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Gender Representation in English and Arabic Foreign Language Textbooks in Iran: A Comparative Approach

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Abstract

Female educational attainment in Iran has been increasing since the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran. This study investigated whether this female superiority is reflected or supported in Iranian textbooks. The study investigated how gender roles are represented in Iranian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbooks. "Criteria for Analysis of the Equality of Gender Representation" by Rifkin, was used for content analysis. These criteria are grouped into two main categories of 'pictorial' and 'verbal'. The results showed that with no exception and in all criteria, males were represented significantly more than females. This indicates that males were the central point of most sentences, either as the subject of actions, or as the main figure in sentences and pictures. Significant differences were observed between AFL and EFL textbooks.

Key Words: Gender, Textbooks, Stereotypes, Equality, EFL, Content Analysis

Introduction

Official statistics from several resources in Iran indicate that female enrollment and achievement in Iranian universities has recently exceeded that of male students (Rezaei, 2012). Is this phenomenon (females' academic achievement) due to an enhancement in females' education or a positive discrimination in favor of them? Are there any positive improvements in the way women are depicted in Iranian textbooks after the Islamic revolution in 1995?

Textbooks have been used by researchers as a tool to study cultures and, particularly, to investigate gender roles in different cultures (Moore, 2007). In Iran, gender roles are especially important because of the ideological influence of gendered politics and religion in the local Iranian educational system. This study investigates how gender roles are represented in Iranian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbooks, and tries to identify micro and macro factors that may contribute to depictions of gender in Iranian textbooks.

Gender discrimination is, to a large extent, a social phenomenon with roots in social structures, social attitudes, and ideologies. Psychologists believe that gender identification starts

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very early (about age 2) in human life (Yelland, 1998). Social roles are normally learned through socialization which starts at home, and then continues in school and within the larger society (Davis & Wills 2010).

Textbooks are an important element in students' gender role education because students use them both in school and at home (Hartman & Judd, 1978; Powell & Garcia, 1985; Bazler & Simonis, 1990; Ferree & Hal,l 1990; Moore, 2007). According to Riazi (2003), "textbooks are considered the next important factor in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher" (p. 52). Furthermore, due to students' trust in their textbooks the influence of textbooks can be much stronger than words they hear from their parents or teachers. According to Porreca (1984), this is particularly true of younger learners who tend not to question what they read and trust the printed word more than adults.

The important issue here is that many children may think whatever comes in their textbooks (e.g., gender roles and stereotypes) is a reflection of socially acceptable or socially desirable viewpoints. Textbooks as good representatives of any curriculum are, perhaps, the most tangible and publicly accessible resources that can "easily lend themselves to objective investigations" (Amalsaleh, Sajjadi, & Yarmohammadi 2006, 11).

Therefore, investigating the content of textbooks is important and researchers have worked on gender roles in textbooks of different countries (Hartman & Judd, 1978; Porreca, 1984; Gupta &Yin, 1990; Cerezal, 1991; Kanamaru, 1998; Yen, 2000; Harashima, 2005; Chick, 2006; Moore, 2007). In Iran, there have been a few research studies on textbooks. The educational system in Iran is highly influenced by the government with increasing control over textbooks' content to comply with governmental policies, and the government's political and religious agendas. Islam is the official religion of the country and according to Moghissi (2008); Islam is not a matter of personal spiritual choice but rather a legal and political system. Therefore, it is important to review the literature on Iranian textbooks to explore how gender roles, are reflected in Iranian textbooks. It is also important to know how these roles have changed since the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979 and the implementation of new policies and revised curriculum.

Studies on Iranian Textbooks

The following literature review shows how textbook content in Iran has changed since the beginning of the 1979 Islamic Republic.

The first study in this regard was conducted just one year after the revolution. Touba (1987) analyzed several elementary-level textbooks and reported that the books portrayed only men in most economic activities traditionally performed by both sexes (for example, shopkeeper/salesperson or librarian). Women were seen only as agricultural workers and as teachers of girls-only classes. On the other hand, some scientific activities, which were traditionally male activities, were performed by both sexes as shown in the textbooks. Touba (1987) concluded that the patriarchal orientation of the Islamic regime had definitely been incorporated into elementary school textbooks, reinforcing traditional attitudes toward women's "proper" role and curtailing any movement toward egalitarian norms. She also found that women were never presented as assertive in the texts she had studied, whether in positive or negative ways.

