A Critical Discourse Analysis of Vision Textbooks: Representation of Social Relations and Ideology

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Abstract

Considering the importance of the textbooks within the field of ELT, EFL textbooks should be subjected to for their suitability. Therefore, this article compared three dimensions of meaning (i.e., contents, subject positions, and social relations) in the conversations of the three volumes of the *Vision* textbook series developed by Iranian educational system. To this end, the theory and procedures of critical discourse analysis, as expounded by Fairclough (1989), were applied to the corpus of the study. The analysis into the dimension of contents revealed that the focus of material developers was more on the topics of everyday and school issues. The analysis into subject positions demonstrated that the material developers had focused more on the student character, with a tinge of gender inequality. The analysis into social relations disclosed their focus on the family and school life relationships for older students, tending to depict male supremacy. Besides, it was revealed that the ideology of Iran centrism had been underscored in the three textbooks thereby focusing on the issue of localization. Finally, two semi-structured interviews were conducted with two material developers of *Vision* series, which corroborated the CDA results. The findings of this study may have implications for language teachers and material developers.

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Introduction

The increasing demand for learning the English language is undeniable in Iran (Whitehead, 2015). One of the means of meeting this demand is the textbook, which is not always ideologically neutral (Monchinski, 2008). A plethora of studies has been conducted by researchers in Iran adopting critical discourse analysis as a framework to investigate traces of ideology within textbooks. Researchers (e.g., Baleghizadeh & Jamali Motahed, 2010; Chalak & Ghasemi, 2017; Delshad, 2015; Hamledari, 2017; Taki, 2008) have gone thorough examination of ELT textbooks to reveal the hidden ideologies of textbooks; however, none of them has analyzed the conversations of *Vision*1 and *Vision* 3 English textbooks. Therefore, given the gap in the literature, a critical discourse analysis of Iranian EFL textbooks of *Vision* series was deemed necessary to investigate how ideology is represented in the dialogues included in these book series. Besides contributing to English language teaching literature, this study may help language teachers and material developers gain deeper insights into hidden ideologies inoculated into textbooks. The findings may encourage language teachers, material developers, managers, and ministerial bodies to consider such critical aspects in materials development as gender bias, and also make learners aware of the critical role that learning materials play in their identity formation at the individual and social levels. Hence, the current study aimed to critically examine three dimensions of meaning in the conversation parts of two English textbooks of Iranian high schools to discover the intersections between language and ideology with respect to social power. To that end, the following questions were put forward:

RQ 1. What contents, as designated in the Faircloughian framework, are mainly involved in the conversation parts of *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* textbooks?

RQ 2. What subject positions in the sense used in designated in the Faircloughian framework are mainly involved in the conversation parts of *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* textbooks?

RQ 3. What social relations in the sense used in the Faircloughian framework are mainly involved in the conversation parts of *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* textbooks?

RQ 4. What are the hidden ideologies in conversations of *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* textbooks?

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis

Recently, critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been known as a seminal part of L2 studies. According to Fairclough (1995), discourse should be considered as a form of social practice and it is not limited to language in use. From a critical perspective, Cots (2006) considered discourse as a path to social practice and as an ideologically determined way of talking about people and places that are formed by society. As Wodak and Meyer (2001) pointed out, "for CDA, language is not powerful on its own - it gains power by the use powerful people make of it" (p.10). In order to analyze textual discourse, Fairclough (1989) introduced a three-dimensional framework for doing CDA. The first dimension of his framework is "description" which is concerned with the "formal properties of a text". The second dimension is, "interpretation" which considers the "relationship between text and interaction", and the last dimension is viewed as "explanation" which deals with "the relationship between interaction and social context" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26).

A related concept to CDA is ideology, defined as an "implicit common-sense assumption" that is shaped by power relations and governs practice (Fairclough, 2001, p. 156). Bloor and Bloor (2007) delineated ideology as the set of beliefs or attitudes shared by members of a particular social group. Moreover, Van Dijk (2000) importantly pointed out that the notion of ideology concerns the system of ideas, particularly with the social, political, or religious ideas, which is common among social groups or movements. Fairclough (1989) also discussed the subject of power in discourse with a type of face-to-face discourse, which exactly comes about where participants are unequal and can be called as "unequal encounter".

Empirical Studies

A bulk of CDA studies has been conducted to analyze discursive features of texts through Fairclough's (1989) three dimensional framework. Ansary and Babaii (2003) conducted a mixed-methods study in order to figure out the existence of sexist attitudes and values in two textbooks (*Right Path to English 1 and 2*). The

results of qualitative and quantitative data analyses revealed that the books were biased for the male sex. In the same vein, Taki (2008) analyzed the conversations of the locally and internationally developed ELT textbooks in Iranian high schools. He found that the ideology in internationally developed ELT textbooks correspond with western economy and consumerism, while the locally produced textbooks have been influenced by Iran's post-revolutionary norms.

