

Analysis of Linguistic Sexism in Sixteen Omani English Language School Textbooks

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine linguistic sexism in sixteen Omani English language school textbooks. The school textbooks belong to Grades 1, 4, 7 and 11. Content analysis was used to analyze the following two categories: masculine and feminine pronouns (he, his, him, she, her, and hers) and adjectives present in the sixteen Omani school textbooks. In general, the study results have revealed the presence of blatant linguistic sexism against females in terms of pronouns and adjectives. The results, including statistical analysis (e.g. Chi-square and likelihood ratio), have indicated that the sixteen Omani school textbooks revealed a biased representation of gender in terms of masculine and feminine pronouns and adjectives. The study findings

showed that the total number of masculine pronouns is 894 compared to only 603 feminine pronouns. Moreover, the total number of masculine adjectives is 227 compared to only 131 feminine adjectives.

Keywords: linguistic sexism, gender bias, school textbooks, gender representation

ملخص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى دراسة التحيز اللغوي في ستة عشر كتابا مدرسيا تُستخدم في مدارس سلطنة عُمان في الصفوف: 1 و 4 و 7 و 11. تم استخدام تحليل المحتوى لتحليل فئتين هما: الضمائر المذكورة و المؤنثة والصفات المستخدمة لوصف الذكور و الاناث. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة وجود تحيز لغوي قوي في صالح الذكور على حساب الاناث، فقد اظهرت نتائج الدراسة بما فيها التحليل الاحصائي وجود تمثيل متحيز للجنس لصالح الذكور على حساب الاناث حيث بلغ العدد الاجمالي للضمائر المذكورة المستخدمة في هذه الكتب المدرسية 894 في حين بلغ

عدد الضمائر المؤنثة 603 وبلغ العدد الاجمالي للصفات المستخدمة لوصف الذكور 227 مقارنة ب 131 صفة تم استخدامها لوصف الاناث.

الكلمات الرئيسية: التحيز اللغوي، التحيز الجنسي، كتب مدرسية، تمثيل الجنس

Introduction

The presence of gender bias in school textbooks is deemed unacceptable nowadays. School textbooks should convey a balanced representation of males and females. Using school textbooks that are loaded with gender-biased content is a serious issue that might bring about undesirable effects particularly on children. Learners, particularly children, are susceptible to the influence of partial or impartial representation of gender roles in school or non-school textbooks. This is of major concern to researchers because it can have either positive or negative effects on young learners. Smith (1985) pointed out that textbooks serve as a powerful medium through which values and attitudes find their ways to students' minds. Smith (1985) elaborated on this critical issue indicating that educational materials help to inculcate values and attitudes in young learners because of two reasons. First, because educational and reference materials (e.g. textbooks) are a source of credibility to

learners, learners are not usually critical of them. In other words, learners do not usually question the authority and trustworthiness of the textbooks they use in their classrooms. They take it for granted that these textbooks are perfect and fully reliable. The second reason according to Smith (1985) is that learners' need to "to absorb and assimilate the textbook material in minute detail, they will be attentive to the messages conveyed, and susceptible to their influence (Lee & Collins, 2009).

Other researchers have also stressed the fact that school or non-school textbooks can influence learners' perception of the world around them. Kelly and Nihlen (1982), Freebody and Baker (1987), Sheldon (1990) and Hsu (1992) emphasized that textbook content is one of the variables of the learning process that can affect learners' view of the world around them. They have stressed out that, "The content of textbooks has the potential to influence the learners' worldview (Lee & Collins, 2009).

Literature Review

Linguistic Sexism

Linguistic sexism is one of the aspects researchers usually examine in textbooks and curricula to decide whether these textbooks are gender biased or not.

Researchers, in general, examine different categories to achieve their study aim in terms of the existence or nonexistence of linguistic sexism in different curricula. These categories generally include examining pronouns, adjectives, titles, and nouns that are associated with males and females in school and non-school textbooks. Researchers usually study two aspects of linguistic sexism: quantitative and qualitative. As for the quantitative aspect, they usually study and analyse the number of occurrences of such categories in different curricula. On the other hand, they study and analyse the nature of such categories present in various textbooks.

