

Revisiting Postmethod Pedagogy: Analyzing Kumaravadivelu's Macrostrategies in the Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) English Textbook

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ABSTRACT

This concept paper analyses the Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) English textbook through the lens of Kumaravadivelu's ten post method macro strategies. While global textbooks are often adopted to align with CEFR standards, their pedagogical value depends on how effectively they balance linguistic input with learner-centred, context-sensitive principles. The analysis shows that Super Minds is particularly strong in maximizing learning opportunities, integrating language skills, and embedding values and cross-curricular content. Songs, stories, phonics, and "English for School" sections provide multimodal exposure that supports both linguistic and cognitive development. However, limitations emerge in promoting learner autonomy, facilitating negotiated interaction, and ensuring cultural relevance, as many examples remain Western-centric. These findings highlight the importance of teacher mediation: Malaysian educators must adapt tasks, localize cultural content, and expand structured activities into more open-ended ones to realize the textbook's full potential. In doing so, Super Minds can serve not as a prescriptive method but as a flexible resource aligned with Kumaravadivelu's call for postmethod pedagogy.

Keywords: Postmethod Pedagogy; Macrostrategies; Super Minds; CEFR; Textbook Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Recent studies indicated that the implementation of CEFR-aligned English textbooks in Malaysia has renewed interest in evaluating their pedagogical foundations. Textbooks have been described as not only sources of linguistic input but also tools that shape classroom practices, mediate cultural exposure, and foster learner autonomy. Among these, Super Minds (Year 1 & 2), published by Cambridge University Press, has been positioned as an innovative course designed to enhance young learners' cognitive and creative capacities. Aripin and Yusoff (2022) reported that the series claims to foster creativity, cross-curricular thinking, and social values through songs, stories, projects, and "English for school" sections, offering tasks that are cognitively, socially, and linguistically rich.

However, researchers highlighted concerns about cultural balance and contextual fit. Katawazai et al. (2022) and Shak et al. (2021) found that although the textbook exposes learners to global cultures, it lacks sufficient integration of Malaysian cultural elements, which they argued are essential for learner identity and social relevance.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggested that postmethod pedagogy provides a framework for evaluating such materials by challenging prescriptive teaching methods and enabling teachers to adapt instruction to learners' sociocultural contexts. He proposed ten macrostrategies such as maximizing learning opportunities, promoting learner autonomy, facilitating negotiated interaction, and raising cultural consciousness that guide responsive teaching.

Earlier, Bakir and Aziz (2022) and Uri (2023) observed that Super Minds aligns with CEFR standards by integrating language skills and supporting cognitive development but reported limited adaptability for diverse Malaysian contexts, particularly in rural settings. Shak et al. (2021) further noted that teachers often make significant adaptations, suggesting a gap between textbook design and classroom realities.

Similarly, Aripin and Yusoff (2022) and Uri (2023) stated that teachers expressed moderate approval of the textbook but reported challenges such as lexical density, limited alignment with proficiency levels, and cultural unfamiliarity. These issues, they argued, raise questions about whether the textbook promotes learner autonomy, contextualizes input, and reflects Malaysian learners' realities. Kaur and Jian (2022) asserted that such analysis contributes to broader discussions on adapting imported materials to local contexts, aligning with Malaysia's English Language Education Roadmap (2015–2025), which emphasizes context-sensitive pedagogies to improve English proficiency nationwide.

Therefore, the purpose of this concept paper is therefore twofold: first, to map the elements of Kumaravadivelu's ten macrostrategies onto the design and activities of Super Minds (Year 1 & 2); and second, to highlight areas where the textbook aligns with or diverges from the principles of postmethod pedagogy. By doing so, this paper aims to provide insights into how teachers and policymakers might critically engage with global textbook series to maximize their relevance and effectiveness in Malaysian classrooms.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Kumaravadivelu's (2003) postmethod pedagogy arose as a response to the limitations of method-based approaches in language teaching. Traditional methods, whether language-, learner-, or learning-centered have failed to capture the complex sociocultural and political realities of classrooms. Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues that the search for a "best method" is both futile and disempowering, as it imposes external prescriptions on teachers working in specific local contexts. Instead, he proposes a pedagogy shaped by three parameters: particularity (sensitivity to specific learners, teachers, and contexts), practicality (teachers generating theory through reflection and inquiry), and possibility (acknowledging sociopolitical dimensions of language education to foster identity and transformation).

