

## Gender Differences in EFL Coursebook Used in Islamic School of Bengkulu Province

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to see if there is a gender bias in the English textbooks for EFL used by Islamic schools in Bengkulu province. The objects of the research used are the course books used in Islamic schools in Bengkulu city, entitled "Bright an English 2 curriculum 2013 revisi" and "Grow with English 5 (a thematic English for elementary schools)" published by Erlangga. This study was analyzed based on six aspects according to Logsdon, namely: (1) the total number of male/female photos, (2) the total number of male/female noted, (3) the total number of male/female actors, (4) overall amount of male/female gameplay, (5) total number of male/female role models, and (6) structure of citing male/female names. The result showed that there is gender bias in the course books Bright an English 2 and Grow with English 5. Males are dominant in the Bright an English 2 book as a whole in categories 1,2,3,4, and 6, but not in the Grow with English book. In the book Grow with English, women are dominant in the first and second categories. Finally, the dominant gender bias lies in men. However, there are similarities in the comparison of gender differences between the two books in the fifth category, namely the total of male/female role models.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Of course, a course book is required when teaching. This also applies to English learning, particularly EFL. The course book will be extremely useful in the teaching and learning process, which aims to achieve the learning objectives. The existence of a coursebook will greatly benefit at least two groups, namely teachers and students. The first is the teacher. The availability of coursebooks will be extremely beneficial to teachers, particularly when teaching-learning materials. Using a coursebook can help teachers achieve learning objectives, assist them in developing learning materials, adapt and adopt book-based materials to meet the needs of students, and last but not least, teachers can design learning activities that motivate students to learn and achieve English learning goals. The second category is students. They can benefit from using a coursebook as a resource for learning. Coursebooks enable students to prepare themselves for class by reading the learning material before arriving at school. Students can also practice their learning at home by reviewing the material taught in their books.

Beebe (1996) stated that gender language is a lifeless language free of political bias when learning English EFL. Gender and language have a reciprocal relationship in which language reflects gender and gender shapes language. The English coursebook is a valuable resource for learning a language and its culture. As a result, it is critical to understand gender in it to understand gender in life. In general, many language teachers use

coursebooks haphazardly, without paying close attention to or analyzing the books they use or those provided by the school. They only use it for educational purposes. This is also why many teachers have limited knowledge of coursebook analysis. So many of them ignore the very significant gender differences in the coursebooks they use. This distinction must be examined to determine any hypotheses generated by the textbook. Students, for example, will consider it normal when men engage in a lot of outdoor activities while women engage in activities indoors. This is since there are numerous illustrations in the textbook that depict this. As a result, it is critical to examine the coursebook as a whole.

Education is a part of the sectors of national development aimed at educating the nation's youth. It envisions an educational system that will become a powerful and authoritative social institution, empowering all Indonesian students to become good human beings and respond proactively to the challenges of a changing era. Education is the most effective vehicle for nation-building and character development. Gender bias must be eliminated to build a nation and character, which education can accomplish.

Recently, the government has increased its efforts to develop the character of students from all provinces in Indonesia. As a result, the formulation of character building is in line with the current government vision, which aims to revolt against the mental.

Gender relations in coursebooks are one of the aspects that should be investigated on a national level because they are used as a primary source of teaching material in students' learning processes. Teaching materials are topics that will be covered during the learning process. These materials are typically obtained from a variety of sources. The coursebook is an important primary source of learning materials.

Cunningsworth (1995) defines a coursebook as a book that teaches a specific subject and is typically used in schools and colleges. It can also be defined as a collection of writing created by the author systematically and containing materials from a specific subject while adhering to the curriculum in place at the time. According to Hinkel (2005), a coursebook is an effective educational practice tool that can reflect individual and national values and senses. Coursebooks and other teaching materials have become so important in education that they have begun to control lessons, homework, and students study time. Finally, the course book definition can be concluded that a course book is a book that contains materials of a specific subject, such as those used by teachers and students in carrying out a learning-teaching process in the classroom, and the materials provided in a textbook are designed based on a valid curriculum.

Many researchers have conducted studies in this area. Gender in textbook research has been ongoing since the 1970s, and it describes gender differences in textbooks (Yang, 2011; Widodo, 2017; Mukudan, 2008; Gupta, 1991; Salamah, 2014; and Zahri, 2018). The results of the study indicate that there is a gender bias in English coursebooks where the bias tends to be male. Based on this, the author will start this research with the question:

*Is there any gender bias in English coursebooks for EFL used by Islamic schools in Bengkulu province?*

By paying attention to this, the researcher will analyze the coursebook used in Islamic schools in Bengkulu city entitled "*Bright an English 2 kurikulum 2013 revisi*" and "*Grow with English 5 (a thematic English for elementary school)*" published by Erlangga. The writer will analyze the coursebooks used by Islamic schools in Bengkulu which focuses on the analysis of 6 aspects according to Logsdon, namely: (1) total number of male/female photos, (2) total number of male/female notes, (3) the total number of male/female actors, (4) overall amount of male/female gameplay, (5) total number of male/female role models, and (6) structure of citing male/female names.

