

**THE EVALUATION OF ESL TEXTBOOKS:
A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

The attitudes and values of textbook authors can (sub)consciously influence the content of their textbooks. Where the culture/gender of writers and users differ, textbooks could be culture/gender-biased. The aims of this mini-dissertation were (1) to draw up criteria for ESL textbooks that are culturally inclusive, gender-representative and use a gender-neutral form of English; (2) to evaluate three ESL textbooks widely used in schools using these three groups of criteria and (3) to make suggestions to supplement the textbooks to overcome shortcomings in these three areas.

Literature on cultural inclusiveness/diversity, gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral form of English was reviewed. Forms of bias in the textbooks analysed are discussed in the light of their potential effects on learners. Preliminary criteria to evaluate textbooks for cultural inclusiveness/diversity, gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral form of English were developed based on the literature review and these criteria were then validated by means of a validation questionnaire, sent to a group of lecturers in Applied Linguistics. A five-point scale was used to rate the criteria. Twenty-eight criteria were selected after validation and were applied to evaluate the three textbooks.

Two of the textbooks were unsuccessful in terms of the criteria. Both displayed bias against formerly disadvantaged groups (Africans/Coloureds), mainly because Africans, the majority of South Africa's population, hardly appear. Both textbooks showed gender bias, as very few women appear. Lastly, both textbooks use a male-centred form of English. Thus, by excluding people from some population groups/women and using male-centred English, these textbooks render these groups and their participation in society invisible.

However, the third textbook met most of the criteria, except that it tended to overrepresent Africans in the texts used at the expense of other formerly disadvantaged groups (Coloureds/Indians).

Where textbooks were unsuccessful in terms of the final criteria, recommendations are made for supplementation to overcome shortcomings with additional materials that are

culturally inclusive/diverse, gender-representative and use a gender-neutral form of English.

KEY WORDS: Evaluation; textbook; materials; ESL; cultural diversity; cultural inclusiveness; gender-neutral English; gender representation; sociolinguistics

OPSOMMING

Die houdings en waardes van handboekskrywers kan die inhoud van hulle handboeke (on)bewustelik beïnvloed. Handboeke kan dus kultuur-/geslagsydig wees wanneer die kultuur/geslag van skrywer en gebruiker verskil. Hierdie skripsie se doel was (1) om kriteria op te stel vir Engels Tweede Taal (ESL) handboeke wat kultureel-inklusief en geslagverteenvoerdigend is, en 'n geslagsneutrale vorm van Engels gebruik; (2) om drie ESL handboeke wat algemeen in skole gebruik word te evalueer volgens hierdie drie groepe kriteria; en (3) om voorstelle te maak oor hoe handboeke aangevul kan word om tekortkominge in hierdie drie areas te oorbrug.

Literatuur oor kulturele inklusiwiteit, geslagsverteenvoerdigheid en die gebruik van 'n geslagsneutrale vorm van Engels is bestudeer. Vorms van sydigheid in die handboeke wat ondersoek is, word bespreek in die lig van hulle moontlike uitwerking op leerders. Voorlopige kriteria om handboeke te evalueer vir kulturele inklusiwiteit, geslagsverteenvoerdigheid en die gebruik van 'n geslagsneutrale vorm van Engels is gekies op grond van die literaturoorsig. Hierdie kriteria is toe gevalideer deur 'n validasievraelys, wat aan 'n groep ervare lektore in Toegepaste Linguistiek gestuur is. 'n Vyf-puntskaal is gebruik vir tellings vir die kriteria. Agt-en-twintig kriteria is geselekteer na validering en is toegepas om die drie handboeke te evalueer.

Twee van die handboeke het nie die kriteria bevredig nie. Albei was sydig teen voormalig benadeelde groepe (Swartmense/Kleurlinge), hoofsaaklik omdat Swartmense, die meerderheid van die Suid-Afrikaanse bevolking, skaars genoem word. Albei handboeke is geslagsydig, want baie min vroue word uitgebeeld. Albei handboeke gebruik ook 'n manlik-gesentreerde vorm van Engels. Deur mense van sekere bevolkingsgroepe/vroue uit te sluit, maak hierdie handboeke hierdie groepe en hulle deelname in die samelewing onsigbaar.

Die derde handboek bevredig egter meeste van die kriteria, maar dit neig om Swartmense te oorverteenvoerdig in tekste ten koste van ander voormalig benadeelde groepe (Kleurlinge/Indiërs).

