

**The Content of Cultural Information on the English Speaking
Countries in the Secondary School Textbook *Smart Moves 2***

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Kulttuuritietouden oppiminen on tärkeä osa vieraan kielen opiskelua, sillä aitoon kulttuurienväliseen viestintään tarvitaan kieliopin ja sanaston hallinnan lisäksi tietoa ja ymmärrystä vieraasta kulttuurista. Pro gradu -tutkielmani käsittelee englanninkielisten maiden kulttuuritietouden sisältöä yläkoulun englannin tekstikirjassa *Smart Moves 2*. Tutkielman tehtävänä on selvittää millaista tietoa *Smart Moves 2* tekstikirja antaa kuudesta eri englanninkielisestä maasta, jotka ovat Yhdysvallat, Kanada, Yhdistynyt kuningaskunta, Irlanti, Australia ja Uusi-Seelanti. Tutkimuksen avulla pyritään selvittämään millaisen kulttuurisen representaation oppikirja antaa näistä maista ja miten ne eroavat toisistaan.

Tutkimusmenetelminä käytettiin sekä kvantitatiivisen että kvalitatiivisen tutkimuksen menetelmiä. Oppikirjan sisältöä analysoitiin jakamalla oppikirjan tekstit maittain kymmeneen eri aihekategoriaan. Tutkimus selvitti kuinka monta kertaa kukin aihe esiintyi kutakin maata kohden eli mikä oli suosituin aihekategoria kunkin maan kohdalla. Kvalitatiivinen osio muodosti tärkeimmän osan tutkimuksesta, sillä siinä kuvattiin yksityiskohtaisesti kymmenen eri aihekategorian avulla mitä kustakin maasta kerrottiin. Tutkimuksessa pohdittiin mm. ihmisten ja yhteiskuntien kuvailua, niiden monikulttuurisuutta ja etnisyyttä, negatiivisten tai positiivisten asioiden esittämistä sekä kuvituksen käyttöä kappaleissa.

Kaikki muut kohdemaat olivat esillä kirjan teksteissä paitsi Yhdistyneen kuningaskunnan Wales ja Kanada, johon viitattiin vain yhdessä kirjan laulussa. Useimmin esiintynyt aihekategoria Yhdysvaltojen kohdalla oli ihmisten ja jokapäiväisen elämän kuvailu, joka keskittyi kertomaan ns. tavallisten ihmisten elämästä. Lisäksi Yhdysvaltoja kuvattiin yhteiskunnan monikulttuurisuuden, etnisten vähemmistöjen ja epäkohtien kautta. Yllättävää tutkimustuloksissa oli se, että Yhdysvaltoja ei juurikaan kuvattu viihdeteollisuuden tai massakulttuurin kehtona vaan oppikirjassa pyrittiin antamaan realistisempaa kuvaa maasta. Australian ja Uuden-Seelannin kohdalla oppikirja keskittyi kertomaan yksityiskohtaisesti maiden luonnosta, eläimistä ja ilmastosta. Merkittävät turistikohdeetkin olivat luonnon nähtävyyksiä. Useimmin toistuva aihe Yhdistynyttä kuningaskuntaa koskevissa teksteissä oli populaarikulttuuri, joskin näihin liittyvät tekstit eivät olleet niinkään informatiivisia, sillä usein ne olivat lauluja, joiden yhteydessä oli lyhyesti esitelty jokin laulaja tai yhtye. Muita vähemmän esiintyviä aiheita oli kuvattu tarkemmin, kuten esimerkiksi Englannille tyypillistä yksityiskoulujärjestelmää ja Skotlannin erilaisia kulttuuriperinteitä. Irlantia käsittelevissä teksteissä esiintyi ihmisiin, kansallisiin symboleihin, juhliin ja historiaan sekä luontoon liittyviä aiheita.

Avainsanat: englannin kielen opetus, kulttuuri, kulttuurinen representaatio, oppikirjat, oppikirja-analyysi

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1 Introduction

One could say that language and culture go hand in hand. If we really wish to engage in a conversation and in the everyday lives of foreign people, we must know something about the target country and its culture. Therefore I think that teaching cultural knowledge is an important part of language learning and teaching. We do not learn only language and vocabulary, but we also need to learn about the culture of those countries where the foreign language is spoken.

I started to think about the topic for my pro gradu thesis when I was teaching a beginner's group at Pirkkala Adult Education Center. During my first year as an English teacher there I realised that in addition to learning the language the students were also keen to hear about British culture, life and people and all the peculiarities and differences compared to the Finnish way of life. Whenever the topic allowed, I would include some information, through personal experience, on Britain's culture in my lessons. As I needed to find something interesting to research for my pro gradu thesis I came up with the idea of studying foreign language textbooks and their country-specific cultural content. I wanted to find out to what extent the texts introduce the target language countries and cultures and what kind of content there is on each country. At this stage I read about the Durham project that investigated French language teaching over an eight-month period, revealing that the teachers' own personal experience in terms of acting as a knowledge source to pupils about France was quite limited, thus making the textbook extremely significant in terms of teaching cultural content (Byram, Esarte-Sarries, Taylor and Allatt 1991, 112). Although it is the duty of the teacher to provide experience that the textbook cannot offer, the role of the textbook remains important for "[t]he textbook provides an overall structure to the information children receive about the language and culture. . . ." (ibid., 112-113). This further encouraged me to investigate foreign language textbooks.

The role of culture in foreign language teaching has produced many research findings before this and has occupied many researchers' minds. According to Byram, Morgan and Colleagues (1994, 11) “. . . a thorough *understanding* of the language can only be gained by understanding the cultural context which has produced it”. Byram (1989, 4) also talks about how cultural learning, as part of language learning, “broadens the horizons”. These are just some of the reasons that support the inclusion of cultural studies as part of foreign language teaching.

This pro gradu thesis examines the cultural content of English speaking countries in an 8th grade English language textbook, *Smart Moves 2*. The focus is on providing a representation of the countries in terms of what kind of topics and content there is on each of the target countries. The analysis focuses on Kachru's (quoted in Kachru and Nelson 2000, 13) Inner Circle countries, which are the USA, the UK and Ireland, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. The thesis begins with mapping out the concept of culture and examining the role of culture in foreign language teaching as well as looking into what is said about culture as part of language studies in the Finnish National Curriculum. The thesis then moves on to the introduction of the data, followed by methodology and research questions. The actual analysis is divided into quantitative and qualitative parts, and as part of the latter there is a detailed presentation of the content by country and topic. The cultural content is examined by labeling each country-specific text into its own topic category and as a result of this I will be able to say what kind of content there is with each of the countries. The analysis is followed by a discussion of the kind of cultural portrayal that the information suggests to its reader, and finally, the conclusion. Hopefully this study will encourage language teachers to really think about the importance of cultural content in foreign language teaching and help them pay attention to this particular aspect in their daily teaching work.

2 The concept of culture

One could argue that there is not one unambiguous definition of culture but several definitions, depending on the era and branch of science where culture is considered. Also, different scholars emphasise different aspects when they try to give definitions for the concept of culture. According to Roberts (2009, 15), “*culture* has been understood in terms of belonging and otherness as if people felt part of one group and so separate from another”. Weaver (quoted in Finkbeiner 2009, 151) notes that “[c]ulture has often been referred to as ‘hidden dimension’”, meaning that culture is actually invisible. Kachru (1999, 77) says that “[c]ulture is not static; it evolves as people conduct their daily lives”. According to Hall (1967, 31), “[f]or anthropologists culture has long stood for the way of life of a people, for the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things”.

Kramsch (2000) provides several ways of viewing culture. One way to consider culture is “to contrast it with nature”, in that “culture refers to what has been grown and groomed” as opposed to “what is born and grows organically” (Kramsch 2000, 4). Kramsch (ibid., 6) also refers to the “double effect of culture”, in that “culture both liberates people from oblivion, anonymity and the randomness of nature, and constrains them by imposing on them a structure and principles of selection”. Thus the effect of culture is, at the same time, liberating as well as constraining. Culture can also be seen as “common ways of viewing the world” among members of the same social group, such as family or professional affiliation, for instance. What unites the group is shared attitudes, beliefs and values, and the effect of these can be seen in the similar behaviour of the members of that group, for instance in using the same linguistic code in verbal communication. In other words, culture can be reflected in the way we communicate. For Kramsch, there is yet another way of viewing culture: one that examines culture from a historical

aspect, implying that “cultural ways” have evolved, developed and become fixed over time, thus they have become behaviour that is considered natural. According to this view, “[t]he culture of everyday practices draws on the culture of shared history and traditions”. This view of culture puts emphasis on material creations, such as technological accomplishments, historical monuments, and works of art and popular culture and the way these reflect historical development. In this view, culture is material. To these two views presented above Kramsch refers to as “the social (synchronic) and the historical (diachronic)” layers of culture. (Kramsch 2000, 6-8.)

King (1991, 2; also quoted in Alasuutari and Ruuska 1999, 54) refers to the traditional way of dividing culture to an “anthropological” idea of culture, such as way of life, values and beliefs and to a “humanistic” idea of culture, such as arts and media – however, according to King, this divide does not really work (*ibid.*). A similar type of distinction can be detected in Hofstede’s idea of culture. Hofstede (1991, 5) divides the notion of culture into “culture in the narrow sense” (“culture one”) and culture as a much broader sense, “culture two”. According to this, the narrow definition contains the idea of culture in the sense of “civilization or refinement of the mind” and “in particular the results of such refinement, like education, art, and literature” (*ibid.*). The broader definition, commonly used by social anthropologists, sees culture “as mental software” that includes “all those patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting” that refine the mind (*ibid.*). Moreover, this “culture two” definition also includes the “ordinary and menial things in life: greeting, eating, showing or not showing feelings, keeping a certain physical distance from others, making love, or maintaining body hygiene” (*ibid.*).

Despite the various aforementioned definitions of culture, there are certainly problems in defining what actually is seen as the culture of a certain country. As Lado (1986, 53) notes,

“[t]he individual acts of behavior through which a culture manifests itself are never exactly alike. Each act is unique, and the very same act never occurs again”. However, as the aim of the thesis is to provide a cultural representation of the English speaking countries as seen in the textbook *Smart Moves 2*, one has to resort to some kind of “labeling” when examining the things, habits, traditions, people and phenomena of the different countries. This thesis does not follow any particular definition of culture as such, but combines areas and aspects of different definitions. Culture in the textbook *Smart Moves 2* is dealt with through categorisation, dividing culture into different categories (areas) of culture. The study demands this kind of approach as I will have to be able to label each text into a category in order to be able to provide some sort of statistical data on what kind of cultural matters are discussed with each country in question. However, the different culture categories are then opened up by providing a detailed description of the content of information that is given on each country, in each category. A thorough description of the process is given in section 5.4.

3 Culture in foreign language teaching

If one considers the history of foreign language textbooks it is clear that culture has not always been part of their content. Before the 1950s textbooks mainly focused on linguistic objectives (Risager 1991, 181). However, from there on textbooks have had “an increasingly important cultural role as well” (ibid.). It goes without saying that in order to successfully communicate in a foreign language with someone from the target culture, one must also pay attention to other matters than mere grammar. One must take into consideration people’s background and culture in certain communicative situations. Social rituals such as gift giving and receiving, giving and accepting compliments, different celebrations and occasions, social visits and behaviour such as

touching require different codes of behaviour in different cultures. On some occasions behaviour is indeed culturally bound. In order to know why foreign people act in a certain way – as well as in order to know how oneself should act in a new situation in a new environment, with new people - one should have some knowledge about foreign cultures and their special characteristics. Something as simple as giving a compliment can vary between cultures and can cause misunderstandings (Wolfson 1986, 119). In some cultures, such as in America, complimenting is very frequent and in other cultures, such as in Indonesia, it hardly exists at all (ibid.). Intercultural communication is more often than not the main reason for learning a new language. Therefore teaching culture goes hand in hand with teaching a foreign language. Over time language teaching has shifted its focus from teaching grammar to teaching communicative language skills. Cultural knowledge, cultural awareness and intercultural communication are concepts that are closely linked with foreign language teaching today and these concepts are discussed in this section of the thesis.

3.1 Linking language and culture in foreign language teaching

Several scholars have identified and explained the importance of linking language and culture in foreign language teaching. Cortazzi and Jin (1999, 197) note that “learning a foreign language is not simply mastering an object of academic study but it is more appropriately focused on learning a means of communication”. As communication in real life situations is always part of some context and “because culture is part of most contexts”, communication is therefore culture bound (ibid.). Buttjes (1991, 8) traces the role of culture in foreign language teaching to different motives. Firstly, there is the pragmatic motive that prepares language learners for international contacts and communication, often in certain fields such as trade and commerce (ibid.).

Secondly, there is also the educational motive that points to learner's "enrichment through the acquisition of a wider world-view and through an access to the non-native cultural capital" (ibid.). According to Buttjes (ibid.), the modern language reform movement revolutionised European language teaching, preparing the way for today's discussion on mediating culture and language in foreign language teaching. The modern language reform enabled the modern languages' entry in British and German school curricula (although first only within elite education) (ibid.), and shifted the focus of texts used for language teaching so that they were not considered mere resources of grammar, but "as sources of 'causal knowledge' (Maniacs quoted in Buttjes 1991, 9) about culture" (ibid.).

According to Byram (1991, 18) "to teach culture without language is fundamentally flawed and to separate language and culture teaching is to imply that a foreign language can be treated in the early learning stages as if it were self-contained and independent of other sociocultural phenomena". In foreign language and culture learning Byram (1991, 18) underlines the importance of the first language in that "it is misguided to teach language structures as if there will be no transfer from the first language". Byram (ibid.) continues that "[e]qually it would be short-sighted to assume that the first language cannot be used to help learners grasp aspects of the foreign culture". Byram (ibid., 20) presents a model combining language and culture teaching, including the use of the learner's mother tongue:

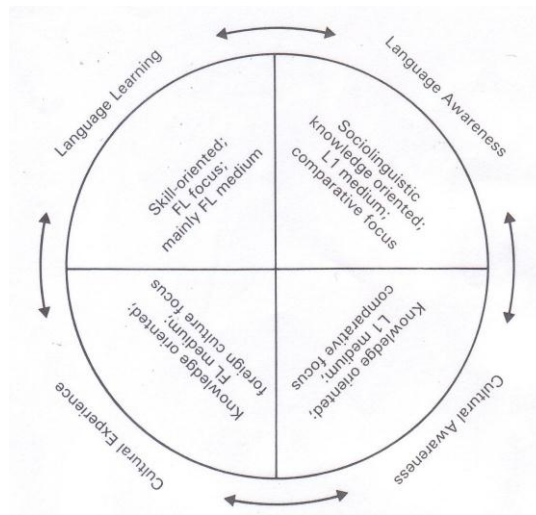


Figure 1: The language and culture teaching process (Byram 1991, 20)

This model, where each quarter supports the adjacent quarter (represented by the arrows), consists of a circle of techniques and experience. The Language Learning aspect involves language learning via skills-acquisition. The Language Awareness quarter emphasises the sociolinguistic aspect and language as a social and cultural phenomenon, thus linking the acquisition of language skills with understanding the foreign culture. The Cultural Awareness segment consists of the study of the foreign language's culture in the learner's mother tongue, with a comparative technique, focusing on intercultural competence. Lastly, the Cultural Experience sector entails direct experience of the foreign culture in the foreign language, with the foreign culture in focus. Examples of this would be, for instance, exchange or family holidays, educational visits and any kind of contact with native speakers. Byram calls this "linguistic survival in a foreign environment". (Byram 1991, 19-20, 22-23, 26-28.) The time and effort that should be spent on each aspect depends on the stage of the learner and on the period of learning (ibid., 28).

