The representation of immigrant characters in Catalan as a second language textbooks: a critical discourse analysis perspective

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This paper examines the representations of immigrant characters in Catalan as a Second Language textbooks for adults. We aim to identify differences in portraying what we call Western and non-Western immigrants, applying the theory and procedures of critical discourse analysis. Firstly, we investigate how immigrant characters' identity is shaped in textbooks by social class, age and gender. Secondly, we focus on the way in which immigrant characters with a major presence in textbooks are portrayed, through the analysis of immigrant stories. This study reveals that Western newcomers are always portrayed as part of the upper/middle class while non-Westerners are represented as working class members. On the other hand, non-Western immigrants are characterized by physical or gender stereotypes, while Western immigrants have positive attributes. We also found an idyllic representation of reality, together with an absence of cultural comparisons or information about immigrant countries of origin.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, foreign language textbooks, immigration, Catalan as a second language, Catalonia.

La representación de los personajes inmigrantes en los libros de texto de catalán como segunda lengua: un análisis crítico del discurso. Este artículo examina las representaciones de los personajes inmigrantes en los libros de texto de catalán como segunda lengua para adultos. Nuestro objetivo es identificar eventuales diferencias entre el retrato de los personajes inmigrantes occidentales y el de aquellos originarios de países no occidentales, a través del análisis crítico del discurso. Primero investigamos la construcción de la identidad de los personajes inmigrantes según su clase social, edad y género. En segundo lugar, examinamos cómo se retratan los inmigrantes con mayor presencia en los libros de texto a través del análisis de sus historias. El estudio sugiere que los inmigrantes occidentales aparecen como miembros de la clase media o alta, mientras que los no occidentales

pertenecen a clases subalternas. Por otro lado, los inmigrantes no occidentales suelen aparecer caracterizados con estereotipos físicos o de género, mientras que los occidentales se asocian con atributos positivos. El artículo también apunta una idealización de la realidad y una ausencia de comparaciones culturales o información sobre los países de origen de los inmigrantes.

Palabras claves: análisis crítico del discurso, libros de texto de lenguas extranjeras, inmigración, catalán como segunda lengua, Cataluña.

1. Introduction

In the first decade of the XXIst century, Catalonia received a large wave of immigration from regions outside of Spain. In the year 2000, foreigners with permanent residency in Catalonia represented only a 2.9% of the total population, whereas in 2010 this number rose to 15.95%, according to official data issued by the Catalan government (Idescat 2016). In recent years, the number of immigrants living in Catalonia has slightly decreased due to the consequences of the last capitalist economic crisis that has largely affected the immigrant population. According to official data, the percentage of foreigners with permanent residency in Catalonia, in 2015, amounted to 13.69% of the total population (Idescat 2016).

Other Catalan-speaking regions in Spain, such as Valencia and the Balearic Islands, have also received an important wave of foreign immigration in the XXIst century. These areas show similar percentages to those of Catalonia when it comes to the number of registered immigrants. However, Catalonia is the territory that has actively promoted the need for the newcomers to learn Catalan, even though the most demanded language to be learnt by this community tends to be Spanish.

The growing percentage of foreigners has translated into a significant rise in the number of students of Catalan as a Second Language in Catalonia. According to data from the Consortium for Language Normalization (CPNL 2010: 22) –one of the main centres for Catalan as a Second Language (CSL) n Catalonia–, the vast majority of foreign students come from non-Western countries, especially from South America (55.1%). On the other hand, the overall of Western students (EU, United States and Oceania) does not reach 10%.

In response to this wave of immigration and the desire to spread Catalan among the newcomers in Catalonia, there has been a rise in the production of CSL materials.

Drawing from Atienza and Van Dijk (2010), this study seeks to explore the different representations of immigrants that appear in CSL textbooks for adults. In their research of Social Science textbooks in Madrid and Catalonia, Atienza and Van Dijk (2010: 68) found "a systematic ideological bias in favour of Spanish and European in-groups while derogating immigrants and other non-European out-groups". Our paper aims to identify the differences when portraying –what we call– Western and non-Western immigrants, to examine how they are reflected in textbooks and to discover whether differences in the way immigrants are portrayed may impact non-Western immigrant learners negatively.

This paper is structured in four sections: a brief literature review, the description of the methodology used for this research, the results and their analysis, and the general conclusions.

