

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

CONTENT ANALYSIS IN COLLEGE ENGLISH
IN TERMS OF GENDER

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the adequacy of *College English* (Atkins, Hailom & Nuru, 1996) in bridging the gender-gap in EFL learning. The sources of data for the analysis were those selected from the “Student’s Book” and the “Instructor’s Manual” of Volume 1, based on their relevance to the purpose of the study.

Data were collected and analysed qualitatively through a process known as “Content-analysis” The procedures used for data collection and analysis were adapted from sets of guidelines developed by different EFL professionals and organizations for the purpose of judging the relative merits of materials in relation to equal treatment of both sexes in foreign language learning.

The overall results of the seven main categories of analysis revealed the adequacy of the course book in promoting fair and balanced treatment of both sexes for effective and enjoyable learning. It was found that the contents of textual materials were of common interest to both sexes; that texts exemplifying cultural and traditional stereotypes were effectively counteracted without affecting the goal of language teaching; that language items were presented and practiced meaningfully in contexts; that tasks were carefully designed to ensure learners’ equal participation by stimulating the interaction that is essential to successful language learning; that the allocation of roles to students reflected gender-equity in role representation; pictures reflected no sign of gender-biased message; and that discriminatory language use was effectively avoided by using inclusive language typical of the usage recommended by guidelines for the equal treatment of both sexes in foreign language learning. Accordingly, recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The image and language which are used in teaching, and the extent to which learners can identify with them, have important effects on how well people learn. Particularly, if female learners are underrepresented in teaching materials, or if they are portrayed in demeaning ways, it is likely that they do not achieve effective learning (Women in EFL Materials, 1991:2). Thus, textbooks have long been expected to be fair and balanced in their portrayal of both sexes in such a way that they treat both sexes with equal dignity and give them equal coverage(Ibid.).

However, as a number of studies on gender bias in textbooks have consistently revealed, textbooks across diverse settings, at whatever educational level, persist in perpetuating stereotyped views of men and women (Gaff, 1982:71; Porreca, 1984:718). Thus, textbooks, rather than mitigating the problem, contribute to it (Conway and Bourque, 1993:9). They serve as vehicles for enhancing discrimination based on gender. Hence, the expectation that textbooks serve as a means of promoting gender-equity and the achievement it has been responsible for, has resulted in marked failure.

For example, review of studies on gender stereotyping in textbooks in different countries shows that discriminatory attitudes towards girls and women are manifested in the following ways:

Compared with boys and men, women are mentioned less frequently in illustrations. Roles assigned to them are more restricted and less varied. Their choice of role models is more limited. Examples and subject matter selected all indicated a prejudice in favour of boys (Michel, 1986:36).

There is ample evidence from research that gender bias inherent in textbooks imposes considerable constraints on the intended achievements of textbook objectives. It has negative effects on educational achievements and job opportunities of girls (Almaz,1991; Anbesu, 1995).

Nevertheless, though scholars recognize the failure of textbooks in the past, they still hope that textbooks may play roles in promoting gender-equity by avoiding gender discrimination in their materials, if there is the will and commitment towards this end. Hence, they stress the need for producing textbooks which incorporate concepts of gender, that are no longer tied to the outdated traditional stereotypical images of females and males.

It is thus worth making an attempt to ensure a decent representation of gender and that does not allow learners to be disadvantaged by discrepancies in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) (Poulou, 1997:72). It is to this effect that gender analysis in foreign language textbooks is found to be essential.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Considering the impact of gender bias in teaching materials, an attempt is presently being made to prepare educational materials in line with the “Equal Opportunities Commission” (Sunderland, 1995) for gender- equity in the treatment of both sexes. However, textbooks which are assumed to be prepared in accordance with this requirement may still be gender constrained. For instance, Anbesu(1991)in the conclusion for his study on the Primary School textbooks, notes that “the society has changed; the curriculum has changed; the textbooks are new; but the stereotypes contained in them look toward the traditional past”(p.8).

The statement above implies that there is still the need to assess the extent to which textbooks currently produced are capable of responding positively to the demand for gender-equity in EFL textbooks. Particularly in Ethiopia, where traditional stereotyped thinking is believed to widely prevail and where study of gender bias in textbooks is a recent phenomenon, it seems quite essential to examine if the textbooks presently in use reflect gender-equity, and whether, in view of modern language teaching approaches, they give evidence of narrowing the gender-gap in foreign language learning.

Based on this, this study sets out to assess whether the new English course book “*College English*” (Atkins, Hailom & Nuru, 1996) for freshman students of the Addis Ababa University is gender constrained or not. To this end, the following research questions are formulated to be answered by the results of the study.

1. What language teaching materials are included in the course book?
2. How are the teaching materials introduced, presented and/or practised?
3. What foreign language teaching approach is adopted?
4. Does the course integrate materials on social themes of common interest to both sexes?
5. Is material on culture included? How is this material, if included, presented?
6. Is material which exemplifies stereotyped attitudes included? How is this material, if included, presented or dealt with?
7. To what extent is gender-equity demonstrated in the course materials? Are gender-stereotyping and linguistic bias avoided, wherever possible, in the course materials?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Within the context of the research questions formulated above, the study intends to determine the status of *College English*, Volume 1, in terms of its adequacy in promoting gender- equity in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). Thus, within this general objective, the study specifically tries to:

1. examine whether the course materials ensure just and fair treatment of both sexes, or ensure if the course materials encourage equality of participation of both sexes in the full range of classroom tasks or activities;
2. assess the extent to which discriminatory language use and stereotypical images are avoided in any of the course materials. That is, to investigate the extent of the effort made to present non-biased language usage in line with what is recommended by guidelines (for example, Schmitz,1984;Women in EFL Materials, 1991;Frank and Treichler, 1989; Warren,1986)for the equal treatment of both sexes.
3. investigate the extent to which both sexes are equally represented in the teaching materials involved in the course book;
4. examine the extent to which the language teaching approach adopted, is effective enough to ensure gender-equity in TEFL.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The extent to which TEFL has hitherto failed to pursue the aim of gender-equity has received increased attention in the field of modern foreign language teaching. This being the case, a number of studies (e.g. Hartman and Judd,1978;Porreca,1984;Gupta and Yin,1990, etc) insist on the need to consistently assess the contents of foreign language teaching materials to make certain that they are efficient enough in contributing to the required effect.

Accordingly, studies addressed to assessing gender bias in textbooks have reported significant findings. However, gender analysis of textbooks in Ethiopia is a recent phenomenon. Hence, studies on gender bias in textbooks are limited in scope as they are confined to primary school textbooks (e.g. Anbesu, 1991). Apart from this limitation, studies, specifically addressed to foreign language textbooks in their own right, seem non-existent.

In light of this, this study, it is hoped, would promote gender study by extending the scope of textbook analysis in general, and of foreign language textbooks in particular. In addition, the findings of the study are assumed to

1. shed light on the underlying gender related factors that may contribute to failure or success of foreign language textbooks to achieve effective learning;
2. show the position of *College English* in the effort being made to produce EFL course books for effective and enjoyable learning. Along with this, through this study, to point out the pride that authors of *College English* should deserve for the talent and effort they put into producing materials for effective learning;
3. provide reliable response to questions related to the adequacy of the course book in bridging the gender-gap in EFL learning;
4. enable one to identify and consider gender constraints that may slip into EFL teaching materials. Thus, to arouse awareness of the responsibility we are to bear by being directly involved in tackling the grave problems associated with gender;
5. stimulate interest in the assessment of course books in general, and foreign language course books in particular. Thus, the study will serve as a spring-board for further studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 AN OVERVIEW

As the review of literature indicates, textbook content analyses such as the one undertaken in this study, “ have a long history dating back at least to the Renaissance” (Commeyras and Alvermann, 1996:34). Analyses of textbook content have varied widely according to the concern of the researchers. Some studies have tended to deal with feminist ideology. Thus, they have interpreted gender-equity in light of the realization of equal rights for women and men as granted by their respective constitutions. For instance, Hellinger’s (1980:267) study has been targeted at examining English language textbooks used in German schools in light of their contributions towards the realization of equal rights for both sexes as laid down in the constitution of the Federal German Republic. Similarly, Gupta and Yin (1990) have examined the representation of females in English language textbooks used in the Singapore Primary Schools, “in comparison with the Singapore Government’s policy on women’s role in society” (p.19).

