

Investigating Gender Representation in Iranian High School English Textbooks from a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective¹

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Abstract

Considering textbooks as important tools that can contribute to education and social change, the current study has attempted to uncover the gender representation in three Iranian high school EFL textbooks through Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA). In so doing, the following MCDA models were utilized: (1) Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Analysis Model, as an analytical framework for analyzing linguistic data, and (2) a merging of Machin and Mayr and Van Leeuwen's Visual Social Actor Network for visual data analysis. The findings indicated that male-female genders are not equally represented in Iranian high school EFL textbooks, and females suffered from low visibility both visually and linguistically. From the MCDA perspective, these textbooks are ideology biased. It can be implied that ideologically gender-biased textbooks can affect students' behavior consciously or subconsciously, with the under-representation of women distorting gender equality and representing the world in a specific way in favor of men. The findings of the current study enable teachers and textbook developers to be aware of how these textbooks not only reflect gender biases but also shape them and break this pattern through this awareness.

Resumen

Considerando los libros de texto como herramientas importantes que pueden contribuir a la educación y al cambio social, el presente estudio ha intentado descubrir la representación de género en tres libros de texto de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) para la escuela secundaria iraní mediante el Análisis Crítico Multimodal del Discurso (ACMD). Para ello, se utilizaron los siguientes modelos de ACMD: (1) el Modelo de Análisis del Actor Social de Van Leeuwen, como marco analítico para el análisis de datos lingüísticos, y (2) una fusión de la Red Visual del Actor Social de Machin y Mayr y Van Leeuwen para el análisis de datos visuales. Los hallazgos indicaron que los géneros masculino y femenino no están representados equitativamente en los libros de texto de EFL para la escuela secundaria iraní, y que las mujeres sufrieron una baja visibilidad tanto visual como lingüística. Desde la perspectiva del ACMD, estos libros de texto presentan un sesgo ideológico. Se puede inferir que los libros de texto con sesgo de género ideológico pueden afectar el comportamiento de los estudiantes de forma consciente o subconsciente, y que la subrepresentación de las mujeres distorsiona la igualdad de género y representa el mundo de una manera específica que favorece a los hombres. Los resultados del presente estudio permiten a los docentes y a los desarrolladores de libros de texto ser conscientes de cómo estos libros no solo reflejan sesgos de género, sino que también los moldean y rompen con este patrón a través de esta concienciación.

Introduction

Textbooks as one type of discourse, are not neutral and do contain ideologies. They are often seen as the most important instruments not only for teaching and learning processes, but also for conveying other types of information, such as gender roles (Fithriani, 2022; Gershuny, 1977; Lee, 2019; Mohammed Ismael Ismael & Mohammadzadeh, 2022;). Textbooks can shape students' gender perspectives in society (Kereszty, 2009). Kizilaslan (2010) stated that gender stereotypes represented in textbooks can affect a child's cognitive and affective development. Moreover, Kereszty (2009) mentioned that the gender-specific behaviors, expectations, and norms represented in textbooks may relate to social inequalities. Vu & Pham (2021) maintain that gender biases portrayed in teaching material may affect learners' development and are related to social inequalities. Orfan (2023) stated that teaching materials can institutionalize gender inequality very easily. As can be seen, textbooks, as one type of teaching material, may include gender biases, different gender representations, and specific gender norms and behaviors, which can affect learners' cognitive and affective development and may represent social biases towards a specific gender. Textbook studies are helpful in revealing their functions in shaping masculinities and femininities.

However, some kinds of discourse are not visible in the textbooks. To draw out the invisible part of the discourses, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be used (Machin, 2013). Scollon (2001) argued that CDA

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is a social analysis that can be used to criticize discourses. As discourses include social problems, CDA can be used to analyze social problems through discourse. Fairclough (2001) similarly found that the purpose of CDA is to unveil ways in which social relations of power and domination are incorporated into language.

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), which follows the CDA frameworks and pays special attention to the semiotic modes (Machin et al., 2016), indicates how graphics, images, diagrams, and photographs can be used in creating meaning (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Based on Machin and Mayr (2012), MCDA considers language, visual, and other modes of communication and believes that these other modes of communication include ideologies that "both shape and are shaped by society" (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 10).

