

**THE REPRESENTATION OF GENDER EQUITY IN EFL TEXTBOOK: AN ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE USE AND VISUAL DEPICTIONS**Vanessa Angelica<sup>1</sup>, Rika Mutiara<sup>2</sup><sup>1,2</sup>Universitas Esa UnggulEmail: [vanessaangelica@gmail.com](mailto:vanessaangelica@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [rika.mutiara@esaunggul.ac.id](mailto:rika.mutiara@esaunggul.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki bagaimana gender digambarkan dalam hal penggunaan bahasa dan penggambaran visual dalam sumber daya pendidikan ini. Sejumlah penelitian telah menyoroti prevalensi bias dan stereotip gender dalam buku teks di berbagai negara dan konteks pendidikan. Berangkat dari penelitian sebelumnya, penting untuk mempelajari kesetaraan gender dalam buku teks EFL dengan menggunakan analisis yang lebih komprehensif dalam hal penggunaan bahasa dan penggambaran visual. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif dengan analisis konten untuk menganalisis dan menggambarkan data yang dikumpulkan. Peneliti mengadaptasi kerangka kerja Porreca tahun 1984 tentang representasi gender ke dalam berbagai aspek seperti penghilangan, keutamaan, pekerjaan, kata benda, dan kata sifat dalam Buku Teks EFL berjudul “Bahasa Inggris untuk Nusantara Untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VIII” yang diterbitkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesetaraan gender masih kurang terwakili dalam buku teks ini. Kemunculan karakter perempuan lebih rendah daripada karakter laki-laki dalam hal teks dan ilustrasi. Selain itu, stereotip gender ditunjukkan dengan jelas dalam kategori peran pekerjaan dan kata sifat.

**Kata Kunci:** Buku Teks Bahasa Inggris Sebagai Bahasa Kedua (EFL), Kesetaraan Gender, Representasi Gender.

**Abstract:** This study aims to investigate how gender is portrayed in terms of language use and visual depictions within these educational resources. Numerous studies have highlighted the prevalence of gender biases and stereotypes in textbooks across different countries and educational contexts. Departing from previous studies, it is important to study gender equality in EFL textbooks by using a more comprehensive analysis in terms of language use and visual depictions. This research used descriptive qualitative research with content analysis to analyse and describe the collected data. The researcher adapted Porreca's 1984 framework about gender representation into various aspects such as omission, firstness, occupations, nouns, and adjectives in an EFL Textbook entitled “English for Nusantara Untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VIII” published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The result showed that gender equality is still underrepresented in this textbook. Occurrences of female characters are lower than male characters in term of text and illustrations. In addition, gender stereotyped shown clearly in occupational roles and adjectives categories.

**Keywords:** EFL Textbook, Gender Equity, Gender Representation.

## INTRODUCTION

The representation of gender equity in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks is an important area of research within the field of education. Gender equity refers to the fair and equal treatment of individuals, regardless of their gender (Mihira et al., 2021). In the context of education, it entails eliminating biases and stereotypes related to gender and providing equal opportunities and resources for all students. Gender equity in education is a significant issue as it directly impacts the overall development and success of students. Unequal representation in textbooks can perpetuate gender biases and reinforce stereotypes, which can lead to negative effects on self-esteem, aspirations, and academic performance (Aydınoğlu, 2014; Yang, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial to examine the representation of gender equity in EFL textbooks to ensure a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Numerous studies have highlighted the prevalence of gender biases and stereotypes in textbooks across different countries and educational contexts (Andini et al., 2023; Barton & Sakwa, 2012b; Siregar et al., 2021; Yang, 2011). These biases can manifest in various ways, such as the under-representation of women in leadership roles, the reinforcement of traditional gender roles, and the portrayal of women as passive or dependent (Paudel & Khadka, 2019). In Uganda, a widely used EFL textbook is overtly gender biased, maintaining a traditional representation of gender roles characterized by women's invisibility and silence, employment in domestic roles and lower-rank occupations, and a negative portrayal of their emotional state (Barton & Sakwa, 2012b). This is guaranteed by the fact that positions in Ugandan society continue to be substantially gendered, with men and women adhering to conventional gender standards. The analysis of two Saudi EFL textbooks in Aljuaythin (2018) indicated a gender inequity in favor of males, which resulted in the portrayal of women as marginalized and stereotyped. It revealed that gender disparity could generate a false reality about women and impede the process of achieving equality for all individuals. Unlike in EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia and Uganda, Yang (2011) discovered that the phenomenon of gender stereotyping in Hongkong EFL Textbook is not prominent in the illustrations in the selected books of either textbook series because females were not frequently depicted as wearing dresses or wearing pink, a 'feminine' color.

