Cleaning mums and brave policemen: gender representation and gender-inclusive language in EFL teaching materials in Lithuania

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Abstract

Gender representation in textbooks used for teaching English as a foreign or second language (EFL/ESL) has been analysed extensively and in various countries since the 1970s. According to most studies (e.g. Hellinger 1980; Porreca 1984; Ansary and Babaji 2003; Pihlaja 2007; Lee 2016), females tend to be underrepresented and depicted in stereotypical ways, which risks reinforcing gender clichés in students (Britton and Lumpkin 1977; Peterson and Lach 1990). To date, only a few studies (Brusokaitė and Verikaitė-Gaigalienė 2015) have focused on gender representation in teaching materials used in Lithuania; moreover, teaching materials other than textbooks remain underexplored. Using corpus analysis tools and criteria adapted from previous analyses of gender representation and language use in textbooks, this study takes a both quantitative and qualitative approach to the analysis of two EFL exercise books and two EFL test books published in Lithuania between 2005 and 2017 and currently available on the Lithuanian book market. The results show that males are more visible numerically; meanwhile, females are more likely to be represented in stereotypical ways. This article argues that neither gender representation nor language use in the books reflect developments in terms of gender equality in English-speaking societies (Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010).

Keywords: gender representation; gender-inclusive language; EFL, teaching materials; Lithuania; sociolinguistics

1. Introduction

Since the 1970s and the second wave of feminism, many studies have focused on the representation of males and females in teaching materials and the role the latter play in children's socialisation. A great amount of research has already been conducted on the role foreign language teaching plays in

teaching gender equality. In this context, the representation of men and women in textbooks used for teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL) in different countries has been analysed extensively (see Hellinger 1980; Porreca 1984; Jones et al. 1997; Pihlaja 2007; Lee and Collins 2009; Barton and Namatende Sakwa 2012; Lee 2016 among many others). To date, only a few studies (Brusokaitė and Verikaitė-Gaigalienė 2015) have focused on gender representation in EFL teaching materials used in Lithuania. Furthermore, teaching materials other than textbooks remain underexplored.

This study aims to contribute to the research on gender representation and gendered language in teaching materials by investigating the representation of males and females as well as the degree of gender-inclusiveness of the language used in four different EFL exercise and test books, respectively. The materials analysed in this study were published in Lithuania between 2005 and 2017 and are currently available on the Lithuanian book market. The findings are interpreted against the background of recent changes in English-speaking societies with regard to gender roles and sexist language (Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010) to answer the question of to what extent gender representation and language use in the teaching materials reflect modern societies. The following research questions were partly adapted from previous studies (Pihlaja 2008; Lee and Collins 2009; Lee 2016):

RQ 1: How visible in numbers are females compared to males?
RQ 2: In which contexts are males and females portrayed?
RQ 3: Which strategies do the authors use to make the language more gender-inclusive?

While the first section of this article aims to introduce the topic, the second section reviews the literature on the relationship between sex, gender and children's socialisation, and summarises the findings of previous studies. The third section presents the methodology applied in this study, followed by a presentation and discussion of the results organised in several sub-sections. The conclusion provides a summary of the most important findings and implications for authors of future EFL teaching materials and teachers.

2. Learning gender: studies on gender representation in teaching materials

In line with most sociologists and gender critics (e.g. Montgomery 1995; Sunderland et al. 2001; Butler 2004), I here distinguish between a person's biological sex on the one hand, and gender as a social construct on the other hand. Accordingly, gender roles comprise a spectrum of behaviours considered acceptable for the respective sex. As social conventions that can be subjected to societal and/or historical influences, gender roles are less stable concepts than a person's sex and overall more likely to be characterised by variation. Analogically to previous studies on gender representation in teaching materials (see review of previous studies under 2.2), this study will explore these variations in the given materials.

In the context of this study, we need to address the question of to what extent school textbooks might affect children's gender socialisation. It has been claimed that books featuring stereotypical gender roles negatively alter children's image of themselves and others (Britton and Lumpkin 1977; Peterson and Lach 1990), which can restrict them with regard to their life styles and careers. Jones et al. (1997), however, argue that while there is a certain risk for negative effects on children's development, the exact opposite may happen as well if they challenge the sexism they are presented with by resisting to be portrayed in stereotypical ways. Despite disagreement on the negative effect of gender stereotypes in textbooks on children's social and cognitive development, the positive effect of gender-fair language, e.g. on children's perception of stereotypically male professions (Vervecken et al. 2013), has been shown. This suggests that gender-fair language does have an effect on children's socialisation with a far-reaching impact, e.g. with regard to their career choices, and, therefore, deserves our attention.