Atkinson (1993) defined linguistic sexism “a wide range of verbal practices, including not only how women are labelled and referred to, but also how language strategies in mixed sex interaction may serve to silence or depreciate women as interactants (Umera-Okeke, 2012). Moreover, Umera-Okeke (2012) defined sexist language as “By typical definition, sexist language is considered to be any language that is supposed to include all people, but, unintentionally (or not) excludes a gender—this can be either males or females”. Saci (2014) has also indicated that sexism is included in any discriminatory

linguistic form that exhibit bias against one of the two sexes. In other words, the language used in textbooks and other curricula is usually centralized around one gender (e.g. males or females). Linguistic sexism can be demotivating to specific learners as it makes one gender more visible than the other one (e.g. masculine pronouns are more visible than feminine pronouns in school textbooks or vice versa). It is usually associated with females. In short terms, females are usually less visible than males in school and non-school textbooks.

Linguistic Sexism in Pronouns, Adjectives, Nouns and Verbs

Many studies have indicated that school and non-school curricula show a powerful presence of linguistic sexism. In general, researchers examine adjectives, verbs, nouns, and pronouns and so on to deem these textbooks as either sexist or non-sexist. Yasin et al (2012) examined linguistic sexism in twenty-four Qatari primary mathematics school textbooks used in primary independent Qatari schools from grade 1 to grade 6. The school textbooks were divided into two groups: one group included school textbooks that are published in Qatar while the other group included school books published by foreigners.

Content analysis was used to examine and analyse the school textbooks. They used Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis for their qualitative analysis and Wordsmith Tools 5.0 for their quantitative analysis. They used categories suggested by Bahiyah et al. (2008) to examine these textbooks. These categories include: the use of male and female pronouns, the use of terms of addresses/salutations, the use of male and female nouns with regard to the family (kinship terms), the use of words related to occupations/professions, and the use of words related to hobbies. The findings of this study revealed that sexism is still inculcated in these textbooks. Yasin et al. (2012) indicated that, "The Mathematics textbooks in this study reveal that the linguistic features conveyed sexism". They also added that, "Qatari Mathematics textbooks portrayed an over-representation of female nouns than foreign textbooks but again the difference is not very significant". In other words, linguistic sexism is present in these school textbooks to some extent. In addition, Bataineh (2003) conducted a study on gender and religious representation in the Jordanian EFL school textbooks. He investigated many areas such as linguistic sexism, occupational roles, personal traits, gendered power relationships. The study

findings showed that linguistic sexism is prevalent in the Jordanian EFL school textbooks. The total number of male pronouns was much higher than female pronouns. In addition, the study found that adjectives associated with males were much higher than those associated with females. The study also found that, "adjectives used in Jordanian EFL textbooks were generally stereotypical of males and females".

Jasmani et al. (2011) conducted a study on gender inequity found in English language secondary school textbooks by examining action verbs used in these textbooks. They used the Hidden Curriculum Theory along with quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data. They used Wordsmith Tools 4.0 (WST) to analyze five categories of action verbs. The study found that actions verbs in these textbooks in general were associated more with males than females. For example, action verbs were associated with males 64% and 36% with females. Moreover, process verbs were associated with males 65% and 35% with females and verbs of bodily sensation were associated with males 75% or 87% and 36% or 13% with females. The study also revealed that momentary verbs were associated with males 65% and 35% with females. Finally, transitional event verbs were associated with

males 65% and 35% with females. Blatant linguistic sexism is evident in these school curricula. The difference between males and females is significant. Moreover, Jin, Vivian, Tong, Ling, & Tarmizi (2013) conducted a study entitled “An Analysis on Gender-based Language and Illustrations in Malaysian Secondary Schools’ English Language and Literature Textbooks”. The study aimed at exploring the “uses of gender biased language and illustrations in Malaysia secondary school English Language Teaching textbooks and Literature readings”. The study sample consisted of five English language textbooks and two literature readings. The study examined and analysed different categories including common nouns and pronouns present in such curricula. The study findings in terms of common nouns and pronouns (linguistic sexism) revealed that male presence is still dominant and the sample texts contain linguistic sexism in favour of males. Jin et al. (2013) have indicated that, “There were more male common nouns as compared to female common nouns found in the textbooks and literature readings which make readers infer that males are still the main characters in the books, and main contributors in the society”. They have also added that the overall results show that, “the occurrence of male pronouns

is double the occurrence of female pronouns”. In other words, linguistic sexism is still present in such school curricula in favor of males over females. Female presence is still marginal compared to their male counterparts.

