Gender Representation in Saudi EFL Textbooks: A Study of the *Family and Friends* Series

Bayan Rashed Almghams
Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract
The aim of the present study was to investigate the gender representation in the   English as a Foreign Language textbook, *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition,* that is designed internationally and widely used in private Saudi elementary schools. To achieve the study goals, a mixed method was used, content analysis and a compiling quantitative data in which the corpus of the English textbook was analyzed; frequencies and percentages of gender appearances and activities were also calculated. The major findings of the study were as follows: First, women were underrepresented in terms of appearance. Second, males were dominant of the reading passages and dialogues topics. Third, there is an overall higher tendency for females to be referenced in sentences before males. forth, males were presented in a wider range and overall a higher level of employment and enjoyed a wider range of spare time and leisure activities than females. Fifth, however, the distribution of household responsibilities was equal between females and males and female activities were not restricted to passive indoor activities. Recommendations and suggestions for further studies are presented at the end of the results section of this paper.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Ministry of Education
Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
Faculty of Languages and Translation
Department of English Language & Literature

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Submitted by
Bayan Rashed Almghams

Supervisor
Dr. Mustapha Ben Kharafa

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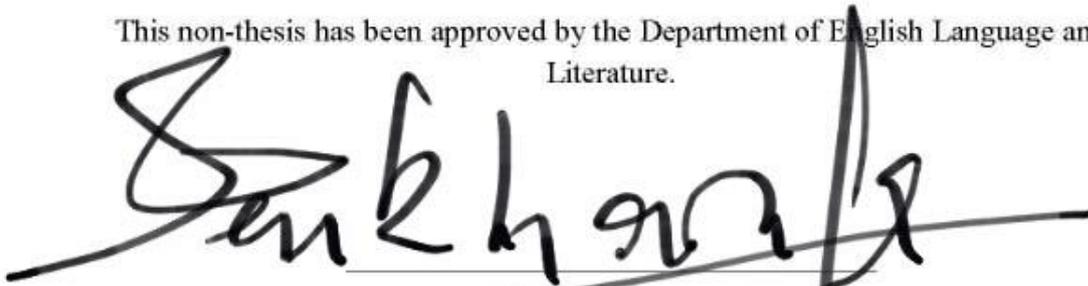
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(Dr. Mustapha Ben Kharafa, Advisor)

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(Dr. Muhammad Abdel Latif, Member)

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(Dr. Zuhair Zaghlool, Member)

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that
both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly
work in the above-mentioned discipline.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to investigate the gender representation in the English as a Foreign Language textbook, *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition,* that is designed internationally and widely used in private Saudi elementary schools. To achieve the study goals, a mixed method was used, content analysis and a compiling quantitative data in which the corpus of the English textbook was analyzed; frequencies and percentages of gender appearances and activities were also calculated. The major findings of the study were as follows: First, women were underrepresented in terms of appearance. Second, males were dominant of the reading passages and dialogues topics. Third, there is an overall higher tendency for females to be referenced in sentences before males. forth, males were presented in a wider range and overall a higher level of employment and enjoyed a wider range of spare time and leisure activities than females. Fifth, however, the distribution of household responsibilities was equal between females and males and female activities were not restricted to passive indoor activities. Recommendations and suggestions for further studies are presented at the end of the results section of this paper.

Keywords: gender role, Saudi students, elementary school, English

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List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Saudi Arabia is now facing some sustainable alterations in many levels especially with female roles and opportunities. The process of empowering Saudi women has displayed significant milestones at social, economic, and political levels, starting with the encouragement of women's education, enabling women to work in various professional fields, and granting them the opportunity to fill notable positions such as members of the Shura Council, university presidents, vice-ministers, and more. Therefore, studying gender roles and inequality is increasingly becoming an important topic to address.

Like behaviors and norms, gender roles are often constructed throughout many social and cultural agents such as family, friends, schools, media, and worship places and so on (Corrado, 2009). Gershuny (1977, p. 150) claims, "textbooks purporting to teach the specifics of academic discipline have concomitantly taught secondary information gender roles and social values". Hence, the indirect effect of textbooks on students especially in early ages leads to an oppressive and gender biased attitude in students. According to Bawazeer (2015) lecturing is the most powerful teaching technique in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, EFL textbooks hold an authoritative status in that they contribute to potentially influencing learners' ideologies regarding different issues. The religious, social, educational, and cultural aspects of the foreign language context may influence Saudi students while learning the foreign language (Sulaimani, 2017).

According to Moore, (2007) biased representation of men and women in EFL textbooks could contribute to an inaccurate understanding of social and cultural

reality and norms of a society. Even with the given attention to EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia, it seems that they have not yet received sufficient evaluation, specifically for gender representation (Aljuaythin, 2018). Moreover, the lack of equality in gender presentation is one of the most frequent problems of published books. Some researchers of ESL textbooks (Lesikin, 2001; Tahriri & Pouran, 2014; AlJumiah, 2016 among others) have shown them to contain gender bias The context of the problem motivated the researcher to conduct an exploratory study to investigate the representation of gender in an EFL textbook for elementary students in Saudi schools. The focus will be on content and analyses of texts as well as on visuals and illustrations.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to Sunderland (2001) The way gender is represented in the textbooks will influence learner's gender identities and language learning opportunities. even with the attention given to EFL textbook evaluation in Saudi Arabia, Gender presentation in EFL textbooks is an under researched topic in the Saudi context. Moreover, most of the previous studies of gender presentation in EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia analyzed textbooks to examine the representation of male and female in texts only, without studying the visual presentation of gender in these textbooks. Van Dijk (1995) asserts that ideologies can be conveyed not only by the verbal mode, but also by the non-verbal semiotic modes such as pictures and movies. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the representation of gender in an EFL textbook for elementary students in Saudi schools and the focus will be on content analyses of texts as well as on visuals and illustrations.

1.3 Research Questions
The current study attempts to address the following main question:

How is gender role represented in Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition textbook?

And in order to answer this question, the study tends to address the following four sub-questions:

Question 1: Are males and females comparably represented in terms of frequency of occurrence in texts and illustrations in Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition textbook?

Question 2: To what extent are the frequency of male/female-oriented topics comparably represented in the texts of the textbook examined?

Question 3: What is the frequency of female/male-centered language in the textbook examined?

