

## Gender Representation in English Textbook for 4th Grade Entitled Student's Book My Next Word for Elementary School

[Dhini Anjarwati](#)<sup>1\*</sup>, [Dinantari Susilo](#)<sup>2</sup>, [Aura Henidar Rasyidi](#)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

Corresponding author's email: [anjarwati.dhini@gmail.com](mailto:anjarwati.dhini@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate gender representation in an English Textbook entitled Student's Book My Next Words for Elementary School which published by The Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture in 2021. Porecca' (1984) framework was adopted for analyzing the female and male representation in the English textbook: omission (the ratio of females to males) in texts and illustrations, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, and adjective. The visibility of gender imbalance was found in the textbook. The number of visibility data depicted that male was higher than female. For social dominance was not found in the textbook. However, the variant of firstness, occupation, noun, masculine generic, and adjective for males are varier than for females. Some stereotypes were found such as cooking for females' activity and the breadwinner role for males. A limitation of the study is that it focuses on one textbook only. Thus, this study can't be generalized. For this purpose, another study with a larger sample would be required a deeper analysis of the picture of the EFL textbook.

**Keywords** gender representation; textbook; English for young learner

### INTRODUCTION

For the teaching and learning processes, textbooks play a crucial role. Rezai (2021) states that coursebooks are a crucial component of the teaching tools used by second language instructors all over the world. Additionally, textbooks are crucial in the development of cultural and social ideals about gender relations Cunningsworth (1995). All educational program contains ideological stances, conscious and unconscious beliefs, and accepted prejudices and perspectives that are ingrained in the real curriculum—the hidden curriculum (Briones, 2019). Ching (2014) in Miranda & Nurbrata (2019) also demonstrated that textbooks have a significant impact on students, thus it is important to examine if they include implicit gender messages or values that help to shape students' conceptions of gender. This means that the portrayal of men and women in textbooks can

serve as a guide for how they should behave in real life. On the other side, gender representation may be noticed in the images chosen to depict men and women and their roles in EFL textbooks as well as the language choices in texts and audio (Aguilar, 2021). According to Triyaswati & Emaliana (2021), gender inequality is a problem that stems from society's adherence to a conventional philosophy that promotes stereotypes. Brink and Nel (2015) cited by Triyaswati & Emaliana (2021) mentioned that stereotyping will have negative effects on the community, and some people will focus on the thing and discriminate against it. Furthermore, gender prejudice is still present in the textbook, as mentioned by Lee (2014) in Miranda & Nurbrata (2019).

Due to the importance of course books in L2 education, it is crucial for L2 teachers to analyze the books on the market in order to select the best option for their pupils (Rezai, 2021). Thus, it is essential to create and maintain gender-balanced EFL textbooks for all ages, particularly for young students who are still rapidly forming their knowledge of the world, including gender roles. Lee (2014) in Miranda & Narubata (2019) states that textbook content encourages students to mimic behaviors that are typical of their genders by relating to character behavior in the texts. Since textbooks have a significant role in influencing students' behavior and views regarding gender, gender must be addressed equally in them. The purpose of this study was to look into how gender is portrayed in the fourth-grade English textbook *My Next Words for Elementary School*. The textbook, which is advised for widespread usage, was released in 2021 by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Moreover, English for elementary education is required since the Merdeka Curriculum is adopted in Indonesia.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (2007) cited by Aguilar (2021). Gender refers to the ideas, views, and social attributions for what is considered to be feminine and what is considered to be masculine. These ideas, thoughts, and social attributions evolve with time and may be altered since they are taught. Additionally, gender representation clarifies the traits, skills, tasks, and responsibilities that are exclusive to men and women in a particular environment (Brugeilles & Cromer, 2009). Yang (2014) claims that representation occurs in spoken, written, and visual texts. Gender may be indicated in spoken and written texts by the words used, such as verbs, adjectives, and noun/noun phrases. Gender representation in graphics refers to how men and women are depicted and how many depictions there are of each gender. Visual pictures are sometimes considered as such. Illustrations are used to teach young students and to help them define their own social responsibilities (Husa and Sovia, 2014). For our kids, who may already establish preconceptions by the age of five, books and textbooks serve as role models. Children's books are a significant source of gender stereotypes since they give kids a role model on which to base their gender-specific actions. Gender representation refers to how men and women are portrayed in societal roles.

