

Analysis of Gender Representation in English Language Learning Materials: The Case of Grade Ten Textbook in Ethiopia

Mebratu Mulatu Bachore^{1,*}

¹Department of English Language and Literature, Hawassa University, Ethiopia

*Correspondence: Department of English Language and Literature, Hawassa University, Ethiopia. E-mail: mebratumulatu@gmail.com

Received: May 2, 2022

Accepted: July 11, 2022

Online Published: August 1, 2022

doi:10.5430/jct.v11n5p175

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v11n5p175>

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to explore gender representation in grade ten English textbook. The study employed content analysis approach which was based four categories of analysis such as language use, visibility/illustrations, occupational roles and firstness. The units of analysis were words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, passages, stories and illustrations in the materials. The data was analyzed in frequency count and compared using Chi-square test to determine the level of significance of the differences obtained between the masculine and feminine groups observed in each category. The findings disclosed that females were underrepresented in language use (particularly in proper nouns and common nouns used), visibility/ illustrations (images and pictures) and occupational roles mentioned in the text. In addition, males dominated the first position (firstness) in dialogues, points of view opinion, common noun pairs, pronoun pairs and proper name pairs. On the contrary, males were underrepresented in the adjectives and pronouns used in the text book. In general, the textbook was characterized by unfair representation of gender in all aspects.

Keywords: gender, representation, text book, English language

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

It has been long time since gender issues has become one of the concerns to ensure comprehensive development in the world. Specifically, having equality of rights between men and women to access education, job opportunity and various administrative roles has been a point of discussion among scholars. However, many people and nations perceive males as “more socially and economically valuable than females” which denies the rights of women to participate and to be fairly represented (Craenest, 2015). Yet, it is believed that the differences between men and women in the developed world are predominantly present in the work field and within the family roles.

However, existing literature and popular views pronounce that gender gap is much larger in developing nations, where women are often discriminated against in terms of basic issues such as education, healthcare, economy, politics and nutrition etc. Yet, conventions have been adopted across concerning the equal and fair gender participation in any local and global activities across the world. As a legally binding exercise, women’s rights are being implemented all over world continents. Ethiopian is one of the countries that accepted human right convention as it also constitutes gender equality.

Literally, in Ethiopia the issue of gender participation has been articulated in the national curriculum that supposed to increase equality in both gender participations. It is mere fact that the country is striving towards representing feminist participation equal with their counterparts. The same right and fair opportunities between both male and female is encouraged in the areas such as representation in political positions, administrations, businesses and the right to educations. One of those world conventions utters this as curricula and teaching materials remain gender-biased to a large degree, and are rarely sensitive to the specific needs of girls and women. This reinforces traditional female and male roles that deny women opportunities for full and equal partnership in society. Lack of gender awareness by educators at all levels strengthens existing inequities between males and females by reinforcing discriminatory tendencies and undermining girls’ self-esteem (Brugailles and Cromer, 2009). There are indications

that gender equalities in many aspects lag behind the expected practices particularly in textbook representations.

1.2 Gender, Curriculum and Schools

The school curriculum is normally considered as a potential channel to impart values and acceptable ways of behaving in the society (Gabriel Nizeyimana et al., 2022; Steck and Perry, 2017). Gender is one of the social construct by which the society can be described. It is obvious that gender is common in all society, but the beliefs related to it vary among the societies. This results in gender stereotypes which are reflected and portrayed in various sectors of society including the school curriculum.

Many scholars (Longwe, 1998; Gabriel Nizeyimana et al., 2022) argue that schools are social institutions which are dominated by male culture. Due to this, they are very much prone for perpetuating gender inequalities among the students and individuals in the society through power relations within schools, pedagogy and representation of male and female roles in textbook and learning materials. In the same vein, Mutekwe et al. (2013) underscores that due to the teachers' behavior and attitudes towards male and female learners in the classroom, boys and girls experience differential worlds in the same classroom even when learning the same subject. Thus, the school curriculum plays a key role in helping learners to develop of gender identity and gender-based behaviors. This is also supported by Crawford & Unger (2004) who pointed out that the interaction of school curriculum (both the formal and the hidden) and the instant social environment help the learners to develop gender identity.