2. Literature review

Textbooks are never neutral and always carry certain fixed constructions of reality (Apple and Christian-Smith 1991). This is why, since the 1970's, several researchers have critically analyzed second language learning materials, especially the case of English as a Second Language (ESL) textbooks. At first, the studies reported sexism in ESL textbooks (Hartman and Judo 1978; Porreca 1984). Then, despite not losing interest in gender bias (Hamdan 2010; Poulou 1997; Rifkin 1998), many researchers have analyzed SL textbooks looking for other types of prejudices or stereotypes. Risager (1991) concluded that Scandinavian ESL textbooks over represent the link between young, middle class, single isolated people, to city center tourists or visitors. Risager's conclusions refer to ESL textbooks in Scandinavian countries, but they could be extended to all Western European language textbooks (Cortazzi and Jin 1999). Other researches have also found trivialization and exaggerated simplification of reality in ESL textbooks (Dendrinos 1991; Cook 2003); for instance, in Russian (Shardakova and Pavlenko 2004) and French textbooks (Kinginger 2004). In the case of global English textbooks, recent research has suggested that they could be artefacts to promote consumerism (Taki 2008) or neo-liberal values (Gray 2010; 2012).

However, few studies have focused on the representations of immigrants in foreign language textbooks. One of the exceptions is the classic article by Auerbach and Burgess (1985) on the hidden curriculum in ESL survival textbooks in the United States. Through the analysis of units related to housing, employment and health, these two authors conclude that the reality of the middle class that is presented has little to

do with the socioeconomic status of newcomers for whom these textbooks are intended. More recently, Gulliver (2010) has analyzed the stories of immigrants in ESL textbooks in Canada. According to this study, the stories of immigrants that appear in textbooks are not true stories about their experience, but examples to legitimize Canada's immigration policies. As far as we know, until now there has been no study that focuses on Western and non-Western immigrant characters in second language textbooks.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research questions

This paper researches how Western and non-Western immigrants are portrayed in CSL textbooks. In order to accomplish the objectives, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

(1) What are the differences between Western and non-Western immigrant characters according to social class, age and gender?

(2) How are Western and non-Western immigrants with a higher percentage of appearance in textbooks portrayed?

3.2. Corpus

We followed two criteria in order to choose the samples: textbooks that (a) are widely used, and (b) have a high percentage of immigrant characters.

Our study analyses the textbook *Veus 1* (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005) and the three volumes of *Nou Nivell Bàsic* collection: *Nou Nivell Bàsic 1* (Guerrero *et al.* 2010a) *Nou Nivell Bàsic 2* (Guerrero *et al.* 2010b) and *Nou Nivell Bàsic 3* (Guerrero *et al.* 2010c). We focused on the most widely used CSL level and resource amongst the students: the beginners 'student's book'.

All the examples cited from these textbooks have been translated into English by the authors of this paper.

3.3. Data collection and analysis

Our research focuses on the analysis of texts and images. It combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches. We have used the general framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) proposed by Fairclough (1989; 1995; 2003) and developed by different authors (Gulliver 2010; Shardakova and Pavlenko 2004).

At the beginning of the study, we counted all immigrant characters that appear in textbooks and classified them, as Western or non-Western, according to their countries. This division seemed more appropriate for the CSL context than others used in the case of ESL: centre and periphery (Cannagarajah 1999) or the inner, outer and expanding circles (Kachru 1985). We consider Western countries those belonging to North America, Oceania and EU before 2007. From the Western block, we excluded Romania and Bulgaria (EU members from 2007) because the citizens of these two countries form part of the massive waves of immigration to Catalonia in the last twenty years, made largely by people from outside EU.

In order to answer the first research question, we have analyzed immigrant characters according to three identity-related traits:

(1) Social class. Jobs have proven to serve as a primary indicator of the social class of immigrants (Shardakova and Pavlenko 2004). This research has also measured their social status according to other dimensions such as place of residence, education, real state properties, symbolic behaviour or mobility (Block 2015).

(2) Age. All characters were classified in four categories: children (underneath 18 years old), young people (18-40 years old), middle-aged (40-60 years old) and senior (over 60 years old).

(3) Gender.

To answer the second question, the so-called immigrant stories –texts that give extra information about the lives of immigrant characters– were analysed. Following Gulliver (2010), we have looked for story-telling patterns that repeat themselves in most of the stories. Searching for repetitive parts in the different texts, we attempted to unveil the ways in which Western and non-Western immigrant experiences were represented. We have also focused on the representations of four main immigrant characters that appear in *Nou Nivell Bàsic* collection using procedures of CDA to discover traces of ideological bias.