In addition, Baghdadi & Rezaei (2015) used content analysis to investigate gender representation in English and Arabic foreign language textbooks. The divided the study into two parts. The first part included the use of “Criteria for Analysis of the Equality of Gender Representation” devised by Rifkin. Baghdadi & Rezaei (2015) used six criteria to examine pictorial gender representation in these curricula:

1. The percentage of pictorial texts including females/males only.
2. The ratio of fore-grounded females/males to back-grounded females/males.
3. The percentage of pictorial texts in which females/males are depicted as children.
4. The ratio of females to males depicted in stasis/motion.
5. The percentage of pictorial texts in which depicted females/males are named in a caption.

6. The percentage of pictorial texts in which the visual context for each figure can be identified as 'domestic'/'professional'.

The second part included "14 criteria which involves a verbal analysis of the content and requires the analysis of different elements of text such as subject, object, verb, noun, pronoun, et cetera". In general, the study findings revealed that male presence dominated these textbooks. As for linguistic sexism, one of the criteria was used from the second part to examine linguistic sexism, which is "Respectful Reference to the Characters". Once again, the study finding showed that linguistic sexism is still prevalent in these textbooks. Baghdadi & Rezaei (2015) also indicated that while the study findings showed that the majority of first, second singular or plural pronouns used in the investigated texts were genderless, there were some pronouns used to refer to males. They added that no single pronouns was used to refer to females. In addition, Baghdadi & Rezaei (2015) stated that the majority of second person pronouns used in the texts were also genderless. They concluded that despite the fact that some second person pronouns 'you' were used to refer to males, there was no second person pronoun used with females. This is blatant sexism.

Syarifuddin (2014) conducted study on sexism. The study explored sexism in three EFL school textbooks used in Indonesian schools. The researcher analysed six categories to explore the nature of sexism in these textbooks. He analysed "generic he; generic man; titles, labels and names; occupational roles both in texts and pictures/illustrations; omission, the number of females and males both in texts and pictures/illustrations; and firstness, the order of mention". The study findings showed that sexism is still ingrained in the Indonesian school textbooks. The results showed that all categories portrayed a biased and unbalanced representation of gender in favour of males over females. The results showed, for example, that the concept of "Omission" in these Indonesian school textbooks was in favour of males over females. Syarifuddin (2014) stated that the study revealed that, "the number of males both in texts and in the pictures or illustrations outnumbers the number of females with the exception of the omission in English on sky 1". In other words, linguistic sexism is a major concern in these Indonesian school textbooks. The findings also showed that, "firstness" was the most unbalanced category in this study. Syarifuddin (2014) stated that the textbooks contained there were 70 instances where

males appeared before females. He added that females appeared before males seven times only. In general, linguistic sexism is found to be powerful in most school textbooks because male presence is dominant. Females' presence, on the other hand, is much less visible than their male counterparts.

Next, Yatim & Paramasivam (2015) investigated linguistic sexism "using Umera-Okeke's (2012) and Amare's (2006) framework". Their investigation of linguistic sexism focused on analysing Malay male students semantic choices. Analysis of Malay male student essays showed that linguistic sexism is still present and ingrained. Their study confirmed earlier findings of previous studies that linguistic sexism is still embedded in school textbooks. It was also noticed that linguistic sexism was powerfully present in terms of male students' choices. Females, for example, were portrayed as "emotional, argumentative, irrational and illogical". In other words, the semantic choices of Malay male students were generally degrading and negative towards females. Moreover, Shaharuddin & Abu Hassan (2016) investigated the presence of linguistic sexism in Malaysian secondary school English literature textbooks. They analysed two currently used literature school

textbooks in northern region of Malaysia. They analysed the two literature textbooks using critical content analysis devised by Fairclough. They investigated the following areas "External appearance of female/male characters and ... Personality of male/female characters". The study findings showed that males dominated almost all categories investigated in the study. In other words, school textbooks are still male-centred textbooks. Females come second to males. Finally, Shoara (2012) conducted a study on gender representation by investigating Touchstone EFL textbook series. She examined sexist attitudes and values manifestations in these textbooks in particular. She used qualitative and quantitative methods utilizing Porreca's (1984) framework. She investigated number of occurrences, firstness, nouns, adjectives, masculine generic constructions, and totals found in these curricula. The study findings indicated that these textbooks are gender biased against females and sexist. In sum, many study findings revealed that there is a powerful and influential presence of linguistic sexism in school or non-school textbooks.

