Gender Representation In The English Textbook: "My Next Words" For Fourth-Grade Students

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Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate gender representation in an English Textbook entitled Student's Book My Next Words for Elementary School which published by The Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture in 2021 and students opinion related gender equality. This study used a qualitative research with content analysis design. Porecca' (1984) framework was adopted for analyzing the female and male representation in the English textbook: omission (the ratio of females to males) in texts and illustrations, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, and adjective. The result of gender omission is not too high with the average ratio of females to male 1:1.03. For social dominance was not found in the textbook. The result of this study from the variants of firstness, occupation, noun, and masculine generic for males are varier than for females. Some stereotypes were found such as cooking for females' activity and the breadwinner role for males. A limitation of the study is this research focuses on one textbook only. Thus, this study can't be generalized. For this purpose, another study with a larger sample would be required a deeper analysis of the picture of the EFL textbook.

Keyword*: gender representation; textbook; English for young learner*

Introduction

The issue of gender has been a topic of discussion and research in social sciences, namely education (Medawattegedera 2018). Education is a critical area in promoting gender equality to the young generation of this country. Although, the Indonesian government is required to support gender equality and end all forms of discrimination against women in all facets of life, according to the Presidential Decree (Inpres) No 9/2000 on Gender Mainstreaming in National Development Planning and Programming and Permendiknas No 84/2008 on Guidelines for Implementing Gender Mainstreaming in Education. Unfortunately, in 2021, Indonesia was ranked as the country with the highest gender inequality in the ASEAN. According to UNDP data, Indonesia's Gender Inequality Index score is even above the world average of 0.436 points. Since public awareness of the urgency of gender equality is still very low, the inherent patriarchal culture and discrimination against women such as subordination, marginalization, and stereotyping also impede the creation of desirable equality. It has been a major concern among scholars in the field of education that gender representation in textbooks as a curriculum artefact. Therefore, the use of textbook is essential and helpful in promoting both learning materials and values embedded. In such books, males are habitually described as active, strong, and intelligent while females rarely reveal their identities and very frequently are represented as weak and helpless.

In the twenty-first century, UNESCO (2012) has issued a policy in response to systematic marginalization of women and negative gender stereotypes for women in the

efforts to reduce gender inequalities through education, including teaching materials used in all types of education. Education has the capacity to provide women with the knowledge, opportunity, self-confidence, and skills required for a country's social development. This policy addresses the imbalance of gender equality across the globe. It indicates that reading materials, including textbooks, should promote knowledge of gender equality. Ching (2014) in Miranda & Nurbrata (2019) also demonstrated that textbooks have a major effect on students, therefore it's crucial to consider if they contain implicit gender messages or beliefs that influence how they think about gender. This means that how men and women are portrayed in textbooks can be used as a model for how they ought to act in the actual world. Gouvias and Alexopulos (2018) also stated that school textbooks, particularly at the elementary (primary) school level, function as transmitters of social conventions and standards about behavior and gender roles. It indicates that, since they are young, the students have begun to be introduced to gender roles, because their thoughts as sponge allow them to easily absorb some new information. On the other hand, gender representation may be seen in the language used in texts and audio as well as the images selected to portray men and women and their roles in EFL textbooks (Aguilar, 2021).

Due to the importance of course books in L2 education, it is crucial for L2 teachers to analyze the books on the market in order to select the best option for their pupils (Rezai, 2021). Thus, it is essential to create and maintain gender-balanced EFL textbooks for all ages, particularly for young students who are still rapidly forming their knowledge of the world, including gender roles. Lee (2014) in Miranda & Narubata (2019) states that textbook content encourages students to mimic behaviors that are typical of their genders by relating to character behavior in the texts. Since textbooks have a significant role in influencing students' behavior and views regarding gender, gender must be addressed equally in them. The purpose of this study is to analyze into how gender is portrayed in the fourth-grade English textbook My Next Words for Elementary School and what are the students opinion related gender equality.