Kramersch (1993) gives a useful example that, in my mind, demonstrates a stirring of cultural awareness in that one is able to look outside one's own culture, becoming aware of another culture that is different from one's own. A female student from a school of engineering in the United States spent some time in a German family in Germany. When she told the family that her ambition in life was to start her own engineering company the family responded to that with laughter as they did not understand how a woman could ever have her own engineering company. She realised that in German culture this kind of a challenge was viewed as utterly impossible whereas in America it was not. Her initial reaction was that she was offended, but she understood the cultural difference in viewing challenges in the two countries. This is the very reason why cultural knowledge is an important part of foreign language studies in any school. (Kramersch 1993, 15, 20-21.)

When considering the relationship between language and culture, Kramersch (2000, 3) identifies three aspects in this connection: language not only “expresses cultural reality”, but it also “embodies cultural reality” as well as “symbolizes cultural reality”. Culture can be seen as “bringing order and predictability into people's use of language” (ibid., 6). This is done, for instance, through different forms of acculturation, such as rules on etiquette and social behaviour, expressions of politeness and other cultural conventions.

Lantolf (1999, 29), on the other hand, looks at second culture acquisition from the cognitive aspect and asks if it is possible “to become cognitively like members of other cultures; that is, can adults learn to construct and see the world through culturally different eyes?”. This phrasing of a question sees “the issue of second culture acquisition as a cognitive process” (ibid., 30). For instance, lexical concepts are organised differently in different cultures, thus “conceptual thought varies across cultures” (ibid., 33). Not all entities exist in all the cultures and

they do not necessarily mean the same things (ibid., 33-34). According to Lantolf, the mind is organised “in culturally specific ways” (ibid., 35). In the light of this aspect, one could say that when it comes to words, entities and concepts people from different cultures may associate them with different things. This can potentially lead to misunderstandings and communication difficulties, and hence cross-cultural understanding is the key to overcoming these kinds of problems. Also metaphors and “metaphorical thinking” (ibid., 42) can reveal how we see and structure the world. Lakoff and Johnson (2003, 7-8, also quoted in Lantolf 1999, 42) claim that utterances such as *Thank you for your time* or *You’re wasting my time* refer to the fact that in an American society time “is a valuable commodity”, in other words, “time is money”. In my opinion this is an extreme example of interpreting culture-bound messages. In my analysis I will not go into such detail and analyse each metaphoric utterance and its meaning, although I will provide a detailed analysis of the content of the texts in the *Smart Moves 2* textbook.

Other views on combining foreign language learning with culture include Byram’s (1989, 25) concept of “otherness”, which means that one of the aims of foreign language teaching is to “introduce learners to and help them understand ‘otherness’”. When communicating in a foreign language one is in communication with people who come from a different cultural background than one’s own, thus cultural knowledge is crucial in successful communication. In addition to enforcing the understanding of otherness, cross-cultural understanding can also affect attitudes. In their research report on the Durham project Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor (1991, xii) note that cultural learning “results in some beneficial effect on learners’ attitudes towards foreign people”. Moreover, Yli-Renko (1993, 5) shares this idea of affecting attitudes of language learners. In her study Yli-Renko (ibid.) emphasises that it is important to identify the cultural differences when teaching languages as that way learners can understand their own behaviour –

which is often culture-related – and also, they can learn to obtain a more tolerant attitude towards foreign cultures and habits. According to Yli-Renko (ibid.), “[t]o become aware of the influence of culture on human behavior requires much knowledge of small details, making such learning a long process”. This is exactly why foreign language teaching should pay great attention to the cultural content in the teaching process. Valdes (1986, 2) draws attention to two things as according to him similarities and contrasts in the person’s native language and the target language are useful in learning the new language, however, also “cultural similarities and contrasts, once identified and understood, can be used to advantage”. Furthermore, Valdes (ibid.) goes as far as believing that successful language learners can actually adopt the “mindset” of the native speakers, accepting both the language and the culture. Kohonen and Kaikkonen (2002, ix) emphasise the fact that “[f]oreign language education has a central role in preparing people to live and work in the globalizing and multicultural world”. I see this as the ultimate goal of any education in schools: to prepare pupils for the life in the real world.

3.2 Intercultural communication and competence

The focus of my thesis is not to investigate to what extent the texts in the *Smart Moves 2* textbook teach intercultural skills (this would require the analysis of the exercises in the exercise book). Nevertheless, becoming an intercultural speaker is one of the key trends in learning English as a foreign language today and it is one of the main aims of teaching cultural information of different countries. Therefore the topic of intercultural communication and competence should be touched upon to an extent.

“We have to learn foreign languages *and* the cultures of the speakers of these languages, if we want to be successful in international communication” (Meyer 1991, 137). In other words,

linguistic competence alone is not enough for fluent communication. In addition to linguistic knowledge, a language learner requires what one can call intercultural competence. This is achieved through teaching culture. Meyer (ibid.) provides a definition for intercultural competence as follows:

Intercultural competence, as part of a broader foreign speaker competence, identifies the ability of a person to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures. Adequacy and flexibility imply an awareness of the cultural differences between one's own and the foreign culture and the ability to handle cross-cultural problems which result from these differences. Intercultural communication includes the capacity of stabilising one's self-identity in the process of cross-cultural mediation, and of helping other people to stabilize their self-identity.

In short, one can define intercultural communicative competence as “an individual's ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries” (Byram 1997, 7). Some scholars use the native speaker as a model for communicative competence, however there are problems with this view: firstly, it sets an impossible objective/goal, meaning that one is to fail in achieving the target and secondly, it implies that the learner should separate from one's own language and culture in order to acquire new linguistic and sociocultural competence (ibid., 11-12). Surely this is not the purpose of fluent foreign language communication. Byram and Zarate (quoted in Kramsch 1998, 16-17) propose that instead of trying to achieve the level of the native speaker, a language learner should strive for becoming an ‘intercultural speaker’ – thus there is a “shift from the native speaker norm to an intercultural speaker model”.

Judd (1999, 152) points out that “[i]t is necessary to learn how to understand and create language that is appropriate to the situations in which one is functioning, employing the proper illocutionary patterns in accordance with the sociocultural parameters of the specific

situation. . . .” One can argue that in some situations verbal communication is culturally bound so in order to be able to produce proper linguistic communication that is in line with the sociocultural framework and does not offend any party, one should be aware of the cultural communication patterns and rules. Judd (*ibid.*, 153-154) refers to “pragmatic misinterpretations”, which means that words can be misunderstood when they are transferred from one language to another (Thomas quoted in Judd, *ibid.*, 153). For example, the custom of complimenting differs in American and Venezuelan cultures: when Judd was invited to some visits after his lectures in Venezuelan universities, he was actually being complimented on his lectures instead of actually being invited, the point which he at first misunderstood (Judd 1999, 153). Thomas (quoted in Judd 1999, 153) refers to this type of misinterpretation as “sociopragmatic failure”. Judd (1999, 154) points out that “knowledge of speech acts and their function is a basic component of communicating in a second language”. One can argue that in the previous example a deeper cultural knowledge and understanding, in other words “cultural competencies” (Rose 1999, 167) could have prevented this miscommunication.

Valdes (1986, 49) draws attention to the importance of spotting similarities and differences between two different cultures in the process of achieving intercultural competence.

Valdes (*ibid.*) argues as follows:

The comparison of other cultures with the language being taught opens great vistas for the teacher and provides a basis for better understanding of persons from other backgrounds, as well as supplying new insights into approaches to teaching a second language. Obviously no one can learn everything about all cultures – no one knows everything about one’s own culture – but even rather sweeping generalities, so long as they are not false, may be a help, if one avoids the pitfall of stereotyping and does not expect all members of a culture to fit the generality.

However, surely all the theorists do not mean to say that the responsibility of teaching foreign cultures and intercultural communication is the sole responsibility of foreign language teachers. Accordingly Byram (1997, 3) notes that the teaching of the intercultural communicative competence does not need to rest solely on the shoulders of foreign language teaching as other subjects such as geography and literature can also guide learners in this. There is further evidence that fields other than language teaching benefit from intercultural communication skills. Yli-Renko (1993, 1) notes the pressing need for intercultural communication in today's world of multinational businesses, international markets and the European integration. Yli-Renko (ibid.) argues the case for intercultural competence as follows:

Not only with such current economic and political interaction but also with the mobility of countless immigrants, refugees and numerous others such as students, sportsmen, tourists, researchers, missionaries all over the world, multilingualism and knowledge of other countries and culture have become of key importance. This intercultural skill and knowledge are considered to be the basis for international understanding and even for maintenance of peace on earth.

In other words, intercultural communication is not something that only foreign language teachers should be interested in, but something that benefits almost all societies, industries and their people around the world.

Byram and Fleming (1998, 9) refer to something called the “intercultural speaker”: “someone who has a knowledge of one or, preferably, more cultures and social identities and has a capacity to discover and relate to new people from other contexts for which they have not been prepared directly”. However, it is a process and one will continue to develop one's capacity as the intercultural speaker – it is not something that is completed at some point (ibid.).

However, there is a pitfall in the process of intercultural communication that one should pay attention to. François Mariet (1991) in her paper about interculturalising the French

educational system expresses the possible risks that underlie intercultural teaching. According to Mariet (ibid., 90), the risks include “the folklorisation of the cultural mind”, meaning that the teacher has the desire to please the students and thus goes along with the preconceptions about a culture. Another possible pitfall is the superficial treatment of social facts, especially if the teacher uses the media as a resource for teaching material as foreign language teachers can often “overestimate their understanding of the foreign culture” (ibid., 91). Mariet (ibid.) therefore stresses that teachers should have training in sociology as well as scientific training in order to avoid “spontaneous evidence, lazy ways of thinking, and the prejudices and partisanship of the teacher”. According to Mariett (ibid.), “[t]eachers should be conscious that an intercultural approach requires that affirmations be made with prudence unless proof is available (proof in scientific sense)”.

3.3 The content of cultural knowledge in foreign language textbooks

There are different types of knowledge that a language learner is and should be exposed to in the process of learning language and culture. Risager (1991, 191) talks about how textbooks are “gradually acquiring a new role as instruments of culture teaching” in that the textbooks should “present the country in a nut-shell”. However, Cortazzi and Jin (1999, 196, 204, 209) point out that there can be textbooks where the target culture is not represented and instead, the textbook can feature a number of English-speaking countries (aimed at international target cultures) or even non-English-speaking countries (textbooks based on source cultures).

There are different theories on what the cultural knowledge is, i.e. what is the content of cultural information that is taught in language classes. According to one view, the information has focused on cultural information that consists of statistical information such as structures of

institutions and different facts, highbrow information such as literature and arts and lowbrow information which includes things like food and everyday life (Kramsch 1993, 23-24). This view focuses on the facts of the culture (ibid., 24). Another direction of cultural teaching, as part of foreign language learning, has focused on placing culture in “an interpretive framework” that aims to understand “foreign reality”: “[l]anguage learners are given a key to interpret phenomena in the target culture” (ibid.). A third view has focused on combining both facts and meaning, however, seeing culture “as a place of struggle between the learner’s meanings and those of native speakers”.

Based on the findings from a questionnaire directed at foreign language teachers, Byram and Risager (1999, 92-93, 195) identified some top themes that teachers considered to be appropriate topics on foreign cultures in foreign language teaching:

- history
- daily life and routines
- shopping, food and drink
- youth culture (e.g. fashion, music)
- school and education
- geography and regions
- family life
- social and living conditions
- festivities and customs
- ethnic relations, racism
- tourism and travel
- working life and unemployment.

There are more views on this. Byram et al. (1994, 50) present some guidelines for learning language and culture, according to which “learners need to engage actively with alternative interpretations of the world, meeting phenomena which express some of the shared meanings of the foreign culture and which they can compare and contrast with their own”. In addition to this, “both taken-for-granted, routine knowledge and conscious knowledge of the shared cultural

world held by the foreign group has to be made accessible to learners so that they can adjust to routine behavior and allusive communication” (ibid.). Also, learners should have access to cultural institutions and artefacts, such as literature, film, history, politics, social welfare and education (ibid.).

When it comes to cultural knowledge, what does the content of cultural learning consist of? Byram et al. (1994, 51-52) present the minimum content of cultural learning as follows:

- **social identity and social groups** (different from national identity, i.e. social class, regional identity, ethnic minority, professional identity)
- **social interaction** (conventions of verbal and non-verbal behavior in situations of social interaction)
- **belief and behavior** (firstly, routine and taken-for-granted actions within a social group, and the moral and religious beliefs that are included in them, and secondly, routines of behavior of daily life, not seen as significant markers of the identity of the group)
- **socio-political institutions** (institutions of the state that provide a framework for routine life within the state, such as health-care, law and order, social security, local government etc.
- **socialization and the life-cycle** (institutions of socialization such as families, schools, employment, religion, military service and the ceremonies that mark passage through stages of one’s social life)
- **national history** (periods and events, both historical and contemporary, that are significant to the nation and its identity)
- **national geography** (geographical aspects inside the national boundaries that are important in members’ perceptions of their country and geography related information that is not necessarily significant to members but essential to outsiders in intercultural communication)
- **national cultural heritage** (cultural artefacts that are embodiments of country’s national culture, from past and present, e.g. Shakespeare in Britain and the Impressionists in France as well as Agatha Christie in Britain and Biermann’s songs in Germany)
- **stereotypes and national identity** (e.g. German and English notions of what is typically German and English national identity and comparisons of them, symbols of national identities and stereotypes, for instance famous monuments and people).

The topics and categories presented here act as the starting point for my own categorisation of the cultural content in the textbook, which is discussed in more detail in section 5.3. I will also

return to these in the discussion part of my analysis findings in order to see to what extent *Smart Moves 2* included the above themes.

3.4 The challenges of teaching culture

Teaching culture is not a simple task as it is easy to resort to stereotype style images and representations of culture. For many pupils foreign language textbooks can still be the first source of information in terms of country-specific cultural information. Hence the content of cultural information in the school textbooks is extremely important. The cultural information can, sometimes, include stereotyping of people and their behaviour. This can have negative effects in that it provides a prejudiced and predetermined images of countries and their people, but when dealt with correctly, stereotypes can be helpful in defining and identifying different countries and cultures. Kramsch (2000, 80) refers to stereotypes such as “French chic”, “German know-how” and “American casualness” as “shorthand symbols” that “help draw cultural boundaries between Us and Others in order to appreciate the uniqueness of both”. In her earlier work Kramsch (1993, 207) discusses the difficulty of teaching culture because “myth and reality both contradict and reinforce one another”.

How can one determine what is cultural or authentic in a culture? Kramsch (2000, 80) points out that “what is authentic in one context might be inauthentic in another” due to different variables such as age, gender, social status, ethnicity or race. When looking at things from this perspective, can one even say what is stereotypical in general? However, the purpose of this thesis is not to say what is English, Canadian or American culture but to provide a representation of those countries and their cultures that is given in this particular textbook.

There are further challenges in teaching foreign cultures to pupils. As culture is something that changes and fluctuates over time it is difficult to give a tenable and static account of a country's culture. Harklau (1999, 110) notes that teachers are often asked to explain the culture of the target language's country and the difficulty of it lies in the fact that "they must in a sense reify their own interpretation of culture, making static something that is in constant flux, and making unified something that is inherently multiple". Another dilemma facing the field of teaching foreign languages and cultures is the "mainstream" and "travelogue" representations of culture (Kramsch quoted in Harklau 1999, 122). Culture is depicted according to the "mainstream ways of thinking held by mainstream citizens" and culture is represented as "picturesque, a sightseeing curiosity" (Kramsch quoted in Harklau 1999, 122). Harklau (1999, 123) states that "[t]hese travelogues suggest that there is nothing more to crossing cultural boundaries than knowing what to pack, how to dress, what to see, and what to eat".

