



Please cite this paper as follows:

Mehdipoor, S., Vahid Dastjerdi, H., Tabatabaei, O., & Salehi, H. (2021). Shades of liberalism over the shoulders of Iranian education: A critical metaphor analysis of Iranian EFL textbooks. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, 12(1), 68-80. <https://doi.org/10.22055/RALS.2021.16725>

Research Paper

Shades of Liberalism Over the Shoulders of Iranian Education: A Critical Metaphor Analysis of Iranian EFL Textbooks

Samaneh Mehdipoor¹, Hossein Vahid Dastjerdi², Omid Tabatabaei³, & Hadi Salehi⁴

¹English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran; smp6610@gmail.com

²Corresponding author, English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran; h_vahid@yahoo.com

³English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran; tabatabaeiomid@yahoo.com

⁴English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran; hadisalehi1358@yahoo.com

Received: 08/11/2020

Accepted: 10/03/2021

Abstract

The aim of this qualitative study was to analyze the manifestation of conceptual metaphors in the new and old versions of Iranian EFL high school textbooks (*Vision* series). To this end, in the light of critical metaphor analysis (CMA) as the theoretical framework, 74 excerpts from the EFL textbooks taught in the Iranian high schools were analyzed in 3 stages: description, interpretation and explanation. In the description stage, all the metaphors existing in the excerpts were identified and analyzed descriptively with details to show their metaphoricality. In the interpretation stage, these metaphors were checked to clarify whether or not they were conceptual metaphors. The third explanation stage explicated how the authors of the textbooks had exposed the students and teachers to the Iranian government policymakers' ideological discourses through conceptual metaphors. Analysis of the data in the 3 stages showed that reification and personification were the most prominent linguistic tools in the old and new versions of EFL textbooks, respectively. Also, the discourse of the old version of the EFL textbooks was mainly affected by modernism, whereas that of the new version was extremely influenced by postmodernism orientations. These results have a number of implications for researchers and those interested in teaching English as a foreign language. Findings of the present study can open new windows to Iranian EFL teachers to be aware of the contents that ought to be taught.

Keywords: EFL Textbooks, Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA), Conceptual Metaphor, Discourse

1. Introduction

The importance of textbooks in current trends in language teaching and learning is undeniable. Whereas there are some opponents to the idea of using textbooks in EFL classes, most people who deal with education, teaching, and learning support the importance of textbooks published for EFL classes. The proponents of using textbooks argue that it is the most convenient way to present materials, help achieve consistency and continuity, and provide students with a sense of system, consistency, and progress (Toms, 2004).

According to Richards (2001), textbooks play a vital role in most language programs. In some situations, however, he maintains that textbooks are the basis for much of the input students receive and for the language practice that occurs in the classroom. Additionally, they provide the basis for class content, the balance of skills taught, and the types of language practice in which students participate. In fact, textbooks for students can serve as the main source of contact they receive with the language, plus the information that their teachers provide. Moreover, textbooks serve as a form of teacher training for inexperienced teachers, as they provide ideas on how to plan and teach classes, as well as the formats they can use (Ebrahimi, 2013).

Given the significance of EFL textbooks in the context of Iran, textbook evaluation to determine their suitability is deemed necessary. In fact, textbook evaluation is an educational necessity because it shows whether or not a textbook



is appropriate for a particular curriculum and a particular group of students. Zeng (2013) points out two main reasons for evaluating textbooks: First, it provides evidence that can inform theoretical discussions about the direction of language teaching or teacher education. Second, it is an instrument used to indicate the applicability of certain methods or techniques under specific conditions and whether they meet the requirements placed on them.

For a long time, a significant issue of concern to discourse analysts and sociolinguists has been the hegemony infiltrated into EFL textbooks; therefore, it has attracted the attention of many researchers. This issue affects the learning of EFL students in positive or negative ways. Regarding how changes occur in an educational system, which may be intangible, many researchers have focused on various aspects of teaching materials in the textbooks from different perspectives. The current study aimed to investigate how the EFL textbooks taught at high school level in Iran, the *Vision* series, reflect political tendencies in their dialogs and activities. This aim was achieved through applying Charteris-Black's (2004) critical metaphor analysis (CMA) to the EFL materials used in the teaching process. It is to be mentioned here that the focus of the study was the conceptual metaphor defined by Lakoff (1993) as "a systematic modelling between the conceptual features of a domain (the source domain) of human experience that is concrete and objective in terms of another domain that is usually more abstract (the target domain)" Thus, to conduct the study, based on the issues mentioned above and purpose of the study, that is, to analyze the manifestation of conceptual metaphors in the new and old versions of Iranian EFL high school textbooks (*Vision* series), the following research questions were addressed.

1. What textual and extratextual entities in the new and old versions of Iranian EFL high school textbooks contribute to metaphorical mapping?
2. What are the specific features of the source domains mapped into the target domains of conceptual metaphors, and which create specific hegemonic notions in the new and old versions of Iranian EFL high school textbooks?