Gender is differentiation of roles, functions and responsibilities between females and males resulting from socio-cultural construction and can change according to the times (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 315). In line with it, Holmes & Meyerhoff (2003, p. 23) says that gender refers to the social, cultural, psychological constructs that are imposed upon biological differences. Gender stereotypes overgeneralize people's qualities and behaviours depending on their gender. The implementation of gender equality in school education is a global issue. Education reflects social values, ensuring that schools accurately reflect their influence on students (Qi Su et al., (2021). Gender equality in education includes fair and equal treatment by teachers Gender-responsive curriculum, textbooks, learning materials, learning environment, and educational results for both boys and girls. The Indonesian government presents a significant task in ensuring equal learning opportunities, attainment, and results for both boys and girls over the next decade (ACDP Kemendikbud, 2013).

According to Widaningsih, (2017), a family could be understood as a subsystem of society and the state, which has a social structure with its system. In the family, a person's life begins, where a child is comfortably protected, a wife/mother performs tasks, gets her rights and does her motherly duties, a father/husband gives comfort, peace, and carries out his duties as head of the family. Many things start from home, children grow and develop, know themselves, their father and mother, siblings, learn to understand everything that happens around their environment, including knowing differences and even conflicts that occur.

A young age is a critical age for a child's development. Repeated exposure to the imbalance and biased portrayal of men and women in school textbooks may form gender identities in children, which may clash with the promotion of gender equality in society (Aljuaythin, 2018). It is crucial for textbooks to include non-discriminatory and gender-equal materials so that children may build their true gender identity and be confident in their capabilities to get the same chances as human beings regardless of gender (Lee, 2016).

Textbooks and learning materials are of significance in the learning and teaching processes in classrooms. In the educational context of Indonesia, textbooks are crucial tools that help learners participate in social action while also using the target language, so textbooks play an important role in influencing learners' thoughts, social practices, and values (Wijayanti et al., 2022). A textbook is a manual of instruction which present in classroom for almost all of the teachers. According to O'Neill (1991 as cited in Yulizar, 2016), textboooks are time and money efficient because their pricing is reasonable and affordable to all students, or they have a short lesson preparation time. In other words, the use of textbooks is essential and helpful in language classroom. In addition, a textbook is one of the items that supports and directs the teaching-learning process in order to enhance students' knowledge and perception. A textbook not only includes exercises but also ideas and values that are important to a culture. Teachers shouldn't base their lessons in the classroom on textbooks. In Wang, Barmby & Bolden (2015, p. 4), English teachers may not strictly follow the textbook's instructions, but they would still cover the same subjects and have similar expectations for students' performance and instructional strategies.

The representation of gender stereotypes has undervalued women in both written and visual media. Most textbooks portray males significantly more dominantly than females. Qi Su et al., (2021) reviewed the gender stereotypes in education. They stated that the learning stage of students at school is very important, but the problems caused by gender differences in students are also obvious. The paper also showed that in some countries, surveys have found females outperform boys in the majority of fields. Schools and governments offer separate courses for students of different genders to balance student growth and build student specialisations. Unfortunately, the stereotypes in society and families limit the opportunities and achievements of various genders. These findings may facilitate individuals who are involved in educational research to give some help.

Method

The title of the textbook which was analyzed entitled Student's Book My Next Words for Elementary School for 4th grade of Elementary School. It was published by The Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture in 2021. The textbook consisted of song lyrics, vocabulary practice, games, and exercises for speaking, writing, and listening skills. There were 12 chapters: What are you doing?; There are 67 English Books; My living room is beside kitchen; Cici cooks in the kitchen; Where is my pencil?; The stove is in the kitchen; I can make fried egg in the kitchen; Be on time; I go to school after having breakfast; He always gates up at 5 o'clock; How do you go to school?; He goes to school by bike. For analysing the data, this study adopted Porreca' (1984) framework: omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, adjective.

Results

The researcher collected data of gender representations from textbook and described them. The findings are classified into six categories, namely omission, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, and adjective.

Omission

This category was related to the ratio of females to males in the text that was calculated both before and after deleting the frequency of masculine generic construction which was previously included in the 'male' data because the masculine that appeared in this book appeared with the pronoun 'he', therefore the final data of this category was just 'female+male' without masculine generic construction.

Proper Nouns

There were some names that appear in this textbook. The researchers defined these names to know better which one that female or male dcharacter.

