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Ali Sabah Jameel<sup>1</sup>

Radwan Abdulkader  
Mohammed<sup>2</sup>

- 1- College of Arts- University Of Anbar
- 2- College of Political Science – Tikrit University

[Alisabah40@yahoo.com](mailto:Alisabah40@yahoo.com)

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**The Degree of Existence of Iraqi National Identity in the English Textbooks of Secondary Schools**

**A B S T R A C T**

The study aims to reveal the degree of existence of Iraqi national identity in English textbooks, such as traditional costumes, places, values, celebrities, events, characters, names, and ancient figures. The researchers used themes, paragraphs, and illustrations as units to analyze the data of the study. The sample of the study is the English for Iraq 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book. The research tries to answer the following questions " To what degree do themes, paragraphs, and illustrations in English for Iraq 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book include Iraqi national identity? To answer the question, a percentage ratio was obtained. Results revealed that the Iraqi national identity is existed with very low percentage in the themes, paragraphs, and illustrations in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book.

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**درجة توافر الهوية الوطنية العراقية في كتب اللغة الانجليزية للمدارس الإعدادية**

علي صباح جميل/ كلية الآداب – جامعة الأنبار

رضوان عبد القادر محمد/ كلية العلوم السياسية – جامعة تكريت

**الخلاصة**

تهدف الدراسة إلى كشف درجة توافر الهوية الوطنية العراقية في كتب اللغة الانجليزية مثل العادات والتقاليد، والمكان، والقيم، والمناسبات، والأحداث، والشخصيات، والأسماء، والسمات التاريخية. استخدم الباحثون الموضوع، والفقرة، والصور (الإيضاحات) كوحدات لتحليل بيانات الدراسة. كانت عينة الدراسة كتاب الطالب للغة الإنجليزية للمدارس الإعدادية (الرابع، والخامس، والسادس). يحاول البحث الإجابة عن السؤال التالي " إلى أي درجة تتوافر الهوية الوطنية العراقية في المواضيع الفقرات والصور

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في كتاب الطالب " الإنجليزية للعراق " للصفوف الرابع والخامس والسادس الإعدادي؟" للإجابة على السؤال تم استخراج النسبة المئوية. كشفت نتائج الدراسة أن الهوية الوطنية العراقية موجودة بنسبة ضئيلة جداً على مستوى الموضوع، والفقرة، والصور في كتاب الطالب للرايع والخامس والسادس إعدادي.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The researchers notice that the students at schools and universities imitate the behaviors, way of communication, and the appearance of the European and American people. In fact most of the student's time is spent in studying, thus, the foreign behaviors may be derived or adopted from the foreign language textbook. To this end , the researchers try to reveal the existence of the Iraqi national identity in the English language textbooks.

### **Question of the Study**

The study tries to answer the following question: "To what degree do themes, paragraphs, and illustrations in English for Iraq 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book include Iraqi national identity?"

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study is an attempt to reveal the degree of existence of the Iraqi national identity in the English language textbook. It is important to highlight the national identity in learning English language in order not to increase the target language identity at the expense of the national identity.

### **Criteria of the Study**

The criterion of the analysis is the inclusion, inclusion of the Iraqi national identity in the themes of each unit of the "*English for Iraq*, preparatory students' book" for the 4th, 5th, and 6th levels.

### **Categories of the Study**

The category is the Iraqi national identity which is included in the themes, paragraphs, and illustrations in the 4th, 5th, and 6th English for Iraq preparatory student's book.

### **Unit of the Analysis**

The unit of analysis is the themes, paragraphs, and illustrations of English for Iraq preparatory students' book.

### **Definition of Terms**

**National identity:** it is a " person's identity or sense of belonging to one state or to one nation " (Ashmore et at., 2001).

It can arise as a direct result of the presence of elements from the common points in people's daily lives: national symbols, language, the nation's history, national consciousness, and cultural artefacts (Kelman, 1997).

**English textbook:** it is a textbook that entitled. " English For Iraq (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>) preparatory student's book."

**Secondary school:** The secondary education has three levels, i.e. 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. (Al-Khayyat, 2015)

**Theme:** The theme is any group of words that provide the reader/learner with information or description about a specific country, characters, or place such as

information about the life in China, or description of the ceremony in Canada or description of the Italian food. (Al-Khayyat, 2009:55)

**Illustration :** Illustration is any photo, map, diagram, or chart of character, place or/and subject, which provide the reader/ learner with information about a specific thing such as, a photo of a camel carrying goods. Such photos inform the reader that the Camels are the way of transportation in the past (Ibid: 55).

### **Limits of the Study**

The content analysis is limited to *English for Iraq* 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book which are taught in public schools in Iraq in the academic year 2018-2019.