3.4. Limitations of the study

This study is limited by three factors:

(1) Its static nature; its real impact is not seen through interaction with texts in the classroom.

(2) The corpus is limited and the conclusions cannot be extended to all CSL textbooks.

(3) The subjectivity of the authors: our cultural background influences the critical perspective adopted in this study.

4. Results and analysis

For the purpose of our analysis, we have counted the total of thirty immigrant characters: twenty in the textbook *Veus 1* and ten in *Nou Nivell Bàsic* collection. As we can see in Table 1, there is a slight higher percentage non-Western characters *versus* Western ones.

	Veus 1	*Nou Nivell Bàsic*	Total
Western immigrants	Germany (x3); Spain (x3); Czech Republic; France; Italy	England (x3); Spain	**13**
Non-Western immigrants	Argentina; India; Ukraine; Morocco (x3); Romania (x2); Ecuador (x2); China	Senegal; Mexico; Colombia (x2); Russia; Latin America (not specified country)	**17**

Table 1. *Immigrant Characters' Country of Origin*

Although textbooks include immigrant characters from various parts of the world, they give little or no information about their countries of origin. We only identified two texts that contained some information about their country of origin. In both cases, however, information is limited (it does not go beyond two simple sentences); and focused on negative stereotypical representation of the country. In the example below, in a text about Emil, a Romanian newcomer, everything the reader learns about Romania is that there was a dictatorship and that the unemployment rate is high:

"*Em dic Emil i vaig néixer a Romania quan hi havia una dictadura. Em vaig casar molt jove, no teníem gaires diners i, amb la meva dona, vam anar a viure a casa dels meus pares. D'això ja fa molt temps. Vam arribar a Catalunya l'any passat. Vam venir per conèixer un altre país i per buscar feina perquè a Romania no n'hi havia gaire.*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 89)
[My name is Emil and I was born in Romania when there was a dictatorship. I got married very young, we didn't have much money and I had to move back to my parent's with my wife. That was a long time ago. Last year I arrived to Catalonia. We are here both to discover a new country and to look for a job because in Romania there was not much work.]

Besides associating Romania to a dictatorial regime and poverty, this text also reinforces another popular stereotype in Catalonia: Eastern Europeans marriages at a young age.

4.1. Social class, age and gender

The social class of immigrants' characters is closely related to their country of origin –see Table 2. Only characters whose professions were explicitly mentioned in texts are included in Table 2.

	Veus		*Nou Nivell Bàsic*	
	Western	**Non-Western**	**Western**	**Non-Western**
Upper/ Middle class	Actress (x2); Language instructor; Translator		Supermarket cashier/MA student; Supermarket supervisor	Travel agent
Working class		Restaurant worker; Supermarket worker; Hairdresser		Delivery guy; Stock guy;

Table 2. *Western and non-Western Immigrant Characters according to their jobs*

Nearly all immigrants with better-paying jobs come from Western Europe while non-Western immigrant characters tend to belong to working class. The only exception is an immigrant character from Russia (Guerrero *et al.* 2010a: 94).

On the other hand, the wide majority of Catalan characters have well-paid jobs. Catalans tend to be represented in textbooks as physicians or managers. The Catalan working class is underrepresented, especially in *Veus 1*, phenomena also identified by Gray and Block (2014) in their analysis of current ESL textbooks.

The great majority of characters in all textbooks belong to the upper-middle class, as can be seen from the information that we have about their houses, the clothes they wear, their professions or their trips. For example, a typical description of a home (in *Veus 1)*: "no és gran ni petit" [is neither large nor small], but it has 90 m2, a guest-room, two bathrooms, a study with drums and music equipment, and a garden with flowers and a dog house (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 68). In *Nou Nivell Bàsic* two of the characters plan their future trips without wor-

rying about money, even though one of them will be travelling to Patagonia, and the other is staying at an expensive hotel in Catalonia.