On the other hand, the gender identity which is constructed in the school environment has a very huge potential to change the gender attitude of the learners and the society at large. Regarding this, Tantengco (2014) asserted that the school curriculum can be a vehicle for engaging boys and girls to understand gender issues and practices not only within the school context but also within their social context. Therefore, a gender responsive curriculum is instrumental in providing a basis for understanding the specific needs and welfare of males and females, identifying gender biases, sharing information and forming a network of classmates with a strong commitment to advancing gender equality and equity (Gabriel Nizeyimana et al., 2022; Tantengco, 2014). Thus, curriculum developers should curiously think about and address gender issues at all stages of curriculum preparation and implementation (designing, development, implementation and evaluation) so as to have gender responsive curriculum (Enrydice, 2010; Tantengco, 2014)

1.3 Gender and School Textbook

To ensure the learners' success in the academics, the school environment is expected to maintain gender equality (Chen and Wu, 2021; UNESCO, 2003). Apart from the teachers and the school administrations attitude towards gender issues, all resources and materials provided to the students should be free from gender biasness. Chen and Wu (2021) specifically listed down textbooks, images, reading materials, written assignments, or even test materials as school resources and material in which gender equality can be materialized in the school context.

School textbooks are tools which present knowledge and social values in the specific subjects. This impact the way learners perceive various social constructs including gender. That is why Campbell (2010) and Ullah & Skelton (2012) argue that representation and discrimination in school textbooks is important since it has an impact on learners' life choices as well as motivation. They further noted that students develop their self-esteem and identity according to the gendered role models they are exposed to. This view has been generated from the notion that curricula, which is manifested through textbooks (Griffith, 2010; Steck and Perry, 2017), hold the power to "naturally" orientate women towards certain careers.

There are also areas and features in which gender cases are represented in school textbooks. These include in text, images/pictures, examples, quotes, adjectives/ nouns, occupations that creates the impression that some activities are meant for men only and job of staying at home and doing house activities is meant for women. On the other hand, the issue of gender balance in textbook goes beyond maintaining equal number of men and women pictures, names, speeches or others, rather it further requires to carefully see the roles which are assigned to males and females in each cases. To underscore this, Chaudhary and Omar (2014) stated that if there is some picture given in the textbook containing images of men and women then it is very essential to know how the men and women are being portrayed i.e. number of men and women and role assigned to them.

Though many education and curriculum experts agree on the need to ensure gender equality, the question of "how" is still open for further discourse among the scholars. But, some scholars, (Durrani, 2008; Haleema Masud, 2017), boldly suggest to increase the number of female textbook writers as they ensure higher representation and frequency of female icons. They also noted that providing training to textbook writers is so vital to be more gender sensitive in their writing, language, illustrations and content of the textbooks that can help in improving the status of girls and

women.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Among teaching learning materials, learners' textbooks play prominent roles in the overall education process. Textbooks have been produced in millions and disseminated to both commercial centers and schools in Ethiopia. In those text books, gender is one of the social attribute which is used to represent various concept, phenomenon and activities exist in the society. Thus, its representation in school textbooks is getting the attention of many scholars in the area of education and social development.

Scholars define gender in many ways. For the purpose of this research, "Gender" is a social attribute which is considered as masculine or feminine particularly depicted in language (Sunderland, 2006, pp. 20). And, one of the potential areas which gender characteristics demonstrated is language. For instances, gender in language is characterized by linguistic and communicative forms. The linguistic features are nominals, pronominals, adjectivals, verbals and adverbials representations (Sunderland, 2006; Gee, 2005; Butler, 2004; Saarikivi, 2012; Syela, 2018; Butler, 2003; Baxter, 2003). On the other hand in communicative/ features, gender is represented in social and occupational roles associated with masculine or feminine gender. Particularly, scholars indicate maleness and femaleness are shown in the learners' textbooks with nouns, title, firstness, occupation, hegemony and visualization. Supporting this view, Craeynest (2015) also explains characteristics such as physical appearance, personality traits, attitudes and interests, social relations, and occupations may also define what it means to be a male or female.

On the other hand, gender representation is the way for depicting both genders (female and male) in a textbook. The equity of depictions with respect to balance or imbalance is assumed as fairness treatment of gender in the context (Yang, 2014; Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2003). It is for assessing representation of males and females in pictures or texts. Imbalance or unequal representation is that one particular sex was predominant and the other poorly represented in the texts and or pictures. Balance or equal representation is both of gender quiet or same depictions in the textbook.