The representation of men and women in coursebooks and especially EFL/ESL teaching materials has been the focus of a great number of studies conducted in various countries since the late 1970s. The majority of studies have found that females in EFL/ESL textbooks are underrepresented in both texts and illustrations (Ansary and Babaji 2003; Barton and Namatende Sakwa 2012); subordinated to males in at least certain contexts (Pihlaja 2007); described by stereotypically female adjectives and actions linked to their weakness (Hartman and Judd 1978; Barton and Namatende Sakwa 2012); usually named second in paired constructions (Porreca 1984; Lee and Collins 2008; Lee and Collins 2009); and ascribed social and domestic roles, while males tend to practise physically and/or intellectually demanding, more interesting and more diverse professions (Hellinger 1980; Lee and Collins 2008). It has been noted by Barton and Namatende Sakwa (2012) that research in this field has mostly been conducted from a European/Western and Asian perspective (see studies

on Australia: Lee and Collins 2009; Germany: Hellinger 1980; Hong Kong: Lee and Collins 2008; Japan: Pihlaja 2007; Lee 2016), and only recently have researchers started to include developing countries. In many of these countries English is taught as a second language and discrimination against women tends to be higher than in Western societies (Barton and Namatende Sakwa 2012). Furthermore, the majority of researchers focus on EFL/ESL teaching materials, with only a few having analysed teaching materials for languages other than English (to name a few, see studies on Greek: Poulou 1997; Russian: Rifkin 1998). Meanwhile, most studies are synchronic in nature, presenting a snapshot of teaching materials available at one point in time. Other studies (Lee and Collins 2008) distinguish more clearly between older and more recent textbooks in order to be able to make reliable statements about changes with regard to gender representation.

Gender-representation in EFL teaching materials used in Lithuania is an underexplored topic. To date, Brusokaitė and Verikaitė-Gaigalienė (2015; based on Brusokaitė's 2013 Master's thesis) are the only ones to have done research on this topic in Lithuania, comparing one EFL textbook used in Lithuania with one each from Argentina and Great Britain. Their findings are in line with the general observation that females are likely to be depicted in stereotypical contexts and males to be named first in paired constructions.

Quantitative and qualitative content-based analysis has always been an important feature of textbook studies, with researchers counting, for instance, the number of male and female characters in a given book and analysing their depiction in gender stereotypical contexts. However, content analysis has been criticised on the basis of its static nature which does not take alternative interpretations into account (Mills 1995). Therefore, most current studies combine quantitative and qualitative research methods with elements of discourse analysis in order to explore the underlying reasons for phenomena related to gender representation in textbooks. Furthermore, some researchers such as Sunderland et al. (2001) have argued that the effect of a text can only be predicted if the teacher's mediation of the teaching materials is studied as well. Consequently, some more recent studies (Barton and Namatende Sakwa 2012) include lesson observations and interviews with the teachers concerning their discourse on the texts.

Based on Rifkin's (1998) evaluation of three different types of studies on gender representation in textbooks irrespective of the target language and the cultural and linguistic background of students, most recent studies of gender representation in teaching materials feature a list of criteria

established prior to the examination of the material. Although some authors have compiled criteria for the assessment of gender representation in foreign language teaching material in general (Hellinger 1980; Women in EFL materials 1991; Rifkin 1998), there is currently no exhaustive list of criteria that has established itself as a sort of universal compilation.

3. Methodology

The following four exercise and test books were selected for this study: *Anglų kalbos gramatika su pratimais* (2005); *Golden Key. Tests 3* (2008); *Key to English. Activity Book 6* (2010); *Anglų kalba. Pakeliui į 5 klasę* (2017). For the sake of simplicity, the following abbreviations will be used to refer to the materials at hand: *EB1* for *Key to English. Activity Book 6* (2010); *EB2* for *Anglų kalbos gramatika su pratimais* (2005); *TB1* for *Anglų kalba. Pakeliui į 5 klasę* (2017); *TB2* for *Golden Key. Tests 3* (2008). These books were selected because all of them (i) were either exercise or test books; (ii) were written by Lithuanian authors; (iii) addressed Lithuanian students in their first and second year of studies, with units centred around topics such as holidays, school and home, i.e. contexts in which family members and friends can be expected to play a major role; and (iv) had been published within a time span of 12 years. Nevertheless, the four books differ considerably with regard to their length, ranging from 2,348 to 47,715 word tokens, and the importance they give to explaining grammar. Based on this observation, the four books were grouped into the following learning levels: Level 1: *TB2*; Level 2: *EB1* and *TB1*; Level 3: *EB2*.

This study focuses on exercise and test books firstly because these materials have been largely ignored by researchers, and secondly because they are by nature materials that encourage independent learning. Especially when they come with an answer key as two (*EB2* and *TB1*) of the four books do, these materials are often chosen for self-study without requiring further guidance from a teacher. If an answer key is not provided, exercises are usually discussed in class; if, however, exercises are assigned as homework, students will still be working on them independently at home, with corrections only made during the next lesson. As noted earlier, it has been argued that a teacher's mediation of a text is likely to have a greater impact on students and their social and cognitive development than the (non-)sexist nature of the text per se (Sunderland et al. 2001). However, there is a risk that in contrast to reading texts such as dialogues from textbooks, repetitious exercises are regarded as serving grammar learning purposes only. Consequently,

teachers might not mediate or comment on their content. Therefore, lesson observations and interviews with teachers were considered irrelevant for the purpose of this study.