Students are encouraged to connect with the actions of the characters in those works by the moral themes ingrained in stories and textbooks. Because of this, it is essential to create and maintain gender-balanced EFL textbooks for all ages, particularly for young students who are still rapidly forming their knowledge of the world, including

gender roles. The choice of toys, games, clothes, vocations, and other gender-appropriate behaviour is subject to the direct or indirect effect of instructional materials. Children frequently copy actions that are gender-specific. As formal education provides children with numerous chances for modelling and imitation, raising public awareness of gender issues should thus include educators as well as groups like the government.

Gender equality, according to Abendroth (2014), may be attained when men and women play equal roles in their lives, whether in the workplace or in the economy. On the other hand, gender inequality can be found in textbooks in a variety of ways, including (1) gender stereotyping, (2) quantitative imbalance, and (3) male firstness, according to previous textbook studies (Ansary and Babaii 2003; Cincotta 1978; Donie 2006; Hartman and Judd, 1978; Lee 2012; Lee and Collins 2008, 2009; McGrath 2004; Poulou 1997). Gender inequality depicts a situation in which various people are offered varying opportunities based on their gender (Parziale, 2008). In contrast to Parziale, Ridgeway (2011) argued that societal norms that label particular identities as gendered prevent men and women from engaging in certain behaviours and activities. This argument was supported by Seguino, Sumner, Der, Sen, and Ahmed (2013) in Ramadani (2021). Such conceptions of the distinctions between men and women have led to gender inequality, which has in turn led to significant gender prejudice (Alba, 2018 cited by Ahmad, 2019). Seven different biases that frequently show up in instructional materials were discovered by Sadker (2001) in Nofal (2015). These included: (1) omission, in which men and women are not equally represented in text and illustrations; (2) sexist language, in which words like "mankind" and "policeman" are used; (3) stereotyping, in which men and women are depicted in traditional roles such as "male heavy-equipment operator" and "female nurse"; (4) imbalance, in which little information on crucial issues is provided; and (5) unreality, in which contentious issues are disregarded in favour of traditional view. (6) fragmentation, when groupings are shown in a fragmented or grouped way such that all women writers are highlighted in one place rather than being integrated throughout, and (7) cosmetic bias, wherein attempts are made to make materials appear balanced while little real coverage is provided.

Some gender representation information was disclosed through research. In order to identify and assess the gender representations in the ELT textbook "Bahasa Inggris Untuk SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas X," Ramadani and Novianti did research in 2021. From home products that are associated with women to vocational pursuits that are mostly studied by males. There are more male characters than female ones in text, according to research. In the illustration, there are more male/boy characters than female/girl characters. In this textbook, male role models are abundant in terms of employment and successful pursuits, but they are scarce in terms of nurturing pursuits. One was nevertheless overrepresented or outnumbered the others even while some activities are shown to be examined by one gender more than the others, and some designations are explored by all genders.