Other studies have primarily tended to focus on certain pedagogical themes that are relevant to understanding their contributions towards the realization of gender-equity as a basis for effective learning objectives. For instance, Poulou (1997), in her recent study, has attempted to observe “ if and how [gender] differences can affect negatively the pedagogical value and goals of textbook dialogues”(p.68).

In carrying out textbook content analysis, some studies have concentrated on examining whether the portrayal and representation of women in textbooks reflect gender-equity. In doing this, they have relied on an analysis that involved comparisons between the number of male and female characters in selected passages /texts (e.g. Hartman and Judd, 1978; Gupta and Yin, 1990), dialogues (e.g. Poulou, 1997), linguistic features (i.e. grammar), tasks/ activities, illustrations (e.g. Gaff, 1982). Accordingly, the findings from such studies have revealed the many ways in which gender differences are manifested in textbooks.

Gender analysis in *College English* is intended to examine the extent to which the course book ensures gender-equity in learning English as a foreign language. In doing so, the study entirely relies on qualitative analysis of selected aspects of the course materials. Thus, it should not be interpreted in light of the feminist theme that is particularly relevant to understanding how textbook language and content socially construct gender.

In this study, insights from the various studies reviewed are used as found relevant and appropriate to meet the objectives of the study. Of all textbook analyses reviewed, those concerned with examining if and how gender differences in textbook content and language affect effective language learning, are of particular interest to this study.

As the review of literature indicates, foreign language teaching textbooks involve texts and dialogues for the purpose of creating linguistic and cultural context within which students can practise language structures and skills (Hedge, 1985; Florent, 1989; Poulou, 1997), for providing factual information about the target culture and for serving affective goals, i.e. for motivating learners by stimulating their interests. In addition, FL textbooks contain a variety of tasks or activities and illustrative materials.

One of the most frequently observed discriminatory attitude, according to Schmitz (1984:7) is the invisibility of female characters in texts. For instance, Hellinger's (1980) analysis of 131 texts from three ELT textbooks has shown that men participated in over 93 percent of the texts, while only 30 percent of the texts included women. In addition, it was noted that 80 percent of the speakers in the stories' of these texts were male(p.270).

Apart from invisibility, the other most pervasive bias observed is the portrayal of women and men into stereotypical roles. In Pakistan, Shaheed and Mumtaz's (1993) content analysis of images of women in school and college texts has revealed that women were portrayed solely in their domestic roles. They were shown in "cooking ,cleaning, bearing and rearing children and serving as domestic help" (p.69).

This does not seem to be peculiar to the Pakistan context. Other studies in different countries have reported the same research findings. Hartman and Judd(1978) on ESL texts in America; Hellinger(1980) on English language textbooks in German secondary schools; Gaff(1982) on French textbooks in Britain; Porreca(1984) in the United States; Gupta and Yin (1990) on English readers in Singapore primary schools have, in one way or another, shown that "house work and childcare as female-exclusive domains" (Porreca,1984:712). It is women who predominantly cook, bake, take care of and clean their homes, look after children. " If men are assigned household tasks at all, they consist, without exception, for instance, of painting, gardening" (Hartman and Judd,1978:386).

The allocation of occupational roles on gender basis seems typical in texts. Evidence from research has shown that occupations assigned to men are quite diverse and a number of the jobs are those considered as prestigious, such as scientists, explorers, bankers, engineers.

and “patronizing” (Hartman and Judd: Ibid.) were associated with men. On the contrary, attributes such as “cunning,” “careless,” “non-cooperative” (Shaheed and Mumtaz: Ibid.) were associated with women.

In addition, studies have pointed out that in the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, sentences in examples and exercises revealed stereotypical patterns. For instance, Hartman and Judd (1978) have reported that in examples and exercises, male referents heavily outnumbered the female referents (p.384). In their report, the ratio of male to female referents was found to be 63% to 37%, 64% to 36%, and 73% to 27%, in three textbooks. Based on this, they have commented that “... when a grammatical pattern is being taught, authors generally seem to opt for a male rather than a female referent” (Ibid: 385).

Gaff (1982), on the other hand, has noted that most examples and exercises devoid of real context are usually bound to reflect gender bias by providing incomplete information (p.73). Quoting examples from sentences used in grammar teaching, she points out how biased attitudes are to be reflected. “In the section on comparative and superlatives... there is one example of male/female equality; and four of male superiority- and none at all showing a woman or girl being ‘more’ anything than a man or a boy...”(p.76).

2.2.2 Linguistic Features: Generics

Studies addressed to the problem of linguistic bias in EFL textbooks have identified a number of linguistic features which discriminate against one of the sexes. One of the most widely discussed and examined linguistic feature is the generic form of the English language. Different studies based on evidence from research findings have noted that using the masculine generic constructions when the sex of the referent is unknown, to refer to people in general (e.g. man, he), has been found to function differently for women and men (Porreca, 1984:708; Frank

and Treichler, 1989:4). Men more frequently use and interpret he and man as a sex-specific than as generic. Women are more likely to avoid using he generically (Frank and Treichler:9).

Porreca notes that in DeStefano, Kuhner and Pepinsky, when children and adults were asked to read sentences containing generics (e.g. “ A working person pays his own way.”) and then choose a picture to indicate “ whom the sentence is talking about,” men and boys tended to choose male referents and women and girls tended to choose gender-indefinite or inclusive referents (Porreca: Ibid.). Similarly, according to Frank and Treichler, Shepelak, Ogden, and Tobin-Bennett “found that elementary, high school, and college students interpret job descriptions written with generic he or man as intended for men only ” (p.8). Thus, it is confirmed that the masculine bias in language reflects and reinforces the gender bias inherent in societies.

Other studies interested in examining the extent to which such linguistic bias is manifested in textbooks have found that masculine generic forms predominate in many of the textbooks analysed. For instance, in Porreca,(1984) a total number of 383 instances of masculine generic usage was found, averaging 25 instances per textbook. Among the 15 textbooks analysed, two textbooks were found to have the highest number (i.e.95 and 97) of masculine generic occurrences (p.716).

As far as the area of occurrence is concerned, Schmitz (1984:8) and Women in EFL Materials (1991:7) note that the generic constructions occur not only in texts but also in examples and exercises in vocabulary and grammar teaching, in explanatory materials, in exercise instructions, and in teacher’s guide. Additionally, gender-linked noun forms, such as postman, policeman, chairman, and other noun constructions, such as poetess, which reinforce

discrimination between the sexes are also plenty in introductory materials (which describe the textbook to the teacher and the student), and in grammar sections(Ibid.).

2.2.3 Illustrative Materials

Equally significant aspect of bias is the unfair treatment of females in pictures, involved in EFL textbooks. Hartman and Judd(1978) have pointed out that males and females are seldom treated equally. They often tend to reinforce traditional images that are reflected in the texts. For instance, in their study they have found that a picture in which a girl appears without boys, illustrates a small child crying when her dog runs off with her ball. In contrast to this passive and weak image, boys without girls are shown juggling dishes, trying to catch the reflection of the moon, and clowning in a classroom (pp.386 -387).

Moreover, in three pictures where both sexes appear, the boys take the active role-climbing a tree, rowing a boat, approaching the lions' cage at a zoo-while the girls just watch what the boys do; and one girl is shown "shrinking with fright behind her mother" (Ibid:387). Gaff's (1982) study also has revealed that pictures reflected the traditional role expectations by providing students with a series of pictures in which these illustrations showed a woman washing up, making the beds, cleaning the house, cooking, shopping and watching TV(p.76).

2.3 EQUAL PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

It is generally accepted that the goals of modern foreign language teaching includes not only linguistic proficiency but also the development of communicative abilities. To this effect, EFL textbooks provide a variety of activities, such as reading, acting dialogue's role, role-play and simulation (Byrne, 1986; Cunningsworth, 1987;Morrow and Schocker, 1987; Littlewood, 1992).

