ROLE OF GENDER IN PAKISTANI ELT TEXTBOOKS:
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS APPROACH

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Abstract

Language and gender relations are two ways: gender is reflected by language and language assists to shape gender. Gender is less studied in the field of textbook evaluation because it states the social standards, practices and roles that distinct females from males. Critical Discourse Studies is a persuasive framework which is applied to evaluate gender beliefs and ideologies in textbooks. It further contains the examination of ideological manipulation, hegemony, power relations and identity. The current study examines representation of gender in Pakistani English Language Teaching schoolbooks of 9th grade and 10th grade of Balochistan which is the largest province (area) of Pakistan. A mixed method approach is used to analyse the data. 'Three-Dimensional Model' by Fairclough (2015) which is based on description, interpretation, and explanation has been used as the theoretical framework of the study. Moreover, the description stage has analysed four aspects. These are included as the frequency of men and women presence, gender activity, the pictorial representations, and the societal/domestic roles related with them. At large scale, the cardinal ideologies roles of power-relations and social challenges are elucidated. The analysis of the two ELT textbooks reveals a gender inequality and supports males. Such inequality has led to the females being less powerful and more stereotyped.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, ELT textbooks, Stereotype, Gender, ideology

1   Introduction

According to Richards (2009), textbooks are authentic material in teaching and learning and their importance cannot be deprived of. Textbooks provide complete guidelines and quite suitable ways to learn for a large number of teachers and students. In ELT context, instructors rely mostly on schoolbooks as considering the underpinning for their teaching (Ahmad & Shah, 2014).

Regardless of the government of Pakistan stating the significance of gender balance in education, there are signs that, regarding current school textbooks, equality aims are questionable to be comprehended. The main aim of current research is to prove the level to which traditional constructions of males and females continue to infuse current school textbooks used in Balochistan, province of Pakistan. The ministry of education has said that efforts will be made to lessen gender stereotypes in curriculum and textbooks (Ministry of Education, 2003). The importance of current study firms from the need to review and challenge gender irregularity as part of a search for change and enhancement because gender imbalance can spread such beliefs that can keep females in as secondary status. The current study has following research questions.

Do Pakistani ELT textbooks for high schools contain male-controlled beliefs and gender bias? How far do they signify gender stereotypes?

2   Literature Review

Gender is less studied in the field of textbook evaluation because it states the social standards, practices and roles that distinct females from males (Dai, 2015). According to Chandler (1997), the "gender roles are socially constructed" as gender behvaiours are educated despite inborn. Hussain,

Naz, Khan, Daraz, & Khan (2015) claimed that it is considered that males are usually known as powerful, independent, and intelligent whereas females are taken to be sensitive and caring. Moreover, such sociological concepts of gender take to the development of gender bias. Language plays a vibrant role in this regard because "it can contribute to the construction of gender bias and sexism" which is identified as the "dominance approach" anticipated by Spender (1980) in her book "Man Made Language". It further claims that how power is distributed in society where females are inferior to males and this discrimination is "manifested in the language and perceptions of males and females and their expected roles". According to Hussain et al. (2015) and Mustapha (2013) gender imbalance directly shapes gender ideologies which may clash 'with the educational goal of the contemporary community'. According to Fairclough (2015), Critical Discourse Analysis is one of the most persuasive frameworks that can be used to investigate gender representation in textbooks/curriculum. Paltridge (2006), claims that CDA can be used to examine the use of language, the relationship between the political and social context and the relationship between the political and social contexts in which it happens. It deconstructs texts to explore power relations in the social and political worlds (Fairclough, 2015). There are three main stages/steps of the model which are description, interpretation, and explanation respectively (Fairclough, 2001, 2015). The primary stage is description which is the analysis of a text and the linguistic devices that are used in text. The next stage is interpretation, which is mainly concerned with the "analysis of discourse practices to examine the relationship between the productive and interpretative processes and the text". It further refers to the situational context of the text. The third and the last stage is explanation which is related with the analysis of a social practice. Dai (2015) elaborated that it goals to analyse the discourse within a wider social scope in order to classify societal purpose. Textbooks are abundant and ideologies are varied which means that the ELT textbooks evaluation in terms of representation of gender is an endless procedure. Plenty of researchers have attempted to evaluate textbooks specially about gender inclusion and exclusion (Al Jumiah, 2016; Amerian & Esmaili, 2015; Dai, 2015; Jannati, 2015; Paltridge, 2006; Samadikhah & Shahrokhi, 2015; Sulaimani, 2017).

The presence of gender biases in Urdu and English textbooks in Punjab province of Pakistan. The males were presented as "macho" and females "wimpy" (Jabeen, Chaudhary, & Omar, 2014). Such representations show that females are not supposed to lead in social life and males can lead all the leading roles i.e., military and religious leaders as claimed in Durrani (2008). Unequal representations of gender in Sindh primary school textbooks are studied by (Agha, Syed, & Mirani, 2018).