As the understanding of gender relations grows, the Indonesian government has incorporated gender mainstreaming programs into educational components. The Indonesian government has developed severe norms and evaluations for the education system. For gender

equity policy, see Ministry of Education and Culture No. 84, issued in 2008, outlining guidelines for implementing gender balance in education. It stipulates that each unit of work in the education sector be connected with gender implementation. As a result, Indonesia has gradually developed gender equity through high-quality textbooks but still gender bias persists in some English textbooks. For example, a previous study by Siregar et al. (2021) has shown gender inequalities in textbook content. The presence of men and women inequality can be noticed when male characters are portrayed in a wider range of career sectors since males have more diverse employment than women. Another study by Andini et al. (2023) revealed that there is a significant imbalance of gender representation in EFL textbooks for Senior High Schools in Indonesia. It demonstrates that the majority of female roles are related to the traditional attitude in society, such as just conducting more housework while a male is superior in sports, manual labor, or outdoor activities.

This present study looked over some previous studies about gender equality such as Apsari et al. (2022); Maesaroh et al. (2022); Septiani & Sidqi (2022a). Previous studies about gender equality have shown that the depictions of males and females in domestic roles and activities are still stereotypical. Most of the results have shown that there is a bias in terms of occupations and characters about women's characters being unimportant as it is just considered complementary characters in a story. These studies are helpful but lacking in several ways, as Apsari et al. (2022) analysed gender equity in EFL textbook for eighth-grade students by employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study aims to see how gender equity is reflected in the textbook. The research then revealed a gender bias in favor of men in particular functions and activities. Maesaroh et al. (2022) analysed gender equality in EFL textbook for elementary students through pictorial representation and names of characters. In terms of quantity, females and males are shown equally in pictorial representation and character names, as well as societal duties of job positions. Male and female characters are also depicted performing various professional jobs such as doctors, firefighters, police officers, and so on. However, because the contents of the textbook are mostly pictures, the researchers did not include categories such as the recurrence of the title and the pronunciation of male and female as the data for those categories was limited. Lastly, Septiani and Sidqi (2022) which analysed gender equality in English textbooks for high school students through the narrative text. The researchers read the textbook and then marked the paragraphs, sentences, and conversations that contained the gender equality issue in the story. It explained how women are told, presented,

and treated in the story through conversation, sentences, and paragraphs to demonstrate gender equality issues from the narrative text in the textbook. The researchers only show a small part of gender inequality that is detrimental to women. As a result, broader development is needed regarding this issue.

Departing from previous studies, it is important to study gender equality in EFL textbooks by using a more comprehensive analysis in terms of language use and visual depictions. As Maesaroh et al. (2022) only analysed gender equality in EFL Textbook for elementary students through pictures and Septiani & Sidqi (2022) only analysed gender equality in EFL Textbook for high school students through the narrative text. Therefore, this research was conducted to find out whether gender equity is found in EFL Textbook for junior high school students through both visual depictions and language use. The researcher chose an EFL Textbook entitled "English for Nusantara" Untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VIII" published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The researcher chose the EFL textbook entitled "English for the Nusantara" because this book is applied to the independent curriculum, where this independent curriculum has now become a curriculum option in many schools. So, it is very likely that this book will be widely used by schools in Indonesia in the future. To fill the aim of this study, the researcher formulated one research question below :

1. How is gender equity represented in EFL textbook?

### **Previous Related Study**

The researcher has identified several prior studies that are pertinent to the research. Andini et al. (2023) aimed to analyse gender representation in English textbook for senior high school by Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia 2017. The study uses qualitative with Fairclough's three-dimensional framework to analyze the data collected. The focus variables include the frequency of gender representation and women's and men's social and domestic roles. The finding revealed that the EFL textbook was biased, imbalanced, and unequal for the position of males and females.

