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The EFL Textbook and Ideology:

an Analysis of the Characters Included

in Two Global EFL Textbooks

Ana Gabriela Vagni Jajam

Directora: María Susana Ibáñez

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper I carry out an analysis of the underlying ideology of two textbooks used to teach English as a foreign language. In doing so, I attempt to address a range of questions that will lead to a critical analysis of the values that English teaching brings with it and the interests that it serves. The ideological and subjective content of the curriculum and textbooks has been acknowledged by many authors. Michael Apple (1990) argued that the selection and organization of knowledge for schools is an ideological process, one that serves the interests of particular classes and social groups. Textbooks signify, through their content and form, these particular ways of selecting and organizing that vast universe of possible knowledge (Apple, 2000). They have been defined not only as mediating tools of subject knowledge, but also as organs for the ideological reproduction and legitimation of "particular constructions of reality" (Apple and Christian-Smith 1991 cited in Gray 2010).

Studying the ideology of textbooks used to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL textbooks) implies analysing them as products of social interaction, and considering them in relation to the social and cultural contexts in which they are negotiated. There were various attempts in the 1990s to document the sociopolitical context and ideological factors that have shaped English Language Teaching (ELT). Robert Phillipson (1992) began an important debate by postulating in *Linguistic Imperialism* that there was a vast hegemonic intent by the ELT community. He analyzes the politics of English as a language together with the export of the methods and textbooks to teach it, and argues that ELT is part of the process whereby one part of the world has become politically, economically and culturally dominated by another. Alastair Pennycook (1994) also attempts to deal with English in its full social, political, and cultural contexts. He points to the broader economic and political forces that impose English, referring to the colonial legacy and to the economic framework provided by international capitalism which has spawned an international language.

Phillipson (1992) defines *linguistic imperialism* as the deliberate spread of the English language itself, with the oppression it brings, while *discourse imperialism* is used to refer to the expansion of a certain discourse dictated by the West, mainly by white men, but, most importantly, a discourse written in English, which guarantees the

supremacy of some countries over others. This form of imperialism is much subtler and, therefore, dangerous. Language is a central dimension of ideological control, perpetuating the subordination of colonial times into the present. Colonization's legacy has become invisible ideological hegemony – domination with consent. The previously colonized peoples still worship the languages, cultures, music, arts, knowledges, pedagogies, or most aspects of Western life as more advanced, progressive and superior (Lin and Luke, 2006 cited in Phillipson 2008).

The colonial coloration of the English language and ELT has also been analyzed by B. Kumaravadivelu (2006). He believes that one of the dimensions of the coloniality of ELT is the integration of the teaching of English language with the teaching of western culture with the view to developing in the learners cultural empathy towards the target language community. This ideology is reflected in the textbooks used to teach the language, which often foster an unfavourable assessment of the student's own culture and a glorification of the foreign one (Lopez Barrios et al, 2003). Another colonial dimension of ELT is the fact that its industry serves the interests of English-speaking countries adding jobs and wealth to their economy (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

In addition to being considered a contributor to the hegemony of English-speaking countries, the English language has also been accused of being in liaison with globalisation. It is not a coincidence that capitalism, globalisation, Americanization and the homogenization of world culture have spread in conjunction with English as the "world language" (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996). In spite of these accusations, the myth of English as merely a "language of international communication", rather than a language embedded in processes of globalisation, continues to be held (Pennycook, 2004). In a similar vein, in ELT circles as recently as twenty years ago there was seldom any suggestion that it might be problematic to package and transfer around the world particular approaches to language teaching in the shape of communicative methodologies, materials, and textbooks (Block, 2004).

Considering the larger social and cultural contexts of ELT brings to notice the importance of recognizing its inherently problematic nature. The teaching of foreign languages is imbued with social, political and moral values that are many times hidden by the emphasis placed on the training of competences. This study is an analysis of the

part textbooks play in the dissemination of a type of discourse which legitimizes a hegemonic ideology, and at the same time constitutes an evaluation of their true educational value.

The paper consists of three chapters and a conclusion. In the first chapter I review some approaches in ELT that favour the integration of language and culture, and consider the benefits that these approaches have for learners. In the next section I analyze the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which incorporates an intercultural perspective in the teaching of foreign languages and serves as a guideline for the elaboration of textbooks. Then I explain the role of textbooks as socializing agents in the process of learning a foreign language and culture, and the ideologies that they tend to reproduce through their selection of topics and characters.

In the second chapter I explain that my approach to investigate ideology is based on the analysis of the characters portrayed in textbooks. I view these characters as illustrations of both the target culture in general, and of the beliefs and values of the authors. Textbook characters represent the speakers of the target language that learners will possibly meet in the future, or at least the ones authors *presume* will be their interlocutors. At the same time, when authors select the characters, they want to interest and motivate the textbook's users. Consequently, characters also reflect the producers' interpretation of learners' needs and expectations.

In the third chapter I carry out the analysis of characters in two stages. The first stage involves a categorisation of all the characters that appear in the selected textbooks into three types: "aspirational", intercultural and socially responsible. My motivation to study these types of characters is in direct relation to the accusations that the ELT profession contributes to both cultural domination and globalisation. A preponderance of aspirational characters (that have the lifestyle that learners aspire to have) would be an indication that the target culture is presented as superior to others and that commercial interests predominate. The inclusion of intercultural and socially responsible characters would indicate that the educational priorities of the CEFR are incorporated.

The second stage of the analysis of characters consists in approaching them from the perspective of the theory and procedures of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which are associated to the work of Fairclough (1989, 1992). CDA serves the purpose of this study because it makes it possible to reveal connections between language use, power and ideology. Fairclough (1992) defines ideologies as "constructions of reality" (the physical world, social relations and social identities) which are built into various dimensions of the forms of discursive practices. He explains how ideologies are embedded in features of discourse which are taken for granted as matters of common sense and provides a framework for studying ideology which I apply in the analysis of two selected texts.

CHAPTER 1
THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING IDEOLOGY AND ELT

In this chapter I look at the ways in which learning a foreign or second language involves acquiring new beliefs, values, and social norms. I refer to some theories and approaches that consider the familiarization with the culture of the native community to be a necessary part of language learning, and I analyze the role of textbooks in this process. I also describe the ideological nature of global textbooks, and the tension that exists between the thematic content of these textbooks and the educational priorities of the CEFR.

1.1 Learning a language and culture

The teaching of any language initiates learners into modes of thought and behaviour which characterize the community of its users. Because language is a major aspect of culture, it provides a means of access to cultural manifestations. Thus, in learning the language of any community one necessarily learns what it means to be a member of that community and familiarises oneself with the socio-cultural values of its native speakers, which might be different from those of the foreign language learner.

Learning a foreign culture can be understood as a process of socialisation into a hitherto unknown cultural system. "Socialization" can in general terms be defined as the process through which an individual acquires their social norms, viewpoints, beliefs, attitudes and values (Sercu 2000). Socialization theory was developed by Berger and Luckman (1966 cited in Sercu 2000). The theory distinguishes between two subsequent phases of socialization, which are labelled "primary" and "secondary". The main primary socializing agents in the formation of a child's world view are parents and peers. Significant secondary socialisers are the school and the media (television, computer games, the internet). Byram (1989 cited in Sercu 2000) took up Berger and Luckmann's ideas and posited that the process of internalizing the world beyond the boundaries of one's own society can be considered as an extension of primary and secondary socialization and can constitute a third phase in this process.

As the learners' experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples, they build an intercultural communicative competence, i.e. an ability to relate to and communicate with people who speak a different language and live in a different cultural context. For someone to acquire intercultural competence the various cultures (national, regional, social) to which the person has gained access cannot simply coexist side by side, but rather they have to be compared and contrasted. The experience of intercultural contact is one of comparisons, of that which is the same or different but compatible, but also of conflicts and incompatible contrasts (Byram, 1997).

In this perspective learning a foreign language is acknowledged to be problematic and value-laden, and at the same time it has important educational benefits for the learners. As young people are introduced to other ways of living, other assumptions about what is "normal", their own sense of what is "normal" is challenged, and they begin to question what they have hitherto taken for granted (Byram, 2002). Foreign language learning represents a development from ethnocentrism to relativity, including a development of the realization that the world can be seen from many different perspectives.

Before considering the role of textbooks as socializing agents in the process of learning a foreign language and culture, in the next section I analyze the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which is the official guideline used for the elaboration of textbooks. The Framework places a lot of emphasis on the learners' development of their intercultural competence and social responsibility through language education.

1.2 The Common European Framework of Reference

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), published in 2001, serves the overall aims of the Council of Europe as regards foreign languages and provides a common basis for the elaboration not only of textbooks, but also of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, and examinations across Europe. The political objectives of the Council of Europe are mainly to develop the learners' intercultural competence as a means to facilitate mobility in Europe and encourage

mutual understanding, tolerance and respect. Particular urgency is attached to these objectives by the Council of Europe because xenophobia and ultranationalist backlashes are an obstacle to European integration and a major threat to democracy. For this reason, preparation for democratic citizenship is also a priority educational objective. According to the CEFR (2001), the methods used for modern language teaching should aim at strengthening independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility (Council of Europe 2001).

In the CEFR, it is a central objective of language education to promote the favorable development of the learner's whole personality in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture. The success of intercultural communication can be assessed in terms of the effective exchange of information, but also in terms of the establishing and maintenance of human relationships. The intercultural speaker is not a cosmopolitan being who floats over cultures, but someone committed to turning intercultural encounters into intercultural relationships.

Tomlinson (1999, cited in Szerszynski and Urry, 2002) describes a "cosmopolitan orientation" as the intellectual and aesthetic sense of openness towards peoples, places and experiences from different cultures, especially those from different nations. The "educated cosmopolitan citizen" (Osler and Starkey 2003) is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their role as a world citizen, which is materialized in their actions to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place. However, cosmopolitanism has also inspired criticism. It stands accused of producing little in the way of commitment to globally oriented citizenship. Banal cosmopolitanism, the consumption of global brands, icons, peoples, heroes, foreign travel and multicultural food, does not necessarily include an awareness of global issues such as world peace, global warming, environmental destruction and global human rights. It does not necessarily extend to ethical and moral commitments to a global community (Matthews and Sidhu, 2005).

In the CEFR the concept of intercultural interaction does not only refer to interaction between people from different national cultures. Instead, the concept is extended to take into account the cultural variety inherent in any complex society. Similarly, intercultural awareness not only refers to the knowledge, awareness and

understanding of the relation between "the world of origin" and "the world of the target community", but it also includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. For this reason, in order to develop the learner's intercultural competence, careful consideration has to be given to the representation of the target culture and the choice of social group or groups to be focused on, because in any complex society there is considerable diversity between regions, classes, ethnic communities, genders and so on (Council of Europe 2001).

The CEFR originated in Europe but then spread far and wide in the process of globalization and influenced not only its European home but the whole world. The political perspective that it includes is useful in the sense that it considers the role language education plays in changing society for the better. Its aims of leading learners to respect the norms of other societies and to evaluate them in an unprejudiced way are broad enough to be applied in any context, especially when these attitudes of tolerance and respect are extended to include the regional and social variety in the learners' own society. These aims consider the educational benefits of learning a foreign language, which are also considered in the distinction that the CEFR makes between the simple exchange of information and the establishing of human relationships. Many of these educational benefits are reflected for example in the curriculum policy in the Province of Buenos Aires, which conceives the EFL classroom as a third space that helps students become conscious of the diversity around them and open up to Otherness (Porto and Barboni, 2012).

However, the application of the CEFR has not always meant that foreign language teaching acquired a more educational perspective or focused on the development of intercultural competence. As a matter of fact, a study of the impact of the framework in Argentina conducted by Melina Porto (2012) indicates that these aspects suffer under the weight of the instrumental view of ELT. She points to "the downgrading of everything other than the linguistic" making reference to the fact that, in some contexts, the CEFR has been used solely as a source of standardized descriptions of linguistic competence as required by the available international examinations in the country (i.e. for outcome-oriented purposes, almost exclusively to assess students' linguistic competences).