Similarly, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) studied English language textbooks in Malaysian secondary schools. The results clearly indicated there is an absolute gender bias in favor of masculinity. Likewise, Baleghizadeh and Jamali Motahed (2010) analyzed three British and three American textbooks in terms of content, relations, and positions. They found out that in terms of content, British textbooks tend to amuse the students while American textbooks include more occupational and business-related issues. Regarding relations, characters in the conversations were placed in socially equal roles, and in terms of characters in the conversations of both series, they took mostly societal positions.

Moreover, Delshad (2015) conducted a CDA study into the English language textbooks of the 7th grade of junior high schools to investigate the power-related. The findings of this research showed that the textbooks represented the indigenous culture and ideology, and a gender-biased perspective through linguistic and pictorial tools of the textbooks considering features like visibility, firstness, gendered vocabularies, occupations and activities. Similarly, Hamledari (2017) examined three dimensions of meaning in the conversations of *Right Path to English* and *Prospect* textbooks through Fairclough's CDA framework. The results showed that *Right Path to English* series focused on general and everyday topics, but *Prospect* series focused on participants. Moreover, it was found that the subject position of the most interlocutors was unclear in *Right Path to English* series, while student and teacher positions were the most frequent ones in *Prospect*. Furthermore, Beiki and Gharaguzlu (2017) employed a CDA approach to investigate the linguistic representation of male and female social actors in *American English Files* series. Regarding subject positions, they found out that this series mostly focused on uncontroversial issues. Additionally, the corpus of this study represents the discourse and culture of western countries, which can employ specific ideologies on language learners.

Moreover, Islam and Asadullah (2018) did a content analysis into secondary school English textbooks in Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The results confirmed a pre-male bias in these textbooks, with female occupations occupied by characters, predominantly introverted and passive in terms of personality trait. Furthermore, Batainah (2020) examined gender bias in the first-grade Arabic language school textbooks at the public school in Oman. The results of the study showed that those textbooks did not exhibit a balanced presentation of gender in terms of gender nouns, illustration, roles, and firstness.

Iranian high school's English textbooks have been changed recently. Given all research studies reviewed so far, it seems that no study has attempted to investigate three dimensions of meaning in conversation parts of these textbooks (i.e.; *Vision* 1, 2, and 3). Due to the influence of textbooks on student's perspectives, the researcher went through critical discourse analysis of this series of state-published materials to see the power representations in these textbooks and any possible hidden layers of meaning and injected ideologies.

Methodology

Theoretical Framework

The framework used is an adaptation of Fairclough's (1989) model of critical discourse analysis to examine content, social relations, and subject positions and reveal ideology and power relations in the corpus. In this framework, the content refers to the topic of the conversations, such as entertainment, politics, and education, social relation, involves the social relationships enacted via text like teacher-student and friend-friend relationships, and subject position concerns the positions that people occupy in discourse like employee or customer.

Corpus

For the purpose of this study, all ten conversation parts of *Vision 1* (Alavimogaddam et al. 2016), *Vision 2* (Alavimogaddam et al. 2018) were selected as the selected corpus. *Vision* 1, 2, and 3 included four, three and three conversations, respectively. The criterion for choosing this part of the textbooks as the corpus was the dialogic nature of the conversations. A major limitation of these textbooks is that the number of lessons in each textbook is limited (i.e., 4, 3, and 3

lessons in the three textbooks, respectively). This is a weakness compared to international language books.

The first conversation of *Vision* 1 includes 76 words, picturing a conversation between a man and a woman in a museum under the topic of Iranian cheetah. The second conversation of *Vision* 1, consisting of 136 Words, involves a dialog about the planets in an observatory. The third conversation of *Vision* 1, comprising 95 words, involves a conversation between two women in the library under the topic of famous Iranian scientists. The last conversation of *Vision* 1 is comprised of 146 words, picturing a conversation between two men about traveling. The first conversation of *Vision* 2, comprised of 86 words, is done between an interviewer and an interviewee. The second conversation of *Vision* 2 consists of 135 words, which depicts a dialog between two friends. The last conversation of *Vision* 2 comprises 121 words, depicting a talk between a tourist and a salesman. The first conversation of *Vision* 3 includes 204 words and is conducted in a hospital between two women who are talking about Dr. Mohammad Gharib. The second conversation of *Vision* 3 pictures a 215-word dialogue between two men regarding the prestigious subject of knowing a foreign language. The last conversation of *Vision* 3 contains 143 words and depicts a father and his son, talking about the wind turbines.

