

A Discursive Analysis on Gender Biased Issues in the International ELT Textbooks

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Abstract

Although textbook is one of the traditional ELT material that playacts an authentic hazardous character in all English language classrooms, in the latest decades there has been a lot of controversies all over the ELT business on the real role of mediums in teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Other points that have appeared in these years encompass textbook designs and practicality, the authenticity of materials in terms of the appropriateness and equality of gender representation, and cultural components. This research is an attempt to scrutinize the representational method of genders in English learning book series, i.e., Face 2 Face Student Textbooks. To reach this end, of the four volumes of the English textbook series "Face 2 Face" were studied with a stress on the representation rate of male and female characters by conducting the content analysis of gender attributed lexicon such as names, nouns, pronouns, and adjectives to see if the two genders are equally distributed. Chi-squares based on five factors (female vs. male's characters, titles, order of appearance, engaging activities and, pictorial representation) as well as gender representation in conversation accomplished to determine the proportion and frequency of the male vs. female discrimination. The findings revealed that this series is significantly bearing sexism; Male is more foregrounded than female. Comparing with females, males are outstanding in many ways such as independence, status and occupations.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, ELT textbooks, Gender attribute lexicon, Gender bias, Social stature, Face 2 face text books

Introduction

The role of textbooks in EFL is one of the issues that provoked a lot in the realm of education over the last decades. Since it is by and large across textbooks that the target language culture and norms are known by learners. Literally, textbooks shape the core of almost all languages programs. They can be the foundation of language input that learners take and practice. This study focuses on the fact that textbooks also act as a bridge that conveys gender roles and values to learners. They instruct desired disciplines transfer in many cases minor information such as genders acting roles and social acting rate (Gershuny, 1977). Otlowski (2003) points out that there are various ways in which people are represented in social acts that may affect learners' perspective. By considering culture and its relation to language, it can be assumed that in many cultures, females have been treated unfairly (Mills, 1995). Therefore, the gender-based study in ELT material is inevitable for both educators and learners. Although sexism in ELT material is a very important issue, there has been less change since this has been widespread. Gender-bias can be examined from different point of views like female vs. male's characters, genders' social roles, domestic roles, utterance, titles, order of appearance, masculine generic construction, engaging activities and pictorial representation.

A few succedent researchists have attacked ELT textbooks for their natural social and cultural prejudices.

Scholars such as Carrell & Korwitz (1994) and Renner (1997) have displayed that many EFL/ESL textbooks yet entail widespread instances of gender-biased stereotypes and sexism. They define such gender-directed one-sidedness like: the approximate visibility of male and female characters, the irrational and bigoted descriptions of various genders as men and women, clichés containing social roles, vocations, relation types and acts as well as linguistic bigotry such as gendered English and sexist language. These findings and controversies have led researchers to this opinion that the undergoing spread of gender-biased or sex stereotypes in many English learning textbooks can mirror the disparate domination correlations that still exist between the male and female in many cultures, the prolonged marginalization of women, and the misrepresentations of compilers with a social panorama that is not compatible with recent realities of the target language culture (Sunderland, 1992; Renner, 1997).

It seems that this issue has not remained in the past after all researches and proposals, rather it keeps being existed inside many course books all over the world. Norova (2020) indicated that the lack of enough representation of women in the textbooks shows that the Kids' English 1-4 have sexist ideology as there is an unequal representation of men. With the representation of females being outnumbered, the textbooks can also be interpreted as promoting the superiority of males over females. not only is the sexist view seen in the image occurrences, but it can be seen in the domestic and social roles they perform. Khokhar (2020) is another researcher who has not remained silent to the representative role of genders in course books and how they can improve gender awareness in the society. Her study proposes that the textbook leadership in Pakistan must be got aware of the fact that the lack of female role models working in different fields in textbooks, is affecting the career and academic choices for women willing to continue their study at the postgraduate (higher) levels. The presence of woman-oriented role models will help the patriarchy to see successful women also contributing to keeping the family together and its socio-economic development, too.