Question 4: Is there any difference between the roles played by males and females represented in texts and illustrations in Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition textbook?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Gender in Saudi EFL textbooks is an under-researched topic. As such, the present study aims to enrich the fields of material evaluation and gender studies by providing a critical gender evaluation of a widely used English textbook series (namely, Family and Friends) in Saudi Arabia. Most of the previous studies in the Saudi context analyzed textbooks to examine the representation of male and female in texts only, without studying the visual presentation of gender in these textbooks. Images portray the outside world and provide learners with more authentic situations. Subsequently, learners' views of target language speakers, their society, culture, lifestyle, and even physical features will be directly affected by the way images in EFL textbooks represent them (Tahririan & Sadri, 2013). Even so, they may wittingly

or unwittingly expose learners to specific ideologies. Van Dijk,1995 emphasizes that ideologies can be conveyed not only by the verbal mode, but also by the non-verbal semiotic modes such as pictures and movies. Hence, the present study intends to investigate textual as well as visual presentations of gender in the investigated textbook. Moreover, the present study differs from previous studies conducted in the Saudi context in terms of the specific method used to accomplish its aim. The method used for the analysis in the present study is adopted from (Hall, 2014).

1.5 Organization of the paper

This thesis is organized into five chapters: the first chapter presents the introduction of the study, statement of the problem, its questions, its significance, definitions of its terms, and the limitations of the study. Chapter two reviews the literature and previous studies that are relevant to this study. Chapter three addresses the methodology of the study, its instruments, and the procedures for collecting and analyzing the data. Chapter four, provides the main results of the product data analysis and answers the study's questions. Finally, Chapter five presents the discussion of the results and conclusion, and it summarizes the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This chapter presents some of the most important factors of gender representations and textbook evaluation. In addition, it provides a review of previous related studies, which shed light on the similarities and differences between these studies and the current research.

2.1 The Vital Role of Textbooks in EFL Classes

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a textbook is defined as "a book that teaches a particular subject and that is used especially in schools and colleges" (Hornby, Ashby & Wehmeier, 2000), p. 1238. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) refer to a textbook as a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, and an authority. As Radic-Bojanic & Topalov (2016) explain, "as a teacher, a textbook gives students relevant information about grammar and vocabulary, as well as English speaking countries and their cultures. As a map, it shows an outline of linguistic and cultural elements as a structured program, and it guides students and teachers to follow the steps taken in previous lessons" (p.139). A textbook is viewed as a resource as it contains a set of materials. In general, EFL textbooks aim at providing learners with necessary knowledge, language skills and information about English speaking countries and preparing them for interaction with people from foreign countries and of different cultural backgrounds.

English language instruction has many important components but the essential constituents to many ESL/EFL classrooms and programs are the textbooks and instruction materials that are often used by language instructors (Litz, 2005). As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) suggest that, "The textbook is an almost universal element of English language teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and

numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in various countries. No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook'' (p.315).

Other researchers such as Sheldon (1988) agree with the previous statement and suggest that textbooks not only "represent the visible heart of any ELT program" (p.237) but also offer considerable advantages for both the student and the teacher when they are being used in the ESL/EFL classroom. For example , (Byrd, 2001) points out that one of the advantages of using EFL/ESL textbook is that ELT textbooks include two kinds of information which are: the topic content (e.g., Family, friends, school, etc.) and the linguistic content (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, skills) and they help learners to learn the linguistic content through topic content.

Second, Haycroft (1998) for example, suggests that one of the primary advantages of using textbooks is that they are psychologically essential for students since their progress and achievement can be measured concretely when we use them in which textbooks give both learners and teachers security and confidence.

Third, students often have expectations about using a textbook in their particular language classroom and program and they prefer published materials because they believe they have more credibility than teacher-generated or "in-house" materials (Sheldon, 1988).

Fourth, as Tyson (1997) pointed out that for teachers who do not have enough time for lesson planning especially for inexperienced teachers textbooks are useful tools, in which they save the teachers' time and give them the chance to focus on the teaching process rather than the material gathering process.

A fifth advantage acknowledge by Cunningsworth (1995) is that textbooks can serve several additional roles in the ELT curriculum. He pointed out that textbooks

can encourage self-directed learning, a source of activities, an effective resource for presentation material, , a reference source for students, a syllabus where they reflect pre-determined learning objectives, and support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

On the other hand, opponents of textbooks believe that many textbooks have negative effects and leave bad impression on both teachers and students. According to Allwright (1981) language learning is such a complex process that textbooks cannot meet various needs of learners around the world. There is no perfect textbook that meets the needs of all students, teachers, schools and, curricula. Each textbook has its own strengths and weaknesses and, therefore, no textbook designed for the general market can be perfectly suitable for a specific group of learners. According to (Graves, 2000, p. 175) "what one teacher considers an advantage in a textbook, another teacher may consider a disadvantage." In other words, Teachers' opinion on the same textbook may differ depending on their experience, background, teaching styles and the needs of their students. In many cases, textbooks fail to "present appropriate and realistic language models" (Crawford, 2002, p.81). Subsequently, the educational methodology that a textbook promotes will influence the classroom setting by indirectly imposing external language objectives and learning constituents on students as well as potentially conflicting or outdated learning methods on the teachers who use them (Litz, 2005). In other words, if a textbook becomes the decision maker, teachers and students role in the classroom will be secondary.(Richards, 2001) summed up textbooks short comes into five main points that include; inauthentic material, biased content, ignoring the needs of the students, de-skilling instructors, and the expensive cost if they are imported textbooks.

More recent authors have criticized textbooks for their conveyed social and cultural biases. For example, (Clarke and Clarke,1990) argue that English textbooks, whether they are designed for ESL/EFL, contain plenteous examples of stereotyping, gender inequity, and sexist language that cause serious challenges for EFL learners in the future. Findings such as the previous, have led researchers to believe that the presence of sexism and gender stereotypes in many EFL/ESL textbooks may reflect the unequal power relationships that still exist between the sexes in many cultures, or it may be as a result of the misrepresentations of writers with social attitudes that are conflicting with the present-day realities of the target language culture (Sunderland, 1992).

In order to avoid prevalent bad sides and disadvantages of instructional materials, it is necessary to carry out a systematic analysis of textbooks based on well-established criteria and determine their strengths and weaknesses (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016).