However, Higgins and Shoar–Ghaffari (1991) suggest that the discriminatory gender roles in Iranian textbooks existed to some extent even before the Islamic revolution in 1979.

They state that the changes in textbooks after the Islamic revolution were not extensive. They report that their content analysis of the elementary Persian language textbooks showed that 60% of the Islamic Republic textbook's lessons were identical to those of the Pahlavi era (pre revolution of 1979) or different only in the pictures, names of characters, or an isolated word or two. They reported that only 10% of the contents in use in the Islamic Republic were new at that time. Furthermore, these post-Islamic revolution changes have only affected social studies, language and literature rather than science and math. They carried out a quantitative content analysis in which they compared grades 1-4 Persian language textbooks in 1969-70 (pre revolution) with those in 1986-7 (post revolution). In comparison with the pre revolution textbooks they found no significant change in the occupations in which women were portrayed, in prominence given to family life, in the size or structure of family, in the characteristics of sex roles within the family, and in stereotypically gendered behavioral characteristics. Nevertheless, they found a dramatic change in dress and in the portrayal of gender segregation.

However, Moghissi (1996) believes that this study has implicitly justified the gender stereotypes and segregations that the authors have observed in textbooks. By 1996, when Moghissi wrote her review, perhaps she had witnessed much more dramatic changes in the textbooks. It should be noted that the Ministry of Education in Iran prints all textbooks in K-12 each year and teachers and students are required to use only the current year textbooks. Changes in textbooks especially in elementary material happened very gradually. It started with changing the pictures (adding veils to female pictures, separating men and women in the pictures) and changing proper names from Persian names (Sara, Dara, Sasan…) to more popular Islamic names (Reza, Ali, Fatemeh, Zinab…). Then little by little, they replaced the content of the lessons. The study of Higgins and Shoar Ghaffari (1994) was based on the Persian language textbooks in 1986-7 academic year.

More recent studies on Iranian textbooks, report more fundamental changes. For example, in his report to Freedom House, Paivandi (2008) concludes that: "Discrimination and intolerance appear consistently throughout Iran's textbooks, across the range of subjects in the core curriculum. They are neither accidental nor sporadic. They are values the regime deliberately seeks to instill in the country's school children" (Paivandi, 2008, 1). The report shows that women are not presented as independent individuals. Rather, they are a man's wife, mother, sister, or daughter. In other words, "Women are accorded little importance as individuals, and their contributions to society outside the home are largely ignored. This attitude toward women is justified in the textbooks through numerous references to the Koran and the lives of prophets and Imams." (2008, 2)

Changes are still going on and, just recently, Iran's minister of education, Hamidrza Gadzhibabai, made the announcement during a press conference in Tehran that the Ministry will soon publish separate school textbooks for boys and girls. Quoting Mr. Gadzhibabai, Iran's Mehr news agency reports that in line with gender segregation in educational system, "education, training, and textbooks should be adjusted accordingly. He predicted that next year, comprehensive education reforms will occur in all fields, including teachers, classes, books, and teaching methods" (Bezhan, 2012, 1). According to Bezhan (2012), this is clearly a policy that will create another area of gender segregation in the Islamic republic.

While the above studies have focused on Iranian textbooks in areas such as history and the Persian literature, this project intends to investigate gender roles as reflected in EFL(English as a Foreign) and AFL(Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbooks. Traditionally, EFL textbooks have been different from other textbooks in Iran. While Iranian culture dominates the context of

other textbooks, traditionally (before the rise of the Islamic government), EFL textbooks portrayed western culture, particularly, American culture. In fact, the original sources of most EFL textbooks used to be mainly American or British sources. Furthermore, the goal of EFL textbooks was to enable students to communicate with English speakers. Therefore, one expects the context of lessons to be more influenced by European or American values. Consequently, it is not expected to see as much of traditional and religious contexts in Iranian EFL textbooks as we see in other textbooks. On the other hand, AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbooks are mostly written in order to enable students to read the Quran and to communicate with people from other Islamic/Arab countries. Therefore, it is expected to see more of the Islamic culture and traditions in these textbooks. Although in today's Iranian education, the Arabic language is more emphasized in schools than English is, we were not able to find any published or unpublished study on Arabic textbooks in Iran. Therefore, this study intends to compare EFL with AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbooks to investigate gender differences in terms of gender representations.

The overall purpose of the present study is to explore gender representation in current EFL and AFL textbooks used in Iran in the academic years 2010-2011. The first goal is to compare male and female roles in a high school (grade 11) EFL textbook. The research question is if there are any significant difference between female and male in terms of the roles they are given in textbooks. Consequently, regarding the literature review, we hypothesize that we will find more important and more prestigious roles given to male.

