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A study of the representations of otherness in Iranian children's and young adult's literature

This study has firstly endeavored to present a review of the concept of otherness. To do so, I have attempted to show the origin as well as the changes this philosophical concept has gone through during the past three centuries, in order to provide a somehow complete theoretical understanding base of the study. Secondly, different types of otherness, which were introduced in advance, are tracked down in Iranian children's and young adults' literature. Here a sample consisting of thirty fiction stories were studied through a deductive qualitative content analysis to decide what kind of otherness do exist in Iranian children's and young adults' literature. Thirdly, in order to show how otherness and other characters are represented in the samples, I have analyzed the texts of the stories using a reflective content analysis method, with a descriptive-interpretative approach. The results reveal that other characters show a low profile in Iranian children's and young adults' literature and that the voice of others is not loud enough. Along with the limited presence, the actions of other characters are also limited due to the fact that they are marginalized people with a low degree of power. Though in some stories self/other relationship is mostly based on conflict, there are some representations of self/other relationship based on interaction, acceptance, empathy and friendship

Keywords: Otherness, other, representation, Iranian children's and young adults' literature, fiction.