2.2 The Need for Textbook Evaluation

There is no doubt that the number of published textbooks nowadays is increasing rapidly. However, choosing the right one is very challenging. Textbook selection can have a huge impact on the teaching and learning process as teachers would make references to the textbooks or design the whole syllabus around it (Harmer,1991).in many cases, the selection of a textbook doesn't rely on a careful analysis, but depends on the reputation of the publishers or author (McGrath, 2002). According to (Tomlinson, 2003, 2008 & 2010) several studies have suggested that the most current global, local ELT textbooks are developed for commercial purposes but are not based on principles of language acquisitions and development recommended by scholars and educator. "Textbooks, like any other book that publishers print, are

pieces of merchandise; the ultimate objective of their production is for commercial success" (Dendrinos, 1992, p.35). These kinds of textbooks may lead to the learner's failure in acquiring the language because of their flaws and shortcomings. However, textbooks written by professional writers are usually of good quality but in terms of organization, packaging, and design, they tend to be lacking in the qualities of being creative and imaginative (Tomlinson, 2003). Litz (2005) also suggested that some more recent researchers in the area of ELT materials development expressed concerns for the cultural content of textbooks which are "inherently social and culturally biased" and help to depict a form of "gendered" English (Banegas, 2011; Litz, 2005). Therefore, it is important to conduct EFL textbook evaluation to ensure that the chosen textbook meet the students' needs, goals, approaches and the expectations of an institute (Cunningsworth, 1995).

Other reasons for textbook evaluation have been mentioned by Sheldon (1988). He suggests that the selection of an ELT textbook is often an important administrative and educational decision in which there is considerable professional, financial, or even political investment. A thorough evaluation, therefore, would enable the managerial and teaching staff of a specific institution or organization to discriminate between all the available textbooks on the market. Moreover, it would enable the educators to identify the strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use. In that sense, teachers will be able to make best use of a book's strong points and recognizing the shortcomings of certain exercises, tasks, and entire texts. One another reason for textbook evaluation is the fact that it can be extremely useful in teacher development and professional growth. Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) suggest that textbook evaluation helps teachers to acquire useful, accurate, systematic, and contextual insights into the overall nature of

textbook material.

In the light of the above, Textbook evaluation can potentially be a worthwhile procedure that provides a professional empowerment and improvement. Similarly, textbook evaluation can be used a valuable part of teacher training programs in which it enlightens student teachers of important features to look for in textbooks while familiarizing them with a wide range of published language instruction materials.

2.3 Gender, Language and Stereotype

'Sex' and 'gender' are frequently considered as synonyms and used interchangeably by the public (Yang, 2014). However, conceptually, these two terms are different, with the former concerning the biological differences that distinguish men and women (Holmes, 2001; Litosseliti, 2006), whereas the latter is "a cultural or social construct" or "the traits assigned to a sex" (Litosseliti, 2006, p. 10-11). This outtake of gender reflects the notion of sex roles being "learned" (Sunderland, 2006, p. 29), through a process in which an individual learns how to become a 'boy' or a 'girl' and acquires characteristics which, are considered as masculine or feminine (Yule, 2006).

This view of gender was proposed by Sandra Bem in 1981. Sandra's gender schema theory is a social-cognitive theory about how people in society become gendered from an early age and the impact of this gendering on their cognitive and categorical processing throughout the lifetime. Children develop ideas and theories about what it means to be masculine or feminine (called gender schemas) from an early age and use these theories to categorize information, make decisions, and regulate behavior. In other words, individuals learn about gender roles and what is gender appropriate from multiple mains and sources such as family, child raising, media, and schools' textbooks.

Sunderland (2012) further proposes that gender roles are socially constructed as gender behaviors are learned rather than innate. That is to say, any differences of men/boys and women/girls are mediated by social considerations. For example, literacy practices (such as the books boys and girls read) may reflect and shape one's gender socially. Gender is however always a matter of tendencies instead of absolute differences between men and women or boys and girls. Such gender-differential tendencies also vary with different cultures, contexts, or communities of practice (Butler, 1990). Hussein (2015) argues that those social and cultural conceptualizations of gender lead to the development of gender stereotyping. Language, as an example, can contribute to the construction of gender stereotyping and sexism.

Spender (1980) was the first to introduce this approach to language, known as the dominance approach. In her book *Man Made Language,* she argues that differences in the use of language that led to an imbalanced perception of gender were the result of men's domination of women. This view mainly focuses on power distribution in society, in which women are subordinate to men, and this subordination is manifested in the language and perceptions of men and women and their expected roles. Broadly speaking, imbalanced or biased presentations of males and females directly shape gender identities and ideologies, which might conflict with the educational goal of the contemporary society, especially when there is a movement toward gender equality and female empowerment (Mustapha, 2013).

2.4 Review of Previous Related Studies

Extensive studies have been conducted about gender representation in the school textbooks content. (Sunderland, 2000; Cowley, 2000; Rahim, 2000; Leontzakou, and Shattuck ,2000) cited many 1980s and 1990s studies on ESL/EFL textbooks. The analysis of these studies showed a number of worrying and consistent

findings about the representation of men and women in these textbooks, as well as presence of behavioral stereotypes, in which a) males were overrepresented, b) men were likely to take more powerful and greater range of occupational roles than women, c) both males and females were given gender stereotypical roles and activities, and d) in dialogs, females were found to speak less and perform a narrower range of discourse roles. Thus, students unconsciously learn the behavioral practices from the stereotypes presented in their textbooks (Pawelczyk, Pakuta, & Sunderland, 2014; Tahriri & Pouran, 2014). Despite the extensive research in the area, English Language is evident that gender and language in education has under researched sites in developing countries in Eastern Europe, Africa, and Islamic countries (Sunderland, 2000). Interestingly, in the past few years, some studies have emerged from the Middle East investigating gender representations in textbooks.

Hamdan (2010) analyzed a series of English language textbooks used in Jordan. He focused his analysis on the Personal qualities ascribed to females and males in the textbooks using a checklist as an instrument of data collection and analysis. The research findings included, that males dominated the majority of jobs in which 79 % of jobs appeared in the textbooks were occupied by men. He also concluded that this type of bias, portrayed males as the dominant characters of the labor market although women in Jordan are working in different kinds of positions such as political parliament, police officer, and even taxi drivers.

Tahan (2014) investigated gender representation in the currently used EFL textbooks from grade 1 to grade 12 at public schools in the UAE. The study examined a randomly selected unit from each textbook and investigated eight concepts: illustrations, visibility in texts, topic domination, occupations, grammatical functions (the role of actor), character traits, character activities and generic masculine. The

researcher based his study on content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The results from the selected units showed that males outnumbered females in seven examined concepts. The findings support the hypothesis that the content of many EFL textbooks contains gender-biased materials and stereotyped impressions.