2. Literature Review

This section reports the studies conducted in the area of materials evaluation in ELT. These studies are varied in their subjects and aims. As they seem, different frameworks and criteria have been used for different purposes; in other words, they are not merely evaluative studies. Some studies are comparative, for instance, ESL textbooks have been compared to EFL ones.

Azizi and Talebinejad (2012) evaluated an ELT textbook used for teaching the English language in Iranian universities from 1970 to 2012. To evaluate the textbook, they employed Tucker's (1975) textbook evaluation model. According to the findings, although the book and its exercises were believed to have been designed to increase the students' comprehension, the features of the employed model appeared in very low frequencies. Therefore, the authors concluded that the book neither increased L2 students' comprehension nor fostered their critical thinking, and that such textbooks cannot meet L2 learners' and teachers' needs within the Iranian educational system.

Behjat (2013) claimed that part of the English language problems in Iran arises from the inadequacies in the design of the prescribed English textbooks used at high school level. His study examined the first-grade English textbook used in Iran's senior high schools based on the current research findings in syllabus design, ELT, and the specific language teaching situation in Iran to determine the extent to which it conforms to the common universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks. The detailed analysis focused specifically on the use of a checklist extracted from different EFL textbook evaluation checklists corresponding to local needs. The findings showed that only 63% of the book conforms to the universal characteristics of textbooks.

A rich and growing body of studies has also investigated the role of socioeconomic tendency in language acquisition studies. Among them, there are research studies that measured the relationship between power and language or discourse (e.g., Goddard & Patterson, 2000; Letseka & Victor, 2013; Xue & Kerstetter, 2018). Goddard and Patterson (2000) concluded that it is essential that educators teach students to reflect on the society in which they live. Students must be able to construct knowledge as a political act. Critical pedagogy enables L2 students to become active social beings, critics, and thinkers of society.

Despite the mentioned studies which intended to scrutinize the overall role of politics in education, there is not much research focusing on the evaluation of the textbooks concerning the power-related issues. Thus, with regard to the

significance of textbooks in L2 education, the present study aimed to analyze the *Vision* series in terms of ideological and political representation within Charteris-Black's (2004) CMA.

3. Method

3.1. Design

Because the current research was a descriptive and content analytic study that dealt with the cognitive-critical aspects of conceptual metaphors in the Iranian EFL excerpts of high school textbooks, that is, old and new versions of *Vision* series, a qualitative design was chosen to evaluate the type of discourses interwoven in the excerpts extracted from the corpora.

3.2. Analytical Framework

In this study, Charteris-Black's (2004) three-dimensional model (i.e., CMA) was exploited to analyze discursive representation in the Iranian EFL textbooks at high school level. Charteris-Black (2004) believes that metaphor is evidence that the human mind finds correlations based on a similarity between one thing and another, that is, the mind finds a correspondence between two different entities. This correspondence is called *mapping*. Mapping is the systematic set of correspondences between the constituent elements of the source and target domains. Many elements of the target concepts come from the source domains and are not preexisting. Charteris-Black, in fact, aimed to strengthen Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) logical metaphor theory by paying careful attention to how metaphors are used pragmatically and semantically, instead of only concentrating on how metaphors are used cognitively. Thus, CMA explores the meaning of metaphors, the implied speaker's motives, and the covert power relations within the social/cultural context. Hence, the conceptual metaphor structure in various discourses of the corpora was examined with a critical look in three stages of description, interpretation and explanation. However, in the explanation stage, we used Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) discourse theory within critical pedagogy in order to uncover the hidden perspectives of the textbooks authors' policies.

3.3. Materials

The materials analyzed were collected from the contents of the three in-house EFL textbooks taught at the Iranian high school level: *Vision 1*, *Vision 2*, and *Vision 3*. These textbooks have been prepared by senior Iranian teachers of English language, focusing on the following issues: attending simultaneously to the four language skills, using a variety of activities in the language learning process, emphasizing on experiential learning, using meaningful, understandable content, creating cooperative learning situations, and providing suitable corrective feedback to learner errors. As stated above, CMA (Charteris-Black, 2004) was employed to collect the data and to analyze critically the conceptual metaphors existing in the discourse of these books.

3.4. Procedure

In order to conduct the present study, after reviewing the whole corpora, 50 sentences and 24 pictures were elicited as the main dataset of the study. Then, the corpus was analyzed with a cognitive and critical perspective and in three stages of description, interpretation, and explanation.

In the description stage, linguistic and pragmatic criteria were used to identify the metaphors. The linguistic criteria included (a) the reification (i.e., concretization) of an abstract concept, (b) the personification of nonliving objects, and (c) the depersonification of living beings. Personification consists of attributing human properties to an object, for example, *the tooth keeps calling me to this reality* (Sánchez, 2014), and depersonification is the opposite of personification, for example, *the authorities are the bank* (objectification; Sánchez, 2014), which compares THE AUTHORITIES with the object A BANK. Conversely, the first metaphor is a personification because it attributes qualities proper to human beings (e.g., *keep calling me*) to an object (i.e., *the tooth*). As Charteris-Black (2011, p. 61) explained, "personification is a linguistic figure that describes an abstraction or an inanimate entity through phrases or words that are normally used to describe a person."

