Linguistic Realization of Gender Representation in EFL Textbooks

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Summary. The aim of the research was to determine linguistic means of gender representation in the Lithuanian, British and Argentinian EFL textbooks. To achieve the aim, EFL textbooks circulated in Lithuania (Super English 4), the UK (Speakout) and Argentina (My Life 2) were analyzed with regard to linguistic means of gender representation. The results revealed that the Lithuanian EFL textbook uses compound nouns and proverbs or sayings comprising a word man which is used in its generic meaning. Moreover, the analysis of verbs used to define gender in the British EFL textbook demonstrated that females are involved in more various mental processes in relation to males. In contrast, the Argentinian EFL textbook can be treated as the best-balanced textbook with regard to gender-biased use of language. Further studies can examine other aspects of gender representation and cover wider range of EFL textbooks.

Keywords: gender representation, gender-awareness, gender-bias, gender-marked linguistic items.

Introduction

Gender is the object of interdisciplinary investigation. It is an important area of study in sociology, sociolinguistics, psychology and linguistics. Sociologists claim that the perception of gender is developed through the observation and is predetermined by “gender agents” (Brym and Lie, 2007, 97). Teaching material presented in textbooks is one of the mostly influential “gender agents”. Gender representation in teaching materials reflects
the attitude of a particular society towards gender that is subconsciously acquired by learners and may cause long term drawbacks on their performances and social behaviour.

The EFL textbooks are the best source for investigation of gender representation as they are designed to reflect the most common and prevailing features of gender representation in a society. Moreover, the EFL textbooks provide a linguistic background for gender description. The studies made in the field of gender representation in EFL textbooks (Foroutan, 2012; Mustapha 2012; Kim 2012; Amini & Birjandi 2012; Jean & Yuit 2012; Verikaitė, 2012; Nagatomo 2010; Hamdan 2010; Johansson & Malmsjo 2009; Kobia 2009; Skliar 2007; Lee & Collins 2006) revealed that females are underrepresented and trivialized in relation to males.

Taking into consideration the previous studies on gender representation, we can construct a hypothesis that EFL textbooks circulated in different regions of the world that have different social, cultural and economic background possess different patterns of gender representation.

Therefore, the aim of the present research was to analyze Lithuanian, British and Argentinian EFL textbooks with regard to the use of linguistic means of gender representation and to determine the recurrent patterns of gender representation from the linguistic perspective. To achieve the aim of the research, the following objectives were set:

- To analyse and compare the ways of gender representation in different cultural settings.
- To analyze gender-biased use of lexical items.
- To determine the relative frequency of the occurrence of gender-biased items in the analysed textbooks.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for the analysis of the items under the investigation. The content analysis method was employed for the analysis. The major categories analysed in the textbooks were:

1) Gender-marked nouns, pronouns, derivational morphemes, titles and “firstness”.
2) The choice of vocabulary items used with respect to gender.

All the analysed instances were classified under the three main categories: gender-marked, gender-balanced and gender-neutral.

The relative frequency of the occurrence of gender-marked instances was calculated and the comparative analysis of the results with respect to gender-biased representation in Lithuanian, British and Argentinian EFL textbooks was performed.

In the analysis linguistic aspects of gender representation were taken into consideration. The linguistic aspect of gender representation is reflected through semantic features such as generically used nouns and pronouns, derivational morphemes and particular vocabulary used to define gender. Moreover, the analysis of “firstness” was carried out in order to define the prominence given to certain gender by linguistic means. Finally, the analysis of titles was performed in order to determine the stereotypical attitude towards gender.
In the analysis quantitative and qualitative approaches for collecting and interpreting the data were used.

The quantitative approach was used for calculation of the relative frequency of occurrence of lexical items in relation to different aspects. The relative frequency of the occurrence was calculated and the relative frequency of each item under analysis was determined.

Content analysis was used to analyze the particular items in context. It helped to interpret the quantitative results.

The analysis involved three EFL textbooks, i.e. Super English 4, Speakout and My Life 2. 

Super English 4 is offered for the market in Lithuania. It was published by five Lithuanian and one foreign author in 2009 and is one of the newest publications of EFL textbooks in Lithuania. The textbook consists of two parts and is aimed at students studying in the eighth form. The textbook comprises twenty-eight units covering topics from festivals to special occasions and from free time interests to law and crime. The textbook consists of one hundred and fifty one pages.

