequential variety of drawing. A further reason could be that the cartoon/comic strip format does not fall within what is considered an appropriate educational genre: it lacks sufficient gravitas.

Without wishing to delve into the history of the way deliberately sequenced pictures and images have been used as a means of communication (e.g. in ancient Egyptian palaces/pyramids, the Bayeux Tapestry in 11th century Normandy or various 18th century English political satires), this format has immense visual appeal, using the power of images that may represent reality or may be purely symbolic in conjunction with ‘chunks’ of highly contextualised language. There is a kind of interpretative involvement on the part of the reader/viewer of the vocabulary and grammar of both the visual and the verbal elements required (Eisner, 1992) which most ELT materials lack. As has been pointed out several times in this chapter, the use of illustrations in coursebooks is rarely combined with any kind of communicative intent or pedagogical purpose, illustrations being largely ‘fluff’ rather than substance. With cartoons/comics this interpretative process means making judgments or inferences about what is shown (visible) and what is not (invisible), which is the key to understanding how cartoons/comics are able to amplify their message/meaning through simplification (McCloud, 1993), a characteristic of some relevance given these middle school learners’ age and language level.

On the two pages immediately following “The Story of the Marathon”, the expected illustrative pattern returns: p.104 features a colour photograph of female swimmers diving into their race as decoration for a quiz on sports, and p.105 features a colour photograph of Martina Navratilova in action to accompany a text about her scientific computer based approach to tennis. Neither photograph connects directly with any language work. The choice of Martina Navratilova to feature in this coursebook was presumably based on her being the most famous female tennis player in the world at that time. Other individual ‘famous’ people featured in this coursebook include Rosa Mota, Carlos Lopes, Freddie Mercury, Tina Turner, Noel Edmonds, David Bowie, the cast of ‘Dynasty’, the cast of ‘The Colbys’ and Steffi Graf.¹⁵⁹ There is also a specific exercise where the learners have to identify/name eleven famous “Women in Movies” (pp.182-183) from their colour photographs and match them to short bio-pieces.

Given that many years have elapsed since this book was published, this exercise is now almost impossible to complete. And that is exactly the point: fame is an ephemeral attribute at best, and by choosing to include such people only on the basis of their fame creates a built-in faults in the materials, especially in the Portuguese context of coursebooks only being replaced every 6 years. Furthermore, from an ethical perspective, much care is needed with any kind of instructional material that might be said to be promoting fame as a desirable or valid objective, either implicitly or explicitly. In the process of moulding their own identities, adolescents often desire fame as a way to create an impact, to make their mark on society and have access to the wealth and power assumed to co-habit with fame: fame is a cure-all for all of life’s problems (Halpern, 2009). The lure of fame is based not on what it is, but on what it signifies. Even when the inclusion of famous people is said to be motivated by a desire to populate the book with real people, to have ‘real content’ (Cook, 1983), the use of famous people, in fact, does the reverse, since what we know of these people is likely to be partial, inaccurate or even fictional (imagined?), depending on how their fame has been engendered.

¹⁵⁹ At least there is an appropriate mix of famous people from different branches of local, international and target cultures.

5. 1. C The Aerial series of coursebooks.

In this series, 82.6% of all the pages have some form of illustration, which is an increase on the “Passport” series, but still less than the “Active English” series. The most striking variation is in the almost total exclusion of black and white images. There is only a single example in the 7th grade book (p.87). Photographs are again the most frequently employed visual element (88.7%), almost to the exclusion of the two other types of illustration under consideration: drawings (10.3%) and figures (1.5%). The presence of so many photographs in this series is almost the direct inverse of the “Active English” series, indicating a dramatic shift in the type of visual representation in the space of approximately 20 years.

Table 58. Aerial series: variety and density of illustrations.

Aerial: Series Percentages. Total number of pages with illustrations = 233 of 282 pages				
Colour variation of illustrations	Black & White		Colour	
	1	0.5%	204	99.5%
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No		168	72.1%
	Yes		65	27.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 204				
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [3]		3	100%
	Drawings [21]		14	66.6%
	Photographs [180]		27	15.0%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?			44/204	21.6%

Of all the four series, this series has the lowest ‘score’ in terms of pages that have illustrations linked to language work (only 27.9%) and this despite this series having nearly over 80% of its pages displaying illustrations (233/282). This series can be said to both highly visual in nature but also minimally pedagogical in the purpose of these illustrations. This is largely due to the chosen format of the coursebooks in this series, which is similar to the Portuguese concept of a “*fotonovela*” for teenagers, a kind of storybook or comic book that has photographs instead of cartoon-style drawings. This is also a strong indication that no clear pattern or trend exists across the period in time under consideration here¹⁶⁰. However, there is a correlation here again with the predominance of photographs as the preferred type of illustration: a lot of photographs but few with any connection to language development (only 15% of the photographs,

¹⁶⁰ The same ‘scores’ for pages with illustrations were 33.1% for the “Passport” series, 54.9% for the “Active English” series and 35.9% for the later “Extreme” series.

which is 13.2% of all the illustrations that the series includes). Both of the other two types are barely represented (17/204 instances), but curiously these few instances are much more strongly related to language work: all of the three figures (100%) and 14 of the 21 drawings (66.6%).

5. 1. C. 1 Aerial 7th grade: illustrations.

This coursebook, while shorter in length, has some kind of illustration on almost every page (94.3%), a strong increase in comparison with the “Passport” series. The coursebook only has one instance of a black and white illustration (p.87, a small photograph of a group of elderly 19th century (?) women, perhaps representing a choir), colour has now become the default presentation medium. Photographs are the predominant form of illustration (80.9%), and the only visual alternative is provided by drawings (13 instances, 19.1%) since there are no figures at all employed.

Table 59. Aerial series: 7th grade illustrations, general data.

Aerial: 7th grade.				Total number of pages available to teach from = 88					
				Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 83 (94.3%)					
				Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 5 (5.7%)					
Total number of instances/illustrations = 68					Total Colour Variation = 69				
Figures		Drawings		Photographs			Black & White		+ Colour
0	0%	13	19.1%	55	80.9%		1	1.4%	68 98.6%%

There is an almost even distribution in terms of illustrations linked to language work (47.0%) compared those which are not (i.e., which are decorative, 53%). While the number of instances of drawings is low (19.1%), the use made of this type of illustration for language development far outweighs the use made of photographs (84.6% compared to 29.1%), this despite the fact that there are more than three times the number of photographs in the coursebook than there are drawings. One of the ways in which the drawings are used is to create an ‘exact’ context for vocabulary work; for example, in Unit 8 “My house” (p.28) drawings are used in conjunction with a listening text for a labelling exercise, and in Unit 11 “St. Martin’s School” (p.39) drawings are used as the basis of true/false questions and work on describing school facilities. Here it would be difficult to find a stock photograph which would illustrate/include all the lexical items that the coursebook writers regard as necessary. Perhaps the ‘rule’ here is: a photograph where possible, a drawing where necessary.

Table 60. Aerial series: 7th grade illustrations, language link data.

Aerial: 7th grade. Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 83 of 88 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	44	53.0%
	Yes	39	47.0%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 68			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [0]	0	0
	Drawings [13]	11	84.6%
	Photographs [55]	16	29.1%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		27/68	39.7%

The predominance of photographs also results from the stylistic choice of the authors/publishers to use photomontage sequences as the primary presentation format of the coursebook. A group of young people are introduced early in the coursebook (colour photograph Unit 1 “Back to school”, p.6) and they continue to feature throughout, having been photographed in all manner of places/situations, usually with speech boxes inserted into the photographs.

Figure 24. Aerial 7th grade: school friends, page 6.



These sequences (13 instances) occur frequently as double page spreads at intervals of 4/5 pages and give the coursebook a visual structure and consistency that is unusual if

not unique (also mentioned above in relation to *'fotonovelas'*). Learners are exposed to the combination of the visual and verbal input on a regular basis even if there is little in the way of follow-up work except for the usual comprehension question, matching and gap filling style exercises. These exercises all fall into the category of 'practice' rather than full scale 'production', which is absent from the main section of the coursebook.¹⁶¹ In addition, this photomontage technique allows for the inclusion of a storyline as the learners/readers follow the evolving relationship between Helen (a British 14 year old) and Michael (a visiting American teenager) and the events at St. Martin's School. This relationship serves as the basis for some exploration of cultural themes from the differing perspectives of the two teenagers, but makes no mention of how any of these themes might relate to the Portuguese experience of the learners.

The way that family life is pictured in this coursebook is a case in point. Early in the coursebook it is established that Helen's family (the Parker family?) live a large three bedroomed detached house which has a separate dining room and living room downstairs, as well as a kitchen and a pantry (drawings, p.28, Unit 8). The grandparents are retired and live in a thatched cottage in a "very peaceful village in the country" (colour photograph, p.14, Unit 4). The family usually sit down and have breakfast together in the dining room (photomontage, pp.16-17, Unit 4) before they go to work/school. Through various different types of illustration the learners get a clear visual impression of this family's lifestyle. However, this lifestyle bears little resemblance to what might be termed 'real family life'. Thatched properties are relatively rare in Britain and nowadays are often considered a high-priced luxury given their costs of purchase, insurance and maintenance and would likely be beyond the means of a retired couple (ex-photographer and ex-shop assistant). But this family may indeed be wealthy judging from their breakfast table: it is fully set with a complete crockery service of plates, cereal bowls and teacups, there are matching placemats and napkins rounded off with a 'silver service' coffee-pot, sugar bowl and jam pots. The image of plentiful comfort in the context of a family breakfast is somewhat jarring.

¹⁶¹ The Aerial coursebooks have a separate, lengthy, 'workbook' section (attached and within the book's glossy cover but on different quality paper) which includes many further 'practice' activities among which there are examples of 'free practice' or 'production' style work. The workbook section is largely un-illustrated except for an occasional drawing. The present day publishing approach involves entirely separate workbooks that accompany the main 'students' book as part of the grand package.

The narrative function of these photomontages means the way the content is composed becomes of crucial importance. One of the aims of this technique would have been to create a character (or series of characters) that the learners could connect with. But there is an air of falsehood surrounding the photomontages that makes it difficult to react in a positive manner to the content as being meaningful or even useful as a vehicle for language instruction. The second example in the coursebook, “Peter’s birthday” on pp.24-25, purports to show the party family and friends enjoying the festivities: there are eight numbered panels showing various interactions, the final two featuring a party game, the three-legged race.

Figure 25. Aerial 7th grade: party games, page 25.



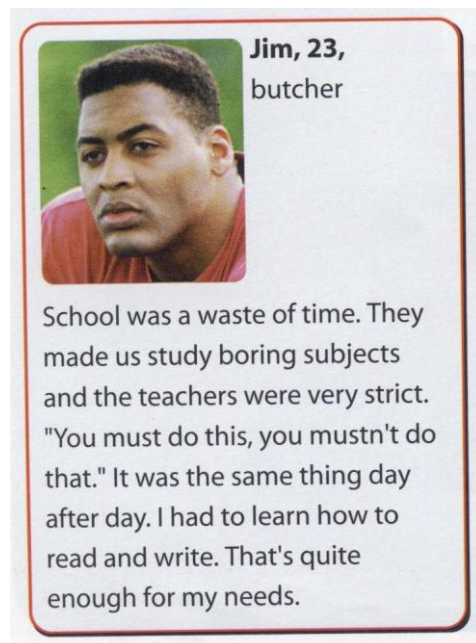
The party is supposed to be taking place at the thatched cottage of the grandparents, but clearly the location in this photograph is some kind of public space (a similar photograph is also used on p.78 in relation to a letter written by Michael describing this day), perhaps on a housing estate, certainly not the garden (as referred to in a text on p.18) of an idealised rural retreat. The use of white plastic chairs and tables as props in this scene/photomontage is also rather contradictory, given the previous allusions to wealth: a correct staging of these scenes is a complex pseudo-theatrical/cinematic matter and makes it difficult to achieve a believable visual context using this photomontage technique.

The first comment in the party scene described above, made by one of the grandmothers, is “Who’s that foreigner over there?” (Panel 1, p.24) How the grandmother recognises that her granddaughter Helen’s potential boyfriend Michael is foreign is not clear. Michael looks very much like the other teenagers at the party: young, white, casually dressed with blondish straight hair. Indeed, the presence of any other ethnic minority in this coursebook is extremely rare. While the setting of the coursebook is clearly the U.K., the characters that feature in the photographs are all white, with only four exceptions: in Unit 10 “My life”, on p.34 there is a photograph of Debbie, a black teenage girl who emigrated from Soweto to the U.S.A. (and is happier as a result, according to her text); in Unit 12 “This is the news” on p.40 there is a photograph of a group of four young people sitting, relaxing in a park, including one young black male; in Unit 13 “Qualifications” on p.44 there is a photograph of a young black male, Jim, a butcher, and in Unit 20 “Karaoke craze” on p.68 there is a photograph of Michael Jackson and one of the Spice Girls. Of the 180 instances of photographs being used as illustrations in this coursebook (which admittedly do not always feature people), there are four instances of non-white people being included.¹⁶²

The notion of inclusivity is one of the defining principles related to the selection and evaluation of cultural content (Gray, 2002). The U.K. is not monochrome (‘White British’ accounts for 80.5% of the 2011 U.K. Census population), ethnic minorities are statistically significant and also significant agents of economic, political and cultural activities, but in this coursebook they hardly feature at all, and when they do it may not be in relation to the U.K. but other locations (South Africa, the U.S.A.). Furthermore, these people are not part of the ‘main cast’ in the Helen/Michael narrative; they have a different ‘profile’ or status: the teenagers in the park (p.40) are not named or referred to in any way; the pop stars on p.68 are not referred to at all; there are some comprehension questions about the text about Debbie (p.34) which focus on how hard life was for her in Soweto and how much better off she is in the U.S.A. But the most blatant case is that of Jim, the butcher, on p.44. The text attributed to Jim is supposed to result from an interview on the importance of school and qualifications.

¹⁶² Potentially problematic representations have been identified as being absent from materials related to other foreign language learning contexts; for example, Canadians in USA published French language coursebooks (Chapelle, 2009).

Figure 26. Aerial 7th grade: Jim the butcher, page 44.



Jim, who looks less than happy in the photograph, expresses a highly reductionist view of education (you only need to learn how to read and write), while the other people (all white) cited in the unit express different, less anti-establishment views: school should train people to think, schools should be more flexible, qualifications are important, school should allow time for relaxation/sports, and so on. But it is Jim who emphasises negative aspects, such as boring subjects, authority issues and restrictive routines. Cultural fairness in coursebooks has been an issue in the U.S.A. for many years (Wirtenburg et al, 1978) and centres on the need for educational materials to exclude distorted perspectives and actively combat prejudice. The suggestion by Ur (1991) that a litmus test would be to take the first 30 pictures that feature people in the coursebook and see what kind of social profile was represented, remains valid today. Invisibility, unreality and imbalance are three of the seven types of bias identified by Sadker & Sadker (2001) which could be said to be present in relation to ethnic minorities in this coursebook. This is not a new issue, all coursebooks should be more inclusive with a range of characters that is racially and ethnically diverse, is non-sexist and depicts people with disabilities in a positive light. This appeal could be taken more seriously by local coursebook writers; indeed, there is some evidence of a positive shift in the most

recent Portuguese publications, such as the “New Wave” coursebook series¹⁶³. There is ‘space’ available between the pressures of political correctness (Ravitch, 2004) in content and language, commercial publishing interests and socio-cultural authenticity, but representations of what is the prevailing demographic situation remain only partially realised.¹⁶⁴

5. 1. C. 2 Aerial 8th grade: illustrations.

Fewer pages in this coursebook (75%) have some kind of illustration compared to the 7th grade coursebook, a reduction, in part, attributable to the inclusion of extensive reading activities which are not illustrated. In terms of the use of colour or black and white printing, there are no illustrations at all in black and white: the coursebook is a 100% colour presentation (the first in this corpus). Figures are almost absent from this coursebook (two instances, 2.9%; in both cases, they are crossword puzzles to be filled in) and the number of drawings becomes residual: one instance (1.5%) compared to 19.1% in the 7th grade); the single, drawing instance is a visual/listening matching exercise (Unit 4, p.17). Photographs are far and away the main, almost sole, form of illustration (65 instances, 95.6%).

Table 61. Aerial series: 8th grade illustrations, general data.

Aerial: 8th grade.						Total number of pages available to teach from = 104				
						Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 78 (75%)				
						Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 26 (25%)				
Total number of instances/illustrations = 68						Total Colour Variation = 68				
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour		
2	2.9%	1	1.5%	65	95.6%	0	0%	68	100%	

An extremely low level of ‘linkage’ (26.1%) is the characteristic pattern of use of illustrations on the pages of this coursebook (the longest of this series). This may, in part, be explained by the lack of figures and drawings: as discussed above, these formats are more ‘flexible’ (an interpretation borne out here with all 3 instances being directly linked to language work). This occurs in combination with the overwhelming

¹⁶³ The 7th grade (2006) coursebook’s unit on sports features the Paralympic Games of Athens in 2004; the 8th grade book (2007) has material about Oprah Winfrey and the Somalian model Dirie. The 9th grade book (2008) makes use of its ‘extensive reading’ supplement to introduce the theme of human trafficking in Africa.

¹⁶⁴ Bedford (2005), in her survey of coursebooks for Business English, reports that representations of White people outnumber representations of Black or Asian people by a ratio of 4 to 1 in her corpus.

presence of photographs, many of which are employed in the continuing use of photomontage sequences at regular intervals throughout the coursebook. While a quarter of the pages (26/104) do not have any illustrations, a similar ratio is found in relation to ‘uptake’ of the illustrations that are included: only 21 instances (26.1%). In addition to the inclusion of extensive reading pages, this coursebook also has a 6 page section (pp.104-109) which is called “Curiosities” where learners are invited to “update your knowledge” in relation to various topics (The English Language, The Union Jack, Capital Cities, Festivities, Food and meals, Sports and Education): several colour photographs illustrate these short texts (of highly dubious content in some cases) but none are linked to any language development activities, indeed it is not clear how this section is to be employed in the classroom.

Table 62. Aerial series: 8th grade illustrations, language link data.