As Richards (1983:115-116) and Cunningsworth (1984:18-19;1987:47) have noted, through these activities students are supposed to practise different communicative abilities according to a given situation, task and roles of the participants. However, as the review literature indicates, this does not seem to hold true for all learners in most FL textbooks. For instance, Poulou (1997) has recently analysed mixed-sex dialogues in two textbooks used for teaching Greek as a foreign language, to examine gender differences in a) amount of speech (number of utterances), b) number of initiating utterances and final utterances, c) language functions.

In her study, the results have shown imbalances in all the three categories of investigation. Regarding “amount of speech”, women produced fewer utterances (a total number of 126) than male utterances (a total number of 155). In the category of “initiating/final utterances”, men produced more initiating utterances (29 versus 17) and final utterances (30 versus 16) than women (p.70).

In the “language function” category, men had a total number of 105 “informational” language function while women had 86 of them. In the “phatic” aspect of language function, men performed a total number of 57 while women did 43 of this language function. In the “directive” aspect of language function, women scored a little better than men (i.e.26 versus 20).

What is important here is that male students predominantly enjoy the opportunity to practise a variety of language functions while female students are limited to practise few language functions. Thus, these findings comply with the view that in mixed-sex conversations males do speak more than females (Spender, 1980; Smith, 1985; Coates, 1986; Holmes, 1988). Again, these findings support Sunderland (1994);“... if men usually initiate and/or finish mixed-

sex dialogues..., male students get more practice in initiating and/or finishing conversations”(p.63). According to Poulou,

dialogues should not simply exemplify structures in which functions are released irrespective of gender but reflect the preferred structural choices of [female] and [male] in as many language functions and contexts as possible (p.71).

2.4 TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS IN ETHIOPIA

Studies on gender bias in textbooks, particularly in FL textbooks, as done in foreign countries are almost non-existent in Ethiopia. With the exception of very few studies on primary school textbooks, by a study team for gender-workshop presentations (e.g. Anbesu, 1991), the other available studies are confined to issues, such as girls’ enrolment, participation (e.g Genet Zewdie, 1991), drop-outs (e.g. Wana Leka and Tsion Dessie, 1994).

Thus, studies addressed, especially to FL teaching materials in their own right are not available to consult for this study. Nevertheless, though limited in scope, intensity and variety, the results from the content analysis of primary school textbooks, seem worth noting as they, to a certain extent, reveal the facts discussed in the review of studies in this chapter.

Anbesu, in a study entitled: “Gender Bias in Primary School Textbooks in Ethiopia”(1991) presented at gender-workshop, reported that contents of primary school textbooks in all subjects (i.e. including English) from grades 1-8, without exception, reflected bias against females: gender-referenced topics of texts were found to be male biased; textbook language and the message conveyed through stories were also biased; allocation of role and activities reflected stereotypical role patterns; representation of female characters in passages and pictures was outnumbered by male characters.

2.5 EFFECTS OF GENDER BIAS IN EFLTEXTBOOKS

Discrepancy between the two sexes in textbooks has considerable pedagogical implications in relation to the achievement of effective EFL learning. EFL scholars recognize that the images and language which are used in teaching, and the extent to which learners can identify with them, have an important effect on how well people learn. Female learners exposed to materials in which females are under represented or represented in demeaning ways are likely to learn less effectively (Women in EFL Materials:2).

Several studies provide evidence to suggest that textbooks which discriminate against females in their contents may result on the part of female learners “in their negative evaluation of the textbook and demotivation, since it may be perceived as offensive, biased, less stimulating and generally inadequate” (Poulou:72).

According to Florent (1989), as “women and men have different roles in the different societies to which EFL learners belong,” it is essential to “be sensitive to the needs of the users” of the cultural materials, because “presenting examples that are too much against the learners’ expectations will make it hard for them to understand” (p.183).

Porreca (1984) referring to Nilsen cites an unpublished study by Jenkins to provide evidence for the effect of biased text content. Jenkins’ study of three classes of students who used the Alpha One Reading material (used in California in the 1960's) “found a direct correlation between the length of time spent in [attending] the programme and the degree to which the children’s attitudes toward ‘male’ and ‘female’ activities matched those displayed in the Alpha One materials” (p.709).

Another aspect of the effects of biased textbooks refers to the overt and covert linguistic bias reflected in texts and in the ways of teaching language items. Several studies have noted a number of instances of the effects of linguistic bias. Among the most significant effects of linguistic bias is the one related to the various generics in the English language.

One of the effects of the generic masculine form is the negative effect it has on recall. According to Porreca, (1984), Crawford and English asked subjects to study two versions of an essay (one written with masculine generic forms and the other with female-inclusive forms) for 8 minutes and then gave them a recall and recognition test 48 hours later. The results from this study indicated that males had higher recall scores with the masculine generic form, while females had higher recall scores with female-inclusive forms. In light of this, Porreca comments: "These findings suggest that females are at a disadvantage in our educational system in which many materials containing masculine generic constructions are still being used and produced" (p.711).

Similarly, researchers (e.g. Bem and Bem, 1973) have found that gender cues in job advertisements influence the job preferences of high school and college students (Porreca: Ibid; Frank and Treichler: 8). When jobs were described in masculine generic terms, only 5 percent of female learners were interested in applying. When they were advertised using female-inclusive language, 25 percent of the female students were interested; and when jobs were presented in female biased terms, fully 45 percent of the female students were interested in applying for the jobs (Ibid.) . Thus, Porreca suggests that:

Sex bias and occupational stereotyping of women and men in textbooks, too, might be expected to produce similar discrepancies in male and female perceptions of their future job opportunities (Ibid.).

Additional research (e.g. McArthur and Eisen, 1976) has shown that “ children’s performance in games and tasks is influenced by gender labels” (Frank and Treichler,1989:8). Again, citing Mackay and Fulkerson, Frank and Treichler state that students make significantly fewer errors in comprehension when “ gender-inclusive pronouns replace masculine generic pronouns” (p.9). What is important here is that men do not mentally include “ women in their masculine generic constructions and women do not feel altogether comfortable about a gender system which does not clearly include them” (Porreca:710).

Furthermore, studies of native English speaking college students have shown that the generic use of words like man (assumed to include all humans), does not elicit mental images of both sexes. When told that “ man needs food and shelter to survive,” the greater majority of the students in the studies visualized only men (Women in EFL Materials:6). Thus, “foreign language learners (building language towards a native-like language competence) who perceive the word man as a term for males will be echoing the feelings of native speakers” (Ibid.).

As Poulou’s(1997) recent work has direct relation to the pedagogical aspect of gender bias, in this study, considerable coverage and attention is given. Poulou has noted two significant effects of gender bias in relation to textbook dialogues for language teaching. Poulou views gender bias a) as an obstacle to knowledge of the interactional aspect of language, and b) as an obstacle to equal opportunities for practice in classroom activities.

Poulou points out that when textbook dialogues do not exhibit the same language functions for the two sexes in the same context (as is the case in the textbook dialogues she analysed), they run the risk of giving incomplete information to students. On the other hand, as various studies (e.g.Byrne, 1986; Cunningsworth, 1987; Morrow and Schocker, 1987; Littlewood, 1992) commonly have noted, EFL textbooks involve a variety of activities, such

as reading, acting roles of dialogues, role-play, and simulation. In light of this, Poulou states that “in cases of biased dialogues the above activities are unlikely to have the same pedagogic results for all learners, since they may offer a different kind and amount of practice ”(p.71).

For instance, if students are divided into male and female students to perform the parts of male and female participants respectively, each student will most probably practise his/her sex's part (Ibid:72). Similarly, if the two sexes do not perform the same language functions in similar contexts (as is the case in the textbooks she analysed), the students will possibly be familiar only with those functions they come across while performing the tasks (Ibid.).

In addition, due to the disproportionate amount of speech allocated to the two sexes, as the case in Poulou's study (where women were found to speak less than men), female students may have less speaking practice opportunities than male students in playing the roles of dialogue participants (Ibid.). This imbalance in the kind and amount of practice gets even worse in role-plays when students are required to use the language functions they practised in the earlier activities.

In such cases, it is likely that the model that students get information from the previous practice activities can be transferred to the new performance. In other words, biases such as the ones identified in Poulou, tend to be repeated and intensified through the various learning activities. This is what usually happens in simulations and role-plays (Byrne, 1986:123-127).

According to Poulou, this repetition of biased “patterns may result on the part of female students either in their acceptance and regular use or in their negative evaluation of the textbook and demotivation since it may be perceived as offensive, biased, less stimulating and generally inadequate” (p.72).

