

## THE EFL STUDENTS' REACTION IN ENGLISH TEACHING MATERIALS: AN ANALYSIS OF GENDER REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK

**Hendriwanto**

*Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,  
University of Swadaya Gunung Jati, Indonesia  
E-mail: hendriwanto46@gmail.com*

APA Citation: Hendriwanto. (2018). The EFL students' reaction in English teaching materials: an analysis of gender representation in English textbook. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 4(1), 83-88. DOI: 10.25134/ieflij.v4i1.887.

Received: 19-11-2017

Accepted: 25-12-2017

Published: 01-01-2018

**Abstract:** The role of teaching materials plays major contribution to the language development. The published materials bridge the content and the practice in the classroom. From the analysis it was found 25 images which represented the gender role in which man dominated in all chapters. The representative of image in the textbook employed the role of social background of what student perceived in the course book. The students perceived that the three images could represent their want. However, most images did not show students' daily activities. In addition, the findings showed that students' responses to the images in the textbooks had controversy related to the role of man and woman in the reality.

**Keywords:** *gender analysis, teaching materials, textbook analysis*

### INTRODUCTION

The role of teaching materials plays major contribution to the language development. Tomlinson (2009) purpose that teaching materials should give the student the opportunity to practice the language in their daily life particularly in all activities related to what they need as to language for survival life. However, the adapted materials are still major troubleshoot for any relation in teaching especially for Senior High School in Indonesia.

Teaching materials as a mean to guide students to achieve the learning objective appears to be essential component in learning English. Teaching materials provide the challenge for the teachers and students to calibrate what their representation in all images they put. Tomlinson (2010) argued that teaching materials should use selected images in order to give optimum effect. In line with this, Yang (2016) explored the importance of imagery in textbook in promoting the student characteristic.

However, in Indonesian context, teaching materials have not been investigated in more detail related to the gendered analysis from students' perception. For example, the theme in one of the topics of chapters provided the related topics about nationality, culture, and education. It means that the course book remains the slot of investigation in any aspects of study.

The discussion of course book analysis has had a long history in the context of language learning. More recently, the amount of published course book has made the critics in any area even frequent. Some writers used the gender perspective as the tool of analysis to investigate the role of gender bias of image in the course materials. Many scholars have also conducted visual analysis in the textbook (Azisah & Vale, 2008; Bahman & Rahim, 2010; Benham & Mozaheb, 2013). The analysis of visual in the textbook showed that gender analysis can be found in numerous of the study. The reason why textbook tend to select man or woman as the representation was a major investigated.

Analyzing textbook was not merely putting checklist with the appropriate guideline rather than analyzing discourse of the text in the teaching materials. To date, most teaching materials analysis was focused on checklist-oriented rather than analyzing what the image represented in the textbook. To fulfill this gap, the two research questions are proposed; how students perceived the image in materials and what materials give to the context of English learning in gender representation.

**METHOD**

The participants of this study were students in a senior high school who have been learning English as their foreign language for seven years. They were participating as member of English association in school. They read teaching materials from the teachers which are accessible in the library and the classroom. Besides, they also have access to read any e-materials as learning resources.

The data were collected from English textbook used and other empirical resources such as interview, transcript, and media for analysis. The selected images taken from English textbook for senior high school which demonstrated the role of gender are presented in Table 1.

As the table shows, the representation of the image was the balancing in each part of the textbook. It is likely that image enacted the role of social representation. Textbook and teachers as user of the social product involve a

set of artifacts in certain social interaction. This is prior data that convey what the images have featured in gender analysis.

Table 1. *Categories of images taken from English textbook*

| No | Category       | Amount | Gender        |
|----|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 1  | Hobby          | 12     | Woman         |
| 2  | Learning       | 5      | Woman and man |
| 3  | Daily Activity | 8      | Man           |

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The published materials bridge the content and the practice in the classroom. From the two textbooks, there were 25 images represented the emotional intelligence. From 25 images, it was revealed that the man in the textbook dominated in all chapters.

By investigating the existence of each image in the part of text book, we can know the rule of some specific idea of how gendered-text represents the rule of learning atmosphere. In this occasion, leaving the image as social function is more embedded in some culture instead of what the image devotes. We can know a lot of social activities by seeing the images in learning materials. Therefore, the learning materials showed that both man and woman have equal opportunity to get job or chance to go to school.