Astuti & Wahyuni (2023) aimed to compare the gender roles in two English textbooks for twelfth-grade senior high school students. The first textbook was published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia, and the second textbook was released by Erlangga. The researchers analysed the illustrations and text in both textbooks using Logsdon's theory of gender representation. Gender stereotypes in male and female occupations were found in both textbooks. Because males dominate gender roles in both textbooks, it was discovered that male

roles in both textbooks tend to be professional occupations, whilst female roles tend to be social occupations. When the two textbooks are compared, the textbook issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia has higher gender equality than the one released by Erlangga.

Apsari et al. (2022) aimed to explore gender representation in the national EFL textbook “Bright: An English” for Eighth Grade Junior High School students. The study used Critical Discourse Analysis as an analysis tool and Fairclough's three-dimensional framework to examine gender representation in the conversation, activities, and illustrations. Gender equity was also analysed using five factors: pictorial representation, female and male character, total relation, domestic and social roles of female and male, and activities. The findings demonstrated a gender bias in favor of men in specific roles and activities, such as being an 'athlete,' attending social events, and participating in sports. Female dominance, on the other side, is seen in that female students outnumber male pupils greatly. Nonetheless, the study found some equality in pictorial portrayal, certain activities, and responsibilities. Although traditional duties and behaviors are linked with the female and male genders in this novel, both genders are shown equally in terms of social standing, power, and dominance.

Lastly, a study conducted by Lee (2018) aimed to explore gender representation in four popular series of Japanese EFL textbook. The researcher investigated the ratio of female-to-male appearances, the extent of use of gender-neutral and gender-marked constructions, the common adjectives associated with women and men, the common address titles for reference to women, and the order of appearance of women and men using corpus linguistic tools. The researcher examined the contents, conversations, reading passages, exercises, and footnotes (excluding word lists in appendices) of four EFL textbooks. The findings indicated some indicators of gender equity, such as the widespread usage of gender-inclusive terminology and the use of the neutral address title Ms for women. However, some gender disparities can still be observed in the texts, such as men being characterized by textbook authors with a range of adjectives, which makes male protagonists more intriguing to readers.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, all of the researchers have similar methods which used content analysis. However, even though this study has similarities with the previous studies, it has a difference in the subject to support the significant differences in the result. In addition, the researcher will also use Porecca's framework to differentiate the result of the study as Porecca's framework offers an in-depth approach to analysing gender

representation in educational materials and is more systematic by discussing one-by-one categories of equality.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Porreca's (1984) framework is distinguished by its multifaceted consideration of how gender is portrayed through various textual and visual elements. As delineated by Porreca (1984), gender representation is categorized into various aspects such as omission, firstness, occupations, gender's noun, and adjectives. Furthermore, the researcher will use this framework to find out the gender equity in terms of balance by looking at the number of times that both genders were presented in the text and illustration (omission), the number of times that both genders were presented first in passages and conversations (firstness), the variations of roles and occupations to different genders based on text and illustration occupational roles), the use of nouns associated with specific genders (gender's noun), and the employment of adjectives that convey meanings related to gender (adjectives). Using Porreca's approach, the researcher will be able to investigate how males and females are portrayed in terms of visual depictions and language use in EFL textbook. This analysis is crucial for creating inclusive and unbiased educational materials that promote gender equality in the classroom. By using this framework, the researcher can critically analyse the language use and visual depictions in EFL textbooks to assess whether they promote gender equity or reinforce gender stereotypes

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research was conducted using focused descriptive qualitative research with content analysis to analyse and describe the collected data. The goal of this method is to find out bias, stereotype, or prejudice in the EFL textbook. According to Krippendorff (1980) cited in Mayring (2014), content analysis is a research technique for establishing reproducible and reliable inferences from texts (or other significant matter) to the contexts in which they are used. Furthermore, content analysis is a broad category of approaches to qualitative data analysis whose goal is to describe written, oral, or visual communication (Silverman, 2011). The researcher used visual and written data from an English textbook in this study, which is referred known as textbook analysis. The textbook analysis is a reasonably objective description that aims to find textbook components or what is in a textbook (Zhang, 2017). To support valid and reliable inferences, qualitative content analysis involves a set of systematic and transparent procedures for processing data. The steps regarding content analysis were

adapted from Yan & Barbara M. (1998). There are seven steps in conducting content analysis proposed, such as: prepare the data, define the unit of analysis, develop categories and a coding scheme, test the coding scheme, code all the data, draw conclusions from the coded data, and report the method and findings