Generally speaking, there are very few situations where characters talk about their economic problems or difficulties. It seems as if poverty has disappeared from the textbooks. The only time it is brought up is in the context on non-Western immigrants. For example, Mammadou from Senegal, explaining his arrival to Catalonia:

"*Em va costar molt trobar feina… Vaig viure uns quants anys a Barcelona amb uns amics senegalesos. Va ser una època bastant dura, perquè no tenia feina i no teníem prou diners per pagar el lloguer i comprar el menjar*" (Guerrero *et al.* 2010b: 58)
[It was very hard to find a job…. For a couple of years, I lived with my friends from Senegal in Barcelona. It was quite a difficult period, because I didn't have a job and we didn't have enough money to pay the rent and buy food]

Another paradigmatic example of social class can be found in a text called "*Catalunya, un país de trobada*" [Catalonia, a country of encounters] (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 34-35), where Asha, a little girl adopted from India, introduces her family. A big picture of an outdoor family reunion, with all her family members, accompanies the text. Interestingly, her grandparents come from Germany and the Czech Republic, her father and uncle have foreign names, and her aunt is French. They all live in Catalonia and speak Catalan. We see that they all belong to an upper Catalan class: her father is a lawyer, her uncle and aunt live in Sitges, an upper class town by the sea. They are very well dressed, engaged in what seems to be a cheerful Sunday outdoor brunch. The only members of this upper-class family belonging to non-Western countries are Asha and another adopted girl from Ukraine.

In choosing to portray this kind of family under the title 'Catalonia, a country of encounters', the authors seem to promote a privileged immigrant, one which is evidently rich. This, in our opinion, can have a prejudicial effect on students of CSL, the majority of which do not belong to upper-middle class families. What is being hidden in this text is that Catalonia is actually a country of the encounters of poor, socially disadvantaged, struggling-to-survive immigrants. Some of them indeed belong to countries in which children are sometimes given to adoption because of the impoverishment of their homelands largely caused by richer countries.

Regarding the age frame of the thirty immigrant characters accounted for in both textbooks, most are young people (13 characters) and middle-aged (six characters), with a smaller amount of seniors (five

characters) and children (4 characters). Immigrants portrayed in text-
books respond to the general tendency in second language materials to
represent mainly young and middle-aged people (Risager 1991).

Western immigrant characters tend to be young people and senior cit-
izens. Senior immigrant characters usually share some information about
their offspring. On the other hand, non-Western immigrant characters are
mainly young people. One may argue that this is a valid way of portray-
ing reality, since most non-Western immigrants came to Catalonia not so
long ago, leaving elderly members of their families behind. Even so, por-
traying non-Western newcomers exclusively as young and omitting to
represent the older members of their families leaves the reader with the
idea of broken family ties, although it may not be the case. Concealing the
reality of non-Western immigrant families, along with the absence of
information about their cultures, suggests that newcomers (and especial-
ly non-Western ones) should forget everything about their previous life
and start a new one in Catalonia with a clean slate.

With regard to gender, there are twice as many female immigrant char-
acters as male. Although the authors seem to give an important role to
female immigrant characters in textbooks, there is a tendency to stereo-
type them. We have observed that both Western and non-Western female
characters are very often connected to traditional mother-wife roles. For
example, in the case two female immigrant characters (Carmen and
Isabel) from Southern Spain who came to Catalonia decades ago with
their husbands, so the men could find work (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 95-
96). A significant case is that of Lucía from Mexico, one of the main char-
acters of *Nou Nivell Bàsic*. Her role as a mother and wife stand above her
role as a worker and a university graduate, as we shall discuss later in sec-
tion 4.3. Most non-Western female characters –same as their male coun-
terparts- are uneducated and/or have low-paying jobs. Surprisingly, in the
texts and images, they all seem to be perfectly happy.

4.2. Immigrant stories

The second research question aims to discover the ways in which
Western and non-Western immigrants with a higher percentage of
appearance in textbooks are portrayed. To answer this question, we first
examined the so-called immigrants' stories. We identified a total of 13
immigrant stories in both textbooks, eight in *Veus 1* and five in *Nou
Nivell Bàsic*. Eight of the stories belong to non-Western immigrants. All
of them are young people and arrived to Catalonia short ago. Whereas
five stories have Western immigrants as the main characters: three mid-
dle aged or seniors –who came from other parts of Spain over 30 years
ago– and two young people who recently moved to Catalonia.

Following Gulliver (2010), we tried to identify phases that reoccur in most of these stories. In the case of non-Western immigrant stories, we identified three phases:

(1) Mention of the immigrants' arrival to Catalonia. All stories contain the mention of the immigrants' arrival to Catalonia and in most cases give the explanation for their migration. In half of the stories, the reason is linked to work, although one has to do with love and another with child adoption

(2) Mention of a period of emotional and / or financial struggle. In most non-Western immigrant stories, there is a period of emotional and /or financial struggle after they arrive to the host region. For example, in the words of Emil from Romania:

