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'Representational Repertoires' of Neoliberal Ideologies in *Interchange (Third Edition)* Series

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Abstract

Considering the fact that engagement with political economy is central to any fully rounded analysis of language and language-related issues in the neoliberal-stricken world today, and that applied linguistics has ignored the role of political economy (Block, Gray, & Holborow, 2012), for the first time, this study investigated the representations of neoliberal ideologies in the Interchange Third Edition Series. To this end, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted based on Du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay, and Negus‟s (1997) model of „Cultural Circuit‟, especially their concept of „Representational Repertoires‟. Furthermore, Kress and Van Leeuwen‟s (1996) „visual grammar‟ was used for the analysis of the artwork. The results of the quantitative analysis revealed that more than 50% of the total number of units in each of the textbooks featured neoliberal-related content. Moreover, the results of the qualitative analysis confirmed Du Gay et al.‟s (1997) argument that textbooks are not only curriculum artifacts but also cultural artifacts or communicative acts which serve to make English mean in particular ways - in this case the hegemonic culture of neoliberalism. As a result, it is necessary for EFL/ESL teachers and students to collaboratively develop counter-hegemonic discourses through critical thinking and dialogic interrogations of neoliberal discourses.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, „Representational Repertoires‟, „Cultural Circuit‟

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1. Introduction

The tsunami of neoliberalism depicts the world as a vast supermarket in which the ideal citizen is the purchaser (Apple, 1999). The ideology behind this vision is presented as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade" (Harvey, 2005, p. 3).

However, this claim of neoliberalism has been criticized to be counter to what is practiced in reality. Harvey (2005) contends that neoliberalism functions to restore the power of economic elites by reestablishing the conditions for capital accumulation by dispossession. He argues that in the past 25 years, neoliberal dispossession has worked to reappropriate public wealth back into the private sector by implementing widespread privatization while championing the virtues of the „free" market. In fact, neoliberal practices have led to "an increasing gap in income and wealth between rich and poor, increasing economic insecurity and stress, and an intensification of the exploitation of labor" (Fairclough, 2010).

The adverse consequences of practicing neoliberalism and its free market have also been the growing destruction of societies as a result of their "environmental degradation, social alienation, and vast disparities of wealth leading to increased poverty and despair" (Chun, 2009, p. 112). These practices also violate basic human rights of societies, such as clean environments, publicly produced wealth to be shared by everyone, and freedom from want (Chun, 2009).

Unfortunately, globalism, as a crucial element of neoliberalism, pursues the strategic objective of spreading neo-liberal capitalism and neoliberal discourse to all areas of the world and in different spheres of social

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life, such as government, social welfare, healthcare, arts, and even education (Fairclough, 2010). Education has become a commodity that "can be considered economically akin to a consumer durable which has the peculiarity of being inseparable from its owner" (Gordon, 1991, p. 44). Textbooks, websites, and other educational materials utilized in schools and institutes function as a discursive space of neoliberal ideologies which are presented as naturalized and non-ideological common sense.

So far, a large number of critical and socio-cultural theorists have condemned the role of English language teaching in the process of globalization which they see as promoting western, capitalist, and materialistic values. Some of them like Tickoo (1995) view the development of the course book as a commodity to be consumed. He claims that textbook-writing in a multilingual and multicultural society satisfies different sets of criteria. Some of these criteria are concerned with a society‟s need to teach the values it wants to foster, and some others arise in the desire to make education at the service of economic progress and social reconstruction.

Toh (2001) also revealed how the content of course books reflected Western socio-cultural norms. Similarly, Singapore Wala (2003) analyzed course books used in Singapore and concluded that a course book is not merely a collection of linguistic items but a reflection of a particular worldview based on the selection of resources. In fact, she views the course book as a communicative act, „a dynamic artifact that contributes to and creates meaning together with other participants in the context of language teaching‟ (p. 59).

Holliday (2005) states that education has become commodified and students have become reshaped as consumers and learners. Bolitho (2008) claims that textbooks have gained iconic status like symbols. Mukundan (2009) also argues about the „declared agenda‟ of the classroom, where the teacher is orchestrated by the textbook writer to create an environment like a

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zoo where learners behave like animals in cages, performing planned tricks for the animal trainer.

Finally, Gray (2010) revealed how English has become a type of linguistic capital, which is capable of bringing a profit of distinction to those speakers with the ability to access it, especially its socially legitimated varieties. He argued that English has become an increasingly commodified dimension of labor-power. Gray focused on how the global course book is an artifact, a commodity which promotes socio-**economic** norms through its texts, activities, values and, especially, its illustrations.

The existing textbook evaluation schemes largely ignore issues of ideology. Rather, they are mainly a description and evaluation of utility. As van Dijk (2001) points out, the patterns of routine discourse (e.g. textbooks) shape our knowledge of the world, our shared social attitudes, our ideologies, and the main norms and values. Ideologies may even be disguised as religion, philosophy, popular culture and science. Textbook writers might say they're immune from ideological influence, but this is far from being true. No one is immune to ideological bias. Ideology criticism calls into question the objective or justified status. Indeed, the issues related to power, hegemony, identity, political ideology, gender and class differences are very effectively presented through discourse of the textbooks.

EFL textbooks depict an ideal society. Some representations in these instructional materials can be irritating for some users (Ballena & Shim, 2018). Thus, it is necessary for the EFL teachers to critically examine textbooks for the likely hidden agenda. Otherwise, they may unconsciously serve the ideology which possibly keeps learners in a lower position (Tajeddin & Teimournezhad, 2015). Nonetheless, most of existing textbook evaluation schemes ignore the issue of bias. Instead, they focus on physical, logistical and organizational characteristics, as well as planning, methodology, curricula and objectives aspects of the material (e.g., Cunningsworth, 1995). Other schemes (e,g., Tucker, 1975, Daoud and

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Celce-Murcia,1979, and William, 1983) are no exception. Tucker‟s checklist model of textbook evaluation encompasses internal criteria, namely pronunciation, grammar, and content, as well as external criteria such as authenticity of language, availability of supplementary materials, adequate guidance for non-native teachers, competence of the author, appropriate level for integration, durability, quality of editing and publishing, and price and value. Daoud and Celce-Murcia‟s criteria are Subject matter, vocabulary and structures, exercises, illustrations, and physical make-up. Williams‟s criteria were concerned with general considerations, speech, grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and technical issues. The first framework to pay attention to the issue of bias is Sheldon‟s analytical framework (1988), which included a section entitled cultural bias. Sheldon (1988) asked whether different and appropriate religious and social environments were catered for; whether the course book enshrined stereotyped, inaccurate, condescending or offensive images of gender, race, social class, or nationality; and whether accurate or „sanitized‟ views of the USA or Britain were presented; whether uncomfortable social realities (e.g. unemployment, poverty, family breakdowns, and racism) were left out. Adopting this framework, Najafi Sarem, Hamidi and Mahmoudie (2013) evaluated a textbook intended for tourist guides. They found the book to be culturally biased in a number of ways.