In order to assess the depiction of men and women in three early primary EFL textbooks used in public schools in Mexico, Janeth Sánchez Aguilar did research in 2021. The results showed that the three textbooks do not have a fair representation of characters; male characters appeared in the drawings far more frequently than female ones. It was

discovered that both genders received a comparable number of appearances in pictures. Similarly, the findings showed that the three textbooks had occupational gender prejudices. More males than girls were pictured in the envisioned jobs. They can draw the conclusion that the professions described in the textbooks reflect conventional notions of genders and stereotypes; males are firefighters, mechanics, physicians, architects, chefs, and majors, while women work as teachers, nurses, salespeople, and cooks. As a result, this reality could encourage gender stereotypes. Ahmad and Shah conducted research in 2019 using Fairclough's three-dimensional model to examine how gender is represented in an English language textbook for Grade 5 pupils in Punjab (Pakistan). As a consequence, it was determined that the aforementioned textbook had a strong gender bias and overrepresented men. Additionally, it appeared that the aforementioned textbook had been written with both implicit and overt male domination in mind. Inclusion refers to portraying one gender more than the other, whereas exclusion refers to portraying one as genderless or not at all. While women have been portrayed as mothers, aunts, and wives, men have been portrayed as reformers, saviors, lawyers, politicians, teachers, scientists, and managers. Women have historically been portrayed as being in subordinate roles to men, or as being dependent on them. Men have been shown in prominent roles such as teachers, attorneys, providers, and managers, while women have been depicted as housewives. Only two women have been mentioned in positions that are shared with men, a teacher and Arfa Karim, who is traveling and attending conferences. It has been discovered that Mr. is commonly used. However, the use of female titles has decreased significantly. By referencing women after men in literary passages, this textbook illustrates the dominance and superiority of men. The book's content demonstrates how men predominate in all social and extracurricular activities, including sports, academics, homework, and employment in fields or offices. However, studies have found that, with the exception of two women—one a student and the other a teacher—females are only allowed to perform domestic tasks. However, the textbook was written from an androcentric point of view because boy(s), man, men, he, his, and his are frequently used. Eight photos have guys in them, whereas there are only two with girls.

In 2019, Briones examined the linguistic facets of gender representation in the 23 most current junior high school English textbooks from the Philippines. Males are typically portrayed as instructors and athletes, demonstrating that they are more caring than men. Both sexes participate in writing, reading, chatting, jogging, eating, observing, speaking, finding, asking, responding, and explaining. Both sexes also travel and engage in these activities.

Males, however, are connected to criminality. They battle, murder, shoot, damage, destroy, and kill. Only women are known to perform tasks like gazing, giving advice, supervising, doing the laundry, cutting, and listening. Third person singular feminine pronouns were dominated by male pronouns. When male and female names are combined or spoken together, the men are often addressed first. The following professions can be seen as having a distinctly masculine focus: politician, judge, jurist, farmer, engineer, fisherman, businessman, statesman, doctor, lawyer, soldier, etc. In addition, men predominate in written texts and are shown as athletes and heroes, while women are

typically portrayed as mothers, daughters, wives, and instructors. Males are shown as cheerful while females are portrayed as depressed. Males are also portrayed as being more successful, strong, well-known, educated, and respected than females who are seen as being dependent and impoverished. Men are more likely to commit crimes, but women are more likely to aid others and take care of home duties. The data reveals that men often come first when male and female names are stated jointly.

To analyse textbook, Porreca (1984) divided the data into the following categories. The absence of a comparison between the number of female and male data points and the gender ratio in texts and images. Firstness refers to the text or phrase organization used in the textbook to illustrate both male and female. Occupational visibility is a tool for examining jobs that are portrayed in textbooks. In the textbook, nouns connected to gender are referred to as nouns. The usage of a noun to represent the general gender is determined by the masculine generic construction. The word "adjective" refers to adjectives that are displayed for both men and women in textbooks. Stockdale claims that visibility, which is possibly the most straightforward part of gender balance to analyse, relates to the proportion of men and women who appear in textbooks. Porreca (1984) mentions a series of studies (Coles, 1977; Hoomes, 1978; Hellinger, 1980) that revealed there were three times as many males as girls in instructional materials. The "order of mention, termed firstness" in textbooks is another area that may show a gender gap (Porreca, 1984: 706). It might be inferred that the person who appears first in a pair of gender-specific nouns or pronouns, such as mother and father or he/she, has a higher rank. Evidence of gender inequality may also be seen in the nouns and pronouns that are used to describe men and women. The discourse contributions made by female and male characters in a textbook may also be considered as a manifestation of the balanced depiction of gender in discourse roles. Brugeilles & Cromer offered a number of characteristics for gender representation (2009). They are 1) sex & age, the characters' outward appearance; 2) designations, the situations in which a character finds themselves; 3) activities, the character's behaviour; and 4) interactions, the characters' interactions with one another.