Speakout pre-intermediate is the British EFL textbook published by Longman in 2011. Speakout is a comprehensive six-level general English course for adults. The textbook consists of twelve units which include the most essential topics covering issues related with everyday life, nature and society. The textbook consists of one hundred and seventy five pages.

My Life 2 is the Argentinian EFL textbook published by two Argentinian authors in 2009. The textbook is originally based on the textbooks published by Pearson. The textbook consists of the student’s book and a workbook. My Life 2 comprises six units of the student’s book and six coinciding units of the workbook. The units cover six main topics such as free time, meals, past events, travel, choices and big events. The textbook consists of ninety-five pages.

In the analysis the British EFL textbook is referred to as “Textbook A”, the Argentinian EFL textbook is referred to as “Textbook B”, the Lithuanian EFL textbook is referred to as “Textbook C I” and “Textbook C II”.

The selection of the textbooks was made randomly; however, the textbooks from different regions were chosen intentionally in order to compare the treatment of gender in the textbooks involving different cultural perspectives. These textbooks are recent publications therefore they provide an up-to-date data with regard to gender representation. The overall analysis comprised four hundred and twenty-one pages of the text.

The analysis of the textbooks with regard to gender representation in EFL textbooks is one of the newest and widely examined issues. The results of the study will contribute to the development of gender-awareness of the teaching process participants, authors and publishers of EFL textbooks. Further studies can examine other aspects of gender representation and cover wider range of EFL textbooks.
Results

1. Gender marked linguistic items in the EFL textbooks

The usage of a particular vocabulary to define gender reveals the attitudes and views which are encoded in the usage of a language towards males and females. The content of the vocabulary depends on the authors and the way they see and treat gender. While designing a textbook, authors attempt to present the most common and prevailing features of gender representation of the society. In addition, it is not only reflected in the visual materials but is also visible in the choice of the vocabulary.

The analysis of the vocabulary can be carried out from two perspectives, i.e. the vocabulary used about gender and by gender. The present study focuses on the analysis of the vocabulary used about gender or, to be more precise, the way males and females are described and presented using the particular vocabulary.

For the investigation of the vocabulary used to define gender in Lithuanian, British and Argentinian EFL textbooks, the verbs, nouns and adjectives were analyzed with reference to the third person singular masculine and feminine pronouns, i.e. he and she.

1. Verbs

The analysis of the usage of the verbs with regard to the third person singular masculine and feminine pronouns was based on the Halliday’s taxonomy of verbs. Halliday (1994) identified the following processes expressed by the verb: material process or process of doing, mental process or process of sensing, process of being, process of behaviours, process of saying or verbal process and process of existence. According to this classification, verbs that appeared together with pronouns he and she were divided into these verb groups in order to compare the actions that are generally referred to or ascribed to males or females.

The relative frequency of the occurrence of verbs collocated with the pronouns he and she revealed that among all three analyzed textbooks the most common group of verbs is material process or process of doing. Males as well as females are involved in going, walking, leaving, coming, working, having or owning something, playing, travelling, buying, spending, learning, studying, watching, reading or writing.

However, the content analysis of the verbs which belong to the verb group of material process or process of doing referring to pronouns he or she disclosed that males are associated with crime or using physical strength, they rob, escape, hit whereas these verbs do not collocate with the third person singular pronoun she. Moreover, in the Argentinian EFL textbook the usage of the pronoun he with the verbs discover, invent and design revealed that males are associated with the activity of creating something or being related with inventions. In addition, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook the pronoun he was used in combination with the verb rule which suggest that males dominate and are powerful. Furthermore, among all three analyzed EFL textbooks males are presented as achieving their goals. The usage of the verbs achieve and graduate shows that males are the ones who are able to accomplish their objectives.
In addition, a number of material verbs or verbs of doing are used only with the pronoun she. For example, females look after and help. It demonstrates that females are responsible for keeping order or supervising something and they are helpful. The usage of the pronoun she combined with the verb text suggests that females are those who more frequently use a mobile phone for texting in relation to males. Moreover, females dress. The action of wearing something is common for both genders; however, the activity of dressing for a special occasion is associated with females.

Moreover, the verbs which frequently occur in the textbooks such as buy and spend collocate with different pronouns. The verb buy more frequently appears with the feminine pronoun whereas the verb spend more frequently appears with the masculine pronoun. It demonstrates that females are associated with the process of buying whereas males are associated with the process of spending money on something.

