

Evaluating Gender Representation of an Indonesian EFL Textbook Entitled "English for Nusantara" Grade VIII: A Content Analysis

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Abstract

This study investigates gender representation in an eighth-grade English language textbook entitled "English for Nusantara" addressing two research questions: (1) What is the proportion of textual and visual occurrences of females and males in the textbook? (2) What are the common activities associated with genders? Indicators of gender representation from Porreca (1984), Lee (2014), and Qatawneh & Rawashdeh (2019) were combined, and data were analyzed using qualitative methods and content analysis. Findings are as follows: (1) Females are less represented in both textual and visual contexts. In the textual context, males are more frequently represented than females by 15.8 percent. Meanwhile in the visual context, males are more frequently represented than females by 2.8 percent, and (2) Females' activities, roles, and occupations are limited across various aspects, including a) educational, b) professional, c) social and family, and d) leisure. The imbalance in gender representation could impact students' understanding of gender roles and identities, potentially discouraging female students from pursuing varied professional or social roles and reinforcing restrictive gender stereotypes.

Keywords: textbook; gender representation; stereotypes; visibility; content analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Schooling plays an important role in shaping learners' views of gender (Davis and Willis 2010). Textbooks, considered reliable resources and used repeatedly by students in class and at home, are considered the second most important factor in the child's socialization process after the teacher (Riazi 2003). Textbooks have a significant impact on learners' knowledge development and perceptions of themselves and others by conveying covert and overt social values (Ndura 2004). In this sense, it is important that textbooks reflect balanced images and data about males and females and support a wide range of roles for both males and females, in order to avoid unfair bias and gender bias. However, Lee (2014) pointed out that gender bias is still present in textbooks. This can influence how students think about men and women. He also said that the content in textbooks encourages learners to participate in the behavior of the characters in the textbook, which in turn leads them to imitate behaviors that are normal for their gender.

Textbook authors' lack of understanding of gender equality has led students to wonder if their depictions are accurate and whether they are referring to something God has given them. According to Allana, Asad, and Sherli (2010), gender inequality is firmly entrenched as bias in textbooks, educational materials, and teacher-student interactions. When problems arise in society, schools play the role of socialization through textbooks. Without detailed explanations, students may be confused if their textbooks include such gender-specific questions. There must be an equal amount of male and female characters in textbooks since they greatly influence students' attitudes and actions about gender.

The textbooks teach students about gender norms and the appropriate and inappropriate ways to behave, claims Turner-Bowker (1996). Behavioral competencies are related to the development of good student characters such as religious, honest, disciplined, high responsibility, caring (cooperation, tolerance, peacefulness), polite, responsive, and reactive, (citizens who have high responsibility and have a positive contribution to civilization). Learners are expected to be able to apply what they have learned in various contexts, including themselves, their families, schools, communities, the environment, their nation, and the state, all within the framework of socialization and existence. The knowledge competency pertains to the ability to understand and apply specific facts, concepts, procedures, and metacognitive principles in the areas of science, technology, art, and culture. The skills competency is about the ability to think and act creatively, productively, critically, independently, collaboratively, and communicatively using scientific methods taught in schools and those learned from various sources. All three competencies work together to shape good learner character.

According to Pakula, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland (2014, pages 11, 15), classroom learning is usually not natural and is interactive. Some examples of this include teacher talk and interaction, students answering questions, and paired group interaction. Mixed-sex forms of classroom interaction can interpret texts by gender. For instance, when

teachers use identifiable patterns to address male and female students. Pakula, Pawelczyk, and Sunderland stress that most EFL teachers claim to only teach English, which suggests that most EFL teachers are unaware of gender and other social categories. Unconsciously, teachers engage students in the teaching-learning process.

This research aims to examine the gender representation in English for Nusantara, a textbook published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, with the purpose of helping teachers avoid social problems, such as gender bias, in their own textbook selection process and ultimately provide their students with the best possible education. This textbook was chosen for analysis by the researcher because it is used in many schools in Indonesia, particularly for VIII grade junior high school students.

After taking into account the research background mentioned earlier, the researcher decided to focus on studying the portrayal of gender in English Language Teaching textbooks. So far as this subject is concerned, the word "gender representation" refers to the textual and visual portrayal of male and female characters in the "English for Nusantara" textbook. "Represent" means to describe or depict something, to bring it to mind through portrayal, description, or imagination (Shorter Oxford Dictionary in Hall, 1997). Gender is defined as socially constructed traits of men and women (WHO, 2020). Gender representation is the depiction of these traits between men and women. This study broadens the scope of investigation by counting the proportion of female and male textual occurrences in the textbooks examined, the social and occupational roles assigned to males and females, and the common activities associated with genders. This is accomplished by examining the order of gender occurrence, the domain activities of gender, roles, interests, and adjectives that describe men and women.

