

## **Exploring Cultural Borders: A Study on English Textbooks in Chilean Basic Education and Their Alignment with International Standards**

### **Explorando Fronteras Culturales: Un Estudio sobre los Textos de Inglés en la Enseñanza Básica Chilena y su Alineación con Normativas Internacionales**

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#### **Manuscript information:**

**Received/Recibido:** 04/05/24

**Reviewed/Revisado:** 12/11/24

**Accepted/Aceptado:** 17/11/24

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#### **ABSTRACT**

##### **Keywords:**

English textbook, intercultural education, teaching English, intercultural competencies.

The objective of this article is to analyze the alignment of English textbooks used in primary education in Chile with international regulations that promote cultural diversity, dialogue between cultures, and an inclusive and intercultural society. The importance of improving the contents of these books is highlighted to guarantee a more inclusive education aligned with international standards of diversity and educational rights. The methodology used combines content analysis techniques with a contextualized approach in relevant international regulations. An analysis of the texts used in public schools from first to eighth grade was carried out, using reports, specialized literature, and international guidelines as a framework of reference, including documents from UNESCO, ECLAC, and children's rights.

The results indicate that only some texts adequately comply with including intercultural aspects. For example, second and seventh-grade books connect effectively to students' everyday lives by addressing cultural diversity in authentic ways. However, a lack of focus on promoting intercultural dialogue is observed in most of the books analyzed. These findings underline the importance of improving textbook content to develop intercultural competencies among students. It is essential that these materials adequately reflect cultural diversity and promote dialogue between cultures to ensure a more equitable education. It is recommended to implement effective teaching strategies to address interculturality in the design and development of educational materials.

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#### **RESUMEN**

##### **Palabras clave:**

libro de textos de inglés, educación intercultural, enseñanza del inglés, competencias interculturales.

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la alineación de los libros de texto de inglés utilizados en la educación primaria en Chile con normativas internacionales que promueven la diversidad cultural, el diálogo entre culturas y una sociedad inclusiva e intercultural. Se destaca la importancia de mejorar los contenidos de estos libros para garantizar

una educación más inclusiva y alineada con estándares internacionales de diversidad y derechos educativos.

La metodología empleada combina técnicas de análisis de contenido con un enfoque contextualizado en normativas internacionales relevantes. Se realizó un análisis de los textos utilizados en escuelas públicas de primero a octavo grado, utilizando informes, literatura especializada y directrices internacionales como marco de referencia, incluyendo documentos de la UNESCO, la CEPAL y los derechos del niño.

Los resultados indican que solo algunos textos cumplen adecuadamente con la inclusión de aspectos interculturales. Por ejemplo, los libros de segundo y séptimo grado establecen una conexión efectiva con la vida cotidiana de los estudiantes al abordar la diversidad cultural de manera auténtica. Sin embargo, se observa una falta de enfoque en promover el diálogo intercultural en la mayoría de los libros analizados.

Estos hallazgos subrayan la importancia de mejorar los contenidos de los libros de texto para desarrollar competencias interculturales entre los estudiantes. Es esencial que estos materiales reflejen adecuadamente la diversidad cultural y promuevan el diálogo entre culturas para garantizar una educación más equitativa. Se recomienda implementar estrategias didácticas efectivas para abordar la interculturalidad en el diseño y desarrollo de materiales educativos.

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## Introduction

The collaboration between the government of Chile and the UN in the field of education is active and aimed at improving education in the country, aligning with international commitments and the principles of sustainable development and human rights promoted by both the UN and the Chilean Ministry of Education (2018). This effort focuses on fostering social inclusion and recognition of cultural diversity, key elements for development, as highlighted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which works to address the diverse realities of multicultural societies (ECLAC, 2018).

Despite efforts to promote diversity, English textbooks in Chile do not adequately recognize diverse cultural realities, highlighting the need to address this gap. This study aims to verify the lack of alignment between English materials in basic education and international regulations, such as UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Chile in 1989 (n.d.). It is hoped that the findings will help define responses for the Chilean educational system to comply with these commitments and promote the integration of intercultural content in English textbooks.