1.3 The role of textbooks

As already stated, this study is an analysis of the ideological content of textbooks used to teach English as a foreign language. In order to understand this ideology it is necessary to take into consideration the commercial context in which textbooks are produced, where the aims of language teaching are very different from those of the CEFR. In this section I describe the nature of textbooks' content and relate it with the guidelines of the CEFR.

According to Lies Sercu (2000), the learner's contact with the foreign culture can be of four types: extra-school and in-classroom, mediated and direct. Extra-school contacts include both direct travels to the target country and indirect contacts with the target culture through the media. In-classroom contacts can be direct with native speaker teachers and indirect when they are mediated by textbooks. Textbooks are frequently major socializing agents in the tertiary socialization process of learning a foreign language and culture (Sercu, 2000). Textbooks and the media are the most frequent socializing agents in countries like Argentina, given that the other types of contact with the foreign culture are not very common for the majority of the learners in our context.

Three categories of textbooks can be distinguished taking into consideration the context of production and reception. The first category consists of global textbooks that are produced by international publishers and are designed for use in language classrooms around the world. A different category consists of "adapted" textbooks produced by international publishers specifically for EFL learners from a determined region. A third category comprises textbooks that are produced at national level. The last two categories of textbooks are usually produced either by or together with non-native speaking authors and include information about the learners' own culture. Global textbooks, by contrast, contain mainly cultural information about the country or countries where the foreign language is used as a first language (Lopez Barrios and Villanueva de Debat, 2006). International publishers generally use the term *coursebook*, which refers to a type of textbook claiming to provide for what are assumed to be all the necessary classroom work in a general language course.

Analyzing the social and cultural contexts in which textbooks are negotiated explains why English language teaching has been stigmatized as colonialist. Global coursebooks are produced for the general EFL class and are predicated on the questionable assumption that "one size fits all" regardless of the social, geographical and educational context of use. This assumption, however, makes more sense on commercial grounds than in pedagogical terms. Global coursebooks are commodities which have to be sold globally to a variety of very different markets. They are financially very lucrative for the prestigious UK academic publishers that produce them. Given the need to maximize sales in the greatest number of markets, the thematic content of global coursebooks is highly regulated by ELT publishers through guidelines for authors which list controversial topics to avoid, or through more informal editorial advice (Gray 2010). Many studies of foreign language textbooks testify to this.

According to research carried out in the early nineties, EFL textbooks usually assumed "a materialistic set of values in which international travel, not being bored, positively being entertained, having leisure, and, above all, spending money casually and without consideration of the sum involved in the pursuit of these ends, are the norm" (Brown, 1990: 13). According to Starkey (1991) to judge by most of the published courses by that time, the basic values of foreign language teaching appear to be materialism and consumerism.

The studies carried out in the twenty-first century provide similar results. Dybiec (2005), for example, examines some ways in which cultural contents are approached in a number of textbooks for teaching English. The textbooks she analyzed choose palatable topics which avoid engagement in social, moral or philosophical problems. Unsettling social issues, such as unemployment or poverty, are missing in this selection. Generally, the topics they discuss concentrate mainly on carefree consumer and leisure activities. As regards the selection of characters to be portrayed in textbooks, the results of studies carried out in the nineties and the beginning of the twenty-first century are ideologically similar to the thematic content of textbooks that I give above. Wajnryb's (1996, cited in Gray 2002) found that textbooks generally depict a clean and affluent social environment. Similarly, the commonest topics in the textbooks Basabe (2006) analyzed tend to be the lives and lifestyles of rich and famous people. Content of this type is referred to as "aspirational" by textbook publishers and it is believed to represent

the lifestyle that students might aspire to and that therefore interests and motivates them in their language learning (Gray 2002)

The selection and organization of the content of global EFL textbooks is clearly an ideological process, one that is in tension with the educational perspective of the CEFR. The inclusion of aspirational characters does not facilitate the development of the learners' intercultural competence, which is considered to be an objective of language education in the CEFR. This common practice of portraying mainly characters belonging to the more privileged social classes could be one of the reasons why "learners often find themselves outside looking in, wishing they could belong to the world they learn about in their textbooks" with an underlying feeling of inferiority (Ferradas, 2007:40). Similarly, judging by the studies of the thematic content of textbooks carried out by Brown (1990), Starkey (1991) and Dybiec (2005), the values that ELT brings with it are far from being educational or prepare for democratic citizenship, which is an important aim of the CEFR. On the contrary, through their selection of topics textbooks reproduce and legitimize consumerist ideologies.

In this chapter I described the ideological struggle that exists between two different contexts which have an influence on the textbooks' choice of content: the commercial context of publishers, and the educational context of the CEFR. One of the main objectives of this study is therefore to evaluate the extent to which the ideology of EFL textbooks has changed after the publication of the CEFR. This evaluation will eventually allow me to analyze which values are prioritized in textbooks used to teach English.

I selected two global coursebooks for my analysis, one which was published before the CEFR was accepted in 2001, and another published after the appearance of the framework. There have been several studies of the ideological content of textbooks but none has been conducted in dialogue with the proposals of the CEFR. The studies cited above were either produced before the publication of the framework (Brown 1990, Starkey 1991, Wajnryb 1996), or based on the analysis of coursebooks which were published before its appearance (Basabe 2006, Dybiec 2005, Gray 2002 2010, Lopez Barrios et al, 2003).

There are three areas in the content of EFL textbooks which might be affected by the framework's objectives. The first area refers to aspirational characters. The CEFR makes very clear statements about the need to represent the regional and social variety of the foreign culture in order to develop the learners' intercultural competence. This might produce some changes in the textbooks' representation of only the more privileged sections of the population described by researchers such as Wajnryb (1996, cited in Gray 2002), Gray (2002) or Basabe (2006).

The second area where there could be an influence is in the portrayal of intercultural contacts among people of different nationalities, social classes, regions or ethnic communities. The Framework places a lot of emphasis on the learners' development of their intercultural competence through language education. Based on this priority, I predict that more intercultural encounters will be portrayed as a way to exemplify the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture that the framework wants to promote.

Finally, the other area which might be affected by the CEFR's ideology is the textbooks' topic choice and treatment described by Brown (1990), Starkey (1991), or Dybiec (2005). Textbooks whose basic values are materialism and consumerism and that avoid engagement in social, cultural or ecological problems cannot be very good at strengthening the learners' social responsibility, which is a priority of the CEFR. Social responsibility is a commitment an individual has towards society that can be expressed as an awareness of social problems, or as an active participation in the solving of these problems. Consequently, in order to be able to contribute towards socially just, democratic and egalitarian societies, learners need to know about the social problems that affect people in their country and in other countries.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As already stated, one of the main aims of this study is to evaluate the CEFR's influence on the textbooks' ideology. My intention in doing so is ultimately to evaluate the real educational value of global textbooks, which will in turn lead to an evaluation of the interests that English language teaching serves.

The way ideology works in textbooks is in relation to the subject positions that authors set up for learners. Authors attempt to interest and motivate students in their language learning through the characters that they portray in textbooks. They may portray aspirational or intercultural characters because they think this is what motivates learners, but at the same time they are constructing an identity for them, as consumers, cosmopolitans, or any other subject position that authors select. The choice of characters gives a lot of information about a textbook's ideology and its priorities. Textbook authors may give more importance to educational values, or they may prioritize the commercial interests of publishers.

I selected the characters portrayed in textbooks as the focus of my study. In addition to transmitting the ideology of the producers, textbook characters are also a means of access into the foreign culture: they provide learners with information about the sociocultural context in which English is used as a first language, and inform learners about the modes of thought and behaviour which characterise the community of English speakers. The characters in textbooks represent the speakers of the foreign language that learners will possibly meet in the future; they are the potential interlocutors that textbook producers imagine for learners. The choice of characters is therefore an important factor in the learners' degree of engagement with the target language and culture.

The analysis of the characters included in the reading and listening passages of the textbooks was conducted in two consecutive stages, a preliminary, more comprehensive examination called "a descriptive approach to character types", followed by a more detailed inquiry into the textbooks' ideology entitled "a critical approach to characters". The first stage involved identifying and categorizing all the characters portrayed in the

two textbooks, while the second stage consisted in applying the theory and procedures of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) proposed by Fairclough (1989, 1992) to the analysis of two selected characters and how they are portrayed. In the next chapter I explain how I carried out the selection of the texts for the critical analysis of characters.

The two stages of the analysis differ in their aims. The first stage aims at analyzing the selection of characters made by textbook producers and comparing them with the CEFR. The objective of the second stage is to analyze how the different types of characters are portrayed. The focus in this part is not any more on the producers' selection of characters in textbooks but on the selected texts themselves, which communicate an ideology of their own and portray characters in ways that reflect their own versions of reality, not only that of the producers.

The textbooks that make up the studied sample are the following:

- Acklam, R., Sally Burgess. (1996) FIRST CERTIFICATE GOLD. Coursebook. England. Addison Wesley Longman Limited.
- Acklam, R., Jacky Newbrook and Judith Wilson. (2008) FCE GOLD PLUS. Coursebook. England. Pearson Education Limited.

The main reason for selecting these coursebooks was the existence of two editions of the same book, the original edition published before the CEFR was accepted in 2001, and the updated edition published after the appearance of the framework. This fact allowed me to analyze the dialogue held between the CEFR and the social and cultural values communicated, and trace the changes in the textbooks' ideological assumptions over a period of twelve years.

The selection was also based on the fact that the coursebooks are recognized within the ELT industry as major global best sellers. In Argentina the textbooks are widely used because they prepare learners for the First Certificate in English examination from the University of Cambridge. The exam is taken by candidates throughout the world, but the majority of the candidates come from European and South American countries according to the information given on the web page of the University's examinations. The exams are popular in private institutions in Argentina, and the First Certificate is the exam with the biggest number of candidates.

Finally, the textbooks were selected because they entail an amount of language knowledge that allows learners to handle texts in which opinions, ideas and attitudes are expressed and these are the types of texts best suited for ideological analysis. Some texts have been simplified for pedagogic reasons, but the simplification is less important than in previous levels and the texts retain much of their authenticity, i.e. the language quality of native speakers when interacting in their community. The word "authentic", however, does not mean that the texts are not influenced by the producers' ideology through their selection and adaptation. The texts, like all discourse, signify the world in particular ways, the ways of native speakers and those of the authors and publishers who select the texts to be included in coursebooks.

CHAPTER 3

COURSEBOOK CHARACTERS

3.1 A descriptive approach to character types

The first stage of the ideological analysis was conducted as follows: first, I made a list of all the characters included in the reading passages and listening excerpts of the two textbooks. Then, I analyzed them in relation to the objectives of the CEFR in order to see the extent to which the framework had influenced the selection of characters in the two textbooks. I paid particular attention to the social groups which were represented, whether the characters were portrayed in intercultural interactions, and whether they engaged in social problems or not. I assigned characters with similar characteristics to groups, and as a result I had three distinct categories of characters: aspirational, intercultural, and socially responsible.

These are the questions that guided the first stage of my investigation:

- Is the variety inherent in any complex society reflected in the textbooks selection of characters or do aspirational characters preponderate?
- How many characters are either portrayed in situations of intercultural contact or speak about an intercultural experience they have participated in? How many of them are interested in other cultures?
- How many of the characters depicted can be considered "socially responsible"?

The results are summarized in the table below and then they are analysed in more detail in the sections that follow.

Table 1. Categorization of characters

Textbook	Gold 1996	Gold 2008
Total number of characters	92	101
Number of aspirational characters	31	44
Percentage of aspirational characters	44%	55%
Number of intercultural characters	10	27
Percentage of intercultural characters	11%	27%
Number of socially responsible characters	10	16
Percentage of socially responsible characters	11%	16%

Some characters were not assigned to any of the three categories and others belonged to more than one category because they were, for example, aspirational and intercultural at the same time. The percentages are only an indication of the relative importance given to the fair representation of the target culture, interculturality and social responsibility by each of the textbooks' authors. As regards aspirational characters, the percentages were not calculated in relation to the total number of characters in the textbooks, but considering only the native speakers of English portrayed. I did not take into account the fictional characters or the ones from other cultures for reasons that I explain in the section on aspirational characters below.