In order to tackle this topic, the researcher drew on indicators of gender representation from Porreca (1984), Lee (2014), and Qatawneh and Rawashdeh (2019). In these studies, gender representation was analyzed by looking at the visual and textual forms of female and male characters, the order of their mention, the gender's activities, roles, and occupation of both male and female characters, and the order in which they were mentioned. To inform the exploration, we asked: 1) How common are female and male characters in the textbooks that were examined? and 2) What are the common activities associated with genders?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Textbooks

Definition of Textbook

It is ironic that educators who use textbooks the most are also the least equipped to assess their content and methodology or understand their goals (Williams, 1983, p. 251). The majority of educational institutions, educators, and learners rely heavily on their textbooks to direct and support them throughout the teaching-learning process. According to Kramsch in Chapelle (2015, p. 14), a textbook includes the publisher's and author's methods for incorporating language, culture, education, and real-world

representation for educational objectives. Put another way, a textbook is the construct, just like any other artwork. According to Hirschfelder, instructional materials have a major impact on students' knowledge and attitudes of others and themselves (Ndura, 2010, p. 143).

Apple and Beyer (1983) noted that textbooks significantly contribute to the dissemination of social beliefs and behaviors that are fostered and reinforced by education, as cited by Canale (2016, page 2). By exposing students to a certain cultural, social, and historical order, textbooks serve as platforms for ideological discourse and as means of socialization (Crawford, 2003 as referenced in Eriksson and Hjalmeskog, 2015, page 237). One of the most important roles that textbooks play in EFL classrooms, as pointed out by Bahman and Rahimi (2010, p. 273), is the transmission of linguistic norms and educational principles. Samadikhah and Shahrokhi (2014, page 121) reference Richard (2001) as saying that a textbook is a crucial part of any language curriculum. Additionally, textbooks aid teachers in arranging their teaching procedures, according to Richards and Renandya (2002), referenced in Batd and Elald (2016, page 62).

With regard to the research conducted by Cortazzi and Jin (1999) in I. It is possible to categorize various EFL textbooks according to their cultural context, as stated by Ke (2012, page 174). 1) one's own culture (or cultures), 2) one's intended audience's culture (often the US or UK), 3) one's own international context, and 4) one's own cultural understanding and proficiency. (p. 174).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Textbook

Richards (2001, pp. 255-256) includes a rundown of the pros and cons of utilizing textbooks. Depending on their use, textbooks may have beneficial and bad consequences in terms of context. Thus, the advantages of utilizing textbooks are as follows:

- a. Textbooks offer frameworks and curricula for the process of teaching and learning. Textbooks play a crucial role because the curriculum and frameworks are created and arranged methodically.
- b. Textbooks contribute to the standardization of instruction. By using textbooks, teachers may make sure that students learn the same material from different classrooms and that their comprehension will be assessed
- c. Across the board, the texts are of high quality. Textbooks are useful because they provide information that has already been tested and shown to be effective according to the steps of a systematic approach to learning.
- d. The instructional resources provided by textbooks are extensive. Supplemental materials including audio, videos, workbooks, cassettes, and comprehensive teaching guides are often included with textbooks. These materials provide a broad variety of useful tools for educators and students alike.
- e. Using textbooks is more effective for teachers since it allows them to focus on teaching instead of creating new materials.

F, Textbooks provide functional language models and inputs. Some educators may find that textbooks are a helpful resource, especially those whose first language is not English or who struggle to come up with appropriate linguistic content on their own.

g. Textbooks might be used to train educators. One possible medium for early teacher training is textbooks and teacher manuals. Considering that not all educators have backgrounds in the field, this is understandable.

h. Attractive graphics are a common feature of textbooks. The production and design standards of commercially available textbooks are quite high-tech. As a result, it can entice teachers and students to use textbooks.'