"Three-Dimensional Model" by Fairclough (2015) of CDA has been used by Amerian and Esmaili (2015). The results revealed gender discrimination was present both overt and covert in ELT textbooks. Furthermore, such discourses not only workable for marketing and promoting the advertising which exposes females was assumed by these coursebooks.

3   Methodology

Two ELT textbooks of grade 9th and 10th have been examined. They are published under the provincial Balochistan government. Balochistan is the largest province in Pakistan area wise. These books are designed under the provided guidelines of the Curriculum Wing of Pakistan. Each textbook contains 13 lessons/units. The framework for analyzing the corpus was used by Fairclough's "Three-Dimensional Model" of CDA. The procedure was modified from Amerian and Esmaili (2015), with slight variations. They utilized Fairclough's (2015) checklist for investigating gender representation in textbooks. Hence, the current research only emphases on the four items from the checklist and rest of the five items excluded as they "deal with semantic and syntactic gender analysis" which is not the part of this study. The description stage analysis was investigated with analysing four aspects. These are included as the frequency of men and women occurrences, gender activity, the pictorial representations, and the social/domestic roles limked with men and women. To confirm the consistency of the assembled data, the frequencies and numbers were

patterned twofold. Afterward, after assembling quantitative data for these features, the study shifted to a qualitative explanation and analysis of these "aspects in relation to the social context". In the last phase, which is the explanation of power-relations, ideologies, identities and societal hardships were described in relations of the dominance theory (Spender, 1980).

4   Results and Findings

The interpretation of data starts with the firs stage (description) of Fairclough (2015) model. In this stage, the explanation and description of the corpus begins from the two coursebooks about the four features stated prior.

4.1 *Occurrences of Males/Females*

The foremost feature analysed in textbooks was occurrences of male/female frequency. In figure no. 1, females were not represented equal to males. Only 101 manifestations of females' occurrence appeared in the textbooks whereas 321 cases were seen for male occurrence. It shows that "males were the focus of more than two in every three-gender representation".

4.2 *Activity Ratio of Males/Females*

Another aspect investigated was what kind of activity that both genders engaged. In Table no 1, males were portrayed performing activities more often as compared to females. Almost 2 thirds of these activities were performed by males. The analysis refers that even activities were gender specific. For instance, males were engaged doing outside activities, working in offices, army, building constructions, doing sports activities etc. whereas females are performing house chores. Only teaching and nursing are the professions shown in these textbooks.

4.3 *Males and Females Pictorial Representations*

The next aspect was related to seeing the pictorial presence of both genders. As shown in Figure 2. There were very few images/ pictures in both textbooks. 30 pictures are representing males whereas 20 images of females. Here, one can say that the difference of ration is present but it's not that large. Only 10 images had equal numbers of both genders.

4.4 *Domestic and Social Roles*

Last aspect investigated was the domestic and social roles with which males and females were linked. In Table no 2, the roles were also gender specific. They were clearly biased as females were represented as 'nurse'. On the contrary, males were war heroes, doctors, leaders, merchants etc.

Table 1. Activity Males and Females (frequency)

Activity	Male frequency	Female Frequency
Shopping	0	2
Work in office	3	0
Playing/Sports	18	1
House chores	0	12
Watching TV	1	1
Travelling	1	0
Outdoor activities others	187	97
Total	321	101

Table 2. Domestic and Social Roles of Males and Females

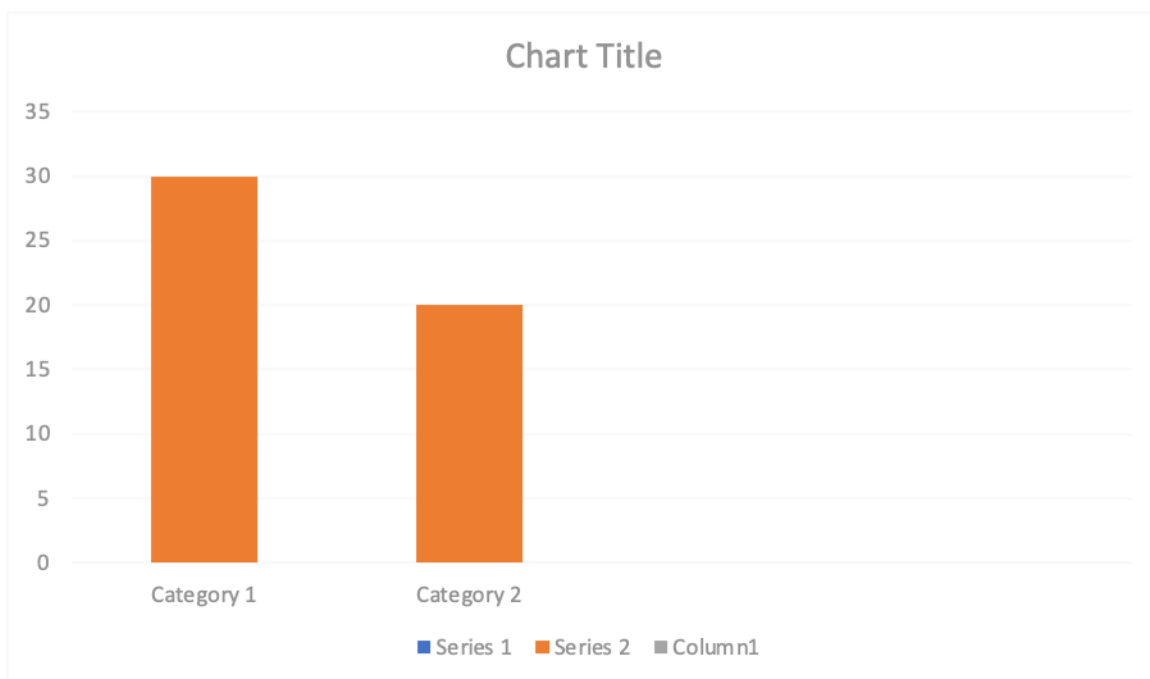| Domestic and Social Roles	Males Frequency	Females Frequency
Parents	7	3
Student	9	4
Doctor	1	2
Children(son/daughter)	5	2
Nurse	0	2
Friend	5	2
Teacher	4	1