Along with other theorists, Prodromou (1988) and Alptekin (1993) concentrated on the advantages of the target language culture as an alternative to teaching the language through textbooks and suggested that it was not really realizable to approach a language without appending it in its cultural field. Their reasoning is that such a flow unavoidably takes language learners to depute themselves about a culture on which they have little experience, and this can lead to stereotyping, detachment, or worse to disgust or hardness to learning that language. Like many scholars, Phillipson (1992) is attentive to the involved amalgamation between the target language culture including language textbooks from one side and on the other side he beholds the elevation of English global textbooks as government-supported investment with an economic and an ideological agenda. Also, Grey (2000) has upheld the sociocultural constituents of numerous books for language learning by offering them as real ambassadorial cultural productions that the language learners must critically engage their textbooks while considering them as a tool more than pure linguistic objects. He goes further and says that the language learners may make better their language proficiency by using these textbooks as effective tools for agitating talks, cultural disputation, and a mutual stream of information and knowledge.

Moderated representation of gender distribution in ELT textbooks can also be seen to state itself in the discourse contributions made by female and male characters in a textbook. A large number of analysis projects into variations in the word of men and women have been led over the last decades with different results (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 315-334). For example, Lakoff (cited in Holmes, 2001, p. 284-288) recognized linguistic features such as lexical hedges, intensifiers, and "super polite" grammar as being more frequently used by women, so contributing to their subordinate status to men (1975). In another example, Maltz & Borker's research (cited in Sunderland, 1994, p.61) displayed that men spoke more and spoke longer than women in mixed-gender conversations (1982). According to Sunderland (1992), language textbooks that attempt to represent male and female discourse as it is in real life as mentioned in the above researches would

only conclude restricting the practice opportunities of students. Thus, it becomes remarkable to find out that these differences are not transparent as well as universal, rather are influenced by factors such as age, class and ethnicity (Montgomery, 1986). Therefore, it can end up to this fact that a textbook that attempts to mirror realistic discourse character would only be representative of a small portion of society.

The project and layout of a course textbook relegates to its composition, adjustment and exposure of language ingredients as well as practices and the outcomes of the teacher-student assessments. Regardless of a few defects, all surveying has demonstrated that many participants indeed responded approximately positively to these aspects of the course books. One of the cryptographic questions on the course textbook's issues and social content depends on the exposition of the target language culture. A few scholars such as Prodromou (1988) and Alptekin (1993) put forward that the inclusion of unfamiliar subject matter and social constructs in English course textbooks has the potential to make realization problems or other critical cultural misreading owing to the objectivity that language learners might lose the proper schemata to render these foreign concepts accurately. Many upholders of authentic language classroom models have disputed that the matters with English course textbooks are not necessarily this act that they are either socially or culturally bigoted, rather they are simply too arranged and deep fictional in their exposure of the target language. They debate that it would be hopeless to introduce language learners to the too substantial traits of authentic real-life samples and models of both written and spoken discourse. They have demonstrated that many language models and dialogues scripted in course books are not natural and appropriate for communicative or cooperative language teaching for they do not adequately put up students for the types of pronunciation (Levis, 1999 ; Brazil, Coulthard, & Johns, 1981) as well as language structures, grammar, idioms, vocabulary and conversational rules, routines and strategies that they ought to use in their real-world practices (Yule, 1992; Cathcart, 1989).

Durrani (2008) directed a research to seek the ways by which textbooks and national curriculum made identities and gender reciprocally in Pakistan. She advanced her research via the representation of a particular Pakistani identity exemplar. Durrani (2008) disclosed also multi-dimensional aspects including national identity, inequality, power, socio-cultural heterogeneity etc.. Furthermore, gender bias was the focal point of her study and she noticed that males were depicted in superior roles as regards military and leadership whereas, women were limited to inferior ones. Also, girls were represented through only two womanly idols while the boys were represented through many religious reformers, conquerors and martyrs. Females in her research were made to be excluded from paid jobs out and their role was limited to being ideal women for care and nurture at home.

Khurshid, Gillaniz & Hashmi (2010) led a research to scrutinize gender representation in secondary school level textbooks through picture analysis and mentioned that the picture illustrating females had been reflected lesser with biased representation. According to concerned activities, women were mostly displayed to be involved in religious and domestic activities.