To operationalize these principles, he outlines ten macro strategies, broad, theory- and method-neutral guidelines that teachers can adapt into classroom-specific micro strategies:

1. **Maximize Learning Opportunities** – Create and utilize opportunities balancing instruction and learner agency.
2. **Minimize Perceptual Mismatches** – Bridge gaps between teacher intentions and learner interpretations.
3. **Facilitate Negotiated Interaction** – Encourage learners to initiate and sustain meaningful discourse.
4. **Promote Learner Autonomy** – Develop strategies for self-directed learning.
5. **Foster Language Awareness** – Draw attention to formal and functional aspects of language.
6. **Activate Intuitive Heuristics** – Provide rich input for learners to infer patterns and rules.
7. **Contextualize Linguistic Input** – Present language within meaningful contexts.
8. **Integrate Language Skills** – Holistically combine listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
9. **Ensure Social Relevance** – Stay sensitive to societal, political, and economic contexts.
10. **Raise Cultural Consciousness** – Value learners as cultural informants and foster reflection on identity.

These macro strategies offer a framework to evaluate whether textbooks like Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) support learner-centred, context-sensitive, and socially relevant language learning.

Textbook Context: Super Minds (Year 1 & 2)

Super Minds, published by Cambridge University Press, is a seven-level primary English course designed to combine language learning with the development of thinking skills, creativity, and social values. In Malaysia, the series has been adopted in Years 1 and 2 under the CEFR-aligned Standard-Based English Language

Curriculum (SBELC), making it foundational for children's early literacy and engagement with English.

The textbook is structured around thematic units that integrate songs, chants, phonics, grammar activities, and values-based stories. "English for school" sections link English to subjects such as science, art, and geography, while the recurring "Super Friends" characters convey moral values like teamwork, fairness, and bravery. These elements position the book as both a linguistic and values-oriented resource.

In addition, the series provides multimodal support through DVD-ROMs, interactive games, and songs, reflecting current emphases on digital learning. However, access to these resources may vary across urban and rural schools.

Overall, Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) goes beyond teaching language forms by embedding cross-curricular learning, moral education, and creative engagement, making it an appropriate case for analysis through Kumaravadivelu's macrostrategic framework.

Analyses Of Kumaravadivelu's Macro strategies In The Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) English Textbook.

Macro strategy 1: Maximizing Learning Opportunities

Kumaravadivelu (2003) defines this macrostrategy as creating and utilizing opportunities for learning, with teachers balancing roles as managers of instruction and mediators of learning. In Super Minds (Year 1 & 2), this principle is embedded through interactive, multimodal activities that go beyond drill-based teaching.

For example, Unit 1: At School (pp. 10–21) introduces classroom objects ("*What's this? It's a pencil*") alongside commands ("*Open your book, please*"). Vocabulary is combined with songs, chants, and role-play, ensuring practice through repeated exposure across multiple formats. Such multimodality maximizes incidental learning by engaging learners in listening, speaking, reading, and singing.

In Unit 9: At the Beach (pp. 106–117), holiday-related vocabulary and grammar ("*Let's play the guitar*"; "*Where's the blue book?*") expand into a story and value section on modesty and working together in "The Top of the Hill" (p. 110). Language learning is embedded in a moral narrative, allowing children to connect real-life values with classroom English. This layering of linguistic and moral objectives transforms one activity into multiple learning opportunities. "Thinking Skills" and "English for School" sections also invite learners to match, hypothesize, and apply knowledge (e.g., Science: "Camouflage", p. 43; Geography: "Holiday Weather", p. 114). These tasks bridge English with cross-curricular content, positioning it as a tool for inquiry and problem-solving.

Super Minds operationalizes this macrostrategy by (1) recycling linguistic forms across modalities, (2) embedding moral and cultural content, and (3) extending learning into cross-curricular contexts. Its design reflects a postmethod orientation, offering teachers adaptable entry points for micro-opportunities like role-plays, projects, and peer teaching. However, the effectiveness of these opportunities is contingent upon teacher mediation and classroom conditions, factors that remain especially constraining in rural Malaysian schools. Recent studies confirm that rural teachers often face systemic limitations, such as inadequate digital infrastructure, insufficient ICT tools, and unreliable internet access, all of which hinder the adoption of learner-centered pedagogies (Donald & Hashim, 2025).

Furthermore, Yang et al. (2023) pointed out that in East Malaysia, educators have also reported difficulty integrating audio-visual approaches due to infrastructure gaps and policy barriers related to CEFR implementation. Additionally, Zakaria et al. (2024) noted that teachers in low-enrolment rural schools express hesitancy to adopt personalized learning approaches due to heavy teaching loads and limited support, despite their potential to enhance student engagement and motivation

Macro strategy 2: Minimizing Perceptual Mismatches

Kumaravadivelu (2003) defines this macrostrategy as recognizing and addressing gaps between teacher intentions and learner interpretations. Perceptual mismatches often occur when the input, task design, or cultural

references are beyond learners' comprehension. Super Minds attempts to reduce such gaps by embedding visual support, clear repetition, and contextual scaffolding across its units. For example, in Unit 1: At School (pp. 10–21), vocabulary for classroom objects is introduced alongside songs, chants, and illustrations (“*What’s this? It’s a pencil!*”), ensuring children can connect words to familiar visuals rather than abstract text. By using highly visual input, the materials reduce the risk of learners misunderstanding teacher prompts or vocabulary.