The second goal is to compare an EFL and an AFL high school textbook (both from grade 11). This comparison will be done with a focus on the content of each chapter and the images in theses textbooks. Therefore, our second research question is about the difference between EFL and AFL high school textbooks in terms of their depiction of gender roles. We hypothesize that gender related stereotypes are still present in EFL textbooks but less in comparison to the AFL textbooks.

The third goal is to compare the findings with other EFL/ESL textbook studies in Iran, and with the studies performed in other countries. These comparisons and analyses will be done both quantitatively and qualitatively as explained in the methods section below. Through a comparative study between previous studies and this one, we will provide an insight into gender representations in EFL and AFL textbooks in contemporary Iran. We hypothesize that the gender gap will be wider in Iranian textbooks in comparison with those found in other countries.

Methods

Two Iranian textbooks were selected for analysis in this study. The first textbook was a grade eleven high school EFL and the second textbook was a grade eleven high school AFL. The "Criteria for Analysis of the Equality of Gender Representation" scale developed by Rifkin (1998) was used for the content analysis. Rifkin (1998) has identified eighteen different criteria for evaluation of gender representation in texts. These criteria are grouped into two main categories of 'pictorial' and 'verbal'. In the 'pictorial' category, the focus is on visibility of female in illustrations and pictures. The second part 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.

The first category includes six criteria for the analysis of pictorial presentation of gender. A quantitative analysis was performed to determine the presence of males and females in the textbook images based on the following six criteria:

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 includes 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. The first criterion in this part measures the frequency with which females and males are unambiguously mentioned or referred to. The frequency with which females or males are referred to in the first person, second person singular, and second person plural are measured as the third criterion in this part. The fourth criterion measures the frequency with which different names for females and males are used. The next five criteria require counting the frequency of subjects, objects (direct or indirect), verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. Criterion number nine considers the "firstness" of each gender in the sentence. The frequencies were analyzed of when either gender (females/males) precedes another when females and males are both included in a single phrase. Finally, regarding the criteria ten, eleven, and twelve, classification of settings into domestic verses occupational settings was done similar to the aforementioned classification of images in part one.

For the most part of the analysis simple descriptive statistics such as frequencies, ratios, and percentages were used. However, in order to compare between the two textbooks of EFL and AFL in their gender representations we used chi square (X^2). Chi square is a statistical methodology used to investigate whether distributions of categorical variables differ from one another and whether there is any significant differences between the expected frequencies and the observed frequencies in one or more categories (Sharp, 1979). The alpha level was set to .05 for all chi square tests of significance.

Results
Content Analyses: Part A
A quantitative analysis was performed to determine the presence of males and females in the textbook images based on the six criteria suggested by Rifkin (1998). The report of the findings is presented in two diffident sections for the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbooks.

English Textbook
The first criterion for pictorial analysis measures the percentage of images that includes female/male only. Overall, 33% of the human images showed female figures and the other 67% showed male figures. The EFL textbook included a total of one hundred and two illustrations.

Seventy-eight pictures had human subjects and twenty-four of the illustrations were pictures of non-human subjects. Examples of non-human subjects are; a picture of the school bus, windy or snowy weather, or a clock on the wall. A total of 23% of all images were non-human and the other 77% were human images. It should be noted that in English and in Farsi languages the non-human objects are not gendered. Therefore, we did not analyzed gender roles in non-human objects.

The second criterion measures the ratio of fore-grounded females/male to "backgrounded" females/male. There were only five images that had both male and female figures in one image. Two of these pictures show a female in the foreground and three show a male in foreground. These images are the only images in which both genders (male/female) are presented together in one image. Table 1 shows that 3% of the 78 images with human subjects had females fore-grounding males and 4% males fore-grounding females.

Table 1. Fore-Grounded Verses Back-Grounded Images

	Female N %	Male N %	Total N
The percentage of fore-grounded females/male to back-grounded females/male (same sex in the picture);	8 10	13 17	78
The percentage of fore-grounded females to males	2 (3%)		78
The percentage of fore-grounded males to females	3 (4%)		78

The third criterion measures the percentage of pictorial texts in which females/males are depicted as children. Fifty one percent (40 out of 78) of human images depicted males or females as children (15 girls, 25 boys). It should be noted that none of the human images contain both adult males and females together. There is either a woman with a child or a man with a child. Table 2 summarizes the findings on the fourth criteria. As shown in this table the ratio of female to male depicted in motion is 71:100.