Aerial: 8th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 78 of 104 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	57	73.1%
	Yes	21	26.1%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 68			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [2]	2	100%
	Drawings [1]	1	100%
	Photographs [65]	9	14.3%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		12 /68	17.6%

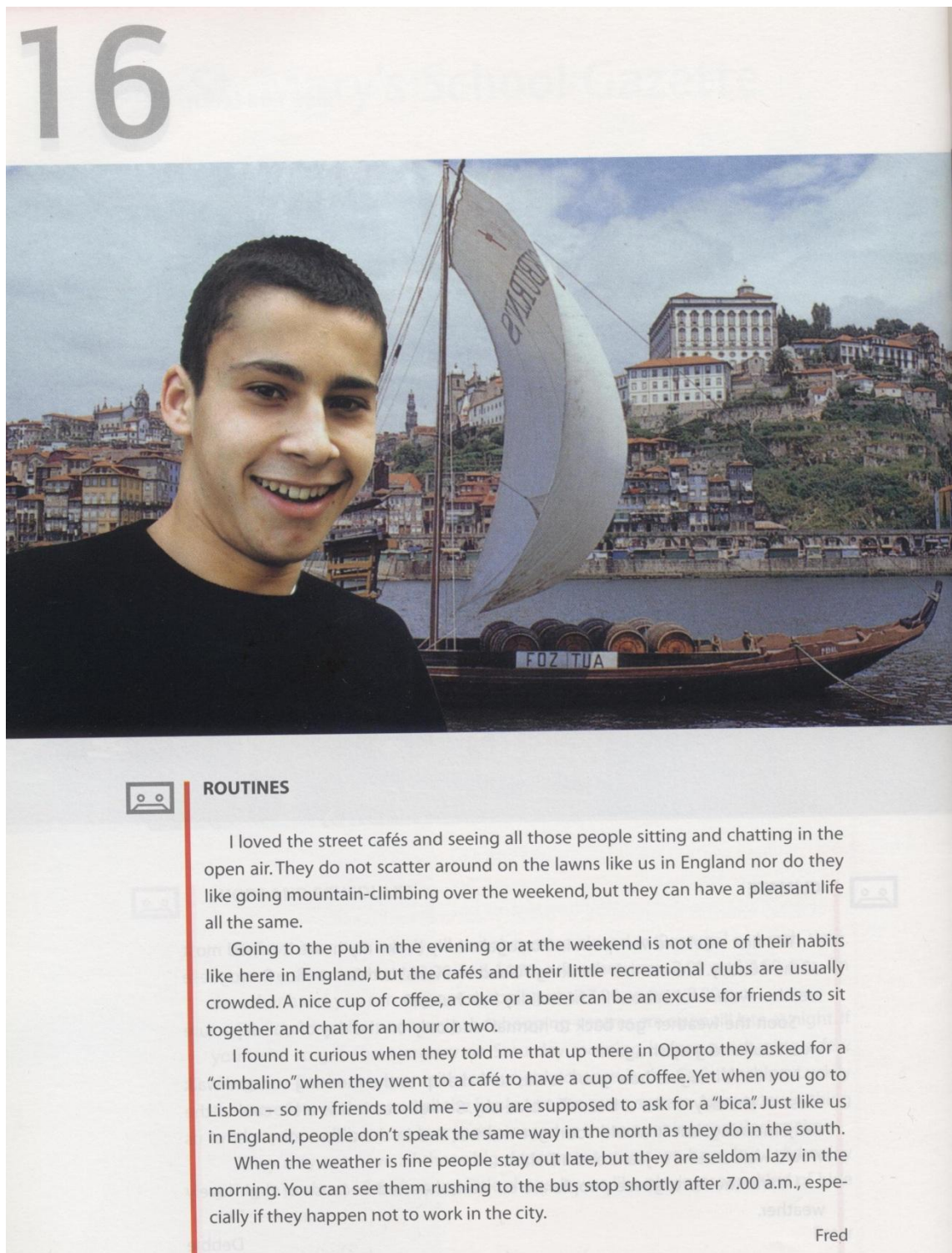
Of the 68 instances of illustrations less than a fifth (12 instances) are connected to language work (17.6%), this ratio being lower than any of the coursebooks in this corpus with the exception of Passport 9th grade. There seems to have been no attempt made to make productive, pedagogic use of the visual elements present, with very few exceptions: for example, the single drawing (p.17) connected to a sequencing/listening activity (already mentioned above) and the two instances of reading texts connected to writing activities via crossword puzzles (p.27 and p.39). In terms of illustrations being connected with language input, the photomontage double page sequences are accompanied by a symbol denoting a listening cassette, but it is not clear how any listening/learning activity is to be developed in connection with this material.

In this coursebook, there is a shift of cultural focus as most of the ‘action’ is associated with a group of supposedly British teenagers visiting Porto. These teenagers feature in

the photomontage sequences (numbers 1-7) in the first 16 units of coursebook as they ‘experience’ the local Porto culture. The image that is created of Porto through the illustrations employed is characteristically a tourist’s gaze (Urry, 1990): the impression created is something like a travelogue, a throwback to a romanticised view of travel as something that ‘broadens the mind’ or where tourism functions as if “it is possible to step outside the burdens of national identity to forge contacts across cultural divides” (Strain, 2003: 1). It is almost possible to predict the local sights that will feature in the photographs without opening the coursebook: the first photographs are of the Ribeira and the cube statue/fountain (p.25), the Majestic Café (p.28 and p.31), various riverside pictures featuring ‘rabelo’ boats and the Porto skyline (pp.32-35), and so on.

Porto is embodied through its buildings - its places not its population - apart from the ‘host family’. The visitors have virtually no contact with the local people; it is an architectural embodiment rather than a human one. The presentation in the coursebook creates a kind of circularity in that these visitors are depicted through photographs, while tourism has also been partially defined as a kind of visual consumption of places visited by means of taking photographs (Urry, 1995). The city of Porto is construed here as almost an empty, de-populated place which would surely come as a surprise to local Portuguese learners using this 8th grade coursebook. It is a very ‘thin’ representation of Porto as a place and one which takes into account neither the diversity and depth of the various social practices that tourism involves (Mota Santos, 2004), nor the real lives of the local inhabitants. In Unit 16, the pretext of this group of teenagers having to write a review of their Porto experience for their home school newspaper is introduced and six topics are dealt with; each of the topics is accompanied by a double illustration: the individual group member who ‘wrote’ the text and another photograph.

Figure 27. Aerial 8th grade: teenager's view of Porto, page 70.



The six photographs feature: a close-up of an elegant building, a plate of 'Cozido', a street scene (shops in St.^a Catarina?), another street scene in the rain (downtown?), a view of the Bishop's Place from the Gaia riverbank with a 'rabelo' boat in the

foreground, and a street scene featuring ‘traditionally dressed’ young women in Viana do Castelo. The resultant visual impression could be categorised as ‘geographical’, dealing with place and climate with residual references to food and local customs¹⁶⁵. Certainly this view of Porto is highly partial, both in terms of its range and its content.

The latter section of the coursebook involves a further shift in ‘cultural horizon’. The penultimate photomontage episode, (Number 8, “Help! Teenagers on the loose!” pp.87-88), features some of the host Portuguese teenagers going to visit London with their new friends. Again, it is the predictable tourist locations that feature in these photographs: Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, Tower Bridge and Piccadilly Circus. The final photomontage sequence (number 9 “A Photo tour”, pp.98-99) has the two national groups having a discussion on the comparative merits of each culture: this (illustrated) discussion is based on the topics and photographs of food, double decker buses, police officers (who are taller or nicer!) and taxis. The thrust of the discussion is to emphasise cultural differences, substantiated by the use of ‘our’ and ‘your’ referencing, as well as the opinions expressed. The meaning is derived from marking various differences, distinguishing between ‘Us’ and ‘Others’ through the use of simplistic binary oppositions, which by nature are not neutral but represent relations of power. While the format here is a dialogue, there is no real dialogic cultural interaction, since nothing is negotiated or modified. The crucial, ambivalent nature of difference and ‘otherness’ is not explored in any shape or form, and this despite the importance it has “for the production of meaning, the formation of language and culture, for social identities [...]” (Hall, 1997: 238). Indeed, the whole series of photomontages stop here, leaving the learners in limbo as the teenage characters disappear from the coursebook at this point, despite the context suggesting that the visit to London is far from over (they are planning to go out and eat and see a film in the final panel).

¹⁶⁵ Part of the text that accompanies the photograph of the Viana do Castelo customs/costumes: “... a folk group was singing and dancing. She took quite a few photos of them all in traditional costumes, like the ones peasants used to wear in rural communities not very long ago” (p.71).

5. 1. C. 3 Aerial 9th grade: illustrations.

The number of the pages with illustrations in this 9th grade coursebook (80%) falls between the values for the 7th grade (94.3%) and the 8th grade (75%), an indication that the visual element remains strongly represented but not in an entirely consistent manner. This coursebook, like the 8th grade, is presented only in colour: there are no black and white illustrations at all. Figures (one instance/1.5%) and drawings (seven instances/10.3%) combined account for less than 20% of the instances of illustrations. As is the case throughout this series, the predominance of photographs is again comprehensive (88.2%): colour photographs ‘greet’ the learners with great regularity (60 instances spread across 90 pages).

Table 63. Aerial series: 9th grade, variety and density of illustrations.

Aerial: 9th grade.		Total number of pages available to teach from = 90							
		Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 72 (80%)							
		Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 18 (20%)							
Total number of instances/illustrations = 68					Total Colour Variation = 68				
Figures		Drawings		Photographs			Black & White		+ Colour
1	1.5%	7	10.3%	60	88.2%		0	0%	68 100%

Of all these 60 instances of photographs only two are linked to language development work. In Unit 16, “I’m vegetarian. And you?” (p.65), there are photographs of lambs and a chicken and there are also recipes illustrated with photographs (p.66). The learners are invited to write their favourite recipe in English and also to discuss whether we have the right to eat our “woolly friends” or “feathered friends”; in Unit 21, “Dear, dear technology!” (p. 87), there are photographs of household gadgets. The learners have to write a “caption” (a kind of definition, according to the example given) and then extend this into a fuller piece of writing to be used as part of a guessing game. These two examples represent a very sparse use of photographs in relation to language work for a 9th grade coursebook. There are a further three examples using figures (Unit 11, p. 51) and drawings (Unit 6, p. 30 and Unit 15, pp. 60-61) but the total of five instances (7.4%) is the lowest by far of any of the coursebooks in this corpus: around half the value of the nearest coursebook which was published more than 10 years previously: Passport, 9th grade (13.6%).

Table 64. Aerial series: 9th grade illustrations, language link data.

Aerial: 9th grade. Total nº of pages with illustrations = 72 of 90 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	67	93.1%
	Yes	5	6.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 68			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [1]	1	100%
	Drawings [7]	2	40.0%
	Photographs [60]	2	3.3%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		5 /68	7.4%

There is no real attempt to link the visual aspect of the coursebook to the teaching-learning process, neither at the level of input (not even the simplest matching of pictures to vocabulary type activity) nor at the level of output (whether related to speaking or writing): the illustrations, while numerous, are not pedagogically exploited. The 9th grade coursebook abandons the photomontage technique of the previous two books in the series and opts for a more topic-based decorative approach where the photographs are somehow illustrative of the unit theme or the topic of the text they accompany. The group of teenagers that ‘inhabits’ the coursebook is maintained, but the composition is now multi-national and multi-ethnic (USA, Scotland, England, Portugal, Japan and Australia) and the location is the USA. This move away from the ‘*fotonovela*’ approach may, while inconsistent, in fact, allow the learners to deal with these characters as being more representative of their social groups, removing them from what is obviously a fictionalised, ‘purpose-built’, unreal context. The group’s composition also allows for the introduction of a wider, more comparative perspective to the issues raised throughout the units while being sure that there is some kind of local connection through the Portuguese character, Catarina Peres (sic) from near Coimbra.

Figure 28. Aerial 9th grade: teen friends, page 14.



The initial location of the coursebook is Atlanta in the USA and refers to a multiple murder that took place in July 1999, the text complemented by with a slightly blurred (newspaper?) photograph of a body being removed on a stretcher (p.9). The tone seems to be that photographs increase the degree of reality present and the ‘connectedness’ of the coursebook to the real world. Each group member is used to introduce some kind of issue supposedly emanating from their home context: Gina, the Australian and the Olympic Games of 2000 in Sydney (which then connects to Atlanta), Kazuo, the Japanese, and the role of technology in society or looking for your first job, Bill, the New Yorker, on fitness and health, and so on. Catarina Peres, the Portuguese character, is used in a similar way in relation to the theme of food and health in Unit 15 “Eating to live, living to eat” (pp.60-61). These are richly illustrated pages: there are photographs of Catarina, her grandmother, a drawing of various fruit and vegetables, a table to complete and a figure (a dialogue build). This kind of integration of text, illustrations, and various exercises is unique in this coursebook, an indication of unfulfilled possibilities tempered by a lack of real pedagogical intent: the vocabulary table (Exercise C) is not used for any further language work; the comprehension questions (Exercise A) require the learners to ‘mine’ words or phrases from the text; Exercise B asks for explanations of badly worded phrases with poor syntax and lastly, the photographs being merely decorative.

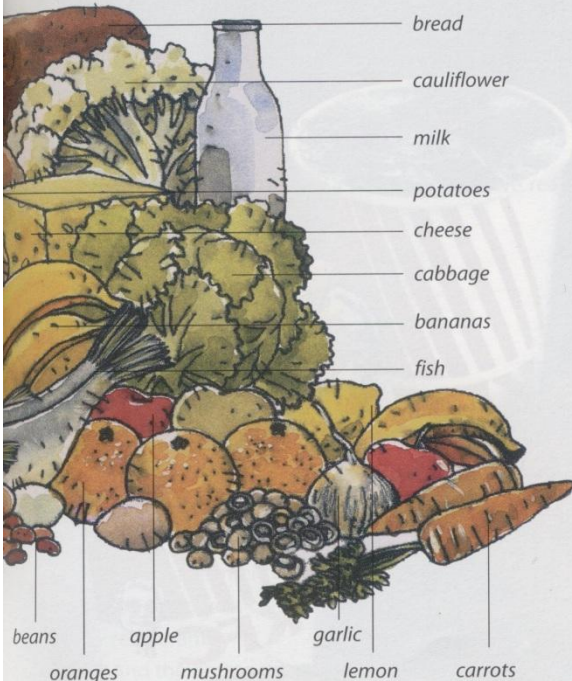
Figure 29. Aerial 9th grade: food and family, page 61.

A Which words or sentences in the text tell us that:

1. Catarina's grandmother likes eating very much?
2. doctors have warned her about her weight?
3. however strange it may appear, she feels all right?
4. her only problem is with her walking?
5. she's a happy, understanding person?

B Explain why:

1. the Portuguese diet was regarded as sensible
2. they ate so much fish
3. soup might make up a complete meal
4. they have a rich tradition in sweet desserts.



C Using the information in the text and a good dictionary, if necessary, complete the table.

Vegetables	Meat	Fish/Seafood	Fruit
lettuce	beef	cod	oranges
cauliflower	...	sardines	...
cabbage		salmon	
...		sole	
		haddock	
		crabs	
		shrimps	
		lobster	
		...	

D One of these days Catarina phoned her grandmother to invite her to a dinner out. Follow the clues and reconstruct the phone call.

Catarina	Catarina's grandmother
greet Mrs Peres	answers the greetings
invites her grandmother to come and have dinner in a restaurant	wants to know when and where
asks her to choose the date and the place	says the following day will be all right and says she adores surprises and would rather not choose
says it is OK and that Gil knows a new restaurant and they will go there	says it is settled then and says it is very kind of them to suggest it
says she deserves everything and says goodbye	says goodbye

The programme for the 9th grade includes more 'serious' topics (addictions, disabilities, urban life) than the previous two years, topics which have great potential for the personalization of the learning process: the individual experiences, speculations and opinions of the learners can easily be called upon. But even the more serious topics may benefit from the use of appropriate illustrations, which does not happen in this

coursebook. For example, in Unit 17 “Holding hands” (p.72), there is a text about Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), such as Amnesty International, the WWF or Médecins Sans Frontières. The ‘worth’ of the text is totally undermined by the positioning of a photograph alongside the text of a young man (protester at a demonstration?) holding a sign which says “Make strawberry jam, not traffic jam”; in Unit 19 “First of all, they are people” (pp.76-77), the learners are working on the theme of people with disabilities. There are two photographs, one showing wheelchair basketball (p.76) and one showing Professor Stephen Hawking (p.77); however, the photograph of Stephen Hawking is of his wedding day, accompanied by a short text which includes “[i]n spite of being almost totally paralysed, he is a brilliant scientist and he got married for the second time in 1995” (p.77). How this photograph (and text) relates to the written work being proposed (the creation of a questionnaire about the fact that “There are many disabled people in Portugal”) is hard to imagine. There is little here that would negate the claim made by Sleeter & Grant, with respect to American coursebooks, that “[s]tudents reading these textbooks would gain virtually no understanding of the current issues that people with disabilities face, nor the struggles for rights that people have waged. An image of invisibility or of passivity, on the part of those with disabilities, predominates” (ibid, 1997: 295).

The (non)use of a photograph in relation to language work is dependent on the meaning(s) it engenders from its content; when not carefully chosen, there may be an absence of utility, but there may also be a negative ‘force’ created, as is the case with Stephen Hawking above. In addition, the juxtaposition of a photograph and a text may also have the same result. For example, in Unit 5 “The Olympic Games” in the top right hand corner of page 21, a proverb is quoted (“A man without religion is like a horse without a bridle”), there is a short text (a kind of sub-heading for the main image at the centre of the double page spread pp.20-21) which states “At the opening ceremony of the Atlanta Games, dancers played the part of athletes and priestesses from ancient Greece”, and there is a small photograph which shows the airport arrival (?) of a group of disabled athletes, several in wheelchairs including one double leg amputee. In the final paragraph of main text, at the bottom of the column at the bottom of the page, there is some discussion of the Paralympics or Special Olympics: a simple realignment of the photograph to the bottom of the page in the space occupied by the Olympic flag would surely have been a better use of the potential to associate photographs with the

topics in question (to provide additional visual contextualization), even if not to stimulate any language production.

5. 1. D The Extreme series of coursebooks.

Almost 90% of the pages of the extensive “Extreme” series have an illustration (10.9% do not). This figure means a slightly higher use of visual material than in both the “Passport” series and the “Aerial” series, but does not match the almost ‘blanket coverage’ of the “Active English” series. There are very few black and white illustrations (only 16 examples in a sample size of almost 400): the use of colour seems to have become the established norm. In terms of type of illustration, this series exhibits a more balanced distribution: photographs still dominate (50.9%) but less so than in the “Passport” or “Aerial” series. This is largely the result of the perceived need to illustrate the storyline in the 7th grade book (about the Alucard vampire family), which implies the use of drawings (37.2%) rather than photographs or figures (11.9%).

Table 65. Extreme series: variety and density of illustrations.

Extreme: Percentages. Total number of pages with illustrations = 415 of 466 pages				
Colour variation of illustrations	Black & White		Colour	
	16	4.0%	380	96.0%
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No		266	64.1%
	Yes		149	35.9%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 436				
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [52]		45	86.5%
	Drawings [162]		65	40.1%
	Photographs [222]		48	21.6%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?			158/436	36.2%

This series is densely illustrated, with 89% of its pages carrying some kind of illustration (415/466). Photographs account for just over half of all the instances (222/436) in these coursebooks. But here again, the use of photographs is mainly decorative, with only 21.6% of them being associated with language work, incrementally far fewer within its own category than with the drawings in this series (40.1%) or with the figures in this series (86.5%): almost 80% of all the photographs are merely decorative. While there are almost twice as many photographs as any other kind of illustration, very little pedagogical use is made of them: photographs linked to language work represent only 11% of all the illustrations in this series. The type of

illustration which is least represented (figures) is the one which is proportionally made most use of, 86.5%. Perhaps surprisingly, the most recent series under consideration in this study does show any evidence of a reasoned, consistent approach to the use of illustrations. Furthermore, it corroborates the general impression that the use of photographs in coursebooks does not have much to do with pedagogical criteria despite the predominance of this type of illustration.