Most people conceive that men are more dominant than women in power, in occupation, skills, in temptations and the like (Pillely, 2013; Wondifraw Dejene, 2017). Likewise, students may hold this position due to representation stereotypes. Students' textbook are not only used as material source but also as means of achieving attitudinal changes among the learners. ELT textbooks, whose contents may represent cultural and social values like gender, are one of the learning resources which are used by English teacher and students in the classroom. If the textbooks may hold certain gender representation biases, this can bear impacts on learners' attitudes. This means that students learn language using the textbook, and language influences how they understand and interpret the world around and develop either positive or negative towards social issues like gender.

It is also believed that textbooks have to reflect balanced images and information about males and females and support broad choices and many roles for both sexes because the students are influenced by attitudes and values around them, including the values of the textbook which they learn in school. For example, representation by pronouns such as captain, doctor, inspector, minister, lawyer and teacher can enhance positional and professional attitudes of our learners. In many respects, gender is widely represented with language and visual elements in books as well as in textbooks in which cares should be taken to balance the two sex categories. However, it needs expertise and practices among academicians. After referring to literature sources and experts views, the current researchers have perceived these problems.

Many studies have been conducted on the issues like gender inclusions and biases in books in general and student textbooks in particular around the world. Some of those studies have found out positive/ balanced gender representations while others disclosed out unbalanced representations in different categories employed to determine gender representations. Unbalanced representations of gender were depicted by Demir and Yavuz (2017) and Sivasligil (2006). Sivasligil studied gender ideology in 6th, 7th and 8th grade ELT course books published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education. She indicated that there was an imbalance in the depiction of gender roles in almost all of the categories. Female characters were underrepresented in terms of frequency of appearance, amount of talk, representations in family roles and other social and occupational roles, distribution of household responsibilities and spare time and leisure activities in most cases. Another scholar, by Skliar (2007), as cited in the former Demir and Yavuz (2017)), compared the ELT course book series produced by Turkey's and Iran's ministries of education. He disclosed the imbalances in representations of women and men, and gender stereotypes in both of the series. Diktas (2011) also made similar inferences from the course book "My English-6" designed by Turkish Ministry of Education. Women were underrepresented in the illustrations and texts, in addition to the presence of gender discrimination in the categories of occupation, family activities, amount of talk, spare time activities and the

semiotic analysis of the illustrations.

In the Ethiopian context, Esayas Gebremedhin (2007), Mulugeta Yayeh (2019) and Solomon Melesse and Mulugeta Yayeh (2020) who conducted a study on Ethiopian primary school English text books. The study found out that females were underrepresented in the learners' textbook. However, there is no any local study on the ELT material at secondary level and the researcher sought to see if the case also exists in the level. In addition, the current study has included different categorical perspectives like to evaluate the proper consideration of gender representation in the textbook.

Thus, this study attempted to answer the following research questions focusing on grade ten English textbook to fill such a gap:

1. Are there fair gender representations through the language use (pronouns, proper nouns, common nouns and adjectives) in the textbook?
2. Are there differences in gender representation in illustrations and occupational roles used in the text book?
3. Are females and males placed fairly in first positions (firstness) in various contents in the text book?

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 The Text Book

Grade ten English language textbook was the material used to investigate the nature of gender representation in this context. The book entitled: "English for Ethiopia Student Textbook", was published in 2003 E.C. by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE). It has 251 pages containing twelve units. It consisted of both macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and micro-skills (vocabulary and grammar) in contents wise.

2.2 Rationale of Selection

The rationale behind selecting the material: English for Ethiopia Student's Textbook, is that the learner's text books often contain various texts, scripts and illustrations which represent the realities and practices that exist in the society. In addition, the reason for selecting grade 10 text book was that the learners in the grade level are at age (17 to 19) of developing gender identity and roles in the way they contribute to their future personality development (Birjandi, 2012; Gharbavi and Mousavi 2012). Thus, at this stage, the gender related lesson imbedded in textbooks might have a long lasting effect on the overall development of the learners.

2.3 Sampling Techniques

Many scholars (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Esayas Gebremedhin, 2007; Mulugeta Yayeh, 2019) suggest purposive sampling as a widely used technique in content analysis approach. In the case of this study too, the text book under consideration was not sampled in terms of chapters, passages, stories, and illustrations or other features. Rather, all parts and contents of the textbook were taken into consideration for analysis. The textbook contained 12 unites having various passages, dialogues and illustrations. Accordingly, all the contents in the units were thoroughly examined on the basis of the identified categories for gender based analysis.