Pragmatic criteria are related to the metalinguistic factors which persuade a specific intention. Within the description stage, the excerpts and pictures with metaphors which caused semantic tension were identified. In this phase, metaphorical discourse model, a metaphorical template and mapping were determined. Here, the two domains of

metaphors, that is, source and target domains, which are either implicit or explicit, as well as their underlying entities, were specified. Also, the similarities between the two domains regarding their entities were depicted in a number of tables, representing the characteristics of the two domains.

In the interpretation stage, the conceptual metaphors were highlighted through evaluating the metaphors obtained from the description stage. At this level, two steps were taken: (1) describing the mapping elements and (2) making conclusions based on the various elements of the mapping. Actually, mapping figures were used to present the results of the interpretation and to enhance the understanding of different underlying entities between the source and target domains in the main conceptual metaphors elicited in this level of analysis.

Finally, the conceptual metaphors which pointed to different ideologies were analyzed in the explanation stage to uncover the hidden underlying ideologies and social agencies which might have affected the authors when writing the books under the study.

4. Findings

4.1. Description Stage

In this stage, the collected data from the three EFL textbooks taught in the Iranian secondary schools, *Vision 1*, *Vision 2*, and *Vision 3*, focusing on the metaphors identified in them, were analyzed and the following three main themes, (i.e., LIFE, KNOWLEDGE, and NATURE) were found to metaphorize the content of the books.

4.1.1. Nature-Related Metaphors

❖ *Tooran is a natural home of the Persian zebra.*

➤ Since the author shows the desirability of Tooran for Persian zebras, the traits of the home were mapped into nature.

❖ *All humans are going to work together to have a beautiful home.*

➤ The world was represented as home to contain all the human beings.

❖ *The ocean is home to the largest animals on the planet.*

➤ The traits of the home were attributed to the ocean as the place the huge strange animals.

❖ *Lakes support smaller forms of life.*

➤ The humane attributes were attributed to lakes as the place which shelter for the small animals.

❖ *Families pay more attention to nature.*

➤ Attention was metaphorized as money that can be paid by families because attention like money can be used to earn important things in our life. This sentence shows that nature is like a precious article that should be appreciated by our attention.

❖ *Many people are taking care of nature.*

➤ In this sentence, care can be considered as an article which can be taken by the people.

❖ *We will save the earth for our children.*

➤ The earth was metaphorized as a legacy which should be inherited from our offspring.

❖ *Students learn about saving wildlife.*

➤ Life was metaphorized as wild being like an animal to show that the other kind of life is specific for animals.

❖ *We should also protect nature and the historical sites of that country.*

➤ This sentence shows the similarity between nature and the country that should be defended as like as our country.

❖ *We are going to protect their homes.*

➤In this sentence, home is used instead of wildlife to show that wildlife for animals can function as homes for people. Therefore, we should respect their wildlife if we want them to survive.

❖ *Humans destroy the natural homes of the animals in the forests.*

➤In order to consider humans as invaders or enemies of nature, the author used the verb "destroy" to approach the concept of home to nature as the place of animals. Also, we consider humans as enemies in this sentence that invaded the country of animals, that is, NATURE.

4.1.2. Life-Related Metaphors

❖ *My experience says interest and hard work are really more important than age.*

➤The humane traits, saying or making advice, were attributed to the experience to be metaphorized as the wise resource.

❖ *But the key to their success is their hard work and belief in themselves.*

➤Success was metaphorized as the lock because success like lock is a problem for the people who want to open something or enter a new stage of life.

❖ *Life shows the way of life and identity of a nation and reflects the history of society.*

➤The traits of a mirror were attributed to Life because both life and mirror are truthful.

❖ *Edison had more than 1,000 inventions and was very successful at the end of his life.*

➤End is a metaphorical trait that was attributed to life as if it is a journey or route.

❖ *An effective way to enjoy a better lifestyle is knowing healthy relationships with others.*

➤Lifestyle was metaphorized as a route or way in order that life is like a journey.

4.1.3. Knowledge-Related Metaphors

❖ *New medicines have found keys to the secrets of the human.*

➤The author uses the metaphor key because it shares similar traits with secrets like having problem and complexity

❖ *Recent research has shown that a good social life decreases the risk of diseases.*

➤Research was metaphorized to a person who shows because it is assumed that the research, like a wise person, is able to reveal the hidden facts of life.

❖ *Some technological inventions have helped doctors to check people's conditions.*

➤The author attributed human trait of supporting to tell the addresses that technology can be reliable to diagnose conditions like an expertise person.

❖ *Recent research has shown that a good social life decreases the risk of diseases.*

➤In this sentence, we have two metaphors: research is like a time that can be old or recent. And research is a reliable and wise person who can know the secrets of a healthy life.

❖ *New medicines and medical inventions have saved the lives of many people.*

➤In this sentence, new medicines were metaphorized as a savior-an able-person. Again, the sentence shows that humans can be replaced by technology.