MCDA and CDA analysts have focused on general language and more specifically on speeches. As pointed out by some researchers, few critical studies have gone beyond the linguistic level (Machin, 2013; Van Leeuwen, 2014). Van Leeuwen said that most studies focus on one mode of critical discourse analysis. Moreover, discourse can be communicated through different genres (Machin, 2013), including linguistic and visual.

In the Iranian context, English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks were considered one of the main challenges for Iranian EFL teachers (Aliakbari & Saeedi, 2022). Thus, studying these textbooks is crucial. To the researchers' knowledge, little research, if any, has been conducted regarding gender representation in textbooks through MCDA. Overall, considering gender representation in textbooks as one type of social problem, this study attempted to uncover the ideologies regarding gender representation in the Iranian EFL textbooks through MCDA. Considering that this study aimed at analyzing written and visual discourse inculcated in the Iranian EFL high-school textbooks, and, as pointed out earlier, texts and images include hidden ideological biases, detailed analytical frameworks were needed to uncover this hidden information. In so doing, MCDA frameworks were applied to seek to answer the following research question:

How equally are female and male social actors represented in the linguistic and visual representations in Iranian EFL textbooks?

Analytical frameworks

As the current study was grounded in MCDA, detailed analytical models were needed to answer the questions that guided this research. To ensure the validity of findings and minimize bias, a triangulated methodology was used in terms of analytical frameworks. Triangulation was also used to minimize bias (Wodak, 2001). Following Wodak and Meyer (2001), it is accepted that "objectivity cannot be achieved by means of discourse analysis" (p. 30). And as a result, the textbooks were analyzed both linguistically and visually. Regarding linguistic gender representation in Iranian EFL textbooks, suppression, background, individualization, functionalization, nomination, and differentiation were studied. Moreover, regarding visual gender representation in these textbooks, exclusion, individual, group, individualization, functionalization, and physical identification were investigated.

Literature Review

A review of the literature revealed several studies that focused on gender representations in textbooks in Iran (Bahman & Rahimi, 2010; Esmaili & Amerian, 2010; Salami & Ghajarieh, 2016) and abroad (Aguilar, 2021; Esmaili & Amerian, 2014; Gorgadze, 2017; Hamilton et al., 2006; Jaakkonen, 2018; Lee, 2014, 2018, 2019; Lee & Collins, 2009, 2010; Orfan, 2023; Vu & Pham, 2021). Salami and Ghajarieh's (2016) findings, using two sets of data including textbooks and interviews with students grounded in CDA, confirmed the representation of compulsory heterosexuality of men and women within the existing Iranian culture. They mentioned that gender representation and supporting the dominant gender by people in power was an attempt to preserve the existing circumstances. Moreover, Bahman and Rahimi (2010) examined the gender bias representation in Iranian EFL textbooks from a sexist perspective using qualitative and quantitative approaches. They found that the male/female manifestation in those textbooks was biased. They indicated that regarding names, nouns, pronouns, and adjectives, the presence of men was highlighted more than that of women.

Another study, based on CDA, investigated gender representation in Iranian English language teaching textbooks and was conducted by Esmaili and Amerian (2014). They applied Fairclough's (2001) three-dimensional model and the results showed that in these textbooks men were represented more than women, including a sexist attitude regarding gender favoring men. They stated that in different parts of the textbooks, females were ignored, particularly with regard to social roles, and their roles as homemakers were underscored. To transition from Iran to abroad, Aguilar (2021), using content analysis, conducted a

study to examine male and female representation in three EFL textbooks in Mexico. Aguilar concluded that men and women were not represented equally in the three textbooks. Male's appearance in illustrations were more frequent than their female counterparts.

Vu and Pham (2021) conducted a study to investigate possible gender biases in newly developed Vietnam English textbooks. They adopted a multimodal critical approach to investigate language and ideological systems. The results indicated that males had greater verbal space and more social properties, and females had less independence, limited choices, and fewer resources.

Orfan (2023) investigated the representation of gender in high school English textbooks in Afghanistan. The researcher adopted a mixed content analysis to analyze the data. The results revealed that men were significantly overrepresented in text and illustrations, whereas women were substantially underrepresented in both. In all coordinated phrases, female characters were placed after male characters. Female characters were not the initiators of the dialogues. Men were portrayed in a wide range of social roles, while women occupied a limited number. Furthermore, masculine generic forms were widely adopted to refer to both male and female characters. The researcher concluded that high school English textbooks in Afghanistan perpetuated and promoted gender inequality in society.