In Unit 5: Free Time (pp. 58–69), daily activities such as playing football or watching TV are contextualized with days of the week (“*Do you play football at the weekend? Yes, I do/No, I don’t*”). Here, possible mismatches in tense and adverbial usage are minimized by coupling grammar practice with familiar leisure activities, making abstract structures meaningful.

Similarly, Unit 7: Get Dressed (pp. 82–93) introduces clothing vocabulary through dialogues (“*Do you like this hat? Olivia’s wearing a red sweater*”) supported by character illustrations. By linking grammar (present continuous) with relatable contexts, the book anticipates and narrows potential gaps between what teachers want learners to notice (grammatical form) and what learners actually perceive (fashionable items).

Across its units, Super Minds proactively minimizes perceptual mismatches by (1) using visuals and chants to clarify meaning, (2) embedding grammar in familiar daily-life contexts, (3) integrating values-based stories to situate language in real dilemmas, and (4) employing cross-curricular tasks to confirm comprehension. These strategies align closely with postmethod pedagogy, which emphasizes context-sensitive, learner-centered approaches and recognizes the inevitability of mismatches in diverse classrooms. Multimodal scaffolding, such as combining visuals, verbal input, storytelling, and tasks has been shown to enhance engagement, comprehension, and meaning construction by supporting learners through multiple semiotic modes (Ji & Luo, 2019; Pacheco et al., 2021; Warndini et al., 2023; Yawiloeng, 2022). These multimodal strategies have been particularly effective in reducing cognitive load, supporting identity development, and contextualizing abstract grammar or vocabulary. However, in Malaysian classrooms, elements such as cultural distance, especially references to Western holidays or leisure activities, may still introduce perceptual mismatches. This necessitates teacher mediation to localize content and build culturally responsive bridges between learners lived experiences and curriculum materials (Adoniou & Macken-Horarik, 2007; Tour & Barnes, 2021).

Macro strategy 3: Facilitating Negotiated Interaction

Kumaravadivelu (2003) describes this macrostrategy as encouraging meaningful learner–learner and learner–teacher exchanges where students initiate topics and sustain dialogue, rather than merely reacting passively. Super Minds incorporates this principle through pair-work, role-play, and interactive problem-solving tasks across several units.

For example, in Unit 6: The Old House (pp. 70–81), learners explore vocabulary for homes and furniture through a song (“*In my little house*”) and follow-up speaking tasks like “*Is there a plane? Are there any rats?*”. Here, students are prompted to ask and answer questions with peers, negotiating meaning as they identify objects in pictures and clarify responses. This activity fosters dialogic exchange, allowing learners to control both the questions and answers.

In Unit 8: The Robot (pp. 94–105), the grammar focus on “can/can’t” is reinforced through interactive questions such as “*Can you swim? Yes, I can/No, I can’t*”. The unit encourages role-play where students perform actions (e.g., skipping, hopping) while classmates ask and answer about abilities. Such embodied interaction not only creates a playful environment but also ensures learners are negotiating meaning in real time.

Similarly, Unit 10: Get Dressed (pp. 82–93) embeds interactive practice in a dialogue about clothing (“*Do you like this hat?*” “*Yes, I do/No, I don’t*”). Learners are encouraged to comment on each other’s clothing, making interaction contextually relevant and unpredictable.

Finally, values-based stories (e.g., “The Go-Kart Race” (p.26) on fair play, “The Top of the Hill” (p. 110) on asking for help) are often followed by comprehension questions and discussion prompts where students talk about their own experiences. These sections create openings for learners to introduce personal perspectives,

facilitating authentic learner-initiated talk. Across its units, Super Minds integrates negotiated interaction through games, pair-work interviews, role-plays, and post-story discussions. The materials foster interaction that is scaffolded but open-ended, allowing learners to co-construct meaning. From a postmethod perspective, this

reflects Kumaravadivelu's call for classrooms where learners initiate as well as respond. Research shows that such negotiated interaction facilitates comprehensible input and output, particularly when paired with teacher-led or peer-supported scaffolding that enables learners to clarify and negotiate meaning (Antón, 1999; Guan & Gao, 2019; Boulima, 1999). Scaffolding in these interactive contexts has been shown to encourage student autonomy and deeper language processing (Danli, 2017; Yaqubi & Mozaffari, 2010). Nonetheless, in Malaysian classrooms, the extent of negotiation may vary depending on factors such as class size, teacher training, and willingness to extend beyond scripted textbook prompts (Febrianto, 2019; Luan & Sappathy, 2011).