The four books were manually transcribed from hard copies and turned into four corpora to allow for corpus-based analysis. Exercises featuring non-open-ended questions (e.g. fill-in exercises) were completed by the researcher to imitate what exactly students would find after completion of the exercise. Vocabulary lists, if available, were not considered since they consisted mostly of words already featured in the exercises, and the few additional words were not used in example sentences. Codes were assigned to every reference to unambiguously male and female characters, including names, all kinds of pronouns referring to a male or female character, non-gendered professions if the person could clearly be identified as being male or female, and pets if referred to as being male or female. In contrast to classical textbooks, the exercise and test books studied here feature few to no recurring characters. Therefore, it was found that counting all references to male and female characters would give a more precise picture of their respective visibility even if their numbers would be much higher and not equal to the actual number of characters in the books. For instance, in the sentence "Yesterday my sister Mary played with her friend.", both nouns *sister* and *Mary* and pronoun *her* would be coded "female", even if they all referred to one and the same person. By choosing a word as an analytic unit for coding rather than the whole sentence or phrase, I found that the visibility and salience of males and females could be more easily and more precisely mapped. Instructions to the students were considered as well (in English and Lithuanian), and so were graphic materials in *TB2* as they often helped to clarify whether pronouns such as *I*, *you*, *we* and *they* referred to males or females.

After the first coding cycle, a second code was added to the first one depending on whether the given character was represented in a stereotypically male or a stereotypically female context; no second code was assigned for neutral contexts. For this distinction criteria adapted from previous studies by Hellinger (1980), Porreca (1984), Women in EFL materials (1991), and Rifkin (1998) were used. Table 1 lists these criteria.

Table 1. Criteria used for coding (context)

Stereotypically male	Stereotypically female
Strength, power, courage, dominance,	Weakness, powerlessness, fear, subordination,

assertiveness	vulnerability
Leading, instructing, rescuing; ability to deal with problems	Being led, instructed, rescued; in need of help and reassurance
Location: outside	Location: inside
Adventures, danger; principal breadwinner for the family	Social and domestic role, caretaking
Activity, spontaneity, creativity	Passivity
Rationality, logic, self-control	Emotionality, affection, intellectual modesty
Description by professional status and/or mental characteristics	Description by physical attributes

Some changes were made to adapt the criteria established by the authors named above to the current study. The category "Intelligence" was not included as it has, arguably, lost its relevance over time. Although it has been observed (Andrikienė and Vaičiūnienė 2016) that the gender gap in Lithuania is widening with regard to education, intelligence per se or good marks at school were not considered to be stereotypically male characteristics. Only when females were portrayed as being in need of assistance or made fun of on the basis of their ignorance or stupidity by a male was intelligence considered as a male characteristic. In this case, the category "Being led" for females was applied.

Afterwards, using tools for corpus analysis (*AntConc*) and content analysis, the extracted data were analysed according to several aspects: (1) references to females and males and the order in which they appear in paired constructions; (2) context of appearance; (3) frequency of the nouns *mother/mum*, *father/dad*, *wife* and *husband* as well as of the female address titles *Miss*, *Mrs* and *Ms*; (4) acceptable professions as suggested by the books; (5) references to famous women and men; interactions between males and females; (6) language use in the four books in order to find *-man* constructions used generically as well as gender-inclusive strategies such as *he and she*, *he or she*, *he/she*, *she and he* (also *him and her*, *his and her*, etc.), and instances of singular *they* (also *them, their* and *theirs*). While some of these categories had already been selected based on research previously conducted in this field (e.g. (3) frequency counts; and (6) language use), other categories only emerged during the analysis (e.g. (4) acceptable professions; and (5) references to famous women and men).

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Visibility

In all four books males are numerically more visible than females as there are more references to males than to females. The male:female ratio is highest in *EB2* (1.35:1; N(male) = 1518; N(female) = 1127), and lowest in *TB1* (1.13:1; N(male) = 529; N(female) = 470). The male:female ratios for *EB1* is 1.26: 1 (N(male) = 297; N(female) = 235) and 1.26:1 (N(male) = 86; N(female) = 70) for *TB2*. This observation appears to support Hellinger's (1980) claim that materials targeting more advanced learners (here *EB2*) typically feature texts in which females are less adequately portrayed. However, the present corpus is relatively small, and lower level of materials and higher number of female characters do not correlate: in fact, females are most visible in *TB1*, a book classified as Level 2, while *TB2* as a Level 1 book only comes second. A significant association between the numeric differences of males and females, on the one hand, and the level of the teaching materials, on the other hand, could not be found (χ^2 (3) = 5.8839, p > 0.05).

In paired constructions, males are usually named first (*TB1:* 78% of all occurrences; *EB1*: 80%; *EB2*: 94.2%). The high percentage of examples of male-firstness in *EB2* can be explained by the fact that in this book teaching grammar rules plays a more important role than in the other books and, consequently, paired constructions featuring pronouns such as *he and she* or *himself and herself* abound. Interestingly, these pronouns are exclusively used in this order, not the other way round. Examples of female-firstness include expressions featuring family roles like *Mum and Dad* or first names such as *Amy and Andy*. In *TB2* only one instance of male- and female-firstness each was found; this can be explained by the book's simple language, with most sentences having only one person as their subject. These findings suggest that the risk of females' invisibility is highest in teaching materials with a high grammar content as a result of the lack of references to them and/or males being named first in paired constructions. This can be explained by the common practice of naming the male pronoun *he* before the female pronoun *she* in conjugation tables.