❖ *New medicines have let people have a happy life and live longer.*

In this sentence, we have two metaphors:

■ Life resembles to a happy person because life can be sensed with happiness and euphoric emotions.

■ New medicine is an authorized person who has the power to give longer life and happy life to humans.

❖ *New medicines have cured many patients.*

➤ In order to emphasize the importance of new medicine, the physician attributes were mapped into it. As a matter of fact, new medicine can considerably help doctors to heal ill people.

❖ *Technology has helped the researchers and scientists of our time.*

➤ In this sentence, technology was metaphorized as a human who has ability to help the researchers and sciences. It can diminish the role of humans in contemporary life because technology has considerably advanced.

4.2. Interpretation Stage

In this stage, the conceptual metaphors were identified based on how the metaphors were mapped into concrete themes. Therefore, the excerpts with similar mappings were selected and tabulated as follows:

Table 1. *Mapping the Conceptual Metaphor NATURE IS A COUNTRY*

The Suggested Conceptual Metaphor is NATURE IS A COUNTRY	
The Features NATURE and COUNTRY Share	
The Features a Country Has:	Excerpts
❖ <i>A country has borders which <u>must be defended</u> against enemies.</i>	1. <i>Humans destroy the natural homes of the animals in the forests.</i>
❖ <i>Nature has borders to be safeguarded by the people and government. We call it wildlife.</i>	2. <i>We are going to protect their homes</i>
	3. <i>We should also protect nature and the historical sites of that country</i>
❖ <i><u>A country is like a home</u> because it is a place that a person can nurture and feel relaxed.</i>	4. <i>Tooran is a natural home of the Persian zebra</i>
❖ <i><u>Within globalization</u>, nature functions as a</i>	5. <i>All humans are going to work together to have a beautiful home.</i>
❖ <i>shared land that the entire world must safeguard</i>	6. <i>The ocean is home to the largest animals on the planet.</i>
❖ <i>because all human beings are</i>	
❖ <i>interconnected in a delicate equilibrium.</i>	
❖ <i><u>A country must be kept carefully as a legacy</u> because it is precious to provide life for the following generations.</i>	7. <i>Many people are taking care of nature</i>
	8. <i>We will save the earth for our children</i>
	9. <i>Families pay more attention to nature</i>
	10. <i>Students learn about saving wildlife</i>

Table 2. *Mapping the Conceptual Metaphor LIFE IS A MAP*

The Suggested Conceptual Metaphor Is LIFE IS A MAP	
The Features LIFE and MAP share	
The Features a Map Has:	Excerpts
❖ <i>A map shows us the roads and places. <u>It functions as a guide</u> to help us find our way.</i>	1. <i>My experience says interest and hard work are really more important than age.</i>
❖ <i>In the most recent periods, globalization attracted attention because it focuses on the entire world to share their articles and merits with each other. Among others,</i>	2. <i>But the key to their success is their hard work and belief in themselves.</i>



paying attention to nature as a shared land or country requires people to considerably safeguard the earth Both MAP and NATURE, as a shared, land have boards.

❖ *A map is a tool to represent a journey because it gives us information of a destination and the roads to reach it.*

As a matter of fact, both map and life resemble a journey, and share the same features to tell us the two themes have similar features to represent a journey like:

- *Both of them have destinations.*
- *Both of them have origins.*
- *Both of them have routes and ways.*

3. Life shows the way of life and identity of a nation and reflects the history of society.

4. Edison had more than 1000 inventions and was very successful at the end of his life

5. An effective way to enjoy a better lifestyle is knowing healthy relationship with others.

Table 3. Mapping the Conceptual Metaphor KNOWLEDGE IS GOD

The Suggested Conceptual Metaphor Is KNOWLEDGE IS GOD

The Features God Has Shared With God:

Excerpts

❖ *God sent messengers to guide people. In religious beliefs, He created the sun and the moon to give the earth light. God resembles light to show the hidden things while helping people to find their ways directly and indirectly.*

❖ *In humanistic thought, knowledge enlightens the minds of people through various ways like science and rationality. The conceptual metaphor The Enlightenment Era or Intellectual which were coined in Renaissance era can reflect this fact that Knowledge can function as a light to save people from darkness,*

❖ *In religious beliefs, God is the one who saves lives because He is the Almighty and has the power to guarantee the lives of people. As a matter of fact, He saves the people's lives directly and indirectly through His missionaries.*

❖ *In humanistic thought, knowledge is the only savior of humans who are resulted by rationality and experience. As a matter of fact, knowledge is the powerful force that keeps people from dangers through analyzing and rationalizing the empirical data which have been acquired.*

1. New medicines have found keys to the secrets of the human

2. Recent research has shown that a good social life decreases the risk of diseases

3. Recent research has shown that a good social life decreases the risk of diseases

4. Some technological inventions have helped doctors to check people's conditions

5. New medicines have cured many patients

6. New medicines have let people have a happy life and live longer

7. Technology has helped the researchers and scientist of our time

8. New medicines and medical inventions have saved lives of many people

4.3. Explanation Stage

In this stage, the claim is that the selected corpus represents a lifestyle based on liberalism in terms of globalist discourses. To support this claim, the data collected from the first and second stages were critically analyzed. This demonstrated that the authors of the textbooks under study represent three main discourses as conceptual metaphors: LIFE IS A MAP, KNOWLEDGE IS GOD, and NATURE IS A COUNTRY.