Azhar, Khalid & Mehmood (2014) carried out a corpus- based comparative stylistic analysis of British along with Pakistani English Fiction books aiming to examine gender representation in terms of attitude and status. They grounded their corpus on the examples of "she is" and "he is" tie-in with the complements proceeding them. Through the corpus analysis process with the help of Ant Conc, they discovered that the gender portrait was comparatively characteristic of the cultures it was related to. The outward of "he is" and "she is" in British English Fiction was moderated whereas the representation in Pakistani English Fiction was relying on the lowness of women and the superiority of men.

Of what all mentioned above, this research sounds logical to evaluate, as a first time, the other English course book Face 2 Face series for reading closely if this series is fair in representing two genders and compare it with the previous course books that have been evaluated. Thus this research is a foremost critical study examining gender

representation in English course book Face 2 Face in language institutions of Turkey. By examining this series, the study informs about the gender ideology represented in these course books and raises awareness of accountable bodies such as the textbook publishers, and the association of English teachers. To reach this end, 3 volumes of the Face 2 Face Student book set are chosen to analyse female's and male's representation in them. These textbooks were investigated in terms of names, nouns, pronouns and adjectives as well as pictures devoted to each gender. It tried to evaluate gender roles to see if they had equal and balanced representation.

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis

Francis & Hunston (1992) have stated that their system for discourse analysis is "flexible" and 'not intended to be absolute'. In analyzing the impact values of dialogues, there were so many examples where it was perceived that the model needed to be modified. For instance, when the model proposes that all exchanges need a minimum of the two elements I (Initiation) and R (Response) in order to be considered complete, the analysis presented in this research considers "I" in an Inform exchange to be sufficient to complete an exchange when a statement finishes and a new statement begins to signal a new Inform exchange (Coulthard and Brazil, 1992). According to Cook (2015), the foundation of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as an expertly determined discipline goes back to the late eighties of twentieth when it became as a programmatic development in European discourse studies administered by van Dijk, Fairclough, & Wodak (1997). Presently, it has appeared as one of the most influential fields of discourse analysis (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). CDA probes the relationship between linguistic options within the texts and conversations regarding to special socio-cultural contexts in which these texts and conversations work. According to Van Dijk (1999), CDA is mostly interested in considering the ways dominance, social power abuse and imbalance are reproduced, enacted and resisted by text and conversation in various social and political contexts. Therefore, it seeks to establish such aspects of social contexts that might act on

the aspects of a language. Since critical discourse analysis concentrates on how language as a cultural tool interfere with the correlation of privilege and power in social interactions, the researchers from the field of education have started using it as a means to interpret, portray or illustrate various educational problems, such as gender imbalance.

Lakoff (1973) is one of the pioneers who used critical analysis to display a sidedness embedded in spoken and written English texts. According to his findings, women were represented as powerless and marginal in the ways they spoke and were addressed. Fairclough (2001) is another researcher in the realm of CDA having a systemic functional theory. His three-dimensional model is one of the well-known approaches used in seeking for gender manifestation in ELT textbooks.

Characters

Primary characters, named, non-active characters, and non-active characters are three kinds of characters which can be tested to understand the relative size of men and women appear in the textbook in the study. The main character is an area where women are absent in the stories and reading texts.

Utterance (Gender Representation in Conversation)

An utterance is a set of vocabulary within a speakers' turn-taking in conversation. Utterances can be short as a word or long as a paragraph (Mineshima, 2008). According to Cincotta (2009), fewer women utterances can degrade this gender students of practicing language. Calculating all number of words by women and men can precisely demonstrate their speaking turn and time opportunities (Jones, Kitetu & Sunderland, 1997).

Titles

In the English language, there are titles used for men and women. For example, the most common of them is 'Mr.' for men. According to Lakoff, sexist language causes to social inequality of the genders as well as the married and unmarried state in a society (1973). Thus, utilizing titles in which the marital state of the women is highlighted causes sexism and

as Thorne and Henley puts out (1975) “language and society cannot be simply detached, so the acceptance of this title (Ms.) sounds to be tough”.