Table 4.1 Proper Nouns

	PN	Visual	Description	Tally	Total	Textual	Tally	Total
Female	Cici	Figure 4.1	A female, that appearance has long hair with braided, has fair skin, often uses any colored dress with sunflower motifs	42	78	Cici is writing in the classroom (p.3)	25	50
	Aisyah	Figure 4.2	A female, that always wears a headscarf both when wearing uniforms and casual clothes, has fair skin	26		Aisyah is reading a book in the library. (p.3)	23	
Male	Joshua	Figure 4.3	A male, black curly hair, has tan skin	40	97	Joshua is watching tv in the living room. (p.4)	19	42
	Made	Figure 4.4	A male, has straight hair, has olive skin	51		Made and his family go to their grandparent's house in the village by car. (p. 26)	17	
Masculine Generic	Kimi (presenting the cat)	Figure 4.5	Appears in the beginning of the book, introduced as one of the main characters, often appears in the corner of the book, the gender is not told, but on the page 60 the author uses 'he' to refer to the pronoun 'Kimi'.	35	35	Kimi plays the ball in the yard. He does not play in the living room. (p.60)	3	3

The average ratio proper nouns of females to males, including apparent masculine generic constructions, is 1:1.09. After subtracting the apparent number of masculine generic constructions, the average ratio of females to males in the textbook is 1:1.03.

In the textbook, as listed in Table 4.1, it could be seen some characters of females, males, and masculine generic were represented by their names. The table also included

descriptions of them as characters in the textbook. The female names mentioned in the textbook, such as Cici (25 mentions) and Aisyah (23 mentions).

Male names also include in this textbook, for visual depictions, such as Joshua (19 mentions) and Made (17 mentions) ; as the male lead of this textbook. According to the findings, this textbook featured 6 female character names mentioned a total of 55 times, while there were 14 male character names mentioned a total of 49 times, but visually the male characters appeared more frequently than females. The proper nouns of males tent to be more varied than female.

Pronouns of Female and Male

This book has started to introduce 'pronouns' although only nominative (who is doing the action [she or he]) and accusative (who the action is done to [her or his]) but this was a good first step so the students begin to understand that the names of females or males can be replaced with 'she or he'. The finding female and male should no difference with section of proper noun because both proper noun and pronoun are the same umbrella of omission.

Table 4.2 The Pronouns of Female and Male

	Pronoun	Examples	Frequency	Total
Feminime Pronouns	She	She is reading a book. (p. 6)	3	
	Her	Cici and her mother cook in the kitchen. (p. 37)	12	15
Masculine Pronouns	He	He does not work in the office. (p. 60)	6	
	His	Made and his family go to their grandparent's house. (p. 26)	3	9 + 1 = 10
✚ **Masculine Generic**	He (presenting *Kimi* as the cat)	Kimi plays the ball in the yard. He does not play it in the living room. (p. 60)	1	

The average ratio pronouns of females to males, including apparent masculine generic constructions, is 1:1.5. After subtracting the apparent number of masculine generic constructions, the average ratio of females to males in the textbook is 1:1.6.

There were two types of pronouns that had been counted, namely subjective pronoun [she (female representation) ; he (male representation)] and possessive adjective [her (female representation) ; his (male representation)]. The frequency of female representation using the nominative pronoun 'She' is calculated 3 times. In contrast, the frequency of male representation using the nominative pronoun 'He' is calculated 6 times. Besides that, there are accusative pronoun. The frequency of female representation using the accusative pronoun 'Her' is calculated 12 times, while the frequency of male representation using the accusative pronoun 'His' is calculated 3 times. In addition, this textbook using Masculine Generic to represent the cat characters namely *Kimi*. The author used the pronoun 'He' to represent the cat. The usage of pronouns in this textbook is limited; it is only the introduction of pronoun, because the level is still in Young Learner, so the pronouns used are not yet diverse.

Firstness

The term 'firstness' related two gender, female and male was stated together in sequence and determined which appeared first. These figure were visual data in terms of firstness.

Figure 4.6   Figure 4.7

In the Figure 4.6, it was found that the one who asked question first was Cici who was identified as female by asking, "*Where does Kimi eat?*" and Made answered with saying, "*Kimi eats in the kitchen".* This figure showed that the firstness was on the female. Whereas, in the Figure 4.7, Joshua who was identified as male started a conversation first by asking, "*What do you do at 6 o'clock*, then Cici answered a question with saying, "*I take a bath.*" Related to visual data, there was an equality in term of firstness.