2.4 Analytical Framework

2.4.1 Unit of Analysis

Before the analysis, according to Fraenkel & Wallen (2006), it is very important to sort out the units to be used for conducting and reporting the analysis. Thus, to carry out deeper analysis, the specification in each unit should go to the word level (the least unit) which has due potential to represent gender issues. Due to this, the units of analysis were words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, passages, stories and illustrations that denote messages about the different categories of gender representations.

2.4.2 Categories of Analysis

Categories are important elements which symbolize not only the group but also the different roles assigned to the specific gender group. Thus, the objectives of the analysis were also developed on the basis of the categories. Esayas Gebremedhin (2007) groups the categories in to two: occupational role and character trait. Whereas, Mulugeta Yayeh (2019) depicts two major evaluation criteria: nature of narrations and sensitivity of illustrations. In the first criterion, attention was given for issues of gender visibility, image and hegemony. Similarly, in the second criterion, occupational roles and power relationships were emphasized. On the other hand, the latest work by Solomon Melesse and Mulugeta Yayeh (2020) used five major categories or evaluation criteria. These are language use (focusing on

gender-related proper nouns, pronouns, and common nouns), illustrations (focusing on visibility), occupational roles, topic domination, and firstness. Hence, it is possible to note that though the categories suggested by various scholars are overlapping, the recent studies are coming up with additional elements.

Based on the suggestions of the above scholars, the current textbook was analyzed in four categories. These are Language use (focusing on gender-related proper nouns, pronouns, and common nouns), Visibility/ illustrations, Occupational role and Firstness.

2.5 Procedures of Data Collection

First, the textbook was accessed and made available. Then, a checklist having the main categories and units of analysis was prepared and duplicated. Then, gender related contents were imported from each unit (passage, dialogues, sentences and illustrations) of the textbook to the checklist carefully. Then after, the data was organized in the identified categories of analysis.

2.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The study employed purely a quantitative data analysis technique. Specifically, the analysis used both descriptive (frequency count and percentage) and inferential (chi-square) statistical methods. The descriptive statistical method was used to see the number of occurrences of different gender-related language issues, whereas, the inferential statistical method, i.e., the chi-square method was to test whether or not there existed statistical significant differences between male and female within the different categories of the study.

3. Results

3.1 Language Use (Pronouns, proper nouns, common nouns and adjectives)

3.1.1 Pronouns

Table 1. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of the Pronouns in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percent	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. (O-E) ² /E	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	269	47.6	282.5	0.64	1	0.25
2	Female	296	52.4	282.5	0.64		
	Total	565	100	565	1.28		

Table 1 shows the descriptive and inferential statistics of pronouns (he, she, him, her, his, himself and herself) in sex category. Accordingly, the frequency of pronouns representing males is 269 (47.6%) which is less than the frequency of the representation of females which is 296 (52.4%). According to this descriptive analysis, there are differences in gender representation which favored females. The level of significance was calculated using the chi-square test, and the results confirmed that the difference is statistically significant as the obtained value (1.28) is greater than that of the critical value (0.25) at p.0.05 and df= 1.

3.1.2 Proper Nouns

Table 2. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of the Proper Nouns in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percentage	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. (O-E) ² /E	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	225	54.9	205	1.95	1	0.048
2	Female	185	45.1	205	1.95		
	Total	410	100		3.90		

The above table illustrates gender wise representation of proper nouns in grade 10 ELT textbook. Thus, out of 410 proper nouns in the text, 225 (54.9%) and 185 (45.1%) represent males and females respectively. This reveals that the gender representation of the two sex categories in terms of proper nouns is unequal which favor males. Also, Chi-square test output confirmed that the difference was statistically significant since the obtained value (3.9) is greater than that of the critical value (0.048) at p.0.05 and df= 1.

3.1.3 Common Nouns

Table 3. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of the Common Nouns in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percentage	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. (O-E) ² /E	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	190	57.2	166	3.46	1	0.008
2	Female	142	42.8	166	3.46		
	Total	332	100	132	6.92		

Table 3 presents the statistical figure of common nouns used in the text book under discussion in gender category. Accordingly, 190 (57.2%) represent males, and 142 (42.8%) are female common nouns. In this case, males are better represented than females. The difference is also statistically significant because the Chi square value (6.92) is greater than that of the critical value (0.008) at p. 0.05 and df = 1.