Instruments

A qualitative phase (i.e., semi-structured interview) was designed to explore two of the material developers' (dis)agreement with the CDA findings of this study and to corroborate the results of the CDA stage. To that end, a semi-structured four-question interview protocol, including main questions and prompts, was developed based on Fairclough's (1989) model of CDA in line with the findings of the study. Each language material developer was interviewed for 60 minutes via telephone due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The interviewer used the interview procedure suggested by Dörnyei (2007). In order to keep the identity of these two material developers of *Vision* series anonymous, care was taken not to reveal any further details of their identities.

*Procedure***Classification of Content.** First, the topics of all conversations were extracted. Then, four major categories for the analysis of content used in Siegel (2014) were adopted to categorize the extracted topics from the selected textbooks.

According to Siegel (2014), the major categories were as follows: a) the self (i.e., topics related to personal information, such as likes, dislikes, age, appearance, family, friends, the past and future plans, asking about personal belongings, and family structure, human relationships, current mental state, and future dreams); b) everyday topics (i.e., general and universal topics such as greeting and small talk, food, health, sickness, fitness, money, jobs, business, shopping, and entertainment); c) school life (i.e., topics specifically related to educational issues, such as teachers, homework, tests, living situation, academic life, extra-curricular activities, and language); d) social topics (i.e., topics related to life beyond the university and school, or everyday general topics, which are generally more global, such as places and travel, culture, and social issues).

Classification of Subject Positions. Any occurrence of the positions that people can occupy was identified and counted by the researcher every time it appeared in the conversations. By analyzing subject positions, it was found what social identities were mainly involved and for what hidden ideologies.

Classification of Social Relations. The social relations were counted when two participants were in verbal communication in conversations. By analyzing the relationships among participants, their equality and their focus were investigated so that the researcher could look for hidden ideologies and gender inequality.

Data Analysis

To fulfill the purpose of this study, content analysis was carried out on the data from the aforementioned textbooks, and the frequency and percentage of occurrences of each aspect of meanings were calculated. Beside the numerical analysis, the ideological analysis was done to unearth the hidden ideologies embedded in the content of conversations of *Vision* 1 and *Vision* 3 textbooks. Fairclough (2015) proposed a procedure for the implementation of ideological analysis in CDA. The first stage is description at which the formal properties of a text, such as vocabulary, grammar, and textual structures, are described. The second stage is interpretation at which the connection between a text and interactions is verified. This stage is concerned with the inter-textual dimensions of text production from the views of different stakeholders, such as educational authorities, materials developers, and teachers. The final stage is explanation which deals with the ideologies hidden in the text, and discloses its relationship with the language use.

Results

Quantitative CDA Results

Results of Content Analysis in Vision 1

The frequency and percentage of all the content categories (i.e., the self, everyday topics, social topics, and school life) in *Vision* 1 are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage of Content Categories in Vision 1

Content	L1	L2	L3	L4	Total	Percentage
The Self	3	7	8	8	26	32%
Everyday Topics	3	3	3	5	14	18%
Social Topics	3	10	9	13	35	44%
School Life	1	0	4	0	5	6%

As shown in Table 1, social topics (e.g., Iranian cheetah, Ray hospital, etc.), were the most frequent category in *Vision* 1 (44%). This category made up a significant portion of the contents. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the subjects in conversations of *Vision* 1 were about social topics. The following are the examples of the social topics category in conversations of *Vision* 1 English textbook:

Excerpt for historical places:

Carlos: Well, Iran is a four-season country. It has many historical sites and amazing nature. Also, its people are very kind and hospitable.

Excerpt for tourist attractions:

Diego: I heard Iran is a great and beautiful country, but I don't know much about it.

Carlos: Well, Iran is a four-season country. It has many historical sites and amazing nature. Also, its people are very kind and hospitable.

A further category (i.e., the self) followed the social category. The following are the examples of self category in conversations of *Vision* 1 English textbook:

Excerpt for future plans:

Mr. Razavi: well, we have some plans. For example, we are going to protect their homes, to make movies about their life, and to teach people how to take more care of them.

Excerpt for likes:

Alireza: Yes! They are really interesting for me, but I don't know much about them.

Excerpt for dislikes:

Mahsa: I was reading a book about famous Iranian scientist.

Roya: But such books are not very interesting.

Excerpt for past plans:

Mahsa: Oh yes. Actually, I learned many interesting things about our scientist' lives.

The remaining categories go to everyday topics (18%) and school life (6%), respectively. The examples of everyday topics in conversations of *Vision* 1 English textbook are as follows:

Excerpt for small talk:

Maryam: Excuse me, what is it? Is it a leopard?