Macro strategy 4: Promoting Learner Autonomy

Kumaravadivelu (2003) defines this macrostrategy as helping learners learn how to learn by equipping them with tools to self-direct and self-monitor their own progress. In Super Minds, learner autonomy is fostered primarily through creative projects, reflection activities, and problem-solving tasks that encourage students to make personal choices and take responsibility for their learning

For example, Unit 1: At School (pp. 10-21) ends with a poster-making project where children collect pictures of school objects, write colour words, and arrange them creatively (p. 21). This activity gives learners control over the design and content of their poster, moving beyond teacher-directed drills to independent production.

In Unit 6: The Old House (pp. 70-81), learners are asked to write about their house after vocabulary and grammar practice (p. 77). By personalizing content, students apply language to their own lives, practicing self-expression and decision-making in English.

Similarly, Unit 8: The Robot (pp. 94- 105) includes a creative task where learners draw and describe their own invented animals ("*I'm a Brog. I've got three heads, three legs and four arms*") (p. 101). Here, autonomy is promoted through imaginative output that is not bound by model answers but guided by learners' choices.

The "English for School" sections also enhance autonomy by requiring learners to apply world knowledge in language tasks for example, in Science activities on camouflage (p. 42) or skeletons (p. 102). These tasks demand that learners hypothesize, test, and present their reasoning, cultivating skills for independent inquiry.

Through projects, personal writing, and inquiry-based cross-curricular tasks, Super Minds embeds autonomy-building opportunities that align with postmethod pedagogy. Such tasks help learners move from passive recipients of knowledge to active constructors of their own learning pathways. Research supports that learner autonomy develops most effectively when scaffolded by teachers who gradually guide students toward self-regulation and independent learning (Danli, 2017; Bajrami, 2015; Zoghi & Dehghan, 2012). However, the extent of autonomy achieved depends on teacher implementation: in some Malaysian classrooms, large class sizes and exam pressures may restrict time for open-ended projects. Teachers thus play a key role in scaffolding and sustaining learner choice so that autonomy is not overshadowed by curriculum demands (Masouleh & Jooneghani, 2012; Ligang, 2020).

Macro strategy 5: Fostering Language Awareness

Kumaravadivelu (2003) explains this macrostrategy as drawing learners' attention to the formal and functional properties of language so that they become more explicit in their understanding. In Super Minds, this is achieved through songs, chants, phonics practice, and guided noticing tasks that highlight sound-spelling relationships, grammatical patterns, and usage in context.

For instance, in Unit 2: Let's Play! (pp. 22-33), learners encounter vocabulary through chants and then practice descriptive grammar ("*It's a new kite,*" "*It's an ugly monster*"). The unit integrates phonics activities such as "The letter sound o" and "The letter sound e" which make learners explicitly aware of how sounds correspond

to letters. By combining meaning-focused practice with phonics, the book raises awareness of both form and function.

Similarly, Unit 8: The Robot (pp. 94–105) builds awareness of modal structures through a chant, “*Let’s make a robot! Here’s the head, here’s an arm,*” while embedding grammar in playful contexts. Learners then create sentences about abilities (“*I can stand on one leg*”), explicitly attending to the modal can/can’t in communicative practice.

Another strong example appears in Unit 7: Get Dressed (pp. 82–93), where the “Clothes Rap” draws attention to lexical sets and the present continuous form (“*Olivia’s wearing a red sweater*”). The rhythmic repetition foregrounds grammatical form while keeping the activity enjoyable, allowing learners to notice how grammar operates in real usage.

Through chants, phonics, and content-based descriptions, Super Minds actively fosters language awareness by encouraging learners to consciously notice patterns in sounds, structures, and usage. This aligns well with Kumaravadivelu’s principle of promoting explicitness in L2 learning. Research has shown that explicit instruction enhances learners’ ability to notice linguistic forms and supports the development of both phonological awareness and general language competence, especially in young learners (Yeung et al., 2020; Jung, 2019). Moreover, noticing is a foundational mechanism for second language acquisition, acting as a gateway to both explicit and implicit learning processes (Lichtman, 2013; Loschky & Harrington, 2013). Importantly, the awareness-building activities in Super Minds are embedded in playful and meaningful contexts, which helps mitigate the risks of decontextualized grammar instruction. For Malaysian classrooms, such tasks provide accessible scaffolding for young learners who may not yet internalize grammar implicitly, making explicit noticing a crucial bridge toward competence as suggested by Yeung et al. (2020).

Macro strategy 6: Activating Intuitive Heuristics

Kumaravadivelu (2003) emphasizes this macrostrategy as exposing learners to rich textual input so they can infer and internalize rules of grammar and communication without overt instruction. Super Minds applies this by presenting vocabulary and grammar through stories, songs, and problem-solving tasks that require learners to notice patterns and deduce meaning.

In the Introductory Unit: Friends (pp. 4-9), learners practice structures such as “*What’s your name?*” and “*How old are you?*” through chants and dialogues (“*Hi, I’m Whisper. What’s your name?*”). Instead of first presenting grammar rules, the book immerses learners in repeated conversational exchanges. From this exposure, children intuitively infer usage of I’m + name/age.