Table 2. The Ratio of the Images with Person in Stasis/Motion

		Female N %	Male N %	Total	ratio
	The ratio of females to males depicted in stasis	7 9	10 13	78	70:100
	The ratio of females to males depicted in motion.	20 26	28 36	78	71:100

The percentage of pictorial texts in which depicted females/male are named/unnamed in captions is considered in the fifth criterion. The results showed that sixty-seven pictures had captions either referring to the person or to the action in the image. Of these 67 pictures only 30% named the person in the caption. The ratio of females to males in these images was 50:100.

Fifty five percent of individuals (females n=21 and males n=22) were unnamed in the pictures. The ratio of female to male in these images was 95:100.

The next criterion, measures "the percentage of pictorial texts in which the visual context for each figure can be identified as "domestic" (d), versus those in which the visual context can be identified as "professional" (p). The results indicated that while 72% of female and male images were in a "neutral" (n) context, the ratio of females to males in professional roles were 33:100 and the ratio of females to males in domestic roles were 300:100 and the ratio of females to males in neutral roles was 44:100. (Table 3)

Table 3. Domestic vs. Professional Roles

	Female N %	Male N %	Total N %	Ratio
'domestic' versus 'professional' roles	d=6 8 p=6 8 n=17 22	d=2 3 p=9 12 n=39 50	8 10 15 19 56 72	300:100 33:100 44:100

Arabic Textbook

The Arabic (AFL) textbook in total had one hundred and seventeen illustrations. Thirty-five pictures had human subjects and eighty-two of the illustrations were pictures of non-human subject materials. In total, 7, 23% of images were males (n=25) and 9% females (n=10) with the ratio of 40:100.

In this textbook there was only one image that contained both male and female together and in that image female was back-grounded (the women with the covered face) to a male (His holiness Imam Ali). The other few images of females were either solo or multiple females in the same layer.

In 42% of the total images, females and males were depicted as children. In another words, in 90% of female images and in 39% of male images the characters were depicted as children. Out of thirty-five images with human subjects, the ratio of females to males in stasis is 59:100. No image of females in motion or physical activity was observed. In contrast, 17% of male images were categorized as motion images. Males presided females in both stasis and motion activities.

Finally, within thirty-five pictures with human subjects none of them had captions either referring to the person or the action in the image. There were also no images of females or males in domestic roles or activities, and only four pictures of males in professional roles. The professions depicted in those pictures were limited to militant, judge, governor, and clergy. The remaining pictures (female=10, male=21) were identified to be in neutral positions.

Content Analyses: Part B

The second part of the content analyses involved a verbal analysis of the content and requires the analysis of different elements of text such as subject, object, verb, noun, and pronoun. Therefore, we started with scanning the entire textbook and then used a feature in Adobe Acrobat Pro to search, find, and count target words in different categories such as Pronouns (he, she, et cetera) and address (Mr., Miss, Dr., et cetera). To ensure the accuracy of

the analysis, we double-checked our manual calculation with the one obtained with computerized counting. The following sections are the findings for the verbal analysis of EFL and AFL textbooks.

English Textbook

The first criterion in this part measures the frequency with which females and males are clearly mentioned or referred to in the text. In total, characters' names were mentioned one hundred-forty times in the textbook. Within these names 23% were female and the other 77% were male names. Therefore, the ratio of female to male was 30:100. The references to these characters by personal pronouns for females were calculated to be 14 ('She'=5, 'her'=9). For males the number of such pronouns was found to be 51 ('you'=5,'i'=7, 'me'=1, 'he'=28, 'him'=10). Therefore, among all the personal pronouns referring to named characters, 22% referred to female characters and 78% referred to male characters which is equivalent to a 27:100 ratio (Table 4). In the next section of this article we'll discuss why there is a clear inconsistency in the way males and females are depicted.

In addition, as suggested by Lakoff (1973), in English, when reference is made individually to members of a sexually mixed group, the normal solution is to resolve the indecision as to pronoun choice in favor of the masculine. The masculine, then, is 'unmarked' or 'neutral', so, will be found referring to both men and women. Following this rule, in our analysis of this text, we found two cases of neutralized 'he'. For example, in the sentence "this education should prepare the person for other job *he* can do best", 'he' refers to 'the person' and in the sentence "when someone fasts, it means *he* doesn't eat", 'he' refers to 'someone'.