Waar handboeke nie volgens die finale kriteria geslaagd was nie, is aanbevelings gemaak oor hoe om tekortkominge te oorbrug deur aanvullende materiaal wat kultureel-inklusief en geslagsverteenvoordingend is, en 'n geslagsneutrale vorm van Engels gebruik.

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To my children

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION

Any decision on which language/s to use as the language/s of teaching and learning is a contentious issue in many countries because it represents a possible conflict of interest. In contemporary South Africa, this is probably the most sensitive aspect of language in policy. Be that as it may, many parents, perceiving English as the gateway to better education, favour English as the medium of instruction from the beginning of schooling, even if their children do not know the English language before they go to school.

South African society is diverse in terms of culture, languages, race and religion. The constitution of South Africa advocates a policy of multiculturalism, multilingualism and gender equality. The rationale for the advancement of multilingualism as a major resource is based on the notion that it affords learners opportunities to develop and value their home languages, cultures and literacies as well as other languages, cultures and literacies in this multicultural country and in international contexts. It also promotes a shared understanding of a common South African culture.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994:315-328) describe English Second Language (ESL) textbooks as an almost universal element of English Language Teaching (ELT). Teachers and learners all over the world use and rely on a variety of textbooks. However, textbooks have been criticised by some scholars for a variety of reasons. For example, Gollnick and Chinn (1998:321) are critical of the attitude of some educators who never question the validity of the content of textbooks. De Castell, Luke and Luke (1989) are critical of textbooks because some textbooks are superficial in content, they lack academic rigour and are written so that they are easy to read, but are devoid of cognitive challenge. In view of this, Sheldon (1987) urges users of textbooks to evaluate them because 'No textbook is perfect'.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As indicated above, ESL materials or textbooks play a crucial role in the teaching and learning situation (Nunan, 1991; Harmer, 1991; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Van der Walt, 1990). However, studies conducted on cultural issues in teaching and learning materials suggest that ESL materials tend to be biased in favour of the writers' cultures (Du Preez, 1983; Valdes, 1986; Scarcella, 1990; Richard-Amato & Snow, 1992). As authors are products of a certain period and climate, it is likely that the values to which they subscribe and which have influenced them will find expression in their books. Thus, the textbooks which they write can implicitly communicate values and attitudes concerning the target culture and the learners' cultures. In cases where the cultures of the writers and users are different, the messages communicated by these materials can have a negative influence on the users, as they may inculcate, among other things, racial stereotypes, ethnocentrism and other forms of cultural bias.

There are obvious reasons for using culturally inclusive textbooks/materials (Robinson (1985:100). They provide learners with exposure to other people's lives and consequently with an appreciation and an acceptance of different lifestyles and cultures. They also instil in learners a cultural versatility that will help them to meet the demands of an increasingly multicultural world.

Feminist research on textbooks (e.g. Romaine, 1994; Delamont, 1980; Spender, 1980; Streitmatter, 1994; Freeman & McElhinny, 1996) is committed to the view that schools can play a role in constructing, defining and reinforcing gender roles and gender identity. This research often expresses the view that language is made by men for men in order to represent their point of view and perpetuate it. Leard (1998) argues that power relations are revealed within the English language in its gender biases, the majority of which rest on the traditional sexual division of labour and the cultural assumption of male superiority. Both Spender (1980) and Leard (1998) argue that one of the ways in which gender bias manifests itself in the English language is through male-centred English and sexism. Both are critical of male-centred language for two reasons: it promotes discrimination against women through sexist language, and, since language is both denotative and connotative, it projects constructions of women as unequal to men.

Gupta and Lee (1990) as well as Stones (1983) note that the stereotyping of roles and the use of gender-biased language still continue in spite of efforts to curb them.

Since school textbooks are vehicles through which values and preconceived views are communicated to pupils (Du Preez 1983; Corson, 1993), McIntosh (1984) and Swan (1992) urge teachers and subject advisers to evaluate textbooks and other instructional materials. The problem, however, is that there are no set criteria for the evaluation of English Second Language (ESL) textbooks for cultural inclusivity/diversity as well as gender issues. This study therefore seeks to address this problem.