Table 4.3 Firstness of Textual Data

		Sentence	Total
Male first	**appeared**	1) Made and Cici are having lunch in the canteen. (p. 4)	4
Female first	**appeared**	1) Aisyah helps her mother in the kitchen. Her brother sweeps the yard. (p. 115)	2

The firstness in terms of textual data was presented in Table 4.3. This table showed that male appeared first more frequently rather than female. The result shows that male characters have more chances to speak first in the conversation and the passage than female have. In this textbook, instances of male appeared first occured 4 times, while female names mentioned before male names occured 2 times. It could be concluded that females were underrepresented compared to males in the order of mention although the difference is not that high in textual data. Meanwhile in visual data, there was a balance where there was one conversation started by the male first and there was also a conversation started by the female first as depicted in the Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7

Occupation

This category for analysing occupation which was depicted in the textbook. It could be gathered from texts and illustrations that refer to female and male. According to the analysis, there were 8 different occupations owned by female and male characters in the textbook. Based on the result, this category could be divided into three : social roles, domestic roles, and some activities performed by female and male.

Social Roles

Some of the social roles contained in this book were described in the following table:

Table 4.4 Social Roles

	Types	Textual	Visual		Tally	Total
	Teacher	—		Figure 4.8	4	
Female						6
	Canteen Seller	—		Figure 4.9	2	
Male	Fruit Seller	Mr. Johanes works in the market. He does not work in the office. (p. 30)			2	4
			Figure 4.10			
	Farmer	Grandfather goes to the paddy field at 06.30 on foot. (p. 25)			2	
			Figure 4.11			

Social roles based on Table 4.4 for females were depicted in two types; teacher and canteen seller, with these roles appearing in 6 occurences. Spesificially, the role of teacher occured four times and canteen seller twice. There was no textual data for the social roles of female. There was no information on the name of the Figure 4.8, but the teacher was teaching fractions where she used a blue dress code (p. 9), while for the canteen seller, it depicted that Aisyah and Cici were buying snacks served by a female whose gesture was preparing food in the cafeteria (p. 5). In addition, social roles for males were depicted in four types; fruit sellers, farmers, office workers, rickshaw drivers, which appeared 8 times: Fruit seller (2 occurences) Mr. Johanes did not work in the office but he worked in the market, where he was faced with a lot of fruits so it could be assumed that Mr. Johanes is a fruit seller; Farmer (2 occurences). In the Figure 4.11, it was depicted that grandfather went to the paddy field with a hoe, so it could be assumed that grandfather worked as a farmer.

Domestic Roles

Domestic roles refered to activitiy that related with household activities, could be done by female and male. Below was the discovery of domestic role data based on this textbook.

Table 4.5 Domestic Roles

	Types	Textual	Visual	Tally	Total
Female	Cooking	Mrs. Neneng cooks in the kitchen. (p. 36)	Figure 4.12	10	12
	Helping the mother	Cici and her mother cook in the kitchen. (p.37)	Figure 4.13	2	
Male	Cleaning the bathroom	The bathroom is very dirty. So I clean it first. (p.	Figure 4.14	1	2
	Cleaning a car	Aisyah's father cleans his car. (p. 115)	—	1	

Domestic roles based on Table 4.5 for females were depicted in four types: cooking, buying some food, waking up the children, and watering the flowers, with these roles appearing in 16 occurences. Spesifically, Cooking activity occured 10 times, the Figure 4.12 showed that Mrs. Neneng with the characteristics of always wearing a green shirt and long hair was faced with cooking utensils; Helping the mother occured 2 times, the Figure 4.13 illustrated that Cici was helping her mother in cooking some food, as often happened around us, a daughter usually helped her mother in anything, one of them was cooking.

In addition, domestic roles for males were depicted in four types: cleaning the bathroom, cleaning a car, sweeping, and picking up the children, with these roles appearing in 5 occurences. Particularly, Cleaning the bathroom (1 occurence), the Figure 4.14 illustrated that the bathroom was dirty with cockroaches and messy toiletries, so Made took the initiative to clean the bathroom; Cleaning a car (1 occurence), there was no visual data of this role, it was only mentioned that the character who cleaned the car was a father. The frequency of female in terms of domestic role was higher than male, where most activities was dominated by "cooking", many pictures and phrases showed the mother who always cooked in the household life. Meanwhile, male was represented doing dirty jobs where they often to clean some things in the household life, such as cleaning a car, cleaning a bathroom, and sweeping the yard.