Another study conducted in the UAE, is Al-Qatawneh and Al Rawashdeh (2019) study in which they investigated the gender representation in the Arabic language textbook for the ninth grade in UAE. They focused on the ratio of gender (female to male) appearances, the ratio of gender (female to male) aspects of religious and historical, educational professional, social and family, the traditional, the language used in the evaluation questions, titles of address for women, and order of mention. The findings were consistent with Tahan's, (2014) findings. Al-Qatawneh and Al Rawashdeh (2019) study revealed that the bias in favor of males is still prevalent, as the phenomenon of males-first referring to the secondary status of women is evident in the textbook examined. However, the findings also revealed the common use of the neutral title Ms to address women.

A more related study conducted by Arabmofrad (2015) on the same series investigated in the current study *Family and Friends* in which he employed a critical discourse analysis approach to investigate the linguistic representation of male and female social actors in *Family and Friends 4, 5 and 6*. Van Leeuwen's (1996) representational framework and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) Transitivity Theory Model were adopted to reveal the ideology behind the constructions. The findings indicated a sexist attitude in favor of male social actors in which males were portrayed more than females and also had high activity. In addition, the findings revealed that there was an attempt to avoid traditional stereotypes of females in most

parts of textbooks and women for example, were not portrayed at home as housewives engaged in childcare.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, a few studies have been conducted with the aim of investigating gender representations in EFL textbooks.

The first was conducted by AlJumiah (2016) who investigated social power relations in terms of gender and race in high-school-level international EFL textbooks made for the Saudi context. The method for analyzing these textbooks was Fairclough's (1989, 2015) dialectical-relational approach to critical discourse analysis. The findings revealed that hidden discourses in the English as a foreign language textbook reproduced and maintained gender ideologies, such as male dominance and women's marginalization.

The second study conducted in the Saudi context was carried out by Sulaimani (2017). She also examined international EFL textbooks made for the Saudi context from a critical discourse analysis perspective, but this time with university students. The findings suggested that the textbooks were gender biased in favor of men, as women were dismissed in almost half of the units of the textbooks.

The third study was conducted by Aljuaythin (2018). She investigated the representation of gender in two EFL textbooks for elementary students in Saudi schools with the focus on representation of gender asymmetry. She employed the three stages of Fairclough's, (2015) three-dimensional model as method for analyzing these textbooks. The analysis of the two textbooks revealed a gender imbalance in favor of males.

The fourth study was conducted by Al Abiky (2019). He investigated the gender roles in the two major English language textbooks widely used by Saudi female high school students in public schools, namely *Traveller* 1 and *Traveller* 2. He

used a mixed method design; content analysis and a compiling quantitative data in which the corpus of the two English textbooks were analyzed and frequencies and percentages of gender appearances and activities were also calculated. Moreover, in his study besides analyzing gender representation in text, he analyzed the distribution of gender role among images throughout the investigated textbooks. The research findings included a) the textbooks contained some obvious gender bias and imbalance; b) males were predominant whereas females were completely absent or marginalized; c) females' pictures and participations in dialogues were very limited; d) dialogues were largely male-male predominant and were about various topics; e) males signed to gender roles significantly higher and more aggressive; f) in contrast, females had weaker roles and never shown as symbolic or even significant social figures.

Most of the previous studies in the Saudi context analyzed textbooks to examine the representation of male and female in texts only, without studying the visual presentation of gender in these textbooks. Images portray the outside world and provide learners with more authentic situations; besides, learners' perspectives of target language speakers, their culture, society, lifestyle, and even physical features will be directly affected by the way images in EFL textbooks represent them (Tahririan & Sadri, 2013). Furthermore, most of the previous studies in the Saudi context focused their investigation on textbooks aimed for adolescent and adults.it should be noted that gender identity cognition begins from childhood. Young children search for indications about gender who should or should not do a particular activity, who can play with whom, and why girls and boys are different from different sources of gendered indications in their social worlds. Children quickly form an impressive constellation of gender cognitions, including gender identity and gender stereotypes

(Martin & Ruble, 2004). Therefore, attention to create a balanced atmosphere in children's textbooks should be considered severely.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher started by discussing the importance of Textbooks in EFL Classes. It is Followed by reviewing the concept of textbook evaluation and its importance. Before reviewing the findings of previous studies of gender representation in EFL/ESL textbooks, the researcher reviewed three related concepts: Gender, Language and Stereotype. The review of previous studies showed that stereotyping and gender imbalance in language textbooks for different grade levels exists around the world. Women are still often portrayed in subordinate positions and a narrower range of roles and activities than men. This issue may not reflect the reality in much of the real world and especially the reality of Saudi Arabia; many demographic changes are now taking place rapidly in Saudi Arabia, especially for females. They are now seeking more equality and hope for more gender egalitarian and indeed reality should be reflected in textbooks as much as possible. Building on the research gap of previous gender and language studies in Saudi Arabia, and the methodology used in previous studies on gender representation in EFL/ESL textbooks, the next chapter will present the data needed and the methods of data analysis for the current study.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

In this chapter, an attempt is made to describe the procedures of the present study. To demonstrate how the research is conducted, the chapter is divided into five sections: (a) material, (b) research design, (c) data analysis, (d) coding, and (e) validity and reliability of the tool.

3.1 Material

The textbook that was examined is an EFL textbook from the series *Family and Friends*, aimed at Saudi elementary students. It is produced by *Oxford University Press* in the UK and authored by Jenny Quintana. The textbook examined in the present study is *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition*, intended for use in the first and second semester of sixth grade. Respectively, the textbook contains twelve modules that cover topics such as free time, technology, and travel. The, *Family and Friends,* series is approved by the Saudi ministry of education. Oxford University Press claims that the KSA second edition features brand new culture pages and more content specific to Saudi Arabia. The reason behind selecting this textbook is because of its popularity in Saudi private schools. Moreover, *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition,* provides rich data for the analysis, especially since the elementary EFL textbooks include more visuals than textbooks aimed for higher levels. Furthermore, instead of analyzing all six elementary textbook series, I decided to analyze one textbook because a research project needs to be manageable.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted the mixed method approach. It involves "mixing or combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches,

concepts or language into a single study" (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2011, p. 2).
Abeyasekera (2005) indicated that the conversion of qualitative data into numerical
codes that can be analyzed quantitatively (i.e., statistically) is known as
quantification. Quantitative analytical approaches allow the reporting of summary
results in numerical terms with a specified degree of confidence. Furthermore, the
combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches may provide a clearer image
and a better understanding of research results rather than one single approach
(Creswell, 2011). Hence, for the qualitative part of the study the researcher used
content Analysis as a main method for the study in which the textbook was analyzed
and examined.