5. 1. D. 1 Extreme 7th grade: illustrations.

While a substantial majority of the pages of this coursebook have illustrations (88%), more than half the illustrations in this coursebook are drawings (58.4%), a fact which goes against the trend of increasing use of photographs over time. The explanation lies in the previously commented adoption of the fictional Vampire family ‘The Alucards’ as the coursebook’s principle characters. There are 22 figures also present, an increase on the very low levels of the Aerial series (only three in the entire series). The coursebook only has three instances of black and white illustrations (two cartoon strips of ‘Garfield’ on p.17 and on p.83 and a photograph of a woman having her shopping carried on p. 118); colour illustrations therefore predominate (97.5%).

Table 66. Extreme series: 7th grade illustrations, general data.

Extreme: 7th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 150									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 132 (88%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 18 (12%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 137						Total Colour Variation = 120			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
22	16.1%	80	58.4%	35	25.5%	3	2.5%	117	97.5%

There is an equal balance between illustrations employed (49.6%) or not employed in this coursebook; likewise, the distribution across the pages of the coursebook is almost equal. In both respects, these percentages represent approximately twice as many instances as was the case in the Aerial series, a major improvement in the space of around five years. The increased presence of figures here is significant in relation to the levels of uptake of the illustrations, as they are nearly all (81.8%) linked to language work. The drawings, despite being more frequent, are less made use of, with under half of them having any direct pedagogical function (46.3%), being rather illustrations which

support the storylines associated with the Alucard family characters. Almost two thirds of the photographs (62.9%) can also be said to be ‘decorative’, with only 13 instances being taken advantage of: again an improvement on the very low series percentage of the Aerial series (21.6%).

Table 67. Extreme series: 7th grade illustrations, language link data.

Extreme: 7th grade. Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 132 of 150 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	64	48.5%
	Yes	68	51.5%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 137			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [22]	18	81.8%
	Drawings [80]	37	46.3%
	Photographs [35]	13	37.1%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		68/137	49.6%

The high percentage of uptake with respect to figures (81.8%) present in the coursebook also corresponds to a wide range of associated activities; while as input the emphasis is on vocabulary and ideas, there are also tasks which involve speaking and writing as output, in addition to the more usual gap filling (e.g. p.136), normally related to grammar or vocabulary.

Figure 30. Extreme 7th grade: daily routines, page 49.

 **14.** Work in pairs. One is student A and the other is student B. Don't look at each others' chart. Ask questions to complete it. Then do the same to know everything about your partner. Follow the example:
Student A – At what time does Nomo get up?
Student B – She gets up at 11.30 a.m.

Student A

	time they get up	brunch	in the afternoon	favourite food	have a bath
Gotsh and Noffic	noon		collect spiders; ride a micro-scooter		before going to bed
Nomo		tea, fruit, eggs and ham		roast chicken	
Your partner					

Student B

	time they get up	brunch	in the afternoon	favourite food	have a bath
Your partner					
Nomo	11.30 a.m.		knitting: gardening on foggy days		after aerobics
Gotsh and Noffic		cereal and milk, yoghurt, bread and marmalade		hamburger with chips	

 **15.** Write about your daily routine. Use all the **adverbs of frequency** at least once. Don't forget to use **linking words**.

LINKING WORDS

First Then Finally

After this After that

 **16.** Write the daily routine of a famous personality or your favourite animal.

EXT7-04 forty-nine **49**

There seems to be a more deliberate approach to getting the learners to produce when they have to deal with figures than with the other types of illustration: perhaps because input, when encoded in the form of a chart or table, naturally demands some kind of response, transferring the content into a different form of language. In general, this coursebook has a greater variety of output tasks associated with illustrations than in the previous series, and requires the learners to respond with a greater variety of language production: there are tasks at the level of vocabulary, phrases and texts.

In terms of content of the illustrations, there is a major issue concerning gender bias. In Unit 2, learners are invited to comment on their choice of future career. On p.81 there is a vocabulary box giving 20 possible ‘careers’ which the learners have to match with the 20 photographs provided on the same page.

Figure 31. Extreme 7th grade: jobs and careers, page 81.

13. Mobiez is studying to be an actress. And you? What would you like to be?
The list below will help you to make up your mind.

A. Match the pictures to the jobs.

☐ Mechanic	☐ Dressmaker	☐ Farmer	☐ Cook
☐ Electrician	☐ Model	☐ Police officer	☐ Computer programmer
☐ Shop assistant	☐ Plumber	☐ Florist	☐ Nurse
☐ Postwoman	☐ Fisherman	☐ Musician	☐ Taxi driver
☐ Waiter	☐ Hairdresser	☐ Porter	☐ Painter

The photographs feature only seven females: there is a clear bias towards the male gender. Given the communicative power of images to create an impression and evoke feelings (Giaschi, 2000), the opportunity to challenge stereotypical assumptions about jobs or occupations is clearly lost here. The lack of balance in the photographs is

compounded by the choice of jobs assigned to the seven females: nurse, shop assistant, hairdresser, model, dressmaker, florist and postwoman. Not one of these jobs would be classified as ‘high prestige’ occupations which carry social status, all of them confirm rather than challenge existing preconceptions or prejudices. There seems to some attempt to provide non-sexist labels for the jobs: the exercise includes “police officer” rather than ‘policeman’ but the effect of this is diminished by the use of “postwoman” and “fisherman”. This lack of consistency does nothing but add to the lack of balance inherent in this material, in this case linguistically rather than visually.

Filak (2002), in a historical survey of Polish coursebooks, reported an imbalance in gender distribution which also remains the case in international publications employed in Turkey (Arikan, 2005). In Portugal, Graça Abranches has written several articles on gender bias in local education materials, and while there has been some improvement since the days of “Streamline Departures” coursebook (1978), which featured a car crash resulting from a man being ‘distracted’ by a woman’s min-skirt, the issue of gender bias in relation to occupations as well as roles remains a concern. ELT coursebooks¹⁶⁶ should play their part in encouraging young people of both genders to aspire, and the low prestige occupations themselves (and the imbalance in them) here do little in that respect: “[i]nstructional materials have the power to positively or negatively play the role of cultural mediators, as they transmit overt and covert societal values, assumptions and images” (Ndura, 2004: 143). Indeed, the example of occupations from this coursebook is not unique; on p.75, there is a photograph of a group of three young girls with their mobile phones, the bridge/connection from the previous text is the topic of cheating in tests (a topic associated with the ‘testimonies’ and photographs of two boys and three girls); on p.118, there is a photograph of a well-dressed woman being followed down the street by two young, uniformed boys laden with shopping bags: the associated exercise is a quiz about shopping habits¹⁶⁷, but illustration sets the tone: (excessive?) shopping as a feminized ritual or pursuit¹⁶⁸; on p.148, there are

¹⁶⁶ In 1996, The Linguistic Society of America issued a document called “*The LSA Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage*”, which could easily have been applied to recent Portuguese ELT publications. Thirteen years later was a similar guide published in Portugal: Abranches, G. (2009). *Guia para uma Linguagem Promotora da Igualdade entre Mulheres e Homens na Administração Pública*. Lisboa: Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Género.

¹⁶⁷ The bias is compounded in the text of the quiz with the use of terms like “party outfit”, which usually denotes female clothes.

¹⁶⁸ See Domosh & Seagar (2001) for a discussion of how notions of maleness and femaleness have shaped the geography of everyday life.

photographs of five film stars of which two are women, and on p. 150 there photographs of three sports stars, one of which is female. The role of illustrations in combatting prejudicial notions about gender difference is crucial, given the potency of the medium to influence young, visually literate people (Debes, 1969) and the fact that the difference is itself a visible one (like race).¹⁶⁹

The broader issue of stereotyping in coursebooks is also relevant here. This coursebook has three separate “Facts and Trivia” sections providing cultural content/input about the USA, the UK and London. The section on the UK (pp.84-87) focusses on Scotland over two pages (pp.86-87). The six short texts are illustrated by six photographs (for a matching exercise): one of a town square, one of the rooftops of Edinburgh (?) and one of a ruined castle beside a lake (Loch Ness?); the other three photographs feature a man in a kilt posing in the street, a member of a military band in full tartan regalia playing the bagpipes, and a set of bagpipes hanging outside a shop. While the photographs of the three different locations are largely non-descript (indeed there is nothing to link them with Edinburgh or Glasgow as they are described in the texts, making the matching exercise almost impossible to complete), the remaining three photographs fully support the established stereotypes concerned with ‘traditional’ Scottish dress and music. The validity of these ‘traditions’ goes unchallenged¹⁷⁰, as does the role that stereotypes play in formulating cultural representations.

While stereotypes have long been recognized as an important area of study in social psychology, and conventional approaches relate their formation to erroneous or distorted impressions (as above), there should also be ‘room’ to admit other approaches. The kind of stereotypes found in this coursebook (and in other ELT publications) may be ‘energy saving devices’ in the sense that they allow the authors/publishers to ignore bothersome diversity and detailed information that would otherwise need to be included (for example, that the kilt is nowadays very much associated with formal occasions or conversely with the Goth/Punk sub-culture). Stereotypes provided simplified, essential explanations and judgements which are more easily shared (McGarty et al, 2002), which

¹⁶⁹ McGrath (2004) noted that since 1991 guidelines have existed in Britain with respect to gender balance in EFL materials and concluded that such guidelines maintained their relevance.

¹⁷⁰ There is a chapter (pp.15-41) by the renowned historian Hugh Trevor-Roper in Hobsbawm & Ranger (1992) on the invention/creation of a Scottish national culture and its tokens and symbols, starting in the 19th century.

surely makes them ‘appetising’ in terms of producers of instructional materials that deal with an ‘Other’ culture.

The choice of making the fictional Alucard family of vampires central to this coursebook is a reflection of the economy and functionality of stereotypes in the construction of meaning. The learners’ existing knowledge allows the authors to provide texts and illustrations which conform to the learners’ expectations, which, while efficient, does not provide a valid basis for developing their understanding of the cultures of different social groups and how they interact and dependent on each other. The cognitive process of categorization of differences and similarities is important for learners as a means to recognizing, remembering and responding to cultures (McGarty, 1999). However, these stereotypes are strong but unreal and ultimately counterproductive, which may explain why these characters and this type of storyline development is absent from the rest of this series.

5. 1. D. 2 Extreme 8th grade: illustrations.

The proportion of pages in this coursebook which have some kind of illustration (86.1%) is very similar to the 7th grade coursebook (88%), while the coursebook itself is slightly longer. In terms of the use of colour or black and white printing, there are 6 illustrations in black and white (4.1%): a minimal increase only, which means the coursebook is substantially a colour publication. There are about half as many figures here (15 instances, 9.8%), and the proportion of drawings also decreases (50 instances, 32.7%) a fact perhaps attributable to the abandonment of the vampire family storyline feature (mentioned above). Photographs are very much the main form of illustration (88 instances, 57.5%), accounting for more than half of all the illustrations employed.

Table 68. Extreme series: 8th grade illustrations, general data.

Extreme: 8th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 166									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 143 (86.1%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 23 (13.9%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 153						Total Colour Variation = 146			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
15	9.8%	50	32.7%	88	57.5%	6	4.1%	140	95.9%

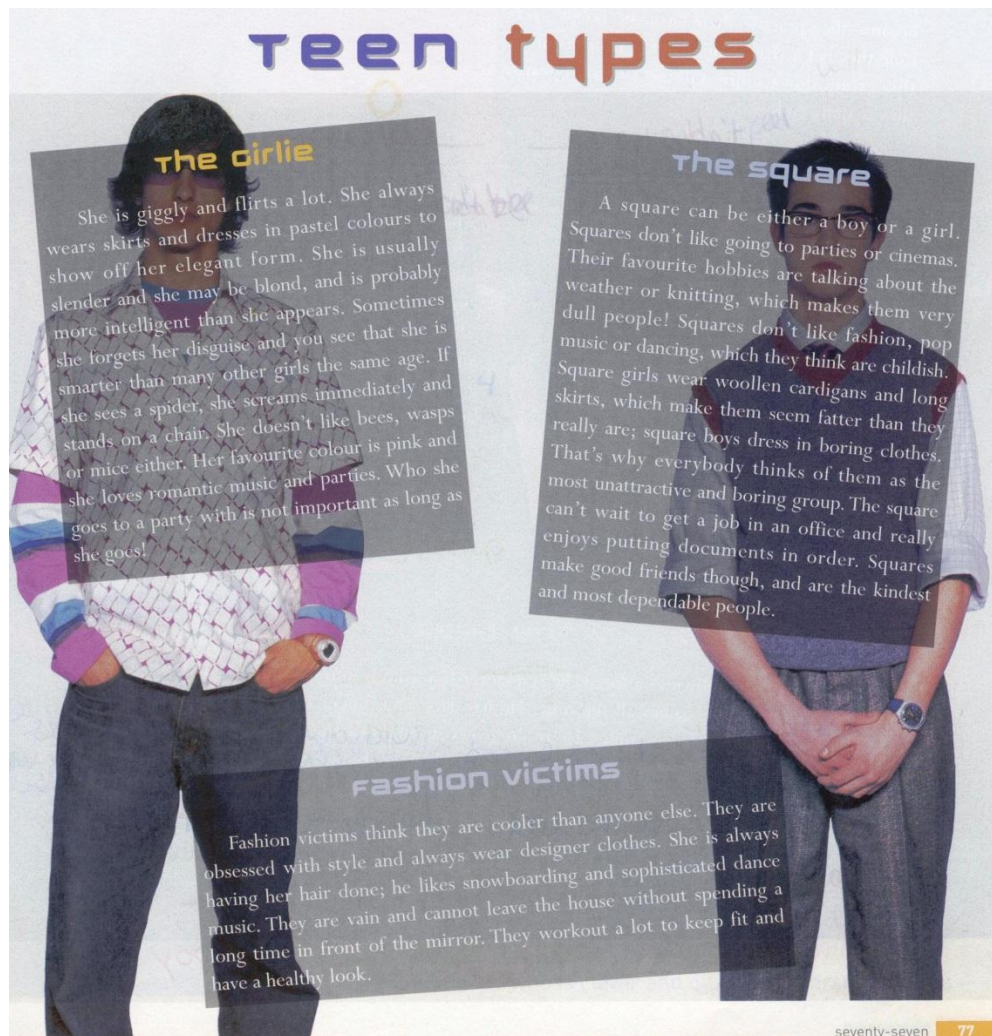
Overall, there are far fewer instances of illustrations in this coursebook: 153 instances, compared to 436 instances in the 7th grade, probably because the drawings associated with the 7th grade coursebook's storyline are absent (only 50 instances, instead of 80). Less than a third of the pages of this coursebook have illustrations linked to language work (28.7%) which, in fact, is double the number of pages for the 7th grade coursebook of this series; there is distinct inconsistency in the overall percentages and yet, in common with the 7th grade, there is a strong reliance on linking language work to the use of figures (15 instances/100%). Photographs are much more in evidence (88 compared to 35 instances) but are proportionally less employed (23.9% compared to 37.1%). This may account for the decline in the summative total percentage of instances of illustrations linked to language work, down from 49.6% in the 7th grade to 33.9% in the 8th grade.

Table 69. Extreme series: 8th grade illustrations, language link data.

Extreme: 8th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 143 of 166 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	102	71.3%
	Yes	41	28.7%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 153			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [15]	15	100%
	Drawings [50]	16	32.0%
	Photographs [88]	21	23.9%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		52/153	33.9%

Part of the explanation lies in the introduction of a 'new' publishing technique: the use of photographs as a background 'behind' a text or exercise; there are 33 instances of this type in this coursebook, which naturally skews the statistics somewhat, since this coursebook has a smaller sample size of illustrations.

Figure 32. Extreme 8th grade: teen types, page 77.



In this case, there can be no doubt that these illustrations serve a purely decorative purpose, creating a kind of ‘wallpaper effect’ which enhances the visual impact of the coursebook but has no explicit pedagogical function. The technique is employed consistently on the pages of the book that deal with specific cultural input; for example, in Unit 1, the section dealing with Guy Fawkes Day (pp.36-37) has a background of exploding fireworks, or in Unit 2, the section “Facts and Trivia”, dealing with Australia (pp.66-71), has a whole series of photographs depicting landscapes of different types as background. While the detachment of this cultural content into separate sections is open to question from a theoretical/methodological perspective (see below), it undoubtedly also creates a visual distinction which is perhaps unhelpful. The impression created is more akin to a travel guidebook than a coursebook: a table top decoration rather than a

pedagogical instrument, to the extent that both teachers and learners will naturally react in a different way to these sections and may even undervalue them.

The decision to employ this technique is probably taken by the publishers rather than the coursebook writers, but nonetheless the way it is used and the impact/impression it creates should be given more rigorous consideration; for example, the final two pages of the Australia section (pp.70-71) has two exercises to do with the information provided about Australia (its geography, its wildlife) on the previous pages, but the background is a dark green, underwater photo-scene which covers both pages and serves to obscure the comprehension exercise (in white lettering) while at the same time to highlight the two photographs in the “Extra Activity” about famous Australians (Mel Gibson and Nicole Kidman): the cultural ‘substance’ is masked, while the cultural ‘froth’ is emphasized.

This coursebook does incorporate a clear decision to include elements of the ‘target culture’ from outside its usual British bounds (unlike the Passport series, for example): there are substantial, richly illustrated sections on Australia (pp. 66-71), New Zealand (pp. 96-99) and the USA (pp. 168-171). However, these countries are all still within the ‘inner circle’ of communities which use the English language as their first/native/mother language (Kachru, 1985). No space is provided in this coursebook for other English language using contexts from the ‘outer circle’ or ‘expanding circle’, which reinforces the notion of, at the least, the centrality of or, at the most, dependence on these countries as norm providers (explicit in Kachru’s model) for both language and culture. This would not be such a problem if there were opportunities in the coursebook for the learners to explore cross-culture language use or reflect on their own culture and aspects of interculturality (similarities and/or differences), but the coursebook limits itself to the role of supplying information through its illustrations and texts (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999).

The section on the USA covers four pages in the latter stages of the coursebook (pp.168-171) and deals with the cultural content under the general heading of “Happy Birthday America”, examining various aspects of the 4th of July celebrations. The first two pages deal with, through short texts, “The History of Independence Day” (illustrated by a small reproduction/scan of the original Declaration of Independence document, “Fourth of July Traditions”, “Parades, Marching Bands and Music”

(illustrated with a photograph of a street parade), “Fireworks” (illustrated with a photograph of fireworks exploding), “Picnics and Family Get-Togethers” and “What’s in the menu today?” (sic) (illustrated with a mock-up menu and photograph of people at a picnic and a photograph of an apple pie). The only illustrations that are explicitly linked to the accompanying text are the Declaration scan and the menu, and there are no tasks or activities proposed for the learners to work with these two pages: these pages/illustrations represent a very passive, information based approach to cultural content.