### **Introduction**

As the English language becomes an international language, English language learners all over the world try to reach what calls " Native-like" speaker. To learn a foreign language means to adopt its culture, system, and identity (Al-Khayyat, 2010).

From the researchers (in the present study) experiences, the foreign language learners focus on learning the target culture which help them to master the language system, and this thing affects learners' identities.

Teaching English language contains two outcomes, the linguistic and the nonlinguistic. The linguistic outcomes contain language system, morphology, phonetics etc. whereas, the nonlinguistic outcomes contain the EFL student's perspective, motivation, culture, and identity. Most language researchers focus

on the linguistic outcomes more than the nonlinguistic outcomes. In fact the nonlinguistic outcomes are also important to be considered in teaching the target language. The learners need to know their culture and the identity, and also the target language, in order to be able to use the foreign language in an appropriate way. Concerning the relationship between EFL learning and learner's identity, Warschaure (2007) states that language has a great role in the shaping and expression of learner's identity. Pavlenko (2003) investigates the relationship between "National Identities" and foreign language learning "Policies and practice". She states that opposing "social and cultural values" of educators' national identity hinders the applicable learning of a target language. Also, if cultural values of the foreign language are in struggle with those of the students' national identity.

Talebi (2000) finds that there is no relationship between learning a foreign language and belonging to national identity. Mahnaz and Mohammad (2014) investigate whether or not the "identity studies in language teaching have come into existence due to social turn. Results revealed that the learners performed differently on national identity.

Zacharieas (2010) highlights the notion that in order to learn a foreign language, the learner needs to get rid of the national identity and culture, and adopt or replace the target language identity. In fact learning a foreign language is not just to learn the grammatical system, but also to learn the non linguistic

aspect such as culture, identity, norms, etc., it is what Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) call "reconstruction of selves".

The EFL teachers need to acknowledge the identities of learners. (Ibid, 2010:30), Zacharias finds that foreign language identity is affected by two factors. The first one is the teaching methods, and the second one is the textbooks, the textbooks are the concerned of the current study. A textbook plays a major role in enhancing or not the language learner identity. To explore the identity options accommodated in EFL textbook, Shardakova and Pavlenko (2004) find that the textbooks provided very little identity options for learners.

### **Population and the Sample of the Study**

The Population of the study is all *English for Iraq* Textbooks. The sample of the study consists of the *English for Iraq* 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book which are taught here in Iraq in the academic year 2018-2019.

### **Reliability of Content Analysis**

The researchers follow the following steps to ensure reliability of content analysis:

- 1) The researchers analyzed the themes, paragraphs, and the illustrations which are presented in the students' books.
- 2) The researchers repeated the analysis after five days from the first analysis by using the same units and categories of analysis. It was found that the consistency was (0.96) which indicate a high coincidence between the two analyses.

3) The researchers asked one of their colleagues who has experience in analyzing students' textbook, the same units and categories of analysis were used. The consistency was (0.95) which was considered acceptable.

### Results of the Study

The researchers analyzed the Iraqi Identity as follows:

Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of Iraqi identity included in *English for Iraq* 4<sup>th</sup> preparatory student 's book concerning themes, paragraphs and illustrations.

**Table 1:** The Frequencies and Percentages of the Existence of Iraqi Identity in the Themes, Paragraphs, and Illustrations.

Items	Total Occurrence	Frequencies	Percentages
Themes	67	6	8.95
Paragraphs	175	24	13.71
Illustrations	202	19	9.40
<b>Total</b>	444	49	32.06

Table 1 shows that the inclusion of the Iraqi national identity in the student's textbook is very low with total percentage 32.06. Concerning themes, the Iraqi identity has been mentioned 6 times, which represented 8.95 of the total themes in the 4<sup>th</sup> preparatory students' textbook. Out of 175 paragraphs, only 42 paragraphs included or referred to the Iraqi identity, that means 13.71. The Iraqi national identity is also included in a very low frequency, out of 292 photos, figures, and stickers only 19 illustrations represent the national identity. Out of 444 themes, paragraphs, and illustrations the Iraqi national identity was included 49 times, that represent 32.06.

Table 2 presents the frequencies and percentages of Iraqi identity included in *English for Iraq* 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book for the level of themes, paragraphs and illustrations, were concerned.

**Table 2:** The Frequencies and Percentages of the Existence of Iraqi Identity in the Themes, Paragraphs, and Illustrations.

Items	Total Occurrence	Frequencies	Percentages
<b>Themes</b>	71	7	9.85
<b>Paragraphs</b>	218	36	16.51
<b>Illustrations</b>	155	26	16.77
<b>Total</b>	444	69	43.13

Table 2 shows that the inclusion of the Iraqi national identity in the student's textbook is medium with total percentage 43.13. In the level of themes, the Iraqi identity has been mentioned 7 times, which represented 9.85 of the total themes in the 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's textbook. Out of 218 paragraphs, only 36 paragraphs included or referred to the Iraqi identity, that means 16.51 of paragraphs include Iraqi national identity. Out of 155 photos, figures, and stickers only 26 illustrations represent the national identity. Out of 444 themes, paragraphs, and illustrations the Iraqi national identity was mentioned 69 times, that represent 43.13.