The term 'content analysis' can be simply defined as the process of
summarizing and reporting written data and the main contents of data and their
messages (Cohen, Manion., & Morrison, 2018). Besides, it also can be defined as an
analysis of the written or visual contents of a document (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001).
Moreover, in this research, content analysis is a method and data collection technique
used to summarize and analyze the English textbook entitled *Family and Friends 6
KSA second edition*. However, a compiling quantitative data was also used in which
frequencies, numbers and percentages of gender appearances and activities were
calculated and analyzed.

3.3 Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher used the manual method of analyzing textual and
visual representation of gender by conducting content analysis. Researchers interested
in gender studies have studied various aspects of gender inequality and bias that may
appear in textbooks, like gender roles, female and male visibility, use of gender-
biased language, gender stereotyping, male-firstness, order of appearance, and address

titles for women (Graci, 1989;1990; Lee & Collins, 2008; Lesikin, 2001; Hamdan, (2010); Porreca, 1984).

In this study, the researcher chose the manual coding method because automated coding methods can be much more time consuming than manual methods in the preparation phase. Subsequently, automated methods do not lead to efficiency gains when working with small datasets as the case in the present study. Due to the high time investment needed to prepare the data for analysis and the high error rate, automated methods start to only save time with a corpus of approximately 200 items or more (Graaf & Vossen, 2013).

3.4 Coding

In order to provide answers to the research questions, manual content analysis was performed, as shown in Table (2).

Table 1

Pages of Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition Analyzed in This Study

Modules	Topics	Pages
Starter	Reading/Listening/Speaking/Writing/Grammar	6
Art project		8
Sports adventure		8
It's festival time		14
Transport of the future		8
The greatest inventions		8
You've won a computer		14
Explorers for a day		8
It's a mystery		8
Survival		14
Around the world		8
Space travel		8
Holiday time		14
Total		126

Table 2

Methods of Analysis

RQ	Categories	Criteria	Codes
RQ1	Textual and visual Appearance (Female to male)	• The frequency of roles in selected gendered words such as mother/ father, wife/ husband, teacher/doctor/ student, sister/ brother/daughter/ son/ woman/ man/ Muslim/ nurse/grandfather/grandmother. • The frequency of occurrence of feminine pronouns (she, her, hers, herself) and masculine pronouns (he, him, his, himself). • The frequency of female and male character pictures, drawings, photographs, or cartoons.	Male Female
RQ2	Female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages	The Frequency of Female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages according to: • The male oriented topics: if the gender of the dominant character that controls the dialogue or text is male. • Female oriented topics: if the gender of the dominant character that controls the dialogue or text is female. • Female/male oriented topics: if the gender of the dominant characters that controls the dialogues or texts is female and male. • Neutral topics: If the dialogue or text has no female or male characters.	Male only Female only Female/male Sex neutral

RQ3	male-centered language	Order of mention: Order of mention of men and women in a phrase coordinated by and/or.	Female first Male first
		Masculine generic: Terms used to generally refer to males as the norm and exclude females.	Masculine generic
RQ4	Gender-linked occupation possibilities and distribution of spare time and leisure activities.	Distribution of occupation and leisure activities among male and female characters.	Male Female

Two methods of analysis were undertaken. First, the textbook was subjected to a systematic quantitative analysis with reference to:

1. Gender visibility in illustrations: illustrations include pictures, drawings, photographs, or cartoons. Each character in an illustration is examined to determine the frequency of occurrence of male and female illustrations. Each character will also be counted as a separate occurrence even if the same character reappears more than once. Simple clues such as clothing and hairstyle will be taken into consideration when determining the gender of the character. However, if the character cannot be identified for any reason, it will be disregarded (e.g. a robot or a talking plant).

2. Gender visibility in text: the researcher will record the frequency of proper nouns (e.g. Ali, Mary, etc.), nouns (e.g. father, mother, etc.) and Generic antecedents (e.g. he, she, his, and her) in all passages. Then, the frequencies and percentages will be calculated and compared.

3. Female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages: the researcher will examine the reading passages and dialogues to examine the

gender of the dominant character that controls the dialogues or texts. The

focus will be on who controls the texts, who the text is about, who initiates

conversations and the number of speech turns. The occurrences and

percentages will later be quantitatively enumerated.

Second, in order to develop a more comprehensive picture of the gender-role

stereotyping in these textbooks, a qualitative analysis was carried out by concentrating

on four components of gender-role modelling:

1. Male-centered language including:

    (a) Order of mention: when two gender-specific nouns or pronouns appear

        as a pair in a text, like mother and father or he/she, the one appearing

        in the first position can be interpreted as having a higher status

        (Porreca, 1984). The researcher recorded any instances of order of

        mention in the textbook.

    (b) Masculine generic construction: these are terms used generally to refer

        to males as the norm and exclude females. The researcher will record

        any masculine nouns used (e.g. postman, policeman, etc.).

2. Gender-linked occupation possibilities: an occupation refers to a job, career,

    profession, and any type of work done by a female or male ("occupation",

    2019). The focus in this section will be on the occupational roles presented in

    the textbook. The occupations were thoroughly examined and enumerated to

    evaluate whether there is a balance or imbalance distribution of occupations in

    the textbook. The researcher focused on the variety of jobs rather than the

    recurrent repetition of jobs.

3. Distribution of household responsibilities: tasks such as cleaning, washing,

    and ironing that have to be done regularly at home ("household

responsibilities", 2019)The household responsibilities were examined and enumerated to evaluate whether there is a balance or imbalance distribution of household responsibilities in the textbook. The researcher focused on the variety of household responsibilities rather than the recurrent repetition of household responsibilities.

4. Distribution of spare time and leisure activities: is the activities that a person do when they are not working and they can relax and do things that you enjoy ("leisure activity", 2019). The researcher examined and enumerated the different spare time and leisure activities done by males and females in the textbook. The researcher focused on the variety of the activities rather than the recurrent repetition of the activities.