3.1.a Aspirational characters

The total number of characters that I took into account to investigate the way the target society is represented did not include the fictional characters portrayed. The reason for this is that fictional characters are not represented as "real" people that live in

the UK or the USA. They are represented as only existing in the imaginary worlds of the novels, stories or songs where they appear and are not understood by learners of English as members of British or American society.

The characters from other cultures were not counted either because they belong to a different society and my purpose was to investigate how much diversity and variety there is the selection of characters from the target culture (Britain and the United States of America). In other words, I wanted to know how accurately the characters portrayed represent the society and culture of native English-speaking people. The quantity and percentage of characters from fiction and from other cultures are outlined in table 2 below.

Table 2. Representation of the target society.

Textbook	Gold 1996	Gold 2008
Total number of characters	92	101
Number of characters from fiction	19	10
Percentage of characters from fiction	21%	10%
Number of characters from other cultures	3	11
Percentage of characters from other cultures	3%	11%

Gold 1996

Forty-four per cent of the characters portrayed in the reading passages and listening excerpts can be considered aspirational. There are six rich people: a Hollywood kid who is making a fortune at the box office, a billionaire who is well-known because he made $ 2 billion in one night, and a clever man who turned a small investment into a fortune of $ 25 million. As well as that, there are six people with glamorous jobs: a supermodel who is touring Europe to promote her new novel and album, a photographer who works with the top models, an actress with the Royal Shakespeare company, a person who is a regular face on TV screens, a drummer for a well-known rock group, and a professional stuntwoman who had a part in Superman IV. The characters with a university degree were also considered to be aspirational because they belong to the social class of the professionals, which represents the highest rank in the classification of occupations within social class groupings used by Drever and Whitehead (1997)

The lifestyles of some of the characters portrayed are also typical of well-off people: they go abroad on holiday, eat out regularly, can hold big receptions, and spend a lot of time and money on their hobbies. Some characters have unusual hobbies like bungee jumping or zip wiring. Their interest in risk sports is explained by a psychologist who believes that they do these dangerous activities because they live in a culture that has eliminated risk. The world has become a bland and safe place for them, but they need adventure. The world that the textbook portrays is indeed one without serious problems. The characters worry about unimportant matters such as not knowing what present to buy someone (who already has so many things), or not getting a room with a sea-view.

Some characters do experience real problems: a woman lost more than seven kilos and her health suffered badly because of hunger. However, it happened because she was taking part in an experiment. She lived in a glass bubble, a model for the future village on Mars, and the place where she lived cost 100 million pounds. In other cultures people suffer from lack of food regularly and, unlike her, they cannot return to normal life when the experiment is over. In the world that the textbook portrays people's problems are caused by having too much rather than not enough. Computers,

for example, are a source of concern because they can be addictive for people who spend a lot of time in front of a screen.

In contrast to the above type of characters, there are others who do not enjoy such a good position in life. They make up only seven per cent of the total number of characters in the textbook. A teenager worries that she will be the laughing stock at school because she is not fashionably dressed and her mother cannot afford to spend an extra amount of money for the kind of clothes that she wants. A shopaholic blames his addiction on his childhood, when he was constantly doing without and being envious of other kids. These are the only two characters who are poor (even though they live in an English-speaking country) and do not magically become rich as it always happens in the new edition.

Gold 2008

Fifty-five per cent of the characters portrayed in the listening excerpts and reading passages can be considered aspirational. These characters would be middle class in the countries of the metropolitan world, but they would belong to the elite class in any peripheral country.

Three of the characters portrayed have glamorous jobs. One of them refers to being followed everywhere by paparazzi. There is also a radio program about the career of a famous chef who makes his own television series and an interview with a TV presenter. As well as that, five characters have important jobs that involve travelling and ten characters have a university degree. There is an architect with a master's degree, a geologist, market researchers, two psychologists, a brain scientist, an astronomer, a doctor, an archeologist and a woman with a PhD in zoology.

The textbook portrays six rich people. Two of them are celebrities who spent a huge amount of money on plastic surgery and three are successful women entrepreneurs (including a woman who owns twelve restaurants around the globe and has 1,000 employees). There is also a pop idol whose first single sold over a million copies.

Some of the characters' lifestyles are certainly not open to everyone. One of them describes what she spends her salary on: after she pays the rent, she has enough money to spend quite a lot on socializing. She eats out most evenings and at weekends goes to the beach or skiing. Another person describes their routine of going round the shops most Saturdays. Going abroad on holiday is common for six of the characters portrayed. They don't seem to be in the need of saving up or denying themselves any sort of other pleasures in order to travel.

Similarly, one character decides to go out and buy himself what is known as a camper van as easily as one would buy a T-shirt. The characters can also afford to have expensive hobbies like free diving, BMX racing, hang gliding and other activities. Not only do they have the necessary amount of free time to pursue these interests, but they also have the economic means to pay for the lessons, equipment, facilities and can even travel to take part in competitions or to find the correct place to practice their chosen sport. Their ambitions are also an indication of their privileged situation. Not everyone can dream of doing a course in aerospace engineering at university, for example.

They also have access to the most recent technology. This allows them, for example, to take photographs with their digital cameras and then email the photographs from their computers or mobile phones. They use mobile phones regularly to make arrangements, keep in touch with people, or pass on jokes. There are two characters who describe their experience of living without electricity or modern facilities for seven weeks as part of an experiment called *Living in the Iron Age.* They stand in stark contrast to the millions of people in the world who actually have no other choice than to live in these conditions.

These people lead worry-free lives, and if they refer to any problem they have, they are not generally serious problems like not having enough money to live by or being unemployed. Instead, they worry about matters which in other contexts would be minor, or would not even be considered worth worrying about, like having your bedroom made over and then not liking it, or having a mast placed in front of your house.

Six per cent of the characters portrayed in the textbook are people with economic problems, humble origins or jobs that are not well-paid. There is a story of a woman who tried to get out of a nightclub through the window to avoid paying the bills for her drinks, she knocked out her two front teeth and was awarded compensation for her injuries, even though they were totally her fault. In the end, her economic problems are solved. A similar story refers to a burglar who broke into a house and then he could not get out. He sued the owners of the house and received compensation.

Other characters with unglamorous lives include a builder, an immigrant and an office worker but they improve their situation most of the times. The builder wins a reality TV program and changes his fate, while the immigrant who has to start a small restaurant to supplement her family's income finally becomes the owner of 12 restaurants and has 1,000 employees. An ordinary woman who dreams of a musical career then wins first prize in a TV contest and is transformed into a singer.

Even though the characters from other cultures were not taken into account to investigate the way the target society is represented, it is interesting to note that the people who experience real problems and difficulties do not come from Britain or America. The textbook depicts a teacher from South America who has to cross a valley by wire to go to work every day and a man in the Arabian kingdom of Oman who is worried because his sons are unemployed. The "problems" that native speakers face are very different: celebrities are concerned that they are not allowed to have a private life, and others worry about people who may not be able to live without technology, being used to a modern way of life.

Preliminary comments on aspirational characters

The representation of the target society seems to be an area where the CEFR has not made any impact because the percentage of aspirational characters increased instead of going down, as can be seen in table 1. This tendency to portray characters belonging to the more privileged social classes and to conceal the rest of society is more noticeable in the 2008 edition where poor people are completely absent. The characters with economic problems invariably improve their situation, sometimes in the most

unbelievable ways as I describe above. Only in the 1996 edition there are characters who are poor and remain like that.

The two textbooks fail to represent the diversity of occupations people have in the target society. When comparing the occupations most frequently represented with the classification of occupations within social class groupings used by Drever and Whitehead (1997), it is easy to see which ones are underrepresented. Laborers, cleaners, machine operators, farm workers and other unskilled or partly skilled workers are missing from the textbooks. Manual skilled workers like carpenters, drivers or cooks are also hard to find in the textbooks. In contrast, the occupations that indicate a higher socioeconomic position like professionals or managers abound.

Learners of English using these textbooks will most probably get the impression that there are no poor people in the UK. However, relative poverty is a very real problem, even though the UK is a rich country. Relative poverty is where some people's way of life and income are so much worse than the general standard of living in the country in which they live (Poverty and Inequality in the European Union,2010). People falling below sixty per cent of the median income are said to be at risk of poverty. In the UK in 2009/2010, sixteen per cent of working-age adults were in households with incomes below sixty per cent of the median before housing costs, and twenty-two per cent after housing costs (Adams et. al. 2011). They therefore do not have enough money to spend on food, clothes, heating, travel or entertainment.

The people who are more at risk of being in poverty are those who are unemployed or have low paid jobs, low levels of education, large families or those who are lone parents. Members of minority ethnic groups and immigrants are also at risk of being in poverty because they suffer particularly from discrimination and racism and thus have less chance to access employment, often are forced to live in worse physical environments and have poorer access to essential services (Poverty and Inequality in the European Union,2010). Notably, this section of the population is not represented in the textbooks analyzed, which focus on the more privileged social classes.

The belief of textbook publishers that aspirational characters interest and motivate students in their language learning is based on assumptions about the learners

of English around the world that are too broad. It can be argued that for learners of low socioeconomic backgrounds these characters' lifestyles are so far from their everyday realities that they feel alienated rather than motivated by them. As a result, these learners may not achieve as much as the ones who are identified with and motivated by aspirational textbook characters. In this way, it could be said that English language teaching is reproducing social inequalities.

3.1.b Intercultural characters

Gold 1996

Intercultural characters are the ones who refer to a contact they have had with another culture or an ambition they have in relation to seeing other cultures. Even when they are not in direct contact with other cultures, they may express an interest in different ways of life. All these characters can be said to have a "cosmopolitan orientation" (Tomlinson, 1999 cited in Szersziynski and Urry, 2002). However, in spite of being cosmopolitans, most of these characters are not aware of global issues such as global warming or environmental destruction, and do not seem to have any sense of moral connectedness with or compassion for global others. For this reason, they can be categorized as "banal cosmopolitans" (Matthews and Sidhu, 2005).

Eleven per cent of all the textbook characters in Gold 1996 can be considered intercultural. This category includes the usual tourists and immigrants, the characters who dream of going to other countries, and the ones with jobs that involve travelling. Two of the characters travel to other countries in their work: a stuntwoman launched herself off the Great Wall of China when she was making a film, and a supermodel is at the moment touring the major European capitals promoting her novel and her album. She says that she lives out of a suitcase. There is also a Hungarian billionaire whose experience of living in other countries is described with some detail. He escaped the communist regime and emigrated to London. It was a desperately lonely period for him because he could not speak the language properly and had no money. He then left England for the States, where he experienced many difficulties because he was still poor.

The intercultural characters are sometimes portrayed as rather unusual or eccentric people. For example, the textbook includes an interview with a vampire woman who is saving to go on a trip to Transylvania. In other cases interculturality is related to illegality, as in the text about the characters that leave their country after committing fraud so as not to be taken to prison.

Gold 2008

Twenty-six per cent of the characters considered intercultural are tourists whose restless pursuit of experience, aesthetic sensations and novelty has taken them to other countries. A further thirty per cent comprises the characters who are intercultural because their jobs involve international travel. All these characters belong to the cosmopolitan elites for whom the world is borderless and opportunities unlimited. Some of them comment on the shops or other places they visited while abroad; they also refer to the beauty of the places or the animal life there, but they do not seem to have been particularly impressed by the culture of the countries where they stayed.

Other characters meet people in their travels and get closer to the foreign cultures. A geologist is investigating whether the caves of the Arabian Kingdom of Oman can be used for tourism and meets some local people during her stay. There is a couple whose study of the eating of insects has taken them all over the globe. They share local people's food and try to understand their culture. A young woman describes the steps she took to find a person in Mongolia and the impression this person made on her. They are very different because she lives in a city and he is a nomadic herdsman.