From among different global textbooks developed for English language learners, *Interchange Third Edition*, which is a fully revised edition of *New Interchange*, has become one of the world‟s most successful and popular series for adult and young adult English language learners. A study by Riasati and Zare (found *New Interchange* to be the most widely used course material taught across English teaching institutes in Iran. Drawing upon Du Gay et al.‟s (1997) theoretical model of „cultural circuit‟, and especially their concept of „Representation Repertoires‟, this study explores how the *Interchange Third Edition* textbooks function as a discursive place of neoliberalism and its ideologies.

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2. Theoretical Framework

Originating in the work of Friedrich von Hayek, Neoliberalism is in the first place a theory of political economic ideas proposing that an unfettered market economy is the only means of preserving „a free political order" and that „the whole conception of social or distributive justice" being pursued by many post-war social democratic European governments is the enemy of this version of freedom (Hayek 1978, p. 110).

Based on the neoliberal view, the role of government is primarily to guarantee and extend the reach of the market, resulting in the deregulation of financial markets, the privatization of state assets, and the marketization of areas of life which were previously seen as the preserve of the state (Doogan, 2009).

The promotion of these ideas in Britain and the US entailed a reconfiguration of the public sphere with implications both for language and the world of work (Fairclough, 2010). As a result, the rise in „customer care" culture, the associating communication skills training, and the imposition of stylized talk in the work place is evident (Cameron 2000; Bourdieu & Wacquant 2001). According to Cameron (2000), such changes have led to the important ideological function of establishing the market as the model for all interaction in the public sphere. Moreover, with respect to learning a foreign language, Heller (2003) argues that the new economy has resulted in the commodification of language, as languages are learned increasingly in terms of their perceived usefulness for employment (Tan and Rubdy, 2008).

As a result of these changes, world of work has become both highly insecure and stressful (Stuckler, King & Mckee, 2009). Moreover, Castells (2000) sees the emergence of two kinds of labor in this economy; i.e. „selfprogrammable" and „generic" labor. The first one is described as labor which is „equipped with the ability to retrain itself, and adjust to new tasks, new processes and new sources of information, as technology, demand and

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management speed up their rate of change" (p., 12). Bauman (2007) refers to such labor as having „zero drag," a term refers positively to the kind of employee who is able to switch jobs and countries with a minimum of effort. On the other hand, generic labor is exchangeable and disposable, and is treated the same as machines and with unskilled labor from around the world (Castells, 2000). According to Gray (2010), it is those in this second group who are most disadvantaged in the neoliberal economy.

From the perspective of neoliberalism, the reconfiguration of the world of work definitely requires a reconfiguration of the self as well (Gray, 2010). With regard to the reconfiguration of the self in neoliberalism, Peters (2008) argues that the way for individuals to survive in a neoliberal climate is effectively to „brand" themselves in order to stand out from the growing troops of generic labor. Bauman (2007) contends that just like commodities that are branded to give them a distinct market identity, individuals too need to promote themselves and make themselves more attractive and hence more marketable commodities.

Peters (2008) proposes six broad steps to become a „Brand You". First, there is the need to be distinct; i.e. individuals need to break out of the pack and show their individuality and uniqueness without any restriction if they are to be noticed. Second, individuals need to be committed; that is, they have to be prepared to put in the work that is necessary to create a brand identity. The third step is the need for passion. In fact, Peters (2008) points out that the individuals who are successfully branded, such as celebrities, are consistently passionate about the work they do. As the fourth step, he argues for the need to think and act strategically. He suggests that people who seek success can get to the top through being prepared to move sideways within an organization or even to move downwards, because this can be an opportunity to learn new skills which may be of use later on. Being prepared to relocate can also be considered as a strategic act. Fifth, he suggests that individuals should exercise choice and only do work that is

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„cool" and „fun". Finally, he warns his readers to begin branding themselves immediately if they wish to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

In this study, the essential characteristics of neoliberalism described above were categorized under two general headings for the purpose of analysis; that is, Work World Reconfiguration and Self Reconfiguration. The features which characterized the reconfiguration of the work world were *globalism, consumer culture, communication skill, commodification of language, insecure & stressful world of work, importance of celebrities,* and *self-programmable labor*. And the characteristics which identified „Brand You" and hence self-reconfiguration were *distinction, commitment, passion, thinking & acting strategically, exercising choice*, and *branding immediately.* (Table 1).

3. Analytical Framework

In this study, the approach to the analysis of the *Interchange Third Edition* has its roots in Du Gay et al."s (1997) model of „cultural circuit". Du Gay et al. (1997) argue that culture is an endlessly recursive process of meaning making and meaning taking. From this perspective, textbooks can be seen not simply as curriculum artifacts, but also as cultural artifacts or communicative acts which serve to make English mean in particular ways.

In their theoretical model, Du Gay et al. (1997) analyze five key moments in the life of a cultural artifact: representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation (Figure 1).

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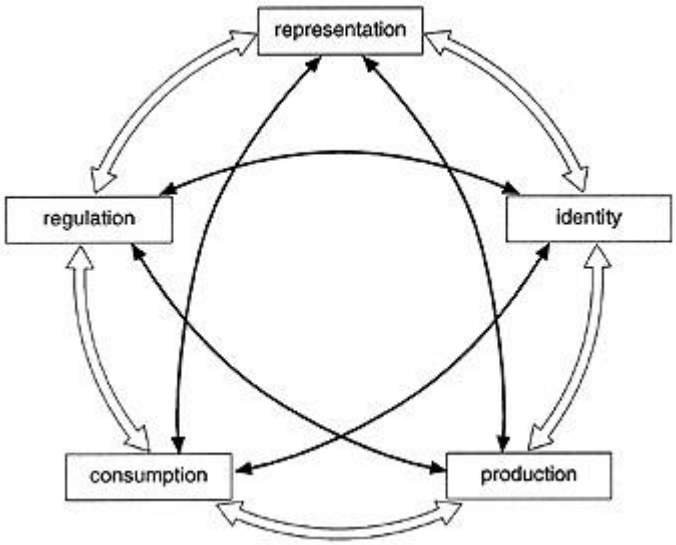

Figure 1: The Cultural Circuit

This study is concerned primarily with identifying Du Gay et al.‟s (1997) concept of „Representational Repertoires‟ related to the world of neoliberalism; that is, the stock of ideas, images, and linguistic choices which are repeatedly deployed in meaning creation, and the identifications that these try to create in readers. The authors argued that meaning is constructed through the representational practices employed in texts where a product is given a specific history and is repeatedly talked about in specific ways. They concluded that the visual and linguistic choices made in the production of promotional material constituted what they referred to as a „Representational Repertoires‟. In fact, a key feature in the identification of the representational repertoires is the analysis of the artwork. This is also important in the present study, given that the representational repertoires deployed in course books are constructed not only through language, but also through the use of photographs, line drawings, charts, font size, and font color as potential carriers of meaning. As a result, Kress and Van Leeuwen‟s (1996) visual grammar was used for the analysis of the artwork.

