

## **Race and Social Class in Moroccan ELT Textbooks**

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper investigates the representation of race and social class in three second year Baccalaureate ELT textbooks currently used in Moroccan public high school. The study hopes to draw the attention of teachers, textbook designers and educational policy makers to the viability of textbook evaluation in improving the quality of Moroccan ELT textbooks. It aims to identify the extent to which Gateway to English 2, Insights into English 2 and Tickets to English 2 provide an authentic representation of race and social class through examining the frequency of appearance of, the visibility of, the space allotted to and the firstness of characters belonging to different races and social classes in texts, dialogues, images and exercises. The study is informed by the theoretical framework of the Standards-Based Approach and adopts content analysis as a mixed research methods that allows for quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data. The findings reveal an undisputable discrepancy marked by the dominance of the Caucasian race and the marginalization of the lower class. Finally, this paper suggests practical ways in which future textbooks could avoid or at least reduce the effect of these discrepancies.*

**Key words:** *textbook evaluation, race, social class*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The practice of textbook evaluation remains at the heart of the teaching learning experience. It allows teachers, administrators, school inspectors and educational policy makers to assess, select, modify and/or replace the textbooks that they are actually using for the purpose of improving the quality of the teaching learning process. Richards (2001) reckons that textbooks will undoubtedly remain central to language teaching context despite the technological advances not only because they provide resources for both learners and teachers, but also because they serve to mold the official guidelines into concrete texts, exercises, illustrations and practice activities. However, many researchers (Cunningsworth, 1995;; Litz, 2005; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Jibreel 2015; McDonough & Shaw, 2003) maintain that textbooks are to a great extent susceptible of containing problems related not only to cultural, linguistic and pedagogical issues, but also to social issues concerning the representation of gender, race, age, social class and disability. These researchers point out that these weaknesses, though not inherent in textbooks, can affect learners' attitudes towards their immediate environments and their attitudes towards the teaching learning process as well. Therefore, the content of textbooks must be continuously assessed in order to examine the extent to which this content agrees with learners' needs and interests on the one hand, and with the objectives of the curriculum on the other.

Textbook evaluation has been neglected in the Moroccan context. As an integral part of teachers' teaching learning experience, it is observed that textbook evaluation has been neglected in both pre-service and in-service teacher training programs. Furthermore, few academic studies could be identified though most of them revolve around gender issues (Benattabou 2010; Agnaou, 2004), cultural issues (Ait Bouzid and Tamer, 2012) and pedagogical issues (Laabidi, 2014). This study intervenes to fill a gap in the literature by exploring the representation of race and social class in Moroccan ELT textbooks which has not been sufficiently examined in the Moroccan context, yet.

This paper responds to this particular call as it investigates the representation of, race and social class in three English language teaching textbooks that are currently used in second year baccalaureate level in Moroccan public schools. It aims to examine the extent to which these textbooks represent social factors of race and social class in a way that is congruent with the social and cultural realities of the average Moroccan learners. The investigation is based on four main criteria regarding (1) the frequency of appearance of names of characters belonging to different races and social classes,(2) the visibility of these characters in pictures and images, (3) the space they were allotted in dialogues, conversations and texts, and (4) the their firstness in dialogues, conversations, texts and exercises.

The present work is informed by the theoretical framework of the standards-based approach currently underlying the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in Morocco (Ministry of National Education, 2007; Cisar, 2000). It draws the

attention of teachers, supervisors, administrators and educational policy makers to the viability of textbook evaluation as a reflective practice that has the potential to improve the content of ELT textbooks as well as boost the quality of the teaching-learning outcomes while contributing to gearing teachers' professional development. This paper also provides insights for textbook designers as it identifies the strengths and weaknesses of current textbooks and suggests practical ways in which these problems could be avoided in future textbooks. Two main questions guided the study, they are:

- a) To what extent do Moroccan ELT textbooks provide an authentic representation of race and social class in terms of frequency of appearance, visibility, space and firstness?
- b) How can future textbook provide more authentic content with regard to the representation of race and social class?