In Unit 6: The Old House (pp. 70-81), learners encounter existential structures (There is/There are) embedded in meaningful contexts such as describing rooms and objects (“*There are four cats. Is there a plane?*”). Learners must interpret meaning through pictures and peer questioning, gradually internalizing how singular and plural forms operate without explicit metalanguage.

A further example is in Unit 7: Get Dressed (pp.82-93), where the present continuous is introduced through dialogues like Olivia’s wearing a red sweater. Rather than rules-first teaching, the unit embeds form in visual prompts (clothes pictures, chants, and a “Cool Cat” song). Learners notice the pattern of verb + -ing by associating it with what characters are wearing.

Across its units, Super Minds fosters intuitive heuristics by immersing learners in stories, chants, and real-life contexts where grammatical structures recur naturally. This reduces reliance on rote grammar explanations and allows learners to notice patterns, hypothesize meaning, and test understanding through interaction. Research shows that inductive grammar learning especially through interaction and narrative contexts is highly effective for young learners as it mirrors first language acquisition and promotes deeper cognitive engagement (Latifah, 2023; Toth et al., 2013). However, some learners particularly in exam-oriented contexts like Malaysia may prefer rule-based instruction, and teachers need to scaffold accordingly to avoid confusion or the perception of ambiguity (Satori, 2024).

Macro strategy 7: Contextualizing Linguistic Input

Kumaravadivelu (2003) emphasizes that linguistic input should be embedded in linguistic, situational, and extrasituational contexts, rather than presented in isolation. Super Minds achieves this by consistently linking grammar and vocabulary to stories, real-life situations, and cross-curricular themes.

For instance, Unit 3: Pet Show (pp. 34-45) presents animal vocabulary and prepositions of place (*"The lizard is in/on/under the bag"*) within a story about being brave. Here, grammar is contextualized through a narrative where characters interact with animals, reducing abstraction and allowing learners to visualize use in meaningful settings.

In Unit 5: Free Time (p.58-69), days of the week and leisure activities (*"Do you play football at the weekend? Yes, I do/No, I don't"*) are tied to children's weekly routines, reinforced by the song *"It's a Busy, Busy Week"*. Instead of isolated verb practice, learners situate grammar in familiar cultural and temporal contexts.

Cross-curricular sections further extend contextualization. In Unit 6: The Old House (pp. 70-81), learners describe natural environments (polar regions, jungles, deserts) with colors and vocabulary (*"The polar regions are white and blue"*). This merges scientific content with linguistic forms, situating input in real-world knowledge domains.

Finally, Unit 4: Lunchtime (pp. 46-57) links quantifiers and question forms (*"Have we got any cheese?" "Yes, we have/No, we haven't"*) with a shopping list activity. By placing grammar in everyday transactional contexts, learners see immediate communicative relevance.

By embedding grammar in stories (e.g., pets and bravery), routines (e.g., free time), scientific content (e.g., habitats), and real-life transactions (e.g., shopping), Super Minds operationalizes contextualization effectively. This, according to Syuhda (2016), supports young learners' meaning-making and aligns well with postmethod pedagogy, which emphasizes the importance of particularity, practicality, and possibility in teaching practices. Not only that but contextualized materials enhance learner engagement, promote language awareness, and foster more meaningful learning experiences, as concluded by Islam (2020).

However, some contexts presented in global textbooks such as shopping for cheese or references to Western leisure activities may feel culturally distant for Malaysian children. Kandel (2019) warned that this echoes concerns that many EFL materials prioritize native-speaker cultures, which may hinder learners' cultural identification and motivation. Therefore, to align with the postmethod emphasis on local relevance, Pariscal and Gonzales-Aboy (2022) proposed that teachers should supplement such materials with culturally familiar examples, such as *pasar malam* shopping or local games, thereby enhancing both contextualization and cultural authenticity.

Macro strategy 8: Integrating Language Skills

Kumaravadivelu (2003) stresses that language teaching should holistically integrate the four macro-skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, rather than treating them as isolated units of instruction. Super Minds consistently integrates skills within single lessons and across units, often combining oral practice with literacy-based tasks and creative production.

For example, Unit 3: Pet Show (pp.34-45) blends oral and written work by first introducing animal vocabulary and prepositions through listening tasks (*"The lizard is in/on/under the bag"*) and songs, then extending this into reading comprehension and writing short descriptions of animals (p. 40). Learners move seamlessly from listening and speaking to literacy tasks, ensuring multiple skills are activated.

In Unit 5: Free Time (pp. 58-69), the theme of weekly activities (*"Do you play football at the weekend?"*) is reinforced by a song (*"It's a busy, busy week"*) for listening/speaking, followed by reading a poem about a child's weekly routine and writing their own version of a "perfect week" (p. 65). This progression demonstrates clear

integration of all four skills within one thematic frame.