The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (n.d.) establishes key principles for promoting interculturality in education, underlining the importance of inclusion, respect and appreciation of all cultures (UNESCO, 2006). In turn, the Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that educational materials reflect this diversity and promote respect between cultures, guaranteeing the right of the child to an education that fosters his or her development and ability to contribute to a society based on understanding and peace (*United Nations General Assembly*, 1989)

ECLAC, as a regional agency of the United Nations, addresses the issue of interculturality in education to promote economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2018). It highlights cultural diversity as an essential asset for the region and advocates policies and programs that promote interculturality in education, recognizing the importance of teacher training, the development of diversity-sensitive educational materials and the participation of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities in educational decision-making. Interculturality in education is presented as a means to build fairer and more democratic societies by promoting equality and valuing diversity as fundamental elements for regional development. This study is framed within this international context, seeking to identify and address deficiencies in the alignment of English textbooks used in Chilean primary education with these international standards and commitments. The results are expected to contribute to strengthening intercultural education in Chile, improving both the quality of English language teaching and its relevance in a multicultural world, and contributing to the empowerment of students in their role as future global citizens.

## Literature Review

The teaching of English in Chile is key to global communication and understanding of cultural boundaries, connecting the country with the English-speaking world. However,

research on the alignment of English texts with international standards is limited, highlighting the need to explore how these materials address the cultural complexities of the Chilean context. This study seeks to fill that gap by aligning English language teaching with international guidelines from the UN, UNESCO, ECLAC and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The goal is to ensure that the texts not only teach the language, but also promote an inclusive, equitable and culturally diverse education.

The choice of these regulations is based on their relevance to the Chilean educational context and their focus on fundamental aspects such as educational equity, the integral development of students and the promotion of cultural diversity. This table provides a solid framework for evaluating how English texts can foster a deeper and more respectful understanding of different cultures and perspectives. The literature review below will provide a broader theoretical context for this study, exploring studies related to curriculum alignment in English language teaching and highlighting the importance of considering international cultural and normative dimensions in the design and selection of educational materials in the Chilean context.

This transformation in education, according to Banks (2021), seeks to ensure equity and expand educational opportunities for all students. The integration of cultural content in the school curriculum is key to enriching the understanding of fundamental concepts in various disciplines. However, this integration must be smooth and consistent, avoiding any sense of artificiality or forcing, especially in areas less explored in terms of cultural diversity, where educators face additional challenges in finding and using cultural materials in a meaningful way. Thus, the development of educational materials that integrate interculturality in a harmonious way is essential to achieve an inclusive and representative education, which not only teaches language, but also universal values of respect and mutual understanding

Therefore, teachers should strive to carefully select the cultural content they use, ensuring that it is integrated coherently with the curriculum and relevant to the learning objectives. It is important to recognize that these opportunities are not evenly distributed across all disciplines. In areas less explored in terms of cultural diversity, educators may face additional challenges in finding and using cultural materials in meaningful ways (Banks, 2021, p. 44).

Therefore, educational programs should foster environments that respect and value diversity in all areas of knowledge, ensuring an inclusive education that reflects the diversity of our society. In addition, institutions are required to develop strategies that promote inclusion and strengthen learning spaces where students from different backgrounds and conditions coexist without discrimination, as established by the Inclusion Law No. 20,845 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Chile, 2015).

In multicultural societies, intercultural interaction is less common and cultural identity is threatened, according to Gómez and Hernández (2022). This highlights the importance of cultural pluralism and the need for ethical approaches in intercultural education. Teaching a second language, such as English, from an early age offers a valuable opportunity to promote respect for cultural diversity. English textbooks used in basic education play a key role in promoting a broader understanding of different cultures (Troncoso, 2018). This pedagogical approach not only promotes language learning, but also helps to compensate for the loss of cultural identity and to strengthen intercultural understanding in societies where interaction between different groups is less frequent.

A recent study by Lu et al. (2022) investigated cultural sustainability in English as a foreign language textbooks by analyzing the cultural representations present in pedagogical resources used in China for high school students. This research provides an overview of how educational texts reflect and promote cultural diversity. The article,

entitled "*The cultural sustainability in English as foreign language textbooks: Investigating the cultural representations in English language textbooks in China for senior middle school students*" examined how these educational materials portray different cultures and how these representations may influence students' cultural perceptions. The most salient result of this study was that it provided important insights into how textbooks can impact understanding and attitudes toward cultural diversity among high school students in China.

