



## An Investigation about Demonstration of Countries in Upper Secondary Schools' Textbooks of Iran based on Van Dijk's Discourse Analysis Approach

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: 20 January 2023            Revised: 05 February 2023            Accepted: 18 February 2023            Online: 22 February 2023</p>	<p>The purpose of research was to investigate the representation of countries in the upper secondary school textbooks of Iran education system based on van Dijk's discourse analysis. The data collection method was documentary by examining primary sources (seven textbooks) and secondary sources. The findings of research reveal that the authors of selected textbooks are aware of the ways of reproducing power in the discourse, by highlighting their identity successively implement the process of producing and understanding ideological discourse and dominate the minds of students through this language structure. Another finding showed the author's use of words, sentences, and numerous paragraphs to create all the negative aspects of others. Another finding is that it is rare to find a positive attribute for the people of a country in the selected textbooks, unless the said country has a history of struggle, war, domination and colonization in relation to one of the western countries. However, it is difficult to find a word praising industrial, technological, social, scientific achievements or progress of a country in the selected textbooks. According to the findings and in order to increase the highlighting of the positive characteristics of "other" and reduce the negative view of other cultures, societies and countries; it is suggested to curriculum planners and authors of school textbooks in Iran to make fundamental changes in the content of textbooks.</p>
<p><b>KEYWORDS</b></p> <p>Demonstration            Discourse Analysis            Ideology            Other            School Textbooks            Self</p>	

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## 1. Introduction

Although the victory of the Islamic Revolution (1979) caused major changes in the political values of Iranians, its effects were not limited to the political system. In the first step, the important indicators of this revolution, such as the sovereignty of God, Islamic-centeredness, the system based on the centrality of the religious guardian, and anti-colonialism had a major impact on Iran's social, cultural, and educational values (Karimi Qahi, 2009). In the meantime, one of the social systems that underwent many changes from the very beginning was the formal general education system. In fact, these indicators, along with the religious nature of Iranian society and the new structure of the political system, caused the status of the educational system and its main mission, "Islamic education", to be elevated from the ideal level to the level of fundamental reality - which should preserve the ideological structure of the society (Alam Al-Hoda, 2005, 12). Therefore, the politicians of the Islamic Republic announced from the very beginning that they have another message for the life of the individual and the society and their movement towards perfection and salvation - apart from what the common ideologies of the world have put forward. It was obvious that this message and mission should be conveyed to the young generation by the educational system and through the cooperation of educational and curriculum planners in determining the new goals and content of school programs (Malki, 2009).

In order to achieve the desired goals of policymakers in the education system, one of the best and most effective tools are textbooks, because it has always been emphasized that the curriculum - and especially the content of textbooks - must be aligned with the specific belief system and values that govern the society (Fathi Vajargah, 2013; Khoinejad & Mehr Mohammadi, 2010; Jafarnia, Amin Khandaghi, Kandili & Javaheri, 2016). Therefore, it is continuously emphasized and reminded to those involved in the education system that they should carefully prepare and edit the content of textbooks in order to bring about changes in the knowledge, attitude and capabilities of the learners so that the lofty goals of the Islamic Republic system are realized (Salehi Omran & Shakibabian, 2007). Based on this, the aim of the curriculum is to help the harmonious growth of the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and political dimensions of the personality of the young generation and lead them to God. Therefore, the teaching materials should cover all the knowledge and tendencies that every Muslim needs in order to live in this world and in the hereafter - and to face various issues and events (Adib Menesh & Parvaneh, 2014; Bidglu & Shahidani, 2016; Javadi, 2017; Malki, 2009).

Now the question we are facing is how the curriculum wants to realize this goal and mission. In response, it should be said that according to experts in the field of curriculum, belief and value

systems try to realize their goals through the ideology governing the curriculum (Cantoni et al., 2017; Mehr Mohammadi & Amin Jandaghi, 2018). Curriculum ideologies are a set of basic beliefs and value systems that view curricula as one of the most important means of achieving their goals (Apple, 2019). Based on this, each country, according to its cultural/social, political and historical conditions, formulates the ideology that governs the curriculum of the society (Mehr Mohammadi & Amin Jandaghi, 2018). Naturally, in this process, the ideology that governs the curriculum is not formed in a vacuum, and as it was said, it is heavily influenced by the indicators and criteria that govern the ideology of the society - and especially the ideology of the political system. One of the dimensions of this macro ideology is to explain the relationship with other countries and societies according to intellectual similarities and differences, cultural commonalities, and historical background for the young generation.

In Iran and during the past four decades, school textbooks have not only been a vehicle for establishing the ruling viewpoint and ideology, but also the political system has tried to spread its views about other countries to young generation through educational system (schools, universities) (Mousavi Behbid, Hasabi & Ider, 2021). In this process, the political system has tried to convey its desired image, perception and interpretation of the role, status, history and ideology of other countries to the young generation through the content of textbooks. This image makes students find out what cultural, social, political and educational commonalities and differences they have with the people of other countries. Also, this image causes emotional states based on empathy, anger, pride or indifference in students about other countries. It is obvious that the image and concept that is presented to the young generation in textbooks from other societies is not always stable and may change due to domestic and international developments. For example, during the last four decades, the relationship of Iran's political system with some countries has undergone a transformation in such a way that this relationship has become stronger with some of them (for example, China and Russia) and a greater distance has been created with others (for example, USA and Western European countries). Considering these changes, the necessity of conducting the present research becomes clear.