The Present Study

The present study aims to examine the scope of linguistic sexism in sixteen Omani English school textbooks. It seeks to identify the existence or inexistence of linguistic sexism in these textbooks. Content analysis is used to examine the following areas:

- 1- total number of masculine and feminine pronouns (he, his, him, she, her, and hers)
- 2- total number of adjectives associated with males and females

Methodology

1. Materials

The sample of the present study is sixteen Omani English school textbooks used in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 11. All Omani government schools are requested to use these English school textbooks as per the directives of the Omani ministry of education.

2. Data Collection Analysis

The present study performs a content analysis of the following two categories: masculine and feminine pronouns and adjectives associated with males and females. The quantitative analysis of masculine and feminine pronouns includes the following categories: total number of

masculine and feminine pronouns in all textbooks and the total number of masculine and feminine pronouns per each textbook.

The quantitative analysis of adjectives associated with males and females, on the other hand, includes the following categories: total number of masculine and feminine adjectives in all textbooks and total number of masculine and feminine adjectives per each textbook. The last part of the quantitative analysis also includes the following categories: total number of masculine and feminine adjectives in Grades 1, 4, 7, and 11 English language school textbooks.

3. Procedures

The present study included three procedures: the first one focused on counting the number of masculine and feminine pronouns found in the sixteen school textbooks. The results then are tabulated and analysed. The other procedure focused on counting the number of adjectives associated with males and females, tabulated, and then analysed. The last procedure include statistical analysis (e.g. Chi-square, likelihood ratio, and Cramer's V) of the total number of masculine and feminine pronouns and

adjectives in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 11 Omani English language school textbooks.

Analysis of Findings

Data obtained from these sixteen Omani school textbooks were analysed quantitatively. The findings of the present study are as follows:

1. Masculine and Feminine Pronouns

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Pronouns in All Textbooks

The analysis of masculine and feminine pronouns in all sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks has revealed that the total number of masculine and feminine pronouns is one 1497. The analysis has also indicated that the sample textbooks contain blatant linguistic sexism in terms of pronouns. Masculine pronouns dominated the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks. The total number of masculine pronouns (he, his, and him) in all sixteen Omani EFL school curricula was 894 whereas the total number of feminine pronouns (she, her, and hers) was 603. The difference between males and females is substantial. This is undoubtedly a sign of powerful masculine presence in these

textbooks. Females, on the other hand, are much less visible than their male counterparts are.

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Pronouns per Each Textbook

Table 1 provides the total number of masculine and feminine pronouns in each textbook. The analysis of data obtained from each Omani EFL school textbook has indicated that all sixteen EFL school textbooks are dominated by masculine pronouns except for *Class Book B* (Grade 1), *Skills Book B* (Grade 7), *Class Book A* (Grade 4) and *Skills Book B* (Grade 4). For example, *Class Book A* (Grade 4) has 60 feminine pronouns and 59 masculine pronouns. In addition, *Skills Book B* (Grade 4) has 22 feminine pronouns and 16 masculine pronouns.

Data available from Table 1 clearly point out that the presence of masculine pronouns in the sixteen Omani EFL curricula is undeniably powerful and dominant. For example, the number of masculine pronouns in *Work Book B* (Grade 11) is 120 while feminine pronouns did not go beyond 45. In addition, *Class Book B* (Grade 4) has 74 masculine pronouns compared to only 40 feminine pronouns. Moreover, *Class Book A* (Grade 7) has 112 masculine pronouns and

only 60 feminine pronouns. In other words, linguistic sexism is still instilled in these sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks because data revealed that the difference between the number of masculine and feminine pronouns is still significant.

On the other hand, data obtained from these Omani EFL school textbooks revealed that some of these textbooks contain more feminine pronouns than masculine ones. For example, *Class Book B* (Grade 1), *Skills Book B* (Grade 7), *Class Book A* (Grade 4) and *Skills Book B* (Grade 4) have more feminine pronouns than masculine ones. It is also worth mentioning that statistical difference between masculine and feminine pronouns is not significant in *Class Book A* (Grade 4) because it contains 60 feminine pronouns compared to 59 masculine pronouns. *Skills Book B* (Grade 4), on the other hand, contains little more feminine pronouns than masculine one. It has 22 feminine pronouns and 16 masculine pronouns. In addition, statistics obtained from *Class Book B* (Grade 1) show that females' presence in this textbooks is more powerful than males'. More efforts should be exerted on the part of textbooks designers and publishers to introduce more gender-balanced EFL school textbooks in the sultanate of Oman.