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Omission

Porecca's 1984 framework defines omission as the presence and frequency of each gender in text and illustration. When females do not appear as frequently as males in both illustration and text, the implicit message is that females are not as essential as males. In omission, there are two categories taken as the data. The first is male and female characters in illustration and male and female characters in text with names that are designated to certain genders (e.g. Monita and Andre). Thus, once an illustration of a male or female occurs it is noted in the cell of the observation list as well as male and female characters in text.

*Table 4.1 The frequency of both genders in each chapter*

	Female in Illustration	Male in Illustration	Female in Text	Male in Text
Chapter 0	3	4	13	17
Chapter 1	61	81	27	32
Chapter 2	28	13	13	11
Chapter 3	30	27	17	17
Chapter 4	40	67	24	20
Chapter 5	41	24	33	60
Total	203	216	127	157

Based on the findings, male characters in the illustration are seen 216 times and outnumbered the female characters who are only seen 203 times in the book. Aside from that, the text contains more male characters than female ones, with 157 times male characters appearing compared to only 127 times female characters appearing. In addition, half of the illustrations in this book depict more male characters than female ones in a single picture. For example, there are appeared to be more male characters than females in a single picture depicting students participating in an activity together.

**Table 4.2 Comparison numbers of female and male characters in a single picture**

Female Illustration	Male Illustration	Note
1	2	p.1
1	2	p.24
2	1	p.24
1	2	p.24
1	2	p.38
1	2	p.38
2	1	p.38
3	2	p.51
2	1	p.65
1	2	p.67
1	2	p.130
1	2	p.144
1	3	p.179
2	1	p.184
1	2	p.207

Based on the table above, 10 of 15 comparisons illustrate more male characters than females in a single picture. However, there are also some illustrations that only show female and male characters separately in one image. More male characters appear than females in a single picture, creating an imbalance in the illustration between the two genders. Furthermore, below are examples of how several male characters are depicted while only one female character is in a single picture.



*Picture 4.1 Female and male illustration on p.130*





*Picture 4.2 Female and male illustration on p.179*



*Picture 4.3 Female and male illustration on p.207*

## **B. Firstness**

Firstness, or the quality of being first, is a linguistic element in depicting female or male characters that indicate gender priority. Firstness refers to who is mentioned first, such as mentioning a female or male's name (e.g. Monita and Andre), noun (e.g. sister and brother), and pronoun (e.g. she and he) in a single sentence. Firstness was measured by counting the number of times females or males were placed first in a single sentence. The list of firstness is provided below.

***Table 4.4 List of female and male firstness***

Female	Male
Monita and Galang are talking about a story. (p.72)	1. Galang, Andre, and Monita speak English fluently. (p.13)
Mention when it happened and who she/he was with. (p.201)	2. Participants: Galang, Andre, Monita, and Pipit. (p.45)
Do you think girls and boys will like the	3. He came first and I (Monita) came

<p>story? (p.240)</p> <p>Who thought that she/he was not good at anything at first? (p.256)</p> <p>Muntaz and Radit could not sit together as usual. (p.268)</p>	<p>second. (p.54)</p> <p>4. Andre and Monita are having lunch together. (p.133)</p> <p>5. Andre and Monita want to save the environment. (p.135)</p> <p>6. Galang, Andre, and Monita are at the canteen for lunch. (p.136)</p> <p>7. Who is reading a post on his/her social media account? (p.151)</p> <p>8. Your brothers and sisters. (p.197)</p> <p>9. Read the following dialogue between Andre, Monita, and Galang. (p.205)</p> <p>10. Complete the following table based on the previous dialogue between Andre, Monita, and Galang. (p.207)</p> <p>11. The members of his/her team guess the answer. (p.246)</p> <p>12. Galang, Monita, and Made are discussing a story about playing football. (p.254)</p> <p>13. Mirza, Abay, and Siti were one team, taking the left side of the field. (p.257)</p> <p>14. Raka, Amelia, and Pitra were on the other team. (p.257)</p>
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The findings reveal that the males mentioned first have a greater number than females. There are 14 times where male characters are mentioned first than females whereas there are only 5 times where female characters are mentioned first than males. In the example above, on page 54, there is a sentence that reads "*He came first and I came second*". The pronoun used was insufficient to determine the gender, therefore the researcher had to trace back the passage's prior sentences to discover that "*I*" was Monita, a female character referenced.