When it comes to foreign language textbooks, foreign cultures are often presented in a positive light. This can lead to pupils wondering that to what extent is this kind of representation of the countries and their cultures realistic. Risager and Andersen (quoted in Byram 1989, 16) warn about the one-sided representation of foreign cultures, using a French textbook as an example: people in this book have no financial or housing problems, all the relationships are very friendly, there are no conflicts between people, social or political problems do not exist, there is no unemployment nor are there different ethnic minorities present. This leads to the distortion of the culture and to the exaggeration of the typical and stereotypical image of the foreign country, culture and its people (*ibid.*). Byram (*ibid.*, 17) stresses the importance of finding a way to represent foreign life in the textbooks that steers clear of "the pitfalls of family idyll and of superficial tourism". I will return to this aspect in the analysis part of my thesis as one of my

aims is to examine whether the cultural representation of the countries is at all realistic, in the sense that are there any evils of the society present.

3.5 The cultural content of foreign language teaching in the Finnish National Curriculum

The objectives of foreign language teaching are more than just linguistic (Byram, Esarte-Sarries, Taylor and Allatt 1991, 103). In addition to the objectives for learning linguistic structures and communication strategies, the Finnish National Curriculum specifies certain objectives concerning the learning of the cultural content of the English speaking world. According to the Finnish National Curriculum, one of the key objectives in English teaching is to increase the pupils' "ability to act according to the demands of the target language" (National Core Curriculum 2004, 141). The Curriculum contains a separate section for *Cultural skills*, presenting the following learning outcomes (ibid., 142):

The pupils will

- get to know the target language culture and come to understand it against their own cultural backgrounds
- learn to communicate and act in normal day-to-day situations in a manner acceptable in the subject culture
- learn to be aware of the culturally bound natures of values.

In terms of the core contents teaching should cover "situations and subject areas from the perspectives of the language regions of the pupil's language and the language being studied" (ibid.). These include subjects such as pastime and leisure, travel, public services, study, work, business life, sustainable development, health and welfare as well as the media (ibid.). I will return to these topics towards the end of the thesis as I will discuss which topics were included in the *Smart Moves 2* textbook.

4 Data

This chapter introduces the secondary school textbook *Smart Moves 2* and defines which sections in the textbook are relevant for the analysis and which I chose to leave out. In addition to this, I will also outline the reasons for choosing this particular textbook for analysis. When appropriate, hereafter the textbook *Smart Moves 2* is also referred to as SM2 and the *Smart Moves 2 Teacher's File*, which I consulted, is referred to as SM2TF.

4.1 Introduction to the textbook *Smart Moves 2*

The object of my analysis is the 8th grade English textbook *Smart Moves 2*. The reason for choosing this particular textbook series over others is that it is one of the two most recent English textbook series used in secondary schools in Finland. I did consider choosing the most recent textbook series, *Spotlight*, for the analysis, but as I was more familiar with the *Smart Moves* series, having used it in my teaching, I decided to choose it. Also, as my initial idea was to analyse all the textbooks from all three grades, I did not want to choose *Spotlight* as the third textbook (for the 9th grade) was still in the process of being written when I started my work for the thesis.

My initial idea was to analyse the entire *Smart Moves* series, that is all the three textbooks (for 7th, 8th and 9th grade), but due to the in-depth approach in the analysis I decided to limit my study to one textbook only. The *Smart Moves 2* textbook introduces several English speaking countries and contains a considerable amount of country-specific cultural information. The authors of the textbook, Tarja Folland, Arja Haavisto, Tiina Huohvanainen, Arto Nieminen, Karolina Sveiby and Marjut Vaakanainen write in the beginning of the textbook that “the texts are your ticket to the lifestyles of different countries” (SM2, 3). The most important thing that

contributed to selecting particularly the 8th grade textbook for analysis was that it included the most amount of country-specific cultural information out of the three textbooks of the *Smart Moves* series.

4.2 Defining the data for analysis

The *Smart Moves 2* textbook includes different sections: chapters and texts inside the chapters, *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* and *Smart Talk* pages, extra reading material on *Reader* pages and towards the end of the textbook one can find *Help pages* (including *Info* and *Grammar* section) as well as *Vocabulary*. I have limited my analysis to the texts in the chapters and the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages. Here one point to note is that one chapter can contain many texts, so in my analysis I refer not only to chapters but also to texts within the chapters (this is further explained in section 5.4 below). I chose to leave out the *Reader* texts because they are extra-reading material, mostly literary extracts, situated at the end of the chapters. Pupils do not necessarily have time to go through them and they are not the main content of the chapter. Also, I did not take the *Smart Talk* sections into account either as these are designed more for practicing conversational conventions and majority of them do not contain any culture-specific information as such. In addition to this, I excluded *Help Pages* and *Vocabulary* sections from the analysis as they do not provide cultural information as such. As for the extra material that is available to pupils online I excluded this as I wanted to concentrate on the actual textbook.

As for the *Teacher’s File*, I have used it as a help in defining the topics for each of the texts. The *Teacher’s File* also provided the transcripts for the listening chapters, which are taken into consideration in the analysis (some of the texts start as “regular” texts in the chapters, but

are continued as a listening text). However, any extra reading material from the *Teacher's File* has not been taken into account. I think this could be a topic of its own for further research.

5 Methods and research questions

In this chapter I will explain my choice for the target countries, along with my research questions, the categorisation of the cultural information in the textbook and the method for the analysis in detail.

5.1 The target countries

In choosing the target countries for the study I relied on Kachru's (quoted in Kachru and Nelson 2000, 13) theory of the three concentric circles, according to which the Inner Circle consists of countries where English is used as a primary language. These include the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The theory also includes the idea of the Outer Circle countries and the Expanding Circle countries. The Outer Circle countries are those where English has an important position in certain fields such as education and governance and these include countries such as India, Singapore, Nigeria, Pakistan and South Africa. The Expanding Circle includes countries where English is "widely studied but for more specific purposes than in the outer circle" and includes countries like China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea and Nepal. (Kachru and Nelson 2000, 13.) The countries that I will consider in my thesis are those that belong to the Inner Circle, that is the UK and Ireland, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. As Ireland is not part of the United Kingdom as such, the country stands on its own. However,

Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom so it is considered within the UK category. In other words I will deal with Ireland and Northern Ireland separately, as one should.

5.2 Research questions

My aim is to find out what kind of cultural information is presented in the texts about the English speaking countries and based on this information, provide a cultural representation of each target country that is presented in the textbook. My research question is:

What is the content of cultural information on the English speaking countries in the secondary school textbook *Smart Moves 2*?

I have broken down the main research question into the following sub-questions:

- 1) What are the English speaking countries presented in the texts? As previously explained, I will take into consideration only the countries in Kachru's Inner Circle (Kachru and Nelson 2000, 13): the UK and Ireland, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.
- 2) What is the content of information regarding these countries? What topic or theme is in focus with each country?
- 3) Based on the previous question, what kind of a cultural representation do the texts provide on each country?

5.3 The categorisation of the cultural content

In order to decide on my own categorisation, I considered the existing categories that I presented in section 3.3 and those presented here in 5.3. This included Byram and Risager's (1999, 92-93, 195) work on identifying top cultural themes to include in foreign language teaching as well as Byram et al.'s (1994, 51-52) idea of the minimum content of cultural learning. These topics and categories acted as a starting point for my own topic categorisation, along with the cultural topic categories presented in theses that had similar topics to mine. These are presented below.

In her thesis on the cultural aspects in *This Way Up* textbook series, Bigün (2002, 27-28) categorised the chapters into the following topics:

- 1) education and work
- 2) customs, behavior and values
- 3) freetime activities
- 4) food
- 5) travel
- 6) popular culture (including pop and rock music, movies and other everyday entertainment)
- 7) high culture (including art such as literature, classical music etc.)
- 8) culture neutral.

To me, this seemed like a straightforward categorisation of cultural content. In addition to that, all these themes were present in SM2 as well so this categorisation was helpful in guiding me towards my own topic categorisation. Pitkänen (2002, 31-34) introduced several models for categorising the cultural knowledge of textbooks and ended up drafting her own analysis model, based on the combination of the different models:

- 1) point of view of the authors
- 2) global level
- 3) macro level
- 4) micro level
- 5) social identity and social groups.

When examining this categorisation I realised that my analysis would definitely benefit from a more concrete list of cultural content, like that of Bigün's. However, one of the models that Pitkänen (2002, 32, quoted also in Byram and Risager 1999, 61) referred to was the seven categories of cultural knowledge drafted by the American Association of Teachers of French:

- 1) communication in cultural context (verbal/non-verbal)
- 2) the value system
- 3) social patterns and conventions
- 4) social institutions
- 5) geography and environment
- 6) history
- 7) literature and arts.

Some of these topics I was able to identify in SM2, such as social patterns and conventions, social institutions, geography and environment, history and literature and arts. Hiltunen (2005, 44) investigated American culture in textbooks with the help of the following categorisation of texts:

- 1) social identity and social groups
- 2) history and science
- 3) sights and monuments
- 4) high culture (e.g. literature, classical music)
- 5) popular culture (e.g. motion pictures, everyday entertainment)
- 6) socialization into culture
 - a) through everyday activities (e.g. school, time with family)
 - b) through institutionalized customs and games
- 7) socio-political institutions.

In my view, this is a comprehensive list of different components of culture, including the important separation between high culture and popular culture which was something that I ended up using for my own analysis. Hiltunen (*ibid.*, 43) as well as other thesis writers have referred to Byram et al.'s (1994, 51-52) list for minimum content of cultural learning, using it, at least to some extent, as a basis for their own (revised) categorisation. As already stated, it serves as the

starting point for identifying relevant themes and drafting the final categories for my own analysis.

Uotila (2006, 39-40) drafted a clear and straightforward categorisation of the cultural themes that would be useful for my analysis as well. It was based on the typical themes in the texts that Uotila analysed and comprised of the following nine categories (ibid.):

- 1) people
- 2) sights & travel
- 3) geography & nature
- 4) history and politics
- 5) literature, classical music, art, architecture (representatives of high culture)
- 6) movies, popular music (representatives of popular culture, including TV and radio)
- 7) hobbies & sports
- 8) school
- 9) language

With these in mind, I examined all the relevant texts in SM2 in order to identify all the cultural topics featured in the textbook. After much careful reading of the texts in the textbook and after comparing the topics that arose from the texts to the existing topic categories created by theorists and other thesis writers I was able to draft a list of topic categories that would suit my own study. Thus I decided on the following categories for my analysis:

- 1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE:** different nationalities and ethnic origins (multiculturalism), immigrants, work and occupations, people's characteristics and appearances, free-time activities such as going to the pubs or churches, family holidays, means of travel, clothing, housing, religion, customs and habits, 'way of life',

- 2) **SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION:** information about countries, capitals and other cities, regions and tourist destinations, country specific information relevant for tourists (e.g. activities for tourists, population numbers),
- 3) **NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY:** national holidays, festivals and traditions, national songs, anthems and flags, anything representing national identity, historical information about a culture or country, folk heroes,
- 4) **NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT:** landscape and geography (e.g. highest point, area, mountains, lakes), animals, natural phenomena and disasters (i.e. storms, earthquakes, global warming), climate and weather conditions, “natural” places such as national parks,
- 5) **FOOD CULTURE:** national dishes, typical foods and drinks, eating habits,
- 6) **HOBBIES & SPORTS:** national sports and teams, typical sports and hobbies in the country, famous sports people,
- 7) **SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE:** societal organisations and systems, e.g. the education system (schools and universities), the police system, the political environment, government organisations, governance, organisation of state, monetary unit (currency), science and technology inventions and inventors, media and news, different industries,

- 8) **POPULAR CULTURE:** references to popular TV programmes, famous actors, actresses and singers, popular songs, popular literature,
- 9) **HIGH CULTURE:** poems, literature, art and
- 10) **LANGUAGE:** official languages, typical characteristics of a language, specifics about place names or people's names, bilingualism, country and culture specific expressions and meanings of words.

With these ten topic categories I was able to categorise all the relevant texts in SM2.

5.4 The method in detail

My analysis is both quantitative and qualitative. It is quantitative in the sense that I have counted the frequency of topic categories per country, i.e. how many times each topic is mentioned in the textbook. However, the qualitative analysis, which is the content analysis of the texts, forms the main part of the investigation. A point worth noting here is that the analysis does not measure the amount of information, but the frequency and the content of it as the aim is to find out what kind of information is given on each country and based on that, to provide a cultural representation of the countries.

As this is a content analysis where the aim is to provide a presentation of the cultural content in the texts mere listing of the texts into the previously presented categories (country and topic categories) is not enough. What I need to do is to provide a detailed analysis of the content of the cultural information presented in the texts, which is done by describing the content of the

information. The kind of methodological approach that I have employed here is called critical discourse analysis (Wodak 2004, Wodak and Meyer 2001). I have used some of the principles of this critical discourse analysis in my thesis, such as the “problem-oriented” approach where I have examined people and possible social problems that are presented in the texts (Wodak 2004, 200). Wodak’s (ibid.) “problem-oriented” approach inspired some further questions (see below) for examining the texts in detail. Also, as Wodak (ibid., 206) suggests there are some key questions about the people in the texts that one can ask when carrying out discourse analysis, such as “[w]hat traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to them?”. These questions were very helpful in my own analysis. Thus, when relevant, I describe the content of the texts with the help of the following questions that I drafted for more detailed analysis:

- a) How are the people represented and described in the texts? What is their social class and ethnic background? Are there any ethnic, social or linguistic minorities present? Does the description of people give a picture of a multicultural society?

- b) Is the country and its culture presented merely in a positive light? Does the text provide a ‘sanitized’ view of the country? Are uncomfortable social realities such as unemployment, poverty, family breakdowns and racism left out? (The last two questions are taken from Sheldon 1988, 244).

- c) Does the text include any negative information about a country and its culture – is anything presented in a negative light or is there any criticism?

- d) How are pictures and other illustrations used in conjunction with the texts? How do they support the content of the texts? How is the text illustrated?

Not only Wodak, but also Siegfried Jäger (2001) provided advice for conducting discourse analysis. Jäger's (ibid., 54-56) analytical guidelines for processing material were extremely useful as it outlined the kind of process needed for close examination of the texts. The methodological approach in my thesis followed Jäger's (ibid.) analytical procedures, which included steps such as general characterisation of the material (a textbook), allocation of single themes and sub-themes (the ten topic categories), justification of the selection of texts (what I chose to include and to exclude), themes addressed (what the texts dealt with), rhetoric means (what the texts and photographs implied, clichés etc) as well as ideological statements that the texts convey (e.g. how are people and society presented in the texts). All this provided the basis for the close examination of the texts in the analysis.

As already noted, I focus on the individual texts in the chapters. I have used the *Contents* pages as a help in defining what constitutes one text (however, not all texts were listed under the chapters in the *Contents* pages so finding the relevant texts required careful reading). For instance, Chapter 1 *Aussie way of life* consists of the main text, which is a dialogue, followed by a separate text, *Our Globetrotter in Australia - G'day from the outback!*, which is a full page article written for a student's magazine (SM2, 10-12). On the *Contents* page this article is not listed as a text of its own, but in the analysis I have counted this as a separate text from the dialogue.

First I read all the texts in the textbook and decided on the texts for my analysis (those that contain information on Kachru's Inner Circle countries). When it comes to defining the topic

for each text, I consulted the *Teacher's File*, in addition to reading the text very carefully, in order to define the main topic for each text. Then the relevant texts were divided into country categories and those were further divided into topic categories, according to my own topic categorisation (presented in section 5.3). If a text discusses more than one country, the text is counted in as many country categories as are mentioned in the text. I used the same method for topic categorisation, too: if a text covers more than one topic (and most of them do) it is included in as many topic categories as it covers. For instance the article *G'day from the outback!* in chapter 1 covers categories (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION and (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, thus it is counted in all the three topic categories. If information is given in just one sentence, for instance, I will count this in the analysis as long as the sentence has some relevant information. The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages demand this kind of approach as these pages include many small bits of information from different topic categories. It would have been impossible to put one "label" on these texts as one bullet point can be about the politics of the country and the next about sights and travel.

