Investigation of gender representation in illustrations in Iraqi high school textbooks

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Abstract:

Textbook takes a vital role whereas gender is socialized in schools . The roles and responsibilities that men and women have in society should be presented to students in textbooks in a balanced way. The major goal of the current study is to examine gender representation in English textbooks that are taught in public high schools in Iraq and how illustrations are employed in the three English textbooks of fourth , fifth , and six preparatory grades. This study employs both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Thus, the data is collected by focusing on counting the number of occurrences of both genders in textbook ,and provide a qualitative examination of illustrations . The framework of Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis is utilized to analyze the data. that includes three dimensions; description, interpretation, and explanation.

The analyses of this study includes visibility in illustrations. The findings of both qualitative and quantitative analyses show that educational materials are both gender biased and conventionally stereotyped, despite the efforts of government to achieve equity in EFL textbooks.

It has proved from the results of the three selected textbooks that males have outnumbered females. Furthermore, the current research provides some pedagogical implications and suggestions that can aid to address the issue of gender unfairness in EFL educational materials .

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1. Introduction

Many researchers have been examining the influence of the issues of bias and various roles that two genders perform in textbooks. In general, educational institutions and books that are taught in schools are identified as the primary source whereas gender is interacted. Language is the mean in which both contact and interaction that not only facilitates learning but also fosters certain attitudes and beliefs of a soceity . Language is a crucial humanistic tool for creating and preserving any kind of social bond between individuals of distinct communities. Both learning and language processes are essential factors in the progress of a society. Thus, one of the main concerns in teaching materials is gender representation which is common around the world , not only in Middle East , when evaluating textbooks.

3. Critical Discourse Analysis

Wodak (2002) stresses that CDA relates to what is formerly known as critical linguistics (CL), which is emerged in the late of 1970s . Thus, CDA is an approach with multiple functions in which its uses are numerous and spread across numerous fields and sectors. It examines social issues like social injustice, prejudice, ideology, hegemony and power abuse by looking at the linguistic features of discourse and speech structures and comparing them with social cognition and structures. Since it studies the underlying connection among society and language , CDA is a theoretical interdisciplinary framework that includes a number of approaches from other fields and sciences(Wodak, R., & Meyer, M, 2009).

3.1 The prominent figures in CDA

1.Norman Fairclough   is a linguistic lecturer at the University of Lancaster in England's Department of Language and Modern English. His works include Critical Language Awareness (1992), Discourse and Social Change (1992), and Language and Power (1989).   Along with Critical Discourse Analysis, Media Discourse (1995), and Discourse and Contemporary Social Change(2007), Political Discourse Analysis was published in (2013). (2013) (Rosa & Coulthard (1996), page vii).

2. Gunther Kress is a professor of education who specializes in English language instruction at the University of London's Institute of Education. Rosa and Coulthard (1996: viii) mention some of his works which encompass; Social Semiotics (co-authored with R. Hodge, 1988), Reading Images (co-authored with T. van Leeuwen, 1990), Language as Ideology (co-authored with R. Hodge, 1993), and Learning to Write (1994) .

3-Teun A. Van Dijk   is a Professor of discursive Studies at Amsterdam   University in Netherlands. The worldwide journals of Text, Discourse and Society are founded by him. Rosa & Coulthard (1996, p. viii)   that Van Dijk edites four

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volumes of the Handbook that is based on Discourse Analysis (1985), News As Discourse (1988) as well as Racism and The Press (1991) and Elite Discourse and Racism (1993).

Discourse is viewed by Van Dijk as means by which ideas and belief systems enter the awareness of a population. He establishes it at the point where sociopolitical and cognitive levels overlap. He focuses on racism in particular and tries to pinpoint and describe the social and linguistic patterns that the media uses to reproduce it (Siapera, 2010:pp.119).

  4-Theo van Leeuwen He is currently works as a lecturer in the School of Media at the London College of Printing and Distributive Trades in England. He produces a collaborated work of "The Media Interview" (with P.Bell ,1994) and Reading Images (also with G.Kress), (Rosa& Coulthard, 1996: viii). His experience in film and television has an impact on him that highlight the full semiotic nature of discourse rather than just text (2013) (Flowerdew: 182). He is a CDA expert who proposes a model for analysis. His CDA model aims to identify and analyze the marginalization of a group or an individual in a discourse. He suggests that language reflects ideologies. So that different ideologies can be exposed, (Syahrul, Zulfadhli, & Adek2019:305;)

 5- Ruth Wodak is an Austrian university professor and the director of the department of applied linguistics. She has written several books entitled Language, Power, and Ideology (ed.,1989). Her areas of interest in research comprise studies of gender , discrimination and prejudice, text linguistics, and speech in political. (Wodak (2007): vii).

