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CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GENDER REPRESENTATIONS IN EFL TEXTBOOKS

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates gender representation in EFL textbooks in Jordanian context using critical discourse analysis. The data were collected from the content of international ELT textbooks series, i.e. interchange 1A & 2B Student's Textbooks which were taught to undergraduate students at Al-Balqa Applied University. The study used Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework to analyze the data. Variables such as women's and men's social and domestic roles, visibility of women and men, women's and men's activities, women's and men's semantic roles, and pictorial representation were analyzed to unveil inequalities or power imbalance between males and females. The findings of the study revealed that the EFL text books were biased in favor of men in certain roles and activities. For example, men occupied the role of a 'craftsman', a 'fitness trainer' more than women. The study also found out that the text books showed some degree of equality between males and females in terms of pictorial representation, visibility and some activities and roles. The results also revealed that even though there existed some stereotypical roles and activities associated with men and women in these books, males and females were represented equally in terms of social status, power, and dominance. In other words, there was no sign of feminism and anti-feminism in the analyzed text books.

Contribution/ Originality: This study is one of very few studies which have investigated gender representation in university textbooks using Critical Discourse Analysis. This study documents the hidden gender representation, gender social roles, gender bias, gender dominance, and gender discrimination found in EFL textbook in Jordanian context.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

The emergence of critical discourse analysis (CDA, henceforth) dates back to the beginning of the 1990s (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Its concerns revolve around the social issues such as social inequality, injustice, racism, ideology, hegemony, power abuse, and power relations via analyzing the linguistic properties of discourse and discourse structures and relating that to the social structures and social cognition.

CDA is a theoretical interdisciplinary framework that encompasses several approaches from various disciplines and sciences to investigate the underlying relationship between language and society. It studies the

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social issues and problems via analyzing the social and political roles that language performs in constructing certain social ideologies, power, and equality. CDA shares various models, introduced by pioneering linguists such as Wodak, Fairclough, and Van Dijik whose endeavors launch the major tenets of CDA. For Fairclough and Wodak, "CDA sees itself not as a dispassionate and objective social science, but as engaged and committed; it is a form of intervention in social practice and social relationships" (Fairclough. & Wodak, 1997).

For Van Dijk (2001) "CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk, 2001). Thus, CDA does not introduce a descriptive view of discourse; rather it explains the effective roles and functions of language in shaping and constructing social structures and interactions. Fairclough (2001) presents CDA as a theoretical framework with multiple perspectives that make CDA textured as an interrelated framework and not a single theory. CDA, as viewed by Wodak (2001), is a bunch of methods with similar theoretical groundwork and purposes endeavors to investigate the opaque ideologies and agendas implemented within discourses. CDA is not concerned only with the internal structures, characteristics, and linguistics of discourse like other analytical discourse theories. CDA comes from critical linguistics and works on humanities and social studies. CDA is also known as a problem-oriented approach to tackle the social and political issues and structures. CDA analyses discourse in its social and political context to decipher the hidden ideologies and functions of discourse. In conjunction with sociolinguistic patterns, CDA attempts to scrutinize how discursive practices and discourse structure enact, reproduce, and legitimate power abuse and social inequality. CDA analysts do not deal with language as merely a means of communication. Rather, language is used by them as a powerful tool that does social, political, and cultural functions. In this respect, Fairclough (1995) rightly asserts that CDA is oriented to explore how language is structured to tackle its primary social function.

1.2. Models of CDA

Critical discourse analysis is a multidisciplinary theoretical framework which utilizes several sciences to decipher the complex relationship between discourse and social underlying ideologies. Thus, each CDA approach tries to integrate specific discursive and social factors in the process of analysis. In this regard, the main and the most prominent CDA approaches share the same theoretical basement but each one focuses mostly on particular social phenomena in discourse. Therefore, it is worthy to shed the light in brief on CDA approaches with more details on Fairclough's model which is adopted in the current study.