It is worth mentioning that in the Lithuanian EFL textbook, the pronoun she appears with the verb milk. The activity of milking a cow or a goat is a typical activity of Lithuanians. For example, in the villages a number of people still own cows and milk them. However, the activity is associated only with females as the verb is used only with the feminine pronoun she.

Moreover, in the Argentinian EFL textbook the pronoun he is used together with a verb kayak which was not identified in the other two analyzed textbooks. The activity of kayaking might be a popular free time activity in Argentina which is associated with males rather than females. In addition, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook masculine pronoun he appears together with the verb fish which was not identified in other two analyzed textbooks and is used only with the masculine pronoun.

The content analysis of some verbs with regard to pronouns he and she revealed that they are used with different objects or in different meanings. For example, the verb win is used with the pronoun he in the phrase of to win an award, however, the verb win is used with the pronoun she in the sense of to win a lottery. In addition, the verb make is used with the pronoun she in the sense of making some food, for example, to make pasta or sandwiches whereas the same verb is used with the pronoun he in the phrase to make friends.

The analysis of verbs denoting mental process or the process of sensing demonstrated that both genders think. The activity of thinking is equally ascribed to males and females. However, in the British EFL textbook the mental processes are more frequently used with the feminine pronoun. For instance, females believe, dream, need and wish. It shows that females are more active and involved in more various mental processes in relation to males.

Furthermore, in the Argentinian EFL textbook the verb love is used together with the pronoun he. This is the only case of referring to love with the masculine pronoun. In contrast, females are those who feel. The perception of feeling is associated with females and the verb feel is used only with the feminine pronoun she. In addition, the verb hate is also used only with a feminine pronoun she. The results disclosed that females are those
who experience various emotions more intensely and they are more open to express their feelings in comparison with males.

The analysis of the verbs expressing behaviour demonstrated that both genders *shout*. Usually shouting is used when a certain situation reaches the point when a person is no longer able to control it which shows that in the present day males and females are both experiencing situations when it is difficult to keep calm.

The most significant and substantial difference among genders with regard to the usage of verbs was revealed in the examination of speaking verbs used to define males and females. Speaking verbs are the verbs which express a certain type of speaking such as *say, tell, speak, explain, ask* etc. The relative frequency of occurrence of speaking verbs with regard to masculine and feminine pronouns revealed that they are more frequently used in reference to females. The results demonstrated that females are those who like to *say, tell, ask, explain, warn, sing* and *speak* whereas males just *say* and *tell*. Moreover, in the Argentinian EFL textbook the verb *chat* was used with the feminine pronoun *she*. It proves that the activity of speaking is associated with and ascribed to females.

Summarizing the results, among all three analyzed textbooks the masculine pronouns appear together with the verbs *go, play, see* and *think*. It can be stated that males are presented as mobile or not attached to one place, they are *travelling, going somewhere, moving to different locations*. Moreover, they like to *play*. The activity of playing involves various sports and computer games. It is worth highlighting that males are seen as a reasonable and sensible gender.

In comparison, among all three analyzed textbooks the feminine pronoun appears together with the verbs *say, want* and *study*. The findings disclose that females are associated with the activity of speaking. They are seen as the “speaking gender”. Moreover, females *want*. The analysis revealed that females are more frequently described as being in the state of *wanting* something. However, the most positive and favourable result is that females *study* which shows that females are visible in the education field and are willing to develop their competences.

1.2. Adjectives

In what follows, the analysis focuses on the third person singular masculine and feminine pronouns usage in collocation with adjectives. In the Lithuanian EFL textbook the pronoun *she* collocates with the adjectives describing social and financial status, i.e. *popular and rich*; the adjective describing the level of knowledge, i.e. *clever*; the adjective describing the emotional state, i.e. *angry*, and the adjective describing personality, i.e. *kind* and *shy*.

In the British EFL textbook the pronoun *she* appears together with the adjective describing social and financial status, i.e. *poor*; the adjective describing the emotional state, i.e. *disappointed*; the adjective describing personality, i.e. *very nice*; and the adjective describing appearance, i.e. *thin*. 

[24]
In the Argentinian EFL textbook the pronoun *she* appears together with the only occurrence of the adjective *lucky*.