## 2. METHOD

This is descriptive quantitative research. The research analyzes the content of coursebooks used in Bengkulu City's Islamic school. One of the objectives of this analysis is to find gender bias in coursebooks. So, the representation of males and females in the coursebook will be analyzed in this research. The content analysis in this research will focus on six aspects based on Logsdon (1985). They are (1) the total number of male/female photos, (2) the total number of male/female noted, (3) the total number of male/female actors, and (4) the overall amount of male/female gameplay, (5) total number of male/female role models, and (6) structure of citing male/female names. The data will be analyzed using the six issues of gender representation suggested by Logsdon in the textbook:

**Table 1.** Six issues of gender

1. Female/male photos	The author has taken into account the total of female/male images shown.
2. Female/male noted	The female/male ratio specified in the textbook will be used. It does include both female and male identities, personal pronouns (such as he, she, his, and her), and female/male terms (such as Sir, ma'am).
3. Female/Male actors	Female/male occupational roles (e.g., student, teacher) will indeed be counted.
4. Female/male gameplay	In the coursebook, the author will collect the number of minority games play or sports (for example, football, and tennis).
5. Female/male roles models	The role models described in scriptures or activities will be taken into account.
6. structure of citing male/female names.	The order in which female and male identities are mentioned in a simple sentence (for example, Aurel and Adit) would be counted.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1.1 Male/Female pictures

**Table 2.** Total of male/female pictures in the textbook of Bright an English 2

Chapter	Male	Female
1	8	13
2	12	17
3	2	3
4	9	13
5	19	22
6	17	40
7	8	8
8	23	10
9	9	6
10	36	37
11	16	17
12	18	14
13	45	33
14	10	3
15	3	3
16	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>240</b>

**Table 3.** Total of male/female pictures in the textbook Grow with English 5

Chapter	Male	Female
1	39	35
2	16	23
3	50	27
4	64	73
5	13	8
6	7	3
7	29	44
8	51	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>258</b>

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there are many differences in the images between men and women. In Bright an English 2 there is a difference of 5 images, with more images of women than men. Unlike the book Grow with English 5, there are significant differences between the pictures of men and

women. In this book, there are 11 more pictures of men than pictures of women. we can conclude that there is a gender bias between the two books in terms of image differences between men and women. Even so, the book Bright an English 2 seems to have minimized the differences which are not so much.

### 3.1.2 Male/Female Mentioned

**Table 4.** Total Male/Female mentioned in the Textbook of Bright an English 2

Chapter	Male	Female
1	34	17
2	4	21
3	28	16
4	63	37
5	36	22
6	38	30
7	31	26
8	17	16
9	40	28
10	41	59
11	25	45
12	54	40
13	60	62
14	25	20
15	14	13
16	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>452</b>

**Table 5.** Total Male/Female mentioned in the textbook Grow with English 5

Chapter	Male	Female
1	15	34
2	0	2
3	23	24
4	57	87
5	8	6
6	-	-
7	18	19
8	29	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>217</b>

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there are many differences between the Men/Women mentioned. In Bright an English 2, there are 58 differences in pronunciation where men are superior, namely 510, while women are 452. It is different from the book Grow with English 5, there is also a significant difference, namely mentioning women more than men, which is 217 compared to men only 150. The difference is 67 mentions where there are more women than men. The two books have a different gender bias, namely that men excel in Bright an English 2 (the difference between women and men is 58). While women excel in the book Grow with English 5 (the difference in comparison is 67).

### 3.1.3 Male/Female Roles

**Table 6.** Total of Male/Female roles in the Textbook of Bright an English 2 and Grow with English 5

Male	Female
1. Teacher	a. teacher
2. student	b. student
3. musician	c. musician
4. scientist	d. scientist
5. security	e. security
6. dentist	f. dentist
7. singer	g. singer

8. dancer	h. dancer
9. firefighter	i. housewife
10. barber	j. customer service
11. animator	k. cashier
12. doctor	l. fashion designer
13. farmer	m. nurse
14. chef	
<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>

From the data above, it is found that the role of men is more than that of women in textbooks. The number of male and female roles is 14 and 13 roles, respectively. Although different, the difference is almost non-existent because the number of male roles is only one more than that of women. Then the two books seem to have taken this into account so that there is no significant gender gap.

