



Comparing Representations of 'Self' and "Other" in Iranian and Indian English School Books: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 16 March 2020 Revised: 11 April 2020 Accepted: 15 April 2020 Online: 27 April 2020	English language course books written by local writers are officially prescribed textbooks widely used in Iran and India. Although there is a valuable body of research about these course books, further studies may be needed to comparatively assess their quality as an educational material. This study limits its scope to two textbooks series, namely, the Prospect, and English Standard since both of them are nation-wide textbooks which fully play the roles of course books described in the related literature. The method of analysis was based on a critical discourse analysis framework inspired by Van Dijk's (1998, 2001) socio-cognitive model and Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) multi-functional model to facilitate investigation of both textual and meta-textual aspects of the textbooks. The results showed that both textbook series follow similar ideological foundations in terms of promoting a product-based prescriptive and static approach to socio-cultural values through investing on stereotypical "Self" while ignoring otherness. The findings implied that lack of a process-oriented approach to ideological underpinnings of socio-cultural values and codes is a threat to raising inter-cultural understanding in terms of using English as an international language and inter-ethnic awareness of the students who live in multi-ethnic and religiously, culturally, linguistically diverse communities in India and Iran.
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1. Introduction

Urban No matter what the nature of English language teaching (ELT) program is, textbooks seem to be the essential constituent to it and (as Sheldon, 1988, p. 237, states) textbooks "represent the visible heart of any ELT program". The seminal role of textbooks in ELT programs necessitates their constant evaluation either as an independent line of research or within a larger curriculum evaluation research (Tomlinson, 2003). To this end, considering the variety of evaluation objectives and approaches, several frameworks have been evolved to meet the goals of such studies. While the primary objectives of the pioneering textbook evaluation research were to focus on teaching techniques and exercises (Tucker, 1975), more recent studies broadened their educational scopes to encompass students/teachers' perspectives (Janfeshan, 2018; Shirvani, 2009) or include different aspects of ELT instructional material such as language sexism (Vahdatinejad & Hamidi, 2017).

There have been a number of studies that have evaluated both international and local ELT textbooks developed so far. Considering the objectives of those course book evaluation attempts, they can be classified into studies with either emic or etic perspectives. From etic perspective, the researcher adopts an outsider view into the textbooks so that the mere pedagogical value of the textbook in terms of language teaching principles and techniques are not the focus of the study anymore. They usually adopt an interdisciplinary perspective to textbooks. In this sense, the textbook is perceived as a social, cultural or a psychological phenomenon or a medium of communication. For example, from an etic perspective an ELT textbook is considered as a text to be studied from a discourse analysis outlook (Ahmadi, Yazdani, Babasalari, & Rabi, 2019) or a specific cultural identity such as Iranian-Islamic identity is investigated in a particular series of textbooks (Ghiyasiyan, Seraj, & Bahreini, 2017).

An emic perspective to textbooks, on the other hand, is ultimately a perspective focusing on the intrinsic distinctions that are meaningful in terms of language pedagogy and is considered to be an insiders' perspective, unlike what is going on in studies with etic perspective. Studies done from an emic perspective often encompass detailed and rich analyses of textbooks based on ELT principles and techniques to probe the pedagogical value, capacity and potentials of a specific textbook. The researchers with emic perspective place themselves within the context of intended study and go further in-depth on the details of practices and principles which are not attended from etic perspective. Such studies move within the realm of the immediate instructional value of ELT

textbooks such as criteria pertaining to the physical characteristics of textbooks (such as layout, organizational and logistical characteristics), methodology, aims, and the degree to which a set of materials is not only teachable, but also fits the needs of the individual teacher's approach as well as organization's curriculum (Ebrahimi & Sahragard, 2017; Jahangard, 2007; Janfeshan, 2018; Shabani & Nejad, 2013; Shirvani, 2009).

According to the above-mentioned dichotomy, the present study adopted an etic perspective textbook evaluation. The necessity of conducting such a study is justified with regard to the fact that the majority of research attempts made on Iranian local textbooks were from emic perspective (Ebrahimi & Sahragard, 2017; Jahangard, 2007; Janfeshan, 2018; Shirvani, 2009). In addition, most of the previous studies done on Iranian ELT textbooks either focused on older editions of the high school textbooks (Jahangard, 2007; Shabani & Nejad, 2013) or compared the high school textbooks with the ones used internationally (Janfeshan, 2018; Shirvani, 2009). There seems to be a gap regarding the evaluation of the newly locally developed high school textbooks in Iran within an etic perspective, especially in terms of a comparative perspective. Taking this fact into account that few but not many studies compared the recently developed Iranian textbooks with international ones from a comparative perspective (Moradi, Karbalaei, & Afraz, 2013; Razmjoo, 2007) or with the local textbooks developed in other countries such as Turkey from emic perspective (Mobarakeh & Arani, 2012; Nikou & Soleimani, 2012), there is still a gap to be filled regarding the comparison of local textbooks developed for a different context such as India.

2. Literature Review

The role of textbooks in ELT programs has been defined as instructional material for teachers and learners to use in the process of teaching and learning (Awasthi, 2006), one of the materials used to assist teachers to prepare learners (Tomlinson, 2011) and a tool for self-directed learning, and presentation of materials, source of ideas and tasks, or a reference for learners (Cunningsworth, 1995). According to these definitions, it is undeniable that textbooks are seen as a core source for ELT instruction. Thus, their evaluation seems inevitable similar to any other components of ELT curriculum (Tomlinson, 2003).