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Drawing upon Halliday"s (1994) theory, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) developed a theory of visual „grammar" to analyze the visually specific ways images realize three fundamental types of meaning; i.e. ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Ideational meaning refers to what an image represents or „says" about a given phenomenon. Here, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) make a distinction between narrative, analytical and classificational visual structures. The second type of meaning, that is interpersonal meaning, considers the way an image addresses its potential viewers or audience. Here, the authors make a distinction between images in which depicted characters appear to be looking directly at us and images lacking this direct gaze. The former category „demands" interaction, while the latter is an interpersonal „offer" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 119). The third type of meaning is concerned with the ways images make textual meaning, or work as compositions. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) describe such visual features as framing to make distinctions between elements, relative size and uses of color. In the present study, Kress and Van Leeuwen"s (1996) theory of visual grammar was utilized for the analysis of the artwork.

4. Objective of the study and research questions

As revealed in the introduction section, the existing course book evaluation schemes have largely ignored the issues of bias and ideology. Perhaps the only exception is this regard is Sheldon"s (1988) framework, which has dealt with the issue of bias. Nonetheless, this method has failed to address ideological issues. Ideological orientations are tacit. Thus, they must be detected with critical eyes. To address this gap, drawing upon Du Gay et al."s (1997) „cultural circuit" model, especially their concept of

„representational repertoires", this study was intended to analyze *the Interchange Third Edition* series in order to find representations of neoliberal ideologies disseminated through the textbooks. More specifically, the present investigation made an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does the *Interchange Third Edition* contain neoliberal ideologies?

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2. What are the representational repertoires through which neoliberal ideologies have been conveyed to the readers?

5. Method

5.1. Corpus of the study

The study corpus was the *Interchange Third Edition* textbooks, which are a fully revised edition of *New Interchange*. The textbooks are one of the world‟s most successful and popular English courses for young adults and adults. *Interchange Third Edition* is a multi-level course in English as a second or foreign language which covers the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as vocabulary and pronunciation. Particular emphasis is placed on listening and speaking. The authors contend that the primary goal of the course is to teach communicative competence; that is the ability to communicate in English according to the context, purpose, and roles of the participants. Also, the language used in the *Interchange Third Edition* is American English. Nevertheless, the course reflects the fact that English is the major language of international communication and is not limited to any one country, region, or culture (Richards, 2005).

5.2. Procedures

To find the extent to which the *Interchange Third Edition* contains neoliberal ideologies and values, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted. In the quantitative analysis, for each level, the number of units which used neoliberal representations for a skill-based or grammarbased activity was determined and the proportion was calculated in terms of percentage. In this way (following scholars such as Littlejohn 1992; Sercu 2000), the researcher was able to make quantitative statements about the extent of neoliberalism as a theme across each textbook. Inter-coder reliability, or agreement between the experts while coding the data, was used to ensure the consistency and precision of data analysis.

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In the qualitative analysis, a content analysis approach was adopted to identify the representational repertoires related to neoliberal ideologies and values. To this end, all the textbooks in the four levels were analyzed unit by unit and section by section based on the predetermined list of the characteristics of neoliberalism (Table 1) and Du Gay et al."s (1997) „Representational Repertoires". In this analysis, any idea, image, or linguistic choice which explicitly featured the neoliberal reconfiguration of the work world or the self-reconfiguration was coded and explained in detail. The features which characterized the reconfiguration of the work world were *globalism, consumer culture, communication skill, commodification of language, insecure & stressful world of work, importance of celebrities,* and *self-programmable labor*. And the characteristics which identified „Brand You" and hence self-reconfiguration were *distinction, commitment, passion, thinking & acting strategically, exercising choice,* and *branding immediately.* Furthermore, Kress and Van Leeuwen"s (1996) „visual grammar" was used to analyze the artworks.

6. Results and Discussion

As can be seen in Table 1, neoliberal ideologies and values feature in all the textbooks analyzed but vary slightly in terms of the actual numbers of units and the percentage of inclusion. The proportion of neoliberal-related content in each book is above 50%, with *Intro* and *Interchange 2* having the highest proportion (68.75%) and *Interchange1*, the lowest (56.25%). This means that more than 50% of the total number of units in each textbook includes neoliberal-related contents. Moreover, a closer look at the table reveals that two neoliberal ideologies are evident in all the level. These features are *importance of celebrities* from the first group of neoliberal characteristics (work world reconfiguration) and *distinction* from the second category (selfreconfiguration). As it will be shown below, the qualitative analysis of the textbooks suggests a focus on individualism, associated with a „Brand You" perspective and, in general, "a celebratory view of the world of work as a means to personal fulfillment" (Gray, 2010, p. 722). In an interesting comparison, Gray (2010) argues that in textbooks such as *Streamline*

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Connections (Hartley & Viney, 1979), which appeared as the neoliberal era was beginning to take shape, the world of work is often depicted negatively and textbook characters regularly complain about work. However, from the 1980s onwards the world of work is represented in a more positive light and characters recurrently display commitment, passion, and distinction in relation to their chosen careers in which they achieve increasingly impressive success (Gray, 2010). This positive view towards the world of work is represented pervasively in all the levels of the *Interchange Third Edition* through the introduction of a large number of celebrities (Table 2).

Table 1 also shows the category of work world reconfiguration, and *commitment* and *exercising choice* from self-reconfiguration group. Another interesting outcome of the quantitative analysis of the *Interchange Third Edition* – as it is also evident in Table 1 - is the fact that the books *Intro* and *Interchange 3* feature the largest number of neoliberal values and ideologies. If we do not consider this as something accidental, it can be justified regarding the fact that the materials that are learned in the first and last levels are usually more likely to be retained in students‟ mind than those delivered in the middle levels. We can think of the first level (*Intro*) as the best opportunity for inducing the maximum amount of neoliberal ideologies when the learners are at the starting point of learning English language and have the most eagerness and readiness for digesting any material delivered to them. In fact, at this stage when they are exposed to another language for the first time, whatever they receive stick in their mind. As for the *Interchange 3*, it is in fact the last book students need to study in this series. It is usually the case that the last words, phrases, sentences, or utterances in lists of words, speech, or lecture remain in mind longer than those which come between the introduction and the summation. As a result, the *Intro* and *Interchange 3* are loaded with as many neoliberal ideologies as possible for the purpose of more impact on the learners.