Within this framework, language learning involves developing the ability to express and construct social and cultural identities through the promotion of critical cultural awareness and global citizenship (Xiong, Feng, & Hu, 2022). In addition to using textbooks and learning resources as a means of transmitting cultural knowledge and values, this domain can benefit from prolonged and consistent efforts to explore products and processes related to curriculum, teaching patterns, materials, classroom interactions, assessments, production, consumption and interpretation of cultural and ideological values (p.13). Consequently, English textbooks in primary education emerge as key instruments for fostering intercultural competencies among students. However, the lack of knowledge about cultural values and phenomena among students is a significant challenge. It is essential that teachers and the management team of educational institutions working in this context receive training to address these sociocultural challenges and promote greater awareness within the international classroom (Van Rompay and Bartels and Geessink, 2023. p.14).

In this regard, Liang and Schartner (2022) noted that although students engage in altercations within small groups in the classroom, they also recognize the advantages of collaborating in multicultural teams. This occurs despite the fact that conflicts and disagreements often arise due to the confrontation of diverse cultures and values (p. 7).

On the other hand, Smaoui (2022) highlights the importance of explicitly including intercultural competence in the curricula and programs for teaching English as a foreign language. It also highlights the need to provide ample opportunities for hands-on learning to foster optimal development of this competency (p. 87). This is consistent with the recommendations of Li and Longpradit (2022), who point to the positive effect of formal learning on the development of intercultural sensitivity. Both authors stress the need to provide practical opportunities and adequate guidance from teachers to optimize the development of intercultural competencies among students (p. 15).

Similarly, Gedik Bal and Savas (2022) highlight the concerns of teachers in public schools regarding the cross-cultural teaching of English, emphasizing the need for more resources and professional development to foster cross-cultural competence. They also stress the importance of promoting critical cultural awareness among students.

These findings are consistent with research by Aski, Jiang, and Weintritt (2023), which demonstrates that integrating cross-cultural activities into language instruction in primary education can enhance students' intercultural development. This underscores the relevance of using appropriate pedagogical resources to foster intercultural competence in the language classroom.

## Method

This study used a qualitative approach based on content analysis to evaluate English texts in primary education in Chile, from 1st to 8th grade, using the latest edition published in 2018 to date. The representation of intercultural competencies in the materials of the Richmond publishing house and Ediciones SM Chile S.A. was analyzed, focusing on the identification of recurring themes and key patterns in relation to cultural

diversity. This qualitative method made it possible to understand how the texts address interculturality, helping to evaluate the inclusion of cultural diversity in educational resources.

In order to establish the categories and indicators for content analysis, a review of reports, specialized literature and guidelines issued by renowned international organizations has been carried out for the creation of a checklist to evaluate English texts, we chose to rely on recognized international frameworks, such as those provided by UNESCO, ECLAC and the rights of the child. These sources help us to address key issues related to educational quality, cultural diversity and student rights. In this way, we ensure a thorough and complete analysis of the texts, aligned with standards that have strong international support.

Below are the indicators derived from ECLAC (2018) guidelines to assess the compliance of texts with international standards.

### **Promotion of Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity**

The text should reflect the United Nations commitment to social inclusion and the recognition of cultural diversity as key elements for development. It should include content that raises awareness of social, ethnic, linguistic and cultural realities, promoting inclusive learning that forms students with a broader and more respectful vision of the world, prepared to interact in multicultural environments.

### **Intercultural Competency Development**

The text should facilitate the development of intercultural competencies among students. This implies the inclusion of content that promotes understanding, respect and appreciation of cultural differences, as well as the ability to interact effectively in intercultural contexts. In addition, it should foster critical thinking skills, allowing students to analyze and question stereotypes and prejudices, and learn to adapt to new perspectives. In this way, we contribute to the formation of individuals who are more empathetic and prepared to face the challenges of an increasingly diverse world.

### **Alignment with International Commitments**

The text must be aligned with the international commitments established in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2006) and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (n.d.). It should reflect the principles and values promoted by these declarations, such as respect for cultural diversity and the rights of children and youth. When reviewing the English textbook, it is important to assess whether it meets these indicators and whether it effectively contributes to the promotion of social inclusion, the recognition of cultural diversity and the development of intercultural competencies among students.