1.2.1. Fairclough's Model

Fairclough has been identified as one of the pioneering figures in the CDA domain. His works expand and develop the theoretical framework of CDA and have several applications in the education domain. Fairclough focuses on analyzing discourse in the light of sociocultural change in relation to discursive change. He considers discourse as a social practice that is produced by social actors interactively in social life. Thus, discourse is not merely a set or a form of sentences rather it reflects ideological implications and dominations. Fairclough (1989) tackles discourse from three dimensions: 1. text (spoken or written), 2. Discourse practice including discourse production, consumption and distribution, 3. Sociocultural practice Additionally, Fairclough sets three levels of discourse analysis for these dimensions: description, interpretation, and explanation. In the light of Fairclough's model, discourse is analyzed and described linguistically to figure out the discursive strategies, vocabularies, and discourse structures which then interpreted and explained with relation to the social, societal and cultural background context to find out underlying agenda of discourse. The current study adopts Fairclough's model to examine if there is a gender discrimination embedded in international ELT textbooks series, i.e. interchange 1A& 2B Student's Textbooks. The study utilizes Fairclough's model to relate discursive structures to Jordanian cultural and social structures.

In light of Fairclough's sociocultural model, the analysis of discourse starts with analyzing the text (description). Text analysis is conducted via the analysis of the texture of text, vocabulary, transitivity, modality, topicality, presupposition, and ambiguity. Words could carry ideological implications. For instance, the over-wording emphasizes certain connotations and denotations that influence the addressees' cognition and perception. The use of synonyms, antonyms, euphemism, and metaphor creates and constructs ideological and social convictions. Transitivity is a powerful technique in depicting the agency pattern in the discourse such as the use of passive, back grounding, foregrounding, and nominalization. This interprets how language influences peoples' cognition, ideologies and convictions. To clarify the point more, the use of repetition and metaphor could establish certain conceptions and beliefs in peoples' mind. Metaphor makes complex abstract senses understandable through creating certain semantic maps.

1.2.2. Van Dijk's Model

Van Dijk has been considered as one of the leading figures of CDA. He introduces the Socio-cognitive approach whose roots lie in psychology. What makes the socio-cognitive approach distinct from other CDA models is its cognitive interface. For Van Dijk, the relationship between discourse structure and social structure can be yielded via personal and social cognition. Thus, the theoretical framework of Van Dijk's model is represented in the triangular interdisciplinary frame that connects discourse to society through the cognitive interface.

In the light of the socio-cognitive approach, discourse is influenced by the cognitive processes like thinking, perceiving, believing, and hoping that operate in humans' brain in the short term memory. The cognitive processes then construct certain mental representations of social practices and structures. Thus, critical discourse analysts should tackle personal and social cognition while analyzing discourse for the sake of uncovering the influence of linguistic features and structures in shaping and framing peoples' thoughts, beliefs, and ideologies. The opaque relationship between discourse and society is indirect and it resides in the interlocutors' cognition.

Socio-cognitive approach focuses on both: micro-structure and macro-structure levels of discourse. It investigates the internal structure of discourse and individual interactions (micro-structure), and the overall underlying function of discourse (macro-structure) like power abuse, social inequality, and ideology. Van Dijk has postulated three levels of analysis to decipher the underlying ideologies and power in discourse. In the first level, the social structure, group relations, and institutional structure are analyzed. In the second level, the personal and social structures with their sublevels are analyzed. The third level encompasses the analysis of discourse structure, syntactic features, rhetorical figures, semantic devices, and pragmatics.

1.2.3. Wodak's Model

Wodak (1997) introduced a historical approach to CDA. His model instigates discourse in its context and historical environment. For Wodak, discourse is structured in relevance to the historical factors and accumulative knowledge. Thus, to study the relationship between discourse and society not only are the linguistic properties required, but all extra linguistic factors such as place, time, participants, and culture are relevant, too. Discourse-meaning is not linguistically structured but the environmental components are contributed. Historical approach to CDA has been adopted by many researchers to uncover the underlying ideologies such as racism and sexism.