Table 4. Ratio of References to Characters in Text

B.	Verbal Texts	Female N %	Male N %	Total N	Ratio
1.a	The ratio of different named female to male characters	32 23	108 77	140	30:100
1.b	The ratio of references to such characters (i.e., personal pronouns with clear gender antecedent);	14 22	51 78	65	27:100

The second criterion measures the frequency with which different names for females and males are used. For example, the frequency of full names, diminutive forms, sure name with titles, et cetera. for each gender. The characters were named one-hundred and forty times by different names. In 20% of cases, females were named by their full first names. This ratio was 69% for males. Therefore, the ratio of female first name to male first name was 29:100. The combination of diminutive form and first name was not observed at all for any gender. The only respectful referring to any characters with clear gender was the form of diminutive and last names for example, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Karimi, and Mrs. Karimi. Similarly, the only combination of diminutive and surnames for females was the form of "Mrs. and last name" and this was observed three times. For males, there was a combination of "Mr. and last names" which was observed nine times. The ratio of female to male in this category was 33:100. (Table 5)

Table 5. Respectful Reference to the Characters

B.	Verbal Texts	Female N %	Male N %	Total	Ratio
2.a	The ratio with which females or males, are referred to by their full first names	28 20	97 69	140	29:100
2.b	The ratio with which males or females, are referred to by diminutive forms of their first names;	0 0	0 0	140	0:0
2.c	The ratio with which females, as opposed to males, are referred to by other respectful naming conventions: surnames only, name and surname, name and patronymic, surname with title (e.g., Dr. or Professor).	3 2	9 6	140	33:100

In the third criteria, the frequency with which females or males are referred to in the first person, second person singular, and second person plural are measured. Our observation showed that there was no reference to the females by first, second singular/plural pronouns in the text. Most of the first person singular pronouns (I) were genderless. Of all those instances (n=131), there were twelve instances clearly marked for male. The second person pronoun 'you' was observed in 132 incidences. The majority of second personal pronoun 'you' in text was genderless. No referral to singular female or any plural was found, and only in four cases, 'you' referred to a male character. (Table 6)

Table 6. First and Second Person Pronoun's Referential

B.	Verbal Texts	Female N %	Male N %	Total	Ratio
3.a	First person singular pronouns (of all those such instances in which there is a clearly marked gender referent) in any grammatical form (i.e., in any case);	0 0	12 9	131	0:100
3.b	Second person singular (familiar) pronouns (of all those such instances in which there is a clearly marked gender referent) in any grammatical form (i.e., in any case);	0 0	4 3	132	0:100
3.c	Second person plural pronouns used to refer formally to an individual (for all those instances, and only those instances in which there is a clearly marked gender referent) in any grammatical form (i.e., in any case).	0 0	0 0	132	00:00

Criteria four to eight examined the frequency of subjects, objects (direct or indirect), verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. First, three different types of clauses (unmarked form of the clause, negations, and question forms) were identified in the text. Then these clauses were categorized by gender. Clauses were placed into male or female category based on their gender-

specific noun or a pronoun. Finally, all subjects, objects (direct or indirect), verbs, adverbs, and adjectives were identified.

A total of four hundred and twenty clauses were identified in the textbook. However, only 377 of these clauses had specific male of female subjects. Considering the gender of subjects in these 377 clauses showed that 71% had a male and 29% had a female subject. Similarly, the percentage of males and females as the object of the clause was found to be 29% and 71% respectively.

The percentage of verbs referring to females (n=40) was 33%, and for males was (n=81) 67%. There was not any unique or a different verb used for any of the genders. However, transitive verbs were used three times more with males than females. The percentage of adverbs referring to females (n=7) was 32% and for males was (n=15) 68%. Other than the difference in number of adverbs there were no other differences between the two groups. For example, there were no differences between the two genders in their reference to unique adverbs such as manly or ladylike.

The percentage of adjectives referred to females (n=10) was 21%, and for males was (n=38) 79%. In order to find if there were any differences in the type of adjectives used for male versus female we classified the adjectives into eleven categories. We used the method suggested by Porreca (1984) to categorize the adjectives. In her study, the following groups of adjectives were identified; "Physical Appearance (tall, beautiful); intellect/Education(bright, stupid); Emotionality/State of Mind (sad, calm); Physical State/Condition (strong, tired); Personality Traits (friendly, disagreeable); Age (old, young); Environmentally Descriptive (rich, poor); Rapport/Reputation (great, unpopular); normality/Deviance (normal, strange); Ability (capable, incapable); and Environmentally Induced (lucky, restricted).