From UNESCO's principles on cultural diversity, we can identify the following indicators or guidelines to assess whether the English textbook meets international standards: These indicators include the equitable representation of diverse cultures, the use of inclusive and respectful language, and the inclusion of activities that encourage cultural exchange and critical reflection on global realities. It is essential that the text is not only an educational tool, but also a means to sensitize and prepare students to live in a multicultural world.

### **Inclusion, Respect, and Appreciation of all Cultures**

The text should reflect the principle of inclusion, respect and appreciation of all cultures, promoting understanding and mutual respect. In addition, it should highlight

cultural diversity as an enriching value for society, offering students the opportunity to identify with different cultures and to actively participate in a globalized world.

### **Adaptation and Respect for the Cultural Identity of the Students**

The text should be oriented to offer a quality education that respects and adapts to the cultural identity of the student body. It is essential that it recognizes the diversity of cultural experiences and provides content that not only reflects, but also respects the cultural identities of students. In this way, an inclusive learning environment is fostered where every student feels valued and represented

### **Imparting Cultural Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills**

The text should provide students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to participate actively in society, promoting intercultural understanding, empathy and the ability to relate effectively with people from different cultures. It should also encourage reflection on one's own identity and recognize the value of cultural diversity.

### **Fostering Respect, Understanding, and Solidarity**

The text should equip students with the cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to foster respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups, as well as nations. It should promote intercultural dialogue and the building of relationships based on mutual respect and collaboration.

Finally, based on the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the following indicators or guidelines can be drawn to review whether the English textbook meets international guidelines: These indicators include the equitable representation of all cultures and groups, the inclusion of content that respects and promotes the rights of children, and the creation of a learning environment that values and protects the dignity and opinions of each student.

### **Reflection of Cultural Diversity**

The text should reflect and promote respect for cultural diversity, including authentic and respectful representations of diverse cultures. In addition, it should offer students the opportunity to value traditions and customs of different groups, fostering harmonious coexistence and a global vision based on inclusion and empathy.

### **Promoting Respect and Tolerance**

The text should promote respect and tolerance towards different cultures, highlighting cultural diversity as an essential value for an inclusive and just society. In addition, it should help students overcome prejudices and stereotypes, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding in order to form responsible citizens committed to peace and equity.

### **Integrated Child Development**

The text should support the development of the whole child, promoting intercultural skills and competencies for peaceful coexistence in a multicultural world. In evaluating it, it is crucial to verify whether it contributes to the promotion of children's rights, especially the right to an education that respects cultural diversity and favors their development as individuals and members of society, encouraging them to be active agents in the construction of a more inclusive and just society.

## Results

The results obtained in the study reveal a diverse and complex reality regarding the integration of intercultural elements in the English study materials used in basic education in Chile. While some of these texts show efforts to incorporate intercultural aspects, considerable variability is evident in their level of adherence to international guidelines in this area.

It has been observed that many of the materials lack adequate representation of cultural diversity, which limits students' ability to understand and appreciate the variety of cultural experiences and perspectives present in the world. This lack of representation can not only lead to a biased or incomplete view of reality, but can also contribute to the perpetuation of cultural stereotypes and prejudices.

In addition, a deficiency has been identified in the effective promotion of interculturalism in English study materials. Although interculturality involves the recognition and appreciation of cultural differences, as well as the ability to interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds, many texts lack activities or exercises specifically designed to foster this skill among students. This lack of focus on interculturality can limit the development of intercultural skills vital for active participation in a globalized and diverse world.

**Table 1**

*Compliance with International Standards. Representation of Cultural Diversity*

Textos de estudio de inglés de Educación básica	Nivel de enseñanza							
	1° Básico	2° Básico	3° Básico	4° Básico	5° Básico	6° Básico	7° Básico	8° Básico
<b>Indicators</b>								
Cultures represented in the text				●			●	●
Variety of names, surnames and physical characteristics of the characters	●	●	●	●			●	●
Inclusion of events historical, traditional or customs of different cultures			●					
Mention of different languages spoken by the characters.								