Wodak and her companions have significantly contributed to the field of study of time in discourse processes. Her "Discourse-Historical Approach" examines the evolution of discourse across time and seeks to take into consideration the historical context of discursive events.(Richardson (2010): 13).

4. Methodology

  Mixed-method is used as a technique for data collecting and analysis. It is stated that using both quantitative and qualitative approaches rather than just one can assist in getting a fuller view and a greater understanding of the results of the research .

5. Data Analysis
1. Visibility in illustrations

The current study aims to answer the following question: 1. How are two genders presented visual content throughout English textbooks that are taught in Iraqi high school ?

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Since many researchers have analyzed EFL textbooks , the issue of gender visibility in illustrations is regarded among the most commonly ways   which are used to evaluate textbooks. The first impression of learners may be difficult to change or even erase from their

memories with each new contact. The first interactions are crucial, especially if they are connected with illustrations. If one gender appears more or less frequently in pictures compared to the other, the underlying message might be that this gender is unimportant in actual life. In their study, Eckert and MacConnell (2003) observe that both images and words get the same importance in tackling the issue of gender representation in textbook. Furthermore, Lavender and Vanstone(1991) state that "... pictures have an impact beyond the surface they communicate." In other words, illustrations can be an extremely effective teaching tool in terms of quantity, assignment, and content in order to design a textbook that is both gender balanced and illustrations presented equally. The findings demonstrate the need to evaluate all EFL teaching resources that are given to Iraqi students and expose pupils to resources in which the images present two genders equally.

  Males and females' relative visibility in the photographs has been counted quantitatively and then some pictures are analyzed qualitatively. Through examining the three selected textbooks females are less depicted in illustrations than males. The total number of males' visibility in the illustrations is 259 with 69% percentage . While females, on the other hand, appear 134 times in the illustrations with 31% percentage.

Book	Male		Female		Total
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
4th preparatory	94	75%	32	25%	126
5th preparatory	83	62%	51	38%	134
6th preparatory	82	73%	31	27%	113
Overall Total	259	69%	114	31%	373

Table 1 Distribution of visibility in illustrations

 In terms of the total visibility of participants in the illustrations throughout fourth preparatory textbook, 75% are male, 32% are female. So, Male's visibility is extremely high in this textbook, whereas female's visibility is extremely low. Thus, the visibility of both genders is not equal. In a comparison to male characters, the characters of females are explicitly underrepresented.

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wsgfemale characters. Here again, the visibility of men is more than female representation in images . The researcher tallies 83 images for men and 51 illustrations for women. So women are less frequent than males in illustrations.

As in the previous textbooks, in sixth preparatory textbook too, men are depicted in most photos with 73% while women have a visibility of 27% of the total images .Male characters are

more visible than females. So males still dominate and outnumber females in terms of frequency.