Appearance in Order

By order of appearance in this study, we mean placing men (names, titles, ...) before women terms. As widespread, whenever there is a situation in which male and female terms should take a place, this is male ones that come first. According to Mills, the firstness of the order of male terms is another bias that shows the unequal treatment between men and women (1995). “Husband and wife, he and she, men and women” are some stable collocations that can be exemplified (p 56).

Engaged Activities

Studies by figures like Helinger (1980) show that males and males and textbooks are engaged in various activities and professions while women are not represented in any of them. Furthermore, the activities in which women are engaged to seem to have interior position compared with men.

Pictorial Acting

Pictorial acting or representation is the visibility of men and women in pictures in textbooks accompanying with solid texts so that they make comprehension easy. Therefore, gender images as much as the messages in the texts can affect learners’

attitudes, values and treatment (Peterson & Lach 1990, Lee & Collins 2008).

Method

This research makes use of a quantitative approach in which the frequency number of women and men attributing terms was examined. To bring to light if women and men are reflected equally in the four volumes of the Face 2 Face Student book second edition of Turkish language institutes, the whole of textbooks, the only materials used in this study, were scrutinized. The illustrations were counted, too. For this purpose, checklists were filled out to collect data from the conversation and pictorial representations in these textbooks in terms of gender-related concepts. Chi-square was utilized to tabulate the raw data statistically. Statistical data were analyzed from various points of view, such as female vs. male’s names, nouns, pronouns and adjectives, order of appearance in conversations and, pictorial representation.

Results

Analyzing tabulated raw data concerning if gender attributed lexicon such as nouns, pronouns and adjectives referred to women and men have balanced frequencies in four Face 2 Face Student textbooks displayed the results subsequently.

Table 1 Frequency of Gender Attributed Lexicon. Names, Nouns, Pronouns and Adjectives of Males & Females in Vol. 1,2,3 and 4. The Numbers Represent Observed Value. (M= Male & F= Female)

Volume	Gender	Names	Nouns	Pronouns	Adjectives	Total
Vol. 1	M	205	110	264	127	706 (66.5%)
	F	151	62	70	74	357 (33.5%)
Vol. 2	M	188	135	233	87	643 (72.5%)
	F	93	54	79	21	247 (27.5%)
Vol. 3	M	109	76	134	45	364 (70%)
	F	45	31	65	16	156 (30%)
Vol. 4	M	85	47	96	32	287 (73%)
	F	32	27	38	12	106 (27%)

Table 1 display the total percentage of gender attributed lexicon such as all names, nouns, pronouns and adjectives of men (66.5%) compared to (33.5%)

for women in the Elementary volume (vol.1) of the Face 2 Face English textbook series. At first glance, it can be claimed that without hesitation there is male

priority over female considering the points under investigation. In addition to this, Chi-square test was applied to prove the result of these frequencies. Chi-square equals 114.582 with $df = 1$. The value of two-tailed P is less than 0.0001. By traditional standard, this difference is remarked to be extremely statistically significant at $p < .05$. In Pre-intermediate volume (vol.2) this distributed percentage for male is (72.5%) while for women it is (27.5%). Therefore, in volume 2. the attributed number of names, nouns, pronouns and adjectives is imbalanced. The used Chi-square test confirms this with the chi-square of 176.198 with df equal to one. The two-tailed P value is not more than 0.0001. By traditional criteria, this difference is remarked to be extremely statistically significant at $p < .05$. The presence number in Intermediate volume (vol.3) for male is (70%) while for female this percentage is (30%). So, the frequency and collected percentage of gender attributed lexicon (nouns, names, pronouns and adjectives) in this case show that males outnumber females, too. To support the above-mentioned outcomes, the result of Chi-square test is remarked as 83.200 for chi-square with 1 degree of freedom. The two-tailed P value is not more than 0.0001. By traditional criteria, this difference is remarked to be extremely statistically significant at $p < .05$. In Upper intermediate volume (vol.4) the total percentage and frequency of gender attributed lexicon name, nouns, pronouns and adjectives for male is (73%) while for female it is (27%). This means that without any doubt males have been given supremacy over females regarding the frequency and total percentage under investigation. Chi-square test used to confirm this initial finding as chi-squared equals 83.361 with 1 degree of freedom. The two-tailed P value is not more than 0.0001. By conventional criteria, this difference is remarked to be extremely statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Table 2 Frequency of Pictorial (Pictures of Male and Female) in Face 2 Face Series Male & F= Female)