Mr. Razavi: No, it is a cheetah.

Excerpt for business:

Mahsa: For example, Razi taught medicine to many young people while he was working in Ray Hospital. Or Nasireddin Toosi built Maragheh Observatory when he was studying the planets.

Excerpt for entertainment:

Diego: Actually, I want to visit Asia, but I am not sure about my destination. Do you have any suggestions?

Carlos: Well, you may have some choices. You can visit China. It is famous for the Great Wall.

The final category (i.e., school life) had the least frequency of content in the conversations of *Vision* 1 English textbook (6%). The following are the examples of the school life category:

Excerpt for educational issue:

Roya: When I came in, you were reading a book. What was it? Mahsa: I was reading a book about famous Iranian scientists.

Library (educational issue) Roya and Mahsa are leaving the library.

Results of Content Analysis in Vision 2

The frequency and percentage of all the content categories in *Vision 2* are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage of Content Categories in Vision 2

Content	L1	L2	L3	Total	Percentage
The Self	9	13	6	28	36%
Everyday Topics	3	10	11	24	30%
Social Topics	7	6	10	23	29%
School Life	4	0	0	4	5%

By looking at the frequency of contents in Table 2, it can be realized that the self-category with 36% was the most frequent one in *Vision* 2. It can be inferred that most of the participants in the conversations were interested in talking about themselves. The school life category with 5% had the least percentage of contents. The following are the examples of the social topics category in conversations of *Vision* 2 textbook:

Excerpt for culture:

Behzad: Hi Sina. How is it going? I haven't seen you since Norooz.

Excerpt for place:

Behzad: I see. Reza and I are going to Darband for climbing and walking this Thursday.

Excerpt for future plan:

Tourist: Well, I'll take both.

Excerpt for money:

Tourist: I'd like to buy a Persian carpet, but it seems too expensive.

Excerpt for educational issue:

Mr. Saberian: I began learning English at school when I was thirteen.

Excerpt for small talk:

Meysam: Thank you Mr. Saberian for inviting me to your office.

Results of content analysis in Vision 3

Table 3 illustrates the frequency and percentage of the content categories in *Vision 3*.

Table 3

Frequency and Percentage of Content Categories in Vision 3

Content	L1	L2	L3	Total	Percentage
The Self	3	8	1	12	27%
Everyday Topics	9	1	0	10	23%
Social Topics	7	1	5	13	30%
School Life	3	6	0	9	20%

As shown in Table 3, the most frequent content in conversations of *Vision* 3, like *Vision* 1, was the category of social topics. This high frequency clearly demonstrates that the material developers are interested in such topics which inoculate nationalism and sexual inequality. Subsequently, the self category (e.g., his close friends, his father, sure) was in the second place (27%), which was the same case in *Vision* 1. The following are the examples of the self category in conversations of *Vision* 3 English textbook:

Excerpt for traveling:

Nurse: Dr. Gharib went abroad to study medicine.

Excerpt for place:

Emad and his father are traveling to Guilan. On the way, in Manjeel, Emad sees huge wind turbines.

Excerpt for asking for personal information:

Nurse: Have you ever heard of Dr. Mohammad Gharib?

Excerpt for future plan:

Mr. Iranmehr: Sure. How can I help you?

Excerpt for friends:

In 1347 this center was founded by Dr. Gharib and one of his close friends.

Furthermore, the everyday topic was the third frequent category in *Vision* 3, as it was the same case in *Vision* 1 (23%). The following are the examples of Everyday topics in conversations of *Vision* 3 English textbook:

Excerpt for sickness:

Sara has been in the Children's Medical Center for a week. She has caught terrible flu.

Excerpt for job:

Nurse**:** In 1316, he became a physician and then came back to his homeland.

Excerpt for small talk:

Sara: Excuse me, who is that man in the picture?

Excerpt for business:

Nurse: In 1347, this center was founded by Dr. Gharib and one of his close friends.

Afterward, the school life category (e.g., English book, dictionary, foreign student) was in the last place, which could be the dominant one according to learners age (20%). The following are the examples of school life categories in conversations of *Vision* 3 English textbook:

Excerpt for educational issue:

Majid: I'd like some information about a good English dictionary.

Mr. Iranmehr: I suppose a monolingual dictionary is more suitable for you, because you can find word information in English.

Results of Subject Positions in Vision 1

Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage of each subject position in each conversation of *Vision 1*.