Despite the advantages of textbooks, Richards (2001, pp. 255-256) lists the following disadvantages of textbook use:

a. Some textbooks could include fake or misleading terminology. This language may exhibit characteristics not often seen in real-life language use, such as conversational style or text-based communication.

b. Inaccuracies in textbooks are not unheard of. Sometimes textbooks try to provide an idealized version of reality, while other times they don't do a good job of representing current events. Keep away from controversial topics if you want your textbooks to be used in a variety of contexts.

c. The needs of students are not always mirrored in textbooks. Because they are created for a global market, textbooks seldom reflect the needs and interests of students. Therefore, it is beneficial to alter the content of a textbook while using it.

d. The function of teachers in the classroom might be transformed by textbooks. The textbooks are the principal source for instruction and learning, but this also means that the role of the teacher will change or be reduced because of the textbooks. Another way of putting it is that the role of the teacher is limited to delivering the work of others.

Gender representation in school textbooks

We encounter the concept of 'gender' on a daily basis. A "social construction," or anything that emerges from social practice, is what "gender" is, say Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013). This differs from "sex," which is based on genetics. People 'do' gender; they learn, consciously and subconsciously, from infancy onwards to perform in ways that are expected of them based on their gender in all social interactions, including conversation, movement, dress, toy selection, and career choice. Gender is a social construction.

Musthapa (2012, p. 259) argues that socially prominent and ever-evolving ideological views and cultural norms may be reflected in how gender is portrayed in instructional materials. According to Titlly in Kalacy and Hayirsever, "inequality, on the other hand, occurs when an individual or a group is favored in a given situation." This suggests that gender bias is not based on biological gender traits, but rather as a product of social construction and societal norms that develop through time (2014, p. 1066). Textbooks may depict unequal treatment, which certainly affects both parts of sexuality, according to Millis (1995), quoted in Bahman and Rahimi (2010, page 273). Individuals may question if the representation in a textbook is inclusive and fairly represents the characteristics of both sexes. According to Kzlaslan (2010), referenced in Yang (2016), page 2, children's emotional and cognitive development might be affected by instructional materials that include gender stereotypes. According to Holmes, the

patriarchal system is an ideology and social structure that places men in a superior position, especially in terms of wealth and social status (2009, page 3). They say the patriarchal system controls how people live their lives. Therefore, patriarchy is the societal institution that is ultimately to blame for the fact that women still face discrimination. Gender inequality is increasing and occurs due to misconceptions about life and gender development in society. Furthermore, this also happens because our society lives in a patriarchal state, causing people to think that what exists and develops in society is given by God and everyone has to compete for it. In summary, textbooks should strive for an equitable portrayal of both males and females to prevent misunderstandings or misperceptions of either gender and to ensure that textbook users are not led to any misconceptions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research analyzes the representation of gender in the eighth-grade English language textbook entitled "English for Nusantara", published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. Using content analysis, the study focuses on 10 pre-established categories: (1) textual representation, including frequency of selected gendered words, feminine and masculine proper nouns, pronouns, and address titles; (2) order of mention for males and females; (3) visual representation, focusing on the frequency of female and male characters in illustrations; and (4) types of activities, roles, and occupations assigned to each gender across educational, professional, social/family, and leisure aspects. This approach aims to reveal patterns of gender bias and representation within the textbook.

FINDINGS

The first discovery is with the disparity between the textbook's verbal and visual depictions of the gender ratio. The second discovery has to do with the things that people often identify with the sexes. In the first discovery, which concerns the portrayal of male and female in textbooks, two kinds of representations are discernible. Both the written and graphic forms of representation are available here.

Gender Representation in the English textbook "English for Nusantara" for eight-grade Junior High School

Textual Gender Representation in the English textbook "English for Nusantara" for eight-grade Junior High School

In this text, we can observe five characteristics: 1) the frequency of specific gendered terms; 2) the frequency of male and female pronouns; 3) the frequency of male and female address titles; 4) the frequency of male and female proper nouns; and 5) the order in which male and female are spoken.

Tabel 1 Frequency of Textual Representation

Aspect	Male	Female
Frequency of selected gendered words	19 (33%)	37 (66%)
Frequency of male and female pronouns	213 (69,39%)	94 (30,61%)
Frequency of male and female address titles	15 (55,5%)	12 (44,5%)

Frequency of male and female proper nouns	125 (48,5%)	133 (51,5%)
Order of mention of textual male and female	20 (71,5%)	8 (28,5%)
Total	392 (57,9)	284 (42,1%)

The eighth grade English textbook at Nusantara, "English for Nusantara," has more references to men than women, both in terms of pronoun use and the sequence in which things are mentioned. According to what we can see in Table 1, this is correct. Despite this, there are a disproportionate number of female-noun and -proper noun users.