4.2. Context of appearance

While both males and females tend to be portrayed in stereotypical ways, the overall observation is that females are subjected to stereotypical representation to a greater extent than men. A comparison of the four books shows that while there are important differences between the books

with regard to the respective percentages of stereotypical contexts, females are more likely to be represented in such contexts than males (*EB1*: 25.5% (females) vs. 13.8% (males); *TB1*: 13.4% vs. 4%; *EB2*: 22.1% vs. 17.3%). This is true for all four books except for *TB2* in which more males than females are portrayed in stereotypical ways (19.8% vs. 14.3%). More specifically, males can more often be found outside and in adventurous and/or dangerous situations; they are referred to as being brave, courageous, strong and less emotional; and they are depicted as leaders. Males who do show emotions, for instance by crying, are usually young boys. Females, on the other hand, tend to be described as weaker, more fearful, more vulnerable and in need of assistance. They can less often be found outside; instead, they take on social and domestic roles within the home domain where they cook, do the cleaning, teach their children or take care of other people. This finding is in line with the observation that in Lithuania females' roles are still strongly linked with the private sphere (Juraitė and Zdanevičius 2004; Andrikienė and Vaičiūnienė 2016). Moreover, females are more frequently referred to with regard to physical characteristics such as their beauty or clothing than males are.

All four books present rather traditional images of the family with very little variation. The typical family consists of a mother, a father, two or three children, the grandparents, and some aunts and uncles. The main character in the exercises or short texts is usually one of the children. The father tends to be the main breadwinner and decision-maker of the family, whereas the mother either works in stereotypically female professions (see section 4.4) or is a housewife. Very few families presented in the books diverge from this traditional image by being examples of postmodern lifestyles, including divorced parents, patchwork families or homosexual parents. One exception is an exercise in *EB1* in which it is mentioned that the mother of the family has died, leaving the father alone with the main character of the exercise and her five siblings. These observations need to be discussed against the background of population and social statistics in Lithuania. After an all-time low in the early 2000s, marriage rates have increased over the past 15 years; meanwhile, divorce rates have decreased since the early 1990s (*Lietuvos statistikos departamentas* 2018). Although marriage rates today are not as high as they were until the 1990s, these numbers contrast with the trend observed in most other European countries, i.e. decreasing marriage and increasing divorce rates (*Eurostat* 2018). At the same time, in Lithuania the number of underage children living in single-parent households as a result of a divorce has been declining steadily since 2000 (*Lietuvos statistikos departamentas* 2018). While the image of the family presented in the teaching materials, arguably, still largely corresponds to students' reality at home, it does not adequately

reflect the situation found in contemporary British and North American societies. Consequently, in these teaching materials we do not find a truthful representation of the societies and cultures that students should learn about in class in addition to developing their English skills.

4.3. Family roles and address titles

The corpus search conducted for the terms referring to family roles (*mother/mum*, *father/dad*, *wife* and *husband*) shows that despite their lower numerical visibility females are more present in the home domain than males. In all four books there are more mothers and mums than fathers or dads (*TB1*: N=32 vs. 26; *TB2*: N=6 vs. 5; *EB1*: N=25 vs. 22). The greatest difference between the respective numbers could be found in *EB2* with almost twice as many mothers and mums (N=71) as their male counterparts (N=40). In *EB2* there are also almost twice as many wives (N=11) as husbands (N=6); in the other three books there were none.

The use of the female address titles *Miss*, *Mrs* and *Ms* in the corpus underlines the impression that it is still important to stress a woman's marital status linguistically. Overall, there are 12 occurrences of *Mrs* and 4 examples of *Miss*. However, no examples of the use of *Ms* as a neutral counterpart to *Mr* could be found. This observation needs to be discussed against the background of the fact that in Lithuanian a woman's surname traditionally tells her marital status: the surnames of unmarried women and girls typically end in *-aitė*, *-ytė* or *-ūtė*; however, when she marries, a woman adopts her husband's surname adding the ending *-ienė*, which indicates that she is married. Heated debates about whether or not this tradition was discriminating against women while men were allowed to keep their surnames first started in the 1930s (Miliūnaitė 2013). They continued until 2003 when the *State Commission of the Lithuanian Language* passed a law that allowed for the ending *-ė* to be added to surnames of both married and unmarried females (*Valstybinė lietuvių kalbos komisija* 2003). If a woman now opts for the ending *-ė*, her surname still indicates that she is female as *-ė* is a typical ending of female nouns in Lithuanian; it does not, however, disclose her marital status. The legitimisation of the ending *-ė*, however, has not put an end to the debates: in the on-going discussions about the topic both proponents and opponents provide various arguments based on, for example, the historical development of the language, traditions, gender equality, the (im)practicality of the new ending, or aesthetics (Miliūnaitė 2013). Against this background, the absence of the more neutral address title *Ms* for women in the teaching materials is, arguably, an indicator of the

authors' overall rather conservative views reflected in the traditional gender roles they present in the books.