4.3.1. NATURE IS A COUNTRY

Metaphors like NATURE IS A COUNTRY reflect globalism. In fact, this conceptual metaphor expresses a globalized view of nature, which is supranational. This view holds that humans are in an intertwined relationship in the core of nature and the planet. It is bound to global capitalism, which owes to idealist philosophy. Idealism in international relations is a kind of doctrine based on human goodness, advocating the role of rationality and spirituality, advocating the construction of international order through moral and legal norms, and the pursuit and realization of human peace. Kant's (1781) theory of eternal peace is regarded as the representative theories of idealism. According to Jreisat (2017), as idealism is supranational and promotes world peace; it is regarded as globalism, as well.

Moreover, according to O'Riordan (2010), globalism focuses on the global environmental consequences of all human activity. In other words, globalism is the recent representation of liberalism and capitalism for the world to involve in capitalism, and this proposition helps the states to connect their people with global needs and transactions. In this way, economic globalization and interdependence (or, as some scholars call it, global capitalism) are linked to globalism (Deneen, 2018). The future interactions require the shared sources and the shared culture to transact. Thus, NATURE is a globally shared source to highlight this globalist proposition. It seems that safeguarding nature and animals as global resources can be lined with this idealism because global capitalism diminishes the significance of national government to reflect the national resources as international resources to connect the people to the international market (Campbell & Pedersen, 2001).

4.3.2. LIFE IS A MAP

Metaphors like LIFE IS A MAP attribute life to a journey and represent global copiousness which is reflected in globally humanist consciousness. This is reflected in religious scripts, too, in which living in this world is like a journey to reach eternal life in the other world—and God's rules function as a map to help humans as triumphant traveler to experience happiness. The map here has been emphasized by Western intellectuals as a manifesto in the Age of Enlightenment and Modernism—thereby, LIFE IS A PLAN. In other words, the experience is like a human road map. According to this classic humanistic viewpoint, what one must trust does not rely on the invisible things like metaphysics and divinity but experiences that one can experiment with. This conceptual metaphor is represented in the globalist views. Accordingly, globalism comprises cultural consciousness, social ideas, and behavioral norms that are different from the nationalistic, holistic, and anthropocentric view of the world. It should be stated here that this is a more comprehensive and precise definition of globalism (Rae, 2007). On this basis, globalism is not only a way of thinking, but also a way of acting, a statement, and a norm for constructing reality. Moreover, globalism includes global consciousness, but is not limited to it. It is, according to Rohac (2019), directed toward social practice and is actively involved in the integration of social reality both in terms of guiding ideology and norms of behavior.

4.3.3. KNOWLEDGE IS GOD

The conceptual metaphor KNOWLEDGE IS GOD also benefits conscious globalism. Within liberalism, knowledge functions as a light instead of divine rules that were to guide people in the right way. As a matter of fact, this proposition (i.e., metaphor) reflects the attribution of characteristics specifically ascribed to God in religion, to the concept of KNOWLEDGE as a modernist idea that considers the individuality of society and the significance of individual rationale. In terms of modernism, science seeks to guide and save humanity, which is the result of personal experience and individual experimentation. This view has strengthened the foundation of liberalism. In this view, religion, characteristic of traditional norms, has the least right to interfere with the explicit rights of individuals in a society to use nature and resources. Fawcett (2018) believes that, under this outlook, what exists is the law of nature, providing essential and equal rights among members of society based on their merits and efforts.

5. Discussion

To answer research question # 1, the first stage of CMA (i.e., description stage) must be considered. In fact, within the description stage, a close reading of exemplar texts should be used to figure out candidate metaphors. Thus, to metaphorize the excerpts and pictures, reification and personification play prominent roles in old and new versions of the books under the study. That is, the old versions attempted to concretize the materials more prominently than the new versions. Based on the data in the old versions, the tendency to use reification was more than personalization, whereas,

in the new versions, the authors have tried to attribute human features to inanimate objects. The difference in using these two linguistic tools in depicting metaphor is rooted in the two types of discursive approaches discussed in the explanation stage. At first glance, the authors have actually represented abstract concepts in reification based on a modernist approach in liberal discourse. In this very vein, Durkheim, Besnard, and Fournier (1998) believed that through reifying, all the abstract concepts can be considered as tangible and concrete objects. He believed that reification acts as a theoretical and political concept. As for personification, the obtained results are in line with what Freire (2018) points out, that is, textbooks serve to represent a class of society that mostly conforms to the world-class and the system constructed in the world media. Here, the authors of the Iranian EFL textbooks have used personification to postmodernize ideas that do not incorporate the Iranian society's weaker class from a critical pedagogy point of view.