From the methodological perspective, there have been several approaches to systematize textbook evaluation. For instance, checklists were used for data collection right from early instances of such attempts (e.g. Tucker, 1975). They included criteria instead of questions; for instance, pronunciation, grammar, content, and others. In most of the instances of such evaluation

reports, researchers themselves applied a group of criteria to specific textbooks and provided their own comments and judgments about the course books under study (Jahangard, 2007; Razmjoo, 2007; Soleimani, & Dabbaghi, 2012).

Beside the checklists mentioned above, many other researchers like Skierso (1991) and Ur (1996), who presented implemented inventories of criteria which were more or less similar criteria as the ones included in the checklists, to evaluate textbook. These inventories often used a weighting system (often from 0 to 5) which easily paved the way for quantitative evaluation of materials. Researchers distributed an inventory of questions or statements among the specific textbook users (teachers and/or students) eliciting either/both a quantitative or/and qualitative responses which were analyzed and discussed with the aid of statistics and/or content analysis (Janfeshan, 2018; Shirvani, 2009).

From the temporal perspective, Ellis's (1997) approach to textbook evaluation which has two main stages, predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation, is relevant. A predictive evaluation is designed to help teachers decide what textbooks to use. Once they have been used, retrospective evaluation may be conducted to find out what impact they have had on instructors and learners. Tomlinson's (2003) three-stage process of evaluation: pre-use evaluation, whilst use evaluation and post-use evaluation also implies such an approach to textbook evaluation.

With regard to the objectives of the study, previous studies may be classified into different taxonomies. One classification may be described from emic vs. etic perspective as described above. Another classification may be explained as absolute vs. comparative evaluation. In absolute evaluation, researchers essentially attempt to compare specific textbooks (as concrete phenomena) with a set of particular characteristics, that is, with an "ideal" course book. In this case the set of evaluation criteria act as an offspring and the analysis shows how far the selected textbooks are from the "ideal" textbook. The evaluation criteria applied are actually representing a set of peculiar properties of an ideal globally-accepted course book which in turn can be considered an abstract phenomenon. This may lead to the problem of subjectivity, that is, each researcher has his own interpretation of an ideal course book. Accordingly, such an approach is vulnerable to an internal variability of judgments, that is, the scores or descriptions provided by either a researcher or a group of participants may not be of similar value (Ebrahimi & Sahragard, 2017; Ghiyasiyan, Seraj, & Bahreini, 2017; Jahangard, 2007; Janfeshan, 2018).

However, comparative evaluation is predicated on two (or more) textbooks and a researcher or a group of participants actually compare two concrete phenomena in terms of some well-defined criteria. Their quantitative or qualitative responses on selected textbooks present a

relative rather than an absolute weighting of the properties of each textbook with reference to their own specific ELT context. The comparative approach to evaluation, unlike the absolute one, puts away the global judgments about textbooks, is in line with a question of relevance within educational philosophy, and attempts to provide an updated framework for materials evaluation. Furthermore, it helps researchers to distinguish to what extent selected materials are compatible with a given teaching context status quo, and to what extent and in what circumstances they might satisfy ELT program objectives (Moradi, Karbalaei, & Afraz, 2013; Nikou & Soleimani, 2012; Razmjoo, 2007; Shirvani, 2009).

However, textbook evaluation as viewed by the present researcher in this study is an etic comparative descriptive approach to critical features embedded in Iranian and Indian local school textbooks. It aims at uncovering and justifying the hidden critical aspects in these textbooks that are developed by non-native authors to be taught nation-wide.

1.1. Critical Discourse Analysis and ELT Textbook Evaluation

There are several instances of research that confirm the fact that ELT textbooks are ideology-led. For example, Brym and Lie (2007, p 97) stated that "teaching materials presented in textbooks are one of the mostly influential gender agents". Many other scholars demonstrated other aspects of ideological issues in ELT textbooks beside gender representation such as representation of cultural values (Setyono, & Widodo, 2019), and socio-political issues (Babaii, & Sheikhi, 2018).

In order to probe the ELT material within a broader social context, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has constantly served as an academic research paradigm aiming to investigate "the power relations, ideological manipulations, and hegemony" (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2007, p.1). According to its definition which include "any theory concerned with critique of ideology and the effects of domination" (Fairclough, 1995, p.20), it assists researchers to decode and clarify "opaque and transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control" (Wodak, 2007, pp.208-209).

Assuming ELT textbook development as a social function or phenomenon is geared with weighting numerous social, ideological, and manipulative factors, including, ethnicity, class, and gender, to name a few, inclusion or inclusion of which would be uncovered through investigating any textbook.

CDA which is rooted in the Hallidayan "pragmatic, problem-oriented approach" (Meyer, 2001, p. 28) to language features a variety of approaches to language and its context. For example,

Fairclough (2001) puts emphasis on semiotic elements such as “productive activity, social relations, social identities, cultural values, consciousness and semiosis” (Fairclough, 2001, p.122) whereas other scholars such as Van Dijk (1998) assumes language to be critically researchable within a triangle of cognition, dialogue and society.