## **2. PREVIOUS STUDIES**

Studies investigating race and social class in ELT textbooks presented findings that could to a great extent be associated with the Moroccan context. Sheldon (1988) emphasizes the necessity of ensuring that ELT textbooks do not present offensive images related to the different social classes and races. In the same token, Cunningsworth (1995) asserts that though textbooks present characters belonging to different social classes and racial groups, there is still an unequal division of space allotted to different races and social classes. Litz (2005) adds that ELT textbooks maintain a dominance of the Caucasian (white) race as characters belonging to this group are more frequently mentioned, more visible in pictures and were given more space in dialogues and texts. Similarly, Kim (2011) and Yamada (2011) agree that in spite of the diversity of races identified throughout ELT textbooks, Caucasians appeared more than the Asians in Korean and Japanese ELT textbooks and that the Blacks are highly underrepresented.

According to various researchers, many discrepancies could be associated with the ways in which ELT textbooks represent social classes. Arikan (2005) demonstrated that ELT textbooks contained instances of social class imbalances. The three textbooks he studied were found to project a middle class images and values; the lower class were almost invisible, while the upper class represented by celebrities and the rich were portrayed as idols and success stories. Interestingly enough, Yaqoob and Zubair (2012) claim that ELT textbooks may work to empower and dis-power certain social classes and that they are designed in a way that keep the uneven division of powers between different social classes by keeping the lower powerless and the upper class powerful. To avoid such discrepancies, Richards (2001) suggests a thorough investigation of the representation of social and racial representations in ELT textbooks to ensure an equal representation that does not impair one class or one race over the other.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a concurrent triangulation design using content analysis as a mixed method that combines both quantitative and qualitative techniques (Krippendorff, 2013) to evaluate the content of three Moroccan ELT textbook currently used in teaching second year Baccalaureate students in public schools, namely *Gateway to English 2* (Hassim, Blibil & Rasmy, 2007), *Insights into English 2* (Najbi & El Haddad, 2007) and *Ticket to English 2* (Hammani, Ahssen & Tansaoui, 2007). These textbooks are locally designed and are used as national textbooks that are used interchangeably to teach the final level in Moroccan public high schools. Unfortunately, teachers do not have the right to choose which textbook to use as this is the task of the local authorities which distribute textbooks among schools equally and randomly.

The three textbooks were analyzed to identify the extent to which they provided an authentic representation of race through investigating the frequency of appearance of Asians, Blacks, Caucasians and Latinos in texts, dialogues and exercises, their visibility in pictures, the space they were appropriated in dialogues and texts and the number of times they spoke or appeared first in texts and dialogues. Social class was analyzed in terms of counting the frequency of appearance of lower, middle and upper class characters in texts, dialogues and exercises, their visibility in pictures, the space they were allotted in dialogues and texts and the number of times they spoke or appeared first in texts and dialogues. The quantitative analysis consisted of making frequency counts and illustrating them in tables. Each table was followed by a descriptive qualitative analysis which describes ways in which different races and social classes were represented through texts, dialogues, exercise and images identified in these three textbooks. The interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data is fused with the qualitative description that follows each table since, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2007), it is impossible to separate qualitative analysis from interpretation.

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Representation of race

Table 1 presents the frequency of names of characters belonging to different races. It shows that 430 names and nouns of various races were identified and that 362 of them (84.2%) are Caucasians, while 36 (8.4%) are Black and only 30 (6.9%) are Asians. Latinos' names appeared only 2 times, which constitutes only 0.5% of the overall number of names found in the three textbooks. *Gateway to English 2* focused primarily, as shown in Table 15, on Caucasian names which construed 87.9% of the totality of the names identified in this textbook. Names of blacks and Asians formed a minority constituting 8.1% and 4% respectively, while Latinos were entirely overlooked. *Insights into English 2* included the four racial groups though at unequally distributed rates. Priority was given to Caucasian names which made 82.6% of the population, but Asian names came second with 12% rate which significantly exceeds the black and Latino

names resting at 2.7% per each. *Ticket 2 English*, like *Gateway to English 2*, did not include any Latino names but had a higher rate Asian and black names which appeared 8.3% and 11.5% respectively. Caucasian names, though still dominant with an average rate of 80.2%, appeared less frequently in *Ticket 2 English* as they did in *Gateway to English 2* and *Insights into English 2*.