Turning now to extratextual entities, a pragmatic criterion was used in the description and interpretation stages to answer this part of the first question. In the old versions of the textbook, KNOWLEDGE as an extratextual entity is a process, likened to a JOURNEY that we have to adapt ourselves with its hardships. Thus, the students should follow their teachers as their LIGHT to find their routes and roads in this perspective. In the new version, however, KNOWLEDGE is viewed as a HOME (mosaic) which gathers all the students to learn collectively. In this perspective, learning is not a process, but a lifestyle. It is a kind of community in which the students and teachers communicate with each other. In other words, schooling is a facilitator to help the students communicate and understand each other's identities. In fact, the former (old versions) use a hierarchical order to define the relationship between the students and knowledge sources, whereas the latter (new versions) use a linear order to define the relationship between them. Thus, it seems that in the old versions, the authors have conceptualized the metaphors in an absolute way, that is, they have used a binary logic to evaluate NATURE, HUMAN, and SCIENCE, whereas the new version authors have used fuzzy logic to evaluate NATURE, LIFE, and SCIENCE. The former have actually attempted to conceptualize how phenomena are divided into existence and nonexistence, humanistic vs. nonhumanistic (wild), controllable vs. uncontrollable, lively vs. deadly, body vs. nothing, teaching vs. learning, whereas the latter have tried to conceptualize how phenomena is seen in a continuum or a collection—mosaic. In this view, life is a collection of different values and beings. In other words, all the creatures, including humans, have similar rights to survive. This view emphasizes the close relationship between knowledge sources and students because science is a relative fact and not an absolute one, meaning that all the elements in a society have mutual effects on each other and nobody is superior to others.

It should be noted here by inducing solidarity and compassion to direct the Iranian students to globalism, the authors of the textbooks have also added nationalist sentiments like using Persian zebra or Persian cheetah. Similarly, they have attempted to offer authority to metaphors by incorporating a sense of severity and evoking a voice for the reader to equate. In line with these findings, Hammer and Kellner (2009) believe that a globalist perspective toward education helps the policymakers devalue classical sources of knowledge. Moreover, regarding postmodernist perspectives which dominate the new version of the textbooks, LIFE can be interpreted differently, and SCIENCE has been given a divine status, with all the traits a god has to create his creatures. In this perspective, SCIENCE is not made by scientists and epistemic sources, unlike in the old versions. It is positioned in the human's realm; thus, all the interpretations toward science may be right. This poststructuralist perspective toward SCIENCE or KNOWLEDGE leads the Iranian students toward a globalist perspective and makes them share their feelings with the people from other cultures.

To answer research question # 3, the identified conceptual metaphors were reanalyzed in the explanation stage to see how they were formulated according to Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) model, and what social reactions had contributed to their emergence. Also, they were reexamined to see what specific features the source domains possessed, according to which conceptual metaphors had been used by the authors of old and new versions of the EFL textbook. Figure 1 is the representation of this reanalysis:

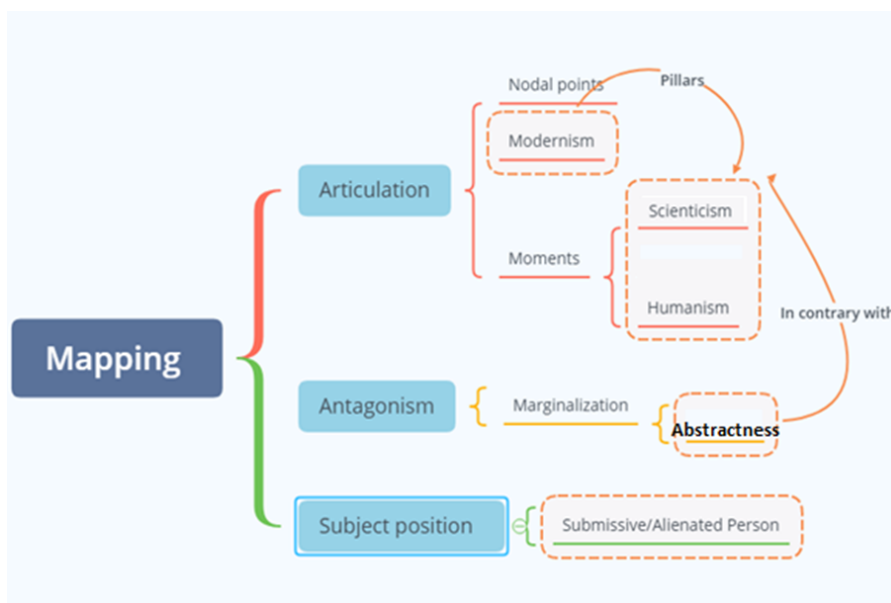


Figure 1. Mapping of Conceptual Metaphor Based on Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) Model (Old Version)

As seen in Figure 1, in the old versions of the textbooks, the articulation of the metaphors highly depended upon modernism. As a matter of fact, humanism, and scientism were the main moments which have helped the authors to follow a modernist approach in these textbooks. Humanism serves humans in developing their personality in an ideal manner, whereas scientism advocates the application of the scientific method and available research to issues of human well-being. Moreover, according to modernism, the relationship between the student and the teachers is a hierarchical and follow-up approach. The student must eventually become a part of the whole. Thus, the old versions of the textbook try to make the students obedient to the education system. In line with this finding, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) believed that all pedagogical action must constitute a form of symbolic violence insofar as it imposes a cultural arbitrariness through arbitrary power. Thus, in terms of a modernistic approach, L2 students' submissive role is imposed to involve them in a unidirectional relationship. In this view, the only source of knowledge is school and the students have no way out but to follow it.