In the process of reviewing the research literature, the present researchers found that no study has been done that is completely similar to the present research. Nevertheless, numerous researches can be found regarding the relationship between the political system and the educational system, the role of the dominant ideology in the curriculum, relations between centre-periphery countries, and cultural identity. For example, with a positive view, Ye (2021) points to the effects of British colonialism in the expansion of public education in India and China. According

to him, before the British colonial era in India, schools were supported by public donations and only upper class children were given formal education. Theologou & Dimasi (2020) examined the content of five English language teaching textbooks at advanced and elementary levels in Greece and found that although there are certain representations of the "other", they do not include a multicultural or intercultural perspective. Madandar Arani & Kakia (2018) to investigate and analyze the state of global education through the image and voice of Africa (with an emphasis on South Africa) found in Iran school textbooks that there are rarely sentences about issues such as global citizenship, acceptance of cultural diversity, peace education or negation of violence. By studying social studies and geography textbooks (Grades 5-9) published between 2005 and 2010 in Finland, Mikender (2016) found that basic values include human rights, equality and democracy, while many old stereotypes about non-Westerners have disappeared from textbooks. Boers-Goi (2014) by analyzing the textbooks of the Netherlands concluded that the colonial history of this country is often forgotten. Paasi (1999) by analyzing the text and photos in Finnish school geography textbooks from the 19th century to the 1960s found that these texts and images are divided into three spatial territories: Western (European) territory with a positive image, Eastern and Southern European territory with a relatively neutral image and others living in current third world countries with a negative image.

In Iran, many researchers have analyzed the content of school textbooks. Raisi Mubarakeh (2019) examines the transmission of Iranian culture in Persian language teaching books to English speakers, and by introducing and classifying the unpleasant attitudes attributed to Iranians in these books, he points out the destructive effects of abuse by the authors of these books. Abbaszadeh Marzbali (2019) by examining "functioning of Iran's education system and necessity of adopting a comprehensive identity policy in order to strengthen national identity" believes that the pattern of identity politics in this system - due to its selectiveness and one-sided emphasis on the Islamic dimension of national identity - has not been able to help and strengthen the tendency of many Iranians about their national identity and as a result the strength of Iran's national identity. Rashidi, Aghtiyari & Seifolahzadeh (2018) by analyzing the components of political socialization in sociology textbooks of high secondary schools (humanities branch) showed that the dominant approach of the authors of these books is to promote the political and ideological components of the Islamic Revolution, which in this process, the components of republic and good governance have been neglected. Hosni (2015) in a research entitled "Evaluation of the Moral Education Approach in Iran's Formal and General Education System of the Primary School" based on the analysis of upstream documents; found that the moral education of students is based on following the religious

virtuous approach. Mikaili & Motamedi (2015) in the research "Analysis of the content of social studies and geography textbooks of the Middle Secondary Schools based on the components of global education" found that the amount of content related to this component is very small under the influence of cultural differences in the textbooks. Adib Menesh & Parvaneh (2014) by analyzing the content of middle school history books found that the authors of these books had a great contribution in shaping and transmitting the concepts of religious and revolutionary identity and were able to describe the features, dos and don'ts of religion, beliefs and Islamic identity - to convey a revolutionary message in the layers of their materials to the students and act effectively in internalizing them-.

Similarly, Najafi, Moghadamzadeh, Vafai & Farmahini Farahani (2014) by examining the dimensions and components of Islamic awakening in Iran's high secondary history textbooks showed that among the 48 components of Islamic awakening, the authors paid the most attention to the following components: Uprising against tyranny, intervention of Islamic scholars in political affairs, anti-arrogance and fighting against the domination system, awareness of the consequences of colonialist influence, and awareness of the enemy's infiltration strategies. Mirdehghan, Sejoudi & Aghaei (2013) by analyzing the concept of culture in "Teaching Persian" books, found that the way of representations is not in line with strengthening the interactive model of "self and other" and comprehensive cultural dialogue. Hashemi (2012) by examining the term "national identity" in middle school sociology textbooks found that the authors did not use this term at all and instead talked about Iranian identity and Islamic identity. Hazari & Rezapour (2012) believe that the ideology governing the educational system in the practical scene (inside the school) introduces itself under the name of "school norms". Razavipour & Zakari (2016) in a research entitled "Effect of educational system transformation on the architectural identity of Qajar and Pahlavi period schools" concluded that with the transformation of the educational system in the Pahlavi period, the Iranian-Islamic identity in schools became weak.

According to what has been said, the mental premise of the present researchers is that there is a difference between the content of high secondary school textbooks - in terms of the image they present to students of the countries - and the realities governing the current policy of Iran's political system as well as the existing realities in these countries. For example, in the school textbook of history and geography, the image presented of the countries of the Africa has a feature called "uniformity", which means that the 58 countries and political regions in this continent are considered to have the same historical, social and political characteristics and all countries to be plagued by issues such as social/economic backwardness, a relationship based on subjugation by

colonialist powers, and an identity crisis. Therefore, in the first step, the existing image of the countries and the characteristics of each country should be identified in the textbooks. It is natural that this identification can be done through qualitative aspects (positive, neutral and negative features). Based on this, the general goal of the current research is to determine the characteristics and attributes of countries in humanities textbooks of the high secondary schools through the application of van Dijk's discourse analysis model.