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 2**

*Compliance with International Standards. Cultural Sensitivity*

Nivel de enseñanza
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Textos de estudio de inglés de Educación básica	1° Básico	2° Básico	3° Básico	4° Básico	5° Básico	6° Básico	7° Básico	8° Básico
<b>Indicadores</b>								
Evitación de estereotipos culturales o raciales.								
Presentación de conflictos interculturales con sensibilidad y empatía								
Representación positiva de las contribuciones culturales de diferentes grupos étnicos								
Reconocimiento de la diversidad dentro de cada cultura					●			●

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 3**

*Compliance with International Standards. Relevant and meaningful content*

Textos de estudio de inglés de Educación básica	Nivel de enseñanza							
	1° Básico	2° Básico	3° Básico	4° Básico	5° Básico	6° Básico	7° Básico	8° Básico
<b>Indicadores</b>								
Conexión del contenido con la vida cotidiana y las experiencias de los estudiantes	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Inclusión de ejemplos y casos que reflejen la realidad cultural y social de los estudiantes								
Incorporación de textos literarios, poesía o cuentos tradicionales de diversas culturas.								
Relación del contenido con eventos o problemas actuales a nivel local o global			●					●

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 4**

*Compliance with International Standards. Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue*

Textos de estudio de inglés de Educación básica	Nivel de enseñanza							
	1° Básico	2° Básico	3° Básico	4° Básico	5° Básico	6° Básico	7° Básico	8° Básico
Ejercicios o actividades que fomenten la discusión sobre temas interculturales							●	
Inclusión de preguntas que inviten a los estudiantes a reflexionar sobre sus propios prejuicios y experiencias culturales								
Promoción del trabajo en grupos heterogéneos donde se fomente el intercambio de ideas y perspectivas								
Incorporación de proyectos o actividades que requieran la colaboración entre estudiantes de diferentes orígenes culturales								

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 5**

*Alignment Compliance with International Regulations. Incorporation of Multimedia Resources*

Textos de estudio de inglés de Educación básica	Nivel de enseñanza							
	1° Básico	2° Básico	3° Básico	4° Básico	5° Básico	6° Básico	7° Básico	8° Básico
Uso de imágenes que representen la diversidad cultural de manera positiva y auténtica		●					●	
Videos o grabaciones de audio que muestran aspectos de la vida cotidiana en diferentes culturas								
Actividades interactivas en línea que permitan a los estudiantes explorar la							●	

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cultura y la historia de  
diferentes grupos étnicos

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Enlaces a sitios web o  
recursos en línea que  
proporcionen información  
adicional sobre la diversidad  
cultural.




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Source: Own elaboration

The representation of cultural diversity revealed a varied range of approaches in the texts analyzed. Some of these materials were able to appropriately reflect the richness and complexity of different cultures, offering an inclusive and respectful vision of diversity. However, other texts exhibited deficiencies in terms of the representation of different cultures, traditions and customs, suggesting a lack of sensitivity or awareness of the importance of addressing cultural diversity in a comprehensive manner in the educational context.

This finding underscores the urgent need to improve the inclusion of cultural diversity at all levels of basic education. By ensuring a more equitable and accurate representation of the diverse cultures present in society, mutual respect, empathy and understanding between different cultural groups can be fostered. In addition, an education that embraces cultural diversity in a meaningful way can contribute to building positive identities and strengthening the sense of belonging of all students, regardless of their cultural background.

The inclusion of cultural diversity in the school curriculum is not only an ethical and moral imperative, but also a necessity to prepare students to live in increasingly diverse and globalized societies. By recognizing and valuing the multiple cultural expressions present in the classroom, an enriching school environment can be cultivated in which diversity is celebrated as an asset for learning and personal growth. Ultimately, improving the representation of cultural diversity in educational materials can contribute significantly to building more inclusive, just and cohesive societies.

The results of cultural sensitivity highlight a significant problem in terms of the cultural sensitivity present in the texts analyzed. It became evident that many of these materials face difficulties in avoiding ingrained cultural stereotypes and negative representations of certain ethnic, cultural or social groups. This lack of sensitivity not only compromises educational quality, but can also have detrimental consequences by contributing to the perpetuation of prejudice and discrimination within the educational community and society at large. Improving cultural sensitivity in educational materials not only benefits students by promoting a more equitable and enriching education, but also contributes to building a society that is more just, inclusive and respectful of diversity.

The presence of cultural stereotypes in educational materials can significantly influence the perception and self-esteem of students belonging to marginalized or minority groups. Exposure to inaccurate or biased representations of their culture can lead to an internalization of negative stereotypes and a sense of exclusion or inferiority, which negatively affects their emotional well-being and academic performance.