The only opportunity learners have to really interact with/react to this USA based content is on the final page (p.171), where there is a matching exercise in which eight drawings have to be matched with eight steps/instructions for making an apple pie; in addition, the learners are invited to “discuss with your partners the festivals and holidays that are important in your town/village or country”. This kind of response seems to operate at a different, more parochial level to the input materials: a more direct focus on the June 10th celebrations in Portugal might yield a more productive reaction, a reaction with a more explicit intercultural focus, aimed at raising intercultural awareness through direct comparisons of similarities and differences between the target culture and the local, source culture of the learners. What is missing is a dialogic approach to cultural representation, exploring meanings and the fact that “[w]hat sustains this dialogue is the presence of shared cultural codes” (Hall, 1997: 10). This kind of approach could also be productive in relation to the illustrations on p.170 (see Figure 33 below); under the heading “Three things American people are proud of on Independence Day”: there are photographs: of the White House, the Statue of Liberty and the Stars and Stripes flag. Some kind of discussion of the equivalent items/symbols in Portuguese culture rather than just illustrations to accompany brief, background/informative texts might have proved productive.

Figure 33. Extreme 8th grade: three American things, page 170.



5. 1. D. 3 Extreme 9th grade: illustrations.

The number of the pages with illustrations in this 9th grade coursebook (93.4%) is higher than the values for the 7th grade (88%) and the 8th grade (86.1%), an indication that the visual element here is at its strongest; there are only 10 pages that do not have any illustrations. There are only seven black and white illustrations, a slight increase on the two other coursebooks in this series but there is no apparent pattern, since the instances include drawings (e.g. two examples of “Peanuts” cartoons) and photographs. The decline in the use of drawings (by a factor of about 50%), noted between the 7th grade (58.4%) and the 8th grade (32.7%), continues here (21.9%), perhaps indicating the writers considered drawings less appropriate as the learners became older. The number of figures remains more constant, with the same number here as in the 8th grade (15 instances). Almost a hundred instances of photographs being used throughout the 150 pages of the coursebook is evidence of the predominance of photographs (67.8%).

Table 70. Extreme series: 9th grade illustrations, general data.

Extreme: 9th grade. Total number of pages available to teach from = 150									
Total number of pages in book with illustrations = 140 (93.4%)									
Total number of pages in book without illustrations = 10 (6.6%)									
Total number of instances/illustrations = 146						Total Colour Variation = 130			
Figures		Drawings		Photographs		Black & White		+ Colour	
15	10.3%	32	21.9%	99	67.8%	7	5.4%	123	94.6%

This coursebook has almost identical percentages (28.6%) in terms of the number of pages with some kind of illustration which is linked to language work as the 8th grade (28.7%). However, analysis of this 9th grade coursebook shows the lowest level of uptake in relation to the illustrations (26%) compared to the 7th grade (49.6%) and the 8th grade (33.9%). There appears to be an inverse ratio in effect whereby increased numbers of photographs employed (99 instances in the 9th grade) leads to decreased use of illustrations for language work. The percentages with respect to figures and drawings remain relatively constant; the change has to do with the use made of photographs: in the 9th grade, only 14 of the 99 instances are connected to language work (14.1%). The explanation may lie in the use of photographs as decorative background or ‘wallpaper’ (referred to above), which continues more sporadically in this coursebook, and a further innovation which is introduced: the use of blurred photographs of the Union Jack flag as ‘sidebars’ (a kind of page marker?) on the six double page sections where the learners have to “Test Yourself” (e.g. pp.32-33). This repeated association of this image with this type of learning/testing activity seems rather incongruous.

Table 71. Extreme series: 9th grade illustrations, language link data.

Extreme: 9th grade. Total number of pages with illustrations = 140 of 150 pages			
Whether any illustration is linked to L2 work per page?	No	100	71.4%
	Yes	40	28.6%
Total number of instances/illustrations = 146			
When linked to L2 work, what type of illustration?	Figures [15]	12	80.0%
	Drawings [32]	12	37.5%
	Photographs [99]	14	14.1%
How many illustrations linked to L2 instruction in total?		38/146	26.0%

Throughout this coursebook, there are several illustrations/photographs related to famous celebrities from the world of ‘pop culture’: early in the coursebook, Aimee

Mann, Sting and Craig David all appear individually; in Unit 2, under the heading “Celebrity Roads to Nowhere” (pp.47-49), Drew Barrymore, Christina Ricci, Christina Aguilera, Travis Baker and various others are featured; in Unit 6, called “Multicoloured Love”, there are photographs of Robbie Williams, The Sugababes, The Black Eyed Peas and Busted, among various film stars and film posters. There are two main issues at stake here: the strong presence of ‘pop culture’ as opposed to more ‘traditional’, big ‘C’ culture, and the kind of ‘celebrities’¹⁷¹ that feature in this material (text and visual).

Since none of the illustrations/photographs referred to above are connected to language work they have to be examined at the level of the cultural meanings they help to create. Very recently an anti-celebrities trend has emerged in ELT¹⁷², aimed at negating the selling power usually associated with ‘pop culture’ celebrities (highly prized in other fields of commerce; see Currid-Halkett, 2010) and the short term motivational buzz created by a photograph of a totally recognisable ‘star’. The well-documented, ephemeral nature of celebrity does not serve ELT coursebooks well (where are Travis Baker, The Sugababes and Busted now??). This fact has increased in relevance with the recent Portuguese government decision to increase the ‘cycle of use’ of coursebooks to six years. In addition, celebrities conjure up images of facile success and wealth¹⁷³ that have little to do with the real world and are representative of largely vapid content. Even when trying to be ‘worthy’, as in an introduction/lead-in to a section on human rights/poverty/equality in Unit 6 (p.149), the juxtaposition of the three photographs (see Figure 34 below) alongside the lyrics of the song ‘Where is the love?’ only serves to enhance any notion the learners might have on the gulf between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’.

¹⁷¹ Celebrities may be considered a new category whose membership is almost entirely ‘pop culture’ and electronic media derived. The notion of fame (discussed above at p. 51) shares some similarities but is also distinct. For example, Nelson Mandela is famous but not a celebrity, Charles Dickens is famous but not a celebrity.

¹⁷² See Lindsay Clandfield’s article in *The Guardian*, on Thursday, May 20th 2010, called “Coursebooks and the curse of celebrity”.

¹⁷³ Perhaps as Littler (2008) suggests, celebrity can even be equated with economic and symbolic empowerment and vice versa.

Figure 34. Extreme 9th grade: daily routines, page 149.



Here, there is nothing new to learn, nothing to discover, nothing to be really interested in from a language learning perspective.

The established power of the mass media, in an era of globalisation, has given unrivalled significance to a range of different strands of ‘pop culture’ (film, music, TV, and so on) which is reflected in the content of the most recent coursebooks, including the Extreme series. Frequent instances of this kind of mass, transnational (Americanized?) culture occur, but it is a culture “which lacks intellectual challenge and stimulation, providing instead the undemanding ease of fantasy and escapism” (Strinati, 2004: 13). It is a culture which is glib and glossy (literally, in the case the covers of these coursebooks; see page 5), as it simplifies and sells rather than evokes and educates.¹⁷⁴ The content (and illustrations) are representative of the kind of products that the ‘pop culture industry’ sells: a song, a cinema ticket, a gadget, or even an item of clothing or perfume¹⁷⁵: all of these items are found in abundance in ELT coursebooks. The problem here is the tendency to invest too much importance in these cultural producers and their products, when the real challenge should be to encourage learners to gain a greater understanding of different cultural perspectives: how people (in Britain? in Singapore? in Portugal?) think and feel about these products (or practices). There is strong alignment between the postmodern view of consumption of images for their own sake, the way illustrations are employed to stylish, decorative effect described above,

¹⁷⁴ Early insights in this debate can be found in the work of writers like Leavis and Hoggart..

¹⁷⁵ For example, “Getting on”, 2005, p. 135 (8th grade) features a photograph of Calvin Klein plus two further photographs of his product advertisements alongside a totally artificial supposed ‘interview’ with him, in the form of a dialogue completion exercise.

and the superficiality/triviality of the ‘pop culture’ subject matter which has come to dominate ELT coursebooks.

The publishers/writers of this coursebook limit the use of illustrations when they are related to language work to well defined learning contexts. Firstly, there are seven instances where illustrations (drawings) are used in conjunction with the presentation of grammatical content, usually some kind of box with rules and examples.

Figure 35. Extreme 9th grade: illustrated grammar, page 44.

UNIT 2
A QUICK FIX

Read the sentences:
Would you **like to leave** a message?
Still everyday in the USA teenagers die **from drinking** and **driving**.

INFINITIVE AND GERUND

Infinitive with to

- after some adjectives: afraid, glad, sorry, happy, amazed, hard
e.g. Bruce was **happy to hear** his friend was out of danger.
- after certain verbs: agree, ask, decide, forget, help, hope, learn, offer, prepare, want, wish
e.g. They **decided to join** the TAD.

Infinitive without to (bare infinitive)

- after modal verbs (except ought to)
e.g. Alcohol **can hurt** you.
- after **had better** and **would rather**
e.g. I **would rather not drive**.
- with **make** and **let**
e.g. The glasses **make** them **feel** like they are drunk.

Gerund

- after prepositions
e.g. Their friends died in a car accident **after having been drinking**.
- after likes and dislikes verbs
e.g. He **enjoys explaining** what the TAD project is.
- after certain verbs: imagine, miss, forgive, suggest
e.g. She **suggested informing** the students about the law.

The idea here may be to try and “lighten the load”, to create a less serious tone in relation to the overt study of grammar, to somehow anticipate learner resistance to this type of language work by using vaguely humorous cartoon-like drawings. In terms of illustrative technique, it also indicates the return of speech bubbles as the cartoon characters have to mouth model/example sentences that ‘fit’ with the grammar point in focus. However, from a methodological point of view, the notion that this type of grammar presentation gains validity from the inclusion of this type of illustration is entirely specious. The inclusion of a colourful cartoon is not what matters here. What

matters in relation to the teaching of grammar are more serious issues (which this coursebook fails to address) concerned with the ways language users construct different shades of meaning through their choice/use of grammar items and the most efficient method to bring that knowledge to their learners' attention and then encourage them to creatively employ the said knowledge/grammar item(s).¹⁷⁶

Materials writers and publishing houses may be inherently conservative, i.e., unwilling to change their approach, since they have successfully sold coursebooks of a similar style over the years, but they also have a responsibility to learners to move away from the widely discredited notion that “the grammar of the language is taught through focussing on a sequence of individual and discrete grammatical items” (Stranks, 2003: 330). Illustrations could be used to help provide the necessary context that is required for meaningful communicative practice rather than just decorate boxes which contain dubious rules of thumb represented as ‘rules’, and highly contrived sentence strings which bear no resemblance to naturally occurring language. This particular coursebook, the most recent in this study (2006), fails to take into account changes in approach to the teaching of grammar such as a task based approach (Willis, 1996), or even a lexical approach (Lewis, 1993). More recently, a local author, Maria José Duarte, has attempted to provide visually based grammar reference materials for Portuguese 3rd cycle learners in the form of a book: “*English Visual Grammar*” (Porto Editora, Porto, 2008). Her book uses Portuguese language explanations combined with English labelled illustrations and exercises.

In this coursebook, there are 10 instances of illustrations being used as prompts for speaking activities that require the learners to describe, or comment, or discuss the issue in question.

¹⁷⁶ See Hurst (2010) for an account of the main issues facing teachers with respect to the teaching of English grammar.

Figure 36. Extreme 9th grade: speaking activity, page 34.

UNIT 2
A quick fix



 **1.** Take a close look at the pictures above and discuss them with your partner.

Then debate the following topics (or others) with the whole class and present your opinion.

- Teenagers are easily influenced.
- Only tobacco, alcohol and drugs are addictive.
- Only parents can stop adolescents from bad vices.
- At school no addiction problems can arise.

This positive, productive use of illustrations may result from the 9th grade programme containing more controversial topics of immediate relevance to the teenage learners: there is a natural association between the topics in question, the learners' lives and a consequent 'availability' for discussion. This kind of technique (using illustrations as prompts without necessarily having any associated specific language input) certainly can cause learners to produce and provide the teacher with evidence/information as to how to proceed in order to build on what the learners already know. At this level especially, illustrations can be the trigger which activates the existing knowledge of any individual learner which may then be used in a collaborative manner through a variety of classroom management techniques so that learners become accustomed to pooling their linguistic resources and benefitting mutually from that accumulation of knowledge. Coursebooks would be greatly enhanced by requiring the learners to

confront and react to the illustrations rather than just look at them in passing as work on texts or exercises.

Various studies have focussed on how a positive attitude to the target culture (and language) may enhance greater intercultural awareness and understanding (for example, Fennes & Hapgood, 1997 or Guest, 2002), and a key element in this process is attempting to negate false assumptions and stereotypes. However, evidence from this study indicates that the use of illustrations plays little part in this struggle and that a kind of rough ethnocentrism persists in this category of ELT materials. The narrow way in which culture is visually represented in many of these materials probably accentuates the image that learners may already have formulated on the basis of mass media/mass driven cultural representations from outside the ELT classroom (Clarke & Clarke, 1976). Learners have a wide range of electronic forms of communication at their disposal outside the classroom which are capable of providing texts and images about peoples, artefacts and cultures almost without geographical barriers (Chamberlin-Quinlisk, 2012); this phenomenon should condition, in a positive sense, the content of ELT coursebooks: learners could be encouraged to select additional learning materials to supplement the core provided by the coursebook, thus encouraging the learners to invest in their own learning without replacing the coursebook.

Sellami (2006, 171-192), in a study of cultural attitudes among Moroccan higher education learners, reported that while these learners drew little distinction between American and British cultures, they also considered Western society to be in moral decline, having sacrificed family values in the name of materialism and having lost their religious foundations. While the social context in Portugal is very different from Morocco, it is not difficult to imagine how the ELT materials/illustrations examined in this study also here serve to reinforce rather than challenge.¹⁷⁷ The learners' range of experience/knowledge of the target culture(s), as exemplified by the kind of illustrations they are presented with, remains basic, if not minimal. The illustrations remain isolated and flat on the page, and rarely serve any learning purpose: of the 1,248 instances tabulated in this study, only 445 were linked to language work (35.7%). From the least,

¹⁷⁷ Buzzeli & Johnston (2002) reported on just such a situation in relation to Poland and Polish people in middle school social studies texts.

the Aerial series (21.6%), to the most, the Active English series (37.3%), the coursebook authors/publishers pay scant attention to the power and potential of images, even demonstrating an almost careless approach at times; in a recent 2012 ELT publication “*Be the Change*” (Porto Editora), short texts on Australian indigenous culture¹⁷⁸, which include information on the native Australian musical instrument, the didgeridoo, are accompanied by a photograph of a young, male, blond haired, white skinned person playing the said instrument. Since Portuguese learners are unlikely to directly experience the Australian cultures, this kind of representation takes on added significance. These teaching/learning materials mediate the learners’ experience in a crucial way (Azimova & Johnston, 2012), they are fulcral elements in their formation of a view of the English speaking world.

Little can be achieved in terms of increasing (inter)cultural awareness if there is nothing being required of the learners in relation to these visual materials. The case of the use of photographs is very apt here: photographs, whether used sparingly, as in the Active English series (19.6% of its illustrations), or more frequently, as in the Aerial series (88.2 % of its illustrations), are generally the least used in connection with any language work. Yet, photographs may be the most immediately accessible, the most visually appealing type of illustration for the learners: it is not an aspect of coursebook production to be taken lightly since “[f]ailure to promote a balanced view of otherness impedes the learning experience, and culture becomes a constraint that inhibits learning rather than a resource that facilitates and enhances it” (Sellami, 2006: 190). Coursebook writers need to take a more active role in determining what kinds of illustrations are included and how they are incorporated into the learning framework that their coursebook imposes.¹⁷⁹ Learners should be encouraged to react to the illustrations: to subvert them, to reformulate their meanings by adding their own information or omitting existing information, to build their own, personalised representations (Neumann & Segarra, 2011). Learner centred construction of image prompted meanings, which involves bringing their own reality to more divergent tasks, is an

¹⁷⁸ The accompanying text in the coursebook insists on ‘culture’ in the singular, failing to acknowledge any diversity in the indigenous populations of this entire continent.

¹⁷⁹ Pozzer & Roth (2003) concluded that this indeed generally was the case with Canadian coursebooks for science, but that further refinement was still required in relation to the use of captions, indexical referencing and multiple photographs.

underused resource in ELT (Hill, 2003), but one which has long been established as being a valid part of the learning process (Pit Corder, 1966).

The illustrations in a coursebook should assist the classroom teacher in a meaningful pedagogical sense rather than vaguely rely on producing supposedly increased motivation and interest among the learners. The illustrations should provide contexts in which the teacher could focus on narrowing the perceived differences between cultures thorough some kind of celebration of the similarities (McKenna, 1999). This requires a degree of care and sensitivity from publishers/coursebook writers¹⁸⁰ that has been shown to be far from frequent, particularly in respect of stereotypical representations of ethnicity, age and gender, which should be actively challenged from ‘within’ the coursebook, rather than having to rely on the class teacher being aware/recognising the ‘problem’ and coming up with some kind of alternative ‘off-book’ materials or strategies. Stereotypes should not remain unchallenged or not spoken of in the ELT classroom, a void which, by default, increases their strength and durability, and materials with a “focus on sophisticated and informed instructional uses of visual literacy and visual thinking” (Britsch, 2009: 718) would add a powerful weapon to the arsenal at the disposal of ELT practitioners.

¹⁸⁰ This despite the existence of bias guidelines which have been issued by major publishing houses and even state agencies in the USA, which draw coursebook producers’ attention to terms and images that should be avoided. See Ravitch (2004).

Conclusion

This study acknowledges the importance of the symbiotic relationship between ‘culture’ and ‘language’, a fact that is also recognised institutionally both in the Portuguese national ELT programme and more widely in the FL teaching world. Generally, recent research, while scant in respect of cultural content, has focussed on exploring an intercultural viewpoint of the issue; however, within this body of research, cultural representation has not been an explicit objective of study. Hence, the main aim of this study was to highlight the significance, in itself, of cultural representation as a factor in the development of ELT materials. Examining three different perspectives of the cultural representations, namely in relation to dialogues, reading texts and the use of illustrations, has revealed a diverse range of conclusions, both in relation to the perspectives stated above and more generally in relation to cultural content in FL teaching. This final chapter will describe and discuss these conclusions and also seek to offer some insights into areas where future ELT coursebooks in Portugal might be improved.

The use of dialogues has diminished dramatically over time to the extent that the Extreme series (2004, 2005 & 2006) contains fewer than 12 dialogues in total, whereas just the 7th grade coursebook of the Active English series (1981) contained almost 100 dialogues. It seems that the use of dialogues is viewed as lacking relevance in the most recent publications; dialogues as vehicles for the modelling of specific language structures or lexical sets (their principal function in the earlier coursebooks) were no longer deemed useful by the coursebook authors. Indeed, this decision can be said to be valid given the characteristics of the dialogues described in this study: the underuse or total absence of features of conversations and service encounters that would approximate them to real language use. Real world orality in English is not represented by these dialogues to any great extent; they have been almost stripped of any contextualisation that would imply approaching the cultural foundations of the social interaction in question; as such, these dialogues fail to represent the key functionality of language as an instrument of social interaction and cultural affirmation. One of the reasons for this situation may, perversely, be the rise of the ‘Communicative Approach’ to ELT, wherein there has been a predominant use of indirect techniques to foster learners’ oral fluency through activities such as situational role plays, problem solving tasks and information gap exercises (Richards, 1990) rather than a focus on specific

usage features, for example, the many conventional expressions that crop up in conversations.