Table 4

Frequency and Percentage of Subject Positions in Vision 1

Subject Position	L1	L2	L3	L4	Total	Percentage
Staff	1	1	0	0	2	25%
Visitor	1	1	0	0	2	25%
Friend	0	0	2	0	2	25%
Tourist	0	0	0	1	1	12.5%
Travel agent	0	0	0	1	1	12.5%

As shown in Table 4, the analysis of subject positions in *Vision* 1 is divided into two major categories. One is possessed by three (25%) for staff, friend, and visitor each and the other is possessed by two (12.5%) for tourist and travel agent

each. Therefore, staff, friend, and visitor were the most frequent subject positions in *Vision* 1, and consequently, tourist and travel agent were the least frequent ones. The first concept which is to be marked first is the dominance of the prevalent social class of literate youth over the subordinate working class (i.e., workers and handy job owners). Generally, the subject positions in the Table 4 are among the jobs for middle- or upper-class families, which remind the learner of money and welfare. For example, in the first conversation in *Vision* 1, a dialogue is taking place in a museum, which easily reveals that the writer is trying to pop up the idea of luxurious life. Alternatively, the fourth subject position (i.e., tourist) indirectly injects the idea of having money and a high-class lifestyle. The most frequent subject position (i.e., friend) can be regarded as the symbol of the joy of young people and their lifestyle, in which friends are assets.

Results of Subject Positions in Vision 2

Table 5 shows the frequency of subject positions in each conversation of *Vision 2* and represents the total number of frequency and percentage of each subject positions in all conversations of *Vision 2* as well.

Table 5

The Frequency of Subject Positions in Vision 2

Subject Positions	L1	L2	L3	Total	Percentage
Friends	0	2	0	2	33.6%
Student	1	0	0	1	16.6%
Translator	1	0	0	1	16.6%
Tourist	0	1	1	1	16.6%
Staff	0	0	1	1	16.6%

As it is shown in Table 5, the most frequent subject position in conversations of *Vision* 2 were friends with 33.6%. The remaining subject positions had the same percentage, which were translator, student, tourist and staff with 16.6% each. Regarding subject position it is obvious that all the participants were male and no female character was in the conversations, which reveals the supremacy of men in the textbooks and gender bias.

Results of Subject Positions in Vision 3

Table 6 presents the frequency and percentage of each subject position in all conversations of *Vision* 6.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage of Subject Positions in Vision 3

Subject Positions	L1	L2	L3	Total	Percentage
Student	0	1	1	2	28.56%
Patient	1	0	0	1	14.28%
Teacher	0	1	0	1	14.28%
Nurse	1	0	0	1	14.28%
Father	0	0	1	1	14.28%
Son	0	0	1	1	14.28%

As it is shown in Table 6, the most frequent subject position in the conversations of *Vision* 3 was student (28.56%). The other subject positions were nurse, patient, teacher, father, and son with 14.28% each. As it is shown, the most frequent subject position was student. By further exploring the conversations, it was revealed fewer female characters occupied job positions in comparison to male characters. Moreover, the jobs assigned to females are among the ones, which are neither favorite, nor well-paid. For example, a nurse is a lower position compared to a doctor in terms of income and social prestige. Overall, this analysis revealed the ideology of sexual inequality in the corpus extracted from *Vision 3*.

Results of Social Relations in Vision 1

Table 7 shows the frequency of social relations in each conversation of *Vision* 1 and presents the total frequency and percentage of each social relation in all conversations of *Vision 1*.

Table 7

Frequency and Percentage of Social Relations in Vision 1

Social Relation	L1	L2	L3	L4	Total	Percentage
Visitor- Staff	1	1	0	0	2	50%
Friend-Friend	0	0	1	0	1	25%
Tourist- Travel agent	0	0	0	1	1	25%

As depicted in Table 7, the most frequent social relation in *Vision* 1 was visitor-staff in the first two conversations with 50%, which clarifies the due attention on the international communication. The least frequent social relations were friend-friend and tourist- travel agent with 25% each. If the same consideration is paid to the social relations involved in the conversations, the situation and setting where these conversations take place will remind the learner of the dominant class of society. It is intended to inject its standards into the lower and often less comfortable class of the society. The museum, observatory, travel agency, and library are the places where these conversations shaped the social relations accordingly.

Results of Social Relations in Vision 2

Table 8 shows the frequency of social relations in each conversation of *Vision* 2 and represents the total number of frequency and percentage of each social relations in all conversations of *Vision* 2.

Table 8

The Frequency of Social Relations in Vision 2

Social Relation	L 1	L 2	L 3	Total	Percentage
Interviewer-interviewee	1	0	0	1	33.3%
Friend-friend	0	1	0	1	33.3%
Tourist-staff	0	0	1	1	33.3%

As shown in Table 8, it can be figured out that the social relations in the conversations of *Vision* 2 had the same percentage. The social relations were interviewer-interviewee, friend-friend and tourist-staff with 33.3% each. Regarding social relations, it can be inferred that all the relationships were among males, and no female was included. For example, the most significant one in the first conversation is that a male person that has got a job is depicted in a private room, having his own favorite and prestigious job with a cup of tea which reveals his satisfaction of life and his occupation, while no female character was depicted in the other volumes of the *Vision* series. The lack of social involvement for women implies gender inequality in the conversations of this volume.