Apart from the characters in situations of intercultural contact, there are some people with an interest in different cultures. One of them wants to see places where the art and culture and whole way of living is different, and two other characters want to go round the world just to see different places.

The textbook also portrays four immigrant women in an article about entrepreneurs who found success in New York. These four success stories give an idealized image of the situation of immigrants in First World countries. The fact that foreigners are usually discriminated against and generally do the worst-paid jobs is not

acknowledged in the article. Instead of referring, for example, to the problems of adapting to life in another culture, the article focuses on the correct decisions the women took in their attempt to make money in the new country.

Preliminary comments on intercultural characters

The influence of the CEFR is very noticeable when we compare the number of intercultural characters included in both textbooks. A much smaller percentage of characters are intercultural in the original edition of the textbook. This difference however, could also be a reflection of the changes that had taken place in the world between 1996 and 2008, and not an indication of the CEFR's influence. During those years, globalisation and the mobility and interconnectedness associated with it resulted in the emergence of the type of people that the new textbook portrays.

In spite of this consideration, the characters in the 1996 edition are not glorified for their travels as they are in the new edition, where the mobility and interconnectedness associated with globalization are frequently celebrated. The producers of the 2008 edition seem to go a long way to meet the expectations of the CEFR, but one has to be very critical of their achievements. The intercultural interactions that are portrayed in the new textbook are far from representing "the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture" and the characters in contact with other cultures are very poor models for learners. It is difficult to imagine how learners will develop a greater openness to cultural experiences when most of the characters are frequent flier executives or cultural tourists without the capacity or desire to form lasting attachments.

In addition, the textbook does not incorporate the "local dimension" of interculturality in its portrayal of characters: there are no characters that are intercultural in the sense that they can communicate with people from different ethnic, social or gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same nation. Considering that prejudice, discrimination and even xenophobia is an obstacle to European integration and the healthy functioning of democracy, an effort should have been done to promote tolerance and respect among Europeans through the portrayal of characters. It is ironic that the intercultural characters portrayed appreciate diversity at a global level when they are

actually facing serious problems of integration and lack of respect for diversity in their own countries.

3.1.c Socially responsible characters

Gold 1996

Eleven per cent of the textbook characters can be considered socially responsible because they care about different problems, such as the environment, poverty or insecurity. Eighty per cent of them are working for the benefit of their own country, while only a twenty per cent is involved in a global action.

Some of the characters in the first group give away to charity, or do other things in aid of charity. Other characters express their concern about some social or cultural problem in their countries such as hospitals' depressing atmosphere, or the amount of pressure the show business children are under. A psychologist is worried that virtual reality will be extremely addictive for children, and an expert on multiple births wants to help parents with the stress of having two babies or more at the same time. Also, a graffiti artist is worried that this type of art does not get due recognition. In addition, the textbook includes a discussion about the activities of the "Guardian Angels", a group of volunteers dedicated to stamping out urban crime.

The characters in the second group are only two: a man known as "the billionaire benefactor of the eastern bloc" who has donated more than $100m to foundations in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, and an ecologist who cares about the environment and does not use pesticides.

Gold 2008

Sixteen per cent of all the characters portrayed in the textbook can be considered socially responsible. Within this category, sixty-two per cent of the characters care about global issues, while thirty-eight per cent of them are concerned with local problems.

The first group consists of ten characters who are aware of the wider world and have a sense of their role as world citizens. Five of them are concerned about environmental damage. There is a character whose main concern is encouraging people to take care of the world's sites of natural beauty, and there is a couple of photographers who eat insects because it makes sense in environmental terms. Also, a wildlife expert expresses her concern about the killing of chimpanzees in Africa, and a young woman is portrayed doing voluntary conservation work in Central America. Apart from that, one character is depicted working to help unemployed people in Asia: a geologist who is investigating whether some caves in Oman could attract tourists and help local people find jobs. As regards poverty, one scientist is involved in a project in which young scientists are sent out into the developing world to help people in rural areas, and another scientist is concerned that some people make billions of pounds when there are other people in the world who are extremely poor.

In contrast to the "banal cosmopolitans" portrayed in the previous section, the socially responsible characters described here have the characteristics of the "educated cosmopolitan citizen" (Osler and Starkey 2003). However, being concerned with the problems people face in other countries and not with the ones they have at home, they help to convey the idea that there are no real problems in their own society.

The second group of socially responsible characters comprises those who are concerned with local problems. Especially remarkable is the inclusion of a business woman who provides training to new immigrants in New York, and a chef who staffs his restaurant with unemployed teenagers. These characters are remarkable because they show that interculturality is not necessarily related to foreign cultures, but that it also refers to the appreciation of diversity within the same culture. They are committed to equality and integration in their own countries, which at the same time helps to represent the target society in less idealised terms.

The distinction between socially responsible characters concerned about local or global issues was not so straightforward in some cases. The character who donates money to a friend for an operation was obviously involved with local problems, but the categorisation of the two people who participated in the project called Living in the Iron Age was more complicated. The project aimed at investigating whether people who are

used to a modern way of life could manage to live in Iron Age conditions. Because the problem of being used to modern facilities is one that affects only wealthy countries, these characters were included in the second group.

Preliminary comments on socially responsible characters

As the table below shows, an important difference to be found between the two course books is related to the extent to which characters are aware of global problems: only twenty per cent of the socially responsible characters in the 1996 edition are worried about global problems, while sixty-two per cent of them are concerned with global issues in the new edition of the textbook.

Table 3. Socially responsible characters' awareness of global problems

Textbook	Gold 1996	Gold 2008
Total number of socially responsible characters	10	16
Number of characters concerned with global problems	2	10
Percentage of characters concerned with global problems	20%	62%

The proportion of socially responsible characters increased slightly from eleven per cent in the 1996 edition to sixteen per cent in 2008. This increase could be understood as an attempt to touch upon sociopolitical issues. However, the great majority of the textbook characters are not concerned about these problems. Even though the world faces serious global issues of terrorism, ethnic conflict, social inequality and environmental destruction, most textbook characters are shown to be unconcerned with these problems.

When serious problems are touched upon, they are most of the times mentioned only in passing or presented as effects. The processes that produce these effects and the agents involved in the processes are absent. For example, the 2008 edition portrays a group of law enforcement officers whose job involves protecting people from extraterrestrial violence. No information is given about the cause of this problem or the agents involved, except that they are from another planet.

3.2 A critical approach to characters

As I explained in chapter two, the previous stage focuses on the influence of the CEFR on the selection of characters in the two textbooks, while this second stage represents a more profound analysis of the portrayal of only two selected characters. The two approaches for the analysis of characters are complementary because this stage is intended to test the findings of the previous section using a different methodology.

The descriptive approach of the previous stage is clearly not enough for depicting the textbooks' ideology. It remains to be analyzed how the different types of characters are portrayed, whether they are glorified or not, and how the texts construct their own representations of reality. Critical Discourse Analysis is used in this stage because it allows me to find connections between language use, power and ideology and in this way identify the manner in which the discourse of the textbooks constructs and imposes particular versions of reality.

I agree with Fairclough (1989) that different interpretations of texts come from different combinations of the properties of texts and the social positioning and knowledge of their interpreters. Consequently, being a non-native teacher of English as a foreign language in Argentina, my interpretation of the texts is informed by my theoretical framework, my intercultural awareness, and my experience in using these types of texts with Argentine students.

In this stage of the analysis I explore the three functions of language and dimensions of meaning which coexist and interact in all discourse - what Fairclough (1992) calls the 'identity', 'relational', and 'ideational' functions of language. The identity

function relates to the ways in which social identities are set up in discourse, the relational function to how social relationships between discourse participants are enacted, and the ideational function to ways in which texts signify the world. These three functions of language correspond respectively to three aspects of the constructive effects of discourse. Discourse contributes first of all to the construction of subject positions. Secondly, discourse helps construct social relationships between people. And thirdly, discourse contributes to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief. Figure 1 shows the values that formal properties of texts may have in relation to the dimensions of meaning and the constructive effects of discourse.

Dimensions of meaning	Values of features	Constructive effects of discourse
Identity	Expressive	Construction of subject positions/ social identities
Relational	Relational	Construction of social relations between people
Ideational	Experiential	Construction of systems of knowledge and belief

Figure 1. Dimensions of meaning (Fairclough, 1989)

Because CDA is only applied in the analysis of two discourse samples, one from each textbook, I paid particular attention to the selection of texts. I took into consideration the actual space the textbooks devoted to the character, and the texts that devoted a considerable number of lines to the depiction of a character, mentioned the character on the title, or portrayed the character in visual form as well as textually were selected. Another criterion for selecting the texts was to choose the ones which were thought to be representative of the textbooks' ideology as a whole. I took into consideration the findings of the descriptive approach, which gives a general outline of

the types of characters that are portrayed in the two textbooks and proposes a preliminary hypothesis of their ideology.

I chose an intercultural character from the second edition of the textbook for the critical analysis because, as can be seen in Table 1, one of the most noticeable differences between the two textbooks is the fact that the new edition portrays more intercultural characters interacting with people from other nationalities. The character I selected, called Lucy, is at the same time an aspirational character, so she is archetypal of the textbook in that respect as well. The text depicts the interaction between Lucy and a Mongolian man, and I am interested both in the portrayal of the characters and in the way the interaction itself is represented. At the same time I aim at comparing the portrayal of an aspirational character like Lucy, with the representation of Lawrence, who is the character selected from the 1996 edition.

For the first edition of the textbook the character that was selected also stands out as a typical feature of the textbook's ideology. This edition depicts a smaller quantity of aspirational characters and differentiates itself from the second edition because it portrays some characters belonging to the less privileged social classes. In the second edition, on the other hand, this type of character is completely absent because the people who are poor in the textbook always improve their situation, sometimes in the most unbelievable ways. Lawrence, the character selected, is not aspirational, he cannot afford to spend so much money and does not have the lifestyle of an affluent person.

In the text Lawrence talks about his addiction to shopping. I considered this text particularly interesting to analyze because the choice of topic shows an ideology which is different from the one textbooks are said to have. If EFL textbooks' basic values were materialism and consumerism as Starkey (1991) and other researchers state, then textbooks would not include addiction to shopping as a topic. It is contradictory to represent shopping as an addiction because in this way the activity acquires a negative connotation when the textbooks' supposed ideology is to encourage consumerism.

Previous studies have shown that textbooks mainly concentrate on topics related to carefree consumer and leisure activities and avoid engagement in social problems or

unsettling social issues. *A*ddiction to shopping is in my view a social problem caused by the excessive pressure put on people to spend money in consumerist societies. Publishers would consider this topic controversial and unsuitable for inclusion in EFL textbooks. This is another reason why the choice of topic is in contradiction with the textbooks' general tendency. However, this very fact makes the text more interesting to analyze for its ideological content.

3.2.a Analysis of Gold 1996

As already stated, the text I selected for analysis is a radio interview to a man called Lawrence, who used to suffer from an addiction to shopping. Its title, "An addict's story", is really suitable because it is a good summary of the content of the text, which includes a description of the man's addiction and an explanation of how he managed to stop it. The text is rather de-emphasized in the students' book because there are no pictures to accompany it. I analyze the transcription of the interview which appears in the teacher's book (the full text can be found in the Appendix). There are two participants in the interaction: the interviewer or radio presenter, and the interviewee, who are labelled RP and L respectively.

My focus in the first section of the analysis is on its subject matter, but because subject matters only enter texts in the mediated form of particular constructions of them, I use the word discourse instead of the more traditional term "subject matter". The next dimension in the analysis is the experiential function of language, which is to do with the way in which our experience of the world is represented. The sections that are included within this dimension of meaning are transitivity and classification schemes. Finally, the last three sections of the analysis of the text (politeness, interactional control features and pronouns) are connected to the interpersonal function, which includes the "relational" and "identity" dimensions that are referred to in Figure 1 above. This function has to do with the ways in which social relations are exercised and social identities are manifested.