1.3. Gender and Language

One of the main endeavors and applications of CDA is to explore the hidden and transparent gender representations in discourse, particularly in textbooks. Compiling textbooks for ELT requires a deep consciousness of various factors that are interrelated such as social and political contexts, culture, and ethnicity (Amerian & Esmaili, 2015). Examining textbooks under CDA's tenets could unravel the underlying social, political, and cultural motivations that in turn reflect hidden ideologies. Regarding educational systems, CDA focuses on investigating

ELT textbooks from different perspectives such as gender bias, gender roles, gender inequality, social values, and feminism. The educational materials are not merely conveying information and scientific knowledge in various disciplines; rather they carry ideological, social, cultural, and even political assumptions and applications. Language plays a vital role in shaping peoples' attitudes, thoughts, and ideologies. In this regard, gender representation in discourse is one of the main interests that attract CDA analysts to tackle educational textbooks and figure out the effective role of language in constructing social structures between male and female.

The current study examines the international ELT textbook series taught to undergraduate students at Al Balqa Applied University, under Fairclough' three-dimensional approach. It tries to explore the hidden gender representation, gender social roles, gender bias, gender dominance, and gender discrimination. The analysis is conducted for the sake of deciphering the way gender is depicted in textbooks in the light of social and cultural context. In the present study, the analysis of ELT textbooks in the light of CDA theoretical framework is applied to textbooks contents, discourse structures, linguistic properties, and discursive practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A large number of studies have investigated the representation of gender in EFL textbooks. For example, Jannati (2015) used content and semiotic analysis to identify gender roles in Iranian EFL textbooks. The study found out textbooks revealed a gender imbalance in favor of males. Women are associated with less powerful and stereotypical social roles. For example, women are associated with doing domestic activities.

In another study, Shahrokhi and Samadikhah (2015) adopted Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional model of CDA to describe, interpret, and explain gender representations in these textbooks. The study showed that the textbooks are gender biased in favor of men in terms of characters, pictorial representations, titles, activities, and status.

Similarly, Amerian and Esmaili (2015) also used Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional model of CDA to examine gender in EFL textbooks. The results of the study identified many instances of sexism towards women, such as discrimination against women and viewing women as instruments for advertising.

Sulaimani (2017) adopted the CDA perspective to investigate EFL textbooks in the Saudi context. The study examined gender frequencies in three dimensions: gender relations, subject positions, and contents. The findings of the study revealed that textbooks presented a sexist attitude in favor of men. It was found out that women are underrepresented in the textbook and they are less frequently characterized compared to men.

Javani and Tahriri (2018) adopted Fairclough (2015) three-dimensional model to examine the representation of male and female social actors in EFL series of junior high schools in Iran. The findings of the study showed that EFL textbooks were biased in favor of men. The findings of the study showed that females were less visible than men. The findings also revealed that 60% of the social roles found in the series are male-monopolized.

Tahriri and Moradpour (2014) utilize CDA model to investigate how genders are represented in the *Top Notch Series*. The study used Fairclough's (2001) three-dimensional model to analyze three major aspects of gender, i.e. relations, positions, and content. They concluded that both genders are represented almost equally.

In another study, Aljuaythin (2018) examined how men and women are represented in two EFL textbooks in Saudi schools. It also attempts to identify gender roles and stereotyping in these textbooks. The study used the three stages of Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional model: description, interpretation, and explanation. The analysis of the two textbooks showed that representation of gender is biased in favor of men. Women in these two textbooks were underrepresented and marginalized.

Bataineh (2017) investigated gender representation in a business textbook taught at Sohar University. The study analyzed gender visibility, gender first ness, and occupational roles using content analysis. The results of the study indicated that there was equality in the visibility of men and women in the textbook. The study also showed

that women occupied more than occupational roles than men. At the level of gender first ness, the data showed that names and pronouns associated with males appear before females' names and pronouns.

In another study, Sahragard and Davatgarzadeh (2010) used Van Leeuwen (1996) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) to examine the representation of gender in the textbook "Interchange" (Third Edition). The findings of the study showed that women are represented as more successful, prominent, intellectual, and powerful.

Bataineh. and Kayode (2018) investigated the appearance of males and females in sixteen Omani school textbooks. The study concentrated on three aspects: titles, the third person pronouns, and names used in these textbooks. The results of the study showed that females were underrepresented compared to men.

Islam and Asadullah (2018) explored the representation of male and females in EFL textbooks taught in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan. The findings of the study showed that men were represented superior to women. For example, men occupied more prestigious jobs than women.