2.6 WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF GENDER BIAS IN EFL TEXTBOOKS?

As the review literature has shown, FL textbooks at whatever educational level are in no way free from gender bias. It is noted that textual materials identify girls and women in stereotypical and traditional roles; convey demeaning and harmful gender-specific messages; include very few female characters in stories as compared to male characters. In addition, learning tasks and activities, pictures, sentences in examples and exercises, are found to reflect and reinforce societies' traditional role expectations and stereotyped attitudes. Linguistic features, such as masculine generic forms and gender-linked noun constructions, are also found to perpetuate gender bias. Likewise, language teaching approach discriminate against female learners, as equal opportunity for learner participation in practice activities is discouraged.

Thus, a number of studies have made it evident that in such unfair and unfavourable learning conditions, it is likely that female students:

- a) develop negative attitudes towards the contents of textual materials and the nature of tasks, and the inappropriate treatment of gender in classroom interaction (Rivers, 1987);
- b) develop reluctance and fear to participate in language learning activities, as the method of teaching discourages promoting confidence (Atkins, Hailom & Nuru, 1995:150).

All these constraints are believed to contribute to female-learners' poor performance and to the inhibition of effective language learning (Ibid.:18). Hence, recognizing this negative effect of gender bias, several studies have proposed a variety of constructive measures to be considered in the effort to overcoming the problem with biased FL materials and ways of teaching.

Having felt that gender bias “is so deeply engrained in our culture, our language, and our subconscious that it is difficult for us to avoid it in the production of language teaching materials”(Florent, 1989:182), studies have suggested alternative ways of dealing with gender bias in teaching foreign language. One of the alternatives, as noted in Hartman and Judd (1978:392). Schmitz (1984:7-9), Women in EFL Materials: (1991: 4-6), is avoiding stereotypical images and discriminatory language, wherever possible and using inclusive language and images which reflect a more balanced portrayal of both sexes in EFL teaching materials.

The other alternative proposed is to reduce the bias present in the materials “without sacrificing the overall educational goal of effective” foreign language teaching (Hartman and Judd 1978:383). In this respect, studies point out that to combat gender bias, “it is above all important to be aware of its presence in the materials” being used (Gaff,1982:78), and thus to recognize the “problem is the greatest step toward solving it” (Hartman and Judd,1978:390).

Thus, as quoted in Gaff (1982:78), H.Harman advises “teachers to attempt through their use of existing material, to mitigate the harm it can cause: for example, by discussing the roles that are portrayed, rather than encouraging acceptance without comment.” Additionally, Catherine (1989) and Hartman and Judd (1978), from authors’ perspective, suggest to provide explanatory note, for instance, in the teacher’s book. Catherine, for example, notes her experience as follows:

I have opted to teach what is, but adding a note in the teacher’s book saying, for instance, that “many women now find the use of man as a generic term for the human race offensive” (p.181).

by creating healthy conditions of learning; b) make language learning more interesting and reinforce the teaching point without boring the students; c) provide students with equal opportunities for practice in using the structure with different vocabulary; d) be appropriate for interpersonal communication (i.e. promote pair and group work); e) be based on context; f) promote learners' self-confidence and self-esteem; g) enable students to develop initiatives and responsibility for their own learning (Ibid.).

Such tasks and activities are expected to enable students to develop their vocabulary and grammar, language skills and communicative abilities through various interactive activities. In dealing with vocabulary and grammar, studies (e.g. Harmer, 1987; 1991; Rivers, 1987) stress that the items need to be presented and practised in a meaningful context (Atkins, Hailom & Nuru, 1995:151). In addition, in learning these language items, students should be provided with interactive and communicative activities. These activities may include interviews, group games, dialogues, poetry and drama, information gathering, etc. (Rivers, 1987).

Language-skill learning requires the integration of skills through interesting tasks. For instance, reading should be linked with purposeful oral or written communication. To this end, students should be provided with meaningful reading tasks that encourage students to communicate interactively with the language they possess. Through such tasks students are expected to develop skills such as, reading for general ideas, reading for specific information, etc. (Ibid.). Writing skills, likewise, can be developed through interactive practice activities by involving students in individual writing, group writing and class writing (Byrne, 1988.). Thus, "collaborative writing in the classroom generates discussion which encourages an effective process of writing" (Hedge, 1988:12).

Thus , it is believed that the opportunity to student participation can be increased by encouraging student/student interaction through communicative group work (Byrne,1987;Rivers,1987). It is generally accepted that designing activities for student / student interaction will give added advantage for girls to perform better (Lightbown and Spada,1993).

As evidence from research suggests, so long as teaching materials and accompanying tasks, activities and illustrative materials are designed in such a way that they promote students' participation in a relaxed and communicative atmosphere, it is likely that they stimulate the interaction that is essential to successful language learning(Rivers,1987). In light of this, it is equally likely that female learners enjoy effective language learning as equal treatment and opportunities are guaranteed.

SUMMARY

Generalizing about gender bias in FL teaching materials, findings from studies concerned with this problem have consistently shown that, despite the efforts made to illuminate the impact of gender bias and demonstrate how to overcome the problem, many foreign language textbooks still contain various aspects of bias in their contents (Porreca, 1984:718).

Considering the impact of gender bias on effective language learning, a number of studies have provided a number of solutions to overcome the problem. Nevertheless, as Hartman and Judd (1978) have noted, “Change will come too slowly unless we make an effort to further it. Stereotypical images are far too engrained on our unconscious imaginations to allow us to produce nonsexist... materials” (p.392). Thus, as Gupta and Yin (1990) put it, in order to move foreign language textbooks “in the directions seen as appropriate to current needs”, their contents need to be more closely monitored (p.48). It is, therefore, in light of this that this study attempts to examine gender bias in *College English*, Volume 1 (Atkins, Hailom & Nuru, 1996).

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

3.1 Study Target and Method

In order to determine the status of *College English* in terms of treating both sexes equally in EFL learning, the study confines itself to dealing with the “Students’ Textbook” and the “Instructor’s Manual” of the first volume. To this end, a qualitative method of analysis is employed as the nature of the contents and organization of the course dictates.

Several aspects of the course are selected for analysis on the basis of purposive sampling. This is so because the study focuses on examining specific aspects of the course which have been considered as areas where biases often occur. Thus, the contents of selected aspects of the course are reviewed and analysed through a process known as “content analysis” (Selinger, 1989:161; Gilbert, 1993:116).

In the study, various procedures for qualitative data collection and analysis are involved. The procedures are adapted from guidelines developed by Schmitz (1984), Hartman and Judd (1978), Warren (1986), Frank and Treichler (1989), Sunderland (1995), Women in EFL Materials (1991). The procedures include a number of specific questions that are capable of eliciting data for a specific category of analysis. The procedures are adapted from the above sources because they :

- 1) allow flexibility for adaptation as seen appropriate for a specific cultural context, content and organization of the course book under consideration,
- 2) incorporate guide questions and procedures of data collection and analysis suitable for a systematic qualitative research,

3.2 The Data Required, their Sources and Sampling

The data required for analysis in this study are grouped into four major categories:

1. Textual content and text treatment
2. Tasks
3. Pictorial content
4. Introductory notes.

Regarding the first category, all the reading and listening texts, with the exception of Unit 1, which is excluded from any aspect of analysis in this study (as it is an introductory unit), are taken for textual content analysis. However, for the analysis of text treatment, only Unit 3 is used because of its focus on a cultural theme.

The second category of the “tasks” is further classified into four sub-categories of data, which include: 1. grammar tasks, 2. language-skill development tasks, 3. communicative abilities development tasks, and 4. academic study practice tasks. The sub-category of grammar, involves data on the treatment of grammar aspect of the course. Thus, grammar exercises in Tasks 7, 9, 10, 17 and 18 of Unit 3 are selected. The second sub-category of the language skill tasks focuses on the participation of learners in practising the skills. Hence, language skill practice tasks involved in Unit 3 are selected.

As far as the third sub-category of the communicative abilities is concerned, the data include a) participation of learners and b) representation of learners in roles/ occupations available for a role-play. As sources of data for analysis, tasks assumed to involve learners in natural speech production (i.e. spoken language) and tasks appropriate for role-play are selected. Thus, Tasks 19, 17, and 29 of Units 2, 3, and 4, respectively are taken for investigation.