Visual Gender Representation in the English textbook "English for Nusantara" for eight-grade Junior High School

There are five categories within the visual context: 1) Frequency of male-individuals people picture (2) Frequency of in female-individuals people picture (3) Frequency of male group-people picture (4) Frequency of female group-people picture (5) Frequency of mix group-people picture.

Tabel 2 Frequency of Visual Representation

Aspect	Male	Female
Frequency of male-individuals people picture	30	-
Frequency of in female-individuals people picture	-	38
Frequency of male group-people picture	22	-
Frequency of female group-people picture	-	18
Frequency of mix group-people picture	184	167
Total	236 (51,4%)	223 (48,6%)

"English for Nusantara," the eighth-grade English textbook at Junior High School, has 2.8% more male presence in the text visuals than female representation (Table 2).

The common activities associated with genders

Educational Aspect

The educational aspect focuses on how the textbook portrays male and female characters in learning environments and academic contexts.

Tabel 3 Kinds of activity, roles, and occupation of male and female in educational aspect

No	Male		Female	
	Activity	Role & Occupation	Activity	Role & Occupation
1	Study in junior high school (p.25)	Student of junior high school (p.83)	Have an idea to create an ending to a story (p.98)	Student of junior high school (p.83)
2	Have an idea and solution to bring their own container to reduce the use of plastic (p.134)		Won international acclaim to their awareness campaigns (p.222)	Student of music class (p.242)
3	Have an idea to make a mini library in the house (p.159)		Telling a story at school events (p.252)	

In educational aspect, the activities of females and males are represented equally. This book contains many scenes in school, precisely in junior high school, but the

discussion is not about educational. And uniquely, the school level is only junior high school, marked by wearing a white and blue uniform. There is no high school or elementary level.

Professional Aspect

The professional aspect examines how male and female characters are portrayed in various occupations within the textbook.

Tabel 4 Kinds of activity, roles, and occupation of male and female in professional aspect

No	Male		Female	
	Activity	Role & Occupation	Activity	Role & Occupation
1	Caught fish at sea to support his living (p.125)	Fisherman (p.125)	Give an assignment (p.72)	Teacher (p.88)
2	Took all the trash out of the gutters (p.190)	Firefighters (p.190)		Security (p.123)
3	Put the elderly and young children on rubber boats. (p.190)	Soldiers (p.190)		Informant (p.226)
4	Work together to rescue the people (p.190)	The rescuers (p.190)		Assistant for online shop (p.259)
5		Singer (p.266)		Dancer (p.267)
6		Soccer player (p.267)		
7		The leader of a band (p.274)		
8		Sand miner (p.285)		
9		Scavenger (p.285)		

If we compare the professional lives of men and women, we see a much wider range of activities, positions, and vocations than we see in the realm of schooling. It seems that males are more likely to have access to a wider range of career choices than women are. Men are described as working and doing strenuous activities, such as firefighters, soldiers, sand miners, and others. While women are not represented in heavy roles or activities.

Social and Family Aspect

The social and family aspect explores how male and female characters are portrayed in familial and community settings within the textbook. This analysis sheds light on gender roles and expectations in social interactions and family dynamics.

Tabel 5 Kinds of activity, roles, and occupation of male and female in Social and Family Aspect

No	Male		Female	
	Activity	Role & Occupation	Activity	Role & Occupation
1	Talking about his past experience (p.28)	Father (p.42)	Tried to calm her son down (p.77)	Mother (p.77)
2	Helped practice music instruments at home (p.274)	Son (p.25)	Explaining about the plastic trash (p.186)	Sister (p.227)

Within the family and social aspects of the textbook that was studied, there is an equal representation of men and women in the activities that occur. Taking care of chores around the home and other domestic duties are examples of the kinds of social

and family activities that women are expected to participate in. A study conducted by Wu and Liu (2015) supports these results. The authors propose that women are disproportionately shown as doing domestic jobs, such as taking care of their family and providing nursing care. Alternatively, inside the family, men and women have equal status.

Leisure Aspect

The leisure section of the textbook delves into the many pastimes and leisure activities that the male and female characters partake in.