The preference for *Mrs* and *Miss* is in contrast with Lee and Collins' (2008) diachronic study on EFL textbooks used in Hong Kong and their finding that females are increasingly addressed by *Ms* instead of titles disclosing their marital status. In line with Brusokaitė and Verikaitė-Gaigalienė (2015), these findings suggest that developments in the English language with regard to gender equality (cf. Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010) are not yet featured in teaching materials used in Lithuania despite similar developments happening in Lithuania and the Lithuanian language.

4.4. Range of professions

A close analysis of the professions seemingly available or considered desirable for males and females further supports the argument that in the teaching materials at hand both genders tend to be portrayed in stereotypical ways. The books suggest not only that males can choose from a greater variety of professions than females, but also that females should preferably stick with stereotypically female professions related to teaching, care-taking, fashion and beauty, or the household. Males, on the other hand, can be found in leading positions, e.g. as headteachers, coaches, professors, managers, spokesmen, governors and bosses. Moreover, all criminals (thieves, robbers, murderers) in *EB2* were male, which was also observed by Brusokaitė and Verikaitė-Gaigalienė (2015). While some professions such as painters, singers, butchers, doctors or pilots are more or less explicitly available for both males and females, there is clear preference for gendered terms such as *policeman*, *postman*, *fireman* or *spokesman* over their gender-neutral alternatives *police officer*, *mail carrier*, *firefighter* and *spokesperson*, respectively, and without balanced naming of their female equivalents. When these gendered terms are used in seemingly neutral sentences such as "You may always ask the policeman for information." (*EB2*: 27), females are excluded from the respective profession. Sentences such as "Our mum does not work. She is a housewife." (*TB1*: 59) are equally problematic as they fail to give credit for women's work at home. The results of this qualitative analysis shed more light on the stereotypical ways in which males and females are represented in the four exercise and test books.

The four books analysed in this study help to reproduce gender ideologies according to which the household is the domain of women, whereas men are the main breadwinners of the family and, consequently, less involved in family life. The employment rate of women in Lithuania is still lower than that of men (52.5% and 61.2%, respectively, in the first quarter of 2018, according to *Lietuvos statistikos departamentas*); in addition, irrespective of the woman's employment status, household responsibilities are often not equally shared by the partners. In fact, the "double burden of employment and the unequal distribution of family responsibilities women are facing" (Andrikienė and Vaičiūnienė 2016: 52) has been named one of the principal factors contributing to the widening of the gender gap in Lithuania. Arguably, the teaching materials featured in this study do not help to close this gap.

4.5. Famous men and women

Differences between the respective numbers of references to famous males and females further contribute to women's invisibility. References to famous individuals can only be found in *EB1* and *EB2*. In *EB1* there is one mentioning each of Karl Benz, the Queen (referred to without her name) and the female singer Pink, whereas in *EB2* mentions of male and female celebrities abound. However, the total number of famous males (N=28) including multiple mention is much higher than the number of famous females (N=8). Famous males include scientists, inventors and discoverers such as Charles Darwin, Nicolaus Copernicus, Baron von Drais and Christopher Columbus as well as artists and writers such as William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Samuel Johnson and Mikalojus Čiurlionis. Furthermore, there are references to numerous kings of England and American President William Howard Taft. All in all, there are three Lithuanian celebrities: painter and composer Mikalojus Čiurlionis, aerobatic pilot Jurgis Kairys, and former basketball player Šarūnas Marčiulionis. Famous females include Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Diana, writer J.K. Rowling, singer and songwriter Suzanne Vega (whose name is misspelled "Suzan Vega") and Gertrude Ederle, who became famous as the first woman to swim across the English Channel and who stays anonymous because her name is not mentioned.

The results of this comparison are in line with the findings on the respective spectra of professions seemingly available to males and females: *EB2* suggests that while males can be successful in a broad range of professions, females can only become famous as queens or princesses (i.e. as a result of either heritage or marriage) or in rather stereotypical professions such as writers or singers.

Interestingly, most female celebrities presented here (J.K. Rowling, Princess Diana, Queen Elizabeth II. and Suzanne Vega) are contemporary well-known individuals, while male celebrities in this book are almost exclusively historical figures. This suggests that females and their contribution to culture and politics are starting to be recognised, albeit still in stereotypical contexts. Finally, this analysis reveals a certain degree of negligence on the part of the authors who did not check the spelling of a name or referred with her actual name to a woman who did achieve something that was rather uncommon for females, especially in 1926.

4.6. Relationships between males and females

A qualitative analysis of the relationships between males and females outside the core family reveals that both males and females are overall more likely to interact with individuals of the same sex than of the opposite sex. While boys and girls play with or take care of their siblings or cousins of the opposite sex, opposite-sex interactions are less common when individuals other than family members are involved. Thus, male characters tend to be named together with other males, and females with other females. Moreover, same-sex pairs or groups of people are likely to pursue stereotypically male or female activities, respectively. Judging from their interests and types of activities, we can assume that most characters in the books are of roughly the same age as the students (i.e. age 11 to 14) unless stated otherwise. Hence, same-sex relationships at this age are portrayed as the norm, and opposite-sex relationships as the exception.