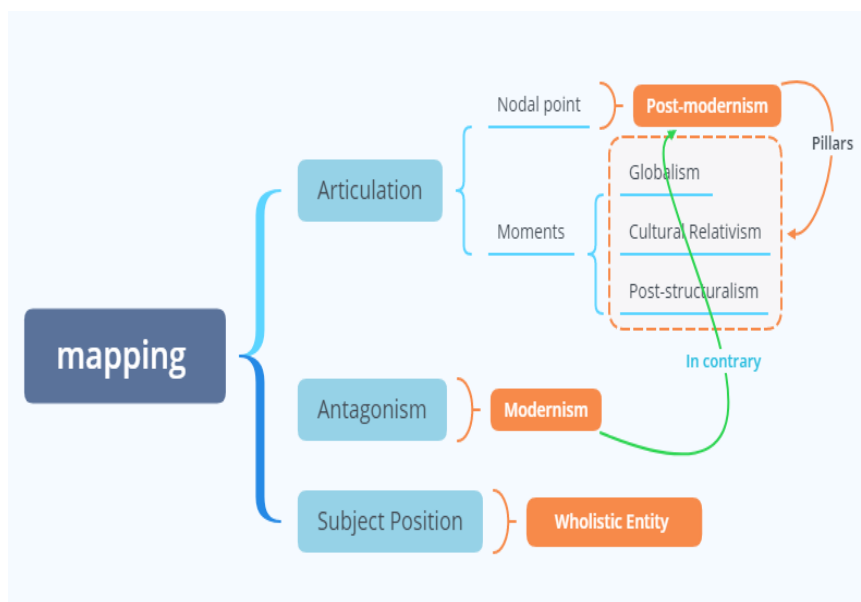


Figure 2. Mapping of Conceptual Metaphor Based on Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) Model (New Version)

As Figure 2 reveals, in the reanalysis of the source domains of the conceptual metaphors in the new versions, there are three moments found to construct postmodernist discursivity as a nodal point. As a matter of fact, globalism,

culture-relativism, and poststructuralism are the three main moments in this discourse. Here, there is a high tendency to represent globalism through respecting the earth, lakes, and other symbols of nature. In fact, the authors of the new versions of the EFL textbooks have employed an effectively emotional tone to construct their concerns about nature, whereas the old versions' authors have employed a neutral and impersonal tone to nature. Another moment or signifier in the postmodernist discourse is cultural relativism. Therefore, variability in the cultures represented in the new versions of the textbook can be clearly seen. According to Anderson (2017), cultural relativism is the thesis that the meaning and value of human beliefs and behaviors should be understood and analyzed only from their culture's point of view. The third moment dominating postmodernism discourse is the poststructuralism signifier. This view tries to violate traditional and ideological beliefs. In line with poststructuralism and according to the results elicited from the new versions of the textbooks, SCIENCE somehow occupies the place of God as a creator. Moreover, in the postmodernist view, KNOWLEDGE is defined as a whole which should be perceived differently by different people. The conceptual metaphor EDUCATION IS A MOSAIC represents such an idea. This conceptual metaphor was represented in different ways in the content of the new versions when looking at KNOWLEDGE. In line with this view, Henderson and Woods (2019) believe that postmodernism has attempted to dilute the role of the teacher as an authority to reflect this fact that there is no dominated power in the local society and the learner must follow the contents of the book as an alternative authority. The materials of the book inject a postmodernist discourse to manipulate the students' minds to think over their conditions. In line with this perspective, Callinicos (2011) argues that today's governments attempt to distort the minds of the people from the locally current demands by means of globalist subjects, materials, and education.

6. Conclusion and Implications

Although it seems that liberal ideas have no place in the educational system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the findings of the present research reveal that the content of the new versions of English textbooks taught at secondary high schools has a somewhat liberal flavor. In other words, as Foody (2016) believes, the existence of such liberal views in the English textbooks would not be surprising if the recent socioeconomic policies of Iran are taken into consideration. Actually, the authors of the new versions have addressed the Iranian EFL learners as global individuals with individual rights, using the ideas of modernism and globalism reflected in the framework of liberalism and neoliberalism. In this view, the role of the government as an interfering factor is diminished.