However, for the data concerned with representation of learners in tasks related to role-play, Task 19 of Unit 2 is found to be the appropriate task for this aspect of analysis.

The fourth sub-category of the academic study practice is addressed to the participation of learners in major tasks involving written discourse. Thus, to meet this requirement, selecting Task 2 of Unit 5 is found to be important.

The third category of the pictorial content focuses on data concerned with the message conveyed through illustrative materials. Hence, the illustrative materials involved in Unit 3 are selected based on the relevance of the theme of this unit for this study.

Finally, the fourth category is addressed to the introductory notes in the “Instructor’s Manual” (pp. 1-17) and include data only on “language usage” (i.e. generic and gender-linked noun constructions).

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

To collect the data for textual content analysis, first, a separate list of topics of each text (both reading and listening) that serve as primary materials for the units (Schmitz:8) is recorded in the “format” prepared for this purpose. Next, each text is reviewed and instances of issues discussed in each text is noted. For the text treatment, tasks/ activities available to deal with the text in Uni 3 are recorded in the format, along with brief account on ways of dealing with the text.

Regarding the treatment of grammar, data are collected by noting brief descriptions of instances of presentation and practice of grammar, and the categories “ real context /devoid of real context”, are recorded as the case may be. To collect the data concerned with the language

skills, first, instructions of tasks in Unit 3 are reviewed. Then instances regarding learners' participation are recorded under categories "equal opportunity/biased-favouring male learner". This is determined by referring to the task instructions. For example, if the task instructions involve gender-neutral terms (e.g. "he/she", "you", "chairperson", etc.) or expressed with "imperatives" (e.g. "work in group", etc.) "equal opportunity" is recorded. If, however, gender-biased terms (e.g. "he", "chairman", etc.) are involved, "biased" is recorded.

To collect the data for the analysis of communicative abilities, first, instructions of tasks selected for communicative activities in Units 2,3 and 4 are reviewed. Then, instances about learners' participation are noted using the same procedures as described for language skills. In addition, the data for learners' representation in role-plays are collected. First, roles/occupations identified in the "public speaking" task (i.e. Task 19 of Unit 2) are listed. Secondly, learners' representation is recorded under the "equal opportunity/ biased" categories as is done for learners' participation in the practice of language skills.

Again, to collect the data regarding the academic study practice, Task 2 of Unit 5 (i.e. "Carrying Out Survey") learners' participation is recorded following the same procedure employed for the other skills above. With respect to the data for pictorial content, first, the descriptions provided for each picture in Unit 3 are recorded. Then, the messages conveyed are noted as "free from bias/biased". This is carried out by examining the recorded descriptions, in light of the guide questions designed for pictorial content analysis.

Finally, the data related to the analysis of the instructor's manual are collected in the following ways. First, the introductory notes (pp.1-17) are reviewed and instances are recorded for the categories "biased /non-biased" language use. For instance, if language items such as "he/she"; "chairperson", etc. are identified, these are recorded as instances of "non-biased". If,

however, items such as “he”, “chairman”, etc. are observed, these instances are recorded as “biased”.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is made using, as noted in section 3.1, guide questions adapted from the sources mentioned . Thus, questions are assembled for analysing the specific data concerned. Data analysis is carried out in light of these questions, qualitatively using tables and verbal commentary descriptions. The guide questions used for data analysis include the following.

1. Do the texts (both reading and listening) discuss common current social problems (e.g. health), contemporary and controversial social issues (e.g. gender and gender-related), and others (e.g. general information, academic issues, etc)?
2. Is material exemplifying cultural and traditional stereotypes included in the course book? Is this material, if included, presented and dealt with in a discerning and sensitive manner (e.g. inviting students to discuss the stereotypes, counteracting role stereotypes through reversal of roles in role-plays, etc)?
3. Are grammar exercises presented in a real context? How? (cite examples)
4. Are both boys and girls given equal opportunity, without gender distinction, to practise
 - 4.1 the same language skills in the same context,
 - 4.2 the communicative abilities,
 - 4.3 the academic study practice activities
5. Are the roles/occupations in the role- play tasks allocated to both sexes on the basis of gender-equity without identifying girls in stereotypical roles?
6. To what extent are messages conveyed through the illustrative materials (e.g. pictures) free from gender bias?

7. Is an attempt made at using non-biased language constructions (e.g. “he/she”, “chairperson”, etc)? How does this presentation compare with the current usage recommended by guidelines for the equal treatment of both sexes?

Having analysed the different aspects of the course book, further analysis is made in order to determine the adequacy of the course book in narrowing the gender-gap in EFL learning. To this end, the following comprehensive questions are used for the analysis.

1. Does the course book present material on contemporary and controversial social issues?
2. Does the course book incorporate material exemplifying cultural and traditional stereotypes? Is this material, if included, presented in a sensitive manner?
3. Do the tasks involve both boys and girls to practise language skills, communicative skills, etc. without gender distinction?
4. How does the presentation of the course materials compare with current modern foreign language teaching approach (ie. co-operative/interactive)?
5. Does the course book contain a variety of tasks and activities for both sexes to practise the same skills regardless of their sex?
6. Do the tasks promote a fair and balanced treatment of both sexes?
7. Are vocational stereotypes avoided by encouraging the allocation of roles/occupations to both sexes in the full range of classroom activities?
8. Is an attempt made at using non-biased language constructions (e.g. “he/she”, “chairperson”, etc.) wherever possible in the course book? How does this presentation compare with current usage in the English language, ie. the usage recommended by guidelines for the equal treatment of both sexes?

Based on the above guide questions, verbal commentary descriptions about the overall nature of the course is made. Finally, the status of the course book is determined in terms of the response to the guide questions.

As can be seen in the table, texts in the category of “contemporary social problems” issues that have universal appeal are involved. For example, texts in Unit 2 discuss the danger of AIDS all over the world. Texts in Unit 5 relate nutrition and health, nutrition and national development, nutrition and problems of lactating mothers, nutrition and child growth, etc. The story of “Vanka” in Unit 7 draws an implication of the existing distance between children and parents; and the exploitation of child-labour.

Content analysis on texts in Units 4 and 6 indicates that they address issues of common interest to students irrespective of sex. Texts in Unit 4, for instance, entirely focus on academic issues which enable students to overcome challenges related to studying English. They provide alternative learning styles/ strategies for effective English language study. Texts in Unit 6 introduce scientific information about the relationship between “theory of evolution” and “genetic research”. Thus, texts in both units appeal to both sexes equally.

On the other hand, texts in Unit 3 and 7 include issues that exemplify cultural and traditional stereotypes inherent in societies. Texts in Unit 3 explicitly discuss a number of manifestations of male dominance, the role of cultural norms in role assignment to family members on the basis of gender. They indicate gender system and its relationship with marriage customs and kinship systems. “Song of Lawino” in Unit 7, conveys gender stereotype implicitly. Hence, the texts in both units introduce the nature and extent of gender-stereotype issues in its complexity.

4.1.2 Text Treatment

This analysis is particularly concerned with examining how texts that exemplify cultural and traditional stereotypes are treated. As the results of textual-content analysis (Table 1 above) indicate, texts in Units 3 and 7 exemplify cultural and traditional stereotypes. The

analysis of text treatment is made on texts in Unit 3 to examine if they are dealt with in a “discerning and sensitive manner” as noted in the guidelines (Schmitz, 1984:8)

Table 2. Manner of Text Treatment

Tasks for text treatment	INSTANCES	UNIT 3		Manner of text treatment
		Tasks	Page	
Brainstorming	. Look at the pictures on pages 48 and 50 and then answer the following questions. “Write... some cultural features of certain cultural groups you are familiar with. Compare your answers with your group.”	1	49	Discerning and Sensitive way of Treatment
	. One aspect of culture is the assigning of roles to members of a family. Are there specific roles given to members of the family...? 2. (a) In many cultures people prefer male children. Why do you think this is so? (b) What effect does this have on the children? (c) How is male dominance reflected in your experience...?	2	49	
Listening and Note - taking	... as you listen, write down the main beliefs and customs and include one aspect of unacceptable behavior related to each belief or custom.	5	54	
Reading: Critical reading	. Look at the title, the first paragraph and paragraph 5. Which words does the writer use to express his attitudes (i.e. his reaction to) what is happening to the Pokot culture?	11	64	
Vocabulary	. Grouping words into categories according to whether they are related to <u>Kinship or Marriage</u>	16	70	
Speaking and listening: Debate	... debate for and against one of the following motions related to the reading passage on culture.	17	72	
Writing	Title: “ Describe a marriage ceremony you are familiar with.”	18	73	

Accordingly, as shown in Table 2, the analysis suggests that the texts are effectively dealt with by involving students in a variety of tasks designed to provoke thinking and

discussion in relation to the theme of the unit. As can be seen in the table, students are exposed to “brainstorming” tasks, and other tasks of “listening and note-taking,” “reading,” “vocabulary,” “speaking and listening (Debating)”, and “writing.” Among the instances noted above, the brainstorming question: “How is male dominance reflected in your experience...?” is convincing evidence that the texts are effectively dealt with, as this shows the attempt to challenge gender bias.