Results of Social Relations in Vision 3

Table 9 shows the frequency of social relations in each conversation of *Vision* 3 and represents the total frequency and percentage of each social relation in all conversations of *Vision* 3 as well.

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage of Social Relations in Vision 3

Social Relation	L 1	L 2	L 3	Total	Percentage
Nurse- Patient	1	0	0	1	33.3%
Teacher- Student	0	1	0	1	33.3%
Father- Son	0	0	1	1	33.3%

As shown in Table 9, in the conversations of *Vision* 3, all the social relations had the same number of occurrences. The social relations were nurse-patient, teacher-student, and father-son with equal percentages (33.3%). Considering the category of social relations, there were contents in which both male and female characters were playing roles, but given what was included in the conversation, the trace of gender inequality is visible. A point in this conversation is that the picture of conversation shows six men with historic costumes. This historical picture suggests that being knowledgeable has been an undeniable fact for the male sex since ancient times. The same is the case even where two women are talking together about a male scientist, suggesting that the knowledge of society is possessed by the powerful gender of society who are men.

Results for Interview Data Analysis

Two interviews were conducted with two authors of *Vision* series. Based on the dialogical features of chosen interviews, a decision was made to adopt Fairclough's (2001) framework of description, interpretation, and explanation for doing CDA. The description of linguistic features was conducted on the structural level to analyze the turn-taking, interruption, controlling topic, and formulation of the discourse.

Turn-taking

The system of turn-taking consists of two components: a) the turn-allocational component, used to regulate the exchange of turns by selecting the next

speaker or regulating the order of turns, and the turn-constructional component, applied to analyze the size of the texture of the turns. It was found that the interviewer ($n_{interview1}$=28; $n_{interview2}$=32) and interviewees ($n_{interview1}$=26; $n_{interview2}$=32) almost took similar number of turns; however, interviewees' turns were much longer. As a result, the power relations revealed by turn-constructional system is that the male interviewee (n=5158) possessed more power than the female interviewer (n=1721) in a boarder sense, both from a professional stance and gender-related perspective.

Topic Controlling

Based on the analysis of the interview data, it was revealed that the interviewees made frequent attempts to change the topics in the interviews to exert power on the interviewer. In other words, in spite of a set theme in each interview question, the second interviewee (n = 30) initiated the changeover of the specific topics in the interview questions more than the first interviewee (n = 10). In both interviews, the act of topic turning influenced the content of the next turns taken by the interviewer in many cases. The following are the instances of the topic shifts and controls by the two interviewee, done mostly through the questioning strategy:

Interview Question 1. To what extent do you think these English textbooks have been localized, and why?

Interviewees' Topic Turning.

Extract 1: In which source is it said that if you are in a context where a person wants to buy a tour, suggest India?

Extract 2: We also have arts in the first grade of high school. Are they going to be painters or calligraphers?

Interview Question 2. It seems that more prestigious jobs and social situations, such as the position of a physical physician, are assigned to men. Or a person who is hospitalized is a female, who is undoubtedly in a state of weakness and illness, while several male people, who are in good health and well-being, are planning for their weekend. These cases seem to indicate gender discrimination in these textbooks. What is your opinion?

Interviewees' Topic Turning.

Extract 1: Does it mean that if eight of the functions in a book are

performed, say, by men, and three by women, or four by women, it means that we actually paid less attention to women?

Extract 2: There was a discussion some time ago. We were talking in the Persian literature department. They said that most of the poets and writers are men.

Interview Question 3. In *Vision* series, more attention is paid to contents of self and social topics than to school life. For example, historical places, tourist attractions, future plans, jobs, and so on, which are a subset of social topics and self, have been talked about more than school-related issues, such as dictionaries, language learning, teachers and students, and so on. What is your opinion?

Interviewees' Topic Turning.

Extract 1: Her second mistake was that she has only paid attention to Vision textbooks.

Extract 2: I suggest that in the next article by the same student, you analyze one case in all the books from seventh grade to twelfth grade, for example.

Interview Question 4.While in *Vision 2*, international, friendly, and school relationships, and in *Vision 3*, family, school, and health-related relationships are equally covered, it seems that *Vision 1* concentrates more on international relationships like visitor-staff. What is your opinion?

Interviewees' Topic Turning.