Despite the existence of various approaches to CDA, study of dialectical relationships between semiosis and elements of social practices has always been at the heart of this approach (Fairclough, 2001) which CDA dialectally mingles social science and linguistics into a single theoretical and analytical framework (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

With regard to the inherent role of ELT curriculum in modern educational systems in Iran and India and the canonical role of textbooks in the ELT curricula of these two countries, a critical study of the content and material included in ELT textbooks seems unnegotiably essential. This fact has been echoed in numerous previous studies on textbooks which urged the necessity of enriching the domain of CDA studies on textbooks via investing on various social issues (Ansari & Babaii, 2003; Esmail & Amerian, 2011).

Among the various ideological and social topics researched in various textbooks worldwide, otherness, or us-versus-them interested several researchers, especially those who were into studying local textbooks or curious to further investigate the hidden curriculum of textbooks used in either outer or expanding circles (Pardo, 2018; Vinal & Shin, 2019). According to this perspective, ELT textbook is an arena where social dialectal meaning such as ‘culture’ is formed through multi-vocal dialogue and common experiences which makes learners' individual identities visible and makes them responsible for their own identity or "self" and the foreign identity or "Other" by recognizing voices from both cultures. From this point of view, an ELT textbook is a basis for democratic experiences and processes social manipulation (Tornberg, 2004).

Although there have been a number of research attempts made to investigate otherness as presented in an ELT textbook either from both absolute (Pardo, 2018; Vinal & Shin, 2019) and comparative perspectives (Horvat, & Nilsson, 2018), none of them has focused on the textbooks from two different cultural communities, similar to the current study which includes Indian and Iranian English learning communities.

1.2. National ELT Programs in India and Iran

The history of ELT in India is much longer than that of Iran as it can be traced back to the beginning of nineteenth century (Vijayalakshmi, & Babu, 2014). During this period of over 200 years, ELT in

India has undergone several curricular changes. The same is true for ELT in Iran despite its shorter history. This section focuses on the current status of ELT in India and Iran.

India is a multi-cultural country with a vast range of international give-and-takes, according to which the relevant governmental committees decided that both secondary and higher education need to not only prepare students for the higher education but also help them learn English for different occupational purposes and daily life communication. In accordance with general goal, reasonable standards of efficiency in English are defined (Yesapogu, 2016). The present ELT curriculum in India is in line with the language policy set in chief Ministers conference of 1961 which declared that English needs to be taught along with Hindi. However, since then English has remained to be a compulsory subject at schools in India whereas it is no longer a compulsory course at college level (Vijayalakshmi & Babu, 2014).

In addition, according to the latest curricular goals, every day English, rather than comprehending literary English is emphasized in schools (Yesapogu, 2016). Currently, among the various suggestions made to solve the language policy problem in India, the one offered by the CABE (Central Advisory Board of Education) in 1956 is implemented. It includes a three language formula for the school children and has been implemented since 1961, after being approved by the Chief Ministers' Conference. Accordingly, every Indian school student is required to study three languages; (1) the Regional language; (2) English (3) Hindi for non-Hindi speaking regions. If a student's mother tongue is Hindi, another modern India language would replace third language (Vijayalakshmi & Babu, 2014). According to current language policy in India, only the regional language has to be taught to the students from grade I to IV. From grade V to VII, regional language and Hindi or English are taught.

Unlike the ELT policy in India, Iran enjoys two parallel ELT curricula, a centralized curriculum implemented in schools and a decentralized one in private language institutes. Public schools and private language institutes are basically two pillars of ELT in Iran. The former follows the nation-wide curriculum assigned by the Ministry of Education according to which English is only one of the subjects that are taught in these schools for two sessions a week from the 7th grade to the 12th grade. Accordingly, Prospect 1-3 is taught from grade VII to IX and Vision 1-3 is taught from grade X to XII. The Secretariat of the Higher Council of Education declared the objective of English instruction at public schools to be achievement of survival level of communicative competence, that is, the ability to communicate with foreigners (Farhady & Hedayati, 2009). Unfortunately, this goal is mostly remained sterile due to summative discrete-point language tests,

large size classes, lack of necessary technological aids, and teachers' low English proficiency and adoption of a reading- and grammar-based approach to teaching English (Rahimi & Nabilou, 2009).

Conversely, private languages institute can select a variety of textbooks and teaching methods due to their decentralized managerial systems. Unlike public schools, they teach English following the principles of communicative language teaching mostly (Rahimi & Nabilou, 2009). Although there are various groups of learners/clients with several objectives, the attendees, who voluntarily sign up for classes, are mostly interested in communicating in both oral and written English, and a considerable number of the learners in these institutes are aiming at attending international tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (Farhady & Hedayati, 2009).

Although private institutes private institutes are distributed all over Iran, especially in urban areas, public schools are mainly responsible for familiarizing Iranian students with English and teaching them English as a foreign language, according to official documents and with regard to their nation-wide coverage, especially in rural and underprivileged regions.

From the theoretical perspective, with regard to the role of English as the global lingua franca, the status of ELT in India and Iran is best described in accordance with Kachru's (1989) "three concentric circles" model which "represents the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition, and the functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts." Accordingly, English speakers come from the Inner Circle which represent "the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English" (Kachru, 1989), the Outer Circle which is characterized by "the institutionalized usage of English" (Kachru, 1989), or the Expanding Circle which include speakers of "English as an international language" (Crystal, 1997, p. 54). From this theoretical perspective, ELT plays a different role in India and Iran which may further affect the ideological approaches to the institution and function of ELT curricula in schools in India and Iran.