6 Analysis

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis, first starting with the quantitative analysis in section 6.1 that shows how many texts there are on one country and how many times certain topics have been featured with each country. This is then followed by the qualitative analysis in section 6.2, which is a detailed content analysis on the relevant texts and images. I previously noted in section 5.4 about counting the texts in as many country and topic categories as

necessary and thus it is worth noting here that the percentages in the tables do not therefore add up to one hundred per cent.

6.1 Quantitative analysis

In the textbook *Smart Moves 2* the chosen target countries are mentioned in 33 texts. The texts cover all the six countries: Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Canada, Ireland and the UK (to be more specific, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland were covered, Wales was not).

Table 1: The number of texts where the target countries are covered, in relation to the total number of texts taken into consideration (33)

Country	Number of texts	Percentage
The USA	11 / 33	33 %
Australia	10 / 33	30 %
The UK	7 / 33	21 %
Ireland	6 / 33	18 %
New Zealand	5 / 33	15 %
Canada	1 / 33	3 %

As one can see, the USA is the country that is most frequently featured in SM2. Out of the total of 33 texts, there is relevant information about the USA in eleven texts. The USA is closely followed by Australia, which is covered in ten of the texts. The next in frequency is the UK,

which is covered in seven texts, followed by Ireland (featured in six texts), New Zealand (featured in five texts) and lastly Canada, which is featured in one text only (a song by a pop group). Due to this, there are no actual results in terms of content on Canada, however, it is included in the quantitative analysis. Below is a detailed list of the relevant texts by country, followed by the breakdown of topics (the topic categories of culture) for each country.

The USA:

There are eleven texts on the USA (listed below).

- Chapter 3 *The name of the game: football!*
- Chapter 18 *New world – new beginnings*
- Chapter 19 *A bite of the Big Apple*
- *The United States of America – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* (in chapter 19)
- Chapter 20 *Backwoods, USA*
- Chapter 21 *LA Stories*
- *Better Days* (song in chapter 21)
- Chapter 22 *The many faces of California*
- Chapter 23 *Park Ranger – an office outdoors*
- *Wildlife USA* (in chapter 23)
- Chapter 24 *Let’s celebrate!*

Table 2: The number and percentage of texts that cover the different cultural topics for the USA

Category	Number of texts	Percentage
(1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE	6 / 11	55 %
(2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFO	4 / 11	36 %
(3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY	4 / 11	36 %
(4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT	4 / 11	36 %
(5) FOOD CULTURE	2 / 11	18 %
(6) HOBBIES & SPORTS	2 / 11	18 %
(7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE	2 / 11	18 %
(8) POPULAR CULTURE	3 / 11	27 %
(9) HIGH CULTURE	1 / 11	9 %
10) LANGUAGE	2 / 11	18 %

As one can see, the focus for the USA is on information on the country's people and their everyday life (featured in six of the eleven texts in total). This is rather surprising, although in a good way, as the stereotypical presentation could easily focus on categories (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION or even more likely on category (8) POPULAR CULTURE. The second biggest category is the category (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION, (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY and category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, each topic being featured in four of the texts. The third most popular category for the USA is (8) POPULAR CULTURE, which is featured in three texts out of the total eleven texts. It is somewhat surprising that information on popular culture is only in three texts, however, as already said, it is

a welcome development in terms of the presentation of American culture. Categories (5) FOOD CULTURE, (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS, (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE and (10) LANGUAGE are all featured in two of the texts, and category (9) HIGH CULTURE is covered in mere one text.

Australia:

There are ten texts on Australia (listed below).

- *I am Australian* (song)
- Chapter 1 *Aussie way of life*
- *Our globetrotter in Australia* (in chapter 1)
- *Australia – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* (in chapter 1)
- Chapter 3 *The name of the game: football!*
- Chapter 4 *The Saturday Show with Danny Dipper*
- *Australian and New Zealand Wildlife* (in chapter 4)
- Chapter 5 *Welcome to my island*
- Chapter 6 *Pasta and Pavlova, please*
- Chapter 8 *Down Under before Captain Cook*

Table 3: The number and percentage of texts that cover the different cultural topics for Australia

Category	Number of texts	Percentage
(1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE	4 / 10	40 %
(2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFO	2 / 10	20 %
(3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY	4 / 10	40 %
(4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT	6 / 10	60 %
(5) FOOD CULTURE	1 / 10	10 %
(6) HOBBIES & SPORTS	3 / 10	30 %
(7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE	1 / 10	10 %
(8) POPULAR CULTURE	2 / 10	20 %
(9) HIGH CULTURE	1 / 10	10 %
(10) LANGUAGE	1 / 10	10 %

As one can see, the cultural topic that is covered in most number of texts for Australia is category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT (covered all together in six out of the ten texts that deal with Australia). The second most frequent topic category is both category (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE and category (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY, both covered in four of the texts. The category (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS is covered in three of the texts and categories (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION and (8) POPULAR CULTURE, are featured in two texts each. Category (5) FOOD CULTURE, (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE, (9) HIGH CULTURE and (10) LANGUAGE are all covered in one text each.

The UK:

The coverage on the UK focuses on England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, with seven texts in total (listed below). Wales is the only country that is not included in the texts in SM2.

Scotland:

- Chapter 9 *School days – happy days?*
- *Scotland – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* (in chapter 9)

England:

- Chapter 10 *Worlds apart*
- *Ugly* (song in chapter 13)
- *Angels* (song in chapter 15)
- *Englishman in New York* (song in chapter 18)

Northern Ireland:

- *Ireland – Bits ‘n’ Pieces*

Table 4: The number and percentage of texts that cover the different cultural topics for the UK

Category	Number of texts	Percentage
(1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE	0 / 7	0 %
(2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFO	2 / 7	29 %
(3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY	1 / 7	14 %
(4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT	1 / 7	14 %
(5) FOOD CULTURE	1 / 7	14 %
(6) HOBBIES & SPORTS	1 / 7	14 %
(7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE	3 / 7	43 %
(8) POPULAR CULTURE	4 / 7	57 %
(9) HIGH CULTURE	1 / 7	14 %
(10) LANGUAGE	1 / 7	14 %

The most frequent category for the UK is (8) POPULAR CULTURE, featured in four of the texts. The second most frequent category is (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE, featured in three of the total of seven texts. Category (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION comes in third and is covered in two of the texts and the rest of the categories are covered in one text each.

Ireland:

There are six texts on Ireland (listed below).

- Chapter 3 *The name of the game: football!*
- *Ireland – Bits ‘n’ Pieces*

- *Moorlough Shore* (song)
- Chapter 17 *Land of shamrocks and leprechauns – excursion to Ireland*
- Chapter 18 *New world – new beginnings*
- Chapter 24 *Let's celebrate!*

Table 5: The number and percentage of texts that cover the different cultural topics for Ireland

Category	Number of texts	Percentage
(1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE	3 / 6	50 %
(2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFO	2 / 6	33 %
(3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY	3 / 6	50 %
(4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT	3 / 6	50 %
(5) FOOD CULTURE	0 / 6	0 %
(6) HOBBIES & SPORTS	2 / 6	33 %
(7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE	1 / 6	17 %
(8) POPULAR CULTURE	2 / 6	33 %
(9) HIGH CULTURE	1 / 6	17 %
(10) LANGUAGE	2 / 6	33 %

Category (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, category (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY and category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT are each covered in three of the texts in SM2. The categories (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION, (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS, (8) POPULAR CULTURE and (10) LANGUAGE are each featured in two out of the six texts.

Categories (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE and (9) HIGH CULTURE are each featured in one text and the remaining category (5) FOOD CULTURE, is not covered at all in the texts featuring Ireland.

New Zealand:

There are five texts on New Zealand in SM2 (listed below).

- Chapter 2 *Challenge your nerves!*
- *Australian and New Zealand Wildlife* (in chapter 4)
- *New Zealand – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* (in chapter 6)
- Chapter 7 *New Zealand – naturally*
- Chapter 8 *Down Under before Captain Cook*

Table 6: The number and percentage of texts that cover the different cultural topics for New Zealand

Category	Number of texts	Percentage
(1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE	3 / 5	60 %
(2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFO	1 / 5	20 %
(3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY	3 / 5	60 %
(4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT	4 / 5	80 %
(5) FOOD CULTURE	0 / 5	0 %
(6) HOBBIES & SPORTS	3 / 5	60 %
(7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE	1 / 5	20 %
(8) POPULAR CULTURE	1 / 5	20 %
(9) HIGH CULTURE	0 / 5	0 %
(10) LANGUAGE	3 / 5	60 %

The most frequent topic category is category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, which is featured in four out of the five texts. The categories (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY, (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS and (10) LANGUAGE are the second most frequent topic categories in the texts, each featured in three out of the five texts. Categories (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION, (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & CULTURE and (8) POPULAR CULTURE are all featured in one text each. The topic categories (5) FOOD CULTURE and (9) HIGH CULTURE are not covered at all in the texts on New Zealand.

Canada:

In SM2 there is only one text that relates to Canada (listed below). It is a song by Simple Plan, a pop/punk group from Montreal, Canada.

- *Welcome to my life* (song in chapter 11)

Table 7: The number and percentage of texts that cover the different cultural topics for Canada

Category	Number of texts	Percentage
(1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE	0 / 1	0 %
(2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFO	0 / 1	0 %
(3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY	0 / 1	0 %
(4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT	0 / 1	0 %
(5) FOOD CULTURE	0 / 1	0 %
(6) HOBBIES & SPORTS	0 / 1	0 %
(7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE	0 / 1	0 %
(8) POPULAR CULTURE	1 / 1	100 %
(9) HIGH CULTURE	0 / 1	0 %
(10) LANGUAGE	0 / 1	0 %

The quantitative analysis is followed by the qualitative analysis, which provides a detailed study of the content.

6.2 Qualitative analysis

In this section I will discuss the above findings in detail, providing a content analysis of each topic category for each country, thus presenting the content of different texts under relevant topic

categories. I will discuss the most frequently occurring countries and topics first. The content of the texts is described with the help of further questions presented in section 5.4.

6.2.1 The USA

Category (1) PEOPLE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

The most popular topic category of culture for the USA is category (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE. This topic is covered in six texts: chapter 18 *New world – new beginnings*, *The United States of America – Bits ‘n’ Pieces*, chapter 20 *Backwoods, USA*, chapter 21 *LA Stories*, chapter 22 *The many faces of California* and chapter 23 *Park Ranger – an office outdoors*.

The portrayal of the different ethnic and social backgrounds is strongly presented in the texts. As I have previously explained, each of the target countries has its own *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages that contain miscellaneous facts about the country and its culture, in a bullet point style. In terms of describing the multicultural background of the country’s people, *The United States Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page tells the reader the following: “Cultural mosaic: there are many ethnic groups that live in the USA (Europeans, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, etc.)” (SM2, 111). Chapter 18 *New world – new beginnings* focuses on the history of immigration in the USA (as well as the history of the Irish which we will deal with in section 6.2.4), showing the fact that Americans have roots in different countries. The text in the chapter is a combination of a dialogue between a granddaughter and a grandmother and entries in an old diary of the family, dating back to the middle of the 19th century. The chapter begins by explaining about the history of immigration in the USA as follows (SM2, 102):

The United States has a long and colorful history of immigration. . . . Many Americans have their roots in Europe. So does Molly Brown, whose great-great-great-great grandparents left Ireland for the US in 1848.

In the dialogue there are mentions of multiculturalism and the different backgrounds people in the USA have (SM2, 103):

This is a multicultural country so it's important to remember where you come from. . . . it's very interesting to learn about my classmates as well because they come from so many different places: Africa, Asia and different European countries.

The rest of the text, as well as the pictures, focus on the Irish and the history of the Irish immigrants, which I will deal with separately.

The portrayal of multiculturalism continues in chapter 21 *LA Stories*, which contains two stories of very different LA families, one featuring a mother and son of Mexican origin and the other featuring a wealthy white family, living in Beverly Hills (SM2, 117-118). First of all, the text in the chapter begins with a brief mention of “the rich and the famous who live in Beverly Hills” as well as the “Hollywood stars” and “celebrities” (SM2, 117), but the actual text does not concentrate on portraying this side of everyday life. The first part of the text focuses on “the world of the less fortunate who sometimes have jobs, but who still suffer from poverty” (SM2, 117). The part titled *Watts, South LA*, is about the everyday life of a poor Hispanic family, that consists of a mother, who works two jobs (and they still don't have much money), and the son, who “knows an easy but illegal way to get some extra dollars” (SM2, 117). The part of the text titled *Meanwhile in Beverly Hills* is about the life of a young 16-year-old girl who drives a new Porsche in the sunshine, “listening to the latest dance hits”, whose parents “wish her a very nice day at school” and the girl “waves her hand happily” (SM2, 118). Evidently this is a wealthy family as the father is the owner of a large furniture company, who is now facing the decision of having to fire a large number of factory workers in order to take care of his family (ibid.). This kind of juxtaposition of the two very different families portrays the inequality of different

communities and how these different communities exist, side by side, in Los Angeles. What is refreshing is that the text presents the negative side by portraying uncomfortable social realities such as poverty. However, the portrayal of these two families is somewhat stereotypical and does not really challenge the reader to change their thinking: the Hispanics are described as poor, without white collar jobs and the white family is described as well-off with “proper” jobs and education. At the end of the chapter there is a small *Off the record* information box that is about the different ethnic groups living in Los Angeles, as follows (SM2, 118):

Just like in the whole of the USA, there are many ethnic groups in Los Angeles. Most of the people living in Beverly Hills are educated white people. However, in Watts there are a lot of Hispanics and African Americans. The number of educated people is low in Watts, and almost 50% of the people in the area live below the official poverty line.

The chapter is illustrated with three photos, each portraying a different side of life: the first is of the Hollywood Hills with the famous Hollywood sign, the second photo shows a group of Hispanic men with the following caption: “There are a lot of Hispanics living in Watts. Watts is in South Los Angeles” (SM2, 117) and the third photo is of a smiling young, white girl sitting in a car.

The portrayal of a multicultural society in California also continues in the next chapter, 22 *The many faces of California*. The text in the chapter has four main parts, each focusing on people from different ethnic groups and backgrounds. There is Jay Brokeshoulder, an engineer student from Navajo County, Arizona, talking with a taxi driver who also has Native American blood in his veins (SM2, 120-121). The second story is on Juanita Chavez, originally from a family of six children in Mexico, who arrived in the USA by swimming across the Rio Grande river (SM2, 122). She tells about her life in California as follows (SM2, 122):

Since then I have harvested grapes in this vineyard. The pay is not good, and almost all my money goes on food and rent. Still, every month I send some money for food and

clothes to my family back in Mexico. In the future, I would like to start a family and get a good education so that my children could have it a bit easier.

Again, this portrays the life of the poorer and less fortunate inhabitants of California, offering the stereotypical view that this type of manual labour is carried out by ethnic minority groups. The third story in the chapter is on Patrick and Lucy Chang, USA born citizens with Taiwanese parents, and their everyday life in the small city of Irvine in California (SM2, 122). The text introduces a small and safe city of Irvine in California that has many Asian American inhabitants. Even though the Changs have an Asian background, they say that “the USA is our home, and we’re proud to be American” (SM2, 122). They both have “good”, middle class jobs, the husband working in a software company and the wife running a restaurant (SM2, 122). The final story in the chapter talks about a young Jolanda Gover, who is determined to study and do well in life in order to avoid a life of gang violence that cost her friend’s life. There is no mention on her nationality, but the accompanying picture shows a young girl with darker skin colour. All the other stories are also accompanied by pictures of people from different ethnic backgrounds.