Lee (2019) conducted a study to investigate gender representation in Japanese EFL textbooks. The findings indicated that the authors were aware of gender representation and portrayed this in textbooks through, for example, the use of gender-neutral words and a neutral term of address, *Ms*, for women. Two textbooks presented a balanced distribution of female and male characters and their amount of talking time, but females were underrepresented and their achievements were less prevalent in Japanese textbooks. Furthermore, men were portrayed in a wider range of social roles and were also depicted as more cognitively active than women.

In their analysis of Caldecott award-winning books, Hamilton et al. (2006) indicated that female characters were portrayed as performing nurturing and caring behaviors three times more than male characters. Regarding occupations, both male and female characters were usually represented in masculine and feminine occupations, with female characters being significantly less represented in occupations outside the home than male characters.

From the studies mentioned above, it can be inferred that female characters were removed from different perspectives in different contexts. Thus, it is essential to study gender representations in different contexts, during different ages, and in different textbooks. Hence, further gender investigation in the context of Iranian EFL textbooks is valuable to illustrate the history of the ideology of gender representation. Additionally, studies like the present need to be done to clarify whether the selected textbooks claimed to be based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and whether or not the female/male social actors were considered equally. Hence, the purpose of this study was to indicate whether Iranian EFL textbooks were gender biased or not, whether they considered gender equality or not, or whether they gave advantages or disadvantages a particular gender.

Method

Context and material

The present study investigated three EFL high school textbooks published by the Ministry of Education in Iran. The selected series textbooks, *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* (Alavi Moghadam et al., 2016) were the corpus of the study. The Iranian EFL textbooks included both student books and workbooks. The present study focused on all the material in the student books, including pictures. Each lessons included an introduction to the lesson followed by a conversation, definitions, and examples for the new words and expressions, a text with some comprehension questions, vocabulary development, grammatical explanation, listening questions, speaking topics, a writing forum, and a review of what was learned. For each section, various pictures and descriptions were included.

Procedure

A critical approach was used to examine gender-related issues in the textbooks. Drawing on Van Leeuwen (2003, 2008) and Machin and Mayr (2012), the following themes were investigated: (1) exclusion, that is, suppression and background, individualization, functionalization, nomination, and differentiation as linguistic inclusion strategies and (2) exclusion, individual, group, individualization, functionalization, and physical identification as visual strategies.

Data analysis

The current study analyzed the data on gender representations using Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA). Van Leeuwen's (2003, 2008) Social Actor Analysis Model was used as an analytical framework for analyzing the linguistic data, and Machin and Mayr (2012) and Van Leeuwen's (2008) Visual Social Actor Network were merged to analyze the visual data.

Machin and Mayr (2012) noted that meanings can be communicated through a combination of linguistic and visual representational strategies. They commented that images can communicate information that language cannot. In this regard, they identified some visual communication dimensions via representational strategies. For the current study, the following representational strategies were considered: individuals and groups, generic and specific depictions, and exclusion to analyze visual male/female social actor depiction.

To triangulate the data and be objective, quantitative data was used to determine the frequency of female/male social actor representation in the textbooks. This quantitative data analysis was done manually over two months by counting the frequency of the (1) male/female names (nomination), (2) singular or plural forms used for male/female characters (individualization), and (3) occupations or roles adopted for male/female characters (functionalization).

Results and Discussion

Nomination

Based on Van Leeuwen (2003, 2008), nomination can be understood using surname only (formal), name and surname (semiformal), name only (informal), and structures like the woman/ man. To identify the nomination, researchers counted the frequency of the men's and women's names. The detailed analysis of the textbooks' linguistic content revealed that males and females were nominated frequently throughout the textbooks: *Vision 1*, *2*, and *3* (Alavi Moghadam et al., 2016). This is an example of fluent nomination:

Example 1

Maryam [a female name] is visiting the Museum of Nature and Wildlife. She's talking to Mr. Razavi, who works in the museum. (Vision 1, p. 19)

The results related to nomination can be found in Table 1 below. As can be seen the total of male representations in each textbook was twice that of the female representations. For example, the frequency of female representations in *Vision 2* was 17 and the male representations in the same textbook is 48, more than twice the female representations. This ratio of gender representation can be seen as well in the other two textbooks, *Vision 2* and *3*. Overall, linguistic gender representation in the textbooks was not equal, and male representations in these textbooks was more than double (69%) that of female representations (31%).