Figure 1. Frequency of males and females' occurrences.

Figure 2. Images/pictures of Males and Females

The next two stages of 'Three-dimensional model', explains the data in "relation to the social context". The major findings have been divided into two critical themes; gender imbalance and biases in the schoolbooks, male-controlled dogma.

Under the first theme, grounded on the findings deliberated prior, it can be argued that women were lessened presented in both schoolbooks. Overall, these textbooks seem male oriented. Females are present in a very few numbers in terms of pictorial representations in the textbooks. Even if their presence showed the tendency to rely stereotypical images and perceptions such as that of nurses, housewives etc. In fact, it is showing a wrong perception of females in Pakistani society. On the other side, males were depicted doing major roles in a wide range of activities which showed the imbalance of gender. In a mega perspective, 'the findings are consistent with those of studies cited'

in the review part (Agha et al., 2018; Amerian & Esmaili, 2015; Durrani, 2008; Jabeen et al., 2014; Sulaimani, 2017).

In addition, the gender power inequality in these ELT textbooks is systems of authority that "interact to construct and reconstruct" male-oriented control, in this regard, constrain the accomplishment of balance for all humans. It is supported by the assistance of the dominance approach to language (Spender, 1980) in her book "Man Made Language", she says, "language limits the world because it constructs reality by giving those in power". The gender imbalance that is very much present in these "ELT textbooks could cause inaccurate perceptions of cultural and social reality". Furthermore, the unremitting presence of such biases in women roles imparts learners that these representations are the only tolerable ones for females. It further reduces the possibility of females practicing roles that are generally linked with males. It acknowledges Sulaimani (2017) ventures that upholding such portrayals of males/females in textbooks can, in fact, form a realism in a culture and community. Therefore, strengthening gender stereotyping "through learning materials could contribute to slowing down the process of establishing balance among humans". However, Spender (1980) explained that language cannot only be taken as an "inhibiting vehicle" nonetheless also a "creative" one which supports the stance that language offers potential liberty because it allows individuals "to construct the world they want to live in".

Generally, in Pakistan the women status is refining swiftly, government is paying attention towards this serious issue and being Islamic state, Islam very much promotes balance for all human beings. Hence, the women empowerment process hindered the imbalance representation of gender in textbooks. The selection of this level of textbooks is also very important. The students belonging to this age group (13-16) are making their concepts abstractly. According to Piaget, this is the crucial stage where they start thinking on their own and making the concepts. Gender biased texts and ideologies present in schoolbooks endorses the ideology of female demoting among female learners.

5   Conclusion

The study in hand examined the gender representation in two ELT textbooks of grade 9th and10th of Pakistan. It proposed to comprehend gender biases and roles in such schoolbooks in order to enhance the field of substantial assessment and gender roles. There are still very few studies addressing the issue in this way. The main objective was to review gender imbalances in a pursuit of modification and enhancement. "Three-Dimensional Model" by Fairclough (2015) of CDA is used. The analysis of these books exposed gender inequality in support of men. Such inequality has led to the women representation as biased, narrow, and marginalized. It further suggested that such marginalization of women could produce a wrong image and reality about females and hamper the process of achieving parity for all beings. The limits of the current study are important to addresses; for example, investigating a large sample would take part to oversimplifying the results to all Pakistani ELT schoolbooks, which may show results in new findings as different topics are there. Learners directly using such textbooks and their stance are important to take in getting perception from these textbooks. It further could be followed up by fascinating contrastive analysis between "ELT textbooks created for the Pakistani Context and the international varieties of the same textbooks".

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