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aims of the research are:

- to draw up criteria for ESL textbooks that are culturally inclusive, gender representative and use a gender-neutral form of English;
- to evaluate a selection of currently used ESL textbooks for cultural inclusivity/diversity, gender representativity and their use of a gender-neutral form of English; and
- to make suggestions to supplement the textbooks to overcome shortcomings where these are encountered.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

In this mini-dissertation, literature on cultural inclusiveness/diversity and the use of gender-neutral English and gender representativeness is surveyed.

Based on the findings of the literature study, criteria for culturally inclusive/diverse and gender-representative textbooks as well as textbooks that use a gender-neutral form of English are drawn up. The criteria are then validated on the basis of the results of a questionnaire sent to a group of experienced lecturers in the field of linguistics. A final set of criteria based on the input of the respondents is drawn up. Three ESL textbooks were selected for evaluation (one Std 7/Grade 9, one Std 8 and one Std 9 textbook). The books selected are the ones that currently enjoy the widest use in schools in general.

The textbooks are then evaluated according to the criteria developed by the researcher. Limitations in the textbooks are pointed out and recommendations and guidelines are offered for the supplementation of the textbooks by teachers.

1.5 THE OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 examines the role of textbooks in teaching and learning. Criticism of textbooks is discussed. Reasons for the evaluation of textbooks, comments on who should evaluate textbooks as well as points to consider when evaluating textbooks are provided.

Chapter 3 surveys the literature regarding cultural inclusivity and diversity in textbooks in South Africa and overseas.

Chapter 4 surveys the literature on gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral form of English in South Africa and overseas.

Chapter 5 sets out a provisional list of the criteria that evolved from the literature study in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 6 reports on the findings of a questionnaire that was designed for the validation of the criteria and provides the final list of criteria after validation.

Chapter 7 applies the criteria to evaluate three textbooks currently in use in schools.

Chapter 8 makes suggestions on how existing textbooks may be supplemented in the classroom with additional materials that are culturally inclusive, gender-representative and use a gender-neutral form of English, so as to overcome the shortcomings of existing textbooks.

Chapter 9 concludes the study and gives a summary as well as recommendations for further research.

The appendices include the evaluation of the three ESL textbooks (Appendices A, B and C), the evaluation instrument (Appendix D) and the validation of the evaluation questionnaire (Appendix E).

CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE AND EVALUATION OF TEXTBOOKS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses different approaches and views held by scholars regarding the role of textbooks, particularly ESL textbooks. Arguments for the evaluation of textbooks are also presented.

Textbooks in general, and ESL textbooks in particular, play a central role in the teaching and learning situation in schools for both teachers and learners. Robles de Mendelez and Ostertag (1997:279) describe textbooks and other instructional or didactic materials as the common denominator of all classrooms. Hutchinson and Torres (1994:315) describe ESL textbooks as an almost universal element of ELT. Teachers and learners all over the world use and rely on a variety of textbooks. Nunan (1991:208) attributes the importance of textbooks to the fact that they are the most 'tangible' and 'visible' component of pedagogy, especially in educational contexts where no other resources are available.

2.2 TWO APPROACHES TO THE ROLE OF TEXTBOOKS

Allwright (1981:6) states that there are two different approaches held by scholars pertaining to the role of textbooks or teaching materials. They are the deficiency and the difference views. The deficiency view operates on the notion that we need teaching materials because teachers are deficient. In view of the teacher's deficiencies, textbooks or learning materials ensure that the syllabus is covered adequately and that exercises are well thought out. However, there is a danger to this approach in that it seems to suggest that the 'best' teachers would neither want nor need published materials; something that is unlikely to be true. At the other extreme, this view suggests that we have what Allwright (1981:6) calls 'teacher proof' materials. This means the materials are so perfect that no teacher would be able to teach badly while using them.

In contrast to the deficiency view, the difference view argues that the expertise required of textbook writers is very different from that required of classroom teachers. Here too, divergent viewpoints emerge. Some believe that materials reduce teachers to being mere classroom managers. For others, the availability of teaching materials frees teachers from worrying about issues pertaining to the selection of materials or designing them, so that teachers can develop the expertise needed for dealing with practical and fundamental issues relating to the fostering of language learning in the classroom setting (Allwright, 1981).

In the light of the discussion above, textbooks can be regarded as pivotal in the teaching and learning situation. There is some truth to both the deficiency and the difference approaches because both assume that decisions are best taken, acted upon and reviewed by those with relevant expertise. However, this assumption puts too much emphasis on who takes decisions without considering whether or not the best decisions have been taken. Whichever view one adopts, it is clear that teaching materials play a crucial role in the teaching and learning situation. Therefore, the selection of these instructional materials should be made carefully and should involve an all-inclusive process which takes into consideration teachers' input rather than rendering them mere recipients of a writer's decisions (Allwright, 1981; Nunan 1991; Hutchinson and Torres, 1994).