Extract 1: Why do you really teach so many units of materials development to students? What percentage of these students produce textbooks?

Extract 2: Unfortunately, our MA students were so indolent in this issue, but it is possible to delve into these minute issues and analyze the whole book.

Interruption

Interruption is used in order to control the contributions by other in a dialog, stop the repetitive or irrelevant information. Considered as a linguistic mark, it shows the power position of the participants in the interviews**.** In these interviews, interruption occurred once in each interview by the interviewee to cut into the interviewer's utterance to show disagreement (if not power) by shifting the focus of the conversation as follows:

Extract 1.

Interviewer: Accidentally, from the very beginning, I asked the student if she wanted to consider the texts as well as the corpus to be more and [interrupted].

Interviewee 1: Oh, this is a wrong.

Extract 2.

Interviewer: Maybe in addition to this, a cultural transfer is allowed to a certain extent. According to the upstream documents, a cultural transfer can be done, for example, now in a way that [interrupted].

Interviewee 2: Let me inform you that …

Formulation

It is regarded as the rewording of what is said by oneself or others, or restating what is assumed to follow or be implied by what is said. It is used to check understanding, reach agreements, and control the participants' future contributions (Fairclough, 2001). Both Interviewees used formulation either in the form of confirmation checks (n=1) or emphasizing their own opinion to make the interviewer accept their versions of understanding (n=5), revealing power struggle. The following are the excerpts of both interviewees' formulations:

Extract 1.

Interviewee 2: Aha, You are working on Vision textbooks?

Extract 2.

Interviewee 1: It depends on the definition of culture. When we say culture, it starts with a simple greeting and goes on to numerous celebrations.

Moreover, the frequent use of such presuppositions by both interviewees as "You know, there is a problem that we equate equality with equity," "This approach that we used to put both He and SHE in the books so that we did not have these biases is really obsolete," and " There are several parameters in selecting people" support the existence of gender discrimination in these textbooks. The textual analysis of the interviewees' words reveal their presupposed knowledge that they regarded their decisions as justifiable and up-to-date, justifying any probable gender discrimination in the prepared textbooks (e.g., " I am one of the sensitive people to observe this equality in the pictures of the jobs and in such cases" or "Maybe if we

analyze the proportion, it comes out to be 40 to 60. But this ratio of 40 to 60 is not very significant.") and condemning the interviewer (e.g., Why do you really teach so many units of language materials development to students?" and "the mere counting of the numbers in each book… look for articles like these!).

The interpretative analysis of the interview data shows the links between the textual properties (i.e., turn takings, topic turning, interruption, and formulation) and the hidden ideologies in the text. Both of the interviewees not only accepted that these textbooks are localized but also considered the localization as inevitable model to be applied to the prepared language materials. They also urged "international publishers, consultants and authors" to "produce localized books, but with high quality, volume and efficiency." This emphasis on localization portrayed through the use of metaphors as "color and smell of a country" and "system" and synecdoche such as "historical background of the country" support the findings of this study that the hidden ideology of nationalism exists in these textbooks.

Discussion

The main purpose of the present study was to compare three dimensions of meaning in *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* within Fairclough's three-dimensional framework. Regarding the first research question, the results demonstrated that the least frequent category was school life. The justification for the low frequency of school life issues can be the importance of issues beyond schools from material developers' perspective, which were materialized in such topics as local handicrafts, historical places, and special national occasions, inoculating the idea of nationalism. This is in line with Fairclough's (1995) notions of foregrounding and backgrounding in the sense that they have backgrounded western culture and people, while the national culture of Iran, as the symbol of nationalism, is foregrounded. This finding is corroborated by the two language materials developers' claim that they are "the national document of Iran" and cultural and local issues must be taken into account. Therefore, the results demonstrated that Iran-centrism and Iranian culture were the most significant meaning of conversations, which is in line with Delshad (2015) and Hamledari (2017).

With regard to the second research question, it was found that the most frequent subject position in three *Vision* English textbooks was friend, which can be

considered as the symbol of kindness in a society. Moreover, female characters were underrepresented in the lucrative and prestigious job positions as compared to male characters. The depiction of males and females in traditionally stereotypical biased occupations can be another reflection of gender bias in this EFL textbook series. Overall, this finding may pinpoint the ideology of sexual inequality in the corpus of this study.