## 2. Research Method

In terms of nature, purpose and method, this research is a qualitative, applied and discourse analysis research. In discourse analysis method, the researcher aims to show the relationship between the author, the text and the reader and to specify what social, cultural, political and other contexts and factors have an effect on the production of discourse (Sadeghi Fasaei & Roozkhosh, 2013). The research population included all the textbooks of the upper secondary school (humanities branch) using purposeful theoretical sampling method for selection of textbooks (History of Iran & Ancient World, Sociology 1, Thinking & Media Literacy, Sociology 2, History 3, Sociology 3 and Cultural Analysis). The method of collecting data was documentary by examining primary sources. The secondary sources were books and articles searching through Boolean approach. The unit of data analysis was the examination of words, text, paragraphs, and photos according to the objectives of the research through van Dijk's ideological square discourse analysis method. Van's ideological square is based on four pillars, which, in his opinion, are used by supporters of each ideology at different levels. These four principles are not only used in interaction with opposing groups, but often when we think about ourselves and others, consciously or unconsciously, these four principles govern our thoughts, feelings and behavior (Van Dijk, 2000: 44). The four pillars mentioned are:

- Expressing and emphasizing the information that contains positive points about us (self).
- Expressing and emphasizing information that contains negative points about them (others).
- Describing and de-emphasizing information that contains negative points about us (insiders).
- Describing and de-emphasizing information that contains positive points about them (outsiders) (Van Dijk, 1993: 265).

Since the primary sources have been published by the Ministry of Education, there was no need to use external criticism to determine their accuracy and authenticity, while the method of internal criticism was used according to the main purpose of the research.

### **3. Findings**

#### *A) Appearance information*

The results of the quantitative analysis of the content of seven selected school textbooks showed that, in total, the names of different countries are mentioned 1402 times in these books and in different forms (in text, tables, diagrams, images and photos). Also, among the advanced countries of the world, textbook authors have mentioned the names of six countries, England, Russia, France, Germany, the United States of America, and Greece more than other countries, while among the developing countries, the highest number of repetitions of names are allocated to five countries of India, China, Egypt, South Africa and Iraq. In addition, the results related to first question of research show that the amount of attention and interest of the authors of textbooks to some regions of the world is very insignificant and at the level of zero. For example, there is no reference to the continent of Oceania or without mentioning the name of the country; a general word is used to refer to the characteristics of the people of the geographical areas without referring to their numerous cultural, social, political, race, language and religion's differences (Like Africans or Europeans).

#### *B) Discourse analysis*

In order to determine the major characteristics of different countries of the world by identifying the intellectual/emotional characteristics and positive, neutral and negative aspects attributed to them by the authors, in the current research, the Van Dijk model was used to examine and analyze the selected texts. By presenting the ideological square for the linguistic analysis of the text and also detailing the different levels of discourse, Van Dijk introduces his model as follows: "by highlighting the positive points of self and negative points of others and marginalizing the negative points of self and positive points of others, it is possible to penetrate into the intellectual system of people and analyze the minds and behavior of individual and social agents " (Van Dijk, 2006: 121). The important point to explain the choice of Van Dijk's method in the current research is to pay attention to the fact that the dominator/dominated relationship in the post-colonial period also mainly follow the same intellectual framework of "self-affirmation and negation of other". It is

obvious that in the current research, the behavior of Iranian agents is considered at the macro (national) level and within the framework of a social system (educational system) (Figure 1).

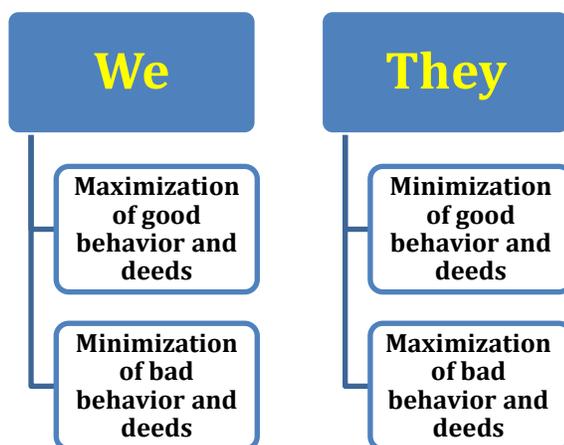


Figure 1: Discourse framework based on Van Dijk's ideological square (van Dijk, 1998)

According to van Dijk's ideological square to analyze the discourse of the sentences and paragraphs of the selected textbooks, emphasis on obvious and objective signs and relationships is one of the first steps. However, attention should also be paid to the discovery of hidden relationships that exist in the foundations of sentences. Thus, according to van Dijk's ideological square, the following pattern can be followed in searching for the four poles in the sentences and paragraphs of school textbooks:

- Highlighting self-positive points (+F)
- Highlighting other negative points (-F)
- Marginalize self-negative points (+B)
- Marginalization of other positive points (-B) (Kasai & Rahimian, 2013: 250)