"*Primer no va ser gaire fàcil; no teníem ni feina ni pis I ens vam instal·lar a casa d'uns amics romanesos, a Barcelona. Ens vam enyorar molt perquè trobàvem a faltar els amics i la família i, a més, no podíem comunicar-nos perquè no parlàvem ni espanyol ni català*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 89)
[At first in wasn't very easy; we didn't have a job or a place to stay, so we stayed at the place of some friends from Romania, in Barcelona. We missed our families and friends and couldn't communicate with others because we couldn't speak Spanish or Catalan]

Similarly, Vilma, from Ecuador, shares her experience:

"*No va ser gens fàcil aprendre català, trobar feina, fer amics... Vaig trobar a faltar molt la meva família i estava molt trista*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 96)
[It wasn't very easy to learn Catalan, to find a job, to make friends ... I missed my family very much and I was very sad]

In only one non-Western immigrant story, the person involved did not experience financial or emotional struggle: "*La veritat és que de seguida em vaig sentir molt bé aquí. No em vaig enyorar gens.*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 93) [The truth is that from the beginning I felt very comfortable here and I don't miss anything].

(3) Positive outcome. In all non-Western immigrant stories, we find a positive outcome. We know that satisfaction comes from the personal and/or professional success of the characters. Most of them have jobs. Some of them got married and had children and say they are doing well in Catalonia. For example, Vilma from Ecuador says:

"*Ara tinc dos fills, el Pol i el Robert. També tinc feina: faig de perruquera. Estic bé aquí*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 96).

[Now I have two children, Pol and Robert. I also have a job: I'm working as a hairdresser. I'm doing well here]

Emil from Romania shares a similar impression:

"*La meva dona treballa en un supermercat, i jo, en un restaurant. Tot comença a anar més bé*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 89)
[My wife works at a supermarket and I work at a restaurant. Everything is starting to go well]

In contrast, in Western immigrant stories, we have found only two reoccurring phases:
(1) Mention of the immigrants' arrival to Catalonia. In all the stories, besides one, their arrival to Catalonia is mentioned. Carmen, an immigrant from Southern Spain, explains: "*Vam venir la meva filla i jo. Jo tenia 32 anys. El viatge va anar molt bé*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 96) [I came with my daughter. I was 32. The trip went very well].
(2) Positive outcome. In all Western immigrant stories, we have also found a positive outcome. Most characters seem to be well adapted. For example, the granddaughter of a Western immigrant explains: "*Els meus avis, ara, estan molt bé a Catalunya.*" (Mas and Vilagrassa 2005: 95) [My grandparents now are feeling great in Catalonia].

In these repetitive stages, we found that in most non-Western immigrant stories there is a period of financial or emotional struggle. Although stories give information about some difficulties immigrants have (homesickness, unemployment), they hide others that directly affect the daily lives of non-Western newcomers such as racism by the Catalan society, labour exploitation or the immigration policies.
It is important to underline that the period of struggle is not present in stories about Western immigrant. The scenario that appears in all thirteen stories has a positive outcome. Presenting Catalonia as a country where immigrants always live happily could be frustrating for newcomers who, despite the efforts, still struggle in Catalonia. We can conclude that Catalonia is always presented as an ideal country for immigrants, a tendency also described by Gulliver (2010) in the case of Canada and ESL textbooks.

4.3. Immigrants as main characters

In *Nou Nivell Bàsic* there are six main characters. They are present in every volume and live in an imaginary town, named Vilaniu, located in Catalonia. Four of the main characters are immigrants. Three of them

are men (James from England, Mammadou from Senegal and Santiago from Galicia) and there is only one woman (Lucía, from Mexico).

James is a white, 26 years old Englishman. He works at a local supermarket as a cashier, but at the same time he is pursuing postgraduate studies in advertising. Mammadou, aged 32, comes from Senegal. He works in the supermarket as a delivery guy. Lucía is a 37 years old woman from Mexico. She is a psychologist but works in the supermarket as stock guy. Santiago, aged 46, came to Catalonia from Galicia three decades ago. He belongs to the first big wave of immigration that came from the rest of the Spain. He is the supermarket supervisor.

Although they are all co-workers at the same supermarket, there are some differences between what we call Western (in this case James and Santiago) and non-Western immigrants (Mammadou and Lucía).

Firstly, there are differences in their social status. Santiago is the supermarket supervisor, lives in a two-story house, together with his wife and two children and spends his holidays in Patagonia. Although James works as a cashier, he is studying to get a master's degree, lives in a big flat and has no problem paying for an expensive hotel room over the weekend. On the other hand, Mammadou and Lucía struggle and have low paid jobs. They do not seem to go on holidays.