<u>Discourse</u>

The first two exchanges of the interview represent a discussion about the best way to describe Lawrence and his illness, and the terms *shopaholic* and *over-spender* are suggested as possible denominations. In another section of the analysis I consider the difference between the terms, but as regards the type of discourse that is drawn upon, both terms are similar in the sense that they entail interpreting the problem from the perspective of psychoanalytic therapy and counselling.

Therapy and counselling assume that problems such as this can be remedied on the basis of the hidden potentials of the individuals and must be dealt with individually. This perspective is in competition with the one that considers over-spending to be a social problem caused by the excessive emphasis placed upon the consumption of commodities in consumerist societies. Being a social problem, it can only be remedied through forms of social struggle and political mobilization.

The presence of the discourse of psychoanalysis is evident in the tenth exchange where Lawrence explains how his problem with shopping was determined by events in his childhood:

RP: And have you ever really found out why you did it?
   L: Oh yes, yes. In my case it was my childhood ... where I was constantly ... err ... doing without, and being envious and jealous of other kids. And then when I was fifteen, I discovered I could spend and my parents couldn't stop me. (...)

Psychoanalysis frequently involves looking at childhood experiences and repressed trauma in order to discover how these events might have shaped the individual and how they contribute to mental illnesses or maladaptive behaviour. Using the discourse of psychoanalysis supports the conception that over-spending is a personal problem which must be dealt with individually, rather than a social problem.

<u>Transitivity</u>

Transitivity patterns represent the encoding of experiential meaning. A real process may be signified linguistically by means of a variety of forms, according to the way the text producer perceives and experiences what is going on. The language differentiates a small number of process types and associated participant roles, and the signification of a real process is a matter of assimilating it to one of these. Transitivity deals with the types of process which are coded in clauses, and the types of participant involved in them.

The predominant process types selected in the text are mental, material, and relational. The verbs selected for the description of the addiction are mainly mental verbs of cognition and affection, while material verbs are selected for the last part of the interview where Lawrence describes how he managed to solve his problem with compulsive shopping. Material processes are processes of doing, usually concrete, tangible actions, and indicate that Lawrence was in control of the situation. On the other hand, the selection of mental processes for the description of the addiction point to a situation where Lawrence was controlled by emotions and not able to think clearly.

Examples of mental processes:

- … and it's a case really of physically buying ten or twenty of everything (…) and not even *remember* doing it.
- I had a long suffering wife who could not *understand* what was going on…
- Well, at first, you *enjoy* the experience …

Examples of material processes:

- So I started *seeing* a hypnotherapist, which really *helped*, …
- … and together we started to *sort* things *out*.
- So, what did you *do* with all the stuff in the house?

Relational processes are also very frequently selected in the text, especially the sub-category of intensive relational processes, which establish a relationship between two terms, where the relationship is expressed by the verb *be* or a synonym. For example:

- … it'*s* a very common impulse

- … and it'*s* a case really of physically buying ten or twenty of everything.

- So how bad did it *get* for you then?

Using relational processes to represent compulsive shopping is a choice with clear significance. As these types of processes are not about actions, there are no actors (i.e. the constituent of the clause who does the deed or performs the action), and it does not make sense to ask "What did *x* do to *y*?" as in material processes. The choice of process type is used to represent compulsive shopping as an event that just happens with no one responsible, and to hide the real cause of this problem, which I believe is the excessive emphasis placed upon the consumption of commodities in consumerist societies.

<u>Classification schemes</u>

The exchange below can be interpreted in terms of a clash between different classification schemes:

RP: (...) it's a very common impulse, isn't it. I mean, we all have bad days and at the end of them think... oh well, to heck with that, I'm off down to buy myself something to make myself feel better.
L: Oh agreed, but you don't do it 365 days a year. Erm ... and it's a case really of physically buying ten or twenty of everything.
RP: Ten or twenty of everything!?

The classification scheme that is drawn upon by the RP is that of the consumer who buys items on impulse despite a need for such items simply because they enjoy shopping. They can do it to mask negative feelings or to please themselves in a narcissistic way, but in any case within that classification scheme the activity of buying

is evaluated positively. Lawrence's response indicates a complete change from the frame of shopping as an enjoyable activity to the frame of addictions. The RP is surprised by Lawrence's intervention precisely because it implies adjusting her understanding of the situation and activating a different classification scheme. After these three turns, which can be understood as a negotiation of the type of interview that will follow, the classification scheme of addicts replaces the one the RP originally had.

Being in a radio broadcast, the RP is not only addressing Lawrence but she is also indirectly speaking for an audience. Through the use of the so-called inclusive "we" in the first turn above, which refers to the herself as well as her audience, the RP is addressing her listeners as if they were all already consumers. At the same time, the absence of modalizing elements indicates that she supports a view of the world as transparent. She considers her view of the world to be the only possible one. Even though for some people it may sound odd to go shopping because one has had a bad day, for her this is simply common sense.

An analysis of the RP's assertion "oh well, to heck with that, I'm off down to buy myself something to make myself feel better" indicates that there are two "voices" in this part, the voice of the RP and the voice of the person being reported, who is not a specified individual, but a more "nebulous" voice corresponding to the discourse of consumerism. This allusion is introduced by the RP to indicate commonality of values. It indicates what she herself might have said, or any of her imagined listeners as a matter of fact.

Classification schemes are in part systems of evaluations and it is clear that, within this consumerist classification scheme, shopping is evaluated positively. After this scheme is replaced by the frame of addictions, shopping for pleasure has completely different connotations. The following presupposition of Lawrence, cued by the definite article, is an example of the negative evaluation of the activity of shopping as a result of incorporating a different classification scheme:

RP: So, when you get home, I mean, do you enj-, do you get any fun out of twenty pairs of shoes or twenty CDs or whatever? Or did you yourself go away

and hide them because you were ashamed of them? I mean did you enjoy it at all?

L: Well, at first, you enjoy the experience, err, you know, you get the famous "buzz"...

"Buzz" is a slang word which indicates a state of pleasant intoxication, as from alcohol or drugs. Even though the expression "the famous buzz" presupposes that shopping is stimulating and exciting, within the frame of addictions, the negative consequences of shopping outweigh the positive feelings the person might have when they buy things.

The metaphor of shopping as a form of alcoholism or addiction is very strong in the rest of the interview. Not only is Lawrence obsessively preoccupied with buying things, but he is also unable to control his own consuming habits despite the negative consequences of his actions. His behaviour has many of the symptoms of addicts, such as lying in order to conceal his actions, hiding the behaviour from friends and family, or feeling ashamed. He also describes having financial difficulties and relationship problems as a result of his obsession with shopping.

The significant aspect of using these classification schemes is that by constructing reality in this way it is possible to criticize consumerism only when the behaviour is similar to that of an addict, but the rest of the time it is perfectly acceptable to buy things that we do not need or may not be able to afford, only for the pleasure it gives.

In fact, this is the main assumption that interpreters need to make in order to understand the text. Shopping and alcoholism have very little in common, except for the fact that they both provide the individual with reward through sensations of pleasure. For people who only go shopping when they need to buy something but do not associate the activity with any form of pleasure, it is going to be very difficult to make sense of Lawrence's problem and of the text in general. In so far as interpreters resolve these contradictions, they are themselves also being positioned as consumers by the text.

In the next sections I focus on the "interpersonal" functions of language, where the "identity" and "relational" dimensions are included. These dimensions are related to the construction of the social identity of Lawrence and of the social relationships between the two participants.

Politeness

In this section I analyse Lawrence's *face*, or public self-image. People want to be liked and admired; they want to be connected, to belong, and to be a member of the group. In the field of politeness this is called *positive face*. I transcribe the first three exchanges of the interview below and analyse them in relation to Lawrence's positive face.

RP: Now, Lawrence, you've described yourself as a "shopaholic", haven't you?
L: Yes, well, in fact, we don't much like that term. We prefer to be called "over-spenders".
RP: But whatever you call it, it's a very common impulse, isn't it. I mean, we all have bad days and at the end of them think ... oh well, to heck with that, I'm off down to buy myself something to make myself feel better.

The RP's first turn is threatening to Lawrence's positive face because it is demeaning and also possibly embarrassing. The word she uses to describe him may cause him to lose his dignity and the respect of others. The alternative to the word "shopaholic" proposed by Lawrence is a less negative option. It does not have associations with alcoholism or addictions and would consequently have represented a face-saving act if she had used it instead of "shopaholic".

On the other hand, the RP's second turn is a clear attempt to emphasize Lawrence's positive face by showing solidarity and drawing attention to a common problem. The positive assertion with a negative tag question which anticipates a positive answer presupposes that high affinity with the proposition is shared between the RP and her addressee. Such questions are asked to demonstrate this affinity and solidarity rather than to get information.

The RP's answer "whatever you call it" is also an indication that she is the more powerful participant in the interaction (as I explain below). She clearly controls the topic of the interaction and is not willing to discuss the most appropriate term. She wants to keep to her agenda, which is to get Lawrence to talk about the addiction itself, not about its denomination.

Interactional control features

The two participants interact with each other according to the conventions of the genre, where the taking of talking turns depends on the power relations between the participants. The question-answer adjacency pair is central, with an opening of the transaction by the interviewer. Lawrence's turns are limited to giving relevant answers to the RP's questions.

The devices used by the radio presenter to put constraints on Lawrence's contributions are: topic control, interruption and forcing explicitness. The topic of the interaction is determined and controlled by her. She specifies the nature of the interview at its beginning, and disallows contributions which are not relevant thereto. Apart from that, she interrupts Lawrence twice during the interview in order to force him to make his meaning unambiguous:

L: ... it's a case of physically buying ten or twenty of everything.
RP: Ten or twenty of everything! ?
L: ... to start with, (...)

L: I went into about $ 30,000 of unpaid ...
RP: $ 30,000 worth of debt?
L: Yeah.

As well as being signs of the RP's position of power, these interruptions are strong expressions of disapproval. In terms of politeness, they are clearly threatening to Lawrence's positive face because his excesses are emphasized and his compulsive behaviour exposed to the audience in a way that no doubts are left of his pathology.

<u>Pronouns</u>

Even though the relationship between the RP and Lawrence is one of infrequent contact and low affective involvement, the topic of their conversation is rather personal and face-threatening. Lawrence uses generic "you" and present tenses when he describes his addiction as a resource to protect his positive face. This technique makes the account more impersonal. In fact, in the following examples he seems to be talking about what shopaholics in general do, rather than about himself:

L: Well, at first, *you* enjoy the experience, err, you know, *you* get the famous "buzz" ...
RP: So what happens when the bank statements arrive?
L: Oh, that's easy – erm, *you* hide them. *You* just pretend they're not there.

The RP goes along with him and uses the same technique but later on attempts to get a more personal answer, with favourable results. Lawrence has to answer using the first person, and instead of the more impersonal present tense, he must use the past tense:

RP: So how bad did it get for you then?
L: Me? I went into about $ 30,000 of unpaid...

RP: And were you married?
L: Yes. I had a long suffering wife (...)

<u>Analysis of tasks</u>

Learners have to do two tasks. First, they are asked to listen to get a general idea of the meaning of the text, and answer two questions. Then, they have to listen in more detail and indicate whether some statements are true or false. The statements included in the second task only focus on the literal meaning of the text. For example, learners must pay attention to what Lawrence bought, how he felt, or how he managed to stop. These activities expect learners to accept the perspective of the text, and are not designed to help them see the connections between language use, power and ideology. The content

of the text is assumed to be unproblematic and the representation of the world that is presented there is taken as the only possible way to represent things.