The gender stereotype study of three textbooks for young learners (Playway to English 1, Magic Adventure 2, Cookie and Friends) demonstrated that these textbooks need certain modifications according to child's cognitive development and their visual perception. There are several gender prejudices in textbooks. In all textbooks, male characters are offered significantly more frequently than female ones. Furthermore, men portray more active positions in all textbooks, while women portray calm, socially acceptable ones. According to the gender schema hypothesis, children form an idea of what it means to be a girl or a boy based on gender norms, and they then plan their behavior accordingly (Taylor, 2003). People allegedly engage in gender ideology, according to Taylor (1998) Gender ideology is shown as a set of symbols or a code. Women may, for instance, utilize cosmetics, certain dress trends, or even specific colors, in an effort to uphold cultural norms for beauty.

## **METHOD**

The title of the textbook which was analyzed entitled Student's Book My Next Words for Elementary School for 4th grade of Elementary School. It was published by The Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture in 2021. The textbook consisted of song lyrics, vocabulary practice, games, and exercises for speaking, writing, and listening skills. There were 12 chapters: What are you doing?; There are 67 English Books; My living room is beside kitchen; Cici cooks in the kitchen; Where is my pencil?; The stove is in the kitchen; I can make fried egg in the kitchen; Be on time; I go to school after having breakfast; He always gates up at 5 o'clock; How do you go to school?; He goes to school by bike. For analysing the data, this study adopted Porreca' (1984) framework: omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, adjective.

### **Omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations**

This category is related to the number of the comparison between female and male data. It is gathered based on text and illustration only for the consideration. Firstness

### **Firstness**

It relates to the arrangement of text or sentence for illustrating both male and female in the textbook.

### **Occupational visibility**

This category for analysing occupation which is depicted in the textbook. It could be gathered from texts and illustrations that refer to female and male.

### **Noun**

It refers to noun which related to gender in the textbook.

### **Masculine generic construction**

Masculine generic construction determines for the use of noun for depicting general gender. It has two meanings which may refer to either a male or female. It can be taken form text only in the textbook.

### **Adjective**

This category refers to adjectives which depicted for males and female in the textbook

## **FINDINGS**

A content analysis was descriptive qualitative design which adopted form Porreca' research (1984). This study provided some information on some categories: omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, adjective.

## Omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations

This category is related to the number of the comparison between female and male data. It is gathered based on text and illustration only for the consideration.

**Table 1.** Omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations

Type	Male	Female
Text (noun, pronoun)	89	91
Illustration/picture	87	47
Total	176	138
Percentage	55%	43%

## Firstness

It relates to the arrangement of text or sentence for illustrating both male and female in the textbook. Firstness data were collected from name, pronoun and sentence arrangement in text. This category consisted 4 data only based on the textbook. In this textbook provided 3 sentence arrangements and 1 name arrangement. For example:

(1)Made and Cici are having lunch in the canteen (*page 4*)

(2)My father drinks coffee. My mother reads a magazine (*page 73*)

(3)Aisyah's father cleans his car. Her mother cooks in the kitchen (*page 115*)

(4)Aisyah helps her mother in the kitchen. Her brother sweeps the yard (*page 115*)

The majority data for this category showed that male appeared first rather than female.

## Occupational visibility

This category for analysing occupation which is depicted in the textbook. It could be gathered from texts and illustrations that refer to female and male. The data were gathered based on text and illustration. I provided the result into a table which consisted of occupation in the textbook. The occupations were job and role that related to female and male.