1.3. Objective of the Study

This study attempted to focus on the latest edition of the Iranian and Indian ELT textbooks developed for public schools. Adopting an etic perspective, they were evaluated through the lens of critical discourse analysis to dig out the features representing identities of the two nations in their locally developed ELT materials.

In accordance with the purpose of the study the following research questions are developed:

1. What are the representations of "self" and "others" in Prospect (1-3)?
2. What are the representations of "self" and "others" in English Standard (Indian textbook) (1-3)?
3. To what extent are the representations of "self" and "others" comparable in Prospect (Iranian textbook) and English Standard (Indian textbook)?

3. Research Method

3.1 Materials

This study encompassed two groups of materials. The first group included three volumes of Prospect (1-3) by Alavi-Moghaddam, Kheirabadi, Anani-Sarab, Foroozandeh-Shahraki, Khadir-Sharbian and Qorbani (2018), which are taught from Grade 7 to 9 at Iranian Junior high schools. The learners are supposed to cover eight lessons of four pages in Prospect 1, seven lessons of six pages in Prospect 2, and six lessons of twelve pages in Prospect 3, that are going to be covered in almost an eight-month academic year. The topics of the units are presented in the following table.

Table 1

Topics of the lessons according to each volume of Prospect (1-3)

	<i>Prospect 1</i>	<i>Prospect 2</i>	<i>Prospect 3</i>
Unit 1	My Name	My Nationality	Personality
Unit 2	My Classmates	My Week	Travel
Unit 3	My Age	My Abilities	Festivals and Ceremonies
Unit 4	My Family	Talking about Health Problems	Service
Unit 5	My Appearance	My City	Media
Unit 6	My House	My Village	Health and Injuries
Unit 7	My Address	My Hobbies	
Unit 8	My Favorite Food		

The second group of materials included three volumes of English Standards (1-3) by Education Secretariat (2018), which are taught from Grade 1 to 3 at Indian secondary schools. The learners are supposed to cover three lessons of twenty pages in English Standard 1 and English Standard 2, and three lessons of twelve pages in English Standard 3, that are going to be covered in almost a nine-month academic year. The topics of the lessons are presented in the following table.

Table 2

Topics of the lessons according to each volume of English Standard (1-3)

	<i>English Standard 1</i>	<i>English Standard 2</i>	<i>English Standard 3</i>
Unit 1	My Pet	My Sweet Home	Unity is Strength
Unit 2	Play Time	Listen to Your Body	Ben and Butterfly
Unit 3	Families	Know Your Feelings	Who Saved the Tree

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was mainly based on the theories critical discourse analysis (CDA) to investigate the representation of "Self" and "Others" in textbooks taught at Iranian and Indian schools from a comparative perspective. Accordingly, this study relied on Van Dijk's (1998) proposition which considers discourse, cognition and society as the basis of analyzing discourse critically. This perspective which later became known as socio-cognitive approach includes three levels as follows:

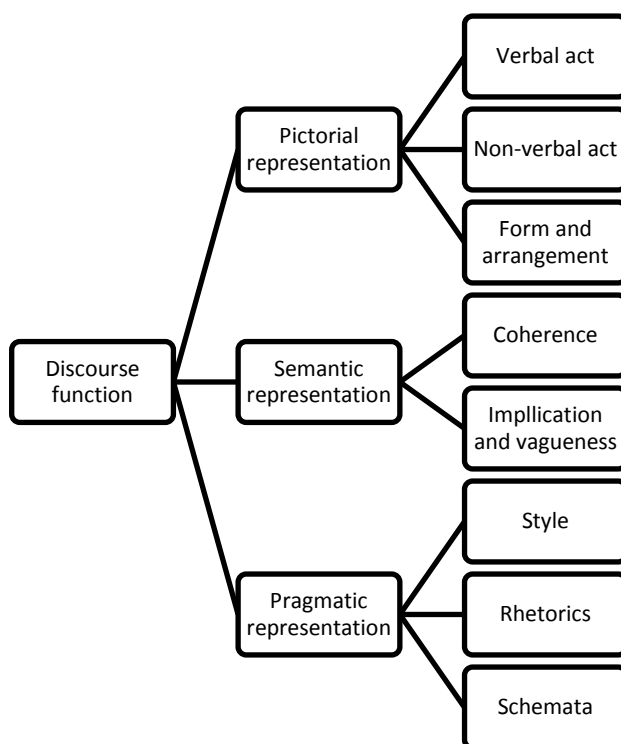


Figure 1

The components and levels of Van Dijk's (1998) model of CDA

From Van Dijk's (1998) perspective, discourse has a general meaning which includes a communicative act such as a conversation, a text, a gesture or a posture, a page layout, an image, and semiotic aspects of multimedia as well. Accordingly, discourse is seen as language within a social and situational context (Van Dijk, 2001).