As my analysis showed, by focusing on Lawrence, the text avoids dealing with consumerism as a social problem and presents over-spending as only *his* problem. The first question learners have to answer ("What is Lawrence's problem?") is formulated on the basis of the assumption that this representation of reality is true, i.e. that the problem belongs to Lawrence only because he is an "addict". Consumerism is not a social problem in this perspective and, when completing the tasks, learners are forced to see reality in the way it is perceived by the text producers.

After completing the two comprehension tasks, students are not asked to give any personal response to the text or to comment on it in any way apart from doing the controlled activities described above. This is unusual, as textbooks generally ask students to contribute with some suggestion or opinion of their own at the end of a listening or reading task. Just as the text is de-emphasized because there are no pictures to accompany it, it is also not considered as important as to require a different contribution from the learners.

Learners should be helped to understand that the representations of the world that are introduced in the texts they read or listen to are not the only possible ways to represent things and there are many different ways to guide learners to do that. For example, the following questions could be asked to challenge the assumptions of the RP when she says "(…) we all have bad days and at the end of them think ... oh well, to heck with that, I'm off down to buy myself something to make myself feel better." :

- What other things can you do if you have had a bad day and feel sad?
- What can be the dangers of buying things in this way?
- Do you agree that nowadays people spend too much on things they don't need?

Preliminary comments on the text

The discourse of counselling, the use of relational process types, and the classification scheme of addictions combine to avoid dealing with the social aspects of

overspending. Consequently, what could have been an opportunity to challenge common-held assumptions about consumer societies turned out to be a description of the personal problems of a shopping addict.

On the other hand, the introduction of quotations coming from the discourse of consumerism, the use of pronouns to involve the audience, and the absence of modalizing elements ideologically constitute learners as consumers. In this way the producers of the text transmit the usual consumerist and materialistic values of EFL textbooks in spite of the topic, which is inherently a criticism of the habit of shopping, at least when practiced in excess.

As regards the interpersonal features of the text, the absence of face-saving acts, the interruptions, the way the radio presenter forces explicitness from Lawrence, and the pronouns expose Lawrence's weaknesses to the audience. He is not represented as a highly valued member of society.

This text is very different from the types of texts that are usually selected by textbook authors. Lawrence experiences a serious problem as a result of his addiction and for this reason stands in contrast to the typical banality of textbooks, where characters generally show no concerns other than spending money and enjoying themselves. The inclusion of a character like him, who is not aspirational, allows for a more diverse representation of the target society through the portrayal of people from all social classes.

As already stated, the text was selected for the critical approach because it appeared to be in contradiction with the materialistic and consumerist ideology that characterizes EFL textbooks. However, after the analysis using the theory and procedures of CDA it was found that the text does not completely oppose this ideology, but incorporates the values of thrift and moderation.

3.2.b Analysis of Gold 2008

The text I selected for analysis is an article originally published in The Guardian and written by a British journalist called Lucy Leveugle. She writes about her journey

from London to Mongolia, which is a kind of experiment she carries out in order to test out the urban myth of *six degrees of separation*. According to the myth, anyone on the planet can be connected to any other person on the planet through a chain of no more than six acquaintances. The article describes Lucy's attempts to reach a man in Mongolia, called Purev-Ochir, using only personal contacts. Her aim in doing so is to confirm her initial hypothesis that we live in a "small world".

The text is accompanied by two photographs, one of the journalist sitting with a laptop computer, and another of the Mongolian man riding a horse in the steppes of his home country. Learners have to do a pre-reading task, then answer some multiple choice questions about the text to demonstrate their comprehension of it, and finally they are asked to give a personal response to the content of the text.

Following Fairclough (1992), my analysis focuses on intertextuality first and then deals with the two dimensions of meaning which coexist and interact in all discourse - what he calls the "ideational" and "interpersonal" functions of language. The analysis then turns from the text itself to the tasks that accompany the text, and the three dimensions of meaning mentioned in Figure 1 are again briefly explored for the tasks.

The first section of the analysis focuses upon the intertextual dimension, which can be seen as the relationships of texts to conventions, including their structured sequence of actions. In addition to that, intertextuality refers to the property texts have of incorporating or otherwise responding to other texts. In the case of textbooks, different text types are transformed into simplified texts for EFL learners. My analysis also considers the adaptations made by textbook producers to the original newspaper article published in The Guardian.

The next dimension in the analysis is the ideational function of language, which refers to those aspects of text analysis that relate to the ways in which texts signify the world and contribute to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief. The sections that are included within this dimension of meaning are transitivity, wording of meaning, and frames. Finally, the last section of the analysis of the text, expressive modality, is connected to the interpersonal function.

<u>Interdiscursivity</u>

Even though the text under analysis is a newspaper article, it uses most of the conventional schema for scientific reports that inform about experiments. A "review of the literature" is given in the first three paragraphs of the article. In this section the writer explains the theory *six degrees of separation* and describes the experiment devised by the psychologist Stanley Milgram. After that, Lucy Leveugle states her aim, which is to repeat Milgram's experiment on a world stage. Much like a scientific report, she then describes the "rigorous" method she used to carry out her experiment, and finally gives an account of her findings and explores their significance

The writer is a journalist, not a scientist, and she is writing a non-technical article which is intended to be entertaining rather than scientific. In spite of this, she uses this unexpected schema. The reasons for doing this might be that the sequential structure of a scientific report makes her argument more convincing to the untrained reader. At the same time, by using this schema, she probably wants to constitute her identity as an educated person.

The article is spoken and conversational in style, which is at odds with its sequential structure. In spite of this, using an informal style is a common characteristic of news media. The writer uses popular speech, which is the language of the public to whom the newspaper is principally addressed. This might be done in order to express solidarity with the audience, and probably also to "recruit" more readers and sell more newspapers.

<u>Transitivity</u>

The transitivity analysis reveals that the types of processes that predominate are material and mental ones. The active participant in these processes is most of the times Lucy, who is the person who either does the actions in the material processes, or the one who thinks and perceives in mental ones. This is not surprising considering that most of the text deals with Lucy's actions and only two paragraphs (lines 53 to 62) are about Purev-Ochir. Her activities are described with a lot of attention to detail, while Purev-Ochir's actions are marginal to the topic of the text and are described very vaguely.

Most of the mental processes that have Lucy as the active participant or senser belong to the subcategory of mental processes of cognition (processes of thinking, knowing or understanding). Examples are: I *decided* to test out Milgram's theory on a world stage (line 24), I *felt* that if I could get to him, then I could get to anyone (lines 31 and 32), I began to *think* I wasn't going to achieve my goal in six steps (line 46 and 47). By contrast, there are no mental processes in the text where Purev-Ochir is the senser or person who thinks.

He is only represented as the actor or person doing the action in a few material processes, and as the behaver in a behavioral process, which is typically a process of physiological behavior. This is the case in line 61: when I explained the theory he just *laughed*, and went back to looking after his animals. No reason is given for Purev-Ochir's laugh. Perhaps he did not consider it very important, useful or relevant to conduct the experiment that Lucy had just described to him. It is also possible that he did not understand her explanation of the theory *six degrees of separation.* Yet another possibility is that he laughed because she could not make it in six steps. In any case, being a behavioral process, laughing is not concerned with the mind but with the body.

The text does not mention that Purev-Ochir had studied to be a teacher but chose the traditional way of life. This information appears in the original article in The Guardian but not in the textbook's simplified version. All these features (the absence of mental processes with Purev-Ochir as the active participant, the omission of the information about his previous studies) contribute to giving a more positive representation of Lucy than of him, and to portraying her as intellectually superior.

Wording of meaning

There are always alternative ways of signifying particular domains of experience, which involve interpreting from a particular ideological perspective. Different perspectives on domains of experience entail different ways of wording them. The highlighted words in the extracts below indicate that the man in Mongolia is experienced as a destination that Lucy has to reach rather than a person she is actually interested in meeting.

- … how many steps it would really take to *reach* someone on the other side of the planet. (lines 25-26)
- If I could *get to* him, then I could get to anyone. (lines 31-32)
- So my journey to *reach* him began. (line 33)
- I was *getting close*. (line 50)

In the same way that the parcels in Milgram's experiment had to reach a destination, Lucy has to get to the Mongolian herdsman in order to prove her hypothesis. Consequently, even though theirs is an intercultural encounter because they come from very different cultural contexts, the words used do not denote that type of experience. Similarly, the words highlighted below indicate that attaining her objective of finding the man in Mongolia is Lucy's most important concern. Establishing and maintaining human relationships does not seem to be her priority.

- I decided on outer Mongolia for my *target* … (lines 26-27)
- …and I began to think I wasn't going to achieve my *goal* in six steps – if at all. (lines 44-45-46)
- Although I didn't actually *make it* in six steps… (line 64)

In terms of transitivity the same effect is attained by the frequent use of material processes where Lucy is the actor (the person doing the action) and either Purev-Ochir or Mongolia are the goals (the participants at whom the processes are directed). Examples are:

- Could she get in touch with this Mongolian herdsman…? (lead of the article)
- So my journey to reach him began. (line 33)
- I had reached Mongolia in four steps. (lines 42-43)
- When I finally found Purev-Ochir… (line 53)

In other cases Purev-Ochir appears as the circumstance of location in clauses where Lucy is the actor:

- …if <u>I could get to him</u>, then I could get to anyone. (lines 31-32)
- …so perhaps <u>I really would make it to my herdsman</u> in six. (lines 43-44)

<u>Frames</u>

The frame which is activated for Lucy by textual cues is of a cosmopolitan person belonging to an affluent social class. She describes herself as "a real city girl" (line 58) who is never without her mobile phone (lines 58-59). The fact that she has access to advanced technology is also evident in the picture which portrays her with a laptop computer. In addition, she states that her aim is to find "someone on the other side of the planet" (lines 25-26) in order to test a theory "on a world stage" (line 24). The world for her is indeed a "small world" as she can move freely from country to country and has a large network of friends which spans many countries.

What is more, she *decided* to test out Milgrams's theory on a world stage, and she also *decided* on Outer Mongolia for her target. The italicized verbs act as cues for the same implicit frame of a cosmopolitan affluent person. Lucy seems to have so much money to spare that she can travel anywhere in the world whenever she wants. Even though she travels as part of her job, the highlighted verbs give the impression that she was paying for the trip herself.

Mobilitiy and constant change can be *said* to characterize her, and it is not surprising that neither her nationality nor her occupation are stated explicitly in the text. As a supranational cosmopolitan she has a multiplicity of cultural identities and cannot be simply categorized as British, English or a member of any other nationality. As regards her job, she appears to have many talents, being able to make documentaries, write articles, and even carry out scientific research. The superficial short-term relationship that she forms with the man in Mongolia is also a result of her constant movement. In contrast, what characterizes Purev-Ochir is stability and fixed location, and for this reason his occupation and nationality are easy to define. He is referred to as "a nomadic herdsman in the middle of the Mongolian Steppes" (lines 30-31) or simply as a "Mongolian herdsman" (lead of the article).

As regards his economic *position*, the frame which is activated for him is of a person coming from the less privileged social classes. He lives in a rural area in the middle of the desolate, empty Mongolian Steppes (line 55). Apart from that, he is a nomad and lives in a tent, so the reader can assume that he does not have access to advanced technology. He is portrayed in a picture riding a horse far from any form of civilization. These textual and visual elements act as cues for the particular frame of a person who has not had many opportunities in life and has not been able to see much of the world. Actually, he had never met a foreigner *before* meeting Lucy (lines 56-57).

The differences and incompatibilities between Lucy and Purev-Ochir are acknowledged in certain parts of the text. One such part is where the writer describes her feelings at meeting the man in Mongolia for the first time. Considering the differences that exist between them, the little time that it took Lucy to reach him surprises her. She states: "When I finally found Purev-Ochir I was amazed that it had not taken me much longer." (lines 53-54) and she soon realizes that their "lives were totally different" (line 58).