Here, two points should be noted here: First, the positive sign (+) represents Self and the negative sign (-) represents Other; Second, the abbreviation F stands for the English word "Foregrounding" and used for highlighting, and the abbreviation B stands for the English word "Backgrounding" and is used for marginalization. According to these explanations, the results of meta-cognition and deep-cognition analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of each of the selected textbooks are presented separately:

### 1) History (1): Iran & Ancient World

In the first chapter of this book - including three lessons - students will get acquainted with the concept of history and historiography, role of time and place, and archeology. Therefore, the topics related to drawing and describing "self" and "other" start from the second chapter of the book - which deals with the description of ancient civilizations. Also, the third chapter - which takes up more than half of the content of the book - deals with the situation in Iran and topics such as patriotism, society & family, religion & beliefs, and art & architecture. The results of the analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of this book according to van Dijk's ideological square are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Polarization of the discourse system in the History (1)

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
Iranians' interest to recording historical events	3	+F
In his reporting of events related to Iran, Herodotus, intentionally or unintentionally, has suffered slips and sometimes ulterior motives.	4	-F
A large number of these historians, such as Tabari and Bayhaqi, were Iranian	4	+F
The tomb of Qin Shi Huangdi, the ancient Chinese emperor, was accidentally discovered by some farmers.	25	-B
The famous Rosetta Stone was discovered by accidentally by French soldiers who occupied Egypt during Napoleon's time.	25	-B
Many precious ancient works of Iran adorning many museums in different countries	26	+F
The ancient Egyptians worshiped many Gods	39	-F
Egyptians were a patient and obedient people	40	-B
The grueling rites of Brahminism gradually turned some of its followers	44	-F
With the establishment of Aryans in India and the formation of Brahminism, a closed and discriminatory class system was created in that country.	45	-F
Women, slaves and foreigners living in Athens were denied the right to vote and participate in the administration of political affairs	54	-B
Iranian people made significant progress in making pottery utensils and tools since about 8,000 years ago	67	+F
Koresh's statement or manifesto is a symbol of the humane and tolerant culture of Iranians	83	+F
The Greeks also exaggerated a lot about their victory in this battle	86	-F
Alexander dominated Iran with cruelty and violence.	90	-B
Although the Parthian army was unsuccessful in some of these battles, in the following battles, it made up for the defeat and pushed the enemy back with courage and bravery.	93	+B
In his memoirs, French archaeologist Jane Dieulafoy wrote,	145	-F

"Yesterday I watched with regret the huge stone bull that was found in recent days. It weighs about twelve thousand kilos. It was impossible to move such a huge mass. Finally, I could not control my anger. I took a sledgehammer in my hand and fell on the stone animal. I gave it brutal blows."		
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Given that the content of the book of history (1) is mainly focused on the expression of historical facts, the polarization of the discourse system based on the four states considered by van Dijk is not very evident. Nevertheless, the table show that the authors of this book mainly considered highlighting the positive points of "themselves" (Iran and Iranians) and negative points of "other" (other nations). The positive traits (+) of Iranians include interest in history, making works that adorn museums, behavior with tolerance, perseverance and bravery. The negative traits (-) of others are: selfishness, arrogance (Greece), random events in life (China and France), worship of many Gods (Egypt), cruelty and violence (Macedonia, France).

## 2) Sociology 1

The results of the review and analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of "Sociology 1" show that the main goal of its authors is to acquaint learners with social life and analyze the relationship of individuals with identity of self and other in different social groups. In this regard Table 2.

Table 2: Polarization of the discourse system in the school textbook of "Sociology1"

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
Poverty and wealth at the same time in cities like Rio de Janeiro	28	-B
Iranian painting is an art that has the ability to express ideas and thoughts in a good way	30	+F
A young man is arrested by the police for protesting apartheid.	36	-F
The huge and ancient geometric drawings of the Nazca civilization in Peru, which can only be identified from a distance of thirteen thousand feet.	38	-B
Watch the movie "New Age" and interpret the image that Charlie Chaplin presents from contemporary man.	49	-B
Consecration of animals in Indian temples (image of mice eating milk)	54	-F
Young black people are stopped and questioned by the police on the streets of London, on average, more often than their white peers.	56	-F
Westerners do not shed tears at the funeral of their loved ones	57	-B
Iranians cry a lot during mourning ceremonies and never hide their sadness	57	+F
I say with complete certainty that real expertise is obtained under the shadow of Islamic commitment and nothing else	66	+F