Once the characters become older, interactions with the opposite sex in the context of romantic relationships are featured as well. It is, for instance, mentioned that older brothers and sisters are dating people of the opposite sex, or stories about how elderly people got to know each other are told. In this context, however, one can observe a higher degree of male activity and female passivity: in *EB1*, the narrator's brother buys a diamond ring for his girlfriend, thereby complying with traditional gender roles. The same pattern can be found in *EB2*, e.g. in "He met his first wife during the war and married her in 1945." (*EB2*: 105) and "He fell in love with her at first sight" (Ibid.). Females in romantic relationships are here portrayed as objects rather than partners at eye-level. Another problematic example from *EB2* is a short dialogue between a husband and his wife about the man they would like to become the husband of one of their daughters as he is a "single man and very rich" and, therefore, "a fine thing for our girls" (*EB2*: 115). The dialogue is, judging from the characters' names and the style of writing, based on Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

However, neither the title nor the original author's name are given. As it cannot be assumed that young learners of English are familiar with Austen's work, there is a high risk that they accept the presented role models as a social norm rather than discuss them in their historical context.

The results of this analysis show that in these books opposite-sex interactions are less frequent than interactions between people of the same sex. Moreover, in romantic relationships, females are often patronised and depicted as objects rather than subjects who can raise their voice. Last but not least, a certain negligence with regard to references not only results in a missed opportunity to discuss traditional gender roles, but also entails the risk of consolidating them.

4.7. Gender-inclusive language: paired constructions, singular *they* and *man* used generically

The language used in the teaching materials is to some extent gender-inclusive; however, the strategies used by the authors of the books do not reflect current developments in English-speaking countries (cf. Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010) but rather show that the authors were influenced by linguistic features of Lithuanian, i.e. their own mother tongue and that of the students. While some split forms such as *he/she* or *his/her* can be found, e.g. in instructions to the reader, strategies aiming to neutralise the language by means of the singular *they* are less common. As a matter of fact, only two examples of *they* in singular use can be found, both of which in *EB1* and in connection with *everybody*. This result can be explained by the fact that while in Lithuanian it is possible to name both male and female forms of a term to make the language more gender-inclusive, the language does not allow for neutralisation due to the lack of neutral grammatical gender. Instead, all nouns and pronouns are either masculine or feminine, with grammatical gender also having major influence on other parts of speech, e.g. adjectives and participles (Ambrazas et al. 1997). As a consequence, *they* in singular use might have been considered confusing for young learners of English who are likely to be more used to the naming of both male and female terms. This suggests that the findings of this study do not contradict Hellinger's (1990) claim that English speakers tend to prefer neutralisation strategies over splitting; they rather point out the extent to which the authors were influenced by their mother tongue rather than by developments in the target language.

In addition to the authors' preference for gendered professional terms such as *postman* or *policeman* over their gender-neutral alternatives discussed above, some uses of *man* were found that are

especially problematic. In one exercise in *EB1*, students have to complete if-clauses with the correct verb forms. The text deals with what the first-person narrator of this short text has to do in order to succeed in life. From the first sentences it is unclear whether the narrator is male or female; however, the text concludes with "If my parents are happy, I will be the happiest man in the world." (*EB1*: 98), thereby making it clear that the narrator is male. It would have been easy to replace *man* with *person* in order to include the possibility of a female narrator; by opting for *man*, however, the authors fail to acknowledge the fact that females can also succeed in life. *Man* is also used generically in two exercises in *EB2*. The first exercise asks students to choose the correct tense form of verbs in a short text dealing with climate change. The text concludes that "man is responsible for the problems Earth faces" (*EB2*: 99). In the second exercise, students have to read a poem based on the Native American saying that humankind will realise too late that one cannot eat money, and then make suggestions to save the planet using *to*, *in order to*, and *so that*. The poem, however, reads that "the white man" (*EB2*: 121) will understand too late that Earth cannot be saved anymore. Although both texts are rather critical of the way humankind has been treating nature especially in the twentieth century, the authors here erase (cf. Irvin and Gal 2000) females' contribution to both the destruction of the environment and the realisation that we need to change our behaviour.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the representation of males and females as well as the use of gender-inclusive language in four EFL exercise and test books published in Lithuania since 2005. Overall, our findings are in line with the results of previous studies on gender representation and language use in teaching materials used in various countries all over the world: in terms of numbers females are less visible than males, and they are more often represented in stereotypical contexts. This answers Research Question 1 on the numerical visibility of females and males, and Research Question 2 on the contexts in which females and males are portrayed. As for Research Question 3 on the use of gender-inclusive language, the use of certain, yet not all available strategies could be observed: while the analysis of the authors' language use indicates that they were aware of issues related to gender-exclusive language and tried to avoid them by using certain strategies to make the language more gender-inclusive, my findings suggest that they were heavily influenced by the strategies that exist for the Lithuanian language, for instance, by the practice of naming both male and female pronouns when referring to an individual of unknown gender. The language used in the four exercise and test books analysed in this study can, therefore, be said to differ to some extent

from both actual language use (cf. Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010) and the language used in teaching materials employed in countries where English is spoken as a first or second language. In his study on Singapore junior college students' opinion on and use of gender-inclusive language Jacobs found an "apparent presence of a ripple effect" (1999: 28) as a consequence of the spread of developments in the English language in countries of the so-called Inner Circle (cf. Kachru 1982) to countries of the Outer Circle; however, this study shows that the same cannot necessarily be observed with regard to countries of the Expanding Circle, e.g. Lithuania.