Ahmad and Shah (2019) examined gender representation in the fifth grade EFL textbook taught in Punjab (Pakistan) by using Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The finding of the study showed that the textbook was gender-biased in favor of males. The study also showed that while men were represented as influential and dominant, women were represented as inferior and less dominant.

In another study, Agni, Setyaningsih, and Sarosa (2020) used content analysis to investigate gender representation in EFL textbook in Indonesia. The study showed imbalance in the representation of females and males in favor of males in four aspects: variety of activity, role, and occupation; textual and visual representation; adjectival portrayal; and order of mention. The paper found out that women are under-represented in these books. Similarly, Curaming and Curaming (2020) adopted critical discourse analysis to examine gender representation in textbooks in the Philippines. The study found out that males were represented as superior to females which showed that gender inequality remained in favor of males.

In the Jordanian context, a limited number of studies examined the representation of gender in EFL textbooks. For example, Hamdan. and Jalabneh (2009) investigated which sex dominates the dialogues and comprehension passages in Action Pack Series textbooks taught in elementary schools in Jordan. The study found out that men are the main characters in dialogues and comprehension passages in these texts.

In another study, Hamdan (2010) used content analysis to investigate whether EFL textbooks "the Action Pack Series" used in Jordanian public schools were biased to a certain gender. The study concentrated on the types of jobs occupied by males and females in these textbooks. The study concluded that while women were associated with traditional jobs such as teachers and nurses, males occupied a variety of jobs. In a similar vein, Nofal and Qawar (2015) adopted content analysis to investigate how males and females were represented in one of the English language textbooks in Jordan, namely, Action Pack 10. The findings of the study revealed that females' presence was less socially, linguistically and visually. Males appeared in the text more than females with a ratio of 3:1. Besides, females occupied less social roles than males.

Reviewing the previous literature showed that the representation of gender in Jordanian EFL textbooks is an under-researched topic. The studies that examined gender representation in textbooks in the Jordanian context are very scanty. Thus, it is important to do more research on the representation of gender in EFL textbooks in Jordan. It is worth noting that the present study differs from the previous studies in the sense that it investigates gender representation in university textbooks using Critical Discourse Analysis.

3. METHODS

3.1. Data Collection

The data were gathered from the content of international ELT textbooks series, i.e. *interchange 1A& 2B* Student's Textbooks. These books were taught to undergraduate students at Al Balqa Applied University. The two books included 8 units as shown in Table 1:

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Table-1. Units of interchange 1A& 2B.

Unit	1A	2B
1	Where are you from?	Good memories
2	What do you do?	Life in the city
3	How much are these?	Making changes
4	Do you play the guitar?	Have you ever tried it?
8	What an interesting family?	Hit the road
6	How often do you run?	Sure I'll do it
7	We went dancing	What do you use this for?
8	How is the neighborhood?	Time to celebrate

Source: Interchange 1A& 2B.

3.2. Data Analysis

Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework was adopted to analyze the data. Fairclough's proposed three stages of CDA: "description of text, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context." In the first stage "description", the study adopted (Amerian & Esmaili, 2015) criteria which are established on Fairclough's three-dimensional model. These criteria include visibility of women and men, women's and men's social and domestic roles, women's and men's semantic roles, women's and men's activities, and pictorial representation. In the second stage and third stage, the data were interpreted and explained in association with social context.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Pictorial Representation

The first aspect is concerned with the pictorial representation of females and males. Table 2 shows that 30.7 % of these pictures display both genders in an equal share. Whereas, male-only pictures constitute 24.5 % of all pictures, female-only pictures constitute 17.5% of all pictures. The rest of the pictures in which both genders are mixed comes to 9.9% related to "more males", 17.2% of pictures were related to females. Table 2 demonstrates the frequencies and percentage of Pictorial representation of males and females.

Table-2. Pictorial representation of males and females.

Pictorial Representation	Number	%
Males only	40	24.5 %
More males	16	9.9 %
Females only	29	17.8 %
More females	28	17.2 %
Equal	50	30.7 %
Total	163	100%

Source: Amerian and Esmaili (2015).