However, the fact is that dialogues have the potential to be highly useful for learners as examples of how language users express their needs, interests and beliefs, within the constraints of real time processing, in commonplace contexts such as interviews, service encounters and conversations. From the point of view of coursebook authorship, the use of ‘bad’ dialogues means missing the opportunity of gaining the potential ‘high returns’ when appropriately employed. Quasi-authentic dialogues might afford this, especially for early stage learners. The challenge for coursebook writers lies in finding/producing the right kind of dialogues, with content that attracts/maintains the interest of learners as well as depicts the real world accurately, without slavishly focussing on a specific language feature. Coursebook writers would benefit from making reference to the work of Leech (1998) and Gilmore (2004), the basis of framework used in the analysis undertaken in Chapter Three. The ‘how’ of teaching with such materials is beyond the remit of this study, but the ‘what’ has been extensively discussed in the literature, specifically in relation the debate about what sort of English should be taught, given the internationalisation of the language; the issue of not imposing a new identity on FL learners is central here, as is the issue of not restricting the development of language use norms to native speaker language users (Mondiano, 2001). In relation to the now well-established codification of the grammar of spoken English, coursebook writers should access the substantial work of British and American researchers stretching back some 20 years: McCarthy & Carter (1995), McCarthy (1998), Biber et al (1999), Carter & McCarthy (2006) or Cullen & Kuo (2007). Reference could even be made to the pioneering work of F. R. Palmer in the 1960s and 1970s or John Sinclair in the 1970s and 1980s.

Portuguese coursebook writers need to take into account the way in which spoken discourse has come to be described in the research literature and the implications this has for FL pedagogy. Little of what the study of Pragmatics has revealed about the social and contextual conditions under which language is used, particularly in face-to-face situations, has filtered through into locally produced ELT coursebooks. The cultural significance of linguistic forms in combination with management of social relationships is representative of values and ways of thinking that cannot be ignored

(Meier, 2003). Local ELT materials (related to spoken production) need to reflect much more what McConachy & Hata (2013) point out, namely that there is a “multiplicity of ways of construing utterances in discourse depending on the sociocultural context of the interaction and the ways the speakers orient to each other and project their intentions and identities” (ibid: 300). Coursebook writers need to pay much more attention to sociocultural context in which they situate the language they present or want the learners to practice: the ‘who’, the ‘where’, the ‘when’, and the ‘what’ should be determining factors rather than incidental or accidental influences. Intention and meaning drive the formation of language strings/utterances in the real world; a fact that is not reflected in many ELT materials which persist in focussing on formal aspects, perhaps because of their supposed ‘teachability’.

Within the context of developing learners’ spoken production, approaches to the teaching of ‘conversation’ have varied widely throughout the long history in ELT methodology, but ‘conversation’ has lost its centrality “playing only a marginal role in the development of overall linguistic competence” (Thornbury & Slade, 2006: 270). What is required is a more systematised programme of exposure to as near as authentic as possible spoken input; with this kind of input, learners could be encouraged to notice and extract both linguistic and pragmatic information which could subsequently be practiced. This type of approach, along with some teacher led instruction to promote more conscious awareness (Schmidt (1990), would seem to offer a better chance of successful uptake than the stale, unnatural dialogues very often to be found, to a greater or lesser extent, in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks between 1981 and 2006. Allowing learners the opportunity to experience context dependent use of authentic spoken language would certainly increase their awareness of the reality of how varied and flexible face-to-face communication can be.

Current technologies make it unproblematic to provide the necessary input, making use of video and audio resources available on the Internet, which can be edited and embedded into a PowerPoint presentation or similar projection for classroom use. This is a function that coursebook publishers seem to be increasingly willing to perform for inclusion in the ‘package’ that most ELT instructional ‘projects’ now consist of. Following on from his 2004 article, Gilmore (2007) makes a strong appeal for multi-media based content in FL teaching to connect the learners’ needs with more original,

authentic input and learning tasks, which take into account the role of English as a world language. An ambitious but locally achievable aim would be to combine new information and communication technologies with the instrumental use of English as a means of promoting learner cognitive development, through an emphasis on having a critical outlook (higher order thinking skills) and promoting learner self-development through an emphasis on intercultural experiencing; it should be possible to teach English as a global language in a nuanced way that provides our learners in Portugal with “opportunities for acting as responsible cosmopolitan citizens, without implying the loss of our cultural and ideological roots or the transformation of the English language into a neutral, disengaged or unaffiliated medium” (Guilherme, 2007: 72).

Materials for teaching the spoken language should both engage the learners and be plausible as examples of “natural, culturally based interaction” (Timmis, 2005: 118). While recognizing that not all real world spoken interaction is actually interesting, and may in fact be “impoverished, inarticulate, and boring” (Cook, 1998: 61), given the vast resources available on the Internet and technical solutions available (mentioned above), it is possible to present learners with materials of good quality. Such recordings could afford the learners the additional benefits of training their global listening skills, of providing an opportunity to integrate skills training in a natural manner and of encouraging their ability to notice features of the language in context. However, such an approach needs to be systematic and sustained; Batstone (1996: 273) refers to ‘noticing’ as “a complex process: it involves the intake both of meaning and form, and it takes time for learners to progress from initial recognition to the point where they can internalize the underlying rule”. The cultural content, rather than being excised or ignored, may serve as a way into this more natural, authentic material, for example, through some kind of activity relating/comparing the learning material’s content with the local culture of the learners (Tomlinson, 2000). Learners should be encouraged to interpret and respond to the meaning(s) inherent in the discourse before any kind of grammatical focus or consciousness raising activities are attempted. Indeed, it could be argued that just as important as the forms employed in the spoken language are other factors, such as the structure of oral discourse, the strategies employed by participants to maintain and guide the ‘flow’ of the discourse, the functions of formulaic language and indirect speech acts, as well as the significance of the social and cultural context

(speakers, setting, formality continuum, and so on) in which the discourse is produced (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994).

In relation to the reading texts found in this coursebook corpus, the uneven but dominant use of descriptive texts indicates a lack of care in the choice/distribution of written discourse to include. The very low percentages for argumentative texts deny learners the opportunity to engage in text evaluation and interpretation, and denies them the opportunity to develop their capacity to think critically; indeed, argumentative texts are explicitly ‘demanded’ by the descriptors for the CEFR language learning level B1. Learners are all too rarely asked to challenge what they read or to transform what they read according to their own opinions (Santos & Fabrício, 2006). Learners need to be guided towards understanding that knowledge is socially constructed, but are instead fed a diet of so-called ‘reading comprehension exercises’ which consist largely of ‘fishing’ for the ‘correct’ information from a standard format, class reading text. Thus, both the tasks and the forms of texts that learners have to deal with are superficial and restricted in range: learners are rarely confronted with authentic texts in different forms; this despite the national programme making specific reference to the need to include texts from diverse sources. This feature of these coursebooks illustrates a lack of concern for the kind of reading that learners would be likely to encounter outside their classrooms: many different types and forms of texts produced for different purposes by different kinds of English users. Reading texts should provide a chance for the learners to engage with ideas, cultures and worlds from far beyond their immediate, known horizons.

The English language is commonplace in many Portuguese everyday and media related situations, even when it comes to the ‘intrusion’ of English terms in local magazine texts (Hurst, 2006). Thus, it seems counter-intuitive to limit coursebook texts/content in the way described in Chapter Four: there exists an immediate and relevant connection to the English language, literally on our doorstep. Local Portuguese learners of English have immense cultural influences/resources available to them outside the coursebook/classroom, which means that that they recognize the artificiality, and sometimes inaccuracies, of much of the reading texts/tasks they are presented with. The research literature nowadays (Jahan & Roger, 2006; Young, 2008) stresses the need to incorporate local, target and international culture in coursebook materials, and reading

comprehension texts represent an obvious and available avenue to explore in this respect, without seeking to impose any kind of values or change the existing local value systems. The aim should be to extend learners' cultural awareness, to increase levels of cultural 'flexibility' and tolerance, to guide learners towards an understanding of the plurality and diversity that constitutes our social life and that rejects stereotypes and hegemonic tendencies. The aim is not to challenge the learners' identity but rather to associate the use of the English language within a framework of "a non-parochial, cosmopolitan, globalised world citizen identity" (Dörnyei, 2005: 97).

Indeed, it is issues related to 'identity' that lie at the heart of contemporary discussion of foreign language instruction. Cross cultural interaction is a more frequent experience for people than at any time in the past and is becoming increasingly frequent in Portuguese classrooms as they themselves become increasingly culturally diverse (Leite, 2002; Martins, 2007; Mateus, 2011). Reading texts in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks should take these facts much more into account and allow for differentiated responses and interpretations: to allow the words on the page to combine with reader's background knowledge and experiences to create individual meanings (Anderson, 1999) which may then serve as jump-off points for further interpretation and discussion. As well as the cognitive process of decoding the text, "... literacy provides people with opportunities to share meanings across time and space" (Cameron, 2001: 123), and being literate in a foreign language is a key element in cultural enrichment. Research has shown that activating content information plays an important role in learners' ability to comprehend and recall information from a text (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1988). These elements all contribute to the construction of a mental representation roughly corresponding to the meaning of the text (Masuhara, 2003). The world which exists within coursebooks has real meaning for learners in the sense that the coursebook is their principle interface with an additional culture in a classroom context. The reading texts in coursebooks should help learners with a twofold objective: "to become more aware of the target culture norms and behaviours; to recognise and understand more about other cultural beliefs and norms" (Johnson & Rinvolucris, 2010: 16). Achieving this kind of objective inside local classrooms would equip Portuguese learners with much better 'tools' to deal with the many Anglophone references that permeate their lives outside the classroom.

The choice of reading texts to include in coursebooks should be guided by their need to conform to three basic criteria. Firstly, the texts should be appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners, as well as their cultural and educational expectations (Gray, 2002). Secondly, the texts should be as authentic as possible in relation to the language features it displays, to the genre the text represents, to the source or purpose the text was designed for and to the responses it demands (Wardman, 2009). Finally, the text should be accurate in its representation of the theme/topic in question, in its use of facts and figures, in its treatment of the social, political or geographical features of the cultural content included (Byram, 1993a). Learners need to become more aware of how written discourse is a product of social practice and is constrained by both global and local conditions (Pennycook, 1994), that their interaction with a text creates new and relevant meanings, the cultural representations contained in ELT materials should “help to provide students with mirrors for their own lifestyles, perspectives, identities and images of the world” (Risager, 2006: 181). This approach is rather distant from a mother tongue reader’s approach to a text where perhaps the reader has the clearly defined purpose of getting useful information, from which an action will result, or gaining some pleasure or emotional stimulation or even gaining some kind of social advantage or advancement. FL reading more often treats reading materials as a way of teaching language using texts (analysing and acquiring declarative knowledge of a linguistic or textual feature) instead of teaching reading. Masuhara concludes, “[m]ost of the reading materials try to kill two birds with one stone and seem to fail to hit both targets” (2003: 345).

The reading texts of recently published coursebooks in Portugal are showing signs of greater ‘awareness’ in terms of the points raised by Risager (2006) quoted above, and less obsession with highlighting structural components, as noted above by Masuhara (2003). While text topics remain restricted to those defined by the national curriculum, a wider range of forms of text (genre) are appearing. More argumentative texts would be welcome (less reliance on the descriptive type of text), as would texts with a more overt concern in dealing with issues of identity. When there is a more flexible and up-to-date acceptance of the kind of language and content that can appear in a reading text and the kind of messages that a reading text can convey (as well as a more diverse range of post-reading activities), then it is possible to make progress towards the designated aim of providing the learners with more authentic materials and a more experiential, dialogic

learning experience. There is an additional ‘problem’ here in that such materials would inevitably involve teachers in more preparation, both in terms of understanding the content and how to deliver that content (Reimann, 2009). Nonetheless, confronting learners with such materials also has a kind of symbolic value: connecting learners to a world outside the confines of a classroom, a world in which the English language has a significant role, a process through which they can construct their own language learning identity (Granger, 2004) and gain added awareness of who and how they are (Johnson, 2011).

The language of texts should include less formal usages and lexis, as well as language that learners could more readily identify as being used by speakers from their age range (in a teenage register) and the geographical locations should all be real and the texts should ‘support’ this reality. The ideas and values expressed should to some degree be ‘non-standard’ as well; for example, when dealing with the topic of families, there should be ‘space’ to include the notions of non-biological children and mono-parental families or even unmarried or homosexual parents. Such material could potentially provide learners with various topics to discuss: what might be the difference between being in a large family or a small one? What about mono-parental families? Is being the first born important? What about family rules? What about roles for the parents? What about the gender balance or distribution of the siblings? Learners need to engage in this way with texts before any kind of learning can take place. In this light, as mentioned above, coursebook writers, when choosing or adapting texts, need to apply this author’s “Triple ‘A’ Test”: is the text **a**ppropriate (to the learners’ age, needs, level, educational background and so on; see: Gray, 2002); is the text **a**ccurate (the facts and figures, the identity issue; see: Byram, 1993a) and is the text **a**uthentic (in relation to the genre, the source, its features; see: Wardman, 2009)?

With respect to the use of illustrations in this corpus of coursebooks, there is little doubt that the vast majority of illustrations serve merely a decorative purpose; this despite historical changes in the type and style of presentation of the illustrations, culminating in the current almost exclusive use of full colour photographs. Greater credence needs to be placed in the highly visually literate school population of today: their ability to engage with and respond to visual stimuli is unparalleled in educational history. Research has shown that the addition of an ‘active’ pictorial element in combination

with a text, for example, would particularly assist weaker learners to construct a mental representation as part of their information processing and ultimately their comprehension (Schnotz & Bannert, 2003; Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003). However, easy-to-follow texts, that are highly concrete and have a strong appeal to the learners' interests, are likely to stimulate mental images that benefit cognition without the need for any extra 'external' additions (Carney & Levin, 2002). Filling a coursebook with illustrations to make it more 'attractive' (and therefore, motivational) or more marketable is hardly a justification for the plethora of full colour photographs splashed throughout current publications and may, in fact, occupy valuable cognitive processing capacity in an extraneous rather than essential way (Clark & Mayer, 2008).

The power of images as an ELT resource has long been recognised, especially in specific areas, such as the teaching of vocabulary, but this undeniably useful 'power' can also be harnessed for a more diverse range of teaching/learning activities; for example, speaking or writing activities might benefit from the use of various different visual forms, such as art, photographs, advertisements, web-based and learner-generated images. The argument that images are fulcral in FL teaching is highly convincing: "[i]f we are to conclude that image is an important factor understanding the meaning of a piece of language, we are grossly underestimating its importance. Image is meaning" (Keddie, 2009: 8). Images have the advantage of naturally creating and implying meanings which can be explored through the L2: there is a kind of 'information gap' created, as one learner may have a lot of pre-existing knowledge to bring to bear in interpreting a picture whereas the learner sitting alongside may not. When multiple images are employed, the process is also likely to naturally involve the learners in developing the content of lessons, giving the FL teacher more opportunities to exercise the currently held pedagogical principle of a learner-centred approach.

More consideration needs to be given to how illustrations are employed in ELT coursebooks. Recent research has shown how well younger English language learners respond to picture books (Mourão, 2010 & 2013), a format where interdependent verbal and pictorial input support the comprehension of a narrative (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006). With this format, the learners/readers can react and respond as well interpret and interact. Lado (2012) claims that picture books can help build awareness of the social and cultural foundations of language that may not be apparent to early level learners

through more traditional style instruction. Greater emphasis should be placed on a more functional typology of illustrations for coursebooks: making use of interpretational (like a diagram or flow chart), transformational (like mnemonic devices) or organisational illustrations (like maps or pictorial instruction leaflets) rather than just representational illustrations that simply replicate an element of a text or exercise (Levin et al, 1987). Illustrations may be ‘active’ also in the sense that the learners actually produce something using the images: a labelling exercise or matching images to different elements of a text describing a process. This technique would also favour FL learners with a visual sensory preference and more image-based learning style (Oxford, 2003), as well as those who rely more heavily on their visual intelligence (Gardner, 1999). Illustrations should be used judiciously with a clear pedagogical intent, regardless of whether the medium is a coursebook or PowerPoint presentation or a web-based exercise: it is the purpose which is important more than the medium.

Both teachers and coursebook writers also need to be visually literate in order to “choose the most suitable forms of images for teaching [...] because they have understood the ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings of images with various natures: representational, analogical and arbitrary” (Suryanto, 2011: 9). Coursebook writers in Portugal are usually experienced teachers and are ‘products’ of training courses which predate the current educational interest in developing learners’ visual literacy so they have neither had the experience of nor any theoretical input about this type of approach. With this in mind, it seems unlikely that the materials they produce would seek to include constructivist rather than decorative use of illustrations or encourage learners to activate their visualization skills as a useful learning strategy (Arnold, 1999; Arnold et al, 2007). Indeed, a brief survey of a recently published coursebook (a 2012 edition of a 7th grade coursebook) revealed only one illustration being used as an active part of the learning process, besides vocabulary picture-word matching tasks.

From a psychological perspective, the correct use of images can provide valuable input and assist in developing learning skills (Neumann & Segarra, 2012), but this is by no means a complete ‘solution’ to the challenges, in relation to cultural representation, facing coursebook writers in Portugal today. At a macro-level, writers and publishers need to incorporate in their locally produced ELT materials a credible interpretation of

‘culture’ as a social construct which is “a matter of continuously reconstructed identities that range from age-cohort affiliation and sexual orientation, through loyalty to sports teams or involvement in particular interests or hobbies, to participant roles and other situational factors” (Durant & Shepherd, 2009: 148). In addition, the diversity of the worldwide English speaking/using community needs to be brought to the forefront in decision-making about ‘cultural content’ to allow learners to observe and interact with both culturally divergent and convergent contexts of language behaviour (communication); the aim must be to increase levels of intercultural awareness and mutual tolerance. English is perhaps at its most useful in multilingual/multicultural contexts acting as a ‘lingua franca’ and the type of challenges that these contexts present can only be understood by learners who have benefitted from a teaching-learning approach that comprehends the cultural adaption and hybridization that are characteristic of contemporary, civil societies.

The avoidance of vague over-generalisations and simplistic notions which deny cultural complexity is of crucial importance. For example, ‘place’ as a criterion of cultural classification is highly selective and misleading, since within both regional and national borders great diversity may exist and the borders themselves may be permeable to the extent of allowing for widespread differences in behaviours and attitudes to enter (and exit). Today what makes up a ‘nation’ is entirely debatable and the concept may be best approached as something that is imagined rather than real (Anderson, 1983). Limiting the cultural content/connections in coursebooks to the traditional British, American or Commonwealth communities of use negates the transformational power of globalization in the 21st century, a major element of which could be termed de-nationalization or disassembling the national (Sassen, 2006). The world in which the English language is located within coursebooks needs to be moved beyond the geographical towards the socio-cultural: to explore how different groups of English users interact within their own group and when in contact with other groups; to take on a Foucauldian perspective and think in terms of how social relations are figured and distributed in space and time as being the key to any ‘geography’ of human behaviour. In this way, writers and publishers may also guard against including cultural representations which legitimate (un-intentioned) colonial or neo-colonial practices, what Edward Said referred to as “the changing constellation of power, knowledge and geography” (1995: 215), wherein the figurative or imaginative value of a place may be converted and acquire a rational sense.