Another strong example appears in Unit 7: Get Dressed (pp.82-93), where the clothing theme is taught through a chant (*"I'm a cool, cool cat"*) and dialogues about what characters are wearing. These oral activities are followed by reading a descriptive text and then a writing activity in which learners describe their own clothes (p. 88).

Finally, cross-curricular "English for School" sections also integrate skills. In Unit 9: At the Beach (pp. 106-117), learners listen to weather forecasts, read short texts about holiday weather in different countries, talk with peers about the climate in their own context, and write simple weather reports. This cycle requires learners to process information across modalities while applying English to scientific and geographical knowledge.

Super Minds integrates skills by cycling between oral/aural and literacy-based tasks, using songs, stories, and cross-curricular links as unifying contexts. This holistic integration reflects postmethod pedagogy's rejection of rigid sequencing and acknowledges how language skills naturally interact (Oxford et al., 1994). Research emphasizes that oracy (listening and speaking) supports the development of literacy in young language learners, especially when rhythm, rhyme, embodiment, and drama are used to bridge oral and written modes (Beaumont, 2022; Greenfader & Brouillette, 2013; Rahimi & Farjadian, 2019). For Malaysian learners, this integration supports balanced language growth. However, due to varying literacy readiness, teachers may need to adjust pacing and scaffold transitions between oral and written tasks to avoid overwhelming students with weaker literacy foundations (Putri, 2024; Porter, 2014)

Macro strategy 9: Ensuring Social Relevance

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003, p.39), this macrostrategy urges teachers to be sensitive to the societal, political, economic, and educational environments in which learning occurs. Textbooks that reflect social realities and values help learners see language as meaningful for their lives and communities. Super Minds embeds social relevance through its stories, values sections, and cross-curricular "English for School" tasks.

For example, in Unit 2: Let's Play (pp.22-33), the story on go-kart race (p.26) emphasizes fair play and condemns cheating. The lesson not only teaches grammar and vocabulary but also connects language learning to moral education, reinforcing fairness as a social value relevant to children's interactions.

In Unit 7: Get Dressed (pp.82-93), the values section focuses on saying sorry "The Cap" story (p.86). By situating language practice within a social dilemma, which are acknowledging mistakes and apologizing, the book ties English use to relational skills important in everyday life.

Meanwhile, cross-curricular "English for School" sections also foreground social relevance. In Unit 4: Lunchtime (pp. 46-57), learners interpret information about healthy living habits in a science-based task in the "Be Healthy!" section (p. 54). This links English learning with health education, aligning language skills with life skills that have direct societal impact.

Seasonal and cultural references further add relevance. For instance, the Christmas cut-outs (p. 121–122) introduce learners to a global cultural practice, while also encouraging social expression through greeting-card making. Although not Malaysian-specific, such activities encourage learners to use English for real-life communicative purposes.

Through values-based stories (e.g., fairness, apology), life-skill content (e.g., healthy living), and cultural projects (e.g., Christmas cards), Super Minds integrates social relevance into its lessons. This aligns with postmethod pedagogy by situating English within learners' social worlds and emphasizing context sensitivity, cultural awareness, and the sociopolitical realities of learners (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Syuhda, 2016; Islam, 2020). However, some content reflects Western cultural assumptions (e.g., Christmas) that may not resonate with Malaysian learners. In line with the postmethod parameter of particularity, which emphasizes tailoring pedagogy to specific local contexts, teachers are encouraged to localize materials such as by substituting local celebrations like Hari Raya or Deepavali to maintain cultural relevance (Cruz-Arcila, 2013; Eusafzai, 2015)

Macro strategy 10: Raising Cultural Awareness

Kumaravadivelu (2003) describes this macrostrategy as treating learners as cultural informants, encouraging them to critically engage with both local and global cultures in the classroom. In *Super Minds*, cultural consciousness is raised through lessons, stories, and projects that expose children to global traditions, environments, and everyday practices.

For example, in Unit 6: The Old House (pp. 70-81), learners are introduced to different environments in the “Habitat” section (p.78) such as the polar regions, jungles, and deserts, and are asked to describe their colors and associated animals (“*The polar regions are white and blue*”). This not only teaches descriptive language but also exposes learners to ecological diversity, prompting comparisons with local Malaysian habitats.

Similarly, Unit 9: At the Beach (pp. 106-117). The “Holiday Weather” lesson (p.114) invites learners to interpret weather in different countries (Scotland, Japan, Italy) through texts and postcards describing cultural experiences of climate (“*It’s cold and snowing in Scotland,*” “*It’s raining in Japan*”). This situates language learning in culturally specific contexts, encouraging learners to connect global realities with their own lived experiences of tropical weather.