To a great extent, these findings are in line with Litz (2005) and Sheldon (1988). With the help of visual illustrations and the accompanying texts, names figuring in the three textbooks could be classified into their original racial groups. The dominance of the Caucasian names is due to frequently overusing names that are essentially associated with Caucasian people of Moroccan, European and North American origins. It was observed that names such as Mr. Watson, John, Linda, Robert, Julia, Sue, Ali, Mr. Karimi, Brahim, Khadija and Zahra are often used to refer to people of Caucasian decent. Names like Zhang, Sung, Li, Sakuzo Yoshino could be identified and associated with Asian origins. In the same token, textbooks contained names that are attributed to black American or black African people such as Eagwali, Johnson-Sirleaf, Okpala, Aske; while two names José, Spaniards could be associated with Latinos of Ibero-American origins. More importantly, names of celebrities and public figures such as Ban-Ki Mon, Iren Natividad, Chandrika Kumaratunga, Kofi Annan, Mary Robinson, Angela Merkel and Bill Cosby were easy to classify into the appropriate categories.

Table 1

Frequency of names of characters belonging to different races in textbooks

	Asian		Black		Caucasian		Latino		TOTAL	
<i>Gateway</i>	8	4%	16	8.1%	174	87.9%	0	0%	198	100%
<i>Insights</i>	9	12%	2	2.7%	62	82.6%	2	2.7%	75	100%
<i>Ticket</i>	13	8.3%	18	11.5%	126	80.2%	0	0%	157	100%
<b>Total</b>	30	6.9%	36	8.4%	362	84.2%	2	0.5%	430	100%

Table 2 illustrates findings related to the classification of characters visible in images and pictures into their respective racial groups as identified in the three textbooks. In general, 798 characters could be identified and classified and it was noticed that Caucasians, who make 72% of these figures, are omnipresent as they are represented by 575 characters in pictures and images throughout the three textbooks. 168 Asians were identified and 47 black Americans/ Africans were discerned, constituting thus 21.1% and 5.9% of the characters, respectively. Latinos are barely visible throughout the three

textbook as there are only 8 characters that represent 1% of the population. *Ticket 2 English* is the least racially diverse textbook as it did not include any images of characters belonging to Latinos. It is also the one textbook that has the least number of racially classifiable characters (193 characters). In addition, *Ticket 2 English* illustrates best the omnipresence of the Caucasian race as it has the highest rate (84.4%) of Caucasian characters that can be visible images and pictures among the three textbooks, while Latinos were totally omitted. Asians form 30.2% and 17.6% of the visible characters in *Gateway to English 2* and *Insights into English 2*, respectively. The blacks are less visible than the Asians as they make 9.3% and 2.2% in *Gateway to English 2* and *Insights into English 2*, respectively. The latter two textbook managed to include few visible Latino characters which comprise 1.5% and 1.1% of characters that could be seen in illustrations of *gateway 2 to English* and *Insights into English 2*, respectively.

The three textbooks presented a dominant majority of the Caucasian white race and marginalized the Latinos whose vast majority speaks Spanish, thus confirming the claims of Kim (2011) and Yamada (2011) . The big number of Asian characters is due to the fact that the pictures depicting Asians usually tend to represent them in overcrowded places such as Indian trains, large rural classes, overcrowded Chinese streets and Indian large families. The Blacks are identified either as African families or as shadowy characters mingling with a majority of Caucasian people. There are pictures portraying individual Black celebrities and famous political figures like Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Bill Cosby and Kofi Annan.

The visual images representing various races demonstrate an unequal division of power among the four groups. The blacks are portrayed in activities of eating, celebrating primitive cultural heritage or complaining about social problems of poverty and illiteracy. The Asians are stereotypically pictured as smart, creative and hardworking on the one hand, and as poor, overpopulated and illiterate people on the other. The Latinos are presented as poor immigrants whereas the Caucasians were mostly shown as authoritarian, happy, rich and well-informed people.