Table 1 shows there are STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT differences between males and females in terms of the total number of masculine and feminine pronouns in each textbook. The statistical difference between males and females is SIGNIFICANT when chi-square and likelihood ratios are calculated. Table 1 reveals the Chi Squared test outputs testing the independence of association between masculine and feminine pronouns. As indicated in the output, statistically significant results were observed between males and females in textbooks used in Omani schools $\chi^2 (14, N = 195) = 56.89, p = 0.00$. Figure 1 also shows that there is statistically significant difference between males and females in terms of feminine and masculine pronouns. In sum, Table 1 and Figure 1 SPSS output statistics also show that the gender gap between males and females is visible in the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks. Males' presence is powerful whereas females' is marginal.

Table 1
Total Number of Masculine and Feminine
Pronouns in Each Textbook

Textbook	Male	Female	Ch2	Sig	Likelihood ratio	Cramer's V
Class Book A (Grade 4)	59	60	56.899	0.00	57.506	0.195
Skills Book A (Grade 4)	17	4				
Class Book B (Grade 4)	74	40				
Skills Book B (Grade 4)	16	22				
Course Book A (Grade 11)	69	58				
Work Book A (Grade 11)	113	83				
Course Book B (Grade 11)	161	85				
Work Book B (Grade 11)	120	45				
Class Book A	1	1				

(Grade 1)						
Skills Book A (Grade 1)	0	0				
Class Book B (Grade 1)	8	21				
Skills Book A (Grade 1)	1	1				
Class Book A (Grade 7)	112	60				
Skills Book A (Grade 7)	32	14				
Class Book B (Grade 7)	77	71				
Skills Book B (Grade 7)	34	38				
Total	894	603				

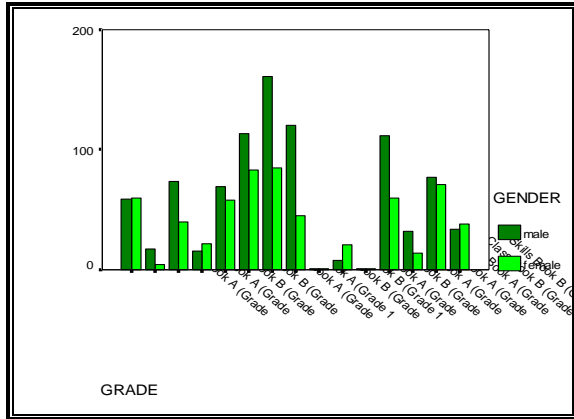


Figure 1
 Total Number of Masculine and Feminine
 Pronouns in Each Textbook

2. Masculine and Feminine Adjectives

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives in All Textbooks

The data obtained from the Omani EFL school textbooks have showed that the total number of adjectives associated with males and females is 358. The total number of adjectives associated with males in the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks is 227 whereas adjectives associated with females are 131. The difference is about double. These statistics clearly show that there is a huge gender gap in terms of the number of adjectives. The huge gender gap is again in favour of males. Adjectives associated with

males dominated almost all sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks. The only exception is *Class Book B* (Grade 7) which has 28 adjectives associated with females compared to only 15 adjectives associated with males. In other words, there is a strong gender bias against females when it comes to using adjectives in the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks. Female invisibility and marginalization in terms of using masculine and feminine adjectives is another characteristic of the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks. Table 2 provides detailed information in terms of adjectives associated with males and females in each Omani EFL school textbook.

Table 2 shows there are STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT differences between males and females in terms of the total number of masculine and feminine adjectives in each textbook. The statistical difference between males and females is SIGNIFICANT when chi-square and likelihood ratios are calculated. Table 2 reveals the Chi Squared test outputs testing the independence of association between masculine and feminine pronouns. As indicated in the output, statistically significant results were observed between males and females in textbooks used in Omani schools $\chi^2 (13, N = 350) = 43.74, p =$

0.00. Figure 2 also shows that there is statistically significant difference between males and females in terms of feminine and masculine pronouns. In sum, Table 2 and Figure 2 SPSS output statistics show that gender gap between males and females is visible in the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks. Males are generally more visible than females.