Table 1

Neoliberal ideologies in the Interchange Third Edition

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	Units Featuring Neoliberal Ideologies			
Neoliberal Ideologies	**Intro**	**Interchange 1**	**Interchange 2**	**Interchange 3**
Work World Reconfiguration				
globalism	Unit 5	Units 1, 3, 8	------	Unit 10
consumer culture	Unit 7, 16	Units 3, 9, 10	Unit 2, 5, 11	------
communication skill	------	------	Unit 9	Unit 2, 7, 9, 12, 13
commodification of language	16	------	-------	Unit 8
insecure & stressful world of work	Unit 6	------	-------	Unit 2
importance of celebrities	Unit 3, 4, 10, 15	Units 2, 4, 5	Unit 1, 4, 9, 12, 13	Unit 10, 14, 16
self-programmable labour	------	------	Unit 10	Unit 2, 9
Self Reconfigeration				
Brand You				
- distinction	Units 1, 3, 15	Units 1, 16 ------ ------	Units 3, 9	Unit 1, 14, 16
- commitment	Unit 8, 15	Unit 16	Unit 3, 10, 16	Unit 14
- passion	Unit 8, 15		------	
- thinking & acting strategically	-----	------ ------	------	Unit 1, 12
- exercising choice	Unit 8, 14, 15 ----		Unit 9	Unit 2
- branding immediately	--		------	------

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Total number of units in each book	16	16	16	16
Number of units featuring neoliberal ideologies	11	9	11	10
Proportion of neoliberal-related content in percentage	68.75 %	56.25 %	68.75 %	62.5 %

The results of the qualitative analysis revealed a large amount of neoliberalrelated content in the *Interchange Third Edition* However, here in this section the most representative ones will be explained.

In a conversation, entitled „Catching up", in unit 16 of *Interchange 1*, two friends, Diane and Kerry, have met each other after a long time. Kerry

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has changed to a large extent, as Diane describes her. Kerry has graduated, got a job at Midstate Bank, cut her hair, worn contacts, lost weight, and got engaged. Utilizing a multimodal representation, that is, text and image, the conversation depicts Kerry‟s changes in a highly positive light, implying Kerry‟s distinction among her peers. In fact, this mode of representation wants to illustrate Kerry as a successful girl in the society by describing her with those particular characteristics which have branded her among other girls. As the title of the conversation, „Catching up‟, implies, Kerry has branded herself immediately to succeed in a rapidly changing world. Here Kerry is an obvious example of „zero drag‟ individuals; that is, the way Kerry is described in the conversation, simply induces the reader the neoliberal ideology that if you want to catch up this changing world and be successful at the same time, you need to change yourself rapidly in the same way that Kerry has.

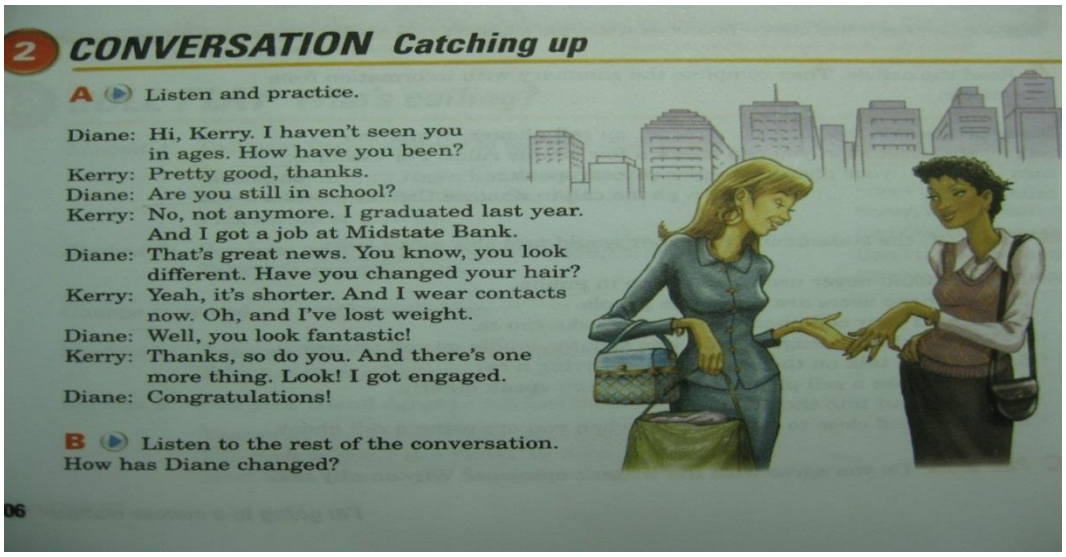

Figure 2: Catching up

Furthermore, the accompanying artwork is designed so as to elicit a positive emotional response in the viewer (Figure 2). In fact, the way Kerry is showing

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off her engagement ring and the way Diane is looking at the ring with envy can provoke this feeling. The „tilted body position" of Diane and Kerry in the image has created an interpersonal „offer" (Kress & van Leewuen, 1996), which draws the attention of the viewers to what is happening between the two characters. This is exactly what in multimodal terms is referred to as „sensory orientation" (Kress and van Leewuen 1996), whereby the image is softened, colored or otherwise manipulated to enhance its impact or its attractiveness to the viewer. This becomes more obvious if one looks at the title of the whole unit, „A change for the better" implying that Kerry has changed herself to become a better person, and the message for the readers is that if they want to become a „better" person, the changes they are going to make in themselves should be of this type, like those that Kerry has made.

The books also contain a large number of texts demonstrating the necessity of one"s commitment and passion towards their job. In the *Intro*, in a reading comprehension passage, under the title of „Job Profiles", a famous actress, Lisa Parker, is depicted through her photograph in one of her auditions. Lisa has two jobs; during the day, she is an actress, and at night she works as a waitress. In the last part of this passage, it says, "Her schedule is difficult, and she"s tired a lot. But she"s following her dream" (p. 55). In fact, this character, her job and her lifestyle is positively evaluated by the authorial voice of the text (Peters, 2008). The passage implies that the successfully branded individuals, such as Lisa Parker, are consistently passionate about the work they do, no matter how difficult the job is. In fact,

Lisa Parker is shown as a member of a „choiceoisie" - that is "a member of a group whose lifestyle choices are largely unaffected by personal, financial or social constraints of any kind" (Gray, 2010, p. 725). Bauman (2005) argues that it is the freedom to exercise choice within consumer society which indexes social status, and in such a society, characterized by the „aestheticization" of ever more aspects of human activity and experience, work too is increasingly evaluated in terms of its glamour, sensation or fulfillment potential. In fact, it is precisely this kind of work which is celebrated repeatedly in the *Interchange Third Edition.*