Table 2

Visibility of different races in textbooks

	Asian		Black		Caucasian		Latino		Total	
<b>Gateway</b>	100	30.2%	31	9.3%	196	59%	5	1.5%	332	100%
<b>Insights</b>	48	17.6%	6	2.2%	216	79.1%	3	1.1%	273	100%
<b>Ticket</b>	20	10.4%	10	5.2%	163	84.4%	0	0%	193	100%
<b>Total</b>	168	21.1%	47	5.9%	575	72%	8	1%	798	100%

Table 3 exhibits the findings regarding the space allotted to voices of different races in texts, dialogues and grammar examples. A holistic view shows that Caucasians were allotted 76.2% of space in the three textbooks as they had an average of 9793 words as

compared to Asians, Blacks and Latinos who were allotted 2045 (16%), 990 (7.7%) and 19 (0.1%) words respectively. *Gateway to English 2* managed to provide a space for the four identified although the Latinos were allocated only 0.4%. The Caucasians were allocated 73.3% of the space, while the Asians were allotted 20%. *Insights into English 2* and *Ticket 2 English* provided no space for the Latinos, but they both prioritized the Caucasian race as they consecrated 74.8% and 78.9% of their space to the latter race, respectively. The Asians were allotted a space that amounts to 24.8% in *Insights into English 2* and 9.3% in *Ticket 2 English*. The blacks were given very little space in *Insights into English 2* as they occupied only 0.4% as compared to *Ticket 2 English* which devoted 11.8% of space.

The Caucasians were allotted more than three quarters of the space given to various races in the three textbooks that were analyzed. This could be explained by the fact that most of the dialogues were acted by white Europeans, Americans and Moroccans. The blacks, as indicated by Cunningsworth (1995), figured only as shadowy characters whose main role was to support the main Caucasian characters. The Asians were allotted more space than the blacks because there were long texts that tackled either the unfamiliar, exotic customs of the Eastern cultures or the unbelievable talents of the Asian people. Surprisingly, the Asians and the Blacks did not participate in any of the dialogues throughout the three textbooks despite the fact that they were often visible in the images and pictures accompanying the dialogues; they were mainly spoken of in texts by Caucasian friends or tourists.

Table 3

Space allotted to different races in textbooks

	Asian		Black		Caucasian		Latino		Total	
<b>Gateway</b>	885	20%	278	6.3%	3251	73.3%	19	0.4%	4433	100%
<b>Insights</b>	608	24.8%	10	0.4%	1840	74.8%	0	0%	2458	100%
<b>Ticket</b>	552	9.3%	702	11.8%	4702	78.9%	0	0%	5956	100%
<b>Total</b>	2045	16%	990	7.7%	9793	76.2%	19	0.1%	12847	100%

Table 4 summarizes the results related to the firstness of races in dialogues, texts and exercises. It shows that Caucasians usually spoke first in dialogues or appeared first in exercises in a total of 84 (93.4%) times in the three textbooks. The Latino never came first in any of the three textbooks, while the Asians never came first in *Gateway to English 2*. The Asian appeared first only once in *Tickets 2 English* and *Insights into English 2.*, whereas the Blacks came first once in *Gateway to English 2* and *Insights into English 2*. The Caucasians appeared and spoke first in most of the conversations, texts and exercises in the three textbooks with significantly high percentages that amounted to 98%, 90% and 87.5% in *Gateway to English 2*, *Insights into English 2* and *Ticket 2 English*, respectively.

In texts, dialogues and exercises that included people from different races, it is noticed that Caucasian names and characters usually speak, act and appear first because they are the predominant figures. As it was observed by Cunningsworth (1995) and Litz (2005), characters from other races remain in the shadow of the Caucasians and act mainly as supporters that react to the Caucasians initial actions as far as dialogues and conversations are concerned. The blacks appeared first in some exercises that follow listening activities in which black celebrities ( Okpala, Kofi Annan and Philip Emeagwali) give speeches. The Asians came first only once in a descriptive text talking about an Asian genius (*Ticket 2 English*, 2007: 16) and once in *Insights into English 2* when talking about the experience of a Japanese tourist.