Interpreting the findings of the analysis of adjectives in collocation with the feminine pronoun *she* in the three analyzed EFL textbooks, it is obviously seen that females are presented *having a rather bad mood*, they are *angry* or *disappointed*. Females are associated with negative emotions and are more frequently described as being in a bad mood. However, the analysis of the personal qualities demonstrated that females are described as *polite* and *good-natured*. The analysis of the adjectives used to define appearance shows that females are viewed as *small, fragile and thin* which is the stereotypical attitude to the appearance of a woman. Despite that, the most interesting result was found during the analysis of the Argentinian EFL textbook which described women as *lucky*.

The quite different results were acquired during the analysis of masculine pronoun *he* used with adjectives. In the Lithuanian EFL textbook the pronoun *he* collocates with the adjective describing status, i.e. *popular*; the adjectives describing the level of knowledge, i.e. *clever and good at something*; the adjective describing emotional state, i.e. *upset*; the adjectives describing personality traits, i.e. *friendly, honest, responsible, generous and quiet*; and the adjective describing appearance, i.e. *tall*.

In the British EFL textbook the pronoun *he* collocates with the adjective describing personality, i.e. *polite*; and the adjective describing appearance, i.e. *good-looking*.

In the Argentinian EFL textbook the pronoun *he* is combined with adjectives describing status, i.e. *popular*; the adjectives describing the level of knowledge, i.e. *excellent* and *talented*; and adjectives describing personality, i.e. *good*.

Summarizing the findings it is obviously seen that males are presented as being *good at something*, they are seen as experts in certain fields. As far as the personality traits are concerned, males are seen as *responsible, good and friendly*. In addition, they are described as *generous*. It is interesting to note that in the Lithuanian EFL textbooks males are described with the biggest number of adjectives denoting positive and desirable personality traits in comparison to British and Argentinian EFL textbooks. Moreover, the adjectives used to define appearance show that males are seen as *tall and good-looking*.

Comparing the usage of adjectives in collocation with the third person singular masculine and feminine pronouns, it can be stated that males are presented as being *more talented* and *better at something* in relation to females. The analysis of the adjectives denoting emotional state revealed that in the Lithuanian EFL textbook both genders are depicted and seen as *sad and upset* which might be treated as a typically Lithuanian perspective. In contrast, in the other two analyzed textbooks the negative emotions are associated with females rather than males. Moreover, the usage of the adjectives clearly delineates the difference in the appearance: males are *tall* and *good-looking* whereas females are *thin* and *little*.
1.3. Nouns

The examination of nouns used together with the pronouns he and she revealed that males are associated with certain occupations such as doctor, sportsperson and politician. The results demonstrated that the mentioned occupations are frequently ascribed to males and can be treated as male-specific. In addition, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook the occupation of comedian is referred to by the masculine pronoun which shows that the occupation of comedian is associated with males.

Furthermore, in the Argentinian EFL textbook males are described as “techies” which means that they are very good at IT. The socially marked items of gender representation revealed that in the Argentinian EFL textbooks IT is regarded as a male specific attribute. In addition, the analysis of the linguistic items proved the same pattern. The word “techie” is used in inverted commas which shows that this word is created by speakers in order to better illustrate and describe males’ capabilities in IT.

Moreover, in the British EFL textbook males are referred to as heroes. It shows that males are seen as those who are admired for doing something very brave or good. Also the word hero means the main character in a book, film, play and etc. which demonstrates the male dominance in written texts.

In addition, males are also described as fans and vegetarians. The reference to a male being a fan confirms the findings of the socially marked items of gender representation that sport is a male specific attribute. Males are not only athletes or coaches but they are also described as fans of different sports. Furthermore, the usage of the noun vegetarian with a masculine pronoun he shows that males as well as females are taking care of their health and trying to consume nutritious and healthy food.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that males are described as liars in the Lithuanian EFL textbook which is in contrast to the results of the adjective analysis collocating with the masculine pronoun. In the Lithuanian EFL textbook the adjective honest was used with the third person singular masculine pronoun, however, the usage of the noun liar with the third person singular masculine pronoun shows that males are liars. So it can be stated that males are seen as honest but it does not mean that they do not lie.

In contrast, females are described as friend, girl, mother and person. The findings disclosed that females are described in several different ways. They are presented as mothers which is one of the most prevailing attributes of females. Also they are presented as friends which shows that females are those who are sociable and can be trusted.