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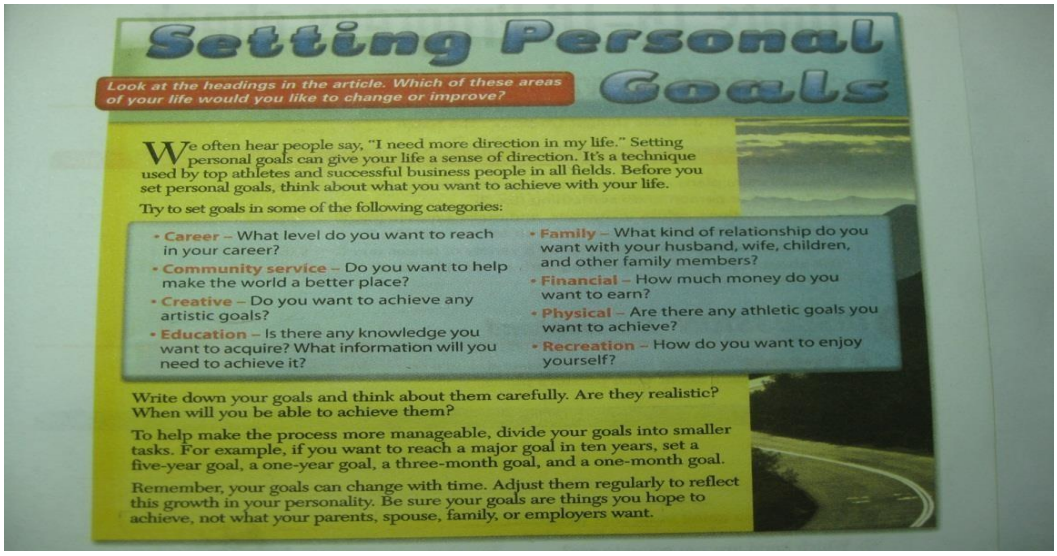
Texts encouraging the neoliberal ideology of self-programmable individuals are also abundant in all the textbooks. For example, in *Interchange 1*, in a reading entitled „Setting Personal Goals", the author first presents the advantages of having goals in life, and then introduces some strategies for achieving the goals in a variety of life aspects, like career, community service, education, family, etc. In the last paragraph, the author very emphatically gives some pieces of advice regarding goals by using words and phrases like „Remember", „Be sure" to draw the readers" attention to what is going to be stated:

> Remember, your goals can change with time. Adjust them regularly to reflect their growth in your personality. Be sure your goals are things you hope to achieve, not what your parents, spouse, family, or employees want. (p. 111)



Setting Personal Goals

Look at the headings in the article. Which of these areas of your life would you like to change or improve?

We often hear people say, "I need more direction in my life." Setting personal goals can give your life a sense of direction. It's a technique used by top athletes and successful business people in all fields. Before you set personal goals, think about what you want to achieve with your life.

Try to set goals in some of the following categories:

- **Career** – What level do you want to reach in your career?
- **Community service** – Do you want to help make the world a better place?
- **Creative** – Do you want to achieve any artistic goals?
- **Education** – Is there any knowledge you want to acquire? What information will you need to achieve it?
- **Family** – What kind of relationship do you want with your husband, wife, children, and other family members?
- **Financial** – How much money do you want to earn?
- **Physical** – Are there any athletic goals you want to achieve?
- **Recreation** – How do you want to enjoy yourself?

Write down your goals and think about them carefully. Are they realistic? When will you be able to achieve them?

To help make the process more manageable, divide your goals into smaller tasks. For example, if you want to reach a major goal in ten years, set a five-year goal, a one-year goal, a three-month goal, and a one-month goal.

Remember, your goals can change with time. Adjust them regularly to reflect this growth in your personality. Be sure your goals are things you hope to achieve, not what your parents, spouse, family, or employers want.

Figure 3: Setting Personal Goals

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Changing one‟s goal with time can be an indication of a changing person who needs to adjust him/herself regularly to new conditions. Such a person is the very „zero drag‟ or „self-programmable‟ individual (Bauman, 2007) who is consistently promoted in neoliberal texts. Furthermore, in the last sentence, the fact that "goals are things that you hope to achieve" and not what other people want, strongly suggests the individual choice ideology in neoliberalism which encourages the pursuit of happiness or personal autonomy. This sense of happiness and independence is more accentuated by the image in the background which depicts an empty road moving toward high mountains scraping the beautiful sky, inducing in the readers the sense of being alone in this road of goal setting which can move them toward the zenith of success (Figure 3).

Textbook characters do on occasion lose their jobs due to lack of the ability to think and act strategically which suggests the instability and stressfulness of life in the neoliberal climate. So, For example, in a reading text in *Interchange 3*, Bob Congers lost his job after working for six years at a company. As the text profiles him, "he hadn‟t done anything wrong. On the contrary, he was a good worker" (p. 13). Stating the fact that "workforce cutbacks are common in today‟s economy" (p. 13), the passage describes Bob‟s failure as his inability to distinguish himself in the workplace due to lack of a set of strategies. One of these strategies proposes that "being a good worker is sometimes less important than making sure that people know you are a good worker. Volunteer for new responsibilities, push your ideas, and make sure everyone knows you" (p. 13).

This is exactly in line with the neoliberal ideology of „Brand You‟ which demands individuals to make themselves distinct; that is, individuals need to break out of the pack and show their individuality and uniqueness without any restriction if they are to be noticed. (Peters, 2008). According to Schroeder (2000), in a world which is increasingly organized around attention, branding becomes necessary if someone or something is to be noticed.

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Another strategy which is proposed within the reading passage is to "make sure you know about changes and new directions in the company. If you find out that sales are becoming the most important department, try making a move to sales" (ibid). This strategy is exactly representing the „zero drag" or „self-programmable" individuals who should be able to adjust themselves in changing conditions. In the neoliberal world of work, employees should be prepared to relocate whenever necessary (Peter, 2008).

The next strategy recommended by the passage is "having a good attitude". The author states that "people who find things to complain about are a lot less popular than people who find things to praise" (ibid). This strategy is in line with the neoliberal ideology of making oneself attractive and likable to be more accepted. In fact, throughout these representations of the world of work there is a clear ideology of individualism in operation.

"Having good ideas isn"t always enough. You need to be able to communicate them. Find ways to improve your speaking and writing skills." (ibid) This strategy emphasizes the communication skill of "emotional intelligence" (Cameron, 2002) which is now presented as an integral part of an individual"s success in the workplace. According to Goleman (1998), a lack of this quality is considered as a type of personal flaw which can explain why employees may fail to keep their jobs. Chun (2009) argues that "this discourse of blaming the individual [for lack of communication skills] has the effect of sweeping away other, more untidy reasons, such as structural or systemic downsizing to increase profit margins and maintain stock prices" (p. 113). In fact, emotional intelligence or EQ as a form of communication skills is one of the outstanding discursive practices of neoliberalism and the most significant factor in career advancement and job performance. As Cameron (2002) states, the neoliberal discursive practice of developing uniform communication skills in the global marketplace has the effect of making "every language into a vehicle for the affirmation of similar values and beliefs,

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and for the enactment by speakers of similar social identities and roles" (pp. 69-70), which as she contends, resembles the preferred speech styles of mainly white educated middle-class Americans. From the perspective of these discursive practices, Cameron (2002) suggests that English language teaching now may not be so much an agent in fostering linguistic imperialism as it is a delivery system of specific interactional norms and speech styles that are privileged across languages in ways that facilitate the processes of the global economy. This is exactly what is evident in the above reading passage about Bob Congers.