In particular, coursebook writers and publishers must deal with the critical issue of representation of the ‘Other’. Indeed, with the publication by the Ministry of Education and Science on May 13th, 2013, of new curricular objectives (*Metas Curriculares*)¹⁸¹ for the second and third cycles of ELT in Portugal, the intercultural domain is specifically identified as being one of seven key ‘reference domains’ which are to be articulated within the teaching of English. The preamble of the document states in relation to the intercultural domain the following: “[i]n an increasingly diverse and complex world, where English is the global language, the contents aim, through descriptions and comparisons of social and cultural backgrounds, to develop in the young an awareness of their own identity and the identity of the Other” (ibid, 2013: 5)¹⁸². Locally produced ELT materials need to embrace the notion of trying to help learners to reflect upon how different cultures experience the world differently and indeed that different cultures may have different notions of conceptualising ‘Otherness’ and experiencing ‘Otherness’ (Balagangadhara, 1994). The production of a coursebook is selective and thus non-neutral and subjective by definition, which makes balanced descriptions/representations much harder to achieve (for example, with content which has religious overtones). The aim of promoting wider ideals such as ‘openness’ or ‘tolerance’ must be tempered by the knowledge that ‘understanding’ and ‘acceptance’ are only part of the process and that issues of power also need to be addressed (Olsson, 2010); the culture of the ‘Other’ cannot be abstracted from the people who constitute and construct that culture if we are to avoid the risk of perpetuating existing hegemonic tendencies (Dias de Carvalho & Fadigas, 2007).

The whole issue of ‘subject matter content’ needs to be brought to the forefront of any discussion of ELT materials; the more recent coursebooks in this study’s research corpus surely bear witness to a greater sensitivity to the issues involved, particularly to do with being more gender and race inclusive, in terms of the population of the coursebooks and the use of non-sexist language. But, at a deeper level, issues to do with social/domestic role stereotyping, marginalisation and visibility/omission still need further attention (Ritchie, 2005), especially with respect to the ageism (older people are almost entirely invisible in the corpus). The materials presented in this corpus display a

¹⁸¹ This publication available at <http://dge.mec.pt/metascurriculares/index.php?s=directorio&pid=21>

¹⁸² Translated quotation.

positive evolution in this respect but do not demonstrate a full grasp of how influential cultural representations may be in the formation of learner identities. For example, with the topic of ‘jobs’, there is evidence of gender and status imbalance in the ‘Extreme’ series. Coursebook writers can consciously promote gender equity through various linguistic techniques (use of the generic ‘*they*’ or even the abbreviation ‘*s/he*’ which actually forces the female element to be placed first rather than in the traditional pairing of ‘*he or she*’) and through the choice of content (verbal and visual texts) either produced by women or which depict women as heroes or inventors (Lee & Collins, 2009). More generally speaking, more opportunities should be attributed in coursebooks to allow learners to develop their awareness of the issues related to gender, age and ethnicity, to explore the diversity that is inherent in today’s English speaking world (which includes Portugal) and to understand that the coursebook is only one, limited version of that reality (Yamada, 2010).

The ‘what’ of coursebook content is largely decided by the Portuguese national programme and the ‘how much’ is constrained by the number of hours allowed for that programme each academic year, but the treatment given to the content is in the hands of the writers and publishers (López Barrios, 2008). The treatment should not negate or trivialize elements such as cross-curricular relevance or providing the learners with a cognitive challenge: the aim should not be to just entertain or ‘occupy’ the learners but rather to provide a spark, to generate FL production employing higher order thinking skills. The kind of culture(s) that should make up the content of Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks was discussed extensively in Chapter Two, but it is worth reiterating that careful consideration should be given to both explicit and implicit meanings, i.e., in the context of illustrations. It is not only what the picture shows, but also what the picture says: something which is individually determined by each learner. In this way, the cultural content can take the learners beyond the banal, safe confines of the traditional EFL coursebook into areas that may have been considered too polemical or even taboo in traditional approaches to coursebook design. How culture is represented may be the springboard for a more creative and interactive utilization of the coursebook by both teachers and learners. Content rich materials are more likely to produce language rich responses.

In truth, a largely superficial concern with cultural content on the part of Portuguese ELT materials' producers is evident in this corpus of coursebooks, especially in the earlier series in this corpus; the problematization of cultural representation in FL coursebooks has only recently appeared to be on the agenda of Portuguese policy makers (this despite Cunningsworth, a key author cited in Chapter Two, pointing out its relevance in his 1984 discussion of checklists and materials evaluations). How much time, effort and resources should teachers devote to helping learners develop an understanding of their own culture, different world views, different cultural practices, different value systems, and so on, remains far from clear. Materials in Portuguese produced coursebooks still reflect a simplistic view of culture limited to a few facts and cultural trivia to do with fame, food or festivals when more serious issues deserve the learners' attention: "[i]t is particularly important to have young people reflect on the economic strings attached to the export of cultural products and icons, especially concerning the multi-billion dollar entertainment business and to explore less advertised but equally important aspects of the cultural life of other communities" (Barletta Manjarrés, 2009: 155). More care is required in the choice and use made of celebrities: they should be treated as opportunities to introduce more serious issues; for example, Brad Pitt has said the reason he is not married to his partner, Angelina Jolie, is that he believes everyone in the USA should have the right to marry the person they want to regardless of gender. This surely is of more importance than his wealth, good looks or latest film. The ELT coursebook is both a provider of knowledge, using various different forms of representation, and a lens through which to view that knowledge. Coursebook writers and publishers need to be much more sensitive to the representations that pervade their 'products' and perhaps give consideration to extending the concept of the 'language reviser' they employ to include a more rigorous 'check-up' of the cultural content.

Given that "the textbook is one of the most enduring and familiar aspects of classroom life" (Boostrom, 2001: 241) and their centrality to most teachers' approach to schooling, the lack of research that focusses specifically on theoretical aspects of ELT coursebook content, design and, particularly production is surprising. This study looked into a specific aspect of representation in Portuguese produced ELT coursebooks; it acknowledges that there have been improvements in this field since 1974 and recognizes that some of these improvements may be seen as co-occurring with

improvements in the provision of training in FL didactics by Portuguese higher education establishments (Alarção, 2010). However, further progress is still required: to make sure that the coursebooks **connect** with the learners and also allow the learners to **reflect** on what they read/see in the coursebooks. Portuguese produced ELT materials should assist in generating local learners' critical awareness by exploring problems, contradictions and issues in relation to these learners' real world and their actual life experiences (Canagarajah, 2005). Locally produced coursebooks should have a clear advantage in this respect, compared to coursebooks produced overseas for the global market, being able to include both the local and the global cultural perspectives: learning materials should reflect a pluricentric attitude to English as an international language (Jenkins, 2006). Portuguese coursebook writers have the obligation to make their materials responsive to the local culture, as well as the target or international culture making use of the learners existing knowledge and experiences (Shin et al, 2011). Learning implies the personalised construction of meaning(s) by individuals; these meanings are co-constructed by language and culture, the two being inseparable, intermeshed and interactive. There must be 'flexibility' in the coursebooks to allow this process to flourish: the focus should be on how the coursebook facilitates this kind of learning rather than how easy it is to teach from.

Increasingly, learners of English in Portugal will have access to authentic materials through digital technologies via the Internet that are not coursebook derived and that may enable them to develop for a critical cultural awareness by themselves. Coursebook writers must adapt to this new era and its almost limitless resources in ways that are still hard to imagine, but which represent a huge opportunity in helping learners to learn in the different ways that they learn (Oxford, 2003). For example, the availability of online dictionaries could radically reset the lexical range/coverage and level of difficulty of some reading texts; or the instant availability of video clips, that provide a degree of contextualization that no 2D resource can achieve, could reset the way practice activities are set up. However, computer assisted language learning (or CALL) and teaching software have not turned out to be the educational panacea that some authors had predicted (Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2008), neither have coursebooks disappeared, perhaps because of their symbolic function, as they represent 'stability' and 'structure' (Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010), an important epistemological value within the educational system in Portugal which has been subject of much

uncertainty and hierarchically imposed change. Coursebook writers in Portugal still have an important role to play; their responsibilities should also include re-training and development sessions so that the creative spark that guides the production of their materials can take account of new insights from research in the field rather than simply perpetuate a strong-selling format, perhaps as an increasingly glossy, teacher-targeted package. In the same light, publishers should also be more willing to evaluate their 'products' using criteria others than sales figures.

Extensive listening and reading (possibly with a component of literary texts), areas which are still neglected even in the 2012 'crop' of 7th grade coursebooks, should be given more prominence as a means of making more explicit the need for FL teachers to deal with up-to-date notions of culture and cultural representation as part of a more multi-dimensional approach to FL teaching and learning. Young people (all people?) are more likely to engage with learning materials that stimulate their senses, their emotions and even their bodies, materials which encourage them to make associations or connections with their own life experiences (their own cultures): the focus should always be on meaning and not the practice of an arbitrary sequence of language forms. The predominant position of local publishers in the Portuguese market should allow for a more localised 'product' which takes on board these insights, broadly speaking to 'humanise' the materials more, to allow more 'space' for personalization and choice. Coursebooks are undoubtedly cost and time effective educational instruments which through necessity form the basis of many classes delivered in heavily loaded ELT timetables, but coursebooks should not be taken at 'face value' (i.e., they are just a means to teach another school subject, a foreign language): they are dynamic, cultural artefacts which should be critically reviewed and evaluated in a much more systematic manner than is currently the case. FL teachers should be trained to become the leading lights in this process, since they are the ones who have to try and achieve successful outcomes working with these materials at the 'chalk face', a fact which had been recognised in Portuguese legislation (*Lei 47/2006, de 28 de Agosto; artigo 2º, f*) but not put into effect.

In consonance with Tomlinson (2012), in his 'state-of-the-art' article on materials development in an international context, it should be stated that FL learning in Portugal needs to be much more exploratory (helping the learners to discover patterns and

features in the language) and much more experiential (providing learners with much more experience of the language in use). Portuguese produced coursebooks tend to have an informative focus (language as a system) and an instructional focus (providing practice exercises) which overpowers the more socio-cultural aspects of the learning process mentioned above. The emphasis in Portugal has been on providing materials that local teachers will find ‘comfortable’ to work with, with respect to their own (historical) training background. The way that ELT coursebooks are produced and published in Portugal allows no opportunity for systematic piloting of the materials to be included in coursebooks. To compensate for this, there need to be review procedures for coursebooks (Amrani, 2011) which should include the learners as well as the teachers’ reactions so that the development of future coursebooks might be better informed (improved). There is a tendency in Portugal for ‘winning formulas’ to be replicated (across publishing houses) and repeated (by coursebook writers) even when there is major policy change at national level: the wrapping paper may change but what is inside the parcel remains largely the same. Perhaps by including in the posited review procedures, in addition to learners and teachers, other interested parties (such as academics, parents’ associations, other coursebook writers or people from exam boards), it might be possible to manage innovation in Portuguese ELT materials development in a constructive, ‘bottom-up’ manner. Future academic research should seek to provide frameworks which can help measure the effectiveness of these ‘new’ materials, an area where the surface has barely been scratched.

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Appendix One: transcriptions of dialogue texts.

A: Conversations

Active English 7th grade Unit 29 p.33: “What’s your day like?”

Bruce 1: What do you do?

Julie 1: I’m a doctor. What about you?

Bruce 2: I’m a reporter. What’s your day like? What’s a doctor’s day like?

Julie 2: On weekdays I get up at six, wash, comb my hair and clean my teeth. I have breakfast at six thirty and then I walk to hospital.

Bruce 3: What time do you start work?

Julie 3: I start work at seven. I have lunch at the canteen and finish at three.

Bruce 4: What time do you arrive home?

Julie 4: I arrive home at three fifteen. Then I read books or do the housework.

Bruce 5: Where do you have dinner?

Julie 5: I have dinner at home at seven.

Bruce 6: What do you do in the evening?

Julie 6: I watch TV or go out with my friends.

Bruce 7: Er ... Would you like to go out with me tonight?

Peter 1: Excuse me. Julie, I’ve got tickets for the theatre tonight.

Julie 7: Great. Goodbye.

Bruce 8: Bye.

Active English 7th grade Unit 59 p.63: “Your summer holidays”

Miles 1: Do you spend your summer holidays on the mountain?

Kay 1: No, I don’t. I usually spend some days in the country and at the seaside.

Miles 2: That’s fine.

Kay 2: Where did you spend your last Summer holidays?

Miles 3: I went to Scotland. Mountains and valleys ... the cattle graze on the grass ...

Kay 3: How beautiful! You are looking forward to your holiday, aren’t you?

Miles 4: Yes, I am.

Active English 8th grade Unit 29 p.33: “Did you enjoy the football match?”

Kay 1: Did you enjoy the football match?

Bruce 1: Yes, we did. England played Scotland. Both are good team.

Kay 2: What was the result?

Joe 1: England won 1-0. Wow, what a fantastic goal in the second half. I'm so glad ...

Kay 3: More and more women are playing football. They'll be better than men.

Joe 2: Do you think so?

Kay 4: Of course I think so.

Bruce 2: Are there many women's clubs in Britain?

Kay 5: Yes, there are quite a lot. I met Beryl near here yesterday. She joined a football team and she is succeeding ...

Joe 3: Why don't girls think of more feminine sports?

Kay 6: Girls have the same rights, don't they?

Active English 8th grade Unit 59 p.63: “I booked a flight”

Mr Naylor 1: I haven't seen much of you lately.

Mr Stewart 1: Well ... I've just got married.

Mr Naylor 2: Really? Congratulations.

Mr Stewart 2: Thank you.

Mr Naylor 3: I imagine you were given lots of presents. Er ... How do you happen to be at the airport?

Mr Stewart 3: Mm ... I booked a flight at the travel agency ... I'll fly out in about an hour.

Mr Naylor 4: Great!

Mr Stewart 4: Um ... I'm on honeymoon.

Mr Naylor 5: Are you? Where's your wife?

Mr Stewart 5: Oh ... She doesn't like flying ... Er ... She's at home.

Active English 9th grade Unit 29 p.35: “Will you bring me some postcards?”

Mark 1: Amsterdam is the foreign city I know best.

Jill 1: How did it grow up?

Mark 2: It grew up in the middle of extensive fen country on a small sheltered bay.

Jill 2: That can't be true! ...

Mark 3: But it is. The main canals are flanked with avenues of elms. Fantastic!

Jill 3: But what about the growth of the port? What's your answer to that?

Mark 4: Well ... It has been dependent upon its water communications.

Jill 4: Are you suggesting that the present landscape results from drainage?

Mark 5: That's right. It means more than one thousand years of effort by the Dutch.

Jill 5: Amazing!

Mark 6: Dutch windmills and gardening are well-known ...

Jill 6: Yes, they are. When are you going there again?

Mark 7: Next holiday. I'll stay at my penfriend's.

Jill 7: Er ... Will you bring me some postcards, please?

Mark 8: Yes, of course.

Active English 9th grade Unit 59 p.71: “The earth is our home”

Kay 1: Dear me! Air, land and water pollution are increasing.

Joe 1: Experts don't say our present troubles are difficult to explain.

Mark 1: World population growth is one of the causes.

Joe 2: Yes. It is causing greater pressure on water supplies, food supplies and non-replaceable resources such as oil, iron and coal.

Kay 2: And on land for building, too. The more the population is increasing, the more waste or rubbish people are producing.

Joe 3: There are other causes for pollution ... Just think of modern technology.

Mark 2: It helps economic growth.

Joe 4: But it uses our earth's resources and leaves waste products at the end.

Mark 3: Ugh! What we eat or drink can be poisoned by pollution ...

Kay 3: What will life be like in the future? Are we moving towards a better or a worse world?

Joe 5: Yesterday an expert said that things wouldn't get out of control.

Mark 4: He assumed people wouldn't go on spoiling the environment. The earth is our home.

Passport 7th grade p.72

Henry, who is studying at Cambridge, and his sister Helen, who lives near London, go camping all Spring week-ends with a group of friends.

They're speaking on the phone on a Friday morning.

Henry 1: Have you heard the weather forecast? I think they said it will rain in the East Midlands all the weekend! We can't go there this time. We can go to Norwich instead.

Helen 1: It can't be the East Midlands, it must be the West Midlands. I was listening carefully. You've made quite a big confusion!

Henry 2: Are you sure? Anyway, do you remember my new roommate, Mark, the boy you met in the pub? He said he knows a farm, which is not far from the train station, where we can camp. He's a friend of the people who live there. Moderate wind, and the sun usually shines brightly at this time of year. And if something goes wrong, we can go into the house. It's such a nice farm!

Helen 2: It can be a good idea, but do you remember what Joan said last month, when we changed the place in the last minute? She said she would never go, if she knew about any change.

Henry 3: Listen, she said so, just because it was always very cold, and windy, and showery too. Otherwise, she would be very happy and say nothing about the change.

Helen 3: You think so? Well, I'll ring her. Tell me again the name of the place Mark knows so well.

Henry 4: It's in Norwich, near a train station.

You and a friend of yours are talking to Chris, a boy from Liverpool, who's spending a week in London.

Chris 1: Would you care for a cup of coffee or tea?

I 1: **Please, don't speak so fast.** It's difficult for us to understand.

Friend 1: Yes, **you must speak slowly.**

Chris 2: Right. I asked would-you-care-for-a-cup-of-coffee-or-tea?

I 2: ... "would you care" ... **what's the meaning of that sentence?** I don't know. Do you?

Friend 2: No, I don't. **What does it mean,** Chris?

Chris 3: "Would you care" means "would you like". You know this, don't you?

I 3: Oh, yes, we know the meaning of "would you like". But ...do you say a "cup of coffee" or a "coffee cup"?

Chris 4 (laughing): A cup of coffee.

Friend 3: **Isn't it possible to say** a coffee cup?

Chris 5 (still laughing): **You could say** so, but that's just the cup, with no coffee inside. See?

Friend 4: Oh, now I understand. Is it the same with a "cup of tea" and a "tea cup"?

Chris 6: Obviously. After all, would you ...?

I 4 (interrupting) Yes, I would care for a cup of coffee. Did I get it right?

Chris 7: Very good. What about you?

Friend 5: I don't like coffee or tea. I'd like a ... **how do you say "Cacau" in English?**

I 5: "Cacao", I believe.

Chris 8: Yes, it is. So, coffee for you and cacao for your friend.

Aerial 7th grade p.18

Helen 1: Hi, Michael!

Michael 1: Hi, Helen!

Helen 2: Look, Michael. Are you free next Saturday?

Michael 2: Next Saturday? ... Let me think! ... Oh, yes, I'm free. Why?

Helen 3: Well, it's my brother's birthday and, as usual, we're having a party at my grandparents' place in Upton. I'd like you to come. Then you can meet my whole family and also make new friends. My grandparents adore having young people over for the weekend and there's always room for one more. When it isn't raining, the party is outside in the garden, where we can play lots of different games.