Table 4

Firstness of race in textbooks

	Asian		Black		Caucasian		Latino		Total	
<b>Gateway</b>	0	0%	1	2%	47	98%	0	0%	48	100%
<b>Insights</b>	1	9.1%	1	9.1%	9	81.8%	0	0%	11	100%
<b>Ticket</b>	1	3.1%	3	9.4%	28	87.5%	0	0%	32	100%
<b>Total</b>	2	2.2%	5	5.5%	84	92.3%	0	0%	91	100%

As a conclusion, the representation of race in the three textbooks demonstrates an uneven distribution of frequency, visibility, space and firstness among the four main races identified in these textbooks. The Caucasians had an indisputable dominance over the Black Americans/African, the Asians and the Latinos who were barely represented at all. The blacks and the Asians remained eclipsed by the omnipresence of the Caucasians; their accents are scarcely heard and their voices are often silenced: they are often visible but they are not heard. At worst cases, the Blacks are shown as African immigrants who are looking for prosperity abroad or as poor people struggling against poverty, (digital) illiteracy and corruption. The Asians on the other hand are represented through their stereotypical images of geniuses who are mentally superior to others. Another stereotypical image associated with the Asians relates to over-crowdedness especially with reference to India and China. At best, the Blacks and the Asians are presented as engineers, Nobel Prize Winners, State Presidents, UN Secretary Generals and famous humorists. The Caucasians had undeniably a better status in these textbooks since they are frequently mentioned, clearly visible, usually heard and often prioritized. They are associated mostly with good jobs, bosses, presidents, sportspeople, celebrities, writers, scientists and informative interviewees. They are depicted in activities relating to entertainment, politics, sports, journalism, humanitarianism, shopping and celebrating success. In short, the Caucasian race is presented as superior both in quantity and quality.



## 4.2. Representation of social class

Table 5

Frequency of social classes

	Lower class		Middle class		Upper class		Total	
<i>Gateway</i>	17	14.9%	66	57.9%	31	27.2%	114	100%
<i>Insights</i>	0	0%	56	56.5%	43	43.5%	99	100%
<i>Ticket</i>	22	25.3%	40	46%	25	28.7%	87	100%
<b>Total</b>	39	13%	162	54%	99	33%	300	100%

Table 5 demonstrates the frequency of appearance of names of characters belonging to lower, middle and upper social classes in the textbooks. It shows that textbooks represented social classes differently despite their agreement on frequently referring to names of people belonging to the middle class. The middle class names are the most frequently used with an average rate that amounts to 54%, while the lower class names are less frequently used (13%). 33% of the names identified in the three textbooks belong to people of the upper class. *Insights into English 2* did not include any name that could be associated with people of lower social class, but it contained more names of people belonging to the upper social class (43.5%) than any of the other textbooks. *Tickets 2 English* relatively provides a more balanced frequency of social class names despite the obvious dominance of the middle class names over the lower and the upper classes.

Surprisingly, the three textbooks do not provide an authentic representation of social classes as could be inferred from the distribution of frequency of appearance of social class names. The ideal textbook could have used the lower social class names more frequently than the middle class and put the upper class at the third rate as is the case in real-life societies. The textbooks often use names of people who are teachers, engineers, doctors, journalists, sportspeople, celebrities and politicians who belong to the upper and middle classes. Even the profession of a certain person is not mentioned, they are usually associated with activities that are conventionally beyond the reach of lower class people. Most of the time, people are identified as shopping in supermarkets, buying expensive goods, driving cars, doing interviews, teaching, visiting doctors, going to the cinema and other activities that the average lower class person would not afford to engage in either financially, intellectually or politically. This idea is reinforced by the accompanying pictures and images as presented in Table 6 below:

Table 6

Visibility of social classes

	Lower class		Middle class		Upper class		Total	
<b>Gateway</b>	140	43.7%	143	44.7%	37	11.6%	320	100%
<b>Insights</b>	5	1.8%	175	63.2%	97	35%	277	100%
<b>Ticket</b>	68	35%	77	39.7%	49	25.3%	194	100%
<b>Total</b>	213	27%	395	50%	183	23%	791	100%

The findings presented in Table 6 show that, on a global scale, middle class characters constitute 50% of the figures visible in pictures and images found in the three examined textbooks, while characters belonging to the lower and the upper classes make 27% and 23% of visible characters, respectively. The lower class is scarcely seen in *Insights into English 2* as it constitutes only a minority of 1.8%, whereas the same class occupies an interesting status within pictures and images in *Gateway to English 2* in which lower class characters constitute 43.7%; thus highly exceeding the proportion of the upper class which makes only 11.6% of the visible population of pictures and images in *Gateway to English 2*.