4.1.3 Treatment of Grammar

This analysis focuses on examining whether ways of grammar presentation and practice contribute towards the purpose of confronting cultural stereotypes. Thus, the grammar treatment analysis is made based on the grammar section in Unit 3 (ie. where examples of cultural stereotypes are presented). In light of this, the grammar examples and exercises are assessed to determine if they are introduced in meaningful contexts (Rivers, 1987; Harmer, 1991). Accordingly, as can be seen in Table 3, the overall result suggests that, without exception, examples and exercises are presented and practised within the context of the theme of the unit.

to write an essay (using the grammar they come across in the unit) on a marriage ceremony they are familiar with.

4.1.4 Learners' Participation

Analysis is made on selected task instructions to investigate whether boys and girls enjoy equal opportunity to participate in practice tasks designed for language skills (i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing), communicative skills, and academic study practices. This is made evident by inference from the linguistic features used in the task instructions in relation to their adequacy in meeting the requirements of guidelines for equal treatment of both sexes (e.g. Women in EFL Materials, 1991).

Accordingly, as the overall result in Table 4 shows, there is an indication of equal opportunity for both boys and girls to participate in practising the available language items and skills.

Table 4 **Learners' Participation in Aspects of Language Study.**

Aspects of Language study	Participation	Evidence	INSTANCES	Unit	Task	Page
Language skills	Equal Opportunity	Imperative Gender-neutral	" Listen to the first part..." The speaker structures and summarizes the main points <u>s/he</u> makes...	3	5	53
Communicative skills	Equal Opportunity	Gender-neutral	(1) <u>He/she</u> will... speak... (procedure)	2	19	41
			(3) Elect a <u>chairperson</u> (Procedure)	3	17	72
		Imperative	Work in group	4	29	102
Academic Study Practices	Equal Opportunity	Imperative and Gender-neutral	<u>Greet him/her...</u>	5	2	107

As can be seen in the table, “Language skills”, “Communicative skills”, and “Academic study practice” task instructions use imperative (“Listen to the first part...” and gender-neutral patterns (e.g. “The speaker structures and summarizes the main points ‘s/he’ makes...”). In addition, for the communicative skill tasks, gender-neutral alternatives (e.g. “he/she” ...and” Elect a chairperson”) and imperatives (e.g. “work in groups”) are used. Moreover, in the academic study practice task instructions, combinations of imperative and gender-neutral expression (“Greet him/her...”) are used. Thus, this way of addressing students suggests that there is equal opportunity to practice; and it equally implies that there is a considerable effort being made to apply the guidelines for equal treatment of both sexes in EFL learning.

4.1.5 Learners’ Representation in Role- play Tasks

To analyse learners’ representation in tasks for role-play, the instruction of Task 19 in Unit 2 is examined by focusing on whether instructions involve discriminatory language (e.g. the masculine generic “he”) or not. Consequently, the overall result (as seen in Table 5) reveals that there is equal representation of both sexes in the social roles available for the role-play.

Table 5 Learners’ Representation in Role-Play Tasks.

Roles/ Occupations	Representation	Evidence	INSTANCES	Unit	Task	page
. Students and teachers in schools . Community elders . Religious leaders . Journalists . Social workers . Family planning organizations . Doctors, Nurses and other medical staff... . NGOs	Equal Representation	Imperative	. Imagine that you are going to represent one of these groups of people. . Work with your group and prepare a short talk...	2	19	41
		Gender-neutral	Procedures 1. ... The group... selects one student as their speaker. <u>He/she</u> will... speak... 3. ... The speaker makes notes that <u>he/she</u> will use...			

4.1.7 Language Use in Introductory Materials

The analysis of language use in introductory materials examines whether the language in the introductory notes of the “Instructor’s Manual” reflects the current usage of English as recommended by the guidelines for eliminating discriminatory language use. As shown in Table 7 below, the overall result indicates that there is no sign of biased language.

Table 7. Language Use in Introductory Notes in “Instructor’s Manual”

Language Use Identified	Section in the Introductory note	INSTANCES	page
Gender-neutral: Hence non-gender biased	Roles of instructors	1) Learning in this course is... measured... by <u>his/her</u> success...	5
	Being clear about aims, goals and procedures	2) ... we expect every instructor to modify these suggestions in the light of <u>his or her</u> own situation...	10

The instances stated suggest the extent to which effort is made to avoid discriminatory language use by using gender-neutral forms, such as his/her and his or her. In this sense, language use in introductory notes is compatible with the requirements of the guidelines for non-discriminatory language use (Schmitz, 1984:8; Women in EFL Materials, 1991:6-8).

4.2 Discussion of the Results

4.2.1 Textual-Content

The overall result of textual-content analysis in this study seems to be in sharp contrast to what studies hitherto documented. Studies concerned with textual-content analysis have consistently reported that in diverse settings and at whatever level, texts directly or indirectly include gender-specific messages in their contents (e.g. Conway and Bourque, 1993:1).

However, in this study, no convincing evidence is found to support these research findings. On the contrary, the results show that texts are quite typical of what is noted in other studies (e.g. Rivers, 1987; Florent, 1989) and topical guidelines (e.g. Schmitz, 1984; Women in EFL Materials, 1991). None of these latter texts directly or indirectly includes any gender-specific messages in their contents. Without exception, texts in *College English* are of common interest and appeal to both sexes.

Some texts include worthwhile topics, such as “AIDS” in Unit 2, “nutrition” in Unit 5, and “Vanka” in Unit 7. AIDS is a contemporary world-wide health problem and concerns all people regardless of their gender. Similarly, texts in the domain of “nutrition” in Unit 5, explore the complex relationship between nutrition and health, nutrition and problems of lactating mothers, nutrition and child growth, nutrition and national development, etc. They explain factors affecting nutrition along with possible means of improving people’s nutritional status. The story of “Vanka” in Unit 7 introduces other social issues related to moral obligations and child-labour exploitation. In the story, distance between the child and his grandfather, and exploitation of the child’s labour by the shoe-maker are implied. These implications seem to suggest the moral obligation expected of both children and parents, and the necessity for checking the unjust exploitation of child-labour.

Other texts in Units 4 and 6 are of some common interest to students. Texts in Unit 4 have the potential to equip students with substantial academic study practices to overcome challenges in their learning English and other subjects. Texts in Unit 6 intend to provide students with scientific information about “genetic research” and “theory of evolution” the implications and applications in people’s daily life.

In addition, texts in Unit 3 within the theme of “Culture and Values”, show concern with introducing the nature and extent of the cultural stereotypes inherent in societies, as exemplified by different cultural features and practices among the Konso and the Gurage in Ethiopia, and

the Pokot tribe in Kenya. In these texts, for instance, the listening text about the Gurage culture explicitly discusses the different aspects of male dominance, the role of cultural norms in role-assignment to family members on the basis of their gender. Moreover, in Unit 7, the poem “Song of Lawino” implicitly explores certain aspects of gender and culture with reference to behaviour patterns as reflected by Ocol (husband) and Lawino (wife). The two conflicting behaviour patterns reflected by Ocol and Lawino imply that Ocol expects his wife to respect the deep-seated cultural norms, while Lawino seems to challenge her husband’s expectation by exposing his ill-treatment towards her, and by showing her contempt for the foreign culture.