In this model, cognition is linked with individual and social cognition, beliefs, judgments and feelings as well as all representations which are connected with memory and mind, as long as they are related to discourse and communication (Van Dijk, 2001). Society, also, includes micro-structures of local communication and macro-structures of political and global interactions of institutions, movements, organizations, social processes and political regimes and other abstract structures of communities and cultures which represent the dynamics among the existing groups, for example, domination, inequality. In accordance with this model both local and global aspects discourse are considered.

According to Van Dijk's (1998, 2001) interdisciplinary CDA approach which includes discourse, cognition and society, investigating ideology is the priority. This model explains how ideologies are reflected in spoken and written discourse, how we perceive an ideological dialogue and what role discourse plays in the reproduction of ideologies in a society. Accordingly, discourse includes text, speech, and any linguistic communication and interaction. In addition, cognition includes ideology which is explained within a social frame which is shared by a member of a community (Van Dijk, 2001).

To enrich the analysis done in this study, the pictures and images were analyzed according to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) which is based on Hallidayan perspectives to meta-functions including ideational, inter-personal, textual meta-functions. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) evolved these meta-functions into representative, interactive and combinatory meta-functions in studying images.

Representative function focuses on meaning which is portrayed in the picture according to the participants in the picture, individuals, places, and objects. This level of analysis includes two levels of conceptual and narrative layers. The latter focuses on an act which is realized through an action or a reaction. That is, the important aspect of analysis is what element (such as men, the rich, the black, or the minorities) in the picture is active and which one is passive (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996).

Unless a picture is not narrative, it would be considered a conceptual image which is classified into categorizing, symbolic, and content or analytical types. A categorizing picture puts the content into different levels and classes; symbolic pictures represent a metaphorical relation; and analytical pictures are portraying a whole-part relationship (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996).

According to this model, interaction occurs between the image and its viewer and this interactional event is defined in terms of contact, distance and perspective. Contact deals with gesture, posture, and facial expressions. Distance may be portrayed as a close-up which represents

intimacy and closeness, medium shot which shows social relations and long shot which represent impersonal and unfamiliar relationship (Yasemi & Aghagolzadeh, 2016).

Perspective is also classified into general and top-down perspectives in which top represents power and down represents weakness and inability. In addition, for horizontal perspectives, a full-length portrait shows a sympathetic and emphatic perspective and side-view represents foreignization (Yasemi & Aghagolzadeh, 2016).

3.3 Procedure

This study relied on Van Dijk's (1998, 2001) model to analyze the textbooks discourse critically from socio-cognitive perspectives. In order to enrich this model for the great number of pictures and images included in the textbooks, a more specialized model put forward by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) was adopted. From procedural perspective, each textbook, listed above in material section, was investigated separately and instances of the layers of Van Dijk's (1998, 2001) model were discovered through analyzing textual features of the textbooks. In addition, the instances of types of functional features of the meta-textual features of the textbooks were extracted based on Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) model. Since it was not possible to mention each of the explored instances in this paper, following Yasemi and Aghagolzadeh (2016), an example of each trend in the textbooks was mentioned and discussed.

4. Results

This section includes the results of analysis and the trends found in the Iranian and Indian school course books are presented and explained separately. Further discussion of the findings is presented in the next section of this paper.

According to Van Dijk (1993), narrating ethnic and local affairs, customs and traditions is a special discourse interaction through which the narrators are presupposing and imposing their knowledge and beliefs so that they try to actively impose their own social and cultural values or ideologies to their audience and challenge theirs. Accordingly, he believes that this process promotes legitimizing specific ideology while reproducing ethnic bias which later forms the foundation of differentiation and discrimination resulting indirectly in ethnic inequalities and formation of ethnic prejudice.

4.1. Self-centeredness of Titles

One of the representations of Self in Prospect series is represented in the titles of the units. A glance at the titles is enough to guess the units are all filled the contents, values and codes which are specific to Iranian society. Almost all the titles in Prospect 1 and 2 include "My" which in Van Dijk's (1998) terms is an actor descriptor which differentiates Self from Other. Although this pattern is not visible and not as direct as in Prospect, further analysis shows that Indian school course books are significantly Self-oriented. That is, in none of the titles of the course books, there is no sign of Otherness and coping with cultural and social values or codes of other nations than the authors'.

4.2. Stereotypical Self

The representation of men, women, children and teenagers in both Indian and Iranian school course books are similar in terms of showing a stereotypical appearance and identity. For example, in Iranian English textbooks a man is usually shown in business attire as if working in an official or governmental institution (Figure 2). From Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) perspective, both pictures in Figure 2, similar to many other is Prospect 1 o 3, are mid-shots which according to their model represent social relationships and are classified under analytical images, as shown in the pictures below.



Figure 2

An example of representation of an Iranian man in Prospect series (Prospect 1)

Similarly, women are shown wearing hijab, especially chador, or school uniforms, in case she is a teenager (Figure 3). Population of all ages are shown as if they are coming from an urban background and are clearly Muslim following the codes and values promoted after the 1979 revolution in Iran. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), it can be claimed that teenager and adults' pictures are symbolic; however, they are different in a number of terms; for example, in terms of distance, while teenager pictures are close-up showing intimacy, adults pictures are taken as mid-shots which convey a sense of vagueness in Van Dijk's (2001) term. In addition, all the pictures are passive and the characters are shown inactive. However, similar to most cases of the pictures of the women in Prospect series, women are shown in side-view perspectives which promote their vagueness and unfamiliarity while this is less common in this textbook for men.