According to the visual analysis that is present in Figure 1 below , it is apparent that fourth preparatory textbook present more males than females. By 43%, males have outnumbered females. Thus, it can be stated that there is a significant decline in the number of females' illustrations with 25% percent while male's get 75% percent .As it is shown in figure1 below.
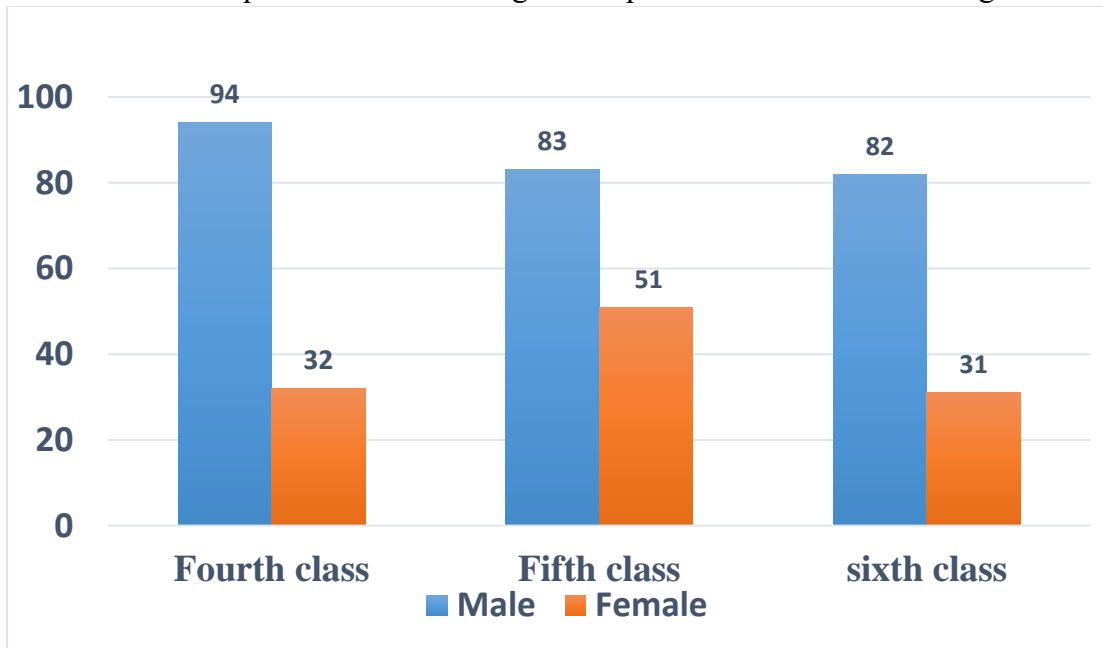

Figure one Total frequency of visibility in illustrations
In terms of illustrative number, it is apparent that the selected textbooks are all in favor of males over girls in their representation. It can be determined that the designers of these textbooks are not very systematic in the distribution of illustrations between males and females. Since men are represented more than their counterpart. So, the   representation of men is dominant in whole levels in images of two genders . Moreover, some images reveal particular stereotypes to both men and women in these chosen textbooks.

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Men seem to appear in active contexts with high authority like being a banker , and police officer whereas women are depicted in more passive positions , such as waiter or flight attendant . So, it is clear that current textbooks tends to show women typically performing conventional household activities whereas men are depicted various positive situations like being a businessmen.   The findings , further , agree with the results of several other studies which are conducted to show gender representation in illustrations in ESL/EFL textbooks (Ansary and Babaii 2003, and Amerian and Esmaili 2013) and others. They have uncovered the dominance of men in the visibility in photographs.

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التحقيق في تمثيل الجنسين

في الرسوم التوضيحية في كتب المدارس الثانوية العراقية

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الكلمات المفتاحية : الرسوم التوضيحية ، كتب المدارس الثانوية العراقية.

الملخص :

يعد الكتاب المدرسي وسيلة أساسية للتثقيف بالتنوع الاجتماعي في المدرسة. لذلك ، يجب عرض الأدوار والمسؤوليات التي تقوم بها الذكور و الإناث في المجتمع بشكل متوازن. الهدف الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة هو التعرف على طريقة تمثيل التنوع الاجتماعي في كتب اللغة الإنجليزية المدرسية التي تدرس حاليا في المدارس الحكومية في العراق و الكيفية التي استخدمت بها الصور في ثلاث كتب مدرسية للصف الرابع والخامس و السادس الاعدادي .

هذه الدراسة استخدمت كِلا التحليل الكمي والنوعي . لذالك فقد تم جمع البينات من خلال التركيز على إحصاء وتيرة الحوادث لكِلا الجنسين في الكتاب المدرسي ، و توفير مُعاينة نوعية للصور .   هذه الدراسة استخدمت نظام فيركلوف (1989) للتحليل النقدي للخطاب وذالك بالاعتماد على ثلاث ابعاد : الوصف , التفسير , و الشرح.

التحليل في هذه الدراسة يعتمد على الرؤية في الرسوم التوضيحية. نتائج كِلا التحليلين الكمي و النوعي تُبين بأن التحيز الجنسي و الأفكار النمطية لا تزال موجودة في الكتب المدرسية لطلاب اللغة الإنكليزية في المدارس الإعدادية العراقية , على الرغم من جهود الحكومة لتحقيق مساواة في المواد التعليمية .

من خلال النتائج لثلاث كتب المختارة فقد تم اثبات بأنً اعداد الذكور فاقت الأناث . علاوةً على ذالك , الدراسة ايضاً توفر بعض الاثار التربوية و التوصيات التي تساعد في تقليل من مسألة عدم المساواة بين الجنسين في مواد التعليم في كتب اللغة الإنكليزية.

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