3.1.4 Adjectives (beautiful, pretty, handsome, etc.)

Table 4. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of the Adjectives in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percentage	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. (O-E) ² /E	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	28	43.8	32	0.5	1	0.31
2	Female	36	56.2	32	0.5		
	Total	64	100	64	1.0		

The above table depicts the quantitative figure of the adjectives used in the grade 10 ELT text book on the basis of the gender they refer. Out of 64 gender related adjectives, 36 (56.2%) of them represent females and the rest 28 (43.8%) are male adjectives. Unlike in the other units of analysis, female are better represented by the adjectives than their counter parts used in the text. Also, the representation shows statistically significant difference as the Chi square test value (1) is greater than that of the critical value (0.31) at p.0.05 and df=1.

3.2 Visibility (in pictures, photos and images)

Table 5. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of Gender Visibility in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percentage	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. (O-E) ² /E	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	252	65.8	191.5	19.1	1	0.00
2	Female	131	34.2	191.5	19.1		
	Total	383	100	64	38.2		

Table 5 presents males' and females' visibility in the text book under discussion. Accordingly, the text book consisted of 252 (65.8) male and 131 female (34.2) pictures, photos and images. In addition, the Chi square test result shows that the difference between the two genders is statistically significant since the value (38.2) is greater than the critical value (0.00) at p. 0.05 and df=1. Thus, the result indicates that females were under represented in the illustrations and images used in the grade 10 ELT text book.

3.3 Occupational Roles

Table 6. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of the Occupational Roles Representation in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percentage	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. (O-E) ² /E	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	34	65.4	26.5	2.46	1	0.27
2	Female	18	34.6	26.5	2.46		
	Total	52	100	64	4.92		

Table 6 comprises the summary of the statistical outputs occupational roles assigned to males and females in the textbook under discussion. There were 52 occupational roles of 34 (65.4%) were assigned to males and 18 (34.6%)

were to females. When the difference was computed, it became statistically significant as the Chi square test value (4.92) is greater than the critical value (0.27) at $p=0.05$ and $df=1$. Therefore, males were dominated the various occupations mentioned in the text book.

3.4 Firstness (Bing Positioned in first place)

Table 7. Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-square out Puts of Firstness in the Text

No.	Category	Observed (O)	Percentage	Expected (E)	Chi-sq. $(O-E)^2/E$	Degree of Freedom	Critical value at 0.05 level
1	Male	56	56	50	0.72	1	0.23
2	Female	44	44	50	0.72		
	Total	100	100	64	1.44		

The above table illustrates the number of males and females appeared first (in dialogues, points of view opinion, common noun pairs and pronoun pairs, proper name pairs) in the textbook. Accordingly, males appeared in before females in 56 (56.0%) positions, whereas females were first in 44 (44.0%) positions. The difference is still statistically significant as the critical values (0.23) is less than the chi square value (1.44) at $p=0.05$ and $df=1$.

4. Discussions

Recent socio-cultural outlooks in relation to gender, subject knowledge and teaching materials suggest that the deep curriculum roots to gender and achievement are more affected by how gender values are privileged in subject communities in schools and how teachers mediate these gender values through their own pedagogical practice (Murphy 2008). This indicates way that gender issues are treated in the school teaching materials play a vital role in ensuring gender equality through imparting an implicit lesson. In the current study, the gender representation in the Grade 10 English text book was analysed based on the language use (focusing on gender-related proper nouns, pronouns, and common nouns), illustrations (focusing on visibility), occupational roles, topic domination, and firstness.

Regarding the proper nouns in the text book, the findings revealed that there are differences in gender representation which favored females. Unlike this finding, Solomon and Mulugeta (2020) conducted a similar study on grade 8 English textbooks, and disclosed that the pronouns in the ELT textbook dominantly represented the male category. Similarly, Mulugeta Yayeh (2019) and Nunoo et.al (2017) have a contradicting result with the current study. This implies that attempts have been made to bring gender balance in the language use in the EFL text book. However, the imbalance shifts from female to the male category. This finding suggests the need for reconsiderations on the preparation of an EFL textbook vis-à-vis language use. This is because, according to Blumberg (2007) and Gachukia and Chung (2005), the presence of a greater number of male or female nouns, pronouns, and common nouns could imply male hegemony which turn might propagate gender misconception and inequality in the society.