Leisure Activities

Some of the activities that were done in leisure time besides social and domestic roles performed by female and male in this book.

Table 4.6 Leisure Activities of Females and Males

Female	Types	Textual	Visual		Tally	Total
	Reading a book	Aisyah is reading a book in the library. (p.3)		Figure 4.15	6	8
	Watching a tv	Cici watches tv in the livingroom. (p.38)	Figure 4.16		2	
Male	Watching a tv	Joshua watches TV every Saturday. (p.35)			2	6
			Figure 4.17			
	Playing football	He plays football at half past three. (p. 94)	Figure 4.18		4	

Leisure activities based on the Table 4.6, showed that both female and male were done in their leisure time. Leisure activities for females were depicted in two types: reading a book and watching a TV with these roles appearing in 8 occurences. Spesifically, reading a book activity occurs 6 times, the Figure 4.15 showed that Aisyah was still wearing her uniform, and according to textual data, this activity took place in the library. Reading books in the library could be done during class hours, but in this picture Aisyah was depicted alone, so it can be inferred that she went to the library during free time.; Watching a tv occurs 2 times, the Figure 4.16 illustrated that Cici was watching a tv with soccer scene, recently soccer was not only favored by male. Moreover, this activity can be done if we have some free time;

In addition, leisure activities for males were depicted in four types: watching a tv, playing football, and playing marbles with these roles appearing in 6 occurences. Particularly, Watching a TV (2 occurences), the Figure 4.17 illustrated that Joshua watched soccer just like Cici in the Figure, but the difference is that Joshua watches TV only every Saturday, which we know that Saturday was a weekend, so it could be assumed that Joshua fills his free time on weekends by watching a TV.; Playing football (4 occurences), the Figure 4.18 showed that there were 4 boys with blue uniforms playing soccer at half past three. This hour was usually used for extracurricular. It could be assumed that these 4 boys were participating in extracurricular soccer to improve their skills.

Nouns

This category referred to the use of words that are only devoted to female or male, for example, if someone who worked in the field of cinema was a male, it was called an actor but if the person who worked was a female, it was called an actress.

Table 4.7 Nouns

Female	Tally	Male	Tally
Mother	4	Father	3
Grandma	3	Brother	2

Nouns based on the Table 4.7, nouns for females divided into two words: mother and grandma with these words appearing in 7 occurences. Particularly, mother (2 occurences) and grandma (3 occurences). Meanwhile, nouns for males divided into two words: father and mother with these words appearing in 5 occurences. Nouns that appeared in this textbook were related to family vocabulary.

Masculine Generic Construction

Masculine generic construction determined for the use of noun for depicting general gender. It had two meanings which may refer to either a male or female. In this book, one data was found where at the beginning of the book, the cat character was introduced as Kimi, in addition the author did not described in detail about its gender, but the author used the pronoun 'he' instead of 'it' or 'she'. Kimi always appeared in the corner of the book, therefore for visual data, Kimi appeared 80 times, but for textual, Kimi only appeared 3 times:

The Figure 4.18 portrayed Kimi was depicted as a lively cat, where it was playing soccer in the field. Then, in the Figure 4.19 Kimi was also the subject of conversation by Cici and Made which appeared in Unit 6 and this conversation contained Cici asking, *"Where Kimi eats?,"* this was a repetition of the vocabulary 'dapur' for children to easily remember because this figure appeared in the Unit that explained about the rooms in the house. After that, in the figure 4.20 Kimi shown to be able to speak when it was having a conversation with Made about time.

Adjective

The data of adjective related to female and male characters was not found in this textbook.

Discussion

The ratio of females to males in the text was determined both before and after subtracting the apparent number of occurences of masculine generic constructions (Porecca 1984). In textbook, textual and visual data tend to be balanced, some were dominated by females and some were dominated by males. However, both genders were depicted with not big gap of number. For the way gender representation, male had more variant type rather than female in all categories. Omission in text and category was the first category to analyse the data. It can be seen that the omission data were 1:1.03. The result related textual data findings was in line with Ramadani and Novianti (2021). They found that there were more female characters compared to male. Moreover, related to visual data findings, the male characters outnumber the female characters. It was similar to Aguilar's study (2021) whose findings revealed that there was not a balanced representation of characters in the three textbooks; males were significantly more frequent than female characters in the illustrations.