When it comes to the representation of males and females in teaching materials, it should not be ignored that the picture conveyed in the materials depends to a great extent on the choices of the authors. Authors have to weigh their options and then decide in how far the materials should be based upon generalisations and how much importance should be given to deviation from what is generally seen as the norm. Considering the young age of the learners, the authors of the four books analysed in this study clearly opted for the role models students at large would be most familiar and, therefore, most likely to identify with. At this point in time, we also need to distinguish between clearly outdated role models on the one hand, and ways of living less featured in society (e.g. homosexual parents) on the other hand. While authors of teaching materials should, by now, be aware of the issues related to clichéd representations of males and females, the question remains of to what extent less common alternative ways of living should be featured in teaching materials. Arguably, there is a certain risk of over-emphasis of variation with the result that children might not recognise themselves in the characters. Therefore, authors of teaching materials should keep in mind recent changes in society and regularly update the picture they convey to the student. While, all in all, they should aim at a more balanced and, therefore, more realistic representation of males and females, they should also not ignore the importance of teaching children that difference is a positive feature.

This study set out to investigate gender representation not only in the underexplored context of Lithuania, but also in a type of teaching materials still largely ignored by researchers. The latter had a great impact on the design of this study. Counting all references to males and females rather than different characters proved to be the best way to map the visibility of males and females in numbers. With regard to the question of whether the teacher's mediation of the materials needs to be studied as well, I maintain that for exercise and test books, especially those that are accompanied by an answer key, the need to conduct classroom observations is lower than for textbooks.

However, the lack of classroom observation certainly remains a limitation to this study. In addition, students are increasingly exposed to books, movies, series and games in English outside the classroom. The influence of these media on the social and cognitive development of children should not be underestimated. Consequently, researchers interested in gender representation in teaching materials should keep in mind that these materials are just one of many resources of children's knowledge of the target language and culture.

Further research in the field of language and gender could be conducted in other countries belonging to the so-called Expanding Circle (cf. Kachru 1982). In this context, researchers could investigate if there is a correlation between the use of gender-inclusive English and the importance of grammatical gender in the respective local language: researchers might wish to focus on languages in which gender either plays a major role, e.g. Modern Hebrew, or a minor role, e.g. in genderless languages such as Finnish. Interesting results might also be yielded in countries in which there is already a debate on the gender-inclusiveness of the local language, e.g. in Sweden, since people will be more likely to be sensitised for the topic.

Abbreviations

EB1: Stoškienė, Rita, Audronė Timofejevienė, Rūta Binkienė, Kristina Pažėrienė, Jurgita Sūnelaitienė and Inga Veberienė. 2010. *Key to English. Activity Book 6*. Kaunas/Vilnius: Šviesa.
EB2: Stoškienė, Rita and Audronė Timofejevienė. 2005. *Anglų kalbos gramatika su pratimais.* Kaunas/Vilnius: Šviesa.
EFL: English as a foreign language
ESL: English as a second language
TB1: Vilūnienė, Lina and Olga Mickienė. 2017. *Anglų kalba. Pakeliui į 5 klasę*. Kaunas/Vilnius: Šviesa.
TB2: Binkienė, Rūta, Virgina Kerdokienė, Salomėja Šatienė and Inga Veberienė. 2008. *Golden Key. Tests 3*. Kaunas: Šviesa.

Acknowledgements

Klein A., 2019. *Cleaning mums and brave policemen: gender representation and gender-inclusive language in EFL teaching materials in Lithuania,* 12: 75–96.
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Cleaning mums and brave policemen: gender representation and gender-inclusive language in EFL teaching materials in Lithuania

Summary

Gender representation in textbooks used for teaching English as a foreign or second language (EFL/ESL) has been analysed extensively and in various countries since the 1980s. According to most studies (e.g. Hellinger 1980; Porreca 1984; Ansary and Babaji 2003; Pihlaja 2007; Lee 2016), females tend to be underrepresented and depicted in stereotypical ways, which risks reinforcing gender clichés in students (Britton and Lumpkin 1977; Peterson and Lach 1990). To date, only a few studies (Brusokaitė and Verikaitė-Gaigalienė 2015) have focused on gender representation in teaching materials used in Lithuania; moreover, teaching materials other than textbooks remain underexplored. Using corpus analysis tools and criteria adapted from previous analyses of gender representation and language use in textbooks, this study takes a both quantitative and qualitative approach to the analysis of two EFL exercise books and two EFL test books published in Lithuania between 2005 and 2017 and currently available on the Lithuanian book market. More precisely, areas of investigation were the numerical visibility of males and females, stereotypical contexts in which characters appear, and strategies used by the authors to make the language more gender-inclusive.