On the other hand, the gender representation of the two sex categories in terms of proper nouns is unequal which still favors males. This finding coincides with other local and global scholars (Birjandi and Amin, 2012; Gharbavi and Mousavi, 2012; Bahman and Rahimi, 2010; Gachukia and Chung, 2005; Healy, 2009; Solomon and Mulugeta, 2020) findings who uniformly confirmed that males dominated in language use, particularly in proper nouns in various students textbooks of different nations. Such biasness to masculinity may arouse learners to develop the sense of gender inequality which may in turn threaten not only the instructional processes but also the social interaction among the learners. Likewise, in the cases of common nouns, males are better represented than females. Scholars such as Solomon and Mulugeta (2020); Rudick (2010) and Anjarwati (2020) reported that text books are dominated by male common nouns such as man, male, boy, father, son, husband, brother, and uncle than female ones like woman, female, girl, mother, daughter, wife, sister, and aunt. Such dominances in learning materials can be perpetuated to the society at large. That is why scholars (Aguilar, 2021 and Muñoz López et al., 2014) states that ELT materials need to be aware of gender and language use and gender representations in order to foster gender equality in and beyond classrooms.

In the case of adjectives, unlike in the other units of analysis, female are better represented by the adjectives than their counter parts used in the text. Though the finding shows that attempts have been made, to ensure gender equality in using adjectives in the text, it disagrees with many scholars (Bahman and Rahimi, 2010; Brusokaitė and Gaigalienė, 2015) who disclosed that men were more accentuated than women in the adjective used in different text books. The finding implies that textbook writers are being directed to create gender imbalance which under represent

males instead of maintaining fair representation.

The other important category for gender representation in language learning materials is in illustration/visibility. The findings show that females were under represented in the illustrations and images used in the grade 10 ELT text book. The result was confirmed by many scholars (Craeynest, 2015; Darni' and Abida, 2017; Fahriany, Alek and Wekke 2018; Sathee, 2018; Anjarwati, 2020; Solomon and Mulugeta, 2020). They commonly stated that there were strong stereotypical images in the textbook that men dominate the public sphere. Also, they noted that there was uneven distribution of images which let men to dominate in every contextual input and exercises to be delivered to the learners.

Similarly, male's dominance is clearly manifested in the various occupations mentioned in the text book. In line with this finding, Aguilar (2021) disclosed that males were depicted in a larger number of visualized occupations than females; 13 jobs with respect to men compared to only six jobs for women. Similarly, Barton and Satwa (2012) analyzed an English language textbook frequently used in secondary education in Uganda and found that the textbooks showed inequity of gender representation in favour of men and that it is male biased as it largely maintains a traditional representation of gender roles characterized by women's invisibility and silence, their employment in domestic roles and lower rank occupations. In addition, Young (2014) found out that apart their representation in limited number of occupations, females were mainly portrayed in stereotyped professions such as cashier, secretary and nurse.

Finally, firstness which is about the position of males and females to appear in various language units (sentences, dialogues, phrases, etc.) was assessed. Accordingly, males significantly appeared in first position than their counter parts. When females are usually positioned after males, they feel offended, alienated or made to feel marginalized by this and subsequently demotivated (Söğüt, 2018; Hall, 2014). In addition, models of language may give the whole class a model of conversational discourse characterized by 'male firstness. Thus, when such type of positioning, "males firstness", occurs in the learning textbooks, it plays a key role in determining students' perceptions of female and male roles in society.

5. Conclusions

A balanced representation of female and male in ELT text books on the basis of different aspects like language use, visibility (pictures), occupations and firstness has crucial importance. The extent of the importance is not only limited to the classroom environment but also ranges to the society at large. That means such representations have a potential in determining the gender role and perception of certain society. The present study carefully scrutinized the representation of males and females in the Ethiopian grade 10 ELT textbook. In the text book, females were underrepresented in language use (particularly in proper nouns and common nouns used), visibility/ illustrations (images and pictures) and occupational roles mentioned in the text. In addition, males dominated the first position (firstness) in dialogues, points of view opinion, common noun pairs and pronoun pairs and proper name pairs. On the contrary, females significantly dominated males in the adjectives and pronouns used in the text book. In general, the textbook has unbalanced representation of gender in all aspects. Some aspects of the representations were dominated by males and others were by females. But, it is hoped that textbooks could serve as tools for change in the society, by integrating universal principles such as the principle of gender equality. Thus, text book writers need to be aware of such imbalances whose lesson can be perpetuated to the wider social environment and harm the overall social interactions.