### C. Occupational roles

Occupational roles for male characters in both illustration and text are more varied than for female characters. In both categories, occupational roles for male characters outnumbered the female characters. Some occupations are mentioned in both genders, which are student and teacher only. The rest occupational roles for female characters are assistant, dance teacher, and security guard. In contrast, we can see diverse occupations for male characters such as firefighters, soldiers, soccer players, sand miners, and others. These findings indicate that the textbook gives a limited depiction of female characters, as female characters are shown in fewer occupations.

*Table 4.5 List of occupational roles in the textbook*

Female in Illustration	Male in Illustration	Female in Text	Male in Text
Student	Student	Student	Student
Teacher	Teacher	Dance teacher	Soldier
	Soccer player	Security guard	Rescuer
	Soldier	Assistant	Soccer player
	Rescuer		Sand miner
	Drum band member		Drum band member
			Scavenger
			Fisherman
			Firefighters

Based on the findings, male characters in the illustration are portrayed as someone strong and responsible (e.g. soldiers and rescuers). For instance, in several illustrations, the male characters are shown in situations such as when they are assisting others or when they are collaborating to gather all the trash out of the gutters (see pictures 4.4 and 4.5). These illustrations imply that males are stronger and more powerful than females as in the illustration females are only portrayed as students and teachers.



*Picture 4.5 Occupational roles of male character on p.190*



*Picture 4.6 Occupational roles of male character on p.190*

Attributes in the image can be used to determine the occupational roles of the character. As in picture 4.6, the male character is seen with a prominent clothing style and attributes. The male characters are seen wearing sportswear with an object (a ball) which makes them look like athletes. When describing the occupational roles of males and females in illustrations, females are more often depicted as students or teachers because they are only seen wearing uniforms from the way they dress and their attributes.



*Picture 4.7 Occupational roles of male character on p.199*

Apart from illustrations, the occupational roles of male characters in texts are also more varied compared to female characters in the book. In a passage, it is described that the male character's occupation as a fisherman and sand miner is called a breadwinner making him the main provider of living.

*As a breadwinner, he had to think a lot about his life. P.285* The situation is different with female characters in texts who, despite having an occupation are not referred to as breadwinners. In addition, surprisingly none of the male characters in this book are portrayed as security guards; instead, a female character works as a security guard in a museum.

#### D. Gender's noun

Gender-neutral and gender-specific nouns have been analyzed between the nouns and other characters. The frequent use of specific genders in texts indicates dominance or predilection for certain genders. Based on the result, there is equal usage for gender-specific nouns in the textbook. These results demonstrated a lack of gender bias in phrase form in the readings, preventing gender imparity. As a result, gender-neutral nouns were most frequently used in the textbook.

**Table 4.6 List of gender-neutral and gender-specific in the textbook**

Gender-Neutral	Gender-Specific	
	Female	Male
People	Girl	Boy
Person	Mother	Father
Student	Sister	Brother
Teenager		
Librarian		
Classmate		
Character		
Parents		
Children		
Friends		
Family		

## E. Adjective

The adjectives used with male and female characters were noted and listed within a single sentence. The results show that the adjectives used to portray male and female characters are almost equally described in terms of frequency and category. Male characters have 16 adjectives described while female characters have 14 adjectives. Some sentences also have adverbs to help describe the adjectives on them. Adverbs in sentences function to explain that the adjectives listed provide additional information about personality related to negative or positive traits. The adverbs are too, so and just. The table below shows the list of the adjectives in a single sentence.