Table 3 presents the frequencies and percentages of Iraqi identity included in *English for Iraq* 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book for the level of themes, paragraphs and illustrations.

**Table 3:** The Frequencies and Percentages of the Existence of Iraqi Identity in the Themes, Paragraphs, and Illustrations.

Items	Total Occurrence	Frequencies	Percentages
<b>Themes</b>	59	5	8.47
<b>Paragraphs</b>	150	16	10.66
<b>Illustrations</b>	190	10	5.26
<b>Total</b>	399	31	24.39

Table 3 shows that the inclusion of the Iraqi national identity in the student's textbook is very low with total percentage 24.39. In the level of themes, the Iraqi identity has been mentioned 5 times, which represented 8.47 of the total themes in the 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's textbook. Out of 150 paragraphs, only 16 paragraphs included or referred to the Iraqi identity, that means 10.66 of paragraphs include Iraqi national identity. Out of 190 photos, figures, and



stickers only 10 illustrations represent the national identity. Out of 399 themes, paragraphs, and illustrations, the Iraqi national identity was included 31 times, that represent 24.39.

### **Discussion of the Results**

To answer the question of the study "To what degree do themes, paragraphs, and illustrations in *English for Iraq* 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's book include Iraqi national identity? " the frequencies and percentages revealed that there is shortage in the representation and inclusion of the Iraqi national identity in the *English for Iraq* preparatory students textbooks for the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The most themes, paragraphs, and illustrations represent foreign identities. As mentioned in the introduction, it is important to highlight the national identity when learning a foreign language.

The shortage of including the Iraqi national identity may due to the fact that the authors of the student's books are foreigners, and the themes, paragraphs, and illustrations that refer to the Iraqi national identity have been added by the editing and revising committee in the Ministry of Education in Iraq.

Following are examples of the themes that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 4<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's textbook:

- 1- At the Hotel in Baghdad.
- 2- Mosul.
- 3- Restoring the Garden of Een.
- 4- Eid Al-Adha.
- 5- Following are examples of the paragraphs that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 4<sup>th</sup> preparatory student textbook:

- 1- The capital of Iraq is Baghdad.
- 2- Filling application form.
- 3- Iraqi airways.
- 4- In Iraq, the bride wears white to symbolize purity.
- 5- History of Iraq.

Following are examples of the illustration that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 4<sup>th</sup> preparatory student textbook:

- 1- Iraqi airways.
- 2- Photos of hotels in Baghdad.
- 3- Postcard from Iraq, Baghdad.
- 4- History of Iraq.
- 5- Wedding customs.

Following are examples of the themes that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory student textbook:

- 1- A famous Iraqi artist.
- 2- The environment- oil and gas in Iraq.
- 3- Ramadan in Iraq.
- 4- Babylon Festival.

Following are examples of the paragraphs that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory student textbook:

- 1- Zeinab Hashim – Iraq
- 2- Born in Baghdad.
- 3- Al-Shorja/ Souq Alsafafeer/ Animal Market- Basra.
- 4- Magazine article about Babylon.

Following are examples of the illustration that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's textbook:

- 1- Ramadan in Iraq.
- 2- Babylon Gate.
- 3- Al-Shorja/ Souq Alsafafeer/ Animal Market- Basra.
- 4- Ahwar/ green oil and gas company / Rumeila.

Following are examples of the themes that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's textbook:

- 1- The Euphrates River.
- 2- I've been coming here since 2009 to Iraq.

3- Meet one of the most popular architects in the world- Zaha Hadid.

Following are examples of the paragraphs that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory student's textbook:

- 1- The Euphrates River.
- 2- How long have Steve been coming to Iraq?
- 3- A car loan ... 2 million Iraqi dinars.

Following are examples of the illustrations that reflect the Iraqi national identity in the 6<sup>th</sup> preparatory student textbook:

- 1- Zaha Hadid.
- 2- Babylon lion.
- 3- Happy travel to Iraqi ancient sites.
- 4- 25.000 Iraqi Dinar.

### **Conclusion**

It can be inferred that the Iraqi identity has included in a very limited percentage in the "*English for Iraq* preparatory students' books". Whenever there is a theme refers to the Iraqi national identity, its paragraphs and illustrations include the Iraqi identity. So, one cannot find a photo or paragraph stand alone to include information about the Iraqi identity, on the other hand, there are many information that stand alone and refer to different international identities.

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