When she describes his reaction to their first encounter she states that he wasn't particularly *impressed* by her arrival (lines 60-61). Her choice of adjective and her use of a negative sentence reveal some prior assumptions she holds about the differences that exist between them, and specially about her superiority. The sentence in lines 60-61 presupposes that the Mongolian man should be impressed by her arrival and should feel admiration for her

Expressive modality

Modality is to do with speaker or writer authority. Fairclough (1989) refers to *expressive modality* when modality is a matter of the speaker or writer's authority with respect to the truth or probability of a representation of reality.

I selected the following proposition in lines 64-65-66 to analyze the use of modality:

"Although I didn't actually make it in six steps, my experience still shows that we can take shortcuts through large social networks and that it really is a small world."

The prevalence of categorical modalities, positive assertions and the absence of modalizing elements in the reporting clauses above support a view of the world as transparent − as if it signaled its own meaning to any observer, without the need for interpretation and representation. At the same time modality is used in lines 65-66 to establish and consolidate solidarity relations with the readers. The writer clearly presupposes that high affinity with these propositions is shared between herself and her ideal readers.

The expression "a small world" is used in the text as a metaphor for globalization and the connectivity that is frequently associated with it. However, globalization has not been experienced in the same way everywhere. As Featherstone (2002) states, the cosmopolitan elites, who enjoy the freedom of physical movement and communication, stand in stark contrast to those who are confined to place, whose fate is to remain located. Globalization does not mean the same for Lucy as it does for Purev-Ochir. In spite of that, her perspective is presented as the only possible one. The text might be said to be constructed on the basis of a first-wordlist discourse of globalization.

Analysis of tasks

Just as it happens with the task of "An Addict's story", the activities accompanying the text assume a view of language as system and do not acknowledge the ideological shaping of language. This is especially true of exercise two, which checks comprehension of the text, because in order to do the task students only have to read for literal meaning. They are not asked to consider the social practice the text represents or, as a matter of fact, any of the dimensions of meaning which Fairclough (1989) identifies. The content of the text is assumed to be unproblematic and the representation of the world that is presented there is taken as the only possible way to represent things.

After demonstrating comprehension of the text, learners are asked to give a personal response to it by answering the question "Who would you choose to look for in order to test this theory?", which forces learners to acquire Lucy's identity. They could have been asked, for example, "Would you volunteer to be filmed in a documentary as Purev-Ochir did?". However, the learners' contributions are constrained as regards the subjects positions they can occupy because they are told to imagine they are in Lucy's situation.

By understanding and answering the question learners are accepting the way they are being positioned by the text, even though their sociocultural contexts might be very different from the one they are asked to imagine they have. It can be said that they are being "educated" to think like cosmopolitan people, which is the same as saying that the text is constructing their identity as affluent cosmopolitans.

Preliminary comments on the text

There are many ways in which the text portrays Lucy more positively than Purev-Ochir. The conventional schema for scientific reports used in her article constitutes her identity as an educated person while the information about Lawrence's studies is omitted in the textbook's simplified version. The selection of mental processes of cognition for her and behavioral processes for him contributes to portraying her as intellectually superior. The presupposition that he should be impressed by her arrival is another way in which the text assumes Lucy deserves more respect that Purev-Ochir.

The unequal portrayal of Lucy and Purev-Ochir is an example of the *discourse imperialism* that Phillipson (1992) refers to, a discourse which subtly but consistently guarantees the supremacy of some countries over others. The ideological effect is that foreign cultures are invariably considered inferior to the culture of English-speaking countries.

At the same time, a combination of certain features indicates that she is a cosmopolitan floating over cultures but not interested in intercultural relationships. The wording of meaning and choice of material processes show that the man in Mongolia is

just a destination for her. Her objective is to reach him in order to prove a theory, but she does not specially want to establish or maintain human relationships, which is the most enriching aspect of intercultural encounters and a central objective of language education.

She is portrayed as a cosmopolitan person belonging to an affluent social class. She has a first-world view of globalization, and uses the metaphor of the small world is if it applied to all of her readers. However, many learners have never had the chance to leave their country of origin or even travel by plane. As a consequence, they will most likely find themselves "outside looking in", wishing they could afford Lucy's lifestyle.

Similarly, based on incorrect assumptions about what interests and motivates learners, authors ask them to imagine they are in Lucy's position and can choose someone anywhere in the world to look for. This is sometimes so far from the students' life circumstances that they will not be able to answer the task question honestly. Many times textbooks' tasks are as irrelevant and inappropriate as the aspirational characters portrayed.

"Steppe by steppe" was selected because Lucy was intercultural, the type of character which differentiated the second edition of the textbook from the first. The text about Lawrence, on the other hand, was selected because he was an "un-aspirational" character, and this type of character was only found in the first edition of the textbook. A comparison between the two texts shows that there are important differences in the portrayal of the characters. The text about Lucy conveys the idea that she is really worthy of admiration, having such a glamorous lifestyle, whereas Lawrence is not represented as someone who deserves much recognition or respect. This is evident in the textbook's layout as well. "Steppe by steppe" has two photographs to accompany it, while "An addict's story" has none. The content of Lucy's text is also more visible because it is a text to be read that occupies two pages of the coursebook. The text about Lawrence, on the other hand, is not available for the students because, being a text to be heard, students can only listen to it in class but do not have access to its tapescript. The coursebook only allots half a page to the listening task.

CONCLUSION

I hypothesised that the CEFR might affect the content of EFL textbooks in three areas: the representation of the social variety of the target culture, the portrayal of intercultural encounters, and the choice of topics that encourage social responsibility. I formulated three questions that guided the first stage of my investigation. Each of the questions corresponded to one of the predicted areas of influence of the CEFR and was related at the same time to one type of character: aspirational, intercultural, or socially responsible. This division was carried out in order to organise the descriptive approach to character types, which was the first stage of the analysis of the textbooks. The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 1 where each type of character is considered separately. However, a more in depth evaluation reveals that the three areas are inevitably interrelated, as I explain below.

The two textbooks portray a high percentage of aspirational characters, which shows that the CEFR did not influence the choice of characters in this area. One problem with this type of characters is that their lifestyles are so far from some students' everyday life that these students' motivation and degree of engagement with the target language and culture could suffer because they cannot relate to the characters in textbooks. In addition to that, the characters portrayed in textbooks very rarely express their personal opinions, values or feelings, and their problems are seldom of a serious type. This strong under-representation of the subjective aspect of characters results in lost opportunities for intercultural reflection. For intercultural competence to be acquired, learners need to become aware of the modes of thought and behaviour and the sociocultural values of the target culture. However, this is not possible with the two-dimensional characters that textbooks portray.

Another disadvantage of the over-emphasis on aspirational characters is that in this way teaching materials run the risk of presenting the target society as a monolithic and homogeneous group and interfere with the learners' development of their intercultural competence. Learners should be made aware of the regional and social diversity of the target language community through the characters that are portrayed in textbooks. However, poor people are rarely portrayed, and when they appear, as in the case of immigrants, they are presented as successful people who make unbelievable

progress in the foreign country. This tendency to reduce the target language community to a single group of highly affluent native speakers increases in the new edition of the coursebook in spite of the specifications of the CEFR.

In contrast to the results for aspirational characters, the CEFR seems to have made an impact in the amount of intercultural characters portrayed. There are more of them in the new edition of the coursebook. However, the analysis that goes beyond the numerical count shows that the so-called intercultural characters do not establish true intercultural relationships and therefore do not exemplify for learners "the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture" which goes beyond the exchange of information and has to do with human relationships. Rather than intercultural people they are cosmopolitans floating over cultures: tourists searching for new experiences or people with high earning jobs that involve international travel. Apart from that, very few of these cosmopolitans are concerned with the problems that local people face in the places they visit.

Another problem with the intercultural characters portrayed is that the concept of intercultural interaction that is used by the textbooks authors only refers to interaction between people from different national cultures. In the CEFR the concept is extended to take into account the cultural variation within the same society. The attitudes of tolerance and respect that are derived from intercultural interactions between people from different ethnic, social or gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same nation are extremely important in the preparation for democratic citizenship, which is also an aim of the CEFR. In the context of Latin America, where interaction with native speakers of English is less frequent than in Europe, the broader concept of intercultural competence of the CEFR is the one that has more relevance.

Even though there was a noticeable increase in the percentage of intercultural characters from 11% in the 1996 edition to 27% in the 2008 edition, this increase could also be a reflection of the changes that had taken place in the world between 1996 and 2008, and not an indication of the CEFR's influence. During those years, globalisation and the mobility and interconnectedness associated with it resulted in the emergence of the type of people that the new textbook portrays. It must be considered, however, that globalisation also caused a lot of poverty and social exclusion, and that there are many

people in the world who did not benefit from it, but they are not selected by the producers to appear in textbooks. The fact that only cosmopolitan characters are selected to illustrate globalisation is not neutral but carries with it an ideology of its own. In addition to that, the way these characters are portrayed in the new textbook is also ideological. Apart from depicting a larger quantity of cosmopolitan characters, the 2008 edition of the textbook celebrates these characters' lifestyle by representing it as especially interesting and enjoyable.

The last area where I analysed the effect of the CEFR was that of the social responsibility that the characters possess. I decided to focus on socially responsible characters because they are an indication that the priorities of the CEFR are considered and that there are other values that are transmitted apart from consumerism and materialism. While aspirational characters show no concerns other than spending money, enjoying themselves, and practising their hobbies, socially responsible characters demonstrate a commitment towards society expressed as an awareness of social problems or as an active participation in the solving of these problems.

The commitment the characters demonstrate can be as trivial as giving away to charity, or showing a concern about some social problem (even when they are not working actively to solve the problem), but in any case this commitment is a positive trait because it represents a way of counteracting, though minimally, the prevailing consumerist and careless ideology of textbooks. The problems that the characters care about are those that generally affect the middle and upper classes, like insecurity or the negative effects of technology on children. However, some of the characters care about the problems that marginalised people face, such as unemployment.

The percentage of socially responsible characters increased slightly from 11% in the 1996 edition to 16% in 2008. However, this increase has to be evaluated in relation to the results for the other types of characters. If we consider that the number of aspirational characters is three times bigger than the number of socially responsible characters in each edition, it is clear that the values that are prioritized are not the educational ones that the CEFR suggests for language teaching.

Taking everything into account, the influence of the CEFR in the three types of characters analysed was not significant. On the contrary, the textbooks' selection of characters carries with it a powerful ideology which supports globalization and the neo-liberal doctrine associated with it, and this appears to be a tendency that is increasing instead of being reduced by the influence of the CEFR. The plethora of characters with glamorous jobs, eccentric lifestyles and cosmopolitan orientations highlights the huge capacity of neo-liberalism for wealth creation and serves to construct it as benign. In addition, the trivial and limited treatment of such serious topics as poverty, inequality, social exclusion and the exploitation of the world's natural resources reinforces the textbooks proselytizing mission on behalf of neoliberal globalization.

Different ideologies are different constructions of reality, and textbooks construct and impose their particular versions of reality. There are other equally valid versions of truth which consider that the problems of poverty, inequality, social exclusion and the exploitation of the world's natural resources are actually the effect of globalization and neo-liberalism, but in the textbooks they are represented as unconnected to this new world order, which is not surprising considering the textbooks' ideological stand.

Ideology works through constituting persons as social subjects, fixing them in subject positions, and this is precisely what authors do through their selection of characters. The preference for aspirational characters is justified by textbook publishers with the argument that they represent the lifestyle that students might aspire to and that therefore interests and motivates them in their language learning (Gray 2002). Clearly, authors and publishers fix students in the subject position of consumers. The main problem with giving students this identity is that, because aspirational characters belonging to an affluent social environment are the predominant type of characters, the only targeted readers are those learners who can reasonably aspire to have this lifestyle, but this ideology excludes those learners whose life circumstances and experiences are not those of the affluent social classes.

More attention needs to be paid to the array of social strata presented in foreign language textbooks and their relevance and appropriacy for the different contexts of use.