However, in this study only four of the above categories were identified to be used for female characters including: Physical Appearance, Emotionality/state of mind, physical state/condition and Age. For males, all of the above eleven categories were identified. Table 7 shows the frequencies and the percentages of verbs, adverbs, adjectives, subjects and object used in the sentences.

Table 7. Frequency of Grammatical Elements of Sentence for Male/Female Characters

Verbal Texts	Female N %	Male N %	Total	Ratio
The frequency with which males/females are the (logical) subjects of sentences	111 29	266 71	377	42:100
The frequency with which males/females are the object (direct or indirect) of sentences.	29 29	70 71	99	41:100
The ratio of different verbs used with males/females (against the total of all verbs used with females and males).	40 33	81 67	121	49:100
The ratio of adverbs used with males/females (against the total of all adverbs used with females and males).	7 32	15 68	22	47:100
The ratio of adjectives used with females (against the total of all adjectives used with females and males).	10 21	38 79	48	26:100

Criterion number nine evaluates the "firstness" of each gender in the sentence. The frequencies were analyzed of when either gender (females/males) precedes another when females and males are included in a single phrase. Within four hundred and twenty sentence chosen for this study in EFL textbook, only in four incidences females preceded males in the sentence and in ten incidence males preceded the females.

Domestic roles verses occupational roles are evaluated in criterion ten, eleven and twelve. In the sample collected for this study, the ratio of females to males in domestic roles/setting was 150:100. On contrast, the ratio of females to males in occupational roles/settings was 24:100. This means males were presented as professionals four times more than females.

Among the named males in the text, there were three names of famous male figures. Alexander Graham Bell was named twice; Mr. Takhti and Mr. Khadem (two Olympic gold medalists in wrestling from Iran) were named once each. No famous female was named in this textbook. (Table 8)

Table 8. Social Elements (Firstness, Famousness, Domestic, Occupational)

Verbal Texts	Female N %	Male N %	Total	Ratio
The frequency with which females precede males when females and males are included in a single phrase	4 0.95	10 2	420	40:100
The frequency with which males/females are depicted in domestic roles/settings	6 1	4 0.95	420	150:100
The frequency with which females/males are depicted in occupational roles/settings	5 1	21 5	420	24:100
The ratio of different occupations cited for females and those for males	7 30	16 70	23	44:100
The ratio of references to females and those to males in unit or section titles or any other typographicallyhighlighted text.	0	0		
The ratio of references to famous females to famous males.	0	4 3	140	00:100

Arabic textbook

The same criteria were used to linguistically analyze gender roles in the AFL textbook. The first criterion in this measures the frequency with which females and males are clearly mentioned or referred to in the text. In total characters were named 117 times in this textbook. Females (n=5) were named 7% compare to males (n=65) 93%.

Among all the personal pronouns referring to named characters, 14% referred to female characters and 85% to male characters. The ratio of female pronouns referring male pronouns in this criterion was 17:100.

The second criterion measures the frequency with which different names for females and males are used. For example, the frequency of full names, diminutive forms, sure name with titles, et cetera for each gender. The characters in AFL textbook were named one hundred and

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forty-seven times by different names. The percentage of named characters was (n=23) 16% for females and 84% (n=124) for males. The ratio of first name female to male was 22:100. The combination of diminutive form and first name or family name was not observed for any of the genders. The only respectful referring to any characters with clear gender were the form religious acronyms/acrostics. For example, after the name of the prophet Mohammad there is always an acronyms / ص / which in English means "Mohammad (peace be upon him)". The ratio of female to male in this category was 10:100.

In the third criterion, the frequency with which females or males are referred as in the first person, second person singular, and second person plural are measured. In total, there were 227 incidences of first person singular pronouns. Females were referred to by pronouns in 15% and males were referred to in 85% of cases. No second person singular pronoun was identified in the text. However, 51 second person plural pronouns were identified in the text. Only 4% of these pronouns were referring to females and 96% were referring to males.

Criteria four to eight examined the frequency of subjects, objects (direct or indirect), verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. First, three different types of sentences (unmarked form of the clause, negations, and question forms) were identified in the text. Then sentences were categorized by gender. These sentences were placed into male or female category based on their gender-specific noun or a pronoun. Finally, all subjects, objects (direct or indirect), verbs, adverbs, and adjectives were identified.