**Table 2.** Occupation visibility

Male	Female
President	Teacher
Fruit seller	Snack seller
Policeman	
Pedicab driver	
Farmer	
Pilot	

The data were gathered showed that there were 6 types for male and 2 types for female. Most of male occupations are outdoor activities such as president,

policemen, pedicab driver, farmer and pilot. The indoor activity was fruit seller only. Furthermore, the types of occupations depicted male can be many fields of job. For female, the data appeared into two types: teacher and snack seller.

For gender activity that refers to gender role. It was depicted in texts and illustrations. The number of the data of male data are higher than female data. For female and male, there were similar data such as visiting grandparent and riding a bike and different data for the rest.

**Table 3. Gender activities**

<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Picking his daughter	Cooking
Sweeping yard	Waking her son up
Cleaning a car	Watering the flower
Visiting grandmother	Helping mother
Playing skipping	Visiting grandmother
Riding a bike	Riding a bike
Going to work	Playing a doll
Playing football	Going to school
Going to school	Learning
Learning	Reading
Eating	Teaching
Watching tv	Dancing
Playing marbles	Eating
Swimming	Borrowing
Reading	Buying sneak
Sleeping	Watching tv
Writing	Sleeping
Buying sneak	Doing assignment
Washing hand	Taking a bath
Taking a bath	Shopping
Selling fruit	
Driving a motorcycle	
Driving a car	

Based on the data the activity for male related to outdoor activity. On the other hand, female related to indoor activity. The example of gender activity was below:





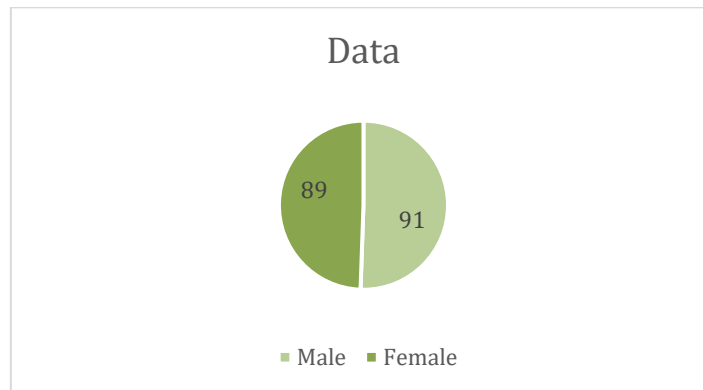
**Figure 1.** Cooking activity

(1) Aisyah's father cleans his car (*page 115*)

Based on the illustrations, the gender occupations and activities of females are related to cook and play doll and nurture their family. On other hand, male tended to do challenging activities such as playing a skipping and playing football. Furthermore, male did outside kitchen activities such as sweeping a yard and cleaning a car.

**Noun**

It refers to noun which related to gender in the textbook. The data were gathered based on noun such as name and pronoun which related to both male and female. The study revealed that the number of male data were higher than female.



**Figure 2.** Noun data

**Masculine generic construction**

Masculine generic construction determines for the use of noun for depicting general gender. It has two meanings which may refer to either a male or female. It can be taken form text only in the textbook.



**Figure 2.** Masculine generic construction

This picture depicted a cat which the character can't be identified by seeing the picture only. However, author use masculine generic construction "he" as a subject for the sentence.

**Adjective**

This category refers to adjective which depicted for male and female in the textbook. The data was gathered based on both female and male which integrated with adjective in text. The data was divided into two categories: male and female. This study founded that the use of adjective for 4th grade in elementary school was not high frequency. It could be seen that the data were 7 for female and 8 for male only. The data also revealed that amount of male data was higher than female data.

**Table 3.** Adjective Data

<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
What	What
Her	How
Where	His
Good	Large
Aisyah's father	Clean
	Dirty

There were some types of adjectives in the textbook: descriptive adjective (e.g. good for female; clean, large and dirty for male), interrogative adjective (e.g. what and how for male; what and where for female), possessive adjective (e.g. her and Aisyah's father for female; his for male).