	Female	Male	Total
<i>Vision 1</i>	26 (36%)	47 (64%)	73
<i>Vision 2</i>	17 (26%)	48 (74%)	65
<i>Vision 3</i>	16 (31%)	36 (69%)	52
<i>Total</i>	59 (31%)	131 (69%)	190

Table 1: Gender nomination in Iranian EFL textbooks

The frequency of visual male/female representation in these textbooks is presented in Table 2 below. The total visual frequency of male/female representations in *Vision 1* was 36. Among these 36 male-female visual representations, 27 (75%) pictures belonged to males, and 9 (5%) to females. *Vision 2* included 57 male/female visual representations, of which 15 (26%) pictures were female and 42 (74%) were male. *Vision 3* contained 39 male/female pictures. Eleven of these 39 pictures were females, and 28 males. As Table 2 shows, the frequency of male social actors depicted in each of these textbooks was almost three times that of their female counterparts. Visual depictions of male social actors (73.5%) were almost three times those of female depictions (26.5%).

	Female	Male	Total
<i>Vision 1</i>	9 (25%)	27 (75%)	36
<i>Vision 2</i>	15 (26%)	42 (74%)	57
<i>Vision 3</i>	11 (28%)	28 (72%)	39
<i>Total</i>	35 (26.5%)	97 (73.5%)	132

Table 2. Frequency of visual male/female depiction in Iranian EFL textbooks

As can be seen, there is no equal representation of genders, either visually or linguistically. The current study's findings align with those of Hamilton et al. (2006), who found twice the number of male characters as female characters in their sample of 200 popular books. On the other hand, our findings differed from those of Kolbe and LaVoie (1981), Tognoli et al. (1994), and Heintz (1987), who indicated that male and female characters were represented almost equally in their books published over several decades. Overall, the low frequency of female representation in the textbooks under investigation indicates the underrepresentation of women in favor of men, resulting in gender inequality in nomination.

Functionalization

In the textbooks that were analyzed here, many male and female social actors were individualized and functionalized, the social actor's activity, role, or occupation (Van Leeuwen, 2008). Functionalization could promise a more positive presentation of women and an advantage to women in being treated equally in education. Following are sample sentences taken from *Vision*, 2. p. 42.

Example 1:

The students are drinking milk [referring to male students].

Example 2:

The students learn English [referring to female students].

But in the textbooks, it was found that women were not functionalized and individualized for most occupations in contrast to men's individualization and functionalization.

Linguistically, the males were functionalized as tourists, doctors, zookeepers, postmen, farmers, pilots, scientists, inventors, researchers, drivers, translators, craftsmen, policemen, poets, and teachers in thirty cases, and females as drivers, cooks, craftswomen, writers, translators, and thinkers. Moreover, visually, both female and male social actors were functionalized in different roles including parents (*Vision* 3, p. 16), athletes (male: *Vision* 2, p. 70; female: *Vision* 3, p. 95), students (male: *Vision* 1, p. 77; female: *Vision* 1, p. 97), doctors (male: *Vision* 2, p. 42; female: *Vision* 2, p. 70), and craftsmen/women (*Vision* 2, p. 87).

However, there are significant differences in assigning roles and activities to different genders. Male social actors were quantitatively more functionalized in varied occupations than female were. For example, while male social actors were linguistically and visually depicted as doctors many times in all three textbooks (*Vision* 1, pp. 82, 85; *Vision* 2, pp. 55, 42; *Vision* 3, pp. 19, 59), female social actors were depicted as doctors only once (*Vision* 2, p. 70). Furthermore, male social actors were functionalized in a variety of occupations and high-level jobs, including firemen (*Vision* 2, p. 66), teacher (*Vision* 2, p. 38), doctor (*Vision* 2, p. 42), scientist (*Vision* 1, p. 70), translator (*Vision* 2, p. 19), inventor (*Vision* 1, p. 85), and astronaut (*Vision* 2, p. 69) while female counterparts were excluded from these functions. Consider the following example taken from *Vision* 1, p. 38:

Example 3:

Amin (Askari / Askari) is a pilot: a male character is semi formally nominated, individualized, and functionalized as a pilot

The exclusion of female social actors from various occupations was also mentioned by Hamilton et al. (2006). Female exclusions of occupations and high-level jobs can limit their imaginations of these occupations for their future lives. This female exclusion of occupations implies inequality in future job selection.