Pictorial	Male	Female	Total	χ^2	Sig.
Vol. 1	53	32	85	11.879	.0006
Vol. 2	41	24	65		
Vol. 3	37	23	60		
Vol. 4	29	25	54		
Total	160	104	264		

Throughout this investigation, it was also analyzed to see whether women and men have equal pictorial representation in the Face 2 Face English textbook series. Table 2 summarizes the pictorial frequencies of male and female. Both inferential and descriptive statistics were used, then it came out that males and females do not bear equal pictorial occurrences in the texts investigated. Chi squared equals 11.879 with 1 degree of freedom. The two-tailed P value equals 0.0006. By traditional standard, this difference is remarked to be extremely statistically significant at $p < .05$. Thus, the results were the ground to assert that there exists an imbalance in pictorial presentation between males and females in which males have been presented more than females.

Table 3 is the other finding of this investigation that shows the rate of male and female representation frequency in mutual conversation in the Face 2 Face series.

Table 3 Chi-square of Male and Female Frequency Rate (Representation in Conversation Parts) in Face 2 Face Series

Equal Relations (X-Y)	Female	Male	χ^2	Sig.
X	32	39	1.06	.303
Total	68	68		

As shown in Table 3 the Chi-square statistic with Yates correction is 1.0609. The p-value is .303013. Thus, this diversity is remarked to be intensely statistically not significant at $p < .05$. This means that there is no a significant difference between male and female representation in conversation parts of the Face 2 Face series.

Multiple-factor investigation of the Face2 Face textbook series displays that gender bias is well-

rooted in their content. Findings also prove the assertion by Azhar, Khalid and Mahmood (2014), Durrani (2008), Khurshid, Gillaniz and Hashmi (2010), that their undertaking textbooks are packed with gender bias. It can be a subliminal organized manipulation of the content or on purpose, in either ways both genders have been presented in a way by which females appear to be inferior to males. Gender prejudice is outward in all domain of life represented in the textbook, but the household roles or activities. So, neither males nor females have equally been represented in the textbook even in such activities as can be seen proper for them. Furthermore, inactive activities have been attributed to females and active activities to males. In addition, restricting females to domestic tasks only presents stereotypical as well as male-centered behavior against females.

Discussion

This research was to study the representation of male and female as two different social actors in Face 2 Face textbook series, (Redston & Cunningham, 2013), by drawing on Lakoff's (1973) Language and woman's place and Fairclough's (2001) three dimensional model. By considering the over all results, it can be seen that there were unfairly prejudiced attitudes towards the role of two genders in terms of social activities in the textbook. The findings related to the exclusion and inclusion of the males and females manifested that they were almost unequally taken, while males were included almost more than females. Moreover, men were included and represented as more premier, visible, active, and dominant people than women in the textbook.

One reason for this sort of representations of social actors might be the writers of the textbooks who think the stereotypes represent some sort of norm that they likely should fit. For example, in some societies, men are considered as more attached in home-rule or a powerful normative beheld in which men must have potent motives to appear strong and impassive. Then, it is not a surprising coincidence that these stereotypes are strengthened in some other ELT textbooks namely Top Notch, Pathway and Summit, resulting in gender bias. Furthermore, women are inclined to place themselves as impotent in some society especially in patriarchal and religious

ones as can be seen in Khokhar's (2020) and Norova's (2020) researches, so they refuse positions of dominance from which they might successfully hale their meanings into discourse with a hope for their success (Lakoff, 1975). This can lead to another reason for the above detection of the study. Not only are the results of the study along with ELT textbooks, but even it can be seen the same flow in basic education course books such as Aguilar (2021), Demir & Yavuz (2017), Sogut (2018), and Bhatti & Mukhtar (2020).