In terms of people’s occupations and work, some of which were already referred to, a wide variety of jobs is present, from waitressing and factory work (the Hispanic mother in chapter 21 *LA Stories*) and grape harvesting (the Mexican Juanita Chavez in chapter 22) to owning a factory (the father of the wealthy, white family in chapter 21 *LA Stories*) to welding in the shipbuilding industry and elementary school teaching (people presented in chapter 22.). Chapter 23 *Park Ranger – an office outdoors* is the final chapter in *Smart Moves 2* that falls under the first category, PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE. It focuses on the occupation of Martha Hess,

who is a park ranger in Crater Lake National Park in Oregon (SM2, 124-125). The text is in the form of an interview, accompanying a picture of Martha in her park ranger uniform.

In terms of describing everyday life in the USA, the focus is on smaller towns. Chapter 20 *Backwoods, USA*, contains stories of three young persons who each live in a small town in Minnesota, Texas and Alaska. The stories are about their everyday life in these small towns. For instance, the life in Circle Pines, Minnesota, is described as follows:

I've lived all my life in this small town (population 5,100), where life is pretty safe but not really that exciting. In a small town every person knows you. . . . I love the idea that I can find the same woman working in the drug store every day and that she will always be friendly to me. When I walk down the street in town, everybody knows my name. There's nothing better than big life in a little place! (SM2, 114).

The text is accompanied by photos of life in small towns. The next text in the chapter is a story about life in a small country town of Bowie in Central Texas, through the eyes of a young girl who is originally from New Zealand. Again, this refers to the different backgrounds of people living in the USA. When it comes to describing people and life in Texas, it is described as "big":

Everything is BIG in Texas, which is something the Texans are very proud of. Here you can see quite a lot of Texans going around in their ten-gallon hats. Almost everybody wears their cowboy boots. . . . often the boots are bigger than the kid. (SM2, 115).

The description on what people wear continues: ". . . there's this thing with baseball caps. They don't take them off at a restaurant or at school in class" (SM2, 115). Texans are described as "usually polite" (SM2, 115). The chapter sums up the life in Texas as follows: "This is my Texan life now: oil fields, rodeos, cattle ranches, lost cows" (SM2, 115). There is also a picture of a girl in a cowboy hat by a paddock. The last part of the chapter is about life in Nome, Alaska, "the end of the world" (SM2, 116). Everyday life in Nome is described as follows: "Nome is very different from any other small town in America: icebergs in the Bering Sea, no traffic lights, few trees, two grocery stores, seven churches, ATVs, snowmobiles and a lot of dogs" (SM2, 116).

Again, there is a mention of yet another ethnic group: “The population of Nome is about 60 per cent Inuits, which also gives this place a special cultural flavor” (SM2, 116). The text is accompanied by a photo of the town in winter, with a person driving a snowmobile. What is interesting about these texts is the fact that everyday life in America is portrayed through the eyes of people in smaller places and towns instead of focusing on life in big and more famous cities. This gives the presentation of the country in the textbook a more realistic feel.

Category (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION

The second most frequent categories of culture for the USA are categories (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION, (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY and (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT. All these topics are featured in four out of the eleven texts in total.

The four texts on SIGHTS, TRAVEL AND TOURIST INFORMATION are chapter 19 *A bite of the Big Apple*, *The United States of America – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page, chapter 21 *LA Stories* and chapter 22 *The many faces of California*. In terms of which areas of the United States are covered, both the east and the west coast are featured, however, the information on famous tourist sights focuses on the sights of New York. Even though Los Angeles is referred to, e.g. in chapter 21 *LA Stories*: “Lost Angeles is one of the largest cities in the USA: almost four million people live in the area” (SM2, 118), the focus of this category is on New York, which is presented through various tourist sights (Los Angeles is presented more through the first category, PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE). Chapter 19 *A bite of the Big Apple* focuses on New York City and its famous sights through the eyes of two tourists who come from a small town. The chapter presents the busy Times Square: “You really have to see it for yourself; the place was full of flickering lights and moving images. I have never seen any place so full of people as

Times Square at night” (SM2, 108) and the high-rise Empire State Building: “Then these huge elevators took us to the 86th floor, 1,050 feet above the city streets. Fantastic views of the Manhattan skyline! Each year, over 3.5 million people see what we saw that day” (SM2, 108). The chapter also features the East side of New York, Little Italy, Chinatown and Battery Park. Central Park is presented as “the lungs of New York City”, a green place where you can go jogging, play sports or have a picnic (SM2, 109). Central Park got many compliments, such as “it looked fantastic!” and “[t]he place was fabulous” (SM2, 109). The last part of the chapter talks about Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, describing “Lady Liberty . . . proudly holding her torch” (SM2, 109). The text is accompanied by appropriate photos of the tourist sights, e.g. a Manhattan skyline, Times Square and Empire State Building by night, Central Park and the surrounding New York buildings and the Statute of Liberty. The sights are very much complemented on, and the only negative mention was the reference to 9/11 attacks: “Unfortunately, we couldn’t climb to Lady Liberty’s crown because they’ve kept it closed since 9/11” (SM2, 109). The chapter covers New York’s most popular tourist attractions that one expects to be featured in a chapter like this – the same ones that are featured in most travel brochures on New York.

In terms of the coverage on the west coast of the country, chapter 22 *The many faces of California* provides some information on Californian tourist attractions and cities, but only through photos and captions, such as the picture of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco with the caption “The Golden Gate Bridge is a symbol of San Francisco” (SM2, 120), a photo of a street of San Francisco featuring the famous cable cars of the city and a photo of the city of San Diego with its high rise buildings, with the following caption: “With around 1.3 million people, San Diego is the second biggest city in California” (SM2, 123). In addition to the photos, there is

a small *Off the record* information box that tells the reader about the state of California: “If California was NOT a state or part of the U.S., it would be the sixth richest country in the world! Nickname: Golden State, Land of Milk and Honey” (SM2, 121). When it comes to actual sights for tourists, the Golden Gate is the only sight that is mentioned, whereas the sights of New York are presented much more thoroughly. *The United States of America - Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages offer information on various different topics, including tourist information such as population numbers and a list of big cities and the capital. This information is supported by an illustration of the USA map, where these cities are marked.

Category (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY

National symbols, celebrations and history are the topics that are also featured in four of the texts: chapter 18 *New world - beginnings*, *The United States of America – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages, *Wildlife USA* and chapter 24 *Let’s celebrate!*

Chapter 18 talks about the “long and colorful history of immigration” (SM2, 102): “In those days people came to America by boat, either by steamship or sailing ship. Your great-great-great-grandparents traveled by steamship because it was faster. It took them 13 days to get to New York” (SM2, 104). However, as the theme of the chapter is the Irish immigrating to America in the middle of the 19th century, there is some overlap in the text in terms of what is labeled Irish history and what is American history. Therefore the chapter can be labeled under both the American and Irish history, however the majority of it is discussed in conjunction with Ireland’s history as it focuses on describing what life was like for the Irish back then.

The Bits ‘n’ Pieces pages mention the famous American holidays, such as the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President’s Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day and

Columbus Day (SM2, 111). Also, it features the national anthem, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and an explanation of the stars and stripes in the flag of the United States, along with a photo of it (SM2, 112). Also featured are the words from “Pledge of Allegiance” with a photo showing people reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, with a hand on their heart (SM2, 110). The theme of national holidays, celebrations and festivals continues in chapter 24 *Let’s Celebrate!*, which gives more information on Thanksgiving, Independence Day / the Fourth of July, Halloween and also St Patrick’s Day (SM2, 129-131). Although the latter festival is Irish, it is celebrated in America as well (SM2, 131):

. . . you don’t have to be Irish to celebrate it here in America. We just bring Ireland here. I mean that we really do that. Every year airplanes bring millions of shamrocks here from Ireland to decorate our parades and houses. By the way, did you know that the St Patrick’s Day parade was invented here in America? Today we Americans have noisier and bigger celebrations than the people of Ireland!

Thanksgiving is described as “a time to relax and spend time with people who care about each other” (SM2, 129). It also talks about the food that people eat at Thanksgiving (this is dealt in more detail with the fifth category: FOOD CULTURE), the habit of saying thanks for what one has and how people spend time together, playing football and chatting. The text also describes the Thanksgiving parade and makes a point of this being a very American thing: “You can see giant balloons that are the shape of animals and cartoon characters. High school bands march in the parade, too. It’s all SOOO American – and I just love it!” (SM2, 129). The text is illustrated with a photo of an African American family, having a big Thanksgiving meal together (SM2, 129). Independence Day and Halloween are described in a similar manner, in that the text explains what people normally do to celebrate and how the festivities are decorated. All in all, all the four holidays are described in a very upbeat manner, the voice of the texts being a young person from age range of 13 to 17 years, who loves that particular holiday in question. Especially in the text

about the Fourth of July, titled *Fireworks and Freedom!*, a strong sense of national pride comes through: “For me, the Fourth of July is the most important holiday. It is the day when we Americans celebrate the declaration of independence from Britain. We celebrate freedom. Happy birthday, America!” (SM2, 130). The pictures are directly linked to the celebrations presented, with images of fireworks, Halloween pumpkin decorations, children in Halloween costumes and a person, dressed in a green outfit, celebrating St Patrick’s Day (SM2, 130-131). In terms of national symbols apart from the flag, the text *Wildlife USA* gives information (as well as a picture) on the country’s national symbol: “The bald eagle has been the national symbol of the USA since 1782” (SM2, 127).

Category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT

The topic of NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT is also featured in four of the texts, which are *The United States of America - Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages, chapter 20 *Backwoods, USA*, chapter 23 *Park Ranger – an office outdoors* and a text on *Wildlife USA*. There is a focus on wildlife, with a two-page text introducing all together 14 wildlife animals. The animals are each introduced with a few lines of information such as “[a]lligators are large, meat-eating reptiles that spend a lot of their lives in the water” or “[t]he bison is the heaviest land animal in North America and lives in parks and reserves” or “[t]he California condor is the largest bird of prey in North America” (SM2, 127). In addition to these, the wild animals presented are armadillo, badger, bald eagle, beaver, blue jay, chipmunk, coyote, grizzly bear, raccoon, skunk and roadrunner. The information is accompanied by a photo of the animal. Chapter 20 *Backwoods, USA*, mentions cows and cattle ranches of Texas and caribou, moose and bear of Alaska. The wild animals of Alaska are described as “big and fascinating, not small and annoying; we don’t have any

cockroaches, spiders, fleas, snakes or toads” (SM2, 116). Another Alaskan animal is mentioned in chapter 23 *Park Ranger – an office outdoors*, where the park ranger talks about a mother grizzly bear charging at her when she was working in Alaska (SM2, 126).

In terms of information related to geography, there is information on Alaska’s close proximity to Russia in chapter 20: “About 12 miles from us lies Siberia, Russia. During winter I could walk there over the ice” (SM2, 116). In addition, on the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages there is a small mention on the area size of country, which is compared to the size of Finland (“28 times the size of Finland”) (SM2, 110).

In terms of nature, chapter 20 mentions the icebergs in the Bering Sea and describes the nature in Alaska: “Ice and snow can be really beautiful, especially when they reflect starlight or moonlight. The sky here is amazingly blue” (SM2, 116). Only one famous nature destination is presented, which is the Crater Lake National Park in chapter 23, with the following information, accompanied by a photo of the lake (SM2, 124):

Crater Lake is the deepest lake in the United States and one of the clearest freshwater lakes in the world. Crater Lake National Park in Oregon is known for its spectacular views. In the summer, visitors can drive around the lake, enjoy boat tours on the lake, stay in the historic Crater Lake Lodge, camp at Mazama Village, or hike the park trails including Mt. Scott at 8,929 feet.

Category (8) POPULAR CULTURE

The third most frequent category of culture for the USA is category (8) POPULAR CULTURE, although one could have expected this to be featured more if one considers the stereotypical view of the United States as the entertainment capital of the world. The topic of popular culture was featured in three texts all together: *The United States of America – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page, chapter 21 *LA Stories* and a song, *Better Days* by Faith Hill.

In terms of popular music, the *Bits 'n' Pieces* page states that “[j]azz, rock and rap were created in the USA” (SM2, 111) and it also lists Elvis Presley among famous American people (SM2, 111). On the same page, Nashville is said to be “the center for country music” (SM2, 111). In conjunction with the song *Better Days*, by Faith Hill, there is information on her being a popular American country music singer, with many awards and albums selling millions of copies (SM2, 119). Surprisingly, the movie industry of Hollywood is hardly featured at all. The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages simply mention that “Hollywood (LA) is the capital of movie industry” (SM2, 111) and in chapter 21 *LA Stories*, there is a general reference to the rich and famous Hollywood stars who live in Beverly Hills. It is refreshing to notice that the texts on the USA do not focus on this side of American culture, but show a more realistic side of American life through the first category, PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE.

Categories (5) FOOD CULTURE, (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS, (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE and (10) LANGUAGE

All these categories appear in two texts each. Food is talked about in chapter 20 *Backwoods, USA* and in chapter 24 *Let's celebrate!* The text about Texas in chapter 20 mentions things like big portions (“The steaks, for example, are almost the size of a baseball glove!”) and free refills of soft drinks (SM2, 115). Chapter 24 focuses on the celebrations and festivals and therefore includes information on what kind of foods people have during the different festivities. For instance, at Thanksgiving people eat turkey, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie and on Independence Day they enjoy all American foods like hot dogs, hamburgers, ribs and apple pie, either at a barbeque or at a picnic (SM2, 129-130).

In terms of hobbies and sports, there is not much information on this as there are only few sentences on that in the entire textbook. On *the Bits 'n' Pieces* pages there is some general information as follows: “Some of the most popular sports in the USA are baseball, American football, basketball and motor sports.” (SM2, 111) and “Surfboards, skateboards and snowboards were developed in the USA” (SM2, 111). On the same page, in the section *Good to know* Michael ‘Air’ Jordan is mentioned in the list featuring famous Americans (SM2, 111). In chapter 3 *The name of the game: football!*, which is a chapter on different kinds of football, there is some information on American football and the Super Bowl event.

There is also very little information on the seventh category, SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE. What are mentioned on *the Bits 'n' Pieces* pages are the 50 states, the President, the currency, and George Washington and Martin Luther King are mentioned in the list featuring famous Americans (SM2, 110-111). Chapter 22 has some information on school, such as extra-curricular activities and an example of a club for pupils that a school can have (SM2, 123):

I go to Point Loma High School in San Diego, California. There are around 2,000 students in my school. After school I take part in various extra-curricular activities such as track and field. I also take part in the Model UN club. We meet every Friday at lunchtime where we learn how the UN works. I take my studying very seriously.

This example features some aspects of American high school life that one can argue to be quite typical, such as the focus on extra-curricular activities and different kinds of clubs. One could say that this is something that is not that common in Finnish high schools. There is no information on societal structures or other society’s institutions and systems, except one line saying that agriculture is the biggest industry in the state of California (SM2, 121). However, the fact that there is information on American high school is not surprising as this is something that directly relates to the pupils studying this textbook. Information on the topic category (10)

LANGUAGE is minimal as there are only two small bits of information on this: “No official language: in addition to English, many people speak Spanish” (SM2, 110) and a mention that the Taiwanese couple, in chapter 22, speaking two languages, English and Mandarin (SM2, 122). The topic of HIGH CULTURE is dealt with listing playwright Arthur Miller and Nobel Prize winning author Toni Morrison in the list of famous Americans (SM2, 111).

