An Analysis of Gender Visibility in the EFL Textbook for Grade 7 In Indonesia

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze an EFL textbook Grade 7 Middle School level book *When English Rings A Bell* published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic Indonesia. This research method includes illustration analysis, text dialogue and reading passages. This analysis uses Porecca's (1984) framework for the representation of male and female gender in the textbook. The result of the research based on descriptive qualitative analysis refers to: (1) gender visibility in both text and illustration, (2) female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogue and reading passages and (3) gender specific/neutral nouns that indicate in each category gender. The result show that the gender representation of women is lower than male in the textbook.

Keywords: Gender Representation, EFL Textbook, Textbook Analysis.

1   Introduction

Textbooks are a set of curriculum materials or curriculum documents presented in systematical order of content presentation, and they play a crucial part in facilitating the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Textbooks are used to give instructors the major teaching tools as well as to provide learning material for students. They are useful for them in planning and putting lessons into practice since they are texts that encompass the dominant cultural, intellectual, and political influences, according to (UNESCO, 2005 cited in Maufiroh and Lukmana 2020).

In its application, textbooks need to be analyzed and evaluated in order to identify the ideological contents as they provide in terms of ideals and ethics (Widodo, 2018 cited in Maufiroh and Lukmana 2020), and it is applied to analyze the text messages in the textbooks. In evaluating textbooks specifically for EFL textbooks analysis, the evaluation of it must consider social factors in addition to language-based themes like syntax, adjectives, and verbs. On the other hand, in the perspectives of value, textbook also contains a set standard value and norm of society and how the male and female is presented as depiction of values adopted by the society. one of the important aspects of the textbook analysis is the topic of gender representation.

Textbooks are commonly only seen as explanations for learning tools, including English textbooks, which only serve to support the development of language skills andknowledge and only instruct students to become familiar with the aim language and culture. Infact, many books contain gender stereotypes and even discrimination, and while these issues are viewed as minor by students and even teachers, they are not criticized or reviewed. We frequently see it in

textbooks, as when driving tasks are described as being performed by males; in the meantime, household and babysitting are entirely in the hands of women. Many people are unaware of how easily textbooks can be used as instruments to promote bias, especially genderbias, or expose gender stereotypes (Loan et al., 2010, cited in Maufiroh and Lukmana 2020).

Since the 1970s, studies on how gender is portrayed in English textbooks have been conducted by many researchers (Hartman & Judd, 1978; Lakoff (1973), cited in Mahnaz Hall 2014); Porreca (1984) also examined the problem of sexism in ESL materials; despite the fact that women make up slightly more than half of the population of the United States. She found evidence that sexism was still prevalent in ESL materials and noted that only half of the men are shown or acknowledged in the text and images. They believe that the usage of textbooks in the classroomcan have an impact on how gender problems are taught and learned. In addition, a team that published a book and included female authors was regarded as being of greater quality than a team that only consisted of male authors (Rifkin, 1998).

Several further studies also touch on this focus, some of which are Nagatomo (2010) made the decision to examine an EFL textbook she had written in 1994 in order to explore anyinherent sexism that her textbooks may have included. The study adapted Porreca's theoretical framework, which focused on presence, firstness, sexual equality, and gender stereotypes as well as Leiskin's theoritical framework, to look at some of the words of communicative superiority and social value in the research. Unlike the earlier study that provided as her reference (e.g. Hartman & Judd, 1978; Porecca, 1984), female characters in her book were more obvious and seem to be more involved in activities and exercises as well as images and conversations compared to male characters.

Three years later, Fatermeh Parham (2013) studied nine English textbooks used to teachkids in Iran. Using the CDA method, the study explored for inequality of gender, on both a micro and macro scale, in text, images, typefaces, colors, sizes, etc. As a result, and in contrastto some earlier findings, this study demonstrates that male and female have fairly equal presence in discussion. The findings of this study implied that conversation in EFL books for children have comparable visibility in conversations.