Textbook writers working for the global market cannot address these issues of relevance and appropriacy because it is virtually impossible for them to take into account all the social, geographic, and educational contexts of use. For authors to engage discourses that are relevant to the students' lives and social and political realities, they have to write for a more specific market. Therefore, the best solution would be in this case to produce textbooks locally, or, if this is not possible, to supplement global coursebooks in order to expand the range of social strata portrayed in them and present a more diverse selection of characters that includes the life circumstances and experiences of people who are less well-off.

One problem with this solution is that many language educators still believe that the pedagogies, textbooks and examinations produced in the UK are superior to those produced in our region. They refrain from using textbooks produced locally, which would be the easiest way to stop hegemonic practices that serve mainly the interests of international publishers rather than the educational needs of learners.

Considering this persistent belief in certain EFL circles, the present study argues for the importance of looking at ELT through an ideological lens and draws attention to the fact that the social and cultural contexts in which textbooks are negotiated are crucial factors to be taken into account. During their exposure to the foreign language in its cultural context, learners are socialized into a world view that, given its power, must be looked at critically. There are two paradigms which, in my view, can make important contributions in this respect: critical pedagogy (CP) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The introduction of these paradigms in language classes does not necessarily involve a change of teaching method. Actually, both perspectives can be used in conjunction with the intercultural approach because they are not intended as "alternative" but as "complementary" to other approaches.

Akbari (2008) makes some suggestions as to how teachers can transform their classes using CP. He proposes that teaching be based on the students' local culture and that classes include more of the students' real life concerns. Reliance on the learners' culture as the point of departure for language teaching will prevent, in his view, the development of the sense of inferiority which might result from a total reliance on the target culture. Supporters of CP also advocate for making learners aware of issues faced

by marginalized groups. While the CEFR aims at preparing for democratic citizenship and strengthening social responsibility, CP takes a step further and deals with questions of social justice and social change through education, so that there is more inclusion and representation of groups who are normally not considered in ELT discussions.

The other paradigm which I strongly believe should be incorporated into English language teaching is CDA. It can help learners reflect upon how texts contribute to particular representations of the world and whether these representations come into conflict with their own representations. This would be a positive and important contribution to ELT practices since usually the content of the texts used for teaching English is assumed to be unproblematic and the representation of the world that is presented there is taken as the only possible way to represent things. Cots (2006) introduces the main principles and notions of CDA and demonstrates in a very practical way how it can be implemented in foreign language teaching. In this way the EFL teacher's task can go beyond linguistic training and become a really educational undertaking, with the aim of helping learners develop their internal values and capacity to criticize the world (Cots, 2006).

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APPENDIX

Gold 1996 coursebook

UNIT 9   Too much of a good thing

Listening: an addict's story

1 You are going to hear an extract from a radio programme. Listen and answer the following questions.

1 What is Lawrence's problem?
2 Is he better now?

2 Now listen to the extract again and decide if the following statements are True or False.

1 The presenter at first doesn't think Lawrence is so different from anybody else.
2 Lawrence would only buy food, tapes, clothes or dolls' houses.
3 Lawrence found the experience of buying in this way very exciting.
4 Lawrence never received his bank statements.
5 The presenter is shocked by how serious Lawrence's problem became.
6 Lawrence believes his behaviour was a way of compensating for what he didn't get as a child.
7 Lawrence's wife left him.
8 Lawrence got professional help.
9 Marlene got a new job to try and pay some of the bills.
10 They sold a lot of the things that Lawrence had bought to help get money.

Gold 1996 Teacher's book

Listening: an addict's story p.94

1 Focus attention on the gist questions. Play the cassette once straight through and elicit the answers.

TAPESCRIPT

RP = radio presenter   L = Lawrence

RP: Now, Lawrence, you've described yourself as a 'shopaholic', haven't you?

L: Yes, well, in fact, we don't much like that term. We prefer to be called 'over-spenders'.

RP: But whatever you call it, it's a very common impulse, isn't it. I mean, we all have bad days and at the end of them think ... oh well, to heck with that, I'm off down to buy myself something to make myself feel better.

L: Oh agreed, but you don't do it 365 days a year. Erm ... and it's a case really of physically buying ten or twenty of everything.

RP: Ten or twenty of everything!?

L: ... to start with, and not even remember doing it.

RP: So, what sort of things are you buying by the dozen?

L: Anything. It can be ... err ... it can be food, it can be tapes, clothes. It can be dolls' houses. It can be anything.

RP: So, when you get home, I mean, do you enj-, do you get any fun out of twenty pairs of shoes or twenty CDs or whatever? Or did you yourself go away and hide them because you were ashamed of them? I mean did you enjoy it at all?

L: Well, at first, you enjoy the experience, err, you know, you get the famous 'buzz' ...

RP: So what happens when the bank statements arrive?

L: Oh, that's easy – erm, you hide them. You just pretend they're not there. They haven't arrived. They've just got lost in the post.

RP: So how bad did it get for you then?

L: Me? I went into about £30,000 of unpaid ...

RP: £30,000 worth of debt?

L: Yeah.

RP: And were you married?

L: Yes. I had a long suffering wife who could not understand what was going on until 1993 when she found a threatening letter from our bank.

RP: And have you ever really found out why you did it?

L: Oh yes, yes. In my case it was my childhood ... where I was constantly ... err ... doing without, and being envious and jealous of other kids. And then when I was fifteen, I discovered I could spend and my parents couldn't stop me. All you had to do was to sign on the dotted line.

RP: So, how did you manage to stop it then?

L: Well, it was quite simple really. When Marlene, my wife, found out, she said, either I had to see someone or she would leave. So I started seeing a hypnotherapist, which really helped, and Marlene became like my manager ... and together we started to sort things out.

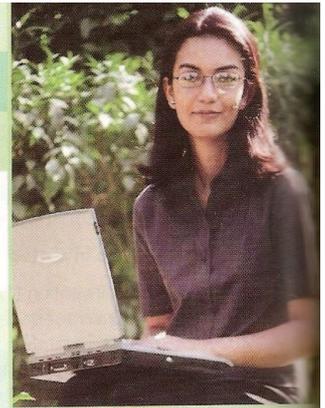**RP:** So, what did you do with all the stuff in the house?

L: Gave it away to charity. I gave away over 3000 records and tapes at one point and that was just the beginning ...

Gold 2008 coursebook

UNIT

8 We are family

Reading: multiple-choice questions (Part 1)

1 Look at the photos. What do you think the relationship between the people could be? Then read the title and subheading to check your ideas.

2 You are going to read an article. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

1 In Stanley Milgram's experiment, one hundred people had to
A exchange a parcel with someone else.
B pass on a parcel to someone they knew.
C find out who had sent them a parcel.
D send a parcel to six different people.

2 What does 'it' in line 17 refer to?
A the idea
B the parcel
C the Internet game
D the world

3 Why does the belief that it's a small world make us feel safer?
A It is an assumption shared by friends and strangers.
B It is supported by the work of scientists.
C It suggests we are connected to other people.
D It helps to create new friendships.

4 The writer chose to look for Purev-Ochir because
A he would be difficult to find.
B he had connections with the media.
C he was in a place where she had connections.
D he was recommended to her.

Steppe by steppe

Lucy Leveugle travelled round the world to put a theory to the test. Could she get in touch with this Mongolian herdsman by following a chain of just six different people?

What if everyone around the world was somehow connected to everyone else? There's a theory called *six degrees of separation* that says you can make contact with anyone in the world by following a chain of acquaintances. Someone you
5 know knows someone, who knows someone else, and so on – and in six of these steps, you can reach anyone.

This idea is based on an experiment carried out in 1967 by an American psychologist called Stanley Milgram. He sent parcels to 100 people in different states of the USA. Each person had
10 to try to get their parcel to someone else in another part of the country. However, the address of the person to whom the parcel was destined was not given – only their name and a few personal details. Milgram found that, on average, each parcel was passed on from one acquaintance to another just six times
15 before reaching its final destination.

Since then, the idea has taken off. There's a play, a film and even an Internet game based on it. Although the experiment has never been repeated on a large scientific scale, it has become commonplace to assume that it really is a small world.
20 And this makes us feel safer. After all, when you meet a friend of a friend, you tend to trust them more than you would a stranger – because you know that you have something in common: you are already linked together.

I decided to test out Milgram's theory on a world stage; to find
25 out how many steps it would really take to reach someone on the other side of the planet. I decided on Outer Mongolia for my target, because I had never met anyone from there. I advertised in Mongolian newspapers, asking for volunteers to be filmed in a documentary, and from the replies I chose
30 Purev-Ochir Gungaa, a nomadic herdsman in the middle of the Mongolian Steppes. I felt that if I could get to him, then I could get to anyone.
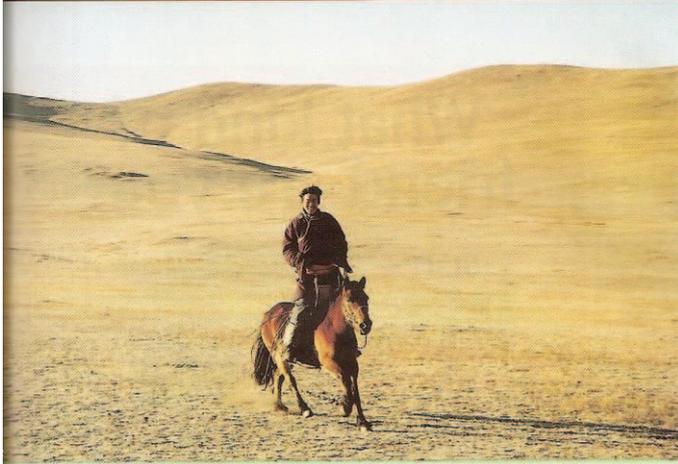
So my journey to reach him began. I set myself guidelines based on the original 60s experiment. I could only contact someone who I already knew on a first-name basis. That person had to pass me on to someone they knew personally, and so on. I wasn't allowed to use the Internet or any other public resource.

For my first step, I chose my school friend Francis, as I knew he had travelled in Russia. Francis passed me on to his sister, a magazine editor, who sent me to her environmentalist friend Rolf in Geneva. And then, unbelievably, Rolf was able to send me straight to someone he knew in Mongolia. I had reached Mongolia in four steps – so perhaps I really would make it to my herdsman in six.

I met my fourth link, a high-ranking civil servant, in Ulan Bator, the Mongolian capital. But language difficulties got in the way, and I began to think I wasn't going to achieve my goal in six steps – if at all. However, I went on trying, and was passed on to two more officials, then a businessman who lived several hundred miles away from Ulan Bator. I was getting close. My eighth step was Oyuntuya, who was a teacher in a tiny village – but more importantly, she was my herdsman's mother.

When I finally found Purev-Ochir I was amazed that it had not taken me much longer. The 24-year-old lived in a traditional tent in the middle of the desolate, empty Mongolian Steppes with his relatives and more than 600 horses, cows, sheep and goats. I was the first foreigner that he had met.

Our lives were totally different. While I am a real city girl, never without my mobile or my make-up, Purev-Ochir rode across Mongolia with his herd. But he wasn't particularly impressed by my arrival, and when I explained the theory he just laughed, and went back to looking after his animals.

Yet amazingly a chain of only eight different people connected Purev-Ochir and me. Although I didn't actually make it in six steps, my experience still shows that we can take shortcuts through large social networks and that it really is a small world.

Adapted from THE GUARDIAN

5 For her first step, the writer had to find someone who
A had a direct connection with Mongolia.
B was in Milgram's original experiment.
C was unavailable on the Internet.
D was already known to her.

6 The writer was afraid she would never find Purev-Ochir when
A she first met Rolf in Geneva.
B she met a government official in Mongolia.
C she saw Purev-Ochir's tent.
D she arrived in Ulan Bator.

7 When he first met the writer, Purev-Ochir was
A uninterested in her story.
B shocked by her appearance.
C unhappy about being filmed.
D annoyed by the problems she caused.

8 What does 'make it' mean in line 64?
A decide
B travel
C move
D succeed

3 Compare your answers with a partner. In which part of the text did you find each answer?

4 Who would you choose to look for in order to test this theory?

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