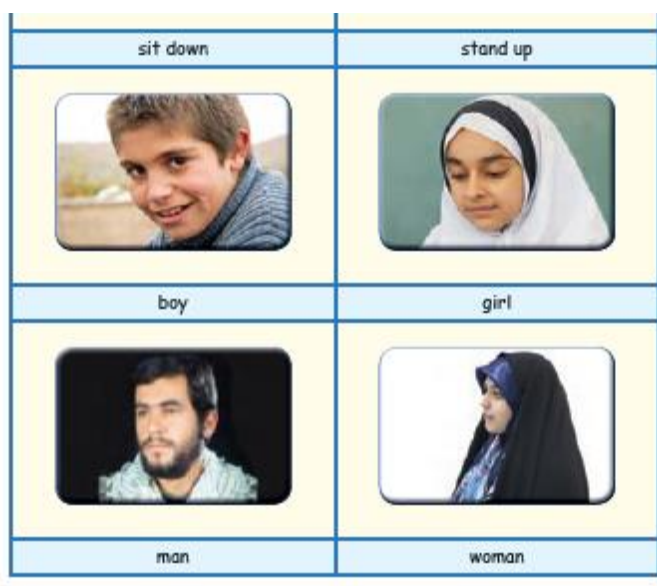


Figure 3
 Representations of different sexes and age groups in Prospect series (Prospect 1)

In the same line, in Indian English textbooks women are generally portrayed wearing Sari and Indian style jewelries as well as stereotypical Indian hairstyle. In few cases, teenage Indian girls are wearing casual non-traditional outfit. Similarly, men are portrayed wearing casual outfit representing urban background, mostly (Figure 4).



Figure 4
An example of the representation of the women and girls in Indian English (English Standard)

Although the characters in both textbooks are representing stereotypical national identities and promote urban lifestyles, Indian textbooks are more successful in keeping balance between urban and rural equality since they show their characters in a rural setting such as home or neighborhood. In addition, Indian textbooks encompass characters of various age groups whereas Iranian textbooks are portraying middle-aged adults and teenagers of both sexes (Figure 5).



Figure 5
Examples of representations of rural Indian men and women in English Standard 3

In addition, it is worth mentioning that both Iran and India are multi-ethnic multi-cultural and multi-lingual countries. Moreover, both countries encompass a variety of minorities in terms of religious beliefs and rituals. Unlike the reality of demographic variety and colorfulness in these two countries, the English textbooks ignore the cultural, religious, ethnic, and linguistic variety of their populations and promotes a stereotypical "national" identities of each country, the image which is either prescribed to the students to be or intended to be seen by an outsider or "other" who is a member of a different community. In van Dijk's terms, these textbooks avoid any categorization, comparison and polarization of the characters and identities. Due to the importance of political coherence and social unity, the dominant ideological trend in the book is to emphasize disclaimers, that is, the existence of others, either an outsider/foreigner or a different variety of Self, a national representation an Iranian or an Indian.

4.3. Self and Other Iconic Figures

As mentioned by van Dijk (1994), every role-holder in a given society has his or her own and sometimes unique experience, biography, attitudes, beliefs, and values which build up into role models who promote, produce and is perceived as a specific discourse and hence an ideology. Such ideologies control what people do or say. Accordingly, it can be concluded that such role models or social icons are forming the foundations of a community's social knowledge, attitudes and ideologies.

Considering the undeniable roles of iconic figures in representing and building identities, it is hard to find any trace of social icons in these two series of textbooks. In van Dijk's (1998) term, the textbooks are promoting vagueness in terms of social identity and presuppose their audience, teenage students, to have formed their national identity. The textbooks imply that there is no specific role model introduced or actually verified for the students or the audience, in a sense. In addition, lack of inclusion of iconic figures imply lack of promoting "other" ideologies. In this sense, "otherness" is equal to both an outsider/foreign ideology and a different ideology existing within the borders of the country.

The only exception of portraying iconic figures is in Prospect 2, as shown in figure 6, where health issues are discussed. These iconic figures represent both self and other communities; however, this otherness is not related to English speaking community since Pasteur, the only

"other" iconic figure in this book is French rather than English. In addition, the "self" iconic figures are both historic and contemporary implying the long line of Iranian honored physicians and iconic figures in medicine. However, there is no more information about these figures than their names. Even their dates of birth and death (if any) are not mentioned. No biographical or professional profile or no short description, caption or narration is mentioned. No exercise, classroom activity or educational group work or project is dedicated to these figures. Within Kress and van Leeuwens' (1996) framework it can be argued that the pictures lack of close-up distance which promotes unfamiliarity and lack of closeness to the audience. Moreover, the pictures are not enjoying bottom-up, but a horizontal perspective which promotes lack of their iconicity and their position as a role model for the audience of the textbooks (Figure 6).



Figure 6

The only instance of portraying iconic figures in Prospect series (Prospect 2)

4.4. Representation of Relations within the Circle of "Self"

The conversations in Prospect series as well as the conversations and stories in English Standard series are all coherent in terms of presenting the relations between or among the members of "Self" community. The instances of interaction and communication, either verbal or nonverbal, between members of "Other" communities or between a member of a "Self" community and a member of "Other" community are absent. Since language is defined as either a medium or means of communication, it is expected that English, is seen as a medium or means of communication or interaction between members of different communities, even not necessarily a member of the inner circle communities, in Kachru's (1986) term, but an outer circle.