Zahra Nemati, gold medalist in the World Paralympic Games	67	+F
USA's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement (reducing greenhouse gas emissions)	70	-F
The support of the people and government of Iran to the oppressed of the world	70	+F
The all-round support of Western governments and some Islamic governments to the occupying regime of Jerusalem	70	-F
When Takhti noticed that Medvid - the Russian wrestler - had an injured leg, he never went to the opponent's injured leg.	71	-B
In England, many hedgehogs are killed by cars every year - on motorways and country roads.	75	-F
Use of surveillance cameras in China to prevent fraud. Fraud is punishable by prison.	78	-F
In the Indian state of Bihar, brick factory workers were born into the impure caste.	85	-F
The law banning the use of hijab in French schools deprives Muslim women wearing hijab of the opportunity to study and work	85	-F
In secular societies, it is not possible to vote on divine laws. The majority of Algerians voted for Islamic rule in 1991, but a military coup prevented the implementation of the election results.	86	-B
In the Islamic world, some jobs such as usury are forbidden and Muslim people should not approach them	86	+B
Iran is among the top ten countries in the world in the field of nanotechnology	87	+F
The thinkers of the western world have written many works about the identity crises of this world	94	-B
Iranian identity before the advent of Islam was a monotheistic, religious identity and in some cases mixed with mythology	104	+B
The Iranian nation has submitted to the truth more than any other nation due to its truth-seeking, non-prejudiced and culture-loving spirit.	104	+F
Farsi language has served Islam more than anything else	104	+F
Iran's Islamic Revolution was the result of a century of resistance of Iran's Islamic identity against the political and economic invasion of the West.	107	+F
In 1980, a Chinese woman was sentenced to a fine of 200 dollars, because according to the law, she was not allowed to have children again after having one child.	117	-F
Martin Luther King, the influential leader of the American black civil movement, spoke of desire for black rights in his famous "I have a dream" speech.	118	-B
Two genocides took place in Bosnia; One in Srebrenica in 1995 and the other during the 1992-1995 war across Bosnia.	130	-F

The results from Table 2 reveal that the authors of school textbook of "Sociology 1" rarely mentioned the positive features of other countries. At the same time, they have used words to describe Iran's society that indicate exaggeration and extreme praise. Among the 32 sentences

quoted in the above table, 10 cases are based on highlighting self-positive points and 12 cases are dedicated to highlighting the negative points of the countries of Brazil, India, USA, China, South Africa (apartheid period) and France. The positive traits (+) of Iranians are artistic, compassionate, self-confident, winning, supporter of the oppressed, chivalrous, scientific excellence, monotheistic identity, truthful, impartial, culture-loving, servant to people, resistant. The negative traits (-) of others are: poverty (Brazil), racial discrimination (South Africa), intangible art (Peru), animal worship, racial discrimination (India), racism, cruelty (England), human in crisis, injustice, irresponsibility towards the environment, supporter of the occupation (USA), fraudster, criminal (China), naked (France), genocidal (Serbia).

### 3) Thought & Media Literacy

The results of the review and analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of the book "Thought & Media Literacy" show that the main goal of the authors is to improve the media literacy of learners (Table 3).

Table 3: Polarization of the discourse system in the school textbook of "Thought & Media Literacy"

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
Holding the great Arbaeen walk, a ceremony called "the largest human gathering in the world".	30	+F
It is a myth that anyone who speaks English or lives in an English-speaking country will immediately be freed from grief.	30	-B
The Wall Street Movement Against Injustice in US	31	-F
In many media representations of the family in the West, animals are also considered as its members!	33	-B
Damavand peak in the posters is a symbol of strength and stability of the Iran nation	44	+F
Adolf Hitler, the leader of Nazi Germany, was able to capture the soul and spirit of the German people with his ambitious and racist ideas.	58	-F
Edward Snowden, a former employee of the CIA of the United States, revealed the massive spying and surveillance operation with his revelations.	78	-F
Many European governments and telephone companies also cooperate directly and closely for widespread surveillance and spying - especially over the Internet.	78	-F
The region [Middle East] and the world are indebted to Sardar Soleimani	158	+F
Six colorful medals, brought by Iranian students from the 2019 World Mathematical Olympiad competitions	158	+F
The activity of 18 thousand CIA spies in Iraq and Afghanistan	158	-F
Taiwanese man died after 3 days of continuous gaming on a game net	164	-B

The data in Table 3 indicates that compared to the previous two textbooks, the authors of “Thought & Media Literacy” emphasized less on positive points of Self (4 cases) and marginalized more the negative characteristics of others (8 cases). Meanwhile, the four advanced industrial countries of the USA, England, Germany and Taiwan and the two war-torn countries of Afghanistan and Iraq are mainly presented to the students in a negative way. The positive traits (+) of Iranians include holding the largest human community in the world, strength and stability, the world's indebtedness to Iran, and great victories. The negative traits (-) of others are: mythmaking (England), injustice (USA), racism (Germany), espionage (USA and European countries), extreme behavior (Taiwan).

#### 4) Sociology 2 (Grade 11)

The results of the review and analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of the “Sociology 2” highlighted that the main goal of the authors is to improve students' knowledge about world culture, especially Western culture and the new world order. Considering the nature of these topics, it seems that the emphasis on the relationship between "self" and "other" is more in this textbook (Table 4).