It is imperative to address this problem urgently and systematically through a thorough review and significant improvement in cultural representation in educational materials. This involves not only eliminating harmful stereotypes, but also incorporating

authentic and diverse narratives and perspectives that reflect the complexity and richness of the different cultures present in society.

**Relevant and meaningful content:** Although most of the materials reviewed were able to establish a basic connection between the content and the cultural experiences of the students, a significant concern arose regarding the lack of inclusion of important historical events and cultural traditions in the materials. This omission can result in an impoverished and limited educational experience for students, as valuable opportunities to explore and understand cultural diversity in its historical and social context are lost.

Incorporating relevant historical events and cultural traditions into educational materials can significantly enrich students' cultural understanding. By contextualizing English language learning within a broader historical and cultural framework, students can develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of English-speaking cultures and their influence on the contemporary world.

In addition, the inclusion of historical events and cultural traditions can contribute to building a positive cultural identity in students by providing them with a sense of connection and belonging to their cultural heritage. This is especially relevant in educational contexts where students come from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as it allows them to share and celebrate their own cultural experiences within the classroom.

Also, incorporating relevant and meaningful content can help foster greater student interest and engagement in English language learning. By relating language content to culturally relevant topics and events, students' intrinsic motivation to actively participate in the learning process and authentically explore English language and culture can be increased.

**Promotion of intercultural dialogue:** Detailed observation revealed a significant lack of active promotion of intercultural dialogue in the educational materials analyzed. Although some texts succeeded in making superficial connections between students' diverse cultures, traditions, and experiences, the lack of activities or exercises specifically designed to foster cultural exchange and mutual understanding was notable.

The absence of a clear focus on promoting intercultural dialogue can have profound consequences on students' understanding of cultural diversity. Without regular opportunities to engage in open and respectful discussions about culture-related issues, students may hold simplistic or stereotypical views of the relationships between different cultural groups. This not only limits their ability to appreciate and value diversity, but can also contribute to the perpetuation of prejudice and discrimination in the classroom and beyond.

To address this deficiency, it is crucial to incorporate active and participatory pedagogical strategies that promote intercultural dialogue. This may include activities such as thematic discussions, cross-cultural collaborative projects, cultural exchanges and visits to diverse local communities. By providing students with hands-on opportunities to interact with people from different cultures and share their perspectives and experiences, a deeper and more respectful understanding of cultural diversity can be fostered.

In addition, it is important that educators receive training and support to effectively implement these activities in the classroom. This may include developing intercultural dialogue facilitation skills, raising awareness of cultural diversity issues, and incorporating educational resources that promote inclusion and mutual respect.

Ultimately, by prioritizing the promotion of intercultural dialogue in educational materials and teaching practice, a more inclusive and enriching school environment can be created that prepares students to live and work in an increasingly diverse and globalized world.

Incorporation of multimedia resources: The detailed analysis revealed a missed opportunity in terms of incorporating multimedia resources to reflect cultural diversity in an authentic and positive way in the educational materials examined. Despite the availability and versatility of multimedia resources, many of the texts analyzed did not take full advantage of these tools to represent cultural diversity in a meaningful way.

The lack of authentic and positive representation of cultural diversity in images, videos and other multimedia tools can have a noticeable impact on students' learning experience. These multimedia resources have the potential to enrich educational content by providing concrete and visually striking examples of cultural diversity in action. However, their underutilization can limit students' ability to meaningfully connect with and develop a deep and respectful understanding of diverse cultural experiences.

Improving the inclusion of images, videos and other multimedia tools that authentically and positively represent cultural diversity can have significant benefits for education. These resources can help students visualize and understand abstract concepts related to cultural diversity by providing visual contexts that reinforce concepts taught in the classroom. In addition, exposure to a variety of cultural perspectives through multimedia can foster the development of cross-cultural skills and promote a greater sense of empathy and understanding of cultural differences.

Therefore, it is essential that educational developers and educators recognize the potential of multimedia resources to support inclusion and cultural diversity in the classroom. This may involve the careful selection of images and videos that represent a wide range of cultures and experiences, as well as the creation of multimedia content specifically designed to effectively address cross-cultural issues.