Michael 3: I'd love to but first I must ask my parents. By the way, how do I get to Upton?

Helen 4: Oh, that's no problem. My father can take you. He has a meeting on Friday so he's only going to Upton on Saturday. Then you can come back with us on Sunday. I'm sure you'll like it there. It's an opportunity for you to see the countryside. On Sunday morning we could go for a long walk or even go fishing.

Michael 4: That would be wonderful. I'll call you tonight after speaking to my parents. See you!

Helen 5: Bye, Michael. I hope you can make it. I'll be waiting for your phone call.

Aerial 7th grade p.28

Today Michael is going to have lunch at Helen's. It's Michael's first visit so Helen is going to show him the house.

Helen 1: Hello, Michael. Come in.

Michael 1: Hi, Helen, what a lovely garden! Are you going to show me the house?

Helen 2: Yes, of course. Come in. Downstairs we have five rooms. Here, as you can see, is the hall. On the right is the living room.

Michael 2: Oh, it's so large. And so many plants!

Helen 3: Yes, my mother is very fond of plants. Let's go. There, on the left of the front door there is a toilet and here on the right next to the living room is the dining room.

Opposite, on the left, is the kitchen. At the end of the corridor in front of the stairs is a pantry.

Michael 3: Oh, that's nice. Shall we go upstairs?

Helen 4: Ok. Upstairs we have three bedrooms, a study and a bathroom. Here, on the right is my parents' bedroom. As you can see, it has a balcony which overlooks the garden. Over there on the right, is the study. Between the study and my parents' room there is a bathroom.

Michael 4: I see. And whose rooms are these on the left?

Helen 5: This one, opposite my parents' is mine and that one, next to mine, is Peter's bedroom.

Michael 5: Very nice indeed.

Helen 6: Let's go downstairs. I'll show you the garden.

Aerial 8th grade p.19

At the same hour, somewhere in England, Fiona and William's parents were talking about their children.

Mother 1: I wish I could talk to them now.

Father 1: There's nothing you should worry about. Anyway, why don't you give them a ring if you feel like it?

Mother 2: And what if they aren't at home?

Father 2: Take the risk. I know you too well. You won't sleep if you don't phone them.

Mother 3: I bet they're expecting our phone call.

Father 3: I don't want to disappoint you, but I bet they are too busy to miss us.

Aerial 8th grade p.30

Listen to the tape and correct the dialogue between Mrs Santos and her husband.

Positive for negative

Mrs Santos 1: I regret having allowed our kids to invite their English friends.

I don't regret at all having allowed our kids to invite their English friends.

Mr Santos 1: You are right, darling. Our house has turned into a madhouse.

You are right, darling. Our house is a lot more quieter.

Mrs Santos 2: Fiona has had a dreadful influence on our daughter. She is quite unbearable.

Fiona has had a very positive influence on our daughter. She is quite a sweet young girl.

Mr Santos 2: I couldn't agree more with you! She has no respect for anyone.

I couldn't agree more with you. She is very polite to all of us.

Mrs Santos 3: Have you noticed how very provocative William is? Sometimes I feel he hates us.

Have you noticed how charming William is? Sometimes I feel he is very fond of us.

Mr Santos 3: I can't stand his hostile look when he is talking to Manuel.

Have you watched how well he and Manuel get on together?

Mrs Santos 4: I hope they'll never spend another holiday with us.

I hope our kids will invite them to spend another holiday with us.

Mr Santos 4: Why don't you talk to them about that? They are the kind of people one doesn't miss at all.

Why don't you suggest that to our children? They are the kind of people one never gets tired of.

Aerial 9th grade p.14

That meeting in the Centennial Park was the starting point of a new friendship involving those young people. The very fact that origins were so different was something that appealed to them, they became inseparable. They visited the city together, they did their shopping, they enjoyed everything together. The hotel where Catarina was a guest became their meeting point for everyday decisions about what to do. Let's listen to what they are saying now.

Kazuo 1: Well, I've been reading something about Atlanta. There are some really curious facts. For instance: do you know that Atlanta was first called *Terminus*, in 1837?

Catarina 1: *Terminus*? Because it was the last railway station, at the end of the line!

Bill 1: I don't know if you have noticed it but there is a real cult of peachtrees though no peachtree thrives here.

Clare 1: Why do you say so?

Bill 2: Well, I've told you I'm spending my holidays with some relatives, my father's side. They told me there are at least 60 streets called Peachtree, and Catarina is here, at the Peachtree Hotel ...

Catarina 2: Do you think we can visit CNN? I'd like to meet a young Portuguese who works there – Pedro Pinto. He reads the sports news – and he's handsome too.

Gina 1: We watch CNN in Sydney too and I know who you are referring to. We could try, because, if we are lucky, we can get a ticket for a CNN tour and peek at live broadcasts. By the way – who knows what CNN stands for?

David 1: Cable News Network, also called “the best window on the world”. If you want to know what's really going on anywhere, just turn it on.

Aerial 9th grade p.23

Catarina 1: What do you know about the Olympic flame?

David 1: Well, I learnt that during the ancient Games a flame always burned in honour of the goddess Hera. The organisers just try to keep the spirit of classical Greece.

Bill 1: There are more and more problems involved in the Games, too. It's not only terrorism, as happened at the Munich Games and that bomb in Atlanta, in 1996. Sometimes they are used for political purposes, and there are problems of drugs, money and so on.

David 2: Yes, and in my opinion, the Olympic Games have become too commercialized.

Gina 1: Well, money is necessary to promote the Games. The main sponsor of the Sydney Games is Coca-Cola and it is said they have a budget of \$100 million dollars for it.

Catarina 2: That's a lot of money. I don't think the Games will ever be held in Portugal.

Bill 3: Why not? The question is to find the right sponsors in time.

Clare 1: Then, the International Olympic Committee must hurry up. China is already the front runner for the 2004 Games.

Kazuo 2: Don't forget that South Africa and France are interested too.

Catarina 3: How do you know? It will be in another century, remember!

Kazuo 3: Well, I usually read newspapers and magazines, and watch TV ...

Extreme 7th grade p.41

Mrs.Onoff 1: Have you heard the news?

Mrs.Romov 1: Yes, I have but it wasn't a surprise. I've always suspected there was something weird about that family. The castle seems very dark and mysterious.

Mrs.Onoff 2: You're right ... and its windows are always closed. But isn't your son a friend of one of the children?

Mrs.Romov 2: Yes. He's Erip and Mav's friend. Actually, Charles is their best friend. That's why my husband is so worried about the situation.

Mrs.Onoff 3: He should be. Their mother looks like a witch. Her hair looks like a cobweb.

Mrs.Romov 3: And her husband is spooky too.

Mrs.Onoff 4: Do you know that all their brothers and sisters work together in the basement of the castle?

Mrs.Romov 4: Just our luck! They work only during the night. We have to protect our families and our village.

Mrs.Onoff 5: I wonder what they're doing up there.

Extreme 7th grade p.105

Mav 1: I found this CD under my bed. Its cover is broken. Is it yours?

Chani 1: No, it's not mine. I think it's Erip's.

Mav 2: Are you sure it's his? I think it could be Cilgar's.

Chani 2: No, it's not hers. I have just remembered Mobiez gave it to Gotsh and Noffic last Christmas. It's theirs.

Extreme 7th grade p.140

Chani and Flow, Mav and Erip's parents, are talking about their holiday plans. They've already decided to travel by car but they aren't quite sure where to go. Read the following dialogue

Chani 1: Our first holiday without the children. It sounds strange but I think they'll have great fun at the summer camp.

Flow 1: At least they're going to do what they have been dying to do for ages.

Chani 2: And so are we. Going sightseeing through countries that we don't know has been our dream since we got married, remember?

Flow 2: How could I forget?! We have been planning this trip for so long and read so many guide books about Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic, that I feel I already know them.

Chani 3: That is going to be very useful as we have decided to travel by car.

Flow 3: I've studied the map and I believe we can get to the Hungarian border by the end of the first day. That's why I've booked a hotel room in advance in a 4-star hotel I found on the internet.

Chani 4: And what about the other nights? We are going to spend a fortnight on the road, aren't we?

Flow 4: That's right dear, but as we don't know how long we will stay in each city, we'll find accommodation as we go along.

Chani 5: Do you think that is a good idea? Don't forget we are in the middle of the high season and we might find the hotels fully booked.

Flow 5: Don't worry!! We can always find a bed and breakfast or a motel.

Chani 6: Let's hope you're right. All I know is that I want to do a lot of sightseeing, visit every tourist attraction in every town, take heaps of photographs and spend lots of money on souvenirs.

Flow 6: Do you think that, between all those things, we'll find a minute or two to phone our children?

Chani 7: (Laughs)

Appendix One: transcriptions of dialogue texts.

B: Service Encounters.

Active English: 7th Grade: Unit 42 p.46: “Can I help you?”

Assistant 1: Can I help you?

Kay 1: Yes. I'd like a dress.

Assistant 2: This one is beautiful.

Kay 2: I'm afraid it's a little big. What size is it, please?

Assistant 3: Size 16. Well try this one. It's smaller.

Kay 3: What size is it, please?

Assistant 4: Size 14.

Kay 4: What is it made of?

Assistant 5: Cotton.

Assistant 6: Well, what's it like?

Kay 5: It's fine. How much is it, please?

Assistant 7: £ 30.

Active English: 8th Grade: Unit 54 p.58: “Black coffee stops me sleeping”

Waiter 1: Would you like to see the menu, sir?

Mr Bryant 1: Yes, please.

Mrs Bryant 1: Uhm ... It's a bit difficult to choose ... So many dishes ... No roast beef ... I'll cook it tomorrow.

Mr Bryant 2: Why?

Mrs Bryant 2: Because Mark is going away tomorrow. And he loves it.

Mr Bryant 3: What about melon and grapefruit to begin with?

Mrs Bryant 3: Right. Er ... to follow ... perhaps a grilled lamb chop or a mushroom omelette ... Er ... How about eating trout?

Mr Bryant 4: That sounds good. Trout and salad for both. As for dessert ...

Mrs Bryant 4: I think I'll have cheesecake.

Mr Bryant 5: I don't feel like having dessert. Just black coffee.

Mrs Bryant 5: I can't drink black coffee in the evening. It stops me sleeping.

Waiter 2: Can I take your order, sir?

Mr Bryant 6: Yes, please. Melon, grapefruit, 2 trouts, 1 piece of cheesecake and a black coffee.

Waiter 3: Have you decided on the drinks, sir?

Mr Bryant 7: Yes. One lager and one bitter, please.

Active English: 9th Grade: Unit 4 p.8: "Fares, please"

Conductor 1: Fares, please.

Joan 1: British Rail, Oxford Street, please.

Conductor 2: 25 pence.

Joan 2: Could you tell me where to get off, please?

Conductor 3: Ok.

Joan 3: I'd like a ticket to Windsor, please. For tomorrow.

Clerk 1: Single or return?

Joan 4: Return, please. What time's the first train?

Clerk 2: At 8.50.

Joan 5: Which platform, please?

Clerk 3: Platform three.

Joan 6: Do I have to change?

Clerk 4: No, it's a through train.

Joan 7: How long will it take to get there?

Clerk 5: Fifty minutes.

Joan 8: Thank you.

Passport 7th grade p.144

Shop Assistant 1: Can I help you?

Customer 1: Yes, please. I'd like to buy a map of London.

Shop Assistant 2: A map or the "A to Z"?

Customer 2: Pardon ... could you say it again?

Shop Assistant 3: I said, would you like a London map or the "A to Z"?

Customer 3: Excuse me, but I can't understand. Is it eight ... ?

Shop Assistant 4: No, not eight. It's A to Z, it's a small and very useful book. I'll show you one ... Here it is, see?

Customer 4: Yes, it's really useful. I'll take it.

Shop Assistant 5: The book and the map?

Customer 5: No, just the book ... Mm ...

Shop Assistant 6: Anything else?

Customer 6: Yes ... that round thing over there ... how do you call it in English?

Shop Assistant 7: Those are badges. Which one would you like?

Customer 7: That one!

Shop Assistant 8: Here you are. Please pay at the desk.

Passport 7th grade p.186

Waiter 1: What can I do for you, madam?

Mrs. Stewart 1: Could I have the menu?

Waiter 2: Certainly ... here you are. Thank you.

Mrs. Stewart 2: Thank you ... I'd like to have a lamb chop and vegetables.

For dessert I'll eat fruit salad with cream.

... And a glass of wine, please. Thank you.

Passport 9th grade p.40

Receptionist 1: Miss Alina's. Good afternoon.

Liane 1: Good afternoon. I'm ringing about the job in today's Gazette.

Receptionist 2: Job?

Liane 2: Yes, for a junior, on Saturdays.

Receptionist 3: Oh yes. Just a minute. I'll ask Miss Alina.

(Pause)

Miss Alina 1: Hello?

Liane 3: Oh. I'm interested in the Saturday job you advertised ...

Miss Alina 2: Friday evening and Saturday.

Liane 4: Yes, of course ...

Miss Alina 3: You're still at school?

Liane 5: Yes. I go to Southmead Comprehensive.

Miss Alina 4: And how old are you?

Liane 6: Seventeen.

Miss Alina 5: Well, I can't take on anybody without seeing them first. When can you come in and see me?

Liane 7: Any afternoon after school. I can get to the High Street by quarter past four easily.

Miss Alina 6: How about tomorrow then?

Liane 8: Yes, that's fine.

Miss Alina 7: And your name is?

Liane 9: Oh, Liane, Liane Hathaway.

Miss Alina 8: Very well, Liane, I'll see you tomorrow at 4.15.

Liane 10: Right, thanks.

Miss Alina 9: Goodbye.

Extreme 7th grade p.124

Scott and Mobiez are at the sports shop. Read the following dialogue.

Shop Assistant 1: Good afternoon. Can I help you?

Scott 1: Yes, please I'd like to try on those Nike trainers in the window

Shop Assistant 2: The ones in leather or canvas?

Scott 2: The ones in leather, please.

Shop Assistant 3: Very well. What size do you take?

Scott 3: Size 8, please.

Shop Assistant 4: And what colour would you like?

Scott 4: Black.

Shop Assistant 5: Just a moment, please.

(Some moments later ...)

Shop Assistant 6: Here you are.

(Scott tries them on)

Scott 7: I'm afraid they're too tight, don't you agree?

Shop Assistant 7: Maybe. I'll get you the next size up.

(Some moments later ...)

Shop Assistant 8: Here's size 8 ½. I'm sorry but I haven't got this size in black, only dark blue or grey.

Scott 8: This size is perfect. They're very comfortable. I think dark blue suits me, don't you agree, Mobiez?

Mobiez 1: Yes, they look nice and they're very fashionable.

Shop Assistant 9: It's your lucky day. These are the last pair in stock, which means they're half price: £21

Mobiez 2: It's my lucky day too, isn't it? I can taste the lasagne already ...

Scott 9: Here you are.

Shop Assistant 10: Here's your change. Thank you. Come back again.

Extreme 7th grade p.130

After such a tiring afternoon, nothing better than a nice peaceful dinner at an Italian restaurant ... Mobiez could hardly wait to taste Marino's delights.

Waiter.1: Good evening. Table for two? Follow me, please.

Scott.1: Thank you. Could we have the menu, please? We have tickets for the 9 o'clock session in a cinema not far away from here and we wouldn't like to miss it.

Waiter.2: Certainly ... Here you are.

(some minutes later ...)

Waiter.3: Are you ready to order?

Scott.2: Yes, we are. We would like the tomato soup for a starter and Lasagna Verdi for the main course.

Mobiez.1: And two cokes to drink, please.

Waiter.4: Sorry. Lasagna is off the menu. We haven't got any.

Scott.3: Hum ... Could we have Spaghetti Bolognese, then?

Waiter.5: No, that's off too. There's no spaghetti.

Mobiez.2: I see ... Well, I'm sure there some pizza. That's it. We'd like to order two tuna pizzas. Ah? I love cheese. So, don't forget ... with extra cheese.

Waiter.6: Well ...

Mobiez.3: Are you trying to tell us there's no pizza??!! Scott, have we come to the wrong restaurant by mistake?

Waiter.7: I'm sorry but there's no pizza.

Scott.4: What have you got?

Waiter.8: Steak and chips.

Mobiez.4: Alright! Two steaks. Well-done, please.

(some minutes later ...)

Waiter.9: Here are the soups.

Mobiez.5: Excuse me! What's this fly doing in my soup?

Waiter.10: I think it's swimming, miss.

Mobiez.6: How disgusting!! Just take it back.

(some minutes later ...)

Waiter.11: Here are the steaks. Rare, as you asked.

Mobiez.7: Rare? We said well-done. And they're so small ...

Waiter.12: Didn't you say you don't want to miss your session? You wouldn't want to have a big one, would you?

Scott.5: That's it, Mobiez. This used to be a decent place! Let's go to a fast food place instead ...

Appendix Two: transcriptions of reading texts.

Active English 7th grade: Unit 30, p.34. Consolidation.

Jill Clarke lives in London. She gets up at 7.30 a.m. every day. She has breakfast at 8 o'clock. She leaves home at 8.30. She rides her bicycle to school. She arrives in time for lessons. School begins at 9 o'clock. Jill doesn't have lunch at home. She has lunch in the school canteen at 1 o'clock. School finishes at 4 o'clock. She arrives home at 4.15. She has her tea and does her homework. She has dinner at 7 o'clock. After dinner she usually watches TV and finishes her homework. She goes to bed at 9.30 p.m.

Active English 7th grade: Unit 45, p.49. Consolidation.

April 10th

My dear Amy,

How are you and the family? I hope you are all fine.

We are in town today. The children are happy. We've got some new books for them. They say these books are more interesting than their old ones. Well ... they are thicker ...

Love from us all,

Mary

Active English 7th grade: Unit 50, p.54. Consolidation.

April 30th

Dear Joe,

How are you? I was ill last week and my parents were a bit worried. I'm better now. Granny is with us today. She's always very kind. We are going to spend the weekend in the country. That's all my news. Please give my love to everyone.

Yours,

Kay

Active English 7th grade: Unit 55, p.59. Consolidation.

On Saturday Kay and Mark left home at 10 o'clock. They went to the bus stop. They wanted to catch a 35 bus. When the bus arrived, they got on. Some minutes later they were in the station. There were lots of people there. Kay bought the tickets and they took the train. Mark didn't have his magazine on the train. It was at home.

Active English 8th grade: Unit 10, p.14. Consolidation.

November 10th

My dear Joe,

Dad is working hard all the time. He gets up early every day and arrives home late. He left for work a moment ago and he'll be back in the evening. I'm going to do the shopping and spend my dollars as usual. I'm going to drop this letter into the letter-box, too. Dad is doing well in New York, but we miss London. Do you remember your cousin Gladys? She is a widow. She spent last weekend with us. She lives quietly in the suburbs and has got a useful occupation helping lonely people. Some people don't understand her new occupation but it doesn't matter. Really it makes little difference to her.

Write to us soon and tell us about your life in London.

Lots of love,

Mum

Active English 8: Unit 15, p.19. Consolidation.