The linguistic generic constructions in the English language are historically derived from words referring primarily to males or masculine linguistic items but are used to refer to both genders. Taking into consideration the fact that language reflects the reality, the set expressions or old forms of the English language usage may confuse learners and present constructions which are no longer valid.

For example, the word man is ambiguous because it possesses two meanings. It can refer to an adult male person or a person in general either male or female. Even though
the second meaning is regarded as old-fashioned, the usage of the generic *man* referring to both genders is still evident. The frequent occurrence of the generically used word *man* shows that males still have prominence over women and it proves that males have dominance in the society. Moreover, the frequent usage of these words reveals that authors lack awareness of gender-unmarked language.

In the Lithuanian EFL textbook some proverbs and sayings are used to illustrate the topic of the units or to influence a discussion about current social, personal and other issues. For example,

1. So many *men*, so many minds (Textbook C I, 30).
2. The civilized *man* has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet (Textbook C I, 42).
3. There is no better boat than a horoscope to help a *man* cross over the sea of life (Textbook C I, 54).

In all the examples a word *man* is used in its generic form, i.e. it does not refer to males only, but it refers to the humankind in general. However, in some cases it is not treated as generic and it is evident from Example (2) where the possessive pronoun *his* is used in reference to the word *man*. Such instances of usage promote males and naturally influence the attitude that masculine gender is prominent and dominating.

In addition, in the British and Argentinian EFL textbooks there are a number of cases when titles of the articles, texts, films etc. contain the generic word *man*. Consider:

4. Let *man* know that *man* can (Textbook B, 38).

In the examples presented above a word *man* stands for a person or human being, however, the generic usage is confusing because the word can be interpreted as referring only to male adults.

Moreover, instead of using gender-unmarked words the authors still choose to use gender-biased terms consisting of a word *man*. Consider:

7. Alfredo Barragan is an Argentinian lawyer, a *sportsman* and an expeditionary (Textbook B, 38).
8. I agree with the proverb, as all *sportsmen* have to work hard if they want to win (...) (Textbook C II, 10).

In the latter example *sportsmen* is used in the generic meaning for human kind and in this way is trivializing women. In contrast, in the British EFL textbook authors use *sportsperson* as an alternative noun for the gender-marked noun *sportsman*. Consider:

9. In the past you had to be a successful actor, musician or *sportsperson* to be famous (Textbook A, 120).

In addition, occupational nouns are the most frequently used in a gender-marked form. Consider the following examples:
(10) A spokesman for the authority said: “We have yet 6. … how big the damage is caused by teens” (Textbook C II, 60).

(11) The fireman called out to him to be careful (Textbook C II, 64).

(12) Indian food has a much longer history because of the influence of Indian seamen who did what? (Textbook C I, 17).

All these nouns have their gender-bias free alternatives, e.g. spokesperson, fire fighter or sailor; however, the old forms are still prevailing in the textbooks.

Moreover, in the British EFL textbook there are several cases when nationalities are used in a gender-marked form, for instance:

(13) An Englishman was feeling terrible he was under pressure at work, he decided to disappear (Textbook A, 141)

(14) This book was written/is written/ was wrote by a Frenchman in 1886 (Textbook A, 147).

Furthermore, even though in the British EFL textbook there is an example of gender-bias free term entrepreneur:

(15) Calling all entrepreneurs (Textbook A, 85).

The word itself is taught using a gender-marked term, i.e. “businessman/woman” (Textbook B, 152). In addition, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook a word businessman is used generically.

(16) From 6.30 a.m., sir, we have got a lot of businessmen staying here (Textbook C I, 19).

The generic usage of the word businessman diminishes women and creates the attitude that only males are associated with and involved in business.

1.4. Pronouns

The analysis of the usage of the pronouns in Lithuanian, British and Argentinian EFL textbooks revealed that the third person singular masculine pronouns prevailed in all three textbooks in relation to the third person singular feminine pronouns. The masculine pronoun he appeared more frequently in the examples, tasks or exercises. For instance, in Textbook A I the indirect speech is presented using only a masculine pronoun he. Consider the following example:

(17) Direct: “Fishing industry is disrupted.”

Indirect: He says (that) the fishing industry is disrupted.
He is saying (that) the fishing industry is disrupted.
He has said (that) the fishing industry is disrupted.
Direct: “The Earth goes round the Sun.”