4.2. Domestic and Social Roles of Males and Females

The second aspect represents the social and semantic roles of males and females. The data show that females and males have somehow occupied nearly the same semantic and social roles in terms of frequency (Table 3). These roles include doctor, parent, chef, manager, singer, engineer and waiter. The data also show that females occupy the role of 'baby sitter' and 'fashion designer' more than men. On the other hand, men occupy the role of 'craftsman', 'fitness trainer' and 'waiter' more than women. These results show an imbalance in some social and semantic roles of males and females.

Table-3. Domestic and social roles of males and females.

Domestic/social role	Male frequency	Female frequency
Parent	11	13
Teacher	7	9
Student	5	6
Doctor	1	2
Caregiver	1	0
Babysitter	0	3
Chef	3	3
Waiter	3	0
Friend	7	13
Fashion designer	0	2
Manager	1	1
Singer	5	6
Sailor	1	0
Writer	3	3
Craftsmen	10	1
Engineer	1	2
Fitness trainer	4	0
Total	63	64

Source: Amerian and Esmaili (2015).

4.3. Activities

The third aspect represents the activities performed by males and females in the two textbooks. On one hand, Table 4 shows that some activities are carried out equally by both males and females, such as driving, working, going to vacation, housework, travelling. On the other hand, the data show that some activities are dominated by males, such as doing sports and engaging in outside activities. It is worth mentioning that the two ELT textbooks associate some types of sports like baseball and soccer only with men. Other activities were dominated by females like shopping, dancing, and engaging in social activities.

Table-4. The activities related to females and males.

Activities	Male frequencies	Female frequencies
Driving	1	1
Shopping	4	14
going to vacation	3	3
Working	24	22
Watching TV	10	7
Doing sports	10	4
Housework	5	6
Travelling	7	7
Dancing	3	9
Engaging in outside activities	10	3
Engaging in social activities	5	9
Total	82	85

Source: Amerian and Esmaili (2015).

4.4. Gender Visibility

Gender visibility is a significant factor in the current study since it carries underlying societal, political, cultural, and religious implications and expectations. Thus, the researchers look for the representation of men and women in terms of pronouns, nouns and proper nouns to reveal the visibility of both genders in the two textbooks. The frequency of gender occurrences is shown in the Figure 1:
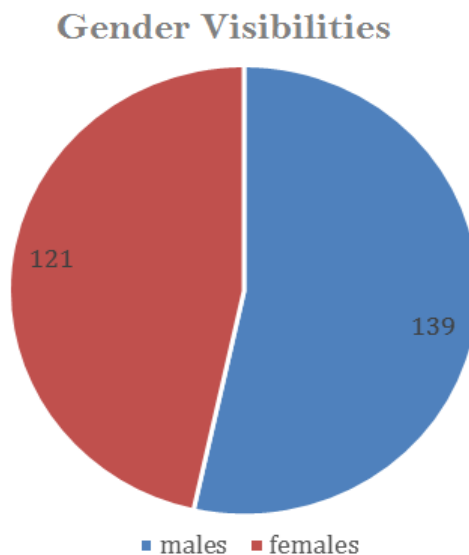
Gender Visibilities

Figure-1. Visibility of males and females.
Source: Amerian and Esmaili (2015).

Figure 1 reveals the female's character appeared 121 times while male's character appeared 139 times. This reveals that both genders were represented somehow equally.

5. DISCUSSION

In this section, the data are analyzed in relation to social context and practice based on the second and third stages of Fairclough (1995) model.

At first, a profound look at the Pictorial representation of males and females reveals to some extent the dominance of men's pictures over women's. The occurrence of Men is 40 times whereas women's occurrence is 29 times only. Even though the difference between men's and women's pictorial representation is not big, it definitely expresses some unequal ideological, societal, social, cultural and religious implications. Such pictorial representation of men and women could be interpreted as gender inequality which confirms societal stereotype of the dominance of men. It is worthy to be mentioned that the pictorial representation depicts women and men equally 30.7% of all pictures. Such equal occurrence of both genders is considered as a remarkable tendency to create gender equality against gender discrimination and bias which acts as a stereotype residing in societies.