Interestingly enough, the statistics related to visibility of Social classes in the textbooks being analyzed confirm the findings of frequency of names and nouns. While *Insights into English 2* underrepresents characters of the lower social class in pictures and images, the other two textbooks ensure the visibility of the lower class through including lower class characters in their pictures and images. These characters are usually associated with activities that promote negative stereotypes about the lower social class. They are often pictured as a mass of large and extended families, illiterate people, delinquent youth, glue-sniffing kids and child laborers, thieves, dirty people who pollute the environment and women engaged in degraded manual sometimes enduring domestic rural tasks. The middle class is often represented by teachers, employees, journalists, interviewers, small nuclear families, happy good-looking individuals wearing elegant clothes, driving inexpensive cars and eating in ordinary restaurants. The upper class is represented by complaining bosses, rich businesspeople, engineers, doctors, interviewees, famous scientists, famous authors, famous artists, politicians, government officials, presidents and international celebrities. Most pictures present an encounter between middle class and upper class characters as in pictures where the boss is talking to his employee(s) or a journalist is interviewing a celebrity; the lower class is pictured as isolated individuals or as a mass. In effect, the abundance of pictures illustrating numerous encounters of upper and middle class characters affirmably affects the amount of space these characters were allotted in dialogues, exercises and texts as unveiled in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Space allotted to social classes

	Lower class		Middle class		Upper class		Total	
<b>Gateway</b>	281	11%	1813	70.6%	473	18.4%	2567	100%
<b>Insights</b>	0	0%	1173	38.4%	1879	61.6%	3052	100%
<b>Ticket</b>	230	6.7%	1738	50.5%	1473	42.8%	3441	100%
<b>Total</b>	511	5.6%	4724	52.2%	3825	42.2%	9060	100%

Table 7 shows that the middle class was allotted 52.2% of the total space allotted social classes in dialogues, texts and exercise throughout the three investigated textbooks. While the upper class occupies a considerable portion of 42.2%, the lower class was allocated very little space that does not exceed 5.6%. *Insight into English 2* is unique because not only it provided 0% space for the lower class, but also it allotted 61.6% to the upper class, which is quite different from *Gateway into English* and *Ticket 2 English* which provided the largest amount of space to the middle class (70.6% and 50.5% respectively). The lower class was allotted 11% and 6.7% of space in *Gateway into English 2* and *Ticket 2 English*, respectively.

The analysis of space allotted to social classes confirms both the predominance of the middle and upper classes and the underrepresentation of the lower class. This in fact goes along with and is a logical outcome of the previous findings related to frequency and, even though at a little extent, visibility of social classes. It is true that, according to tables 20 and 21, the rates of visibility of lower social class are higher than those of the space it occupied, but this is not at all impressive. Characters of the lower class are actually visible, but they did not usually speak; they were most of the times presented as silent characters. Their few speeches take the form of monologues where they talk about their struggles against poverty, illiteracy as they strive for personal development. The upper class was allotted a considerably higher portion of space than was the lower class because textbooks contained several biographies about famous literary, social, political and artistic figures. There were also numerous interviews in which successful and important people from the upper class were interviewed and they talked elaborately about their achievements and sometimes giving pieces of advice and expressing their opinion about different socio-political issues. The middle class had the highest amount space because most dialogues and exercises featured students, teachers, employees and parents. Most commonly tackled topics in middle class speech were about school, exams, jobs, travels, food, free time and hobbies. Undoubtedly, the abundant space allotted to middle and upper social classes is significant of the numerous occurrences of characters belonging to these classes in dialogues, texts and exercises; the effect of this misbalanced situation on firstness is clearly visible in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Firstness of social classes

	Lower class		Middle class		Upper class		Total	
<i>Gateway</i>	4	17.4%	12	52.2%	7	30.4%	23	100%
<i>Insights</i>	0	0%	7	63.6%	4	36.4%	11	100%
<i>Ticket</i>	1	8.3%	6	50%	5	41.7%	12	100%
<b>Total</b>	5	10.8%	25	54.4%	16	34.8%	46	100%

Table 8 demonstrates that the middle class appeared or spoke first in 54.4% of dialogues, texts and exercises in which two or more different social class characters were featured. While the upper class appeared first in 34.8% of cases, the lower class had 10.8% of the overall first appearances. The lower class was totally overlooked in *Insights into English*, whereas in *Gateway to English 2* and *Ticket 2 English*, it was given firstness in 17.4% and 8.3% of cases, respectively. The middle class and the upper class characters always spoke and appeared first in exclusively in the three textbooks.