The results show that males are more visible numerically: not only are there more male than female characters in all four books, males are also more likely to be named first in paired constructions. With regard to stereotypical contexts, both males and females tend to be represented in traditional

gender roles: males are typically represented as leaders, the breadwinners of the family and the main decision-makers; females, on the other hand, are depicted as working in stereotypically female professions or in the home domain, and they are more often described as weak, fearful and in need of assistance. Moreover, there is very little variation with regard to the traditional image of a family, typically consisting of a mother, a father and two to three children. As for the use of gender-inclusive language, the use of certain (e.g. naming both male and female pronouns when referring to a person of unknown gender), yet not all available strategies (e.g. singular *they*) could be observed. These findings suggest that the authors were heavily influenced by the strategies that exist for the Lithuanian language. The language used in the four books can, therefore, be said to differ to some extent from both actual language use (Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010) and the language used in teaching materials employed in countries where English is spoken as a first or second language (Jacobs 1999). Finally, this article recommends authors of future teaching materials to pay more attention to the representation of males and females and to also give importance to deviation from what is generally seen as the norm. Arguably, this would provide children with a more truthful picture of contemporary British and North American societies, and help to teach them that diversity is a positive feature.

Keywords: gender representation, gender-inclusive language, EFL, teaching materials, Lithuania, sociolinguistics

Besitvarkančios mamos ir drąsūs policininkai: lyties įvaizdis ir lyčiai neutrali kalba lietuviškose anglų kalbos mokymo priemonėse

Santrauka

Socialinės lyties kalbinės raiškos ir įvaizdžio kūrimo aspektai anglų kalbos (kaip svetimosios ar antrosios) vadovėliuose yra sulaukę nemažai tyrėjų dėmesio, tačiau lyties raiška Lietuvoje leistuose anglų kalbos vadovėliuose iki šiol analizuota sporadiškai (Brusokaitė, Verikaitė-Gaigalienė 2015), o tyrimų, skirtų ne vadovėliams, bet kitoms mokymo priemonėms, iki šiol beveik neatlikta. Šiame straipsnyje kiekybiniu (pasitelkiant tekstynų analizės įrankius) ir kokybiniu (remiantis turinio analize) būdu analizuojamos socialinės lyties vaizdavimo tendencijos keturiose – dviejose pratybų ir dviejose testų – anglų kalbos (kaip svetimosios) mokymo priemonėse, išleistose 2005–2017 m. Lietuvoje. Remiantis ankstesnių tyrėjų įdirbiu, straipsnyje nagrinėjamos tiek lytį nurodančios

kalbinės raiškos priemonės (pvz., įvardžių, kreipimosi formų, šeimos ir lyties vaidmenis įvardijančių daiktavardžių vartosena), tiek vartosenos kontekstas, t. y. lyčių formavimo stereotipai.

Atlikto tyrimo rezultatai patvirtina ankstesnių tyrėjų (plg. Hellinger 1980; Porreca 1984; Ansary, Babaji 2003; Pihlaja 2007; Lee 2016) rastas lyties įvaizdžio kūrimo vadovėliuose tendencijas: analizuotose mokymo priemonėse dominuoja vyrišką lytį atspindinčios kalbinės raiškos priemonės, o moterys dažniau nei vyrai yra pateikiamos stereotipizuotuose kontekstuose. Vyrai neretai pristatomi kaip lyderiai, šeimos maitintojai, o moterys siejamos su namų ir šeimos sritimi, jos dažniau vaizduojamos kaip bailios, silpnos ir pagalbos stokojančios būtybės. Tokia vartosena, viena vertus, rodo, jog analizuotų mokymo priemonių autoriai (sąmoningai ar nesąmoningai) palaiko ir rizikuoja mokiniams įskiepyti patriarchalines lyties įvaizdžių kategorijas, kurios neatspindi modernioje visuomenėje kintančių kultūrinių lyčių santykių modelių (Britton, Lumpkin 1977; Peterson, Lach 1990). Kita vertus, nei šiuose tekstuose pasirinktos lyties įvaizdžio kūrimo strategijos, nei kalbinių lyties įvaizdžio raiškos priemonių vartosena neatspindi šiandienės anglų kalbos vartosenos tendencijų, kurios pirmenybę vis dažniau teikia lyčiai neutralioms kalbinės raiškos priemonėms (plg. Pauwels 2001; Romaine 2001; Baker 2010).

Mokymo priemonių rengėjams ateityje reikėtų daugiau dėmesio skirti kalbinei lyties raiškai: vengti stereotipinių lyčių įvaizdžių ir šališkumo lyties atžvilgiu, atsižvelgti į kintančius lyčių santykius šiandienėse britų ir amerikiečių visuomenėse ir juos atitinkamai atspindėti mokymo medžiagoje. Tai padėtų praplėsti socialinės lyties sampratos ribas ir ugdyti kitokį (nebūtinai heteronorminį) mokinių požiūrį į lytį.

Raktažodžiai: lyties įvaizdis, lyties kalbinė raiška, anglų kalba kaip svetimoji, mokymo priemonės, Lietuva, sociolingvistika