On the other hand, female social actors were individualized and functionalized in several cases as those interested in or responsible for working at home. Consider the following examples:

Example 4:

Shadi is working at home. (Vision 2, p. 43)

Example 5:

You [refer to a female social actor visually] should wash the dishes. (Vision 3, p. 36)

Example 6:

A little later, the mother went to her room and came back with an old diary. She said, "My dear son". (Vision 3, pp. 24-25).

The examples mentioned above reflect the ideology that females (as noted by some researchers, including Human Rights Watch Organization, 2017; Hamilton et al., 2006; and Esmaili & Amerian, 2014) are responsible for being mothers, wives, and in charge of the home. From these discussions, it can be concluded that female social actors were treated unequally regarding both the variety and level of occupations.

Another finding is the representation of the famous male/female social actors in the textbooks under investigation. It is worth saying that linguistically and visually famous female social actors, with two exceptions, including Tahereh Safarzadeh (Example 7) and Marry Curry (Example 8), were not included in these textbooks.

Example 7:

Tahereh Saffarzadeh [a female name] was an Iranian writer, translator and thinker. (Vision 3, p. 82)

Example 8:

Mary Curry [a female name] herself found uranium (Vision 1, p. 86)

On the other hand, in the textbooks under investigation, 23 examples of famous male social actors were individualized and functionalized in different specializations. The following are some examples:

Example 9:

Alexander Graham Bell [a male name] himself invented the telephone. (Vision 1, p. 86)

Example 10:

Alexander Fleming [a male name] was a great researcher. (Vision 1, p. 82)

Example 11:

One such a story is about Thomas Edison [a male name]. (Vision 1, p. 80)

Example 12:

There is a collection of Farshchian's..... in Astan Ghods Museum. (Vision 2, p. 84)

Example 13:

Dr. Gharib was a famous physician. (Vision 3, p. 19).

Examples such as these can widen male's imaginations and motivate them to try to be like the characters in the textbooks. Thus, in the textbooks under investigation, the highly frequent examples of famous male social actors can motivate male students to consider them a model to try to behave like them. On the other hand, excluding famous female social actors from these textbooks suppresses the visibility of women's function in society and can direct female students towards other functions such as working at home, being mothers, or providing childcare.

Grouping

Concerning female-male grouping, the analysis of the textbooks under investigation has shown that no visual or linguistic male-female groupings was found, with some exceptions, such as marketplaces (Vision 2, p. 96) and family (Vision 3, p. 16). Moreover, almost all the visual and linguistic representations of female and male social actors were in groups of the same sex: all male or all female. This implies that there was segregation between different genders. This male-female separation can specifically be seen in an educational context.

Example 14:

Alice and Kate will go to the library tomorrow. (Vision 1, p. 25)

Example 15:

Nancy and Margaret have plans to do their homework soon. (Vision 2, p. 77)

In public places, however, there were a few cases in which female-male social actors interacted with each other, as in Examples 16 and 17 below.

Example 16:

Maryam [a female name] is visiting the Museum of Nature and Wildlife. She's talking to Mr. Razavi who works in the museum. (Vision 1, p. 19)

Example 17:

Alireza [a male name] is visiting an observatory. He is talking to Ms. Tabesh who works there. (Vision 1, p. 47. male-female grouping)

Despite limitations in the interaction between male and females, there were different cases of communication among the same sex, both visually and linguistically.