Table 2
 Total Number of Masculine and Feminine
 Adjectives in Each Textbook

Textbook	Male	Female	Chi ²	Sig.	Likelihood ratio	Cramer's V
Class Book A (Grade 4)	20	14	43.747	0.000	48.459	0.350
Skills Book A (Grade 4)	8	5				
Class Book B (Grade 4)	11	4				

Skills Book B (Grade 4)	4	0				
Course Book A (Grade 11)	16	14				
Work Book A (Grade 11)	20	11				
Course Book B (Grade 11)	23	4				
Work Book B (Grade 11)	37	6				
Class Book A (Grade 1)	2	0				
Skills Book A (Grade 1)	0	0				
Class Book B (Grade 1)	13	14				
Skills Book A (Grade 1)	0	0				
Class Book A (Grade 7)	33	23				
Skills Book A (Grade 7)	13	7				

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives per Textbook

Class Book B (Grade 7)	15	28				
Skills Book B (Grade 7)	12	1				
Total	227	131				

Data available from Table 2 clearly show that the number of adjectives associated with males in each school textbook is higher than the number of adjectives associated with females except for one textbook. For example, *Class Book A* (Grade 4) has 20 adjectives associated with males compared to 14 adjectives associated with females. Another example is *Work Book A* (Grade 11) which has 20 adjectives associated with males while the total number of adjectives associated with females is 11. On the other hand, statistics obtained from Table 4.13 show that *Class Book B* (Grade 7) is the only textbook that has more adjectives associated with females than males. The presence of *Class Book B* (Grade 7) is not sufficient to achieve gender balance.

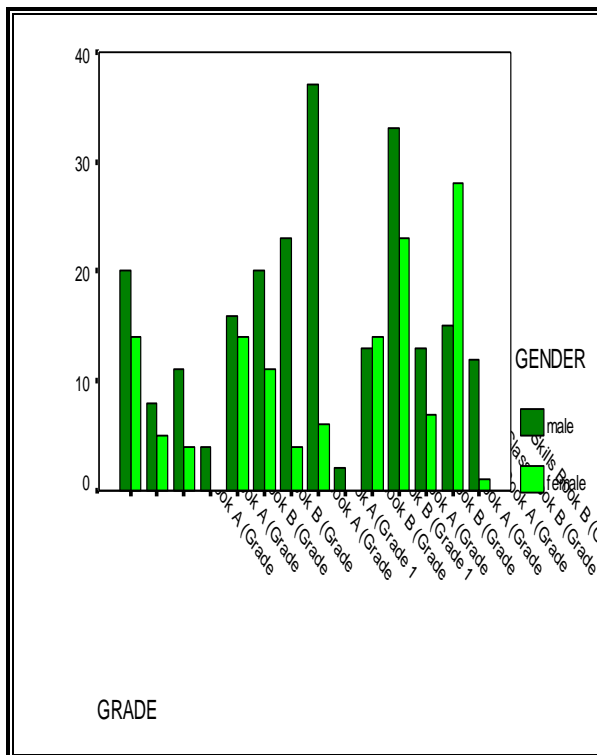


Figure 2
 Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives in Each Textbook

In addition, statistics show that some Omani EFL school textbooks contain substantial gender gap in terms of the number of adjectives used with males and females. *Work Book B* (Grade 11), for instance, contains 37 adjectives associated with males while the same textbook has only six adjectives associated with females. Another example is *Course Book B* (Grade 11) which has 23 adjectives associated with males compared to only four adjectives associated

with females. In other words, explicit gender bias against females in terms of adjectives is clearly present in the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks.

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives in Grade 4 Textbooks

Data obtained from the analysis of Grade 4 Omani EFL school textbooks have revealed that these four EFL school textbooks contain linguistic sexism. The total number of adjectives associated with males in Grade 4 is 43 compared to 24 adjectives associated with females. In other words, Grade 4 school textbooks are biased against females. Females' presence in these textbooks is still insignificant and marginal compared to their male counterparts.