2.3 THE ROLE OF TEXTBOOKS

2.3.1 The importance of textbooks for the teacher

As mentioned in the introductory section, textbooks are undoubtedly important in the teaching situation. Hutchinson and Torres (1994:317) regard textbooks as providers of input into classroom lessons in the form of texts, activities and explanations. Although the reasons for using textbooks vary from teacher to teacher, the commonly cited reasons by teachers centre around the textbooks' facilitating role. So, for example, Hutchinson and Torres (1994:318) assert:

Textbooks save time, give direction to lessons, guide discussion, facilitate giving of homework, making teaching easier, faster, better.

In short, textbooks provide teachers with security and confidence.

2.3.2 The importance of textbooks for the learner

One of the primary means of implementing a curriculum is the use of instructional materials. Learners spend an enormous amount of their schooling time using instructional materials. A study by Scott and Schau (1985), for example, suggests that learners spend about ninety per cent of their learning time in the classroom using some sort of instructional materials. While textbooks are the items most easily identifiable as instructional materials, other items often used are workbooks, pamphlets, anthologies, dictionaries and journals. For learners, the importance of textbooks is linked to the provision of both content and management. Hutchinson and Torres (1994:318) summarise the role of the textbook thus:

Learners see textbooks as a framework or guide that helps them organise their learning both inside and outside the classroom during discussions in lessons, while doing activities and exercises, studying on their own, doing homework and preparing for tests.

As Robles de Mendelez and Ostertag (1997:281) suggest, children use didactic materials to ponder, produce and process ideas. They are necessary resources that help children acquire and shape knowledge.

2.4 CRITICISM OF TEXTBOOKS

Although textbooks are undoubtedly important due to their educational value, and their contribution to the learners' development in general (Van der Walt, 1990:193), some authors are critical of their use in schools for a variety of reasons (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; Swan, 1992; De Castel, Luke & Luke, 1989; Sheldon, 1987; Valdes, 1986). For example, Gollnick and Chinn (1998:321) argue that the problem with depending on a textbook for classroom instruction is that many educators never question the validity of its contents. Too often, educators read the information contained in textbooks as if it were unquestionably accurate. This risk is also highlighted by Swan (1992:33), who says:

The danger with ready-made textbooks is that they can seem to absolve teachers of their responsibility. Instead of participating in the day-to-day decisions that have to be made about what to teach and how to teach it, it is easy to just sit back and operate the system secure in the belief that the wise and the virtuous people who produced textbooks knew what was good for us. Unfortunately this is not the case.

Other authors such as Romaine (1994) and Valdes (1986) are critical of textbooks because, depending on the values and genders of their authors, textbooks and materials they write can convey cultural and or gender bias.

From this discussion it is clear that if they are not selected and used properly, textbooks can have a negative impact on both teachers and learners. Therefore, teachers should be active rather than passive users of textbooks.

2.5 WHY THE NEED TO EVALUATE TEXTBOOKS?

As discussed in Section 1.1, there is no perfect textbook. Therefore, it is crucial that people who use textbooks be aware of this shortcoming. This section puts forward two arguments for the evaluation of textbooks.

There is general agreement that the majority of textbooks and other materials are written by 'some higher authority' (Harmer, 1991:276), often with minimal or no teacher involvement whatsoever. The writers often include university professors, lecturers and established writers who are not necessarily teachers. The problem that results from this arrangement is that these writers are often not conversant with either the level at which the learners are, or the problems relating to the proficiency, performance and competence of the learners. Thus, the classroom teacher, because s/he is conversant with learners' problems, would play an important role in the process of writing, designing and selecting materials.

Research has shown that the majority of textbook writers are white males, while the users of textbooks are people from all races and cultures (Du Preez, 1983; Hunt, 1987; Romaine, 1994). Given the diversity among the users of textbooks, it is not surprising that some critics label textbooks as being culturally biased in favour of the writers' cultures. Thus, textbooks could unintentionally advocate values alien to those of the users. The same argument could be put forward for gender bias, since males constitute the majority of writers. In view of this, it is not surprising that some textbooks are male-centred and not gender-representative.