The passage also suggests that "you can make a positive impact on your boss by arriving early and working late" (ibid). This strategy indicates the neoliberal ideology of commitment to hard work which is delivered through the authorial voice of the text. Finally, the last paragraph summarizes all the strategies in one basic strategy; that is "make yourself so valuable that the company won‟t want to lose you" (ibid). This reading passage is the best example of how the neoliberal capitalism world of work becomes both highly insecure and stressful for employees due to the fact that it is not important how well you work unless you are able to show that. One consequence of such ideology is that besides good working, employees should put lots of time and energy into striving to make themselves recognized, otherwise not only doesn‟t anybody bother appraising their hard work but also they should expect to lose their jobs as well. As a result, all the time employees are worried and anxious about not being approved by their boss or the company they are working for.

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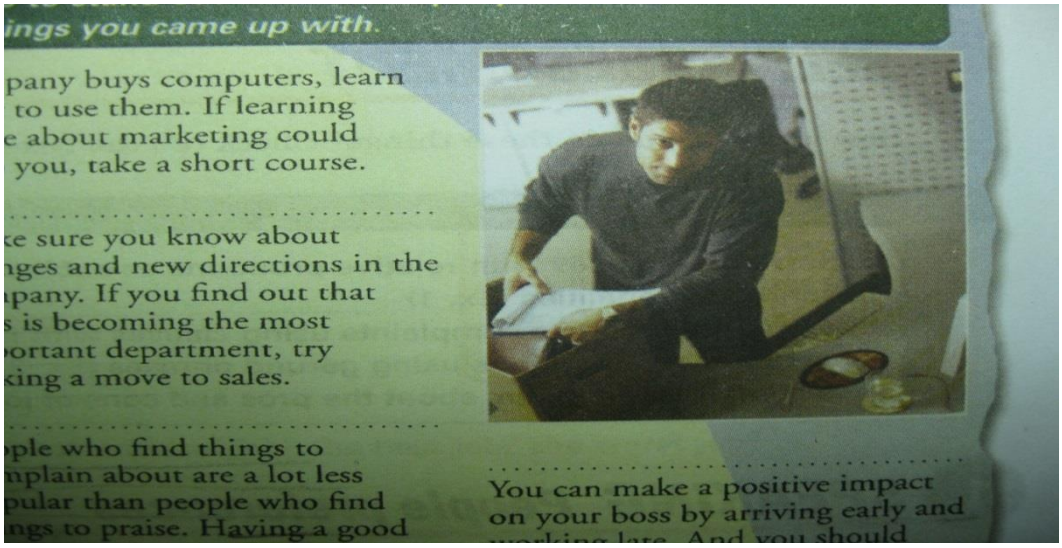

Figure 4: Bob Congers

Also the photograph in the top corner of the passage depicts Bob who seems to be packing all his stuff to move from his workplace as a result of losing his job (Figure 4). However, the interesting fact is that Bob is not sad in this photograph. On the contrary, there is a mild smile on his face suggesting the fact that he considers losing his job as a "common [event] in today"s economy" (ibid), the phrase that the author has used in the beginning of the passage. In fact, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen"s (1996) „visual grammar", the direct gaze of the man in this photograph suggests a form of interpersonal meaning which „demands" attention from the viewers. In this way, as Fairclough (2010) argues, ideologies are represented as naturalized common sense which leads to the unconscious acceptance of the ideology on the part of the readers.

The increasing importance of celebrity is another theme related to neoliberalism which is the most pervasive of all in the *Interchange Third Edition*, as it was revealed in the quantitative analysis. As Table 2 illustrates, the number of celebrities is the highest in the *Intro*, which is the first book the students need to study as the starting point. In this way, the *Interchange Third*

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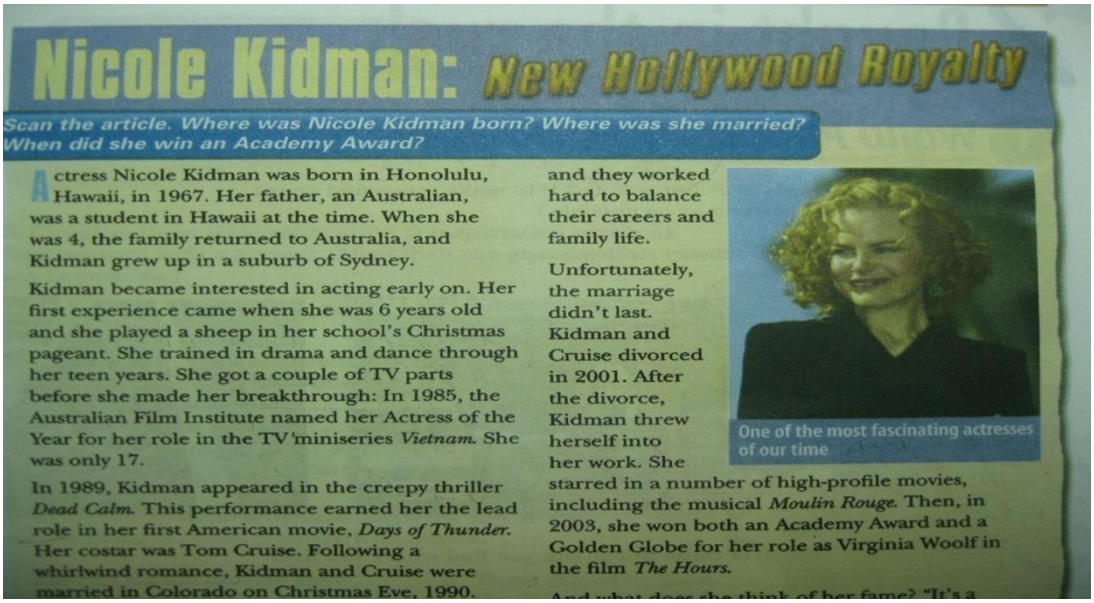
Edition has tried to attract the most attention to the world of celebrities from the very beginning. Teenagers, who make the vast majority of the language learners in language institutes, are really interested in the celebrities‟ personal lives and life styles. As a result, they are considered as the best tools for attracting the students‟ attention to the „Brand You‟ in consumer culture. As Althusser (1971) argues, the world of work is excessively seen as a privileged means for the full and intense realization of the self along with personal choice. In fact, in the majority of these materials, the world of work and indeed the world in general are seen in highly idealized and aestheticized terms.



Nicole Kidman: New Hollywood Royalty

Scan the article. Where was Nicole Kidman born? Where was she married? When did she win an Academy Award?

Actress Nicole Kidman was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1967. Her father, an Australian, was a student in Hawaii at the time. When she was 4, the family returned to Australia, and Kidman grew up in a suburb of Sydney.

Kidman became interested in acting early on. Her first experience came when she was 6 years old and she played a sheep in her school's Christmas pageant. She trained in drama and dance through her teen years. She got a couple of TV parts before she made her breakthrough: In 1985, the Australian Film Institute named her Actress of the Year for her role in the TV miniseries *Vietnam*. She was only 17.

In 1989, Kidman appeared in the creepy thriller *Dead Calm*. This performance earned her the lead role in her first American movie, *Days of Thunder*. Her costar was Tom Cruise. Following a whirlwind romance, Kidman and Cruise were married in Colorado on Christmas Eve, 1990.

and they worked hard to balance their careers and family life.