A year later, in her study titled Gender Representation in Current EFL Textbooks in Iranian Secondary Schools, Mahnaz Hall (2014) attempted to look at how male and female areportrayed in the Right Path to English I and II EFL textbooks used in Iranian secondary schools. The study implied that there is an imbalance or bias towards the portrayal of gender in the ELTcurriculum in Iran using two methodologies at once, quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis. However, this analysis also showed that there had been improvement ESL/EFL textbooks in Iran in terms of the proportion of balanced gender representation.

Indah Mutimatul Maufiroh and Iwa Lukmana (2020) also examined how gender was represented in the Indonesian EFL textbook. This study looked at gender representation in Indonesian senior high school English textbooks for the tenth grade that were written by Indonesian authors and distributed by the Minister of Education and Culture. This study included questions about how gender is represented in English textbooks for tenth grade senior high schools in Indonesia. Readings, conversations, and exercises that categorize gender representation and concentrate on the transitivity system were the subject of this study. In accordance with the findings of this study, gender stereotypes were no longer included grade ten SMA English textbooks in Indonesia.

Additionally in the same year, Nachipah Nunun, Yanty Wirza and Rd. Safrina Noorman (2020) examined how gender is represented in the grade 7 textbook for the middle school in Indonesia, *When English Rings A Bell* (Wachidah et al., 2013). Visual content analysis was the research methodology used, and it is provided with qualitative research methods. There are three

gender-specific categories: personality, place, and leisure activities. According to the findings of the study, men are more frequently represented in the workforce than women.

Numerous studies have looked at how gender is portrayed in various genres of literature, and it has become evident that the two genders have been treated quite differently or unfairly. Due to the fact that books have grown to be a significant component of education, everyone involved—students, teachers, curriculum planners, material writers, and other organizations with a stake in the outcome—must always evaluate and select books carefully (Nunun, Wirza & Noorman 2020). The previous study of the seventh-grade English book *When English Rings A Bell* (Wachidah et al., 2013) by Nunun, Wirza, and Noorman (2020) on the aspect of gender representation using visual content analysis, has discussed various aspects of sexism observed in their investigations, and this present study is examined in the hopes of gaining fresh insights and a better understanding of the issue of gender representational inequality by analyzing the current version of the same text book, *When English Rings A Bell* (Wachidah et al., 2017) for Grade 7 in Indonesia, and presents its justification by adapting Porreca's (1984) theoretical framework and using quantitative descriptive method.

2 Method

2.1 Unit of Analysis

The materials discussed are contained in the EFL Textbook Grade 7 Middle School level book '*When English Rings A Bell*'. This book was written by Siti Wachidah, Ph.D., Asep Gunawan, S.Pd., Diyantari, M. App. Ling. (2017) As well as illustrators are Priyo Trilaksono, S.Des and Muhammad Imam Khasan Taufik. This textbook was published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. There are 8 chapters in this textbook, each chapter consists of material in the form of dialogue with illustrations and practice questions. 6 chapters are analyzed regarding gender representation, especially in the images contained in the textbook. The number of various pictures or illustrations made us interested in researching the book from the aspect of gender representation.

2.2 Research Design

Qualitative descriptive methods used to analyze this textbook. Qualitative descriptive analysis refers to: (1) gender visibility in both text and illustrations, (2) female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages and (3) Gender specific/neutral nouns.

The illustration, dialog, and reading passage were examined using Porecca's (1984) framework:
1. Gender Visibility in Illustrations
2. Gender Visibility in Conversation Practice Dialogues
3. Visibility of Gender-Neutral Nouns
4. Visibility of Gender Specific Nouns

3   Research Findings

There were two steps to the study's methodology. The first step was to count the instances of males and females in the text and images. The data were totaled and calculated, along with the overall number of times that dialogues and reading passages discussed issues related to males and girls

This section presents the results of the analysis of the EFL textbook *When English RingsA Bell* using the Porecca's (1984) framework. The results are presented in tabular form showingthe visibility of female and male in illustrations and conversations as well as gendered nouns.