Another aspect of investigation is the domestic and social roles of males and females. The data manifest balanced and equal representation of both genders in terms of occupations and social role such as of manager, chief, engineer, singer, doctor, writer, and student. Consequently, men and women are presented equally in the educational level and knowledge. They both occupy literate social positions as doctors, engineers, writers and students. From critical discourse analysis perspective, the equal representation of both genders in the aforementioned domestic and social roles reflects the societal, social, and cultural beliefs and practices in the society.

There is also no bias and discrimination between men and women in the mental and cognitive ability. They equally occupy jobs that require intelligence, effective performance, awareness, and competence. The data show that there is somehow an imbalance in the representation of women and men with regard to some activities and roles. Women go dancing, shopping, and babysit children more than men. This reflects societal stereotypical image of women that they like to spend their time in entertaining activities as dancing and going shopping. Additionally, women are associated with some low-status roles like babysitter. The data also reveal that while women work four times as babysitter, men absolutely do not work as a babysitter in these two books. This representation confirms the maternal nature of women. On the contrary, men get involved in outside activities, work as craftsmen and fitness trainers, and do sports more than women. It is a stereotypical image that men are physically better than

women in sports and in handy works. These results are in line with other studies, such as Jannati (2015) and Ahmad and Shah (2019).

Even though the data reveal that the two books are bias in favor of men in certain roles and activities, it is clear that there is a tendency to show some degrees of equality between males and females in terms of pictorial representation, visibility and some activities and roles. With regard to activities, women drive cars, travel, and work, go on vacation, and do housework. It is a stereotypical image of women that is associated with homework but in the data men and women are equal in this concern. In these textbooks, women like men occupy different roles, such as doctors, engineers, writers, singers, teachers, managers, students, and parents. High-status jobs like doctors, engineers and managers are not restricted to men anymore. Women enjoy a high and equal status as men do.

From CDA perspective, the profound analysis of the selected data reveal, in general, underlying ideological tendency or bias in favor of men over women in specific social practices. This conclusion could not be interpreted as anti-feminism ideology in the two books because the profound analysis of data does not come with hard evidence to confirm anti-feminist ideology. Moreover, the analysis doesn't decipher any form of enacting power relations between males and females. Both males and females are depicted equal regarding social status, visibility, and social role. Some differences that that are depicted in the two books could be accounted as natural differences between feminine and masculine. In other words, men and women have the same power in society in terms of job position as professors, engineers, managers, parliament members and teachers. Even though the data showed no imbalance of power between men and women, there were stereotypical images of men and women represented in the books. Women are still portrayed more than men in certain activities and roles, such as a babysitter, shopping, and dancing. Women also do not occupy jobs that require physical efforts, such as fitness-trainer or craftsmen like men do. Thus, the study recommends books' writers and designers to pay attention to these aspects.

To sum up, analyzing the gender representation that is resided in the content of international ELT textbooks series within the context of the Jordanian community similarly conveys and reflects the gender representation in Jordan. These two books mirror the status of gender in Jordan. Females in Jordan occupy high-status positions as males, such as managers, professors, ministers, parliament members, doctors, etc. They have the same rights as men in Jordanian society. Moreover, the books portray the actual stereotypical image of both genders as they are really presented in Jordanian society. In Jordan, jobs that require physical strength, such as electricians, builders, painters, mechanics, etc. are exclusive associated with men.

6. CONCLUSION

The current study is a CDA endeavour which is conducted to uncover the gender representation explicated and implicated in the content of international ELT textbooks that are taught to undergraduate students at Al Balqa Applied University, Jordan. The researchers adopted Fairclough's three-dimensional model as an analytical framework. Accordingly, the study investigated women's and men's social and domestic roles, the visibility of women and men, women's and men's activities, women's and men's semantic roles, and pictorial representation. The results revealed that males and females were represented in general equally in terms of social status, power, and dominance. Additionally, there was no existence of feminism and anti-feminism in the analyzed books. However, the data revealed the existence of some stereotypical roles and activities associated with men and women in these books. All in all, gender representation in the Jordanian community is compatible with the gender representation in these ELT textbooks. The present study is limited to EFL textbooks taught at Al-Balqa Applied University. The study recommends investigating the representation of gender in EFL textbooks taught in different universities in Jordan.

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