6.2.2 Australia

Category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT

The most often featured topic category for Australia is category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT. This topic is featured in six out of the total of ten texts, as follows: *I am Australian* (song), *Our globetrotter in Australia*, *Australia – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages, chapter 4 *The Saturday Show with Danny Dipper*, *Australian and New Zealand wildlife* and chapter 5 *Welcome to my island*. The texts focus a lot on describing Australian nature, climate and geography. The song, *I am Australian*, by Bruce Woodley and Dobe Newton, falls under several topic categories, due to its nature as a pop song, its contents and the information, given at the bottom of the page, on some of the references that the song has (SM2, 8). However, there are very strong references to Australian nature and climate conditions, for instance in the following stanza (SM2, 8):

I’m the hot wind from the desert,
I’m the black soil of the plains
I’m the mountains and the valleys,
I’m the drought and flooding rains
I am the rock, I am the sky, the rivers when they run
The spirit of this great land, I am Australian.

In addition, there are references to “dusty red soil plains” and “rocky shores”, and the song is accompanied by a photo of dusty red soil plains (SM2, 8). The text *Our globetrotter in Australia*

features an article titled *G'day from the outback!* that talks about the different things that a Finnish student has experienced in Australia (SM2, 12). There is a strong focus on the nature and climate conditions of Alice Springs in Central Australia. For instance, the text talks about there being summer in February, the weather being hot, sunny and dry and the hottest months being from October through to March, with temperatures rising up to 50 degrees during the summer (SM2, 12). There is a photo of dry outback with red sand. The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages feature information and a photo on both Uluru, Ayers Rock, which is “one of the biggest monoliths in the world” and the Great Barrier Reef, which is “the largest coral reef in the world and the most popular tourist attraction in Australia” (SM2, 13-14). There is also a photo of a man walking in Australian bush. Again, the features of Australian nature are referenced to in a song, *Advance Australia Fair*, which is the national anthem of Australia (SM2, 15). Chapter 4 *The Saturday Show with Danny Dipper* continues the information on the Great Barrier Reef: “There are so many animal and plant species. It’s so amazing there. You won’t believe it until you see it yourself!” (SM2, 25). The text is illustrated with a photo of the Great Barrier Reef.

In terms of wildlife and other animals, the text *Our globetrotter in Australia* talks about the “many kinds of poisonous snakes and spiders in the outback” (SM2, 12). The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages draw attention to the more exotic animals that are typical of Australia, such as koalas, platypuses and kangaroos, accompanied with a picture of a kangaroo (SM2, 13). The spread *Australian and New Zealand Wildlife* features all together 14 animals that are typical to Australia and New Zealand, with some information and a photo on each of them. Out of the 14 animals, ten are said to be found in Australia: the black swan, the dingo, the platypus, echidna, the Australian emu, the kookaburra, the Tasmanian devil, the wallaby, the wombat and the possum. For example, this is what the text says about the Australian emu (SM2, 28):

The Australian emu is a very large flightless bird. It is the second-biggest bird in Australia and the third-biggest bird in the world. The emu is also very fast; it can run up to 50 kph. Did you know that they even have emu races in Australia – with riders! But be careful when you go near an emu; its kick can be painful!

The Australian wildlife theme continues in chapter 5 *Welcome to my island*, which focuses on all the different kind of animals that one can see at Kangaroo Island. There is information on kangaroos (including a photo and some drawings), koalas, penguins, sea lions, fur seals, wombats, goannas and echidnas. For instance, there is some statistical information on kangaroos (SM2, 31): “There are more than 60 million kangaroos in the whole of Australia, and there are only 20 million people so there are three kangaroos to every man, woman and child in Australia”. All in all, the texts that fall under this category contain plenty of information on Australian nature and climate, and make a point of nature being an important attraction for anyone visiting Australia. Another important aspect that rises from this category is the large variety of exotic Australian wildlife.

Category (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE

This topic category of culture can be found in total of four texts, all of which have some information on the Australian Aboriginals. *Our globetrotter in Australia* makes the first reference to the Aboriginals of Australia, “the native Australians” as the text talks about “a local guide with an Aboriginal background” (SM2, 12). According to the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages, out of Australia’s 20 million population 2.3% are Aboriginals (SM2, 13). The text about Australian and New Zealand wildlife talks about how “Aboriginal Australian people used dingoes as hunting dogs” (SM2, 28). Chapter 8 *Down Under Before Captain Cook* is all about the Australian Aboriginals and their history, with information on how they lived, what they hunted and ate,

their religion and traditions. For instance, the text gives information on something called “the Dreamtime” (SM2, 41):

It’s all quite complicated and difficult to understand. It means something like ‘the time before time’, that everything started in the Dreamtime. The Aboriginals still have a lot of ceremonies and rituals as part of the Dreamtime: they paint their bodies with white and ochre paint and they dance.

The text on the Aboriginals tells a lot about the history of Australia as well as about important symbols of the Aboriginals, such as the flag and the didgeridoo. These are dealt with as part of the third category, NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY. What rose from this topic category is that the information about people focuses on the Aboriginals and there is just a brief mention on ‘everyday’ Australian people: “Wherever in Australia I’ve been, people have been very friendly, carefree and helpful, and they have a great sense of humour” (SM2, 12). One could say that the general conception of Australians is that they are easy-going and friendly people with a laid-back attitude so this example would support the general idea of Australians’ characteristics. The original inhabitants of Australia are a big part of the country’s history and are an important group, although small in numbers, and that could be one of the reasons why there are so many references to this particular group.

Category (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY

Also this category is the second most frequent topic category of culture for Australia, featured in four out of the ten texts in total. This topic category entails small bits of miscellaneous information, such as on a historical folk hero, Edward “Ned” Kelly who “was a famous bushranger and a folk hero” (SM2, 8), on Australia Day and national emblems (which are emu

and kangaroo) (SM2, 13, 31). In addition, the *Bits 'n' Pieces* page contains the lyrics of Australia's national anthem.

There is quite a lot of historical information on the Aboriginals' history from the time when the white people arrived in Australia, took away their land and forced them to live in certain areas (SM2, 41). In the same chapter (chapter 8), there is a whole section on the didgeridoo, which is the musical instrument of the Aboriginals and "[p]ossibly the world's oldest musical instrument" (SM2, 41). The text tells the reader things like how it is used to "imitate the sounds of nature such as wind, thunder, trees and water and the sounds of animals like the owl, kookaburra and kangaroo", what it is made of, what it looks like and how one plays it (SM2, 41). Alongside the text there is a picture of an Aboriginal man playing the didgeridoo instrument. There is also information on another symbol of the Aboriginals, the Aboriginal flag, including a picture of an Aboriginal man holding the flag (SM2, 41). Again, the Aboriginal group rises as the focus of this category, probably due to being an important part of the country's history.

Category (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS

The third most frequently featured category of culture for Australia is (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS, which is featured in three of the texts. The focus of the information seems to be on rare and unusual sports. Chapter 1, *Aussie way of life*, brands Australians "sports mad" (SM2, 10). The chapter talks about "crazy sports event where they race with boats on a river without water", the Henley-on-Todd Regatta and other more unusual sports such as cockroach races and camel races (SM2, 11). Other sports that chapter mentions are footy, cricket, swimming and tennis, however, one could say that the latter two are not considered typically Australian. There is more information on the Australian rules football, "footy", in chapter 3. *The name of the game:*

football!, (SM2, 22-23). Chapter 4, *The Saturday Show with Danny Dipper*, features a television interview with a diver, who talks about diving in Australia, including information about diving equipment and location, with Australia being recommended as the place to go in terms of diving (SM2, 26-27). Both chapter 1 and chapter 4 feature photos of people doing the different sports that the texts focus on. In chapter 4, there is also a photo and some information on shark cage diving, yet another example of more unusual sports (SM2, 27). The same kind of orientation of unusual sports continues with the presentation on New Zealand, discussed in section 6.2.5.

Category (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION

Information on Australia's sights and popular culture are featured in two of the texts each. *Australia – Bits 'n' Pieces* pages contain facts and bits of information such as the capital and big cities of Australia. In terms of tourist information, the text *Our globetrotter in Australia* lists the kind of outdoor activities that one can do when one visits Alice Springs, "the capital of the outback" (SM2, 12): "You can travel by hot air balloon, ride a quad-bike, hire a four-wheel-drive, ride a camel or go bush walking." (SM2, 12). However, a lot of the places that the tourists would visit, i.e. places that could also be categorised under the second category (such as the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru), were categorised under the fourth category, NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, due to the fact that these are nature's own creations, typical to Australian nature, climate and geography. However, having said that, these are also popular places for tourists to visit, so the small number of relevant texts in the second category can be somewhat misleading, or at least explained with this divide in categorisation.

Category (8) POPULAR CULTURE

References that fall under the category of Australian popular culture are minimal and almost mere lists of names. There is the song with lyrics, *I am Australian*, by Bruce Woodley and Dobe Newton (SM2, 8), but in addition to that there is only the *Bits 'n' Pieces* page that lists some popular Australian icons in the film and music industry: Mel Gibson, Russell Crowe, Nicole Kidman, Kylie Minogue, AC/DC and Natalie Imbruglia (SM2, 14). This kind of presentation of information does not really say anything about Australian popular culture, apart from listing famous Australians.

Categories (5) FOOD CULTURE, (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE, (9) HIGH CULTURE and (10) LANGUAGE

The four remaining categories of culture are present in one text each, however, certain texts are more informative than others in terms of the amount and content of information. The entire chapter 6 *Pasta and Pavlova, please* focuses on Australian food and eating in a restaurant, so even though the topic is featured in one chapter only, it is somewhat informative in terms of typical Australian foods. Before the actual dialogue of the chapter, there is an example of “Aussie Style Menu” with special Australian foods such as “emu pate”, “grilled kangaroo fillet” and “lemon myrtle tart” (SM2, 32). The *Off the record* information box gives information on Australian food culture as follows (SM2, 32):

Australians love seafood. In Australian seafood restaurants you can find fish, prawns, crabs and lobsters. One type of crayfish, the yabby, is a traditional ingredient in Australian dishes. Today, Australians farm yabbies for food markets. In Australian restaurants, seafood lovers can enjoy yabby chowder or yabby stir fry, for example.

The actual text and the dialogue in the chapter feature different foods, such as tuna pasta, chicken wok and chili poppers, which, one could argue, are not considered typically Australian.

However, the characters in the dialogue order “Pavlova”, a meringue-based dessert filled with berries, which is considered a typical Australian dessert (SM2, 35). The chapter is illustrated with photos of an Australian restaurant, some dishes and the young characters in the dialogue.

In terms of the seventh category, SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE, there are only three miscellaneous facts on this on Australia’s *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page: Prime Minister is the political leader in Australia, the British Monarch is the head of state and the currency is the Australian dollar (SM2, 13). The presentation of Australian high culture is very minor, with short introductions on Albert Namatjira, who is an Australian Aborigine artist known for watercolour paintings and Banjo Paterson’s poem classics (SM2, 8). Both of these are referred to in the song, *I am Australian*, and the brief introductions to these references are given on the same page (SM2, 8).

The category LANGUAGE is featured on the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages, with a short vocabulary on “Strine” (Australian English), featuring Australian expressions and words such as *G’day mate!*, *a pom* (=a British person), *snag* (=a sausage) and *cake hole* (=a mouth) (SM2, 15). Other bits of information on these pages include the nickname for Australia, *Down Under*, and the Aboriginal place names and their translations, for example *Canberra*, meaning “Meeting Place”, *Wollongong*, meaning “Sound of the Sea” and *Wagga Wagga*, translating “Place of Many Crows” (SM2, 14).

6.2.3 The UK

Category (8) POPULAR CULTURE

The topic category of POPULAR CULTURE is featured in four of the seven texts on the UK, making it the most frequently occurring topic for the UK. On the *Scotland - Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages there is

some miscellaneous ‘*Good to know*’ facts about Scotland, featuring famous Scots, out of which two names fall under the Popular culture category: famous actor Sean Connery and the author of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (SM2, 56). However, there is no actual information on these people. The popular culture of England is manifested through three songs by famous English pop singers, *Ugly* by Sugarbabes (SM2, 70), *Angels* by Robbie Williams (SM2, 83) and *Englishman in New York* by Sting (SM2, 105). All the three songs feature the lyrics, a photo and some information on the presenters and their careers.

Category (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE

The second biggest category of culture for the UK is category (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE. The topics belonging to this category are featured in all together three out of the seven texts in total and they are dealt with through two countries, England and Scotland. There is one small mention on the famous scientist Alexander Graham Bell in the list of famous Scots on the *Scotland – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page (SM2, 56), but apart from that the rest of the information on this category is on school life, with two whole chapters dedicated to the topic of school. Chapter 9 *School days – happy days?* compares school life and punishments in Scotland school system today and in the past. The chapter highlights the differences between punishments via a dialogue between a grandson and a grandfather where they compare experiences. The grandson explains that today pupils can get extra work or detention after school, or they have to see the head teacher or get their parents called in to talk with the teacher, or maybe one even has to stay out of school for few days (SM2TF, 138). Whereas “in the old days” pupils were punished there and then, as the grandfather explains: “They made us write essays or hundreds of lines of ‘I promise not to come late to school or to talk back to the teacher’. It was tough. Your hand hurt for a long

time after all that writing.” (SM2TF, 138). Also, the text talks about the physical punishments in the old days, such as the teacher hitting the pupils with a heavy leather belt (SM2TF, 138). The chapter is illustrated with an old black and white photo of school boys and a photo of a schoolboy today (SM2, 53). The theme of school continues in chapter 10 *Worlds apart*, which is a text on the historical Eton College in England, a private boarding school for boys only (SM2, 58). The text on Eton College gives information on how the private school (i.e. “public schools” in English) system works in England (SM2, 58):

[T]here is a queue to the school! Many parents register their sons into the school immediately after their birth. It’s not cheap to go to Eton. You must pay about £23,000 for a year at Eton plus extra for different activities like sports and music. However much money your parents have, you still have to pass the entrance exam. Luckily, you parents don’t have to be filthy rich – there are also scholarships.

The text goes on to explain why parents want their sons to get into a school like Eton College: “After school, they want them to get to a good university and do well in life. Eton has produced great men in politics, for example, and even many royals like Prince William and Prince Harry went to the school” (SM2, 58). Even though there is no mention on the tradition of school uniforms, the chapter features photos of school boys wearing their school uniforms. Eton College is described as an exclusive private school with benefits such as “their own study-bedrooms” and access to sports such as rowing, cricket and tennis (SM2, 58). Indeed, the school system in the UK is quite different compared to many other countries, like Finland for example, especially in terms of the compulsory fee system, which is also explained in the text (SM2, 58).

Category (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION

The second topic category of culture, SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION is covered in two of the texts: *Scotland – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages and *Ireland – Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages (in the latter there is a small information box on Northern Ireland, but the rest of this *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page is analysed in conjunction with Ireland). In terms of Scotland, there is miscellaneous information regarding the population, the capital and the big cities in Scotland: “Capital: Edinburgh (population about 460,000) or “The biggest city: Glasgow (population over a million)” (SM2, 54). The information is accompanied by an illustration of a map featuring the cities. The information on Northern Ireland is presented in its own small information box on Ireland’s *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* page, and it contains a brief mention on the capital and population, in bullet point style, as follows: “Capital: Belfast” and “Population: about 1.7 million”) (SM2, 90). In addition to another small piece of information, dealt with the first category, PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, there is nothing else on Northern Ireland. In terms of important sights, the textbook does not provide any information on which tourist spots to see while visiting either Scotland or Northern Ireland. However, the textbook does give a fair amount of other information on Scotland’s culture, for instance information relating to the third category (NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY) and also other miscellaneous bits of information (analysed below).