According to Sogut (2018), in the B level ELT coursebook by Turkish Ministry of National Education, male characters are attributed larger number of jobs compared to female characters in all coursebook level and there are conversion of the representation of female and male characters among the proficiency levels beyond under-presentation of female characters. Her findings show that female characters are attributed more domestic and indoor jobs such as nurse, carpet weaver, waitress, housekeeper while male engage in more prestigious jobs such as astronomer, writer, mountain climber, professor, and so on. In her study, although there are some similar jobs (i.e., teacher, doctor, architect) attributed to both men and women, female and male characters in the coursebooks differ from each other in terms of both the number and variety of jobs attributed to them. On the other hand, the results of her study are in parallel with Demira & Yavuz's (2017) one in that men were relate to significantly more careers than women in "Yes You Can". The findings of her study stand in an opposite side in terms of the distribution of jobs and adjectives, and the results do not correspond to what Demir & Yavuz (2017) claim in which the coursebook embodies a very elaborately distributed, gender-inclusive language and representations. The reason underlying this various interpretation might well be the scope of the research studies; compared to Sogut, their scope was wider, and the main elements of their study were visibility in the illustrations, occupational groupings, domestic roles, household and out of home responsibilities, associated activities and sports, amount of talk, the dispersion of interlocutors, firstness, gender actually focused on in writings. In Aguilar's (2021) study, the findings are given away in two trends throughout the

three basic education course books. First, they show that males are noticeably more visible than females in terms of illustrations. Therefore, male characters are significantly more visible than females in terms of illustrations in the selected three EFL textbooks exclusively in Textbook 3 whose ratio of visibility of males as compared to females is more than twice. This finding, indeed, supports Cook's (2015) argument that there are still more male characters than female characters portrayed in language textbooks.

Aguilar's (2021) second trend indicated that females are slightly more represented than males in terms of photos as they were moderately more portrayed in three selected textbooks. Thus, his findings reveal a more balanced representation between male and female characters as compared to illustrations which demand some further investigation to find answers to some questions; "what causes the difference in presentation between photos and illustrations?" and "how are the photos and illustrations related to the authors' values and mindsets?"

Considering the variety of activities attributed to males and females, the results showed that males were represented in material, mental, strength, and leadership processes more frequently than females, though not very significantly. Besides, the nature of the actions in relation that males were activated to was more powerful, linking the males to high social activities. On the other hand, females were mostly associated with home activities and low status jobs. Their presence was more tangible in indoor stable activities, such as helping and care-giving roles. Marginalization of females and attributing them mostly to home activities may apply certain ideologies on L2 learners. Perhaps, this action will hold down them with the idea that males, including male students, are more powerful and genius than females. This type of representation might even amplify stereotyped views of male and female roles and their abilities among students, which is detrimental to L2 Learning (Lee & Collins, 2008).

Conclusion

This study investigated the representation of gender in four Face 2 face (Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Elementary and Upper-intermediate)

EFL course books for English language institutions in Turkey for language learners to specify whether the male's statue and female's statue are balanced. The aim of analyzing gender representation in these textbooks was to see if EFL textbooks facilitate in the education's aim to create an equal society in terms of gender and to add to the field of material evaluation and gender representation, since only a little attention has given on this issue. The main goal of this paper is to call into question the gender dissymmetry in English course books to inform educational officials to come up with required solutions. The significance of this study is that there is no other study aimed to evaluate the Face2 Face textbooks used in the context of Turkey by critically approaching EFL textbook analysis used in Turkey using Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional framework to critical discourse analysis. The quantitative analysis revealed that there is not impartial conduct with females and males in this series of textbooks. There is a considerable gender sidedness between the representation of females and males in the textbooks undertaken. Unfair representation of females in the textbooks proves that the Face 2 Face course books have a sexist ideology and deposits stereotypical agenda on them. This imbalance leads to the semi representation of women as marginalized and stereotypical position. This study also proposes that such non-equal representations of women could initiate a false reality about women and prevent the process of equal access in society for all. The areas that showed sexism were names, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and pictorial. In fact, in these areas, males outnumbered females. Regarding the frequency of male and female representation in conversation, it has been revealed that this area is not included in the sexism area. It means that in the frequency of male and female representation in conversation both genders, male and female are distributed equally in the textbooks.

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