3.5 Validity and reliability of the data analysis

Validity is defined as the quality of research results that leads us to accept them as true, while speaking about the real world of people, phenomena, events, experiences, and actions. A measuring instrument is considered valid if it measures what its user claims it measures. A content analysis is valid if the inferences drawn from the available texts withstand the test of independently available evidence, of new observations, of competing theories or interpretations, or of being able to inform successful actions (Krippendorff , 2019).

To specify the content analysis validity for the investigated textbook, the researcher applied professional consultations. The content analysis was evaluated by the research supervisor and two of EFL university professors. Modifications were done according to the experts' recommendations and the final method of analysis was conformed.

As for reliability, it is defined as the extent of replicability, which is pursuing the same results through repeated measuring procedures (Neuendorf, 2002). Reliability is one of the most distinctive attributes of content analysis methodology, in which the independence of the procedure of measuring, instrument, and judges builds up the significance of reliability (Wang, 2011). Moreover, Reliability is essential in content analysis because the goal of this research method is to achieve identifying and recording characteristics of messages objectively. However, the process of data collection in content analysis methodology is often conducted by human observers through recording or transcribing texts, pictures, or audio recordings. Therefore, reliability in content analysis studies is necessary to demonstrate and ensure the trustiness of conclusions from such data (Neuendorf, 2002).

In content analysis, reliability is interpreted as intercoder reliability or the extent of agreement. Intercoder reliability is the term generally used to represent that the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message and reach the same conclusion (Lombard et al., 2002). Specifically, intercoder agreement is more appropriate for the particular characteristic of required consistency in content analysis studies. Therefore, the researcher used Holsti's, (1969) equation to compute the inter-rater reliability; the researcher randomly selected a unit from the *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition* textbook, which was then analyzed by two English language teachers as analysts (coders). Next, the ratio of agreement between the two coders was calculated using the following expression shown in Table (3):

Table 3

Interrater Reliability

Items	Coder 1	Coder 2	Agreement between Coder 1 & Coder 2
Textual and visual Appearance (Female to male)	43	41	42
Female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages	2	3	2
male-centered language	0	0	0
Gender-linked occupation possibilities and distribution of spare time and leisure activities.	2	2	2
Total	47	46	45
Coefficient of Reliability			0.97

Coefficient of Reliability=2M/(N1+N2)

Where M is the number of judgments on which both coders agreed, and N1 and N2 pertain to the number of judgments made by Coder 1 and Coder 2, respectively. The calculated was value 0.97, and the compatibility percentage was modified using Cohen's kappa equation to exclude agreement by chance in the interrater reliability to become 0.96%, where the result ranged from 0.81 to 0.99, indicating that the analysis in this study is reliable.

3.6 Summary

This chapter explained the method the researcher adopted, which is the mixed method approach to investigate gender representation in *Family and Friends KSA 6 second edition*. Then, the researcher presented the method used for data collection and analysis, which is manual content analysis. In addition, a clear and detailed description of the data coding and the validity and reliability of the research data analysis was provided.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis

This chapter is divided into two main sections: (a) quantitative analysis and (b) qualitative analysis of the corpus. The first section is presented in two parts: part (1) gender visibility in both text and illustrations and part (2) female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages. The second section is presented in four parts: part (1) male-centered language; part (2) gender-linked occupation possibilities; part (3) distribution of household responsibilities, and part (4) distribution of spare time and leisure activities.

The results of the current study were based on the content analysis of the corpus of the English textbook, *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition*, intended for use in the first and second semester of sixth grade in Saudi schools. Moreover, the data were analyzed using Microsoft Office Excel 2016.

4.1 The Quantitative Analysis

4.1.1 Gender Visibility in Individual Text and Illustrations.

Table 4

Gender visibility in text and illustration

	Male			Female		
	Text	Illustrations	Total	Text	Illustrations	Total
Textbook	705	492	1197	119	72	191
	85.5%	87%	86%	14%	13%	14%

Note: All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Due to the rounding, they may not add up to 100%.

The gender visibility shown in Table (4) confirms that female underrepresentation is a problem in this textbook. Female and male characters appeared 824 times in text and 564 times in illustrations throughout the Textbook. Female underrepresentation is a problem in this textbook. The analysis results reveal

that females appeared in texts 119 times and 72 times in illustrations, which represent

fourteen percent of the total male and female representation in texts and illustrations.

However, males appeared 705 times in texts and 492 times in illustrations

representing 86% of the total male and female representation in texts and illustrations.

A comparison between the percentages of female figures 14% and male figures 86%

shows a difference of 72% suggesting that there is a sharp numerical imbalance in the

visibility of female and male characters in texts and illustrations, which implies that

men are dominant in terms of appearance.

**4.1.2 Female/Male-Oriented Topic Presentation in Dialogues and Reading
Passages.**

Table 5

Female/Male-Oriented Topic Presentation in Dialogues and Reading Passages

	Male only	Female only	Male/Female	Sex neutral	Total
Reading	22 (50%)	3 (7%)	2 (4.5%)	17 (38.5%)	44
Dialogue	22 (81%)	0	5 (15.5%)	0	27

The obtained results concerning the presentation of gender in dialogues and reading

passages show that in all cases males outnumber the females in this textbook, as

presented in Table (5), the total of dialogues and reading passages presented in the

investigated textbook is 71, 44 reading passages and 27 dialogues. The results of

female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues in the investigated textbook

revealed that of the total of 27 topics, 22 (81%) were male and none of the dialogues

were female-oriented. However, in five dialogues (15.5%), an interaction between

female/male characters was observed. Furthermore, in the reading passages in the

investigated textbook, of the total of 44 topics, 22 (50%) were male topics and three

(7%) of the reading passages were female topics. Moreover, the results showed that

two reading topics were Male/Female topics and the remaining 17(38.5%) reading

topics were sex neutral. The results shown in (Table 2) indicate that there is a female

underrepresentation in the dialogues and reading passages of the investigated

textbook.

4.2 The Qualitative Analysis

      4.2.1 Male-Centered Language.

table (6) presents when two gender-specific nouns or pronouns appear as a pair in a
text.