*Table 4.7 List of adjectives in the textbook*

Adjective	Female	Male
Physical Appearance	1. They (two girls) are so beautiful. (p.239)	-
	They're (two girls) whiteand tall. (p.239) They (two girls) are justperfect. (p.239)	
Intellect/Education	Monita is a clever student.(p.13)	Galang, Andre, and Madeare diligent students. (p.13) Andre has a good idea.(p.135) He is a good singer.(p.266) Redit always got goodgrades in this subject. (p.268)

Emotionality/State of Mind	<p>Monita was too shy to join a parade. (p.41)</p> <p>She felt excited. (p.55)</p> <p>She felt delighted. (p.55)</p> <p>She felt embarrassed. (p.55)</p> <p>His mother got annoyed by the sound. (p.259)</p> <p>She was quick. (p.266)</p> <p>Mumtaz was surprised.(p.268)</p> <p>She felt angry at Radit.(p.268)</p>	<p>Galang and his friends watched the school parade excitedly. (p.46)</p> <p>Made was happy with the tour... (p.124)</p> <p>He cursed sarcastically. (p.125)</p> <p>He was worried he couldnot play soccer again. (p.258)</p> <p>He was very sad and almost gave up. (p.261)</p>
Physical State/Condition	<p>Siti was tired after the sport subject. (p.13)</p>	<p>... he (Galang) was so fast and steady. (p.54)</p>
Personality Traits	<p>She is loud. (p.266)</p>	<p>He kept silent. (p.257)</p> <p>2. Why did Mizra keepsilent after the game? (p.258)</p> <p>3. Galang is always friendly to his friends. (p.266)</p> <p>4. Andre is an only child, and sometimes feels lonely. (p.266)</p> <p>He is a careful motorcycle rider. (p.266)</p>
Age	-	-
Environmentally Descriptive	-	-
Rapport/Reputation	-	<p>He always failed to keep the goal area. (p.261)</p>
Normality/Deviance	-	-
Ability	-	-

Environmentally Induced	-	-
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Female characters and male characters only discussed 5 out of 11 adjective categories based on Porecca's framework. The adjective categories that were not mentioned in both genders are age, environmentally descriptive, normality/deviance, ability, and environmentally induced. Furthermore, rapport/reputation category is not mentioned in female characters as well as physical appearance category in male characters.

## Discussion

Based on the result of omission, there are more male characters than female ones in terms of text and illustrations. Even though female characters have been referenced more than male characters in a few chapters (see Table 4.1), the overall result seems to be that male characters are more dominant. The result shows an imbalanced portrayal of female and male characters. This is in line with previous studies in Japan and Uganda that show female characters are always less mentioned than male characters in the textbooks (Barton & Sakwa, 2012a; Lee, 2018). Male characters are more frequently encountered in the present study because most of them are portrayed as the main characters in passages or texts. However, previous studies in Indonesia have revealed different results in the omission category. Apsari et al. (2022) and Maesaroh et al. (2022) revealed that females are more dominant in the textbook, making no ideology such as gender inequality or gender biases. It is different from the present study and a study by Andini et al. (2023) that found an unequal portrayal between female characters. In addition, the present study found that illustrations of both genders in one image also mostly featured more than one male character while there was only one female character. This result has not been mentioned in previous studies before. It also supports that gender equality still occurs in these EFL textbooks (Andini et al., 2023; Astuti & Wahyuni, 2023). The unequal portrayals of female and male characters in textbooks can illustrate the marginalization of women in Indonesian society, where they value the interests of men more than women.

For firstness, the result shows that the number of males mentioned first is doubled than the number of females mentioned first. This result can represent the common belief that men are more important than women in almost all fields, which implies that it is important to put them before women everywhere. Males mentioned first are more commonly found in the textbook as when two nouns were paired together. This result has not been described



thoroughly by Apsari et al. (2022) as the previous study did not use Porecca's 1984 framework. Lee (2018) also found the conventional word order of putting female terms after male terms, reflecting thesecondary status of women such as Romeo and Juliet, Adam and Eve, and Mr and Mrs Brown.

Male names are indeed mentioned first more than female names. Moreover, no title addresseswere found like Lee's findings because in this EFL textbook addresses are mentioned in Indonesian. The result of firstness in the present study represents unequal representation whichprioritises males. Thus, the priority of one gender exposes social inequality in this textbook. Considering that EFL textbooks are among the most important socialization resources used inschools, it will eventually lead to a more judgemental society due to a rise of biased perspectives if gender equality is not adequately addressed in educational texts.