Tabel 6 Kinds of activity, roles, and occupation of male and female in Leisure Aspect

No	Male		Female	
	Activity	Role & Occupation	Activity	Role & Occupation
1	Win the marble in spoon race (p.34)		Win the kerupuk race (p.40)	
2	Played some games and joined the school parade (p.34)		Dressed as Cut Nyak Dien (p.50)	
3	Dressed up as Tuanku Imam Bonjol (p.50)		Have recommendation movies (p.159)	
4	Participated in a wheelchair basketball competition (p.123)		Have an idea to donating the books in an orphanage (p.159)	
5	Showing how to wash hands (p.136)		Have an idea to sell the books (p.159)	
6	Played football (p.199)		Watching YouTube about plastic in the oceans (p.205)	
7	Throwing in the river (p.199)		Showed up to help collect the trash (p.221)	
8	Cutting fingernails (p.246)		Cleaning up the island from plastic (p.222)	
9	Washing face (p.246)		Applying body lotion (p.247)	
10	Applying pomade/hair oil (p.247)		Wearing perfume (p.247)	
11	Brushing teeth (p.247)		Putting make up on (p.248)	
12	Using deodorant (p.247)		Combing hair (p.248)	
13	Playing basketball (p.255)		Write about how to sort out trash (p.150)	
14	Create a soccer field with a piece of stone (p.257)			
15	Keeper and player soccer ball (p.257)			

Male activity in the leisure aspect is slightly more varied. The activities are not much different. It's just that females do more indoor activities and males do more outdoor activities. The similarity between male and female is that they both like various games or races, and they both have the same passion to win a race. And another similarity between the two is that male and female both take care of the body, it's just that female beautify the body more, and male is only limited to taking care of the body.

DISCUSSION

The study found that "English for Nusantara," the eighth-grade English textbook at Junior High School, offers various representations of the sexes. This proves that gender discrimination is an ongoing issue. In both the text and the images of the textbook that was considered, there is an absence of female characters. Additionally, there is a limitation on the roles, responsibilities, and occupations traditionally associated with females..

Females are less represented in both textual and visual representation.

"English for Nusantara," a Junior High School English textbook for eighth graders, had gender imbalances when the evaluation was conducted. Neither the text nor the visual representations of the text have enough female characters compared to the number of male characters. In the context of the text, males have traditionally had the upper hand in three of the five characteristics listed. When referring to addresses, how often do you use male and female pronouns, and what order do you give the titles? However, out of the five characteristics, this is valid for only two of them, namely. The relative frequency of selected gendered words and proper nouns. Because of this, masculine characters appear in literature 15.8 percent more often than female ones. In contrast, males are shown around 2.8% more often than females in visual contexts.

This phenomenon is characterized by the fact that it is invisible to the naked eye. When females are less noticeable than males, or when males are less obvious than females, a phenomena called invisibility occurs (Sunderland in Mustapha, 2012). Sadker (1991) argues that the invisible hand idea is the most harmful kind of bigotry. Textbooks may contribute to students developing skewed gender stereotypes when they fail to fairly depict male and female characters. The omission of the female character in the textbook might send the message that her value and relevance are undervalued. Underrepresentation of women conveys the message that girls and their achievements are unimportant, as pointed out by Lee (2006).

Females' activities, roles, and occupations are limited

In the textbook, females' activities, roles, and occupations are depicted with limitations compared to those of males. While educational activities are represented equally for both genders, with scenes set mainly in junior high school, the professional roles are notably biased. Men are shown in a variety of strenuous and diverse occupations, such as firefighters, soldiers, and miners, whereas women are not depicted in similarly demanding or varied fields.

Social and family roles show women primarily in domestic settings, focusing on household chores and caregiving, which aligns with traditional stereotypes. This aligns with Wu and Liu's (2015) findings, which showed that women are more often portrayed as engaging in domestic tasks, such as taking care of the house and providing nursing and family care. Leisure activities also reveal gender differences, with females more often engaging in indoor activities and focusing on beauty, while males participate in more outdoor and physically active pursuits. Overall, females are portrayed within a

narrower range of activities, emphasizing traditional roles and indoor or domestic contexts.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the English language textbook for eight-grade Junior High School student entitled "English for Nusantara" still contain significant gender bias. This bias not only reduces females' representation but also limits students' understanding of the potential role of females in various aspects of life. This unbalanced representation can affect students' perceptions of gender roles and identities, so it is important for publishers and educators to consider gender equality in teaching materials presented in schools. Other researchers are advised to conduct follow-up research that includes textbooks at various levels of education and other subjects to see if this gender bias is a consistent pattern in teaching materials. Research can also focus on the impact of gender representation in textbooks on students' perceptions and attitudes regarding gender roles.

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