Cultural consciousness is also explicitly embedded in festivals and cut-outs (pp. 118–123), where learners make Christmas cards. Although reflecting Western traditions such as Halloween, Easter, and Christmas, such tasks expose learners to global practices and provide opportunities for teachers to initiate discussions about similarities and differences with local festivals like Hari Raya, Deepavali, or Chinese New Year.

Finally, in Unit 9: Let’s Go to the Beach (p.106), cultural references appear through leisure activities like making sandcastles, catching fish, or snorkeling. These tasks highlight lifestyles that may be foreign to some learners, offering an opening for teachers to validate students’ own cultural knowledge (e.g., local seaside activities in Malaysia).

By embedding cultural references in environmental knowledge (habitats), everyday contexts (weather), global traditions (Christmas), and leisure practices (beach activities), *Super Minds* promotes cultural awareness and comparison. This aligns with postmethod pedagogy, which emphasizes the importance of raising cultural consciousness and validating learners’ identities while introducing them to global cultures (Syuhda, 2016; Gao, 2024). In Malaysia, intercultural competence is increasingly recognized as essential, particularly in multicultural classrooms. Recent studies highlight how students’ ability to interact across cultures depends not only on language proficiency but also on inclusive content that reflects local identities (Dalib et al., 2019; Yaccob et al., 2022; Rahim & Daghigh, 2020)

However, cultural distance remains a challenge, as many examples in imported textbooks are Western-centric. Teachers in Malaysia must bridge this gap by engaging students in comparing their own cultural practices, such as *Hari Raya*, *Deepavali*, or *Gawai* with global ones, transforming these lessons into meaningful intercultural dialogues.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of *Super Minds* (Year 1 & 2) through Kumaravadivelu’s ten macrostrategies reveals that the textbook systematically embeds opportunities for young learners to engage with English in ways that extend beyond grammar drills and vocabulary memorization. However, the integration of these strategies is uneven, with certain macrostrategies strongly represented and others only weakly implied.

One clear strength of the series is its multimodal and integrated design, which aligns well with the principles of maximizing learning opportunities, fostering language awareness, and integrating skills. Research by Lai (2024) showed that multimodal task designs can significantly enhance learners’ oral competence, content understanding, and engagement, particularly when hands-on and visual activities are used to reinforce language in context. Similarly, Psaltou-Joycey et al. (2018) reported that cross-curricular integration supports both language and content development, particularly in multilingual classrooms. Fazio and Gallagher (2019) then added that the

inclusion of phonics and cross-subject content helps learners form meaningful connections between form and function in language use

At the same time, the book frequently employs narratives and values-based stories that embed social and moral lessons such as fairness, teamwork, and apology. This approach aligns with the idea that multimodal and values-integrated learning enhances not only linguistic development but also learners' connection to real-life experiences and emotional intelligence as suggested by Morales and Zapata (2024). However, the potential for moral growth hinges on guided discussion and teacher mediation.

A more uneven area lies in the promotion of learner autonomy and negotiation of interaction. While creative projects and pair-work tasks exist, researchers such as Price (2017) noted that they often remain scaffolded and teacher-led, with students following prescribed formats rather than exercising genuine independence. This reflects broader tensions in multimodal learning environments, where even student-generated materials may display limited initiative unless autonomy is deliberately scaffolded. In Malaysian classrooms, these limitations appear more clearly in practice. Shak et al. (2021) reported that in large classes of 40 pupils or more, pair-work tasks were frequently reduced to choral repetition or short, scripted exchanges, leaving little space for authentic negotiation of meaning. Luan and Sappathy (2011) observed that teachers often avoided open-ended discussions in favor of controlled questioning, as managing diverse responses in oversized classes could be overwhelming.

Febrianto (2019) similarly found that without specific training in scaffolding interaction, many teachers reverted to directive approaches, tightly monitoring projects rather than encouraging learner choice. These patterns were particularly evident in rural schools, where teachers facing overcrowded classrooms and limited access to teaching aids tended to rely on whole class drilling to maintain discipline. By contrast, urban teachers with smaller class sizes and greater digital access sometimes expanded pair-work into group projects but still maintained close control over task outcomes due to exam-oriented pressures. These examples illustrate how structural and contextual factors such as class size, resource availability, and training gaps can constrain the potential for textbooks to foster autonomy and negotiated interaction, underscoring the centrality of teacher agency in expanding beyond textbook prompts.

Another key finding concerns the cultural framing of the textbook. While cultural content is present, researchers have noted that the overrepresentation of Western examples risks creating cultural dissonance that can hinder learning. Rahim and Daghigh (2020) argued that when learners are repeatedly exposed to festivals, lifestyles, or social practices that are distant from their own realities, they may struggle to relate to the material, which can reduce motivation and weaken personal identification with English learning.