References

- Aguilar, S. (2021). Gender Representation in EFL Textbooks in Basic Education in Mexico. *MEXTESOL Journal*, 45(1).
- Amini, M., & Birjandi, P. (2012). Gender bias in the Iranian high school EFL textbooks. *English Language Teaching*, 5(2), 134-147. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n2p134>
- Anjarwati, Dh. (2020). *Gender representation in the English textbook: A content analysis of Pathway to English for tenth grade senior high school*. Purwokerto: Erlangga.
- Bahman, M., & Rahimi, A. (2010). Gender representation in EFL materials: an analysis of English textbooks of Iranian high schools. *Procedia Soc Behav Sci*, 9, 273-277. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.149>
- Barton, A., & Sakwa, L. (2012). The representation of gender in English textbooks in Uganda. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 20(2), 173-190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2012.669394>

- Baxter, J. (2003). *Positioning Gender in discourse: A feminist methodology*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230501263>
- Blumberg, R. L. (2007). *Gender Bias in Textbooks: A Hidden Obstacle on the Road to Gender Equality in Education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Birjandi, P., & Amini, M. (2012). Gender Bias in the Iranian High School EFL Textbooks. *English Language Teaching*, 5(2), 134. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n2p134>
- Brusokaitė, E., & Gaigalienė, D. (2015). Linguistic Realization of Gender Representation in EFL Textbooks. *Man and the Word / Foreign Languages*, 17(3), 19-36. <https://doi.org/10.15823/zz.2015.9>
- Butler, J. (2004b). *Undoing Gender*. London, Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203499627>
- Campbell, E. (2010). *Women in the history's textbooks*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.com/reference/article/womens-history-textbooks/?page=4>
- Chen, H., & Wu, J. (2021). A Comparison of Gender Equality Education Curriculum in Primary School in China and Finland Advances in Social Science. *Education and Humanities Research*, 638(1). <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220110.202>
- Craeynest, V. (2015). Gender representations in EFL textbooks: A quantitative and qualitative content analysis (MA thesis).
- Crawford, M., & Unger, R. (2004). *Women and Gender: A feminist psychology* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill Companies, Inc.
- Demir, Y., & Yavuz, M. (2017). Do ELT course books still suffer from gender inequalities? A case study from Turkey. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 13(1).
- Diktaş, M. (2011). Gender Representation in EFL Coursebooks. *2nd International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications* (27-29 April, 2011) Antalya-Turkey.
- Durrani, N. (2008). Schooling the 'other': the representation of gender and national identities in Pakistani curriculum texts. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative*, 595-610. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920802351374>
- Essayas, G. (2007). *Gender Bias Analysis on Grade Five and Six Textbooks of Tigray Region*. A.A: AAU Press.
- Eurydice (2010). *Gender Differences in Educational Outcomes: Study on the Measures Taken and the Current Situation in Europe*. Brussels: European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.
- Fahriany, A., & Wekke, I. S. (2018). Gender Representation in English Textbooks for Islamic Junior High School Students. *Kafa'ah Journal*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.15548/jk.v8i2.221>
- Fithriyah, D., & Abida', I. N. (2017). Gender Bias in Elementary School Language Textbook. *International Journal of Gender and Women's Studies*, 130(5). <https://doi.org/10.15640/ijgws.v5n1a13>
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2006). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (6th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Gachukia, E., & Chung, F. (2005). *The textbook writer's manual*. IICBA, Addis Ababa.
- Gharbavi, A., & Mousavi, S. (2012). A content analysis of textbooks: investigating gender bias as a social prominence in Iranian high school English textbooks. *English Linguist*, 1(1), 42-49. <https://doi.org/10.5430/elr.v1n1p42>
- Griffith, A. L. (2010). Persistence of women and minorities in STEM field majors: Is it the school that matters. *Economics of Education Review*, 29(6), 911-922. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2010.06.010>
- Hall, M. (2014). Gender representation in current EFL textbooks in Iranian secondary schools. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(2), 253-261. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.5.2.253-261>
- Healy, D (2009). The representation of women and men in a modern EFL textbook: are popular textbooks gender biased? *Mem Osaka Inst Tech*, 54(2), 91-100.
- Holmes, J., & Meyerhoff, M. (2003). *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. Oxford, Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470756942>
- Jabeen, S., Chaudhary, A. Q., & Omar, S. (2014). Gender discrimination in curriculum: A Reflection from Punjab Textbook Board. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 36(1), 55-77.