Taken as a whole, the textual content analysis has revealed that the texts are in conformity with what is suggested by the guidelines (e.g. Schmitz, 1984; Women in EFL Materials, 1991) and specialists well versed in “Women’s Studies” in languages (e.g. Florent and Catherine, 1989).

4.2.2 Text-Treatment

The text-treatment analysis examining how texts in Unit 3 exemplifying cultural stereotypes are treated, has shown that the attempt to challenge stereotypes conforms with what studies (e.g. Hartman and Judd, 1978:383; Gaff, 1982:78) and guidelines (e.g. Schmitz, 1984:8; Women in EFL Materials, 1991:5) recommend.

To increase students’ critical awareness of the stereotyped attitudes, a variety of carefully designed tasks, such as brainstorming tasks, which provoke thinking and generate discussion, are presented. In addition, language study tasks (i.e. listening, reading, speaking, writing, vocabulary and grammar) are involved and illustrative pictures are also included.

Thus, in dealing with the materials exemplifying cultural stereotypes, students, for example, are encouraged to discuss what they think about the issue, listen to a lecture and read about it, and finally write an essay about it at the end of the unit. This seems to comply with what studies suggest, for instance, discussing the stereotypes sensitively “without sacrificing the

overall educational goal of effective... teaching...” (Hartman and Judd:383) “ rather than encouraging acceptance without comment” (Harman quoted in Gaff:78).

4.2.3 Treatment of Grammar

The grammar treatment analysis is an attempt to examine whether ways of grammar presentation and practice support effective language teaching with the purpose of confronting cultural stereotypes.

A review of literature has revealed that in the majority of EFL textbooks, grammar examples and exercises reflect and reinforce gender stereotypes. For example, Gaff (1982) has reported that in teaching grammar, sentences in examples and exercises serve to reflect and reinforce stereotypes (p.76). According to Gaff, in grammar drills, where sentences are devoid of real context (as in the case of her study), it is inevitable that incomplete and superficial views of certain complex social issues are provided (Ibid.).

However, in the present study, contrary to Gaff’s findings, the results of grammar treatment analysis on the grammar tasks in Unit 3 have shown that grammar is never introduced without context. It is observed that examples and exercises are presented and practised in a number of contextualized sentences.

Grammar tasks are closely related to the overall theme treated in the unit. The tasks seem to reflect what is suggested by a number of studies (e.g. Rivers, 1987;Harmer, 1987;1991), which stress the importance of “genuine, clear contexts and situations in which new language can be presented and applications of rules can be demonstrated through interesting practice activities” (Atkins Hailom & Nuru,1995:86). Again, according to Gaff, using language in context (as is the case in *College English*) supports effective language teaching just as it breaks down cultural stereotypes (p.73). In this connection, Stein (cited in Gaff), maintains:

... in continuous texts, with context questions added to them, prejudices and inappropriate value judgements become quite apparent and therefore can be exposed and dealt with. In this way, the selections may receive the consciousness of students and teachers, and ultimately lead to discussions and critique of the material (Ibid.).

But when the grammar is presented and practised in examples or exercises devoid of context, and when the emphasis is on grammar (form) rather than on content, “the information becomes subconscious” (Ibid.). In this respect, the attempt made in *College English* at “getting students to use real English in real spoken and written discourse”(Instructor’s Manual:2) seems to be in recognition of this. This is, perhaps, because of the grammar tasks that allow students to use and extend their knowledge of grammar in activities and discussion, followed by a final writing task that enables students to use much of the grammar they have acquired in the unit (Ibid.).

4.2.4 Learners’ Participation

Studies concerned with and interested in examining gender difference in opportunity for language practice, have reported that textbooks discriminate against female learners. For instance, Poulou’s (1997) recent analysis of gender difference in practice opportunities in Greek textbooks, asserts that the dialogues in the textbooks manifest gender difference in kind and amount of practice. Female students do not enjoy equal participation with male students to practise the same language functions in similar contexts (pp.71-72).

Unlike what is reported by Poulou, the result in this study has revealed that both sexes equally enjoy the opportunity to practise the same language aspects under consideration. Analysis of linguistic features in their respective task instructions aimed at examining the extent to which language use ensures equality of learners’ participation in the full range of language study practices, has revealed that the task instructions involve language that is typical of what is recommended by the guidelines (e.g. Schmitz,1984) for non-discriminatory language use. In

light of this, it can be said that equality of participation of girls is guaranteed as far as analysis of learners' participation shows.

Furthermore, the use of "inclusive language" (Women in EFL Materials:2) such as "he/she, s/he, him/her, chairperson", etc. and "imperatives"(Florent:182) as shown in Table 4, demonstrates the possibility of fully expunging linguistic bias, as opposed to what studies(e.g. Hellinger, 1980; Gupta and Yin, 1990, etc) have reported as the failure of most textbooks analysed.

Thus, the attempt, as Gupta and Yin put it, to "move in the direction seen as appropriate to current needs "(p.48) seems to be successful.

4.2.5 Learners' Representation

As the review of literature indicates, studies (e.g. Poulou,1997)have reported that male and female students are seldom treated equally in role-plays designed for language practice. Allocation of roles to male and female students mostly reinforce the traditional gender-role stereotypes inherent in societies. For instance, Poulou has reported that females are restricted from enjoying the opportunity for equal representation in the roles of dialogues.

Opposed to the case above , in this study, analysis of linguistic features, whether they ensure gender-equity in role-representation in their respective task instructions, reveals that both sexes take part in a range of roles/occupations available for the role-play.

The avoidance of linguistic bias from the task instructions provides convincing evidence in support of this. For example, gender-neutral constructions, such as "he/she" and "imperatives" appear repeatedly in the task instructions. Unlike the failure reported in the studies noted earlier, gender-role stereotyping is effectively counteracted, and gender-equity in language learning is reflected by wisely implementing the recommendations by the "Equal Opportunities Commission" as noted in Gaff(1982:78) and Sunderland(1995). It is equally

worth noting that women's representation in social roles that have traditionally been the domains of men is acknowledged in *College English*, as results of the study have shown.

4.2.6 Pictorial Content

Studies (e.g. Hartman and Judd, 1978; Gaff, 1982) which have examined the portrayal of gender in illustrative materials have reported that, in textbooks analysed, most pictures reflect the preoccupation of texts and reinforce their messages.

Similarly, the results of the analysis on pictures in this study (ie. in *College English*) seem to be consistent with the pattern noted in Hartman and Judd (1978) and Gaff (1982). However, as might be expected, this conformity may not entail conformity in all respects and circumstances, because certain clear differences between the two observations have been noticed.

For example, in the findings of Hartman and Judd and Gaff, it is asserted that the pictures aim, primarily and more significantly, at reflecting and reinforcing the pattern of male dominance in society to further the traditional stereotypes conveyed through the contents of the texts (e.g. Gaff, 1982:73).

On the contrary, in this study, the contents of pictures analysed, though they seem to reflect the preoccupation of the texts, are, above all, intended both to help students develop their understanding of concepts related to the theme and to provoke thinking and generate discussion. They seem to be intended to effectively combat and discourage stereotyped attitudes. For instance, the notes in Table 6 clearly conform with what is a widely accepted strategy for dealing with cultural stereotypes.

4.2.7 Language Use

The review of literature has revealed that EFL textbooks are in no way free from linguistic bias (i.e. usually manifested by the use of the generic constructions). According to

studies, with the exception of the very few incomplete success in avoiding generics, almost all textbooks are found to fall far short of fully avoiding discriminatory language use (e.g. Gaff:76).

Unlike what is reported above, results of the linguistic analysis in the introductory notes in the Instructor's Manual, reveal that discriminatory language use is successfully avoided by using alternative non-biased language, such as "he/she, his/her, his or her,"etc, which is consistent with what is recommended by guidelines (e.g Schmitz, 1984; V.L. Warren,1986;Frank and Treichler, 1989; Women in EFL Materials, 1991).

Generally, in the review literature in Chapter 2, a number of studies (e.g. Hartman and Judd,1978:392;Hellinger,1980:267;Gaff,1982:71;Porreca,1984:718; Poulou,1997:68) have indicated that the contents of the majority of textbooks are not free from gender bias. For instance, Gaff (Ibid) and Porreca (Ibid.) have reported that textbooks at whatever educational level, persist in perpetuating stereotyped views of men and women.