Improving the incorporation of multimedia resources in an authentic and positive way contributes to a more inclusive education that prepares students to function in a globalized world. This approach highlights the importance of revising and updating English textbooks in Chilean basic education, ensuring an adequate representation of cultural diversity. It also seeks to promote cultural sensitivity and foster intercultural dialogue in the classroom, key elements for facing the challenges of a diverse society.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The evaluation of English study materials in primary education in Chile reveals a number of significant findings that demand immediate attention and action.

With regard to the representation of cultural diversity, the variability in the results underscores the urgent need for constant review and improvement of these educational resources. According to Regader (2024), Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory indicates

that individuals can adapt their environment according to their personal goals. This theory holds that the development of children in a specific cultural environment cannot be considered a universal standard and is not directly applicable to children from different cultures. An example of this is the case of a migrant student in a multicultural classroom, where the knowledge transmitted reflects the local culture, to which the student does not feel affiliated and lacks understanding; therefore, it is essential that textbooks are kept up to date and meet quality standards to ensure an effective and relevant education for students.

Adequate representation of the principles of intercultural education is essential to foster respect and understanding between different cultures. However, it is observed that only a few texts manage to adequately capture this cultural diversity. This finding highlights the need to improve the inclusion of different cultures at all levels of basic education.

On the other hand, although most of the texts represent a variety of character names, they omit their respective surnames. According to the article *TEl origen de los apellidos: el viaje a través de su historia* (Admin, 2023), his omission influences the identity and heritage of the characters, which could help students feel more identified and represented in educational materials. It is crucial to recognize that the surname has a meaning that varies significantly according to cultural, historical and personal context. In relation to physical characteristics, in the texts from first to fourth grade, a dark-skinned girl named Ruby is visualized, who interacts with the other characters. Respectfully.

However, the limited presence of historical events suggests an enrichment opportunity to broaden students' cultural understanding and contextualize English language learning.

In addition, the scarce information about the inclusion of traditions or customs from diverse cultures highlights a possible area for improvement. Incorporating this type of data can enrich students' cultural understanding and foster greater respect and appreciation for diversity. For example, in third grade alone, in the "*Story World*" lesson, students are invited to discuss in pairs a party in which children dress up for Halloween.

The section mentions that there is no reference to different languages spoken by the characters in any of the texts evaluated in the different grades. This omission is significant in the context of interculturality, since the inclusion of multiple languages would more accurately reflect the linguistic diversity present in society.

By representing the variety of languages spoken by the characters, educational materials could contribute to a deeper and more respectful understanding of different cultures and linguistic communities. In addition, this could promote appreciation of linguistic diversity and encourage the learning of additional languages, which is beneficial from both an educational and intercultural perspective. Therefore, the absence of this representation in the texts highlights an opportunity for improvement in the inclusion of linguistic diversity as an integral part of the intercultural approach to English language teaching.

In the context of cultural sensitivity, in terms of the avoidance of cultural or racial stereotypes, none of the texts analyzed met the alignment. This evidences a lack of sensitivity in the representation of different cultures and ethnic groups in English textbooks for basic education in Chile. The presence of cultural or racial stereotypes can contribute to perpetuating prejudice and discrimination, underscoring the urgency of reviewing and improving this aspect. According to Díez Gutiérrez and Rodríguez Fernández (2020), authors of the book "*Educación para el Bien Común: Towards a critical, inclusive and socially engaged practice*", the classroom is the context where students establish their social relationships, creating an environment where connections and

bonds are built. Collaboration in projects involves a dynamic in which aspirations, interests, motivations and needs converge, thus influencing the actions and decisions of the participants.

Similarly, in the presentation of intercultural conflicts with sensitivity and empathy, none of the texts analyzed achieved alignment on this indicator. Lack of sensitivity and empathy in the presentation of cross-cultural conflicts can limit students' understanding of cultural diversity and perpetuate simplistic or biased views of relationships between different cultural groups.

In terms of positive representation of cultural contributions from different ethnic groups, alignment was also not achieved. The lack of recognition and appreciation of the cultural contributions of different ethnic groups can contribute to their marginalization and invisibility in the educational context.

However, it is relevant to point out that only the fourth and seventh grade texts were able to meet the indicator of Recognition of diversity within each culture. This finding is evidenced by the question: "*Do you know someone from another country?*" (Do you know someone from another country?) and "*Do you have friends or family abroad?*" (Do you have friends or relatives abroad?) in the unit "*Where are you from?*" (Where are you from?), which interacts with the main countries that currently represent the majority of foreigners living in Chile, such as Peru, Colombia, Haiti and Venezuela.