The findings can open new windows to the Iranian EFL teachers and researchers to be aware of the contents they are obliged to teach. Also, within critical pedagogy, it is hoped that these findings can trigger the Iranian EFL teachers to involve themselves and their students in social issues that may lead them toward authorizing their textbooks. The findings have also the following implications for those interested in EFL research:

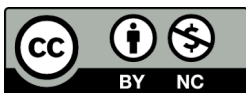
Using the CMA approach (Charteris-Black, 2004) will help L2 researchers study metaphorical conceptualizations of the influential and memorable sequences of the Iranian EFL textbook contents, while relying on cognitive processes. In fact, the CMA, as a form of critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, which is simultaneously based on a cognitive application approach and Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of metaphor, can assist L2 researchers to identify rhetorical persuasion and determine the effect of metaphor on representing the media's discourses, including textbooks and, hence, examine the structure of conceptual metaphors in various discourses with a critical look in three stages of description, interpretation, and explanation. The present study can help media researchers manipulate the audience's mind by using conceptual metaphors. It can also open new windows to the Iranian EFL teachers to be aware of the contents that ought to be taught. Also, within critical pedagogy, it is hoped that the findings of the present study can trigger EFL teachers to involve their students in social issues that cause them to participate in authorizing their textbooks. At the same time, critical pedagogy researchers can use the present study's findings to depict the hegemonic relations pursued in compiling EFL textbooks. Finally, using the findings of this study and other critical studies in EFL contexts can sensitize stakeholders about the content which will be used in new series of the EFL textbooks in future.

References

- Alavimoghadam, B., Kheirabadi, R., Rahimi, M., & Davari, H. (2016). *Vision 1*. Tehran: Ministry of Education.
- Anderson, E. (2017). Feminist epistemology and philosophy of science. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (pp. 20-35). Palo Alto: Stanford University Publications.

- Azizi, M., & Talebinejad, M. R. (2012). Evaluation of general English course books in Iranian universities: A critical thinking perspective. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(10), 2194-2203.
- Behjat, F. (2013). Internet-supplemented ESP course books: Fostering Iranian ESP students' vocabulary breath. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 93, 1755-1759
- Bourdieu, P., Passeron, J. C., & Nice, R. (1977). *Education, society, and culture* (Trans. Richard Nice.) London: SAGE Publications.
- Callinicos, A. (2011). *Against postmodernism: A Marxist critique*. New Jersey: Wiley Publishing Company.
- Campbell, J. L., & Pedersen, O. K. (2001). *The rise of neoliberalism and institutional analysis*. London: Princeton University Press.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2004). *Corpus approaches to critical metaphor analysis*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2011). Metaphor in political discourse. In J. Charteris-Black (Eds.), *Politicians and rhetoric* (pp. 28-51). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Deneen, P. J. (2018). *Why liberalism failed*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Durkheim, É., Besnard, P., & Fournier, M. (1998). *Lettres à Marcel Mauss*. Paris, FR: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Ebrahimi, S. S. (2013). *Learning English middle voice constructions by Iranian EFL learners*. Sunnyvale: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Fawcett, E. (2018). *Liberalism: The life of an idea* (2nd ed.). London: Princeton University Press.
- Foody, K. (2016). The limits of religion: Liberalism and antiliberalism in the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Culture and Religion*, 17(2), 183-199.
- Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Goddard, A., & Patterson, L. M. (2000). *Language and gender*. London: Routledge.
- Hammer, R., & Kellner, D. (2009). Media/cultural studies: Critical approaches. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 26(3), 369-386.
- Henderson, R., & Woods, A. (2019). (Re)focusing the lens beyond deficit: Making diversity and difference in schools visible. In R. Henderson (Ed.), *Teaching literacies: Pedagogies and diversity* (pp. 231-248). Oxford University Press.
- Jreisat, J. (2012). *Globalism and comparative public administration*. London: Routledge.
- Kant, I. (1781). *Critique of pure reason*. London: Paul Guyer and Allen Woods.
- Laclau E., & Mouffe C. (1985/2001). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Toward a radical democratic politics*. London: Verso.
- Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought* (pp. 202-251). Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). Conceptual metaphor in everyday language. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 77(8), 453-486.
- Letseka, M., & Victor, P. (2013). Foucault's discourse and power: Implications for instructionist classroom management. *Open Journal of Philosophy*, 3(1), 23-28.
- O'Riordan, T. (2010). *Globalism, localism, and identity: New perspectives on the transition of sustainability*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Rae, P. (2007). *Modernism and mourning*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

- Rohac, D. (2019). *In defense of globalism*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Sánchez Ruiz, R. (2014). *Persuasive and manipulative language in political discourse*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Toledo, Spain.
- Toms, C. (2004). General English course books and their place in an ESAP program. *Asian EFL Journal*, 6(1), 9-18.
- Tucker, C. A. (1975). Evaluating beginning textbooks. *English Teaching Forum*, 13, 355-361.
- Xue, L., & Kerstetter, D. (2018). Discourse and power relations in community tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(6), 757-768.
- Zeng, R. (2013). *Compiling principles and standards of ESP course book: Taking English course books of textile foreign trade as an example*. Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Science and Social Research, International Informatization and Engineering Associations, Atlantis Press.



© 2021 by the authors. Licensee Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Iran. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0 license). (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).