Table 1. Gender Visibility in Illustrations

	Male	Female	Total
Chapter 1	64	52	116
Chapter 2	19	16	35
Chapter 3	46	28	74
Chapter 4	35	29	64
Chapter 5	36	43	79
Chapter 6	26	17	43
	226	185	411

As presented in Table 1, female and male characters appear 411 times in 6 of the 8 chapters in the textbook. A comparison between female (185) and male (226) illustrations shows a difference (41) between the two genders. Although the results do not show a large difference, it still indicates that there is a slight numerical imbalance in the visibility of the maleand female characters in the textbook illustrations.

Table 2. Gender Visibility in Conversation Practice Dialogues

	Female to Female	Male to Male	Female to Male	Total
Chapter 1	10	12	16	38
Chapter 2	1	0	4	5
Chapter 3	2	1	2	5
Chapter 4	1	2	0	3
Chapter 5	5	3	2	10
Chapter 6	0	0	3	3
	19	18	27	64

As shown in Table 2, the visibility of gender in dialogue conversations shows a symmetrical result in conversations between genders. Conversations between women only appeared in 19 dialogues, while conversations between men only appeared in 18 dialogues. Meanwhile, conversations between female and male characters can be seen in 27 dialogues.

Table 3. Visibility of Gender-Neutral Nouns

	Number of Occurrence
Teacher	112
Friend	8
Guys	3
Everybody	5
People	9
Person	5

The speaker	8
Dear	1
Family	15
Student	5
Farmer	1
Parent	2
Winner	1
Hero	1
Children	1
Classmate	4
Baby	2
Everyone	1

Table 4. Visibility of Gender Specific Nouns

	Number of Occurrence
Female	86
Male	127

Table 3 and 4 show a list of gendered nouns in specific and neutral nouns. There are several occupations mentioned in the textbook, including those that are gender-specific: nurse and housewife. Other occupations, such as teacher and farmer, cannot be indicated by gender. Table 4 indicates that men have wider visibility in gender specific nouns than women.

The results of the analysis show that there is an imbalance in gender representation in the Indonesian EFL Textbook *When English Rings A Bell*. Although the difference is not significant, the results show that male have more roles and visibility than females. In terms of character visibility, male characters are more commonly found in image illustrations than female characters. Meanwhile, in the visibility of dialogue conversations, although the results show that women play more roles than men, this difference doesn't indicate a good result because the difference is very small.

In terms of pronouns, "You", "We", "Our", and "Teacher" are commonly used in reading texts. Gender cannot be ascertained in such sentences because they can be used equally to represent both male and female. Although, the reader must think that the sentence is addressing them and not for gender otherwise. As for the pronoun "Everybody" in the textbook, it refers to a male character because of the image used to describe the pronoun. This result shows the same result as previous study in the same book (Nunun, Wirza & Noorman, 2020).

4 Conclusion

The results of this textbook analysis show the same results as the previous study conducted by Nunun, Wirza and Noorman in 2020. There is an imbalance in describing gender in this textbook, where male have a wider role than female. This can affect students' stereotypes or thoughts about the roles of male and female in the real world. Under-representation of female characters has a negative impact on children's development and framing their attitudes about future roles (Hamilton et al., 2006 cited in Parham, 2013). For this reason, it is necessary to make improvements in describing gender representation in textbooks. Both teachers and writers should be aware of the gender bias found in textbooks. Textbooks are one of the main

sources of teaching materials for teachers andstudents. Thus, it is important to have an equal depiction of gender in the textbook so that students can develop ideas about gender balance and that all genders have equal opportunities.

In addition, it is also necessary to conduct further studies on the listening or speaking section of the EFL Textbook which is currently being used to find out about gender representation.

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