- Longwe, S. H. (1998). Education for Women's Empowerment or Schooling for Women's Subordination. *Gender and Development*, 6(2), 19-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/741922726>
- Masud, H. (2017, October, 28). *Curriculum, Textbooks and Gender Stereotypes: The case of Pakistan*. Retrieved from https://worldsofeducation.org/en/woe_homepage/woe_detail/15405/curriculum-textbooks-and-gender-stereotypes-the-case-of-pakistan
- Mulugeta, Y. W. (2019). Analyzing Curriculum Materials from a Gender Perspective: Grade Eight English Textbook of Ethiopia in Focus. *Bahir Dar Journal of Education*, 19(2).
- Muñoz López, A., Cortés Cid, M. M., & Rodríguez, G. (2014). *Guía la para la incorporación de perspectiva de género* [Guide for the incorporation of gender perspective]. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores.
- Murphy, P. (2008). Gender and subject cultures in practice. In P. Murphy & K. Hall (Eds.), *Learning and Practice: Agency and Identities* (pp. 161-172). London: Sage/Open University Press.
- Mutekwe, E., et al. (2013). Exploring the Teachers' Role in the Social Construction of Gender through the Hidden Culture Curriculum and Pedagogy: A Case of Zimbabwe. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 37(3), 307-318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2013.11893229>
- Nizeyimana, G., et al. (2022). An Investigation of the Gender Responsiveness of the Upper Primary Social Studies Curriculum in Rwanda. *Rwandan Journal of Education*, 5(2).
- Nunno, D. P., Mensah, E., Adu, B., & Nunno, I. E. N. (2017). Analysis of Gender Representation in Basic Level English Textbooks in Ghana. *Journal of Science and Technology*, 37(2), 307-318. <https://doi.org/10.4314/just.v37i2.8>
- Pilley, P. (2013). *Gender Representation in Contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies Textbooks*. South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Ruddick, M. (2010). A Gender Analysis of an English Language Textbook Used in a Senior High School in Japan. *Niigata University of International and Information Studies Journal of Research*, 13, April 2010.
- Saarikivi, K. (2012). Gender representation in the Finnish EFL textbook series (MA thesis).
- Sathee, Sh. (2018). Gender Discourse in English Language Teaching (ELT) Course book (BA Research).
- Sivashgil, P. (2006). *Gender ideology in 6th, 7th and 8th grade coursebooks published by the Turkish Ministry of Education*. MA Thesis, Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey.
- Skliar, O. (2007). *Gender representations and gender bias in ELT textbooks published in the Middle East: A case study of ELT textbooks published in Turkey and Iran*. MA thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Söğüt, S. (2018). Gender representations in high school EFL coursebooks: An investigation of job and adjective attributions. *Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 18(3), 1722-1737. <https://doi.org/10.17240/aibuefd.2018.18.39790-471184>
- Steck, A., & Perry, D. (2017). Secondary school leader perceptions about the inclusion of queer materials in the school course curricula. *Curriculum Journal*, 28(3), 327-348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2017.1292180>
- Syela, A. (2018). The analysis of gender position in ELT textbooks for eleventh grade Students (MA thesis).
- Solomon, M., & Mulugeta, Y. (2020). Gender representation in educational materials: A focus on Ethiopian English textbooks. Retrieved 3 May, 2021 from <http://www.researchgate.net/publication/343571006>
- Sunderland, J. (2006). *Language and gender: An advanced resource book*. London, Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203456491>
- Tantengco, N. S. (2014). Assessment of gender equity in the secondary social studies curriculum: basis for a proposed guide in preparing gender fair instructional materials. *Standard Global Journal of Educational Research*, 1(3).
- Ullah, H., & Skelton, C. (2012). Gender representation in the public sector schools textbooks of Pakistan. *Educational Studies*, 39(2), 183-194. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2012.702892>
- UNESCO. (2003). *Gender and education for all: The leap to equality*. Retrieved from <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php>

Wondifraw, D. (2017). A Survey of Gender Representation in Social Studies Textbooks of Ethiopian Primary Schools. *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*, 21(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.9734/BJESBS/2017/32754>

Yang, C. (2014). Gender Representation in Hong Kong primary English language textbooks: A study of two widely-used textbook series (PhD thesis).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).