Table 6

Order of Mention

Order of mention (coordinated by and, or)	Male first	Female first	total
Frequency	2 (25%)	6 (75%)	8

      The researcher noted the order of mention of women and men in a single phrase

including and/or coordinating conjunctions and eight instances of order of mention

were observed. The results show that there is a clear tendency for referring to females

before males, with six instances (75%), compared to only two instances of males

mentioned before females (25%) and examples are given below:

      On page 6, in exercise 3 the sentence "My mum and dad work/are working

every day." shows a case of referring to females before males where the mother was

mentioned before the father. As well, four other instances where the order Mum

followed by dad were observed. On page 30, in a reading passage about a boy who

went to a Chocolate Festival and learned how to make chocolate ice cream, the

sentence "I made it for my mom and dad when I came back to England" shows a case

of referring to females before males. Moreover, on page 118, in a reading passage the

sentence "we left Canada on January when Mum and Dad decided they wanted us to

give up our lives and in Canada, and go travelling for a year!" is also showing an

instance of referring to females before males. However, the sentence shows that decision-making is shared by the mother and the father and not dominated by one of them. The second and the third instance of ordering Mum before Dad is on page 124 on a reading passage the sentence "I am on holiday with my mum and Dad." and on page 125 in another reading passage the sentence "I am on vacation in Europe with Mom and Dad right now." Showing an instance of referring to females before males. However, the common, 'mum-first' phenomenon in which mum or mother always appears before dad or father in this textbook, is might be due to the fact that mum and dad is fixed term in English.

On page 13, in exercise 1, the sentence "you should never hit your brother or your sister." This sentence on the other hand, shows a case of referring to males before females where the brother was mentioned before the sister.

On page 30, in a reading passage about a boy telling about a trip he went to, he used the sentence "It was nice to stay in Aunt Sally and Uncle Tom's lovely big red house in Perugia." Demonstrating a case of referring to females before males. However, on page 78, exercise 3, the uncle was mentioned before the aunt in the sentence "we have just finished lunch when my uncle and aunt arrived."

In case of generic pronouns, three masculine generic pronouns were found in this textbook, in which referring to males as the norm and excluding females. On page 14 and 97, the author used the noun fisherman instead of using fisher. Furthermore, on page 34, the author used the noun sportsman where the generic word could be an athlete and on page 99, the noun postman was used instead of using mail carrier or postal worker.

4.2.2 Gender-Linked Occupation Possibilities.

Table (7) shows occupational roles presented in the textbook.

Table 7

Gender-linked Occupation Possibilities

Gender-linked occupation possibilities	
Female	Male
Inventor	Fisherman
Writer	Pearl diver
Teacher	Sportsman
	Inventor
	Novelist
	Journalist
	Writer
	Explorer
	Historian
	Politician
	Astronaut

Occupations were clearly embedded in this textbook as shown in Table (7). They were spread around the textbook's modules in the reading passages, dialogues, and activity questions. As shown in Table 4, males were presented in a wider range and overall a higher level of employment than females in the textbook. A close examination shows that women occupied positions such as writer and teacher, with the exception of the portrayal of a woman as an inventor on page 62. In contrast, men enjoyed greater diversity of occupations ranging from lower ranking roles such as fisherman, to higher ranking roles such as Astronaut, Inventor, and Politician.

4.2.3 Distribution of Household Responsibilities.

Table 8

Distribution of Household Responsibilities

Household responsibilities	Female	Male
Cleaning their room	*	*
cooking	*	
Shopping for clothes	*	
Cleaning the car		*
Doing the groceries		*

Note: (*) Indicates household responsibility

An evaluation of the distribution of household responsibilities shown in Table (8) reveals that the distribution of household responsibilities were equal between females and males, which could reflect that the textbook has an encouraging message that household responsibilities, should be equal for both genders.

4.2.4 Distribution of Spare Time and Leisure Activities.

Table 9

Distribution of Spare Time and Leisure Activities

Spare time and leisure activities	Female	Male
Visiting friends	*	*
Making a home recycling center	*	
Cleaning the park		*
Building		*
Playing football		*
Watching TV		*
Painting		*
Going to the park	*	*
Going to the museum	*	*
Going to the stadium to watch a football match		*
Going to festivals	*	*
Cooking	*	
Fishing		*
Biking		*
Going to the library		*
Rock climbing		*
Running		*
swimming		*
Paragliding		*
Sailing		*
Playing basketball		*

Note: (*) Indicates spare time and leisure activity.

The list of spare time and leisure activities in Table (9) reveals that out of twenty-one of spare time and leisure activities, only six were performed by females which, suggests that males enjoy a wider range of spare time and leisure activities than females. However, a close look at this table reveals that female activities are not

restricted to passive indoor activities such as watching television or reading a newspaper as they also enjoyed active outdoor roles (going to festivals, to the park, or to the museum).

4.3 Summary

The results revealed that females were underrepresented in *Family and Friends 6 KSA second edition* textbook. The number of male characters outnumbered female characters in both texts and illustrations in which a comparison between the percentages of female presentation fourteen percent and male presentation 86% shows a difference of 72%. Furthermore, half of the reading passages in the textbook have male oriented topics while almost all of the conversations in the course book are male-male conversations. However, this study showed an overall higher tendency for females to be referenced in sentences before males in the present textbook. Furthermore, one of the evidences of male dominance in this textbook is that males enjoyed a wider range of occupations and leisure activities than females. On the other hand, the distribution of household responsibilities was equal between the two genders, which could let contemplate on the textbook encouraging message that household responsibilities, should be equal for both genders.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter consists of three sections: (a) discussion, (b) conclusions, and (c) recommendations. The discussion presents the most important findings in relation to the previous related studies. The conclusions present the summary of the research findings related to the objectives of the research. The recommendations give particular matters suggested to curriculum committees, textbook developers and other researchers.

5.1 Discussion

This study investigated gender representation in an EFL textbook from the series *Family and Friends*, aimed at Saudi elementary students. The study used a mix method approach in which descriptive statistical analysis was utilized to investigate male and female frequencies enhanced by a qualitative analysis of the data. The goal of this study was to cover four aspects of gender depiction: 1) gender visibility in both text and illustrations; 2) female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages; 3) female/male-centered language; 4) the roles played by males and females represented in the textbook, including occupations, household responsibilities and spare time and leisure activities.

5.1.1 Gender visibility in texts and illustrations

As for the first aspect of this study, the results confirmed that women in the current textbook are underrepresented in terms of appearance. Females appeared in texts 119 times and 72 times in illustrations, which represent fourteen percent of the total male and female representation in texts and illustrations. Al Abiky, (2019) study examined gender roles in two English language textbooks widely used by Saudi female high school students in public schools and encountered similar results.