### 3.1.4 Male/Female Games or Sport

**Table 7.** Total of Male/Female games or sports in the Textbook of Bright an English 2 and Grow with English 5

<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1. football player	a. football player
2. swimmer	b. swimmer
3. basketball player	c. basketball player
4. skateboard player	
5. tennis player	
6. ice hockey player	
7. baseball player	
<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

From the data above, it is known that the number of games for men is 7, while the number of games for women is only 3. In this case, we can see that the number of games for men is more than for women. The difference is as much as 4 games or sports. it can be concluded that there is gender even though it is not very visible.

### 3.1.5 Male/Female Role Models

**Table 8.** Total of Male/Female role models in the Textbook of Bright an English 2

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1	Campbell	Alitha
4	Mike	Jenny
5	Murphy	-
8	Andrew	-
9	-	Harlee
10	-	-
11	-	a. Ruth b. Ashley
13	Eric Holland	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Table 9.** Total of Male/Female role models in the Textbook of Grow with English 5

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1	a. Rudy Palmer b. Rooney Proctor	a. Patty Prentice b. Sally Perker
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

From the data above, it shows that the number of male/female role models found in the textbook Bright an English 2 and Grow with English 5 has the same gender ratio, namely 5:5 and 2:2. Based on this, it can be concluded that the government has paid attention to gender differences in textbooks.

### 3.1.6 The pattern of Mentioning Male/Female Names

**Table 10.** The pattern of Mentioning Male/Female Names in the Textbook of Bright an English 2

Chapter	Male	Female
1	Daniel and Ela	Anna and Daniel
3	Firman and Salma	-
4	Ben and Mischa	Meilin and Ivan
6	Jim and Ann	-
7	Evan and Pamela	-
11	Anton and Felicia	a. Mrs. Black and Mr black b. Ruth and Daniel
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>

**Table 11.** The pattern of Mentioning Male/Female Names in the Textbook of Grow with English 5

Chapter	Male	Female
4	Tigor and Diana	-
5	Seta and Nurul	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

From the data above, we can see that the pattern of mentioning male/female names is different between men and women when writing male/female names in one phrase from the two-course books. Both in the book *Bright an English 2*, and the book *Grow with English 5*, more 2 phrases contain the mention of the male name before the female name. This shows that there is a gender bias, namely that men are prioritized over women.

Based on the two English course books that have been analyzed, it was found that there is a gender bias in both. Based on the two books, the results show that gender is unequally presented. In the first category, namely Total of Male/Female Pictures in the Textbook, it was found that men were more dominant in Bright an English 2, but in Grow with English 5, it was found that women were more dominant than men.

In the second category, namely Total Male/Female Mentioned, it was found that men were more dominant than women in Bright an English 2, but in Grow with English 5, it was found that women were more dominant than men.

In the third category, namely Male/Female roles. From the data obtained, the roles of women and men are almost the same, it can be said that there is no difference in this category. In the fourth category, namely the Total of Male/Female games or sports, it was found that males are dominant and the gender bias is quite clear.

The fifth is the Total of Male/Female role models. It was found that from the two books, both of them had the same ratio between men and women, so in this category, it seems that the government has taken into account that gender does not occur in learning books. The last one is the Pattern of Mentioning Male/Female Names. In this category it was found that in Bright English 2 and Grow with English 5 books, men were more dominant than women.

The curriculum and educational structures are all permeated with gender. We must go deeper into the issues surrounding gender representation in picture books in order to increase our understanding of the various components of gender and the amount to which it has changed through time. According World Health Organization (2021); Davison et al. (2021); and Haghanikar (2022), gender refers to the roles, attitudes, activities, and traits that are socially created for girls and males. Researchers agree that one of the very first social identities that toddlers learn is their gender (Jackson & Gee, 2005; Rogers & Metlzoff, 2017). Previous research have found that stories and picture books can influence a child's developing sense of gender (Crisp & Hiller, 2011; Jackson & Gee, 2005; Weitzman et al., 1972). Picture books in particular "offer prolonged and repeated exposure to parenting approaches and related gender norms" (Anderson & Hamilton, 2005).

Then, in a text or course book, interpersonal and transactional communication must be taught to students (Corbett, 2003; Bailey, 2005; Brown, 2007; Susilawati, 2020). The student is exposed to the genuine fundamental communication that takes place in daily life through interpersonal and transactional communication. Interactional speech or communication are other terms for interpersonal communication. Instead of transmitting information and facts, it is done mainly for the purpose of developing and maintaining social relationships. So, picture indeed with different gender can make students be motivated.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of the study, the result showed that there is gender bias in the course books *Bright an English 2* and *Grow with English 5*. Males are dominant in the Bright an English book as a whole in categories 1,2,3,4, and 6, but not in the Grow with English book. In the book Grow with English, women are dominant in the first and second categories. Finally, the dominant gender bias lies in men. However, there are similarities in the comparison of gender differences between the two books in the fifth category, namely the total of male/female role models

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