Secondly, the authors have chosen James to be the most represented character in all three volumes. He works two shifts at the supermarket, and yet has time to study, hang out with his friends, go out, and on trips. Readers are more acquainted with his life (where he lives; his family and friends) than with the life of any other character in this textbook.

Unlike James, Lucía's and Mammadou's lives are presented in a different way. Lucía's marital status and her image as a mother are constantly brought up. Although she has a degree in Psychology, she has one of the lowest paid positions at the supermarket. Mammadou's life is a mystery for the readers of these textbooks. His family or friends, besides from his co-workers, are never present; neither are the conditions in which he lives. As mentioned above, Lucía and Mammadou do not go on holidays, and their social agenda is limited to their co-workers and family members.

In the dialogue in which Mammadou, Lucía and James are talking about their arrival to Catalonia (Guerrero *et al.* 2010b: 58), only Mammadou and Lucía explain their arrival. James, in this very significant dialogue, only plays the role of the interviewer, as if his experience had somehow been different from Mammadou's and Lucia's.

Finally, the attributes the authors have given these characters reflect how the immigrants are portrayed. James is "*jove i modern*" [young and fashionable] and "*molt treballador*" [very hardworking] (Guerrero *et al.* 2010c: 6). Almost every time he is pictured outside work, he is close to a laptop. Mammadou is "*alt i fort, té els cabells curts i vesteix roba esporti-*

va" [strong and tall, with short hair and wears sports clothes] (Guerrero *et al.* 2010a: 4). Lucía is "*casada i amb tres filles*" [married with three children] (Guerrero *et al.* 2010ac: 7) and "*sempre està contenta*" [always happy] (Guerrero *et al.* 2010a: 5). Santiago is "*molt responsable i amable*" [very responsible and kind] (Guerrero *et al.* 2010c: 6).

Although it seems that *Nou Nivell Bàsic* tries to present realities of both upper-middle class and working class immigrants and connect people from different backgrounds, in order to create space for negotiation of meaning, and a better understanding of immigrants' realities, it fails to do so. The main problem with the texts is that they are overburdened with stereotypes. We have an African immigrant whose physical appearance and clothes are his most remarkable traits; a Mexican woman who is, first, a mother and a wife; a fashionable and hard working Englishman; and a white boss who is well-intentioned, helpful and kind.

Choosing universally positive attributes (modern, hardworking, responsible, kind) to portray Western immigrants on the one hand, and bodily and gender attributes (strong, tall, married) to portray non-Western ones on the other, may help in raising bias. This, together with the representation of white Western immigrants as socio-economically superior to non-Western ones, may contribute to impose a submissive role on non-Western newcomers to Catalonia and to implement stereotypes.

5. Conclusion

Throughout the study, we have identified several differences between Western and non-Western characters in textbooks.

On the one hand, we have seen that the non-Western immigrant characters with a higher percentage of appearance in textbooks are associated to physical or gender stereotypes while Westerner have positive attributes linked to them.

On the other hand, Western newcomers are always portrayed as part of the upper/middle class, a dominant trend in all textbooks. At the same time, non-Western immigrant characters are portrayed almost entirely as members from the working class. Textbooks promote that it is 'natural' for non-Western immigrants to have low-paying jobs and subservient social roles. Meanwhile Catalans and Western characters seem destined to have leading roles in Catalonia. In doing so, textbooks fail to provide the means for students to transform their reality and fight against exclusion they may face everyday, especially non-Western newcomers. All the above mentioned indicates segregation in the representations of Western and non-Western characters inside an idyllic (characters seem happy and all immigrant stories have a positive outcome) and conflict-free (nobody complains) reality.

We also found an absence of cultural comparisons and/ or information about the countries of the immigrants or their lives before their arrival to Catalonia. Generally speaking, the norms of Catalan society are usually presented without any reference to the cultural differences or the experience undergone by the newcomer. This denial of the immigrant's cultural and family background could be negative for students who may not see themselves valued enough by textbooks. Moreover, it has being suggested that, after coming to Catalonia, immigrants should forget their roots and accept all norms of Catalan society without questioning.

We applaud the authors for including many immigrant characters in the textbooks since they are the main learners of CSL. Nevertheless, future textbooks should avoid using stereotypes, especially negative ones. It is also important to include more information about their traditions, beliefs and values and not hide the internal conflicts Catalonia has. This way, textbooks for Catalan as a Second Language for adults would seize to be artifacts which promote *status quo* and instead become tools for social change.

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