However, this seems insufficient to exclude other units of equal importance, such as those related to meals or celebrations around the world, which are presented in English texts in other grades. This suggests that these textbooks could offer a more complete and nuanced representation of diversity within each culture, which would contribute to a deeper and more respectful understanding of cultural diversity among students.

Regarding relevant and meaningful content, most of the textbooks meet the alignment in this indicator, with the exception of the sixth grade. This indicates that most of the educational materials analyzed manage to establish a connection between the content and the students' daily lives, addressing relevant aspects of their lives outside of school. This is reflected in activities that include visits to museums, trips to the park, trips and outings with the family. This integration of everyday experiences contributes to more meaningful and relevant learning.

In relation to the inclusion of examples and cases that reflect the cultural and social reality of the students, none of the books in the analysis meet the alignment in this indicator. The absence of examples and cases that reflect the cultural and social reality of students may limit the ability of educational materials to be relevant and meaningful to students, as well as to promote a deeper understanding of their environment.

According to the incorporation of literary texts, poetry or traditional stories from diverse cultures, once again, no book meets the alignment in this indicator. Failure to include literary texts, poetry, or traditional stories from diverse cultures may limit students' exposure to cultural and literary diversity, as well as different cultural perspectives and traditions.

Relation of the content to current events or problems at a local or global level, Only the second grade and seventh grade books comply with the alignment in this indicator. This suggests that these educational materials manage to establish a connection between the content and current events or problems at a local or global level. For example, they address the issue of climate in different parts of Chile, Caracas and Peru, presenting a unit focused on nature where the problem of endangered animals in Chile becomes evident.

However, by focusing only on extinctions in Chile, other currently recognized extinctions in places that might have cultural relevance for some students are excluded. Integrating these extinctions could help students understand the relevance and

importance of the content in its current context, thus promoting a more complete and contextualized understanding of global environmental issues.

In relation to intercultural promotion and dialogue, only the seventh grade book showed alignment with this indicator, specifically, in the unit "*Natural Disasters*," this aspect was reflected in an activity that shows the geography of Peru and Ecuador, where students had the opportunity to listen to an audio related to the topic of natural disasters. This reveals a lack of focus on promoting intercultural dialogue through activities or exercises in most of the textbooks analyzed.

Regarding the inclusion of questions that invite students to reflect on their own cultural biases and experiences, none of the texts approached the guideline in this indicator. This lack of attention to self-reflection and cultural awareness in educational materials is notable.

Regarding the promotion of work in heterogeneous groups, where the exchange of ideas and perspectives is encouraged, no favorable responses were observed in relation to this indicator in the research. This suggests a lack of emphasis on promoting collaborative work and the sharing of cultural perspectives in textbooks.

Similarly, no positive responses were observed in relation to the incorporation of projects or activities that require collaboration between students from different cultural backgrounds. This indicates a missed opportunity to foster cross-cultural collaboration and teamwork in the classroom.

In relation to the use of images that represent cultural diversity in a positive and authentic way, it is observed that only the books of second grade and seventh grade addressed this aspect. This suggests that most textbooks are not adequately leveraging images to represent cultural diversity in an authentic and positive way, which is critical to promoting inclusive and respectful education.

No positive responses are mentioned in relation to the incorporation of videos or audio recordings showing aspects of daily life in different cultures. The lack of such resources can limit students' exposure to cultural diversity and restrict their understanding of the globalized world in which we live. Also, miss the opportunity to motivate students through images that remind them of their country of origin.

The absence of interactive online activities that allow students to explore the culture and history of different ethnic groups is also notable. Only the seventh grade book incorporated this type of interactive online activities. This suggests that most textbooks are not taking full advantage of the technological tools available to enrich students' learning experience and promote cross-cultural understanding.

Regarding links to websites or online resources that provide additional information on cultural diversity, it is observed that the seventh and eighth grade books included them. This inclusion is positive, as it allows students to access additional resources and broaden their understanding of cultural diversity.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of greater attention to intercultural education in English textbooks at the elementary school level in Chile. The results underscore the need to more effectively integrate cultural diversity and interculturality in these textbooks to comply with national and international guidelines and promote a more inclusive and equitable education, thus contributing to a more inclusive society.



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