Categories (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY, (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, (5) FOOD CULTURE, (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS, (9) HIGH CULTURE and (10) LANGUAGE

All the remaining six topic categories of culture appear in one text each (apart from the first category, PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, as there is no content on that). However, as usual, there are differences in the amount of information. The majority of the information on these six categories

is on Scotland, on the country's *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages. I will start with the third category, NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY, as there is a substantial amount of information on this regarding Scotland. The *Scotland – Bits 'n' Pieces* pages contain information on certain traditions and festivals, such as Highland games (SM2, 55): “*Highland games* are traditional competitions. The events are, for example, tossing the caber, putting the shot, throwing the hammer and throwing the weight.” Another famous Scottish tradition, also featured on the *Bits 'n' Pieces* page, is the clan tartan and the kilt (SM2, 55):

A group of Scottish families with the same name is called a *clan*. Each clan member wears the clan *tartan*, which is a woven pattern. It is often used in *the kilt*, which only men wear, so it's not a skirt. Kilts are worn on special occasions, like weddings.

Scottish culture is also described in terms of traditional festivals, such as *Hogmanay* that takes place on New Year's Eve and all the different traditions linked to this festival (SM2, 55). Other cultural topics present in this text that fall under this particular category are national symbols, such as *bagpipes*, “the national musical instrument of Scotland” and *the thistle*, “the national flower” (SM2, 54). There is also a photo of both of these symbols and a photo of men at Highland games wearing kilts. The pages also feature information on the Scottish flag, including a picture of it (SM2, 56). In terms of historical content of the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages, there is a short mention on Scotland having been part of the United Kingdom since 1707 (SM2, 54).

The content in the fourth category, NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, includes some typical features of Scotland's geography and nature, such as the country having three different types of areas: the Highlands, the Lowlands and the islands (SM2, 54) and references to the mountainous scenery and the country's famous lakes (Loch Lomond and Loch Ness) (SM2, 54,56). There are also images of the Scottish landscape (SM2, 54,56).

The rest of the content on Scotland's *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages are random bits of information on Scottish food and drink, *haggis*, (including a photo) and *whisky* and famous football teams, *Rangers* and *Celtic* (SM2, 56). What is also mentioned is that the game of golf originates from Scotland and Sean Connery is Scottish (SM2, 56). As for the last topic category, LANGUAGE, there are few references to certain words that have Scottish equivalents: *lochs* is used for lakes, and in Scottish surnames, *Mac* or *Mc* originally had the meaning of *son of* (SM2, 56). Also, it is mentioned that 80,000 of Scots speak Gaelic (SM2, 54). Although the previous examples are rather loose without connection, there is informative content on Scotland's national symbols and celebrations, as previously explained.

6.2.4 Ireland

Category (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE

The most frequent topics for Ireland are categories (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY and (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, all of which are featured in three of the six texts. In terms of describing Irish people, chapter 17 *Land of shamrocks and leprechauns – excursion to Ireland* (which is about a class trip from Finland to Ireland) gives a positive picture of the Irish (SM2, 94): “The plane to Dublin was Aer Lingus, the Irish airline. There we got our first experience of Irish people. The flight attendants were great fun: they made jokes all the time and talked with us – and said how good our English was” (SM2, 94). Chapter 18 *New World – new beginnings*, already partly analysed in terms of US people and history, draws attention to the appearance of the Irish by giving the indication that the Irish have ginger hair and freckles as well as a bit of temper (SM2, 104). Alongside the text there is a photo of an Irish girl, with her ginger hair and freckles, reinforcing the stereotypical image of

the Irish looks (SM2, 103). The historical and well-known Irish-American connection in people's origins is manifested through some famous Irish-Americans that are listed in the *Good to know* section on the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages, e.g. President J.F. Kennedy, President Reagan, John Wayne (SM2, 91). In terms of everyday life in Ireland, there is a brief mention on the Catholic Church playing a big role in everyday life of the Irish (SM2, 91).

Category (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY

The third category, NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY is also featured in three of the texts on Ireland. The *Bits n' Pieces* pages offer miscellaneous bits of information on the country's national symbols: the Shamrock is the symbol of Ireland, the Harp is the national emblem and the national fairy is the leprechaun ("Irish history is full of myths and legends") (SM2, 90-91). The pages introduces an important Irish celebration, St Patrick's Day on 17th of March, in celebration of "Patron saint of Ireland", St Patrick (SM2, 91). This theme continues in chapter 24 *Let's celebrate*, with more information on how St Patrick's Day is celebrated in America, however, as already discussed previously. Other snippets of information include historical information regarding the Independence, traditional Irish dancing, Riverdance, including a picture of it, and information and picture of the Irish flag, with reference to the two main religions: "Orange stands for Irish Protestants, green for Irish Catholics and the white stripe for the hope that someday there might be peace between them." (SM2, 91). The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages also feature Ireland's national anthem, *The Soldier's Song* and an Irish blessing (SM2, 92). Chapter 18 *New world – new beginnings* provides substantial information on the history of the Irish and of those Irish people who immigrated to America, for instance in the following dialogue between a grandmother and a granddaughter (SM2, 103):

- Grandmother: It started in Galway, Ireland, more than 150 years ago.
- Granddaughter: That's ages ago!
- Grandmother: Well, they were very difficult times for the Irish people.
- Granddaughter: Yes, there was a big famine in Ireland in those days, right? . . .
- Grandmother: Yes, there was. . . . The famine started when the potato blight struck and wiped out most of the crop in the 1840s. It wasn't good for the poor people. Thousands were starving in Ireland and even died of hunger.
- Granddaughter: That was the main reason why so many people left their homeland, wasn't it, Grandma?
- Grandmother: Yes, it was – for our ancestors, anyway. But lots of people left because of religion, poverty and unemployment.

The chapter includes many diary entries from the middle of the 19th century, describing the difficult journey from Ireland to America on the steamship (SMTF, 273):

September 10th, 1848: We haven't got enough food – some watery soup and hard bread. There isn't enough water to drink, not to mention washing yourself. There seem to be bad people wherever you go. A young man told me that somebody had stolen his money while he was sleeping. Poor fellow. Mum sewed our money and some small valuables into her and Dad's clothes.
I saw Emily, the Irish girl. She was crying because of her little brother had died. I told her how very sorry I was. So many people on the ship and no doctor!

There are all together six diary entries in the chapter, all describing the life and journey on the steamship, giving an extensive and realistic picture of the conditions of the Irish back then. There are also three black and white photos of people and the families travelling on the ship. The content in the chapter gives informative and detailed knowledge on the history and the origins of the Irish-American population, portraying the hard times they had to go through in order to arrive in the new world.

Category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT

Also the fourth category, NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, is covered in three out of the six texts in total. The content in this category draws attention to the landscape and climate of Ireland, as follows: “Ireland is also called the Emerald Isle because of its green countryside” and “[i]t rains about twice as much in the west of Ireland as it does in the east” (SM2, 91). The *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages also contain photos featuring Irish scenery. The describing of the landscape and nature continues in the lyrics of *Moorlough Shore*, by The Corrs, as shown in the following stanza (SM2, 93):

Your hills and dales and flowery vales
That lie near the Moorlough Shore.
Your vines that blow by Borden’s grove.
Will I ever see you more?
Where the primrose glows
And the violet grows
Where the trout and salmon play.
With my line and hook delight I took
To spend my youthful days.

Nature and climate as well as wildlife are also present in chapter 17 *Land of shamrocks and leprechauns – excursion to Ireland* which includes a Finnish pupil’s diary entries on the excursion to Ireland, including entries such as: “saw seals swimming in Galway Bay in the middle of town”, “walking underground; beautiful limestone and sounds of water”, “high cliffs, very windy”, “stormy boat ride, rainy and foggy day”, “windy beach, quicksand, freezing water – some of us swam” (SM2, 96). The content of the text as well as the accompanying photos give representations of typical Irish landscape, nature and weather.

Category (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION, category (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS, category (8) POPULAR CULTURE and category (10) LANGUAGE

These topics are all covered in two texts each. The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages offer very little information on the second category, SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION: merely random pieces of information stating Ireland's population (about 4 million), capital (Dublin) and some large cities (Cork, Limerick and Galway) (SM2, 90). Chapter 17 *Land of shamrocks and leprechauns – excursion to Ireland* does, however, offer more information in terms of describing Dublin and Galway as tourist destinations. The city of Dublin is described as follows: "Dublin seemed very nice with old buildings and green double-decker buses. We had to watch out for cars because in Ireland they drive on the left-hand side" (SM2, 95). The hostel in Galway, which is the final destination of the school excursion, is described as follows:

At first sight the room was a shock: six bunk beds in a bleak room! No luxury – we all knew that but still... Anyway, the most important thing was that we had a toilet of our own and a shower, which seemed to work alright." (SM2, 95).

The diary entries on the highlights of the excursion include few references to local sights and tourist places in Galway (the rest being references to nature, wildlife and climate as discussed in the previous section): a beautiful abbey in Connemara, Dun Aengus, a 2000-year-old fort in Aran Islands and James Joyce's wife's house (SM2, 96). These parts of the texts are illustrated with photos of a restaurant in Galway, a person cycling on Aran Island and of a group of young people outside a fort (SM2, 95-96). As one can see, there is very little information on the country's capital, Dublin, in the texts and perhaps one could have expected some more information on it. The second category seems to focus on sightseeing in a smaller place, Galway, with references to local sights and places to visit. One could argue that the description of the

Dublin hostel being somewhat basic does not have any cultural value as such as it is expected that hostel conditions can be lacking in any city or country.

The topic of HOBBIES & SPORTS appear in two of the texts. In chapter 3 *The name of the game: football!* there is a brief piece on Gaelic football, including a photo of the actual football (SM2, 23-22):

There's also Gaelic football, which they play in Ireland and Australia. Unlike Aussie rules, rugby or American football, this game has a round ball. It's a little smaller than a soccer ball. If you compare soccer or rugby with Gaelic football, you will find many things in common. However, Gaelic football is the oldest game of these three.

The theme of football continues on the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages as Roy Keane, an Irish football player, is mentioned in the list of famous Irishmen (SM2, 91). On the same spread Gaelic football, hurling and soccer are stated as the national sports of Ireland (SM2, 90). Apart from these brief references there are no other mentions on Irish sports or hobbies so it is clear that this topic is not given much attention at all in the textbook.

In terms of category (8) POPULAR CULTURE, it focuses on music, however, with limited amount of information. The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages list three famous Irish bands and singers (U2, the Corrs and Enya) (SM2, 91) and in conjunction with the Corrs song, *Moorlough Shore*, there is some information on the band as well as a photo of its members (SM2, 93). Other references to Irish popular culture are in the form of names in a list featuring famous Irish people and those include actors Pierce Brosnan, Colin Farrell and Liam Neeson as well as C.S. Lewis, the author of *the Chronicles of Narnia* (SM2, 91).

There is not much on the topic of language apart from stating Ireland's official languages, English and Irish Gaelic and another reference to Gaelic, as the mother tongue of the Corrs (SM2, 90-93). There is nothing on its features or for instance, which percentage of the population

speaks Gaelic. However, there is a small piece of information on the meaning of letter *O* (=son of) in Irish surnames, such as in the surname O'Brien, translating it to *son of Brien* (SM2, 91).

Category (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE and category (9) HIGH CULTURE

These topics appear in only one text, on the *Ireland - Bits 'n' Pieces* pages, consisting of the following information: President being the head of state in Ireland and the list of Ireland's four winners for the Nobel Prize for Literature, George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Samuel Beckett and Seamus Heaney (SM2, 90-91). The lack of any further information on these topics as well as some of the topics presented in the previous section can be explained with the fact that they are featured on the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages, consisting of short snippets of facts, presented in a bullet point style so expansion on these is not even expected on these pages. There is nothing on the remaining category, FOOD CULTURE, in the texts that deal with Ireland.

6.2.5 New Zealand

Category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT

With New Zealand, the most frequent topic category of culture is category (4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT, featured in four of the five texts in total. The *New Zealand – Bits 'n' Pieces* pages offer some facts about New Zealand's nature and geography: it has two main islands, the volcanic North Island and the South Island that has fiords and snowy mountains (SM2, 36). The *Facts* section on the same page also mentions Mount Cook as the highest point (3,764m) (SM2, 36). The same page features a scenic photo of New Zealand landscape. The next chapter (chapter 7 *New Zealand - naturally*) provides more detailed information on New Zealand's nature and its

features. In it Heeni from Timaru talks about her favourite things in New Zealand's nature and environment (SM2, 38-39). It is described for instance as follows:

“New Zealand is a country with breathtaking scenery. Many New Zealanders think that their country is the greatest place in the world. It's got everything: the Alps and hot springs and rain forests.” (SM2, 38)

The chapter talks about Moeraki Boulders, Mount Cook mountain and national park, Mirror Lake and Whakarewarewa in Rotorua, presenting information on each of these, with a photo of each place (SM2, 38-39). For instance, the text talks about Mirror Lake in the following style (SM2, 39):

I love the lakes and fiords in New Zealand! My favourite lake is Mirror Lake. When you look at the surface of the lake, it's like a mirror. . . . Once my family had a visitor from Norway, and we took him on a boat trip across Milford Sound. That's a famous fiord here in the south. There were hundreds of waterfalls coming down from the mountains in every direction you looked.

Whakarewarewa in Rotorua, in the North Island, is described as follows (SM2, 39):

My favourite place in the North Island is Whakarewarewa in Rotorua. That's the best place to see boiling mud pools and geysers. In the area there are health spas where they use natural mineral water. Because I live in the South Island, I easily forget that the North Island is volcanic. Then again, we have small earthquakes on both islands almost every day!

This chapter introduces many different kinds of features of New Zealand's nature in an extremely positive light as they are praised as “breathtaking”, “the greatest place in the world”, “amazing”, “my favourite place”, “the best place to see . . .” (SM2, 38-39).

The text *Australian and New Zealand Wildlife* includes information and photos on the wild animals that can be found in the New Zealand nature: the Black Swan, the Wallaby, the Kakapo, the kiwi, the Tuatara, the weta and the possum, all together seven animals (SM2, 28-29). For instance, the text tells the reader the following information on the Tuatara (SM2, 29):

“The Tuatara is an unusual reptile that lives on the islands of New Zealand. This animal sleeps in a burrow during the day and hunts at night. Although it looks like a lizard, it is a reptile.” In chapter 7 *New Zealand – naturally*, there is some further information on New Zealand animals, for instance on the large number of sheep in the country (SM2, 38):

Well, in New Zealand you’ve got to mention sheep! We’ve got about 45 million of them. They are just everywhere! My cousin has a sheep station with 25,000 sheep. They even use three helicopters to tend the sheep! Sometimes you can see workers with laptops sitting in the middle of a sheep flock. You see, they want to develop better wool – wool that is softer and less prickly. Amazing, isn’t it!

The chapter also mentions birds in the Mount Cook National Park and more specifically a Kea, a parrot that is olive green, describing them as “really curious birds” (SM2, 39). The theme of birds continues in chapter 8 *Down Under with Captain Cook*, with the introduction of the Moa, a “flightless bird like the Emu”, including information like its height and weight as well as when it became extinct (SM2, 42). The different descriptions on the various features of the country’s nature, wildlife and geography provide an image of a country of vast diversity and it is clearly presented as something that its people are very proud of.

Category (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE

The second most frequently featured topic categories for New Zealand are categories (1) PEOPLE & EVERYDAY LIFE, (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY, (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS and (10) LANGUAGE, all featured in three of the texts. *New Zealand - Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages have a mention on the Maoris, “the native people of New Zealand”, counting for 10% of the country’s population (SM2, 36). There is also a photo of a Maori person, with the traditional face marking

on the same spread (SM2, 37). In addition to this, there are short references to Maori people in chapter 7 *New Zealand – naturally* and in chapter 8. *Down Under before Captain Cook*.

Category (3) NATIONAL SYMBOLS, CELEBRATIONS & HISTORY

In terms of New Zealand's national symbols, celebrations and history, there is a mention on the kiwi being "national emblem of New Zealand" (SM2, 29). On the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages there are brief bits of information on the country's history (accompanied by a photo of James Cook who was the "first person to map New Zealand") and the New Zealand flag, along with a photo of it and the lyrics of the country's national anthem (SM2, 36-37). The national holiday of "Waitangi Day" on the 6th February gets a mention in a bullet point (SM2, 36), however no further information is given on this holiday as to what it stands for. Information on the Maori tradition of the "haka", comprising of song and dance, is given in chapter 8 *Down Under before Captain Cook*, including the lyrics for it (SM2, 42). Again, the Maoris are in focus and "haka" is described as the "all Maori dance" (SM2, 42).