Example 18:

Sina and Behzad [male names] are old friends. They have not seen each other for about three months. Behzad has called Sina [a male name]. (Vision 2, p. 53. male-male grouping)

Example 19:

Why hasn't Zoreh [a female name] invited Mina [a female name] yet? (*Vision 3*, p. 62. female-female grouping)



Figure 1. Male/male visual interaction
(*Vision 3*, p. 62)



Figure 2. Female/female visual interaction
(*Vision 2*, p. 70)

Overall, segregation between male-female social actors means that different gender groupings in the Iranian context are not explicitly legitimized in the educational context. This segregation in the educational context was found by Haeri (1989), Ghajarieh and Salami (2016), and Khan et al. (2014), indicating that despite the passing years and the development new textbooks, no changes have been made related to male/female grouping, especially in an educational context and the ideology of the male-female segregation has remained constant.

Physical representations

Regarding physical representation, all female social actors were visually depicted as covering all parts of their bodies in the textbooks under investigation. Females, represented as an individual or in a group in educational contexts, wore headscarves that covered their heads and just faces were shown, manteau⁴ that covered hands to the wrist and below or very little above the knees, pants that covered them to the ankles, with socks, and shoes (*Vision 1*, p. 84; Figure 3). Despite the real situation, this type of coverage was also shown in special places such as families (*Vision 3*, p. 17; Figure 4). The bright colors of the clothes in schools at lower ages were acceptable, for example, in pre-elementary or elementary schools (*Vision 2*, p. 50). However, in higher levels such as high school, dark colors in school uniforms were only acceptable (*Vision 1*, p. 84), as suggested by Iranian clergy, who represent Islamic ideology and the concept of hijab. Male social actors in textbooks under study were visually depicted as wearing pants and either shirts or uniforms in schools (*Vision 2*, p. 42.) and T-shirts in public places (*Vision 2*, p. 56; Figure 5). This suggests that women in the Iranian context must wear a special kind of clothing called *hijab* covering all parts of their body, but men are freer in their clothing. As noted, these differences in culture are grounded in ideology.



Figure 3. Educational context of female representation in Iranian EFL textbooks
(*Vision 1*, p. 84)



Figure 4. Female representation in a family context (*Vision 3*, p. 17)



Figure 5. Male representation
(*Vision 2*, p. 56)

⁴ A loose cloak, coat or robe.

Conclusion

This study investigated the representation of gender in Iranian high school EFL textbooks using multimodal critical discourse analysis (CDA). Findings indicated that male and female genders are not equally represented in Iranian high school EFL textbooks.

From the CDA perspective, textbooks are ideology biased. It means that they reflect cultural, social, and religious ideologies. In the Iranian high school textbooks studied here, females suffered from low visibility, both visually and linguistically. Based on these findings, it can be said that publishers left no room for the representation of women. This tendency could be due to ideological background or ignorance. The first possibility discussed in this study could have originated from the intentional manipulation of discourse to produce ideologically rich discourses, which would need to be described and explained by critical discourse analysts. The second possibility could have come from the textbook authors' lack of awareness and their limited involvement in discourse studies. One implication of our study is that the second possibility could be discussed, and practical solutions could be given. However, the conclusions derived from this study are related to the CDA and its frameworks, and a new study should be conducted for the second possibility.

In the textbooks studied here, women's names were represented far less than men's and they were presented as only being interested in and responsible for working at home. Men appeared in higher-paying jobs than women who were seen as active in society and had different social roles. This under-representation of women was probably aimed at decreasing or ignoring their roles in society as well as marginalizing these. Moreover, the underrepresentation of women may lead to the creation of some misconceptions in society that women should stay at home. The danger here is that women's social identity, power, ability, and talent could be ignored by marginalizing their functions in society through the textbooks.

To cater to practical ambitions, textbook developers should consider making drastic changes in the development of educational materials and the reflect on their thoughts which went beyond the educational materials development. The findings of the current study can be useful in designing and developing EFL textbooks. Textbook developers can use the findings from this study to be aware of gender-biased practices and try to develop textbooks that are fair in gender representation. Iranian EFL teachers can also inform students, as their audiences, about the biases in textbooks and explain the reality and the importance of women's functions in society through clear examples.

Limitations of the study

This study is a critical discourse attempt which is limited to the Iranian high school English textbooks context and its findings are generalizable to this context. Furthermore, the current study only focused on high school textbooks, *Vision 1-3*; further studies are required to investigate the gender representation in other Iranian EFL textbooks, such as *Prospects 1-3* (Alavi Moghadam et al., 2016).

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