2.6 WHO SHOULD EVALUATE TEXTBOOKS?

Selecting a suitable coursebook or textbook is not a simple task, since many people may be involved and resistance to alternatives can be strong (Chambers, 1997:29). Ideally, it is preferable for this decision to be made by the whole teaching team. McDonough and Shaw (1993:65) observe that teachers' prerogative to choose materials may vary from totally free to extremely circumscribed. Nevertheless, the ability to evaluate textbooks and other materials effectively remains a very important professional skill for all English language teachers.

In the U.S.A., for example, how much control an educator has over instructional materials to be used in the classroom often depends on the school district or state in which s/he teaches. In twenty-four states, including the two largest – Texas and California, textbooks have to be adopted by the state before they can be used in the classroom (Starr, 1989). In some states, the teacher may have a role in selecting the textbook to be used in the classroom. However, most often, decisions involving textbook selection are made at a higher level of the education hierarchy. Thus, textbooks are assigned to teachers by those in power. In South Africa too, very few teachers participate in the selection and choice of textbooks. Often, the people responsible include subject advisers, inspectors of schools or lecturers at universities as well as curriculum committees. Sadly, teachers who are facilitators in the use of these textbooks are seldom included in the decision-making.

2.7 POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN EVALUATING TEXTBOOKS

Although some teachers do not have a choice in the selection of textbooks, in most cases, this is an area in which a teacher may make important decisions. There are some places, though, where teachers are allowed some latitude regarding the kinds of supplementary materials to be used. One of the factors that has to be taken into consideration is that classrooms nowadays have learners from diverse backgrounds and with diverse cultures studying in the same schools. In view of the diversity and multicultural reality of society, both Thompson (1993) and Morris (1983) warn teachers not to rely on the content of the resource alone, but rather to verify the nature of the didactic materials by asking whether these materials present an accurate, bias-free and

stereotype-free picture of diversity. Matsumoto-Grah (1992:105) has established seven guidelines for selecting materials that include all aspects of diversity. Although these guidelines were designed for the American situation, they could apply to the South African situation, which also happens to be diverse in a number of ways. In the use of textbooks or instructional materials, Matsumoto-Grah (1992:105) recommends that users determine whether textbooks:

- present the contributions of groups other than Euro-Americans and whether they reflect a cross-cultural perspective of what women have contributed;
- portray people, including women, across socio-economic classes and religions in a way that is free of stereotypes, such as Euro-Americans portrayed as upper-class and minorities as poor;
- depict religious issues appropriately 'when religion is integral to the context of the subject';
- give a socially balanced view of 'famous people' to include outstanding people from both the privileged and the working class;
- reflect the ethnicities and cultures of the children in the classroom and of their community;
- exhibit and include the home languages present in the classroom (for example, if the class has children who speak Spanish and French-Creole, materials in these languages should be available); and
- are at the developmental level of the children and offer challenges with opportunities to experience success.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The discussion above has attempted to highlight the important role textbooks can play in the teaching and learning situation for both teachers and learners. The discussion has also addressed the question of why textbooks should be evaluated and who should evaluate them. Since the attitudes and values of the writers are usually reflected in the textbooks they write, Du Preez (1983:13) urges all users of textbooks to evaluate them for cultural, gender and other forms of bias.

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature on cultural diversity and inclusivity in textbooks. The chapter also provides reasons for arguing for the use of culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks in schools.

Several studies have revealed that writers of books are products of certain periods and social climates (Du Preez, 1983:13; Valdes, 1986:153). Consequently, it is likely that the values to which they subscribe and which have influenced them will find expression in their books. This means that the textbooks they write can implicitly communicate values and attitudes concerning the target culture and learners' cultures. In cases where the cultures of the writers and the users are different, the biased messages communicated by these materials can have a negative influence on users, as they may inculcate, among other things, racial stereotypes, ethnocentrism and cultural bias.

In view of this, there is a need to counteract cultural bias and move towards bias-free textbooks and teaching materials. This can be done by ensuring that the content of materials used in schools is inclusive of as many cultures as possible, particularly those from which the learners originate. There are many benefits to using culturally inclusive materials (Robinson 1985:100). These include:

- providing learners with exposure to other people's lives and consequently with an appreciation and an acceptance of different lifestyles and cultures; and
- instilling in learners a cultural versatility that will help them to meet the demands of an increasingly multicultural world.