Indirect: He said the Earth goes round the Sun. (Textbook C I, 44).

Similarly, in the Textbook B the grammar construction used to is practiced using only the masculine pronoun he:

(18) He ________________ have long hair. Now it’s short.

He ________________ drive a car. He rode a motorbike when he was younger.
He ____________ wear a leather jacket. Now he wears a suit.
He ____________ do a lot of sport.
He ____________ win competitions.
He ____________ be fat.
He ____________ work as an actor. Now he’s a politician.
He ______ not________ be interested in politics. (Textbook A, 141)

Moreover, the analysis disclosed that male or female characters dominance in texts predetermined the usage of the masculine or feminine personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns in the coinciding exercises and tasks. For example, after the reading task where a male is the main character the following exercises were presented with the masculine pronoun he:

(19) He grew up in Mar del Plata.
    He ____________ two passions.
    He ____________ Maira for US$ 500.
    He didn’t grow up in Mar del Plata.
    He ____________ have much money.
    He didn’t ____________ a new bike. (Textbook B, 33)

In contrast, after the text about a female character the exercises were presented with the feminine pronoun she:

(20) How often / Faye / train?
Who / she / usually play for?
What / she / do / in the photo?

Furthermore, a case of the generic usage of the third person singular masculine personal pronoun him was identified. Consider the following example:

(21) Everybody … his / her favourite person and …. him. (have, worship) (Textbook C I, 8)

The first part of the sentence reflects authors’ gender-awareness because they use masculine and feminine third person singular pronouns referring to both genders. However, in the second part of the sentence only the masculine pronoun him is left. The pronoun refers to a word person; however, a person can be a male or a female. The generic usage of the pronoun him trivializes and diminishes females.

Moreover, another instance of gender-biased use of the masculine pronouns was observed in the case when a gender-neutral occupational word was substituted with by a masculine pronoun. Consider:

(22) He can book you a table at the world’s top restaurants, get you the best seats for The Lion King, find you a private plane for the next day or organise a red carpet for you at the Oscars. He’s a personal concierge and he can get you anything you want … If you have enough money! (Textbook A, 122).
The occupation of a personal concierge is not exclusively masculine and the usage of the pronouns referring to the occupation is not restricted to masculine pronouns. It is interesting that before presenting the occupation, a definition of an occupation is provided which states that a personal concierge is someone who organizes things for (usually rich) clients. However, in the example of a word only the masculine pronoun is used.

However, the authors’ gender-awareness is observed in the usage of the third person singular masculine pronoun and third person singular feminine pronoun referring to indefinite gender in this way avoiding gender-biased use of masculine pronouns. Consider the following examples:

(23) The police holder’s home loan is paid off if he / she dies. (Textbook C I, 25)
(24) What are three things should he / she bring into the house? (Textbook C I, 65)
(25) He / She is one of my best friends because … (Textbook A, 15)
(26) What is his / her talent? Has he / she ever done it in public? (Textbook A, 39)
(27) Why did you choose him / her? What did he / she do? Why is he / she interesting? (Textbook B, 39)

2. Derivational morphemes

Another linguistic aspect that was analyzed in the present study was derivational morphemes. Derivational morphemes are the example of masculine gender dominance and prominence in the English language. Derivation is a word formation adding a suffix or prefix to the root of a word in order to change the meaning of a term. During the development of the English language a number of words denoting masculine gender became root words for the feminine terms. “In English lexicon, one of the most obvious evidences of the sexism is the affixes which lead to a view of women as a derivation from a male” (He, 2010, 332).

Consider the following examples:

(28) “Think about a god/goddess or another famous person” (Textbook C II, 13)
(29) “I’ve got a job as a waitress at the café on the corner of my road” (Textbook C II, 63).

The examples from the Lithuanian EFL textbook demonstrated the derivation using the most prevailing suffix, i.e. –ess to form a noun of the feminine gender. The meaning of goddess is the same as the meaning of god, however, the masculine term is a core word used to form the feminine derivative of a word which affirms male prominence in the English language. However, the usage of dual forms in Example 28 is a favourable result to females because the masculine word is not used in a generic form referring to females. In contrast, in the British EFL textbook there were cases when a masculine form of a word was used in a generic form referring to both males and females.