Table 4: Polarization of the discourse system in “Sociology 2”

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
Iranian gardening has a close relationship with religious beliefs of their creators	7	+F
African soldiers of the French colonial army in Africa	22	-F
An American using an African child as a chair	22	-F
Advertising of commercial companies in India and Nigeria	24	-B
Persian language was the second official language and the cultural and scientific language of this country before India became a British colony.	25	-F
But in the western world, secularism has become the dominant worldview	38	-F
The French Revolution, which has its roots in the Renaissance and enlightened philosophical thoughts, is the first liberal revolution in the world.	53	-B
The oldest mosque in East Africa is located in Zanzibar, Tanzania. This mosque was built by Iranians in the 6th century.	56	+F
Western secular governments had no religious motivation in supporting Christian missionaries	59	-B

Freemasonry lodge in Turkey	60	-F
Masonic symbols in George Washington Lodge, USA	60	-F
Japan, which had closed its gates to Western countries since the 17th century and after the influence of Christianity, was forced to establish trade relations under the conditions desired by European countries	62	-B
Among the largest coffee producing countries are Brazil, Ethiopia, Guatemala and India, while most of the large coffee preparation and sales companies in the world are American.	66	-B
Bangladeshis are working in dangerous and unsafe conditions with low wages.	66	-B
The first <i>qibla</i> of Muslims, Jerusalem, became the place of establishment of the government of the Zionist the occupier immigrants	67	-F
In England, which was a pioneer in the industrial revolution, the condition of workhouses was such that the poor living there preferred death to life.	76	-B
According to the English demographer Malthus, those who are born in poverty do not have the right to life.	77	-B
At the height of the famine, the people of Roscommon in Ireland ate boiled cabbage leaves once every forty-eight hours.	78	-F
Statue of children victims of World War II in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic	84	-F
The Vietnam War was called the worst war of the 20th century	85	-F
The first economic crisis occurred in England in 1820	92	-F
Some western countries continue to export their waste to countries such as Ivory Coast, Ghana, Somalia, Nigeria, Egypt, India, Indonesia and Mongolia.	96	-F
Facing the modern world, the Islamic world is going through the stage of colonialism, and with the victory of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, it will overcome the bottleneck of colonial tyranny.	105	+F
The Islamic Revolution of Iran was not affiliated to any of the two blocs and declared its anti-American, anti-Zionist and anti-Marxist orientation from the beginning.	120	+F
Some countries that were under the influence of the Western bloc recognized the usurping government of Israel	126	-F

Table 4 reveals that compared to previous textbooks, the authors of "Sociology 2" have paid more attention to highlighting the negative characteristics of "other" than praising "self". Also, in this book, the marginalization of others' good characteristics is more than the marginalization of the negative characteristics of "self". The positive characteristics (+) of Iranians include the use of religious beliefs in art and architecture, cultural influence, historical record, liberation from the tyranny of colonial tyranny, anti-Zionist, and anti-Marxist. The negative traits (-) of others are: colonialist, liberal, secular (France), ruthless and freemason (USA), freemason (Turkey), poor (Bangladesh), famine-stricken (Ireland), victim (Czech), usurper (Israel).

## 5) History 3 (Grade12)

The results of the review and analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of the book "History 3" show that the main goal of the authors is to acquaint young learners with the contemporary period of Iran history and the political-military confrontation and scientific and cultural relations of Iran with Western countries and their role in events such as the Constitution Revolution and Islamic revolution (Table 5).

Table 5: Polarization of the discourse system in the "History 3"

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
The recording of events by Muslim historians, a significant number of whom are Iranian, has provided us with a rich heritage and an important source for understanding and interpreting many important historical events.	2	+F
Afghans could not form a powerful government due to their inability to dominate the entire Safavid territory and unfamiliarity with the principles of statehood.	16	-F
One of the Nader Shah actions was the expedition to India. he had a financial and economic motivation for this; Because the administration of his large and numerous army was not possible without sufficient financial resources	18	+B
The British developed their power in the world by looting the rich land of India	25	-B
In the introduction of the book, Montesquieu ridicules the short-sightedness of the French who do not know where Iran is	28	-F
From the time of Peter the Great, the Russian government started an expansionist policy with the aim of dominating the northern borders of Iran and the Ottoman Empire	41	-F
The British government - unlike the Russian government that supported the court - was apparently supportive of the constitutional movement	67	-B
In the face of the constitutional movement, Russia and England were at odds with each other due to their colonial interests.	70	-F
The British have hidden their good looks and bad insides under a beautiful exterior.	73	-B
The emergence of the Islamic revolution in Iran is the first hit to the new American order in the world	109	+F
After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the foreign enemies, especially the USA, could not prevent the establishment and strengthening of the Islamic Republic	151	-F
During the eight years of imposed war, major powers such as the USA, the Soviet Union, France, Germany, and UK, in addition to providing various advanced weapons and even chemical weapons to the Iraqi Ba'athist government, also openly and secretly sided with this regime from a political point of view.	152	-F
Global arrogance led by the great devil, USA	158	-F

The content of this book is mainly a description of the historical events that occurred in Iran during the last century and I & II World War. Based on this, the authors mainly pointed to the negative role of several powerful European countries (England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia) and USA. Positive traits (+) of Iranians include rich heritage, chasing enemies, and striking the new American order. The negative traits (-) of others are: inability (Afghanistan), looter, hypocrite, profiteer, pretender, malicious (England), short-minded, pro-tyrant (France), expansionist, profiteer, pro-tyrant (Russia), enemy, devil, oppressor supporter (USA), oppressor supporter (Germany), aggressor (Iraq).

### 6) *Sociology 3 (Grade 12)*

The results of the review and analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of the book "Sociology 3" show that the authors try to familiarize students with different approaches of modern sociology and social sciences of the Islamic world and its distinctive identity (Table 6).