**DISCUSSION**

Overall, there are two main findings: the number of gender visibility and how gender representation in text and illustration. Those was divided into six categories; the result omission (the ratio of females to male) in texts and illustrations, firstness, occupational visibility, noun, masculine generic construction, adjective. In textbook, male was dominance occurrence data rather than female in all aspects. However, both genders were depicted with not big gap of number. It can be seen that the percentage

of female and male were quite same. For the way gender representation, Male had more variant type rather than female in all categories.

Omission in text and category was the first category to analyse the data. It was about the comparison both genders in textual and pictorial data in textbook. It can be seen that the female data were 91 in text and 47 in picture while male data were 87 in text and 47 in picture. For the total comparison was 55 % for male and 43 % for female. The result was in line with Ramadani and Novianti (2021) that In text, it is found that there are more men/boys characters compared to women/girls moreover, In illustration, the men/ boys characters outnumber the women/girl characters It was also same with Aguilar (2021) that findings revealed that there is not a balanced representation of characters in the three textbooks; males were significantly more frequent than female characters in the illustrations.

For the occupational visibility, the number of male data were higher than female. It can be seen table 2. There were only two types of occupation for female but male were six types of occupations. The result was in line with Aguilar (2021) that males were depicted in a larger number of visualized occupations than females.

The occupation for females was related to indoor jobs such as teacher and snack seller. On the other hand, males referred to the outdoor job such as policemen and farmers. There are 23 types of activities for males and 20 types for females. Both genders have some similarities: riding a bike, going to school, learning, reading, eating, buying snack, watching tv, sleeping, and taking a bath. The activities for females only were related to indoor activities and household: playing a doll, cooking, waking her son up, and watering the flower. These also were related to nurturing traits: waking her son up, helping her mother, and teaching. This is similar to Aguilar (2021), the data can be concluded that occupations presented in the textbooks show traditional perceptions of genders and stereotypes; women are teachers, nurses, sales clerks, and cooks. Briones (2019) revealed that females show that they were more nurturing than men. On the other hand, males were related to outdoor activity and household: playing skipping, playing marbles, playing football, swimming sweeping the yard, cleaning a car, going to work, and picking up their daughter. It can be seen that the male is depicted with some domestics; cleaning a car, picking up his daughter, and sweeping the yard. Moreover, the stereotype existed that males were depicted as breadwinners in the family. These are different results from Ramadani and Novianti (2021) that are only explored often by men, to domestic items that are attached to women.

There were some types of adjectives in the textbook: her, Aisyah's father, what, where and good for female; what, how, his, clean, large and dirty for male). In this category, the author used a few adjective words. Female data was less than the male that is 5 for females and 6 for males. It doesn't illustrate the gender stereotypes in this category. The study also revealed the occurrence of noun use that the number of male data was higher than female.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this research, it can be concluded that gender representation in the English Textbook “For 4th Grade Entitled Student’s Book My Next Word for Elementary School showed imbalances of genders which male and female still exists in the school textbooks in term of firstness, occupation, noun, masculine generic and adjective. Males’ data are varier and higher than females. Some stereotypes are also still integrated into gender traits from a social perspective that cooking refers to females and breadwinner refers to males as the leader of the family. Language teachers could promote respect for difference, diversity, and gender equality by reducing stereotyped messages and images, balancing the representation of men and women in messages and images, including images that show men in domestic, family, and care-giving environments and women in decision-making and management positions, and promoting equal participation of men and women in public, economic, and political spheres (Aguilar, 2021). Generalizations of gender bias do not take into consideration the public primary education sector due to the volume of textbooks examined. However, this study adds to the body of knowledge in the area. It is recommended that further study be done on gender representation in a picture with deeper analysis for primary school EFL textbooks

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