Unfortunately, the marriage didn't last. Kidman and Cruise divorced in 2001. After the divorce, Kidman threw herself into her work. She starred in a number of high-profile movies, including the musical *Moulin Rouge*. Then, in 2003, she won both an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for her role as Virginia Woolf in the film *The Hours*.

One of the most fascinating actresses of our time

Figure 5: Nicole Kidman

In a reading passage in *Interchange 2*, the professional profile of Nicole Kidman, the famous Hollywood actress, has been presented under the title "Nicole Kidman: New Hollywood Royalty" (p. 7). The gold color of the title, which is written in a diagonal line, and the photograph of this beautiful and happy actress in the corner of the text have made the passage quite attractive

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for the readers (Figure 5). Furthermore, the caption under the photograph reads "One of the most fascinating actresses of our time" (ibid).

The passage tells the celebrity‟s professional story and how she has gained success in her professional life. As in other texts about the world of work, hard work has been presented here as the crucial element of her success in her profession. The last paragraph of the text brings a quotation from Nicole Kidman which shows her opinion towards „fame‟. She says, "It‟s a fleeting moment …How long it will last? Who knows? But it‟s here and it‟s now" (ibid).

In fact, celebrity is the most recognizable type of branded individual in consumer culture (Cameron, 2002). The neoliberal period is characterized by an increase in the number of celebrities. One reason, according to Gray (2010), may be the fact that celebrity is increasingly associated with a variety of jobs, such as celebrity chefs, celebrity historians, celebrity doctors, celebrity entrepreneurs, etc.

With respect to the importance of celebrities in neoliberalism, it is also interesting to note that in many cases those who are distinct are also women; a feature which reflects the profound impact of feminism on the *Interchange* textbooks. This is exactly in line with Sahragard and Davatgarzadeh‟s (2010) investigation of the linguistic representation of male and female social actors and construction of gender identities in the *Interchange Third Edition.* They found that females were presented as more prominent, successful, active, independent, expressive and assertive in comparison with males.

Table 2

Celebrities presented in the Interchange Third Edition

Books	**Celebrities**

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Intro	Thalia, Charlize Therone, Hideo Nomo, Celine Dion, Tiger woods, Sandra Cisneros, Tom Cruise, Issey Miyake, Shakira, Chow Yun Fat, Salma Hayek, Ronaldo, Michelle Yeoh, Apolo Ohno, Gisele Bundchen, Gael Garcia Bernal, Ricky Martin, Bjork, Renee Zellweger, Adam Sandler, Halle Berry, Penelope Cruz, Reese Witherspoon, Will Smith, Jennifer Lopez, Keanu Reeves, Jackie Chan, Denzel Washington, Antonio Banderas, Cameron Diaz, Nicole Kidman, Marc Anthony
Interchange 1	Eminem, Celine Dion, Yo-Yo Ma, Jet Li, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Michael Douglas, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Enrique Iglesias, Julio Iglesias, Francis Ford Coppola, Nicholas Cage, Annette Bening, Shirley MacLaine
Interchange 2	Nicole Kidman, Elvis Presley, Tom Cruise, Madonna, Michael Jordan, Bill Gates, the Beatles, Jane Austen, Steven Spilberg, George Bizet, Gustav Klimt,
Interchange 3	Jimmy Carter, Suketu Mehta, Diana Spencer, Jose Cruz, Kristina Ivanova, Se Ri Pak, Albert Einstein, Marilyn Monroe, Michelangelo,

On the one hand, the books give credit to the jobs of celebrities by providing the readers with texts that describe celebrities as the most successful individuals in life, and on the other hand, in some other parts of the books, other jobs are belittled and humiliated seriously. For example, in the „snapshot" section of the second unit in *Interchange 1*, new job-related vocabularies are introduced under the title of „The Six Worst Jobs in the United States", with the word „Worst" in red and with all of its letters in

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capital (Figure 6). The word is also written diagonally to attract more attention.

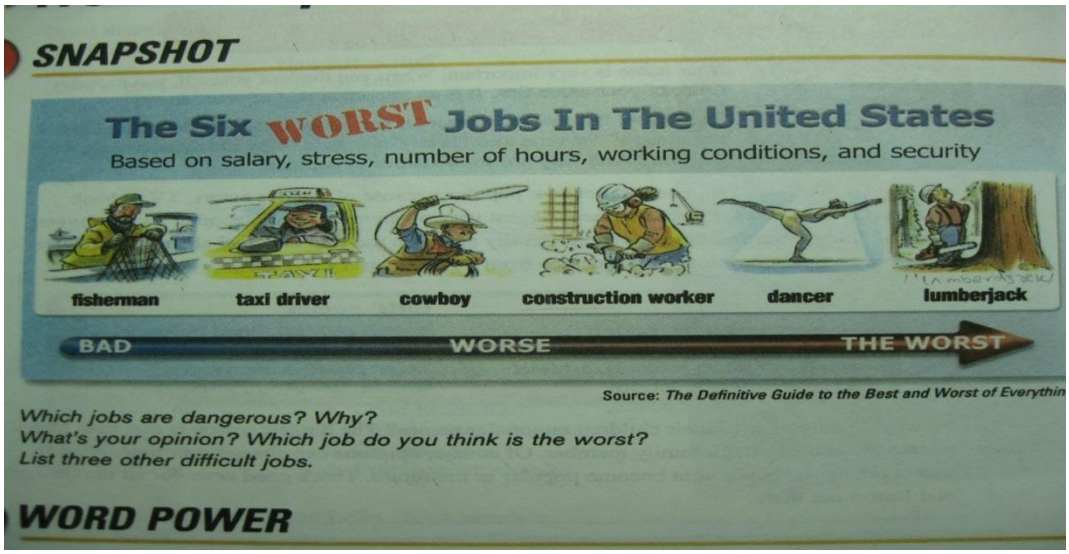

Figure 6: The Six Worst Jobs

Besides the pervasive representation of celebrities as an important factor of the consumer culture, this culture is also depicted in other ways throughout the *Interchange* textbooks. One clear example is a reading text about the world‟s online marketplace – eBay. This passage which disseminates ideologies concerning globalism as well, encourages the readers for online shopping, using the following authorial voice of the text,

> Do you like shopping online? Do you like finding a bargain or a good buy? Then eBay is for you. eBay is the World‟s Online Marketplace. It‟s a place to buy and sell almost anything. With over 18 million members, eBay is more popular than any other shopping site on the Internet. (p. 21)

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After explaining to the readers how eBay works, in the last paragraph, the author, very deterministically, states that eBay is a part of life and will continue to be so.

> Whether you like it or not, eBay is here to stay. There are now eBay users in the United States, Europe, Latin America, China, and many other countries. Soon people may be able to shop on eBay anywhere in the world. (ibid)

In this last paragraph, in addition to the neoliberal ideology of consumer culture, another crucial element of neoliberalism is evident, and that is globalism. Here the world is characterized by a network of connections through eBay and the entire world is viewed as a proper sphere for one nation to project neoliberal influences, such as a consumer culture. The ideology of a consumer culture is prevalent throughout the whole book. In fact, the book has commodified the language to present the whole world as a vast market for the readers to come and pay as much money as they can for shopping, going to restaurants, and travelling to the most popular places in the world. Sometimes a unit of the *Interchange* books becomes like an advertisement page of a newspaper, magazine, or website for attracting readers or tourists from all over the world to the most exciting places in the world.