A comparative examination of Grade 4 and Grade 11 Omani EFL school textbooks has also indicated that Grade 11 school textbooks have far more adjectives than Grade 4 textbooks. Grade 11 school textbooks have 131 (96 for males and 35 for females) adjectives associated with males and females while Grade 4 school textbooks have 66 (43 for males and 23 for females). In addition, data analysis of the above statistics shows that Grade 11 school textbooks exhibit more linguistic sexism than Grade 4. It is

another indication of the powerful presence of linguistic sexism. It is in favour of males over females. In other words, females still suffer from invisibility and gender bias against them.

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives in Grade 11 Textbooks

Data obtained from Grade 11 Omani EFL school textbooks have shown that these four EFL school textbooks contain blatant linguistic sexism. The total number of adjectives associated with males is 69 compared to only 35 adjectives associated with females. The total number of adjectives associated with males is almost twice the total number of adjectives associated with females. It is an indication of the powerful dominance and presence of males in these Omani EFL school textbooks.

Analysis of Grade 11 Omani EFL school textbooks has also shown that Grade 11 school textbooks used in semester 2 (*Course Book B* and *Work Book B*) have far more gender bias than Grade 11 school textbooks used in semester 1. For example, *Course Book B* has 23 masculine adjectives whereas *Course Book A* has only four feminine adjectives. In addition, *Work Book B* has 37 masculine adjectives while *Work*

Book A has only six feminine adjectives. In other words, this is an indication that the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks contain overt and powerful gender bias against females.

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives in Grade 1 Textbooks

The analysis of data obtained from Grade 1 Omani EFL school textbooks has revealed that these school textbooks contain a balanced representation of males and females. The total number of adjectives associated with males in Grade 1 is 15 compared to 14 adjectives associated with females. In other words, Grade 1 school textbooks are not biased against females.

A comparative examination of Grade 1 and Grade 7 Omani EFL school textbooks has also indicated that Grade 7 school textbooks have far more adjectives than Grade 1 textbooks. Grade 7 school textbooks have 132 (73 for males and 59 for females) adjectives associated with males and females while Grade 1 school textbooks have 29 adjectives (15 for males and 14 for females). In addition, data analysis of above statistics shows that Grade 7 school textbooks have more linguistic sexism than Grade 1. It is another indication of gender bias against females. Linguistic sexism is still entrenched

in these textbooks particularly Grade 7 school textbooks.

Total Number of Masculine and Feminine Adjectives in Grade 7 Textbooks

The analysis of data obtained from Grade 7 Omani EFL school textbooks has indicated that linguistic sexism is present in these school textbooks. The total number of adjectives associated with males in Grade 7 is 73 compared to 59 adjectives associated with females. In other words, Grade 7 school textbooks contain gender bias against females.

A close examination of Grade 7 Omani EFL school textbooks also reveals that Grade 7 school textbooks used in semester 1 contain more gender bias against females than Grade 7 school textbooks used in semester 2. For example, the total number of adjectives associated with males in *Grade 7* (semester 1) textbooks is 46 compared to 30 adjectives associated with females. Semester 2 textbooks, on the other hand, contain more adjectives associated with females than males. Semester 2 textbooks have 28 adjectives associated with females and 27 adjectives associated with males. In other words, it is evident that some Omani EFL school textbooks still exhibit gender bias against females.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study confirmed the findings of previous studies on linguistic sexism in school and non-school textbooks. The analysis of linguistic sexism (masculine and feminine pronouns and adjectives) has showed that the sixteen Omani EFL school textbooks contain obvious and significant linguistic sexism. In other words, linguistic sexism is blatant. The gender gap is huge and is in favour of males over females.

Pedagogical Implications

Pedagogical implications are of importance in the present study because the findings of the present study confirmed the findings of previous studies on linguistic sexism in school and non-school curricula. Therefore, it is fundamental that school textbooks designers and writers should follow guidelines designated to eliminate sexism in school textbooks as much as possible. It is not possible to eliminate all sexism in school textbooks, but making an effort to use guidelines related to eliminating sexism should help create more gender-balanced and equitable school curricula.

Teachers and instructors should play a more active role in promoting gender

equality in classes. Teachers and instructors are expected to be conscious of gender as an important variable in the educational process. Therefore, teachers' and instructors' role should not be limited to teaching what is only in the textbooks. They should do their best to engage male and female students in more gender-balanced practices. For example, if teachers have to highlight achievement of famous people, male and female heroes should be discussed and highlighted in class.

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