A total of four hundred and twenty sentences were identified in the textbook. However, only 291 of these sentences had specific male of female subjects. Considering the gender of subjects in these 291 clauses showed that 96% had a male and 4% had a female subject. Similarly, the percentage of males and females as the object of the sentence was found to be 91% and 9% respectively.

The percentage of verbs referring to females (n=15) was 19%, and for males was (n=80) 82%. There was not any unique or a different verb used for any of the genders. The percentage of adverbs referring to females (n=4) was 22% and for males was (n=14) 78%. All the verbs, adverbs, and adjectives agreed in gender and number with each other.

Criterion number nine is about the "firstness" of each gender in the sentence. The frequencies were analyzed of when either gender (females/males) precedes another when females and males are included in a single sentence. In fifteen incidence males preceded the females, and only in three incidences, females preceded males. Therefore, ratio of female to male in this category was 20:100.

Finally, domestic roles verses occupational roles were analyzed based on criteria ten, eleven and twelve. In the AFL textbook, none of the genders was presented in domestic roles. There were only five incidences of male on professional job including soldier, carpenter, clergy, philosopher, writer, and judge. Among the named males in the text, there was the name of five famous female figures and sixty-five famous males.

Discussion

Many factors motivate or inspire both women and men to study and to continue their education. The way women are depicted in the media and textbooks is one of the most important factors in this regard. The above textbooks' content analysis showed that with no exception and in all criteria, males were represented significantly more than females and males were presented in significantly higher positions in a variety of situations. Therefore, if female students are

outperforming males academically, this phenomenon has not happened due to an enhancement in females' education or a positive discrimination in favor of them.

The pictorial analysis of the EFL textbook was the first phase of this study. The results showed that males were depicted significantly more than females in the EFL textbook. Similar to other studies (e.g., Hellinger 1980) males in images and text were engaged in a variety of professional and occupational activities and females were not represented in any occupational or professional jobs. Males were also depicted more than female as the fore-ground, in motion, and as children. The only category in which females were depicted more frequently than males was the 'domestic' (housework) category. Regarding the literature review and the fact that the government's educational theorist's beliefs particularly about the very limited role of females in society, this finding was quite expected.

Similar to the pictorial analysis, the textual content analysis of the text also showed that males were named significantly more than females and they were more than females the subject and the object of sentences. The occupation of males was stated more frequently and more famous males were mentioned in the text. In fact no famous women were mentioned in the EFL textbook. The only category in which females were mentioned more than males was the category of females' work at home. Like Porreca's (1984) study, our results showed that the occurrences of feminine nouns and masculine nouns were imbalanced and males were more prevalent in "firstness" than females with a ratio of 40/100.

As mentioned earlier, EFL textbooks in Iran, traditionally, have been different from other textbooks. It was expected that the ESL textbook to present less gender bias in comparison with other textbooks in Iran because, traditionally, EFL textbooks portrayed western culture and most of the original sources of EFL textbooks used to be mainly American or British sources. Regarding the fact that EFL textbooks are written for students who want to communicate with English speakers it was expected the context of lessons to be more related to European or American life styles. However, the results of this study did not support this hypothesis. In contrast, the results showed that no matter which method (pictorial, textual) was used, or which criterion in these methods were considered, with no exception males were presented significantly more than females. It is interesting that unlike many studies in other countries, even for passive or receptive roles and even for low status occupations (with the exception of housework) males outnumbered females significantly in the EFL textbook.

The results of gender roles analysis in the AFL textbook, was even more unbalanced with respect to a focus on males. Our hypothesis for the AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) textbook was different from the one for the ESL textbook. We predicted that we would find more male dominance in the AFL textbook than the EFL textbook. We based our hypothesis originally on the fact that AFL textbooks are mostly written in order to enable students to read the Quran and to communicate with people from other Islamic countries. Regarding the historical perspective presented in the literature review, and given the prominence of men in the Islamic literature, we had expected to find a similar gender representation in the AFL textbook. Therefore, we did not expect to find gender equality in the AFL textbooks. The results clearly supported this hypothesis.

However, the gap in gender presence in AFL textbook was significantly deeper than that found on the EFL textbook and much more pronounced than what we had anticipated. The differences in frequencies and also the ratios were unlike any other studies that were considered in the literature review earlier. A closer look at the data showed that in ten criteria (either pictorial or textual), the frequency of female presence was zero and in almost all categories the

ratio of female to male was less than 50/100. More accurately, the range of the ratios was from 0/100 to 59/100 (this ratio was the only ratio above 50/100).