The term "discursive practice/s" describes those practices of knowledge formation by focusing on how specific knowledges ("discourses") operate and the work (Flairclough, 1992). It serves to reproduce and transform, socially structured resources, values, and ideologies (van Djik,2001). For example, Edward Saeed in his book *Orientalism* (1978) famously showed how the discursive practices of 'othering' plays a role in the construction of national identities by a particular group of people. There are a number of frameworks to analyze discursive practice/practices. Fairclough‟s (2010) model of discursive analysis encompasses three components, namely a-force of utterances, b- coherence of texts, and c- intert-disursivity of texts.

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The passage selected for discursive analysis is entitled "The Global Village" describes the world in terms of a village where "everyone knows everyone and where people face the same types of problems" (p. 69). The text continues that "the political and technological changes of the last century have made the global village possible" (ibid). Finally, in the last paragraph, the author confidently states that "the development of the global village will almost certainly continue in the future. Not only is this likely, but the challenges the world faces - for example, conflicts between peoples, pollution and population growth - will make it necessary" (ibid.).

In terms of the force of utterances, this article does not seek any form of appraisal or criticism from the reader. There is not even a single question. All the sentences are declarative. Instead, the author speaks with the highest degree of certainty. In terms of coherence, this article is extremely coherent to the extent that we interpret it as a feature story. Fairclough (2010) believes that coherence should be considered as a property of interpretations rather than a property of text. In terms of interdiscursivity/intertextuality, the article is inter-textual in nature as it draws upon several other discourses, namely history (e.g. World War II, United Nations), technology, and science. The article is also inter-discursive in that it is a typical example of blending narrative with opinion. To hide opinion, the author uses a formal tenor, with many specialist terms. The tone is authoritative, as if it were simply conveying undisputable facts.

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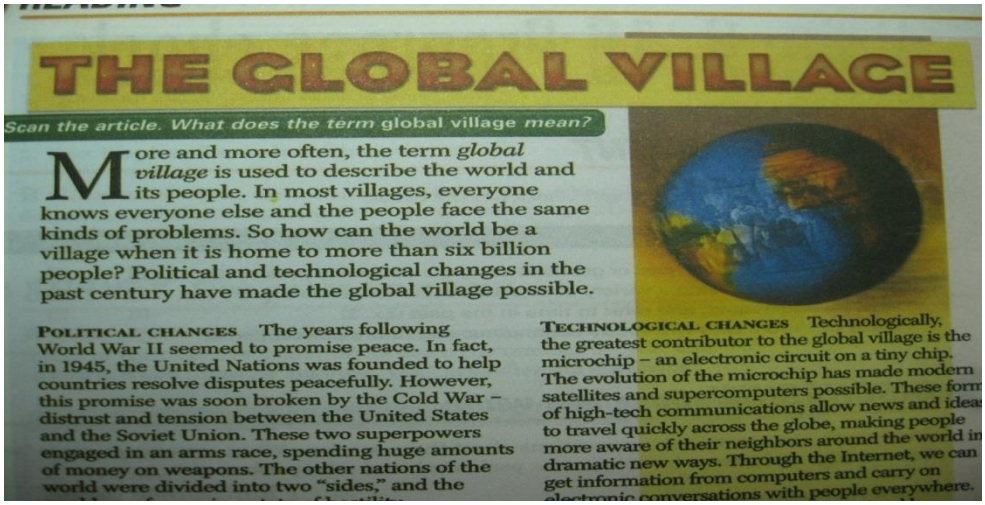

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Scan the article. What does the term global village mean?

More and more often, the term *global village* is used to describe the world and its people. In most villages, everyone knows everyone else and the people face the same kinds of problems. So how can the world be a village when it is home to more than six billion people? Political and technological changes in the past century have made the global village possible.

POLITICAL CHANGES The years following World War II seemed to promise peace. In fact, in 1945, the United Nations was founded to help countries resolve disputes peacefully. However, this promise was soon broken by the Cold War – distrust and tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. These two superpowers engaged in an arms race, spending huge amounts of money on weapons. The other nations of the world were divided into two "sides," and the

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES Technologically, the greatest contributor to the global village is the microchip – an electronic circuit on a tiny chip. The evolution of the microchip has made modern satellites and supercomputers possible. These form of high-tech communications allow news and idea to travel quickly across the globe, making people more aware of their neighbors around the world in dramatic new ways. Through the Internet, we can get information from computers and carry on

Figure 7: The Global Village

Finally, the title of the passage which is written in red capital letters draws more attention towards the topic of the reading (Figure 7). In fact, the font size and the color have been utilized to convey what Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) term as „textual meaning."

As the analyses of the *Interchange Third Edition* reveal, neoliberalism has become „hegemonic as mode of discourse" (Harvey, 2005, p. 3). Harvey argues that neoliberalism has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the extent that it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world. According to Fairclough (2010), neoliberalism and the values associated with it have become naturalized in many spheres, particularly in commercial ELT as a lucrative global service industry. The readers find an abrupt end with little in-depth discussion of the findings.

In short, neoliberalism has brought fundamental changes to education. Through the privatization of public services and the capitalization and commodification of humanity, neoliberalism has resulted in the creation of competitive markets in public services such as education. The result included

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a loss of equity, economic and social justice; loss of democracy and democratic accountability; and loss of critical thinking. Education now serves the capitalist economy, helps to reproduce the social, political, ideological and economic conditions necessary for capitalism. Therefore, it reflects and reproduces the organic inequalities of capitalism stemming from relations of production (See Gray, 2010).

7. Conclusion and implications

In conclusion, the neoliberal ideologies articulated in the *Interchange Third Edition* can be questioned through counter-hegemonic discourses by constructing social and cultural interconnections between teachers and students in the EFL/ESL classroom. Further, critical teaching also allows teachers and students who may feel silenced or frustrated by certain content to begin constructing counter-hegemonic discourses. In fact, it is believed that dialogic interrogations in the classrooms with students can facilitate their interpretations and contestations of the neoliberal ideologies, as part of a collaborative critical response to these ideologies and practices. Critical thinking in EFL/ESL classrooms can help students to analyze textbook discourses to increase their engagement not only in academic life but also their social life. As a matter of fact, drawing upon critical approaches toward texts and discourses can enable EFL/ESL instructors and students to co-construct discourses that problematize identities of ideal citizens as consumers and commodities in the neoliberal era.

EFL material developers have the responsibility to unmask bias and hidden ideologies. They are also responsible for developing their own cultural awareness as well as that of their pupils. As Tomlinson (2012) suggest EFL teachers and ELT material developers ought to protect their pupils and help them to resist the commodity they are asked to consume.

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