(30) “In your country, how much do you tip waiters?” (Textbook A, 78)
(31) “In the western Man of Conquest (1939) the Native American actors used sign language” (Textbook A, 118)
(32) “You can see your heroes and cheer them on in an exciting competition” (Textbook C II, 39)

The examples demonstrated that the masculine form of a word is not only used as a root word for derivation but is also used in a generic form referring to both genders. Such usage trivializes and diminishes women in relation to males. These entrenched structures in the English language may cause an incorrect attitude towards gender. Moreover, the usage of masculine words in a generic form in textbooks may influence learners’ failure in the communication process.

3. Titles

In the English language there is one title for a male, i.e. Mr and three titles for a female, i.e. Mrs, Miss and Ms. Two titles for a female indicate her marital status, Miss refers to a single female whereas Mrs refers to a married female. The feature of indicating marital status together with a surname trivializes women in relation to men because they are treated and presented in the society according to their marital status. In contrast, the title Mr does not indicate male’s marital status and frequently is used in order to address politely.

The analysis of the relative frequency of occurrence of titles together with surnames disclosed that in the Lithuanian EFL textbook there was the highest number of cases where titles were used together with surnames.

(33) “Late again, Anna,” said Miss Brown. (…) I quickly raised my hand. “Yes, miss, I do”” (Textbook C I, 30),

(34) “Mr Dare said last night that only 50 pupils were really involved” (Textbook C II, 60).

As seen in Examples 33 and 34, the marital status is clearly indicated in Example 33 whereas it is impossible to identify the marital status of Dare in Example 34.

In addition, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook a poem illustrates the purpose of the title Mrs:

(35) “Plenty of love,  
Tons of kisses,  
Hope some day,  
To be your Mrs” (Textbook C II, 17).

The poem illustrates the idea that a married woman becomes Mrs which shows her status and assigns her to a married women group. Even though linguists suggest using Ms for both married and single women as an equivalent to Mr, there are no cases of this usage in the analyzed textbooks.

Moreover, males are more frequently addressed with academic titles.

(36) “Dr Ellsworth Wareham is a surgeon” (Textbook A, 58),

(37) “The mother of the real Dr Cyr saw the photo” (Textbook A, 70),

(38) “You can see your heroes and cheer them on in an exciting competition” (Textbook C II, 39)
(38) “Dr Alexander Fleming forgot to wash a lab dish with bacteria before he went on holiday” (Textbook B, 61).

In contrast, there are no examples of female characters being addressed with an honorific Dr.

In addition, names of profession also function as honorifics among them the most common are professor and doctor.

(39) “Professor Ian Deary says the instructions, the test and the time limit (…)” (Textbook A, 44)

(40) “I had an appointment with Doctor Shipson at 3.00 p.m., but I’ve been here for over two hours” (Textbook A, 102).

The tendency to use the name of a profession while addressing a person is more common among males rather than females. However, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook a female character is addressed with a name of profession but together with the indication of marital status:

(41) “Today on ‘Healthy Living’ we will be talking about eating habits and I am happy to welcome the Minister for Health Mrs Diette” (Textbook C I, 14)

Furthermore, the previous studies showed that honorifics are more frequently used addressing males rather than females. The present study demonstrated that the usage of honorifics is not prevailing. However, in the Lithuanian EFL textbook several examples revealed that only males are addressed with honorifics.

(42) “A full English breakfast, sir, with cereal to start and tea or coffee with toast” (Textbook C I, 18)


4. “Firstness”

“Firstness” refers to the mentioning of men first when both genders are mentioned together. The tendency to mention males first diminishes women and creates the attitude that males have prominence. In addition, it is not a mistake to mention a female first but the tendency to place males in front of females is so deeply entrenched in the patterns of language usage that saying female first sounds strange and unnatural.

The present study revealed that in pairs when male and female names are mentioned together females usually come first.

(44) “Jean and Bert Jolley from Blackburn, UK, recently married for the third time” (Textbook A, 10).

(45) “I choose two characters, Sadie and Troy, and go to Blazing Falls” (Textbook A, 110).

The results showed that authors avoided being gender-bias and frequently mentioned females first in both gender pairs.