Table 2. *Teacher and Students' Perceptions*

| Learning Materials | The interview of Teacher devotes the task  | Students Perception   |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Unit 1             | This chapter, I think it is not good choice for me since I need a lot of resources that it is not easy to find. When I looked my learning objective again, I remembered that the choice of man or woman as an example is one of the representation of social practice. | When I read this section, I remember of my teacher suggestion that if we as student for next generation, we have to have a big dream. |
| Unit 2             | Deciding to use man or woman as example of what we are going to teach is certain barrier consideration. It relates to what extent that teacher enables   | This is what I need to deploy a man or woman as my reading assignment when I get the task from the teacher.                           |

---

materials in their pedagogical imagine.

|        |  |  |
|--------|--|--|
| Unit 3 | What I am going to share in this teaching material to my student is that I can catch while my student perceived that they learn separately with their context. | I learn a lot from this teaching material since I have perceived that my role in English learning as learner devotes my decision to find my opportunity. |
|--------|--|--|

---

The teacher articulates the component of what teaching materials did not have special consideration in interplaying the reduction of teaching materials. As we investigated, the teacher reaction towards teaching materials, we get hold of any kind of teacher's perspective to apply these teaching materials in the classroom. Furthermore, some certain behavior of teacher gained is that we have seen that teacher looked at the imagery in teaching materials as to devoting social interaction in the real situation.

The relation of image as social semiotic can be deployed by genre as a tool for analyzing text. This text conveys making meaning between teachers and students. Therefore, the two pictures in teaching materials represent language use in the world. Teachers accomplish the related view of genre text and ideological intervention in the textbook.

Students were able to learn what they got from teachers' materials in which the content of this subject interpose them with the store of learning language. This is the way they learn from what organization of learning experience such as emotion, culture, and gender. These features predict the situation of what we need as gender approach in teaching language learning.

In unit 1, teaching materials entailed the performance of gender choice in which image showed any particular content. Student perceived that image in the textbook can be

arranged to be teaching media as to the favorite of choice in any classroom assignment. This is what we call by the term of engagement in situated condition such as the barrier of learning language as foreign language.

In unit 2, teaching materials provided the new terms of optional choice whether man or woman represents the teaching materials. Having enacted the student through teaching materials, students preferred to convey what the situation in learning language want as a mean to accomplish the general notion of gender choice.

In unit 3, teaching materials devoted the rule of language composition in order to serve materials content of teaching instruction. To date this composition gendered text. The three major images relate to empowering the component of rejected or accepted culture as social backbone of learning English for different student background.

### **The students' hope of their dream in the future**

Representing the images in the English teaching materials, students owe the hoping to acquire what they want to be. The images below showed that woman is drawing the picture with a girl image. The image of a girl who has a hobby in drawing demonstrated that it is rare job for woman in the reality as can be seen from students' reaction.



Source: Dokumen Kemdikbud

Picture 2.7

The first picture showed that to be a painter was not merely the profession for man. However, a painter was perceived as professional job for those who want to have valuable activity in leisure time. In teaching reading, the role of picture play pivotal aspect in which image demonstrated the selected gender whether man as profession or woman as object of profession.

*Student response:*

*"I think when I want to be an artist in special art, I have to think twice since I have no guarantee my future life to be an artist"*  
(Student 1)

The data showed that an optional job in their future life after they got an official job. They need to have guaranteed insurance for what they work for and what they can get benefit. Students give the responses to the picture in the textbook relating with what their dream in the future. It is imperative to analyze the way students want after they graduated from the school and the teaching materials in the classroom. The images send the implied

meaning that women have good chance to reach any kind of job position. This seems to be in line with writer of the textbook that woman was delegated to be an alternative decision maker.

Particularly in teaching materials analysis, one of the three images showed that gendered text in the English textbook is to establish students' awareness that man and woman have the capacity to know and develop their potential in life. Similarly, student responds that awareness of building their capacity as means to realize their potency in learning English as communication tool. As such, student's reaction to the images in the text of gendered choice appears to look at the method of building competence.

Conversely, it is likely that written text and images presence occurs in back and forth in reality of student's background especially in man and woman separation. For example, in the images of a girl who is drawing on the canvas, it is that the image appears to represent the students' background.

Rahmi : Yes. Come to my room. Look at this. What do you think?  
Sinta : Terrific. I like the cover. Let me see the contents.  
          This book is excellent. You really did a great job.  
Rahmi : Thanks a lot. You've inspired me to do this.  
Sinta : Your publisher should send it to all bookstores here.  
Rahmi : Yes, you're right. The publisher will do it for me.  
Sinta : Well, that's great. I am proud of you, Rahmi.  
          By the way, I've got to go now. Have a nice day!  
Rahmi : You, too.