Table 6: Polarization of the discourse system in the "Sociology 3"

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
The publish of the false news of the death of Alfred Nobel, the Swedish chemist, the inventor of dynamite and the owner of the Bofors weapons factory in a newspaper, made him think of leaving a better image of himself for posterity.	14	-B
By confirming the influence of Islam in society and with the aim of creating a religion that is approved by the government and does not threaten secular principles, the Turkish government built Imam Khatib schools, but since 1970, these schools have become a refuge for Islamists.	35	-B
Ordos, which is the largest abandoned city in the world, despite the investment and planning of the Chinese government to encourage thousands of people to living in it is almost deserted and is nicknamed the city of ghosts.	37	-B
Rais-Ali Delvari, the popular leader of the people of Tangistan in the uprising against British colonialism. 12 September is named after him as the National Day of Struggle against Colonialism.	57	+F
Gandhi, the leader of the Indian people in the struggle against British colonialism.	57	-F
India's Independence Day is the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect, replacing the laws of the British colonial government.	63	-F
During the 132 years of French colonialism, Algeria sacrificed about a million to achieve independence.	63	-B
Protests of women with placards in their hands for the right to vote (London, 1911) In England, women did not own their property in front of their husbands.	69	-B

Rosa Parks, a black American woman who refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white man, was arrested and fined for this reason.	71	-B
The Burakumin are Japanese people who were persecuted during the feudal era. They are no different from others, but they have always been discriminated against. With the modernization of Japan, the government officially declared them equal to others. But there is still discrimination against them	84	-B
Genocide in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge (Communist Party)	85	-F
Deportation and killing of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar	85	-F
During the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, thousands of Bosnian Muslims died or were forced to leave their cities and homelands.	85	-F
Within many industrial societies, there are racial and ethnic divisions; separation of the French speakers of Quebec from the English speakers in Canada and the conflict between the Flemish and Walloons in Belgium.	86	-B
Ku Klux Klan is the name of related organizations in the USA in the past and today, which supports the supremacy of the white race.	87	-F
The Chinese New Year celebration with its shows and decorations is not just a show event that is held every year in America, but it is a symbol of the continuity and cultural continuity of the Chinese people in America.	87	-B
At the beginning of his youth, Abu Rayhan Biruni began to study Greek, but Greek knowledge could not convince him	100	-B
When Abu Rayhan Biruni describes the religions of India, he speaks from the position of a critical narrator	100	-B

From the data in Table 6, it can be inferred that the main goal of the authors of the “Sociology 3” book is to de-emphasize others’ positive traits. For example, we can refer to Alfred Nobel (Sweden), construction of the city of ghosts (China), role of Martin Luther King (USA), Gandhi’s struggle (England), women’s civil protests (England & USA), and the role of Abu Rihan Beruni (Greece & India). In all these cases, others’ positive attributes are presented to the students along with highlighting the negative role of a country. Positive traits (+) of Iranians are fighters, science lover, critics. The negative attributes (-) of others are: weapons maker (Sweden), secular (Turkey), lack of planning ability, dramatic actions (China), colonialist, racist (England), colonialist (France), racist (USA), supporter of discrimination (Japan), genocide (Cambodia, Myanmar, former Yugoslavia), racism (Canada, Belgium).

## 7) Cultural Analysis (Grade 12)

The results of the review and analysis of the sentences and paragraphs of the “Cultural Analysis” book show that the authors are trying to familiarize students with topics such as cultural developments, Iran culture and Iran’s cultural issues (Table 7).

Table 7: Polarization of the discourse system in the “Cultural Analysis” book

Example	Page	Pole of discourse
Iran is a vast land with many resources and facilities	22	+F
Why are foreign tourists more willing to visit Iran's museums and ancient monuments?	31	+F
Why do some European governments prevent veiled students from entering universities?	49	-F
Natural and social sciences were transferred from the Islamic world to Europe.	50	+F
European and American countries are trying to promote cultural negligence with their tools and media	51	-F
Promoting and expanding concepts based on the intellectual and theoretical foundations of the West in the world, and forcing other countries to accept these concepts and definitions, are examples of cultural imperialism.	51	-F
Strategy of Islamophobia and Iranophobia, which is used by cultural imperialism against our country,	52	-F
The events in France and the publication of insulting images to Islamic holy places in a French publication	54	-F
The history of Europe and America is ashamed of slavery	55	-F
By using the influential tool of the media and its key element, i.e. advertising, Western capitalism tries to unify culture	61	-F
Journalists who were present in the camps of the American and British forces used to broadcast the news of the Iraq war to the world through the lens of their cameras and of course from the perspective of the interests of the invaders.	62	-F
One of the important cultural characteristics of us Iranians - which is rarely matched among other nations - is cultural continuity.	67	+F
We, in our long history, have had a political break, but not a cultural break.	68	+B
Iranian people have been culturally interested in knowledge, peace-loving, tolerant, art-loving and truthful,	70	+F
With the acceptance of Islam, the cultural continuity of Iranians was not only weakened, but Iranian culture became elevated and sublime.	72	+B
Modern culture, after the renaissance in Europe, was formed by rejecting the popular traditional culture and based on anthropocentric thought	74	-B