However, in case of addressing both genders by their surname males remained first:

(46) “Tony and Gretel Rivera were arrested for art theft” (Textbook A, 101).
Moreover, when addressing both genders with titles males always were mentioned first. (47) “Mr and Mrs Williams are going to the theatre” (Textbook C I, 51).
(48) “Yes, I sent you an email booking a double room for Mr & Mrs John Brown for three nights” (Textbook C I, 18).
Furthermore, the third person singular masculine pronoun always appeared before the third person singular feminine pronoun when they were mentioned together.
(49) “What is he / she like?” (Textbook C I, 13).
(50) “What did he / she do? Why is he/she interesting?” (Textbook B, 39).
(51) “Has he / she ever done it in public?” (Textbook A, 39).
The same pattern was followed using possessive and reflexive pronouns.

**Conclusions**

The perception of gender is developed through observation and is predetermined by “gender agents” among which the mostly influential are textbooks. Gender-biased use of language in textbooks may cause long term drawbacks on students’ performances and social behaviour. The studies made in the field of gender representation in EFL textbooks revealed that females are underrepresented and trivialized in relation to males.

Lithuanian, British and Argentinian EFL textbooks are not designed to promote gender-bias, however, certain stereotypical attitudes towards gender that can be interpreted as being based on culture and traditions are evident. The values and norms of the particular society influence stereotypical representation of gender in EFL textbooks.

The analysis of the vocabulary that was used to define gender in the Lithuanian EFL textbook revealed that males as well as females are associated with negative emotions such as being sad, upset and disappointed. However, in the majority of cases males are characterized as responsible, friendly, honest, and generous which shows that males are presented as “better” gender in relation to females. Moreover, the Lithuanian EFL textbook possesses the greatest number of compound nouns and proverbs or sayings comprising a word man which is used in its generic meaning and in this way trivializing women. Furthermore, only the Lithuanian EFL textbook provides the titles indicating women’s marital status which emphasizes the importance of females being treated according to their status. In addition, some specific attributes were observed: males like to fish and collect mushrooms whereas females milk.

The analysis of the verbs in the British EFL textbook revealed that females are more frequently involved in mental processes than men, they believe, dream, need and wish. Moreover, the nationalities in the British EFL textbook are used in a gender-marked form. In addition, a masculine form of a word waiter was used in a generic form referring to both males and females.
The Argentinian EFL textbook stands out from the other two in the use of masculine third person singular pronoun with the verb love which shows that love is not a female-specific attribute. Although the generic word man was commonly used, the Argentinian EFL textbook can be treated as the best-balanced textbook with regard to gender-biased free use of language.

The comparative analysis of the results of the present study demonstrated that the analyzed textbooks exhibit the following similar patterns of gender representation:

Males go, play, see and think whereas females say, want and study.

Females are sad and disappointed; they are small and thin whereas males are good at something, tall and good-looking.

The usage of gender-unmarked items, gender-bias free words, dual gender pronouns while referring to the indefinite person, no use of masculine pronouns in a generic meaning and gender engagement in stereotype-free activities prove that authors of the textbooks did not deliberately promote one gender.

However, cases of gender-biased use of language suggest that textbook authors lack gender-awareness and that they are more concerned about the subject rather than about issues of “secondary importance” such as gender-awareness and gender-balanced presentation of gender in the teaching materials.

References


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**Sources**


Kalbinė lyties įvaizdžio raiška anglų kalbos vadovėliuose

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Santrauka

Lyties suvokimas yra ugdomas stebint aplinką ir yra veikiamas taip vadinamų „lyties agentų“. Vadovėliuose pateikiamos mokymo medžiaga ir yra vienas iš „lyties agentų“, darančių didžiausią įtaką lyties suvokimui. Lyties vaizdavimas vadovėliuose atspindi visuomenės požiūrį, kuris yra nesamoningai perimamas besimokančiųjų ir gali sukelti ilgalaikius socialinės elgsenos ir bendravimo trūkumus. Lyties vaizdavimas vadovėliuose yra vienas iš naujausių ir labiausiai nagrinėjamų klausimų tiek sociologijoje, tiek kalbotyroje.


Anglų kalbos vadovėlis, išleistas Didžiojoje Britanijoje, moteris vaizduoja kaip daug dažniau užsiimančias protine veikla, jos aprašomas kaip svajojančios, tikinčios ir norinčios. Tačiau neigiamos emocijos yra taip pat asocijuojamos su moterimis, jos pateikiamos kaip nusivylusios ir liūdnos. Tuo tarpu vyrai yra pristatomi kaip heroinai, kurie veikia kažką labai drąsau ir ryžtingo.