November 26th

Dear Mum,

It was a pleasant journey from London to Edinburgh. The coach was not a quick one. Now I am at the farm. The climate is a bit dry. The leaves of the trees are falling to the ground. I like the plants and the animals. There are a lot of horses, cows and pigs. Yesterday I crossed the bridge to visit some friends of mine. There was ice on the river. Aunt Mary is pleased with the children. They have got good school reports.

Love from,

Sue

Active English 8: Unit 55, p.59. Consolidation.

You can turn your cooking into profit.

The Morgans started running a tourist attraction and aim to make a fair profit. Up to ten foreign tourists prepared to pay £6 each accept the invitation ‘Won’t you come to tea?’ the Morgans prepare the food and the guests sit down to a traditional tea and beautifully-laid table. On top of that they each receive a small souvenir of their visit. As they decided to find visitors through a travel agency, they have customers visiting their home every weekday.

An evening of clog dancing, singing to the harp and traditional Welsh food is no myth in The Dolphin, a family-run hotel in Wales. The owners knew nothing about running a hotel or catering when they decided to open it. As they became interested in the job, they learned a lot about it. At the beginning they just cooked for the hotel restaurant. Nowadays they also cook for up to a hundred guests who come specially for the traditional Welsh evening.

Active English 9: Unit 9, p.13. Travelling in London

Both the red buses and the 'tubes' cover London with fast and frequent services. As in most capital cities, a quick way to travel is by underground or 'tube'. But if you intend to see London as you go, take the bus.

There are single-deckers and double-deckers. For safety's sake, standing is never allowed on the platform or on the upper deck of double-decker buses. Most of London's buses are the world famous

red double-deckers where you can pay your fare to a conductor. On some buses you must enter by the front doors and pay the driver. On most buses in the centre of London, fares vary with the distance travelled.

You choose your bus by the number and destination shown on the front. Many bus stops show which bus numbers stop there, give details of these routes, and may show a map of the stops in the area.

Active English 9: Unit 24, p.30. If an Englishman ...

If an Englishman or a Frenchman or an Italian should travel my route, see what I saw, hear what I heard, their storied pictures would be not only different from mine, but equally different from one another. If other Americans reading this account should feel it true, that agreement would only mean we are alike.

For start to finish I found no strangers. If I had, I might be able to report them more objectively.

.....

Americans are much more American than they are Northerners, Southerners, Westerners or Easterners. And descendants of English, Irish Italian, Jewish, German, Polish are essentially Americans.

.....

It is astonishing that this has happened in less than two hundred years and most of it in the last fifty. The American identity is an exact and provable thing.

JOHN STEINBECK (*Travels with Charley*)

Active English 9: Unit 33, p.43. And Marian played the piano

Then suddenly someone moved. Someone stood up. It was Marian. To everyone's relief she walked quickly to the piano and sat down. She was wearing a pale blue dress, and she looked very beautiful.

The people who could sing had brought song-books and sheets of music with them. And Marian played the piano for them. She was an excellent pianist. Her playing was a lot better than their singing. The applause of the audience showed respect for the pianist and pleasure at the songs.

The members of the cricket teams sang first, and soon it was Ted Burgess's turn.

L.P.Hartley (*The Go-Between*)

Active English 9: Unit 39, p.49. After cutting the grass

Winifred crouched down, with her child of six in her lap, to examine the knee. Egbert bent over also. 'Don't make such a noise, Joyce,' he said irritably. 'How did she do it?' 'She fell on that sickle thing which you left lying about after cutting the grass,' said Winifred, looking into his face with bitter accusation as he bent near.

He had taken his handkerchief and tied it round the knee. Then he lifted the still sobbing child in his arms, and carried her into the house and upstairs to her bed. In his arms she became quiet. But his heart was burning with pain and with guilt.

D.H.Lawrence (*England My England*)

Active English 9: Unit 42, p.53. My firm is the oldest in the city

‘It would have broken my father’s heart if I had not gone into the business.’

‘What is that?’ I asked.

‘I am a tea merchant, sir. My firm is the oldest in the city of London. I have spent forty years of my life in combating to the best of my ability the desire of my fellow-countrymen to drink Ceylon tea instead of the China tea which was universally drunk in my youth.’

.....

‘But in his younger days my husband did a lot of amateur acting and he was thought very clever,’ said Mrs. St Clair.

W. Somerset Maugham (*The Round Dozen – Collected Short Stories*)

Active English 9: Unit 45, p.56. You’re with a lucky boat

The old man had taught the boy to fish and the boy loved him.

‘No,’ the old man said. ‘You’re with a lucky boat. Stay with them.’

‘But remember how you went for eighty-seven days without fish and then we caught big ones every day for three weeks.’

‘I remember,’ the old man said.

.....

They sat on the terrace and many of the fishermen made fun of the old man and he was not angry. Others, of the older fishermen, looked at him and were sad. But they did not show it and they spoke politely about the current and the depths they had drifted their lines at, about the steady good weather and of what they had seen.

ERNEST HEMMINGWAY (*The Old Man and the Sea*)

Passport 7: Unit 6, p.102

This is a letter one of the pupils wrote to a friend of hers, a Londoner who is working in Portugal, in a travel agency.

Royal National Hotel,
Bedford Way,
London WC1H 0DG.
31st March 1985

Dear Helen,

I'm having a wonderful time. I'm writing to you in the lobby, on the groundfloor. It's getting very cold, and I'm drinking a glass of hot milk. I was reading the newspaper and I know it's lovely weather in Portugal. Here the weather is changing constantly, but my interest in London is growing day after day.

You were right; travelling in London is simple, if you buy the Pass, the London Explorer. It's much cheaper and you get discount vouchers to different places. We've been to the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's, Tower of London, British Museum, Madame Tussaud's, the London Zoo, Hyde Park etc

The Royal National Hotel is comfortable enough to stay at, in spite of being too crowded and sometimes too noisy to sleep in.

This morning I was walking along Hyde Park when I met your cousin Rose. She promised she will visit you next month. Your uncle will also go with her, but your aunt won't, and Jim can't go either, as he's working hard for his exams.

The day before yesterday we went to Oxford, where we visited the Sheldonian Theatre. In the evening we went to the cinema, in London.

And yesterday we drove to Stratford, where we spent all the day.

Well, I must go upstairs, to my room, right now. There's a musical programme on TV, and I'm afraid of missing the beginning, I'll be back on the 3rd of April, and I'll give you a ring as soon as I get home.

Yours,

Ana.

6. Have fun!





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Major Connections



Tube Heathrow
Aireside St, A&B, B&C

Engineering
Buckingham Palace St
Jewell's Park
Tube Piccadilly Green Park St
Jewell's Park, Hyde Park Corner
Bus: 1, 28, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

House of Parliament
Traveller's Express
Tube Charing Cross, Piccadilly
Bus: 1, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

Leicester Square
House of Commons
Tube Leicester Square, Piccadilly
Bus: 1, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

St. Paul's
Tube St. Paul's, Piccadilly
Bus: 1, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

Major Connections

Tower of London/To
Katherine's Bank/ Tower
Bridge Walkway
Tube Tower Hill, Bus: 12, 45, 76

Maritime Museum
Tube Tower Hill, Bus: 12, 45, 76

Maritime Museum
Tower, Greenwich, Greenwich
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

Maritime Museum
Greenwich
Tube Tower Hill, Bus: 12, 45, 76

London Transport Museum
Tube Tower Hill, Bus: 12, 45, 76

London Transport Museum
Tower, Greenwich, Greenwich
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

London Transport Museum
Tower, Greenwich, Greenwich
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

Major Connections

Museum of London
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

High Street Kensington
Tube High Street Kensington
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

Knightsbridge
Tube Knightsbridge
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101

Portsmouth Road Market
Tube Portsmouth Road Market
Bus: 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 34, 34A, 34B, 35, 36, 43, 53A, 54, 55, 73, 74, 76, 85, 86, 100, 101



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OR:
Senior Citizens
all Thursday evenings until 15 June
Book your ticket in advance (one per person) and pay: 4.00 for best available seats

Passport 8: Unit 3, p.71 That isn't cricket.

F. FOX HUNTING



The dogs (fox hounds) follow the smell of the fox. The hunters, who ride horses, follow the dogs. Boxing day (December 26th) is a traditional day for foxhunting. Some people refuse to accept foxhunting as a game or a sport. They find it cruel. Have you ever thought about it?

G. GROUSE SHOOTING



The grouse season begins on the 12th August and ends on the 10th December. Many restaurant customers expect to have grouse for dinner on the season's first day, the 'glorious twelfth'. Grouse tastes very good and hunters obviously hope to be able to satisfy those who like it.

Passport 8: Unit 3, p.77. That isn't cricket

Cricket: the national game. A type of cricket was first played in England in the twelfth century, and sometimes it seems as if that match is still going on. Totally incomprehensible to the outsider, but a way of life to thousands of English people.

In fact, to many people, cricket is a mystery. It looks slow and



boring and the rules are almost impossible to explain. But cricket isn't just popular in England. Many other Commonwealth countries play too, for example, India, South Africa and the West Indies. One of the greatest cricketers of all time was this man – W. G. Grace (1848-1915). He was the captain of the English team thirteen times. He's holding a **bat** and wearing **pads** around his legs.

Passport 9: Unit 4, p.107-108. The Olympics

G. A POEM

W. H. Auden wonders if modern civilization has at last produced the 'perfect' Modern Man who thinks and does everything in the way experts consider best.

This poem commemorates such an imaginary man – The Man of the Future, perhaps – but it is ironical. The sting in this poem can be found in its tail.

THE UNKNOWN CITIZEN by W. H. Auden

(To JS/07/M378 This marble monument is Erected by the State)

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint,
And all the reports on his conduct agree
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,
Except for the War till the day he retired
He worked in a factory and never got fired,
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.
Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.
The press are convinced that he bought a paper every day
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.
Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,
And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.
Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare
He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Installment Plan
And everything necessary to the Modern man,
A phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.

Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;
When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.
He was married and added five children to the population,
Which our Eugenist says was the right number of his generation,
And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.
Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:
Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

Passport 9: Unit 5, p.163-164. Top of the Pops

8. Video Violence

In Britain, many people including politicians, church leaders and teachers are worried about the effects these videos have on children.

Over thirty per cent of British homes have video equipment, and shops hiring video films are everywhere. Children as young as six years old are watching horror in their homes.

A recent newspaper report quoted some children's opinions on video violence. One ten year old said: 'When I watch horror films, I don't have nightmares. I just think about them when I'm awake. I wonder whether things are really alive and that frightens me, but I still want to see them.

If I tell my mum and dad about a film I want, they'll usually try and get it for me.'

Another child was asked about banning horror videos. She felt, 'They're too good to ban. If people want to watch them, they'll watch them. I'm not scared – I like them. If there was a law against them, I'd still go on watching them.'

Many children share this opinion.

Meanwhile video makers and shop owners are making enormous profits. But ...

- How will exposure to video violence affect these children?
- Will they enjoy violence so much they'll become violent adults?
- Will they see so much violence on film, that real violence will lose its power to shock them?

While we wait for the answer ...

- **DEBATE** the topic **VIDEO VIOLENCE** in your class.

- **USE** the information contained in the report, the children's opinions and the questions we asked.

Aerial 7: Unit 3, p.12. Monday Morning

It is Monday morning. As usual people are getting ready to begin a new week's work.

At Helen's, Mary and John are the first to wake up. They usually get up at half past six. Later, at seven, John goes jogging in the park.

Before going to work Mary has lots of things to do. First, she has a shower, then she gets dressed and after this she goes to the kitchen to get breakfast ready.

Helen and Peter have classes at half past eight, so they only get up at twenty past seven.

At quarter to eight everybody has breakfast. For breakfast the children have cereals and milk while Mary and John drink a cup of tea and eat two or three pieces of toast with butter and marmalade.

After breakfast Mary runs to catch the train to London while John and the children do the washing up.

John usually drives the children to school on his way to work.

Aerial 7: Unit 4, p.14. A weekend in the country

Helen's grandparents live in a very peaceful village in the country.

Mr Parker was a photographer and Mrs Parker a shop-assistant. Now, they have retired and spend most of their time playing the piano, playing chess, gardening, cycling and travelling.

Helen, her parents and brother usually go to Upton on Fridays. There they can spend the weekend far from the hustle and bustle of the big city. All of them want to relax after a tiring week and get away from the noise and pollution of London. They all think that it is healthier to breathe the fresh air of the countryside.

Helen is fond of her grandparents. They are very kind and understanding. The whole family get together at their place as they enjoy one another's company and have lots of fun together.

Aerial 7: Unit 10, p.34. My life

1.

[Steve] When I was younger and lived in California, I had everything money could buy – the fashionable clothes, an excellent education ... But I wasn't happy. My parents earned a lot of money but worked long hours and were never home. We never talked because they were always busy.

My grandmother, the nicest and kindest person in the world, kept me company and tried to cheer me up.

2.

[Dan] I consider myself the luckiest person in the world. My sisters, although younger, are terrific and my parents the most understanding parents of all. I try to please them by being a good student and we always solve our problems without arguing.

3.

[Betty] When my parents divorced I came to live with my mother. Meanwhile she married again and had two more sons.

I feel miserable because I am always arguing with my mother and stepfather. They always overprotect my half-brothers, who never help at home.

When I complain my mother says that I am the most selfish person she has ever known. As I am the eldest, my duty is to help at home, according to her.

4.

[Debbie] Two months ago Debbie emigrated to the United States. She is South African and before emigrating lived in Soweto. Her aunt and two cousins shared her room while her uncle slept in the living room on the floor.

For Debbie, Soweto was the most dangerous place in the world to live in because there were confrontations between black people. The police arrested many of her friends and others couldn't afford to go on studying. Although she misses her relatives and friends she feels happier in the United States.

Aerial 7: Unit 15, p.50. Arnold Schwarzenegger (A true success story)

Arnold Schwarzenegger was born in Austria on July 30th 1947. His father was a policeman. During his youth, Arnold showed special interest in body-building and soon became the Junior Mr Europe. He later won the Mr Universe title five times and the Mr Olympia title six times.

When he was 20 he went to live in the USA.

He became a famous actor and had made about 20 films. He took a Master's degree at the University of Wisconsin, married into the Kennedy clan and is now a happy papa. He is also a very successful businessman, being, among other things, Bruce Willis and Sylvester Stallone's partner in the Hollywood Planet chain of restaurants. He is the author of four best-sellers and has produced a video cassette on body building. He was also appointed by the White House to advise the President on physical training in American schools.

He is a good example of a man of talent, both physical and mental. Unless he changes his lifestyle, we will hear more about him in the future.

Aerial 8: Unit 11, p.46-47. Quite an adventure

That Wednesday morning not one of the four friends seemed to be in a cheerful mood. For the first time in the last two weeks the group was going to split. Paula and Manuel were going back to school. They knew from the beginning that their classes would re-start before their friends' departure; that's why Paula and Fiona were making a list of the places the group of English teenagers could visit in their absence. They would have to while away the time as well as they could without the company of their Portuguese friends.

That morning, shortly before leaving for school, Paula reminded her friend not to forget to take the city map with her and whispered:

- I wish I could go with you too!

Mrs Santos left immediately after but not without checking first with the two guests to find out if they had enough bus tickets and some money for their meals.

It was indeed quite an adventure for Fiona and William. Although Paula and Manuel lived some way away from the city centre, the bus trip had never been a problem. Their friends had always been there to tell them where to get off.

This time they had to remember the number of stops their friends had taught them to count before getting to Praça da Liberdade. The rest of the group was already there and Peter suggested walking across the bridge and having a look at Gaia. William felt delighted because he would finally have the chance to take some photos from the bridge.

Peter offered his arm to Fiona and said in a naughty way he just wanted her to feel comfortable and safe when she looked at the river from that high bridge.

They all the view from there and for a few minutes only clicks of the cameras could be heard.

In Gaia they met a group of teenagers, wearing their school uniforms. Though their English was not very good, they chatted for a while before getting back to Oporto, eager to share with their friends the experiences of the day.

Aerial 9: Unit 20, p.80-81. Choose life! It's worthwhile

	The man who was called the king and that so adored that some people refused to believe he had died, weighed nearly 116 kilos towards the end of his life	An autobiography based on these experiences called Take it like a Man tells how much harder it is to cope with problems like drug addiction when you are constantly hounded by the media.	It is ironical that, in the early seventies, Richard Nixon, who was President of the USA, awarded him honorary membership of a government organization which wanted to eradicate drugs.
	Despite this, he made increasing use of cocaine and valium in the last months of his life. When he collapsed on the street outside a famous Hollywood nightclub, his sister, Rain, threw herself on the body to try and stop his violent spasms, while his brother, Leaf, called for paramedics.	In 1986 the News of the World said he had 8 weeks to live. The lead singer of Culture Club was spending at least 300 pounds a day and may be even 800 pounds on his heroin habit.	A typical meal for him could have been almost half a kilo of bacon, four rounds of mashed potatoes, followed by 20 or 30 cartons of yoghurt. After his death doctors found traces of 11 different drugs in his body tissue.
	After a recovery period he began a successful solo career and launched his own record label called More Protein, a name probably inspired by his new interest in Hinduism and macrobiotics.	He had ingested GHB, the latest and most potentially lethal synthetic drug. He died in hospital less than an hour later. He was 23. Traces of cocaine, heroin and valium were found in his blood.	His death, on 30 October 1993, shocked the world. In interviews, the promising young actor spoke about the environment and the pointlessness of money. He jogged and swam regularly and his strict vegan lifestyle meant that he even refused to wear leather shoes.

Extreme 7: Unit 3, p.64. What a school!

Dear all,

I really missed you at Christmas. It seemed so different from other years. I felt sad that we didn't get together but I only had 3 days off school because of the 1st term exams. I booked a ticket for Christmas in November, but it was cancelled due to the stormy weather. I even tried to go by train then I realized that it would take too long to get there. Meanwhile, as I wanted to have company for Christmas, I phoned a friend and went to her house in Scotland where we spent a wonderful weekend and relaxed a bit after those long days of study.

Although it is hard work here, these have been the best days of my life!

The school is magnificent and the drama course really fulfils my needs. I was fortunate enough to meet some wonderful people and I now have a special group of friends who also come from other countries. Some subjects are very interesting and completely relevant for what I'd like to become – a famous actress (I feel great when I'm on the stage). I have Music, Dancing and Drama, which are my favourite subjects. These classes are usually in the new part of the building, in one of the auditoriums. My other subjects – English, History and Maths – are the most demanding, because I have to read a lot; the teachers aren't the most energetic ones in the staff, but they're also very nice, competent and understanding.

One of the worst things about boarding school is that you can never leave it during the week and, in my case, not even at weekends. On the other hand, there are lots of modern facilities and challenging activities. For example, we can spend time playing tennis on the five-star tennis court, swimming in the indoor or outdoor swimming pool, practicing sports at the well-equipped gymnasium, reading in the biggest library I've ever seen or surfing the net in a huge room – where I'm sitting now – with about a hundred computers. Naturally, one of the funniest moments of the day, is when we go to watch TV trying to find out what is happening in the outside world.

Deep inside I miss you all but this is my dream come true.

Kisses and hugs,

Mobiez

Appendix Three: visual data collection sheets.