Iranians, like other countries, were exposed to the cultural attacks of the West	76	+B
Iran's Islamic revolution, as one of the prominent revolutions of the 20th century, is a cultural revolution	76	+F
Indian rulers have managed to transform cultural divergence into cultural convergence	83	-B
Governments in Iran, except for a few cases, have been less concerned about violence and encroachment on their neighbors	89	+B
Throughout history, following the invasion of enemies, although sometimes the government and the political government in Iran have been destroyed, the value and status of the family has never been weakened.	91	+B
<i>Fatwat</i> , meaning chivalry, is a precious heritage of our Iranian Islamic culture	92	+F
After World War II, the British government increased taxes on the import of agricultural products.	102	-F
Today, the work culture in our society faces some shortcomings	103	+B

From the data in Table 7, it can be inferred that the main goal of the authors of “Cultural Analysis” book is to emphasize their positive characteristics from the point of view of cultural identity. In this regard, major parts of the book are dedicated to honoring the history and culture of Iran. At the same time, while the authors of the textbooks have at least mentioned the existence of other cultures in the world (for example Indian and Chinese culture), they have focused their sharp attacks on the negative role of Western culture - and countries such as the USA and UK. In fact, it is impossible to ignore the efforts of the authors to minimize their negative characteristics - such as that we Iranians have never captured the enemy or the value of the family has never been weakened in Iran - and avoid highlighting the good characteristics of others - such as ignoring predominance of modern culture over traditional culture in Europe or existence of cultural divergence in India.

#### 4. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to determine the characteristics and traits of countries in the textbooks of Iran's upper secondary schools using van Dijk's discourse analysis model. For this purpose, the content of seven books namely: Iran & Ancient World, Sociology 1, Thought & Media Literacy (Grade 10), Sociology 2 (Grade 11), and History 3, Sociology 3 and Cultural Analysis (Grade 12) was investigated and analyzed. The first findings showed that in these books, in total, the names of countries are mentioned 1402 times in different forms (text, tables, diagrams, images and photos). Also, among the developed countries of the world, the names of six countries England,

Russia, France, Germany, America and Greece are mentioned more than other countries in the selected books, while among the developing countries, India, China, Egypt, South Africa and Iraq are mentioned repeatedly. This research revealed that the amount of attention and interest of authors to many regions of the world is insignificant. For example, there is no reference to the continent of Oceania, or without mentioning the exact names of the countries; a general word or feature is used to refer to the characteristics of the people of a large geographical area without referring to their cultural, social, political, racial, linguistic and religious differences (Westerners, Africans, Europeans). In this case, the Iranian authors of the textbooks have benefited from the "simplistic" approach, which is one of the common features of the ideas of the proponents of "continuing colonialism" in the post-colonial era.

The authors also are aware of the ways of reproducing power in the discourse and highlighting their identity (through words same as us, Iranians, Islamic nation, rich heritage, Islamic revolution, imposed war, foreign enemies, religious beliefs, influence of Islam) successively implement the process of production and understanding of ideological discourse. Through this linguistic structure, they dominate the minds of the audience (students). In other words, authors highlighted all the negative aspects of the "other" by using many words, sentences, and paragraphs - in different school subjects (for example words like colonial, liberal, secular, masonic, Christian influence, invader, famine, black, newly established cult, usurper, looter, colonial interests, great devil, colonialist, genocide, expulsion of Muslims). Also, in order to break the image of the "other" in the eyes of young learners, they try to reveal the disadvantages that the colonial countries have hidden yesterday - or that the former colonial countries are unaware of -.

The second finding of the research is that it is rare to find a positive attribute for the people of a country in selected textbooks unless the said country has a history of struggle, war, domination and colonization in relation to one of the western countries. For example, India is mentioned only in relation to Gandhi's struggle with the British, South Africa in the struggle against white racists in favor of apartheid, and USA to refer to the struggle of blacks against all kinds of social discrimination. Another interesting finding is that it is difficult to find a word praising the industrial, technological, social welfare, economic success, or scientific progress of a country in the selected textbooks. In fact, the authors of these books have paid attention to the modern world, contemporary civilization, and the prosperity and development of countries with the lowest degree of positive view. This applies even to neutral countries or countries that are considered friendly countries from the perspective of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. For example, except for the mere mention of historical events about the royal dynasties in China, in other cases

the image of this friendly country is mostly negative or neutral. The findings support the results of previous researches that have shown that the authors of textbooks try to convey their desired image about other cultures, societies and countries to the learners according to the social context and ideology of the ruling discourse (Ye ,2021; Theologo & Dimasi ,2020; Sharonova et al. , 2018; Madandar Arani & Kakia ,2018; Táboas-Pais, & Rey-Cao , 2015; Boers-Goi,2014; Paasi ,1999, Raisi Mubarakeh ,2019; Adib Menesh & Parvaneh ,2014; Hashemi,2012) . In the end, according to the findings of the research, it is suggested to curriculum planners and authors of school textbooks in Iran to make fundamental reforms in the content of textbooks - taking into account global developments, increasing the highlighting of the positive characteristics of "other" and reducing negative view of other cultures, societies and countries.

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