In the AFL textbook, we found 10 female images. However, seven of the ten images were, in fact, a logo of female children that was repeated seven times. The other two female images were faceless (outlines) images similar to what was shown in Figure. Therefore, there was actually only 1 image of an adult female. These examples show how deep the gender gaps are in both textbooks, particularly, the AFL textbook.

A comparison of the results of this study with similar studies in other countries shows that the male dominance in Iranian textbooks was significantly more than what had been reported in other studies. The reported frequencies and the percentages clearly show the dominance of males in both pictorial and textual formats as well as the social prominence. We believe the results of this study, particularly, the AFL textbook is more similar to Sadker & Sadker's (1994) study which reviewed history textbooks, and found that women were essentially invisible in American history textbooks. They reported that only 3% of the book's coverage was dedicated to women and only 8 women had as much as a paragraph written about them. In the same respect in the present study, analysis of the EFL textbook showed that there was no section or chapter and even paragraph dedicated to a women or women issues. In addition, it was only one chapter with women character in the AFL textbook. No other section or paragraph was dedicated to any women or women issues.

Although in most studies the authors report lower female visibility, we did not find any finding similar to this in the literature. For instance, in study of Malaysian EFL textbooks, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) reported that based on their findings, there were more pictures of males than those of females in all of the textbooks. However, their results demonstrated that the ratio of females to males that appeared in the visuals was 68:100 whereas our analysis of the AFL textbook showed a ratio of 40:100. They also reported that the number of gender-specific nouns and pronouns referred to males were considerably higher than number of nouns and pronouns referring to females in all the textbooks (ratio of 65:100). In comparison, the ratio of gender specific noun and pronouns referring to females and males in the current study was 15:100 for the AFL textbook, and 29:100 for the EFL textbook.

The results of our analyses of the occupational dimension, was also significantly different from other studies in the literature review. For example, although the overall finding for occupational roles in Qatari EFL textbooks reviled the gender-bias, there were twenty-seven cases of female occupational roles reported by the authors (Binti Ismail, 2011). In contrast, in the present study the frequency with which females were depicted/cited in occupational roles/settings was only seven in the EFL textbook and zero in the AFL textbook.

Conclusions

Overall, these findings show that both textbooks were extremely traditional in presenting stereotypical gender roles and activities. We do not believe these textbooks are a true reflection of the Iranian society as a whole. The findings simply show the viewpoints of the textbooks' authors or a small sector of the Iranian society and particularly the ideology of the government in power. As it was mentioned in the literature review, the public education in Iran is under direct influence of the government. Iranian public textbooks are developed under the direct supervision of educational authorities and, hence, they implicitly and explicitly maintain social control consistent with certain religio-political beliefs. For example, all women including children

depicted in these textbooks are depicted in hejâb. While in reality, even in the most religious families women do not wear hejâb inside the house and female children are not supposed to have hejâb even in public. Therefore, these textbooks are more prescriptive (prescribing hejâb for students) rather than realistic.

The result of this study might be useful both for curriculum designers and teachers. Regarding the importance of textbooks in students' lives, as discussed in the literature review, we believe we should, and can, reduce gender bias in textbooks. It could be argued that textbooks should not simply mirror the unfair and biased social gaps. Authors are responsible to initiate and lead a change, the same way that some media leaders in the past tried to show a more equal status for females and ethnic minorities. For example, if teachers realize their textbook is not balanced in gender roles they may use supplementary instructional material in their courses.

There are guides or lists that could be considered by teachers and authors to reduce gender bias in their teaching or their texts. For example, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2002) a professional association of educators in English studies, literacy, and language arts has provided a guideline and has suggested ideas for gender-balance curriculum. This organization has also published a list of gender-balanced books and material to be used for English language arts. In addition, there are several other gender sensitive guidelines available online.

Finally, this study has focused on the gender roles in Iranian textbooks published inside Iran under the supervision of the Iranian government. It might be argued that gender bias is mostly a cultural phenomenon and perhaps government's ideology is not the main cause of it. We suggest that in the future, researchers compare gender roles in Iranian textbooks published in Iran with those that are published outside Iran by Iranian authors and Iranian publishers. Such a comparison may help us to see if it is the ideology of the government or the social cultural values that has made such a wide gap in gender roles as depicted in Iranian textbooks.

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