Source: Dokumen Kemdikbud  
Picture 2.2

In the second picture, the actor, Rahmi, had an excellent job to be writer for the new book. This kind of job was not too popular in any area especially for Indonesian. Few students had no experience in major dream to be writer for writing novel, scientific book, and also other works of creative writing. This image, however, performs the overview of situational fact that was not too related with the reality.

Having a dream to be a writer seems to be unnatural for some students. Student felt

that they actually need to improve their situation in their daily life activities such as learning management and doing some activities related to the finding of their journey in their life.

#### *Students response*

*Reading a lot of the book can be a good writer, but I do not really want to be a writer. In my family, no member of my family wants to be a writer as their profession. (Student 2)*



Source: Dokumen Kemdikbud  
Picture 2.18

In the third picture, man and woman were playing a ball game in which the actor throws the ball to each other. However, the position among player was divided into two sides, left and right in face to face interaction. The girls were in the left side, while the boys were in the right side. This implied that the two genders should be separated into two different sections to devote the gendered classification. Therefore, the textbook in major

learning materials persist many components of teaching.

Overall, the textbook's image employed a gender vision of the students' reality in the school in which they correlate the distance between man and woman. For the students, taking the role of women task was responsible for what they need to perform. As Fould (2013) argued that students demonstrated the identity of gender in reality.

The main idea of what every textbook devote to the message of what social need is that carrying out them adequate reason to do so. In fact, data showed that students do not aware at the beginning of learning. Rather than devoting them into main message, it is not merely deduction to adapt it into our teaching materials.

Further investigation leads us into a discussion of what the teaching materials bearing for students. The more detail the investigation, the more we have a gestalt to what extent the role of major contribution of what the materials confer. Material as a main learning tool has been neglected by the teacher to select what are the appropriate materials that contribute to student learning. In this case, teacher was trying hard to find the mostly adapted materials so that the student is able to follow what they need.

Thus, investigating materials requires any case for likely engagement of enactment. The three images discussed above teach about gender representation as multiple meaning in collaborating the new idea. Man was selected in the part of teaching English textbook since the two activities in the context are usually done by man. Meanwhile, woman was only displayed when there is activity that can be done by woman. Therefore, the consequence of choice between man or woman was ideological perspective. Prior to inviting teacher to come to the class, it is very necessary for teacher to have philosophy of what language is and how they can teach language.

In the picture of playing ball, it gives an overview that there is no space between western ideological and how they teach the language. This picture delivers what the student gives in image as social representation. In the second picture, words are used to tell relating to the profession of writers or artist. It shows that woman have a good opportunity in these two professions. In addition, the picture of reading book in which the reader show ability to read more and more showing their capacity. Thus, what the analysis gives to the fully guided into the dissemination.

## CONCLUSION

The representative of image in the textbook employed the role of social background of what student perceived in the course book. The students perceived that the three images could represent their want. However, most images did not show students' daily activities. In addition, the findings showed that students' responses to the images in the textbooks had controversy related to the role of man and woman in the reality.

Social justice and social practice can be perceived in those teaching materials as to giving what every teacher wants. Student as a user considers to read or not to read, but students exactly need some special issues in gender. Learning English as foreign language yield magnitude why learner wants to learn.

## REFERENCES

- Azisah, S., & Vale, C. (2008). Gender mainstreaming in Islamic primary schools in South Sulawesi, Indonesia: A textbook analysis. *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, 42(1), 55-79.
- Bahman, M., & Rahim, A. (2010). Gender representation in EFL materials: An analysis of English textbooks of Iranian high schools. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 273-277.
- Benham, B., & Mozaheb, M. A. (2013). The depiction of men and women within Iranian high school EFL textbooks, tested against Islamic custom. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 34(1), 100-104. DOI: 10.1080/13617672.2013.760253.
- Tomlinson, B. (2009). Materials development for language teachers. *Modern English Teacher* 8(1), 62-68.
- Tomlinson, B. (2010). Connecting the mind: A multi-dimensional approach to teaching language through literature. *The English Teacher* 4(2), 104-115.
- Yang, C. C. R. (2016). Are males and females still portrayed stereotypically? Visual analyses of gender in two Hong Kong primary English Language textbook series. *Gender and Education*, 28(5), 674-692. DOI: 10.1080/09540253.2015.1103839.