Category (6) HOBBIES & SPORTS

The topic of HOBBIES & SPORTS is featured in three texts all together. Chapter 2 *Challenge your nerves!* focuses on portraying New Zealand's Queenstown as "the capital of extreme sports" (SM2, 18). Not only bungee jumping the chapter refers to "other Kiwi extreme sports", such as rafting, jet boat riding, skydiving, mountain biking and tandem skydiving (SM2, 18-20, SM2TF, 42). The chapter describes the bungee jumping experience and other extreme sports in detail, including photos of these and of the Kawarau Bungee Bridge which is described as "the world's first bungee bridge" as well as "the world's 'full time' bungee jumping place" (SM2, 18-19).

Through the text and the accompanying photos New Zealand and Queenstown is strongly associated with exciting extreme sports: “Welcome to Queenstown in New Zealand, the capital of extreme sports. If you’re into bungy jumping, rafting, jet boat riding or skydiving, this is the place for you” (SM2, 18). In the dialogue the characters refer to things like “some serious New Zealand Kiwi action!” (SM2, 18). Another sport associated with New Zealand is the rugby: “*The All Blacks* is the name of the national rugby team in New Zealand” (SM2, 37). Rugby is again mentioned in conjunction with the “haka”: “Rugby teams have different hakas, which they do at the beginning of a match to give stamina to the team” (SM2, 42).

Category (10) LANGUAGE

In terms of the category (10) LANGUAGE, there are references to Maori names: “The name Weta comes from the Maori name *wetapunga*, which means “God of ugly things”” (SM2, 29). Mount Cook, New Zealand’s highest mountain has a Maori name “Aoraki”, which means “cloud piercer” (SM2, 39). On the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages New Zealand’s two official languages are mentioned, English and Maori, and there a reference to the second longest place name in the world (SM2, 36-37). Again, one can see the Maori aspect in this category.

Categories (2) SIGHTS, TRAVEL & TOURIST INFORMATION, (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE and (8) POPULAR CULTURE

All these topics are featured in one text each. In terms of tourist destinations, on the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages there are references to the capital, Wellington, and other cities of interest that are Auckland, Dunedin, Queenstown and Christchurch (SM2, 36). However, no information is given on these places in terms of what to see or what to do, apart from Queenstown, which is

approached more through extreme sports and other sports activities. As is the case with Australia, the places that are labeled under the category 4) NATURE, WILDLIFE & ENVIRONMENT can also be places of interest to tourists. This can in part explain the small number of relevant texts in category 2). On the *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages there are short references to New Zealand's head of state (the British monarch) and the currency which fall under category (7) SOCIETY, POLITICS & SCIENCE (SM2, 36). In terms of popular culture, on the same *Bits 'n' Pieces* spread there is a small bit of information on the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy being filmed in New Zealand (SM2, 379). There was no information on the remaining categories, FOOD CULTURE and HIGH CULTURE.

6.2.6 Canada

The only feature on Canada in SM2 is a song by Simple Plan, a pop/punk group from Montreal. Apart from that, none of the chapters contain information on Canada.

7 Discussion

According to Risager (1991, 181) foreign language textbooks “increasingly participate in the general cultural transmission within the educational system and in the rest of society”. The content of textbooks is influenced by “cultural trends” outside the foreign language pedagogy and “as cultural texts they can be compared with other types of texts and other media participating in cultural reproduction: travel brochures, photographic reportage in newspapers and magazines, museum displays of life and culture” (ibid., 181-182). Based on the content in *Smart Moves 2* one can say that the information on the countries is versatile: ten different topics are covered in the textbook. Chapter 2 presented several different definitions of culture. What

was useful for my analysis was the inclusion of the “anthropological” idea of culture, such as way of life, value and beliefs and the “humanistic” idea of culture, such as arts and media (King 1991, 2, also quoted in Alasuutari and Ruuska 1999, 54). However, this divide was not enough for this study. To refine the analysis I expanded the notion of culture to include several different topics as the purpose of the analysis was to put all the country-specific information into different topic categories. Therefore I had to define several categories of culture, including topics like nature, wildlife and environment, even though some might argue that these topics would not traditionally be thought to mean “culture” as such.

Earlier I referred to Risager’s (1991, 191) idea of textbooks presenting the countries “in a nut-shell”. This idea is reflected in the textbook’s *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages which offer a sort of miscellaneous information package on five of the countries: Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Ireland and the USA. These are the countries that are in focus in *Smart Moves 2*, and more English speaking countries are dealt with in the other two textbooks of the series, *Smart Moves 1* and *Smart Moves 3*. As the title suggests, the *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages include “bits of information” about different facts, such as geography, culture, traditions etc. This type of presentation of information can sometimes leave certain pieces of information rather loose from connection, however, one can assume that the whole point of these *Bits ‘n’ Pieces* pages is to present many different facts and pieces of information, in other words present the countries “in a nut-shell”.

In SM2 the coverage on the USA focuses on the portrayal of real people. The texts provide a strong focus on portraying the multicultural aspect of the society, along with an indication that certain ethnic minorities come from a lower social class, thus enjoying fewer professional opportunities which directly results in a poorer lifestyle. One can argue that it is quite stereotypical that the Hispanic family is portrayed as poor and non-educated whereas the

Asian American family of Taiwanese descent is portrayed as a middle class family, with good jobs and university-educated children. The different characters and their different starting points in life do show the harsh reality of unequal opportunities in American society, even though there is really nothing surprising or new information to the reader on this. However, what is refreshing is that the textbook does not ignore this, but portrays these unequal opportunities in the texts. However, the dealing with such issues is rather superficial and does not go into detail. As Risager (1991, 189) points out about foreign language textbooks, in general “the subjectivity and feelings of characters are under-represented”, almost as if the characters are “half-persons”.

The everyday life of Americans is portrayed through lives of people in smaller American towns, giving the reader a sense of reality in terms of describing what life is like in the USA. The textbook does not, however, forget the “travelogue” (Kramsch quoted in Harklau 1999, 122) representation of the USA: New York is presented as the major tourist attraction of the country. The most important and probably the most famous American holidays are presented in the texts, with a strong focus on how important these celebrations are to American people. The feeling of national pride and the appreciation of the American flag are things that filter through the texts that focus on national holidays and celebrations. In general, nature is described as something extremely beautiful and as something that the Americans are very proud of. In terms of the presentation of wildlife and animals, focus is on the vast variety of different animals that can be found in the wild. What is rather surprising about the findings is that although the country is often seen as the capital of entertainment and popular culture, the texts do not portray this aspect (texts on popular culture are not that frequent nor that informative in terms of content).

Not surprisingly, Australia is presented through its impressive and versatile nature, wildlife and environment. Australia’s nature, climate and geography are described in detail,

presenting Australia as a country of outback, deserts, plains and shores. Nature is complemented through features such as Alice Springs, Ayers Rock and the Great Barrier Reef. Also Australian wildlife is described in detail, portraying the country's wildlife as extremely diverse and unique. In terms of representing Australian people the focus is clearly on one ethnic group, the Aboriginals of Australia. As pointed out in the analysis, this group of people is an important part of Australia's history and this could explain the frequent references to this ethnic group. The country's symbols and history is also represented through the Aboriginals. However, *Smart Moves 2* textbook does not really say anything about other ethnic groups or backgrounds of Australian people – it only portrays this one ethnic minority.

The UK is presented through several examples of its popular culture, however, the content is mostly just names of famous people or songs. This does not really say that much about popular culture or music as such, apart from introducing some performers and songs. The information on the British school system is, however, quite informative and it is told through two countries, England and Scotland. The exclusive English public school (i.e. private school) system is opened up to the reader and it is portrayed as very elitist and expensive. This can be seen to give the reader an indication of the still-remaining class society in England. It portrays the English school system as rather archaic perhaps, with its gender segregation and school uniforms. In terms of the "travelogue" (Kramsch quoted in Harklau 1999, 122) representation of the UK, the texts in *Smart Moves 2* do not focus on that. There are mere mentions on the big cities in Scotland and Northern Ireland, but nothing on tourist sights, for example. However, the textbook does give informative content on Scottish traditions, even though it is not a frequently occurring topic in the textbook. The *Bits 'n' Pieces* pages offer insight into many Scottish traditions and festivals, including many pictures and this kind of portrayal of Scottish traditions

gives the country a unique appeal, making it stand out culturally from the rest of the UK countries.

In *Smart Moves 2* Ireland is one of the countries in focus. The textbook gives information on Irish symbols, celebrations and history, featuring things that are generally considered very Irish, such as St Patrick's Day and traditional Irish dancing, Riverdance. Also the ginger hair and freckles of the Irish get a mention. However, this type of information is somewhat superficial as it portrays the stereotypical look of the Irish, albeit if it is true that most Irish have red hair and freckles then there should be nothing wrong with this representation. There is a whole chapter dedicated to the history of the Irish people and their immigration to America, in other words, there was a strong focus on the history of country and its people. There is just a brief mention on the Catholic church and one could have expected perhaps a little more information on the religion of the Irish as it is regarded so important within the Irish people and society. In terms of its nature, climate and scenery, Ireland is described through its green landscape, rainy and windy weather and high cliffs.

The portrayal of New Zealand has a strong focus on nature, wildlife and environment, as is the case with Australia. This is a somewhat expected result as nature and wildlife is something that New Zealand is very well known for in general so it is expected that the texts would strongly reflect this aspect. The texts provide detailed descriptions of nature's many creations and wildlife animals, thus offering a picture of a country of diverse environment. This kind of presentation of New Zealand portrays the country as a true nature resort with many exquisite features. Moreover, in chapter 7 in *Smart Moves 2*, the information is told from a personal perspective, thus making the nature experience more personal and thus, perhaps more appealing. This kind of detailed and personal presentation of the New Zealand nature and environment suggests that New Zealanders

are very proud of their nature and outdoors. In terms of describing its people the focus is on one indigenous group, the Maoris. The Maori theme continues with other topics as well, such as Maori traditions (haka) and Maori names and language. In terms of representation of everyday life and people in general the textbook does not offer any information on these aspects at all. One thing that comes across from *Smart Moves 2* textbook is that New Zealand is strongly associated with extreme sports and rugby. Queenstown is described as the place of extreme sports and the textbook gives a lot of information on different extreme sports that one can try over there.

The findings show that textbook writers have come a long way since the 1950s when the main focus was on the linguistic objectives (Risager 1991, 181). The topics that Byram and Risager's (1999, 92-93, 195) questionnaire findings suggested as top foreign culture themes for foreign language teaching are almost all included in *Smart Moves 2* textbook: history, daily life and routines, shopping, food and drink, youth culture (e.g. fashion, music), school and education, geography and regions, family life, social and living conditions, festivities and customs, ethnic relations, racism, tourism and travel as well as working life and unemployment. The minimum content of cultural learning by Byram et al. (1994, 51-52) is also followed in *Smart Moves 2* textbook: there is information on social groups such as ethnic minorities, beliefs and routines, socio-political institutions, national history, geography, cultural heritage and national identity. Surely certain representations are somewhat stereotypical, as the Irish looks of ginger hair and freckles or portraying the national pride of the Americans or the importance of certain typically American holidays such as Thanksgiving. These are some of the challenges of teaching culture, as referred to in chapter 3.4, however, as already said, stereotypes can sometimes be helpful in identifying different countries, cultures and their people.

What is refreshing about *Smart Moves 2* is the fact that it does portray uncomfortable social realities of different communities at least to some extent, as is the case with the representation of unequal communities in the USA. In terms of the topics that the Finnish National Curriculum (National Core Curriculum 2004, 142) advises for inclusion in foreign language teaching the majority of these, however not all, are present in the texts in *Smart Moves 2*: pastime and leisure, travel, public services, study, work, business life, sustainable development, health and welfare and media.

8 Conclusion

This study has examined the content of cultural information on the English speaking countries in *Smart Moves 2* textbook, focusing on the Inner Circle countries defined by Kachru. The information on the USA was the most frequently occurring in the textbook, closely followed by Australia, then the UK, Ireland, New Zealand and lastly Canada, with just one text mentioning Canada. The study showed that each country has a different focus in terms of what topic is the most common. The most frequently occurring topic with the USA is the portrayal of real people and their lives as well as the multicultural societies in the country. This is a somewhat unexpected result, as one could have thought other, more stereotypical topics, such as popular mass culture, to be covered when it comes to the USA. Also, the focus was not on big cities or tourist attractions, but on life in smaller towns around the country. The information on Australia, not surprisingly, focused on the country's versatile nature, wildlife and the environment. This was also the case with New Zealand. Out of the countries in the UK, the textbook presents information on England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but there is nothing on Wales. Although the textbook mentions several features on the UK popular culture, actually making it the most

popular topic with the UK, the information is not that informative as it consists of songs and has very little information on the performers. However, what is presented in rather detail is the elitist English public school system and the culture of Scotland is portrayed through Scottish traditions and festivals. These findings are not surprising as England is famous for its unique school system (featuring things like school uniforms) and the country of Scotland tends to be known for its distinctive culture when compared to the rest of the UK countries. As to Ireland, the analysis showed that the textbook focused on things that are commonly known to be very typical of Irish culture, such as celebrations like St Patrick's Day and Riverdance. It was not surprising at all that Irish people were described as having ginger hair and freckles. Also, Ireland is known for its immigration history and this was covered in detail in the textbook. In addition to this, the distinctive landscape and climate of Ireland was also featured in rather many details.

When comparing the different cultural topics found in the *Smart Moves 2* to those top themes that, according to the field's key researchers and theorists, should be present in foreign language textbooks one can say that the *Smart Moves 2* textbook offers a comprehensive presentation of topics. Almost all of the topics that, for example, Byram and Risager (1999, 92-93, 195) suggested as appropriate on foreign cultures were present in this one textbook. The demands of the minimum content of cultural learning, presented by Byram et al. (1994, 51-52), were also almost all met in the *Smart Moves 2* textbook as the content of the information covered the themes of social identity and social groups, belief and behavior, socio-political institutions, socialisation and the life-cycle and national history, geography and cultural heritage as well stereotypes and national identity. Certain topics and certain countries were dealt with in more detail than others and one cannot really even assume that there would be the same amount of

information on each country and each topic in one textbook as the presentation of the English speaking world is divided between all the three textbooks in the *Smart Moves* series.

The initial idea was to analyse all the three textbooks of the *Smart Moves* series and for sure this would have provided more comprehensive results on the representation of the target countries. However, this was an in-depth content analysis of all the cultural information of the target countries and therefore one textbook alone provided more than enough material for analysis. Perhaps the study could have been carried out by doing an analysis with mere random text samples, however, then it would not have provided a realistic representation of the content which was the purpose of my analysis to begin with.

Also, what arose from this study was an idea for further analysis, which is the investigation of intercultural communication in foreign language textbooks. It would be interesting to analyse to what extent *Smart Moves 2* furthers this aspect of foreign language teaching and learning. As this was not the actual research question in my analysis it is difficult to comment on this. However, on the basis of my analysis I can say that there was very little comparison between countries and cultures in the texts. The results could have been different if one had analysed the exercise book as perhaps intercultural communication is better taught through exercises.

Hopefully this study will encourage foreign language teachers to pay attention to the content of cultural information that they are teaching and to treat the cultural content as an integral part of foreign language teaching in the classroom. As for my own part, I will certainly aim at taking a more critical look at the kind of cultural information presented in the textbooks from now on, in order to provide a comprehensive and realistic representation of different countries and cultures to pupils.

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