Hartman and Judd (1978) investigated the order of mentioning two words matched for sex, such as Mr. and Mrs.., brother and sister, and Husband and Wife. The arrangement of sentences or phrases in the textbook demonstrated an equitable introduction of male and female characters, fostering a sense of equality and representation. This category derived the data from dialogue and phrases done by female and male characters. The findings showed that both female and male characters had initiative to talk first in a conversation similar to Julianti et al., (2019) which revealed the dialogues had equal firstness representation. However, there is an example in the textbook about firstness, which is Made and Cici (Unit 1, page 4). This phrase mentioned a male's name first before a female's name. It was similar to Lee's study (2014) that recorded a higher tendency for males to be presented before females.

The number of occupational visibility, male were higher than female. It can be seen from Table 4.4 There were only two types of social roles for female but male were four types of occupations. The result was in line with Aguilar (2021) that males were depicted in a larger number of visualized occupations than females and domestic roles presented in the textbooks showed traditional perceptions of genders and stereotypes; women are teachers, nurses, sales clerks, and cooks. Briones (2019) revealed that females show that they were more nurturing than men. On the other hand, males were related to outdoor activity and household: playing skipping, playing marbles, playing football, swimming, sweeping the yard, cleaning a car, and picking up the children. Male also depicted with some domestics; cleaning a car, picking up his daughter, and sweeping the yard. These were different results from Ramadani and Novianti study (2021) which domestic roles only performed by female.

The most frequently occurring nouns for both males and females were those which designate a person's sex and family relationship. Nouns related to gender in the textbook were thoughtfully selected, reflecting a conscious effort to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and to present a comprehensive vocabulary to students (Porecca, 1984). The examples of nouns related to female, such as: motherhood, sister, queen, actress, etc. also there was the noun pair which was lady or gentleman. In this textbook, nouns only appeared related to family.

Hellinger & Bumann (2002) identified the terminology of "Generic masculine is the use of masculine personal names and pronouns to refer to both genders." Masculine nouns and pronouns were thus used to refer to persons of unknown gender, where the gender of the persons is not relevant (Klann-Delius, 2005). Using pronouns was a strategic approach in communicating gender. The traditional prescriptive choice was to use generic "he" in contexts that were gender-indefinite. An example of a sentence in this textbook could be found on page 60 "Kimi plays the ball in the yard. He does not play in the living room." The noun Kimi was an indefinite sex, we as the readers did not know Kimi female or male, but the author used pronoun "He" to stressed the masculinity of the noun Kimi. The preferred usage of masculine pronouns over feminine or neutral pronouns in generic situations is a reflection of male societal dominance. This means that males not only have superiority in society, but in language as well (Halder A. & Tanja M., 2022).

The adjectives that refer to female and male could be divided into several categories, such as Emotionality or State of Mind, Physical Appearance, Environmentally Descriptive, and Physical State/Condition. There is no significant difference in the kinds of adjectives used for females and for males in the Emotionality or State of Mind category. However, the adjectives for female in the category of Physical Appearance seem to suggest a preoccupation with attractiveness namely: beautiful, pretty, and sexy, meanwhile handsome and good looking for males (Porecca, 1984). In this book, there was no data related to adjectives that suitable with the categories elaborated by Porecca. Adjectives that appeared such as: clean, big, and dirty described the room not to describe female or male.

Conclusion

The study analyzes the gender stereotype representation in the English textbook "My Next Words 4" using Porecca's framework. The results show that the average ratio of females to males in the textbook is less than 1:1, and social roles, domestic roles, and nouns are depicted in a way that reinforces gender stereotypes. However, the use of masculine generic construction is minimal. Gender representation in instructional materials for young learners has implications for their development and society as a whole. Balanced and varied depictions may challenge traditional stereotypes, increasing self-esteem and diversifying professional goals. Positive depictions of all genders may improve cognitive flexibility, social awareness, and empathy.

Suggestions are given to stakeholders related to gender representation in English textbooks. Students should have more insight into gender concepts to reduce the negative effects of gender stereotypes. Teachers should pay more attention to gender issues in the classroom and provide additional materials and examples to minimize the negative effects of gender inequality. Textbook authors should promote respect for difference, diversity, and gender equality by reducing stereotyped messages and images. Further research on gender representation in English textbooks, especially for young learners, is also recommended.

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