Previous studies revealed EFL textbooks provide a variety of occupational roles for male characters and less for females (Andini et al., 2023; Astuti & Wahyuni, 2023). The current study provides the same evidence that male characters have higher occurrences and variation of occupational roles in this textbook. In the textbook, female characters are described as assistant, teacher, dance teacher, student, and security guard. All of those occupations are strongly associated to feminine characteristics such as traditional service. A study by Porreca (1984) stated that occupations for women are often restricted to the traditional service such as waitress, teacher, and secretary. On the other hand, male characters in the textbook are described as firefighters, soldiers, rescuers, and fishermen. All those occupations are strongly related to masculine characteristics such as being independently strong and willing to take risks. This also confirms the traditional value of masculinity that men are physically strong, logical, and have a strong sense of leadership (Astuti & Wahyuni, 2023). It was clear that gender bias still occurs in this book as male and female occupations are still imbalanced.

The next discussion is about gender's noun that describes if it is gender neutral or gender specific. Gender's noun in previous research by Lee (2018) related to the titles of address such as Ms or Mr. While in this study, the researcher analysed gender neutral and gender specific to make a difference in findings. In almost all cases, gender neutral nouns were chosen more often than gender specific. These findings prove that there is a lack of gender bias in terms of gender's noun which prevents gender imparity.

Lastly, the discussion is about adjectives used to describe male and female characters in the textbook. Based on the result, when adjectives of male and female characters are compared,

males are more associated with adjectives related to intellect and personality traits while females are more associated with adjectives related to physical appearance. This finding is different from some previous research that showed male characters are often associated with physical appearance (Barton & Sakwa, 2012b; Lee, 2018). In the physical appearance category, female characters are described as someone who is perfect, beautiful, and tall while male characters there is none. However, in the intellectual/education category, male characters are more often occurs and described as someone who is diligent and always has good ideas and good grades. In contrast, female characters are only described once as clever student. Both genders are also described in the category of emotionality/state of mind although women are mentioned more often. The only significant difference is seen in the physical state where in this category male characters look stronger compared to female characters. In the same passage, the male character is described with adjectives that portray someone strong such as fast and steady, while the female character is described with an adjective that looks weak because it is written that the character is tired after doing sport subject. This finding is in line with a study by Lee (2018) that found female characters are commonly depicted as weak people. Male characters in this book are also mentioned in several personality traits category which makes them more interesting to read about than females. This indicates a sign of the writers' unawareness of the significance of equally depicting male and female characters, particularly in an educational environment such as a school.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

The aim of this study was to discover how is gender equity represented in the EFL textbook entitled “English for Nusantara Untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VIII”. It has been shown that gender equality is still underrepresented in this textbook. The results showed that occurrences of female characters are lower than male characters in terms of text and illustrations. Males mentioned first were also commonly found in the textbook than females mentioned first as when two nouns were paired together, male characters came first (e.g. Andre and Monita). Stereotyped occupations were also found in both genders, where occupation for males was related masculine characteristics that are strong such as being a soldier and rescuer. In contrast, occupation for females was related to feminine characteristics that are still doing traditional services such as assistant and teacher. A lack of gender bias also occurred regarding gender's noun as gender neutral was more commonly found in this textbook. In addition, this textbook mostly describes the various adjectives for male characters. Even though both genders were

almost described in the same adjectives, female characters were associated with adjectives related to physical appearance more and none for male characters. Moreover, male characters in this book are also mentioned in several personalities, making them more interesting to read about than females. It can be concluded that there were still unequal portrayals between males and females.

The researcher conducted the present study with only one EFL textbook. As a result, there should be room for improvement to the future researchers who are concern with gender and education issues to make a broader study with more than one EFL textbook. The result of the present study also showed that gender equality is still underrepresented, noting the textbook writers' awareness in gender related issues to make an equal portrayal. The representation of the two genders in textbooks should be balanced, as EFL textbooks are among the most important educational resources for socialization. In addition, teachers' awareness in the classroom must be able to give the learners' perceptions of gender equality.

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