Specifically, the findings of his study showed that males were predominant, whereas females were completely absent or marginalized in both texts and illustrations. In addition, the findings of the current study support the findings of Sulaimani, (2017) study, who also examined gender representations in international EFL textbooks made for the Saudi context. The findings of her study suggested that the textbooks were gender biased in favor of men, as women were dismissed in almost half of the units of the textbooks. These results are in parallel with the majority of previous studies into gender bias in EFL/ESL materials in the Saudi Arabia, for example, (AlJumiah, 2016; Sulaimani, 2017; Aljuaythin, 2018; Al Abiky, 2019).

5.1.2 Female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages

The results of the second aspect of this study revealed that males were dominant of the reading passages and dialogues topics in which 81% of the dialogues were male oriented and 50% of the reading passages were male oriented topics. Tahan, (2014) investigated gender representation in the currently used EFL textbooks at public schools in the UAE, and the results of his study revealed similar result namely, that male characters are more dominant with reference to topic dominance in dialogues and reading passages. In his study female characters domination in dialogues and reading passages is less than males by 24%.

5.1.3 Female/male-centered language

Regarding female/male centered language, in the current textbook there is an overall higher tendency for females to be referenced in sentences before males, with 6 instances of females mentioned before males, compared to only 2 instances of males mentioned before females. However, most of the times when females were mentioned

before males in a sentence, the writer was using the term mum and dad that is a fixed

term in English.

These findings are not in line with the findings of Al-Qatawneh & Rawashdeh,

(2019). They investigated the gender representation in the Arabic language textbook

for the ninth grade in UAE and one of the factors they focused on was the order of

mention. The results of their study revealed that there is a higher tendency for males

to be referenced in sentences before females. Moreover, In the case of generic

pronouns, three masculine generic pronouns were found in this textbook, in which

referring to males as the norm and excluding females.

5.1.4 The roles played by males and females represented in the textbook

Males were presented in a wider range and overall a higher level of

employment than females in the textbook. Hamdan, (2010) analyzed a series of

English language textbooks used in Jordan and encountered similar results. Gender

imbalances were obvious in the English textbooks he analyzed. Males in those

textbooks were presented in a wider range and overall a higher level of employment

than females in the textbook while women were marginalized and portrayed as having

extremely limited roles.

Regarding the distribution of household responsibilities in the current textbook,

it was equal between females and males, which could reflect that the textbook has an

encouraging message that household responsibilities should be equal for both genders.

Furthermore, males enjoy a wider range of spare time and leisure activities than

females. However, female activities were not restricted to passive indoor activities as

they also enjoyed active outdoor roles. Moreover, the writer in most parts of the

textbook avoided traditional stereotypes of females for example, women were not

portrayed at home, as housewives engaged in childcare. These findings support the

findings of Arabmofrad, (2015) who investigated the linguistic representation of male and female social actors in the same series investigated in the current study (family and friends). In his study, he revealed an attempt of the series (family and friends) writer to avoid traditional stereotypes of females in most parts of textbooks. However, these findings did not support the findings of Aljuaythin, (2018) who investigated social power relations in terms of gender and race in high-school-level international EFL textbooks made for the Saudi context. In her study, she revealed that when females were represented there was a tendency to rely on stereotypical perceptions of females, such as that of a "nurturer," which she noticed in the portrayal of females as mothers, nurses, or housewives.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, the present study is an attempt to investigate gender representation in an EFL textbook from the series *Family and Friends*, aimed at Saudi elementary students, four conclusions were drawn from the analyses conducted in the Fourth chapter.

First, women in the current study are underrepresented in terms of appearance. Females appeared in texts 119 times and 72 times in illustrations, which represent fourteen percent of the total male and female representation in texts and illustrations.

Second, in terms of female/male-oriented topic presentation in dialogues and reading passages, males were dominant of the reading passages and dialogues topics in which 81% of the dialogues were male oriented and 50% of the reading passages were male oriented topics.

Third, regarding female/male centered language in the current textbook there is an overall higher tendency for females to be referenced in sentences before males, with 6 instances of females mentioned before males, compared to only two instances

of males mentioned before females.. Moreover, In the case of generic pronouns, three masculine generic pronouns were found in this textbook, in which referring to males as the norm and excluding females.

Fourth, males were presented in a wider range and overall a higher level of employment than females in the textbook. However, that the distribution of household responsibilities was equal between females and males, which could be interpreted that the textbook has an encouraging message that household responsibilities, should be equal for both genders. Furthermore, males enjoy a wider range of spare time and leisure activities than females. However, female activities are not restricted to passive indoor activities as they also enjoyed active outdoor roles.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The present study selected only one textbook from the *Family and friends KSA second edition* series that serves the aim of the study. Due to this limitation, the findings cannot be generalized to the whole series. Moreover, the content analysis in this study is only based on examining illustrations, the dialogues, reading texts, exercises, and activities.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the conclusions, some recommendations are proposed. First, gender imbalances should be considered as big educational flaws that are hardly justified. In the present study, it can be argued that since the textbook namely, *Family and Friends KSA second edition 6,* was not written by Saudis, the writers might rely on stereotypical false ideologies of Saudi society. It is believed in the West that women in Saudi Arabia are oppressed and marginalized (Rajkhan, 2014) but in fact, that is not the case anymore. The government of Saudi Arabia has achieved remarkable progress in the status of gender equality in education, employment, and health

(Alasleh, 2018). Moreover, the author of the current textbook claims that the KSA edition features culture pages and a content specific to Saudi Arabia. However, this textbook failed to reflect the real situation not only in the target language society but also in Saudi Arabia and its 2030 vision, which has a clear political well and enforcement, empower females to be independent in all aspects of life to insure gender equality instead of imbalance. Since the Saudi Ministry of Education approved this textbook to be used in private education, this research is expected to be useful for curriculum committees and textbook developers.

Second, the present study selected only one textbook from the *Family and Friends* series, which serves the aim of the study. Due to this limitation, the findings cannot be generalized to the whole series. A large-scale study including more than one adapted series of EFL books used in a Saudi education would broaden our understanding of gender representation in these textbooks. Moreover, A longitudinal study might reveal hidden and deep effects of gender misrepresentation and bias embedded in those textbooks, which Sunderland (1992) called 'unconscious influence'. Subsequently, female future choices and decisions about their academic majors, careers, and social roles might all be investigated and correlated to these imbalances.

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