Visual Representation of Social Actors in ELT Nursery Rhymes

Mahmoodreza Atai¹, Esmat Babaii², Ebrahim Isavi^{3*}

¹Professor Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

² Associate Professor Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

³ PhD Candidate Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Received: 2017/09/19

Accepted: 2018/02/17

Abstract: With the advent of globalization, especially in its third phase (see Robertson, 2003), global relations of domination have undermined abuse of power at national and local levels (Fairclough, 2001). Global ELT textbooks, as corollaries of the globalization process, are not immune to the embedment of discriminatory discourses, as various studies have shown (see for example, Gray, 2010, 2012; Babaii and Sheikhi, 2017). On the other hand, a social actor analysis of verbal and visual discourse will contribute significantly to the disclosure of discriminatory discourses (see van Leeuwen, 2008; Hart, 2014). The current study, therefore, reduces the gap in research on ideology of ELT materials by probing into the nursery rhymes in children and young-adult ELT textbooks. Visual representation of social actors in the images accompanying nursery rhymes in Magic Time, English Time, Let's Go and Family and Friends were, thus, examined, using van Leeuwen's (2008) framework. Regarding results, the most frequent exclusionary discourses in the corpus included religion, nationality, race, and gender respectively. Significantly, it was found that monochromatic depiction of social actors constituted a strategy for the discursive construction of otherness in Family and Friends. Additionally, a process, called *whitenization of blacks* in the terminology of the current study, was found to be at work in which blacks were depicted as having the facial features of whites.

Keywords: global domination, visual social actors, global ELT textbooks, whitenization of blacks.

^{*} Corresponding Author.

Authors' Email Address: ¹ M. Atai (mreatai@yahoo.com), ² E. Babaii (ebabaii@gmail.com), ³ E. Isavi (ebrahim_isavi@yahoo.com) ISSN (Online): 2322-5343, ISSN (Print): 2252-0198 © 2018 University of Isfahan. All rights reserved





















