Likewise, Katawazai et al. (2022) observed that such imbalance may unintentionally marginalize local traditions, thereby diminishing opportunities for students to see their identities validated in the classroom. Over time, this cultural mismatch was said to risk reinforcing the perception that English is tied exclusively to Western values rather than functioning as a global and locally adaptable tool. In response to these issues, scholars such as Cruz-Arcila (2013) and Eusafzai (2015) recommended localizing content to promote learner identity and relevance. They emphasized that when teachers adapt materials to reflect Malaysian customs, traditions, and festivals, learners are more likely to feel engaged, affirmed in their cultural identity, and able to experience English learning as a meaningful process.

Finally, the analysis highlights the tension between global textbook design and local pedagogical realities. The book's flexibility comes with assumptions about technology and resources that may not hold in rural or under-resourced Malaysian schools. Research on CLIL and multimodal learning confirms that the success of such materials depends heavily on teacher agency and contextual adaptation (Lai, 2024)

In summary, *Super Minds* demonstrates strong alignment with macrostrategies related to multimodality, integration, and moral/social themes, but shows limitations in areas of learner autonomy, negotiation of interaction, and cultural localization. This underscores the necessity of teacher mediation as a critical factor: the book provides seeds of postmethod pedagogy, but their growth depends on how teachers cultivate them within the Malaysian educational ecology.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) textbook through the lens of Kumaravadivelu's ten macrostrategies, highlighting both its strengths and limitations as a CEFR-aligned resource in Malaysian classrooms. The findings suggest that the series is effective in maximizing learning opportunities, integrating skills, and embedding moral and cross-curricular content, making it a valuable springboard for young learners' English development.

At the same time, the textbook demonstrates notable gaps in areas such as learner autonomy, negotiated interaction, and cultural localization. These limitations underline the reality that no global textbook can fully anticipate the needs of every local context. The responsibility therefore shifts to teachers, who play a critical role in adapting materials, extending structured activities into more open-ended ones, and contextualizing cultural references for their learners.

In line with Kumaravadivelu's postmethod pedagogy, the analysis confirms that textbooks should not be viewed as fixed scripts but as flexible resources to be reinterpreted and reshaped according to learners' needs and sociocultural realities. For Malaysian educators, this means treating Super Minds as a platform for creativity and adaptation rather than a complete solution.

Building on these insights, it is essential to provide actionable recommendations that can guide teachers, curriculum planners, and policymakers in bridging the gap between global textbook design and local pedagogical realities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the pedagogical value of Super Minds (Year 1 & 2) in Malaysian classrooms:

1. **Enhancing Learner Autonomy:** Teachers should complement the textbook's creative projects with microstrategies that actively promote self-direction. For example, embedding open-ended questions into pair or group activities can stimulate student-initiated dialogue and decision-making. Peer-review tasks and reflection journals are also effective for encouraging self-monitoring and responsibility over learning processes, as mentioned by Chan (2000). Meanwhile, project-based learning (PBL) further enhances learner autonomy by fostering problem-solving, independent research, and team-based reflection (Yuliani & Lengkanawati, 2019; Saad et al., 2024a).
2. **Localizing Cultural Content:** To address the dominance of Western cultural references in English materials, teachers are encouraged to adapt content using local customs, games, and festivals. Replacing global holidays such as Halloween or Christmas with locally celebrated events like Hari Raya, Deepavali, Gawai, or Chinese New Year can foster cultural relevance and identity, which Ismail et al. (2028) and Ahamat et al. (2024) believed has been linked to improved learner motivation and engagement.
3. **Strengthening Negotiated Interaction:** Although textbooks like Super Minds offer role-play and pair-work tasks, they often rely on scripted exchanges. These can be expanded into open-ended, real-life conversations about learners' personal experiences, such as family, school, and local traditions. Encouraging learners to generate their own questions supports authentic interaction and deeper negotiation of meaning, a key feature of learner-centered classrooms as suggested by Murray (1999).
4. **Addressing Classroom Realities:** Large class sizes and limited digital infrastructure, particularly in rural contexts, present serious barriers to implementing tech-dependent methodologies. In these settings, teachers can use low-tech alternatives such as rotating student group leaders, peer teaching, and incorporating realia such as local objects and materials to foster participation and engagement as observed by Shahzad et al. (2021). These practices not only encourage learner autonomy but also build resilience in resource-constrained environments.
5. **Consolidating Teacher Agency:** The successful implementation of textbooks like Super Minds ultimately relies on teacher mediation. Professional development should emphasize adaptive, postmethod approaches, equipping teachers to creatively reinterpret textbook tasks to suit their learners' needs (Hasim

& Zakaria, 2016; Saad et al., 2024b). Empowering teachers through context-sensitive training ensures they can effectively foster learner autonomy regardless of systemic constraints.

By implementing these recommendations, educators and policymakers can bridge the gap between the global design of CEFR-aligned textbooks and the local needs of Malaysian learners. This will ensure that Super Minds functions not merely as a prescriptive resource but as a dynamic platform that empowers teachers and nurtures learner-centered, culturally responsive English language education.

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