Other studies, however, although they recognize the failure of the textbooks in relation to alleviating the problem of gender bias, have expressed their hope that textbooks may play roles in promoting gender-equity by avoiding gender discrimination in their materials provided that there is the will and commitment towards this end (Conway and Bourque, 1993:1-2).

The over all results of our gender analysis of *College English* have revealed that the course book seems to have achieved marked success, as the shortcomings (reported in studies noted above) are redressed by fulfilling what many studies (e.g. Conway and Bourque) have suggested.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary and Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to determine the status of *College English* in relation to the efforts being made to produce course materials for effective and enjoyable learning. It is attempted to examine if the course book is compatible with the goals of modern language teaching approaches, which include not only linguistic proficiency but also the development of awareness of particular contemporary social problems and complex social issues (Hellinger, 1980:274).

Based on this, texts are analysed to find out if *College English* has succeeded in including or integrating topics on contemporary social problems, of topics of common interest to learners, and of topics on complex and controversial issues. Besides, texts which exemplify cultural stereotypes are investigated for text-treatment. Grammar-treatment is examined in light of grammar presentation and practice. Equality of participation is assessed in relation to learners' opportunities to practise the various language points introduced in the course book. Moreover, the extent to which tasks for role-play ensure equal representation of the two sexes regardless of their gender is also analysed.

Furthermore, pictures are investigated for the message conveyed through their contents. Finally, linguistic features in introductory notes for eliminating discriminatory language use are analysed to determine the extent to which attempt is made at non-biased language usage in light of the current usage recommended by guidelines for non-discriminatory language use.

For the category of textual-content analysis, the study has examined all texts (reading and listening texts) used as primary materials for each unit (except Unit 1). For text-treatment,

texts in Unit 3 are analysed because they are considered to be appropriate for examining how cultural materials are dealt with. The grammar section in Unit 3 has been used for analysis for the purpose of examining the effectiveness of the language teaching approach in tackling cultural stereotypes in light of the modern approaches to grammar treatment (e.g. Harmer, 1987;1991).

To examine learners' participation, Task 5 in Unit 3 for language skill practice; Tasks 19,17 and 29 in Units 2,3, and 4 for communicative skill practice respectively; and Task 2 in Unit 5 for academic study practice are selected for analysis. Concerning learners' representation, Task 19 in Unit 2 is used as it is expected to serve as a role-play, and appropriate to examine gender-equity in role-representation. In determining the extent of learners' participation and representation, linguistic features in their respective task instructions are considered as manifestations of gender treatment.

Regarding pictorial content analysis, pictures in Unit 3 are investigated for their message, as they are found relevant with respect to the nature of the theme of the unit (example of cultural stereotypes). Finally, to examine the attempt at non- biased language usage, the introductory note in the "Instructor's Manual" (pp.1-17)is analysed as this is expected to be one of the problem areas in relation to language use (Women in EFL Materials, 1991:7).

In carrying out the analysis, different procedures adapted from topical guidelines proposed by Schmitz (1984), Women in EFL Materials (1991), etc. are used. We believe these to be appropriate for the different categories of analyses and for the nature of the course content and language teaching approach used in the course book. Based on this, each category of analyses is shown in tables accompanied by verbal descriptions. Finally, the course book is examined on the basis of the overall results obtained from each category of the analyses.

Accordingly, the results from the textual-content analysis indicate that the course book incorporates texts on topics of contemporary social problems (e.g. “AIDS” and “Nutrition”); issues of common interest to students, which are of academic and general knowledge nature (e.g. “Improving Study Practices” and “Genetics and Evolution”); and complex and controversial social issues, which have universal appeals in their nature (e.g. “Culture and Values” and “Song of Lawino”).

In the case of text-treatment, the results show that a concerted effort is made to challenge cultural stereotypes by dealing sensitively and constructively with the stereotypes through various carefully designed discussion questions which generate/provoke students’ critical thinking and awareness of the issues. Thus, this seems to reflect the concern of the authors with offering students a genuine opportunity to develop awareness of gender bias.

Regarding grammar treatment, the results reveal that grammar examples and exercises are always introduced and practised in a meaningful context. In this respect, they seem to reinforce the aim of counteracting gender-biased attitudes. This is made possible by the modern foreign language teaching approach adopted in *College English*, which encourages learners to develop grammar through real-life activities for real spoken and written discourse in English. The grammar development tasks are closely related to the theme of the unit, thus no grammar item is introduced outside the context of the theme.

As far as learners’ participation is concerned, the results demonstrate that equality of participation by both sexes in the full range of classroom activities is ensured. This is evidenced from the nature of the task instructions that are not targeted at a particular gender group, providing evidence for the effort made in implementing the recommendations of the “Equal Opportunities Commission” for gender-equity in EFL as noted in studies like Gaff(1982:78).

Concerning learners’ representation in role-play, results suggest that a reasonable representation of learners in the variety of roles or occupations is made possible. Thus, learners

are not disadvantaged because of discrepancies between provisions for the two sexes. In view of modern foreign language teaching approaches, the attempt is powerful enough to counteract gender-role stereotyping, and capable of ensuring gender-equity in learning English.

As regards the pictorial-content analysis, the results indicate that the pictures are intended to clarify and simplify messages imparted through the texts. Finally, the language usage analysis on the introductory notes in the "Instructor's Manual" shows evidence for the success of avoiding discriminatory language use by employing inclusive language such as "he/she, chairperson, imperatives," etc.

To conclude, the overall results of all categories of the analyses of *College English* concerning the implementation of gender-equity in EFL learning, seem to provide adequate evidence for the virtue of the course book in presenting materials for effective and enjoyable learning. The course book is believed to be capable of responding positively to the demand of gender-equity; and in view of modern foreign language teaching approach, there is evidence of narrowing the gender-gap in EFL learning.

The inclusion and presentation of textual materials which are balanced in their appeal to both sexes, the attempts to challenge traditional gender-role stereotyping, the success in avoiding discriminatory language use in line with the current usage recommended by guidelines can be interpreted as evidence for the claim that the course book is capable of narrowing the gender-gap in EFL learning. This being the case, then, *College English* seems to:

- a) contribute significantly to academic progress, especially to TEFL, by introducing the most effective and innovative language teaching approach,
- b) comply with the goals of modern foreign language teaching which include not only linguistic proficiency, but also the development of particular social behaviour patterns (Hellinger, 1980:274) as a means of implementing the goals of a nation. In this respect, it seems to contribute towards the realization of the aims in Ethiopia today, to create an egalitarian society that treats both sexes fairly, and

- c) play a leading role as a repository of authoritative usage and style, and of insights for people involved in all aspects of ELT publishing to produce course materials which reflect and integrate gender-equity issues in foreign language course books.

Overall, this researcher believes that the authors of *College English* should deserve to be complimented for the talent and efforts they have put into producing a course book that is effective and enjoyable; and for the great virtue it possesses to be considered as a model for efforts that are being made to produce textbooks or instructional materials necessary for the “move in the direction seen as appropriate to current needs” (Gupta and Yin, 1990:48).

Recommendations

In light of the results of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. It would be advantageous for research investigations to extend the scope of content analysis to all EFL course materials currently in use at all levels to ensure a fair and balanced treatment of both sexes in EFL learning.
2. Authors of *College English* should share their talent and experience with others who are trying to free their work from gender biases.
3. EFL curriculum development panels at various levels, teachers, women departments, and others involved in educating and creating awareness of the impact of gender-biases, may make use of *College English* as a model work. Thus, it would be advantageous:
 - a) to produce instructional materials that treat both sexes without gender difference,
 - b) to judge the relative merits of materials in relation to gender-equity in textbook or teaching material selection, and
 - c) to integrate accurate and balanced materials into foreign language course books at any level.

To reach this end, therefore, interested individuals or group of individuals should carefully and thoroughly look into the contents of *College English* for adequate and detailed information.

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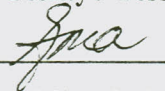
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Declaration

I, the undersigned affirm that this thesis is my original work, and that, all the works cited have been duly acknowledged.

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