Regarding the third research question, it was found that the most frequent social relation in three *Vision* textbooks was visitor-staff, followed by other social relations (i.e., friend-friend, tourist-travel agent, interviewer-interviewee, tourist-staff, nurse-patient, teacher-student, and father-son) with the same frequency. However, even in the conversations in which both male and female characters were role-playing, gender inequality is undeniable since their topics are related to the male sex. This finding is in line with the study done by Delshad (2015). However, it is in disagreement with that of Hamledari (2017), who found out that the writers of the series adopted both an equal and unequal social relation in the textbooks with the most frequent one devoted to student-student relationship, as an equal social relation between the interlocutors. More specifically, Hamledari (2017) concluded that none of the participants in conversations had the power over the other in *Prospect* and *Right Path to English* series, whereas this study revealed the supremacy and priority of male characters. Moreover, the results for this question are in conflict with Baleghizadeh and Jamali Motahed (2010), who found that the characters in the conversations were placed in socially equal roles. In this regard, the finding with regard to the third research question may be justified based on the Clarke and Clarke's (1990) assertion that some English textbooks include instances of gender inequity.

Regarding the fourth research question, Iran-centrism was found as one of the ideologies in these textbooks given a focus on the national culture of Iran is brilliantly visible through many of the analyzed dialogues. More clues were collected such as talking about local handicrafts, historical places, and special national occasions, all of which are trying to inject the idea of nationalism into the unconscious of learners, implying backgrounded western culture and people, and foregrounded Iranian culture. Similarly, this is in agreement with Hamledari (2017), who found that these materials were developed based on the norms and standards of

Iran. Given this finding, it seems that the textbook developers in Iran have neglected the culture and norms of English as a foreign language, which is considered as important in teaching an L2 (McGrath, 2002), and English as an international language as well. The second ideology unearthed in this study was gender inequality. This finding is in agreement with Delshad (2015) and Hamledari (2017), who found the representation of genders as unequal and biased for males. Surprisingly, the finding with regard to gender discrimination in this study agreed with three Asian studies as follows (i.e., Batainah, 2020; Islam & Asadullah, 2018; Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2008). The second finding of the fourth question regarding gender discrimination was in contrast to Baleghizadeh and Jamali Motahed (2010), who claimed that inequalities were rarely addressed in the interactions, and Beiki and Gharaguzlu (2017), whose findings showed that subject positions were almost equally distributed between both genders. The disagreement between these two studies and that of this study can be justified on the ground that the corpora in Baleghizadeh and Jamali Motahed (2010) and Beiki and Gharaguzlu (2017) were the internationally produced ELT textbooks. Given gender inequalities, the convergence among the textbooks produced in Asian context, and their divergence from the Western textbooks suggest the difference between the western and eastern cultures (Taki, 2008).

Conclusion and Implications

Aimed to compare the dimensions of meaning in *Vision* textbook series within Faircloughian framework, this study revealed that the conversation parts of *Vision* series are ideologically loaded. It is concluded that the dominant, noticeable ideologies in these textbooks were Iran-centrism and gender inequality. In general, since *Vision* English textbooks are localized and only focus on Iranian culture, they cannot satisfy learners' needs and demands in terms of getting familiar with the culture of the real-world target language they are learning. More importantly, it can be concluded that all conversations of *Vision* textbooks are not equal in terms of gender, and the men's priority over women are embedded between the lines of conversations.

The findings of this study might bear some implications for language teachers and textbook designers. Teachers must burden the crucial responsibility to

learn how they should look at the textbooks and read them in a critical way, and then teach the learners how to read texts with critical minds and eyes. In doing so, in-service training classes might be needed to teach language instructors CDA definition and methodology. Due to the limitation of time, and the complications of such definitions to the students of this age, the teachers must prepare a series of routine and easy-to-understand tasks to help students avoid the aforementioned false unintentional effects of such hidden ideologies. For example, a set of questions regarding the hidden facts can drive them to think about these issues and understand what is going on. Some examples of such questions can be as follows: Why did this conversation take place between an ill woman and a female nurse, and why were they talking about a male doctor? Could this situation not be the other way around?

Moreover, training the material developers with CDA methodology may also help them resist bias in compiling and preparing textbooks. In general, the findings of this study may help them gain a better understanding of textbooks, which are currently used in Iranian high schools, and encourage them to revise these textbooks with a more equal and balanced perspective in term of contents categories, subject positions, social relations, and gender in order to make these textbooks more suitable for teenagers' needs. In other words, when the Iranian young generation are unconsciously under the influence of such unbalanced and asymmetric hidden meanings and ideologies, their social characters will not be shaped as they should because they are rooted in such ideological beliefs.

It is worth noting that the results of this study, like the majority of studies, had some limitations. First, for the shortage of time, the researcher could not thoroughly analyze the other parts of three *Vision* textbooks, such as reading, grammar, etc. Second, the corpus of the study was not large enough since the number and size of conversations are small in this series. Finally, the researcher did not have access to all three material developers of *Vision* series in order to ask interview questions. These areas are open to future studies given the importance of the phenomena under study.

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