The dominance of the middle class and upper class was further maintained through firstness. Since most characters belonging to the lower class were identified in silent and supporting roles, their speeches were mainly presented as reactions or responses to middle class characters in dialogues. They were given firstness only in cases in which they were expressing complaints or asking for advice in dialogues. In some situations, especially in texts dealing with social problems of poverty and illiteracy, lower class characters appeared first. The middle class figures came first in most dialogues and texts in which an upper class character was interviewed by a journalist belonging to the middle class. They also appeared first in exercises containing examples which featured students, teachers, employees, bosses, ministers, scientists and celebrities. The upper class characters were given firstness in different dialogues in which the boss is talking to an employee or when celebrities are talking about their lives and experiences.

To conclude, the analysis of the representation of social classes in terms of frequency, visibility, space and firstness has revealed many interesting findings that are to a great extent congruent with previous studies. Arikan's (2011) view that textbooks contain an imbalanced representation of class favoring the middle class is confirmed as the three examined textbooks agree on a hierarchical order that places the middle class on top and the lower class at the bottom; the upper class remains at the middle with rates that position it closer to the middle class. *Insights into English 2* broke this tradition twice. First, it did not include any content related to the lower class in occurrence, space and firstness. Second, in contrast with *Gateway to English 2* and *Ticket 2 English*, it placed the upper class at the top of the criterion of space. In general, the findings have revealed a substantial underrepresentation of the lower class and a noticeable favoritism of the middle class and the upper class, despite the fact that a considerable number of the textbooks' users come from the lower social class. This state of affairs aligns with

Yaqoob and Zubair's (2012) claims that textbooks tend to empower the middle and upper class while actually disempowering the lower class through projecting instances of uneven division of power. It is therefore legitimate, as Richards' (2001) notes, to question the effect this misrepresentation of social classes can have on students' learning outcomes as well as their attitudes towards not only these textbooks but also learning English in general.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The present study investigated the representation of race and social class in three Moroccan second year Baccalaureate ELT textbooks. Using mixed content analysis, it examined these issues with regard to four main criteria: frequency of appearance of names/ nouns, visibility in pictures, space in dialogues and texts and firstness and dialogues, texts and exercises. The findings were to a great extent congruent with previous studies.

The dominance of the Caucasian race over ELT textbooks is in fact a stereotypical misrepresentation. Textbooks should reflect an authentic image of different races actually using English all over the world. Thus, there should be a balanced representation of characters belonging to different racial groups using English throughout textbook's texts, dialogues, exercises and images so that learners would be able to understand that English is no longer an Anglo-Saxon language reserved for the British and the Americans, but a universal language used as an international lingua-franca facilitating communication and cultural exchanges among people from different parts of the world. Similarly, English should not be portrayed in ELT textbooks as a language reserved only for the upper and middle classes, but as a language that can be studied, learnt and used effectively and fluently by people irrespective of their social class. It is to maintain, however, that English language textbooks projecting an image favoring the upper and middle classes is not acceptable, but it is quite impossible as well as unauthentic to create a classless language teaching textbook. Therefore, ELT textbooks should provide a balanced representation of social classes that reflects an authentic representation of the social reality of the learners. Hence, the present study is an attempt to position three currently used Moroccan ELT textbooks within this tradition of evaluating ways in which they represents race and social classes.

This study concludes with some guidelines that should help to improve the quality of future textbooks concerning issues of representing race and social class:

- Authentic names of people belonging to different races should be identified in the textbooks
- People from different races should be equally visible throughout the textbook
- Voices and accents of different racial groups should be given enough space in texts, dialogues and exercises through including dialogues that feature characters other than Caucasians

- There should be equal opportunity for people belonging to different races to speak, act and appear first
- Textbooks should present characters belonging to different races performing various activities and occupations so that no race would appear superior or inferior to others
- Negative racial stereotypes should be avoided
- All social classes should be equally visible and heard in images, texts, dialogues and conversations
- All social classes should be given enough space to speak in texts, exercises and dialogues
- Textbooks should feature successful lower class characters who talk about their success stories so as to empower and motivate lower class learners

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