The dominant instances of human relations in Prospect series include family relation, teacher-student relation, and student-student relation, as shown in Figure 7. The content of the book is coherent in terms of the human relation and interaction type. From a textual perspective, teacher-student and student-student interactions and conversations in the Prospect series include formal, face-saving conversations occurring indoors in an institutional contexts implying and presupposing the traditional Iranian values and codes of conduct. Family relation instances which are rare include indoor in-home short parent-teen interaction on daily issues, rather critical challenging topics such as generation gap or off-limit social conducts. As shown in Figure 7, in accordance with Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) model, the pictures are taken from either top-down or horizontal perspective and are commonly long-shots or mid-shots in terms of distance which represent the weakness unimportance of the action included in the picture and vagueness of the human relation in van Dijk's term which promotes the ideological perspective toward the position of human relation, controlled and limited communication, dialogue and synergy in the community.



Figure 7

Instance of human relations in Prospect series

Unlike Iranian textbooks, Indian textbooks enjoy a variety of settings, both indoors and outdoors, implying a more authentic representation of human relation settings and contexts. In addition, the communication and interaction is seen in a broader sense among different age groups in different contexts embedded in English Standard settings which mostly include family relation, peer-relation, adult-child relation, and human-nature relation. It is worth mentioning that the latter type of relation is totally absent in the Prospect series. In addition the interactional function and content of the other types of relations in Indian textbooks are different from their counterpart in Iranian textbooks. Take family relation for example; unlike Iranian textbooks representing a nuclear family, Indian textbooks are representing extended family relation. In addition, from a symbolic perspective, the pictures in English Standard include characters with traditional appearance for the adults and more modern styles for the young (Figure 8); however, Prospect includes inauthentic yet contemporary outdoor appearance for both adults and the young (Figure 7).



Figure 8
 Instances of human relations in English Standard Series

The present study adopted a critical discourse analysis approach based on van Dijk's (1998, 2001) socio-cognitive model and Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) meta-functional approach to investigate the representation of "Self" and "Other" in the English textbooks developed by the local authors for high schools in Iran and India. The overall finding of the study was that both textbooks weigh "Self" over "Other" so that there are almost no elements or components pinpointing otherness in these textbooks. That is, despite the existence of minor differences in these textbook series in terms of the manner of representing "Self", the ignoring and neglecting "Other" is a principle underlying developing the material in both settings.

As stated earlier, this study compared the textbooks from two different ELT curricula from an etic perspective and they were studied from a critical discourse analysis outlook which served as an academic research paradigm investigating ideological manipulations, hegemony (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2007), domination (Fairclough, 1995), dominance, discrimination, power and control (Wodak, 2007). It seems that the findings of the present study are in line with several previous

instances of research that confirm the fact that ELT textbooks are ideology-led and they are developed to fulfill a social function which is geared with weighting different social, ideological, and manipulative elements, such as ethnicity, social class, and gender.

For example, the findings of this study are in agreement with Brym and Lie's (2007) which imply that teaching materials presented in textbooks are one of the mostly influential gender agents. This was especially evident in terms of presenting adult women in doors with definitive appearance and with vague representation in the images in Iranian textbooks on one hand and the portray of adult women in traditional Indian dress, sari, both indoors and outdoors doing their family chores or daily affairs in Indian textbooks, on the other hand. These portrays of different sexes and age groups, as discussed in the previous section, are representation of cultural values that are implied and prescribed to the students engaging in these curricula (Setyono, & Widodo, 2019).

The results of the study obtained with regard to textbook images after applying Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) confirm the findings of previous studies conducted on other language teaching contents developed in Iran in that the images conform to ideological loads and values of dominant socio-political power (Ahmadi, Yazdani, Babasalari, & Rabi, 2019; Babaii, & Sheikhi, 2018) so that they promote a specific cultural identity which is defined as Iranian-Islamic identity (Ghiyasiyan, Seraj, & Bahreini, 2017).

In terms of the results obtained regarding the issue of otherness, or us-versus-them, it can be argued that the existing hidden curriculum of the school textbooks used in either outer circle (India) or expanding circle (Iran) are comparable and follow similar principles. According to the results, due to the dominant representation of "Self" in these ELT textbooks 'culture' defined as social dialectal phenomenon remains sterile due to lack of multi-vocal dialogue and absence of experiences which make learners' individual identities visible and make them responsible for their own identity or "Self" through comparing and contrasting their identities with the foreign identity or "Other" as reflected in voices from foreign or international cultures (Horvat, & Nilsson, 2018; Pardo, 2018; Tornberg, 2004; Vinal & Shin, 2019).

A simple justification of emphasis on stereotypical "Self", as explained in the previous section, may be the fact that, according to Holiday (2006), Otherness which is represented as the native speaker ideal is thought to aim at correcting other cultures into white western culture of the inner circle nations which is seen to be hegemonic and imperialistic. It can be argued that the presence of western or Anglo-American culture, to be more specific, is considered to be equal to confession to their superiority according to current global norms as it is displayed in the textbooks published by inner circle nations (Canagarajah, 1999; Holliday, 2006; Philipson, Pennycook, 2010).

To resist such Anglo-American cultural hegemony and saving "Self" against imperialistic and colonial intentions of "other", it is argued that adopting us-against-them mentality, which is closely connected to product-based culture, is a safe cultural move which entails promoting "Self" product-based culture in the textbooks and avoiding "interculturality" (Horvat, & Nilsson, 2018; Pardo, 2018). That is, the national curricula, both in India and Iran resist the idea of students facing different "other" instances where English is used as a means of communication.

The fact that these textbooks are avoiding "Other" cultures than their own circle is problematic since English is an international language spoken by more non-native speakers than it is by native speakers (McKay, 2002). Accordingly, with regard to global use of English, it is expected that both non-inner-circle cultures and inner-circle cultures are portrayed in these textbooks. Both textbook series clearly under-represent "Other" outer-circle and expanding-circle cultures as well as inner-circle ones which imply that English is not a national or a foreign but an international language and belongs to whoever learns it (Smolder, 2009; Nault, 2006; Lundahl, 2014). It is evident that ideologically, the authors and policy-makers avoid a wide range of communicative contexts in these ELT textbooks since they hold to a traditional view of English as imperialistic and hegemonic tool of colonial inner circle nations (Smolder, 2009; Nault, 2006). It seems that such a view has been taken to such an extreme that further familiarity with outer circle or expanding circle cultural values and codes, as it is more possible that these are the English speakers that the students will interact with in the future, are also considered as "Other".

According to the results observed for both Indian and Iranian textbooks, it can be argued that mere emphasis on the representation of stereotypical non-iconic "Self" while ignoring "Other" representation implies that the inherited fundamental ideology behind the authorship of these textbooks, both Iranian and Indian ones, is promoting product-based culture which entails us-against-them mentality which believes diverse cultural contexts to be exotic, and different (Lundahl, 2014). As discussed before, neglecting different ethnicities and emphasizing a very stereotypical appearance and lifestyle truly promotes an us against them mentality through reinforcing stereotypes (Lundahl, 2014).

5. Conclusion and Implication

This study was an attempt to comparatively investigate the representation of "Self" and "Other" in two locally developed textbooks from two different ELT curricula, one from an outer circle ELT program in India and the other one from an expanding circle ELT program in Iran. The results of

analysis based on a CDA framework developed based on van Dijk's (1998, 2001) socio-cognitive model and Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) meta-functional model demonstrated the dominant ideological orientation which promotes stereotypical non-iconic "Self" while neglecting otherness through a socio-culturally product-based ELT material.

The intentional absence of a process-based approach to culture which neglects diversity as the norm (Akbari, 2008; Lundahl, 2014), is leading to the exclusion of diverse ethnicities of these two countries as well as various cultures from inner, outer and expanding circles and building up a hierarchy where a vague stereotypical normative culture is prescribed and promoted as superior resulting in us-against-them mentality (Lundahl, 2014).

Such mentality is hindering the development of inter-ethnic intercultural awareness, which promotes a static prescriptive culture which is against the ever-changing nature of culture as a dynamic phenomenon for which diversity is the norm (Aghagolzadeh, & Davari, (2012, 2014; Lundahl, 2014). The same ideological approach resists not only raising intercultural awareness through denying otherness in the ELT textbooks but suppresses developing inter-ethnic understanding through exclusion of many different "Other" cultures as well as the students' own countries' local ethnic cultures, to avoid threatening social unity and homogeneity through promoting diversity (Arslan, 2016; Bocu & Razi, 2016; Ghaffar Samar & Davari, 2011).

According to the results, both textbooks are promoting traditional norms rooted in the dominant ideologies of their home communities through product-based approach to socio-cultural values and norms where non-western cultures and diverse ethnicities of the home country are seen as exotic and different "Other" (Arslan, 2016; Bocu & Razi, 2016).

From the pedagogical perspective, it is problematic that these two textbooks lack diverse cultural and ethnic contexts which hinder intercultural and inter-ethnic awareness through exclusion of critical thinking (Arslan, 2016; Lundahl, 2014). Bearing in mind the fact that English is beyond the inner circle nations and the students are more likely to use their English when communicating with someone from the outer or expanding circle countries in the future (Smolder, 2009; Crystal, 2003), the students need to raise their intercultural awareness through critically facing and challenging others (Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

Accordingly, the findings of this study, in accordance with those of the previous studies conducted in Iran, such as Aghalozadeh and Davari (2012; 2014), Akbari (2008), Ghaffar Samar and Davari (2011), Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012), Rashidi and Safari (2012), imply that the textbooks covered in this study need to be revised and improved so that they can contribute to the improvement of inter-cultural and inter-ethnic awareness of the learners. This would be achieved

through embedding a sound critical perspective in the textbooks after conducting a needs analysis, training teachers accordingly, and developing an English curriculum which is proportionate to the local and national needs and priorities. Practically, the policy makers and those in charge of planning language policies in both countries have to take an active role in including diverse aspects of socio-cultural values of local and global contexts rather promoting a prescriptive stereotypical values and codes of conduct. Promoting a critical inter-cultural inter-ethnic approach instead of a centralized dictating instruction of language certainly not only hinders and controls the hegemonic function of English and Western culture but also contributes to linguistic and cultural immunity of the students through representing an authentic role of English and inner circle cultural hegemony as well as awakening the learners in terms of their own ethnic and national identity.

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