Since South African society is both multicultural and multilingual, there is no doubt that the use of culturally inclusive textbooks would be of benefit to all. Among other things, this study attempts to provide criteria by which textbooks can be evaluated for cultural diversity and inclusivity.

3.2 FINDINGS OF TEXTBOOK SURVEYS CONDUCTED TO DATE

This section reports on surveys conducted in the U.S.A. and Europe on textbooks in different fields of study. There is evidence suggesting that bias in textbooks and other instructional materials is common practice. Bias in textbooks and other instructional materials has taken many forms and can negatively affect many groups of people, such as minority ethnic groups, older people, people with special needs, and people of particular religious and sexual orientations.

During the 1960s and 1970s, considerable attention was given to school textbook bias in the U.S.A. and on the continent of Europe as well as in Britain (Cole, 1989). An analysis of textbooks was undertaken internationally in 1972 to establish what prejudices were contained in 49 reading, literature, and social studies textbooks. The analysis stimulated more research, resulting in the following findings (Du Preez, 1983:16):

- textbooks cater primarily for the white middle class;
- textbooks contain racial stereotypes;
- textbooks contain gender stereotypes; and
- there is a shortage of material that cultivates a positive self-image among children of minority groups.

In the past decade, a number of organisations such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the International Federations of Teachers' Associations and the World Federation of Teacher Unions have given serious attention to removing national prejudices from textbooks. One of the measures put in place to eradicate bias in textbooks is reciprocal reviewing of school textbooks. Here, two countries agree to scrutinise each other's textbooks in order to detect stereotyping and other forms of bias. The aim of this exercise is to encourage and motivate writers to exercise great care in the choice of words and sentiments, so as to prevent prejudices from creeping in.

In South Africa, too, some research relating to this matter has been undertaken. For example, Du Preez (1983:17) notes that South African history as interpreted in school textbooks is not free of bias. Criticism of these books in educational journals and the press has provoked diverging reactions among teachers. In subjects such as children's English readers, maths problems and science textbooks bias is still common.

3.3 FINDINGS OF TEXTBOOK ANALYSES

In this section, the findings pertaining to kinds of bias contained in textbooks are discussed. Six forms of bias have been identified in classroom materials and textbooks (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998:322; Sadker, 1991:91). They are invisibility, stereotyping, selectivity and imbalance, unreality, the fragmentation and isolation of non-dominant cultures, and linguistic bias.

3.3.1 Invisibility

Gollnick and Chinn (1998:322) define invisibility as the under-representation of micro-cultures or non-dominant cultural groups in textbooks and other material. Non-dominant groups are groups with distinct cultural patterns that differ from those of the dominant group. When specific cultural groups are invisible in teaching materials, it means that they are not included or information about them is left out. This omission, Gollnick and Chinn (1998:322) argue, implies that these groups are considered as being of less value or significance in the society concerned. Invisibility occurs most frequently for women, minority groups, the disabled, and the aged. A study by Sleeter and Grant (1991:97), which examined 47 textbooks used for Grades 1 to 8 in social studies, reading, language, arts, science and mathematics, found that Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans appear as figures on the landscape with virtually no history or contemporary ethnic experience. It was also found that no sense of ethnic diversity within each group is presented. Low-income individuals, the aged and the disabled were found to suffer the same fate in textbooks.

This omission, according to Gollnick and Chinn (1998:322), has negative effects for children who belong to under-represented cultures. The fact that there are no positive role models from their societies has a negative effect on the development of their self-esteem and it teaches them that members of their own groups are less important and less significant in society than members of the dominant group.

3.3.2 Stereotyping

A second form of bias identified in textbooks and other instructional materials is stereotyping. Gollnick and Chinn (1998:322) define stereotyping as a practice whereby traditional and rigid roles or attributes are assigned to a group. Banks (1994:117) as well as Richard-Amato and Snow (1992:75) are critical of stereotyping on the basis that it reflects a culture-bound world view in which we picture other cultures in an overly simplified manner, lumping cultural differences into exaggerated categories and then viewing all people belonging to a particular culture as possessing corresponding stereotypical traits which often carry derogatory implications. Examples of commonly held stereotypes, according to Richard-Amato and Snow (1992:75), include that Americans are all rich, informal, materialistic, and overly friendly; that Italians are passionate and demonstrative; that the British are reserved, polite, thrifty, and drink tea; or that Orientals are reserved, wise, cunning and inscrutable.

Gollnick and Chinn (1998:322) argue that the problem with perpetuating such forms of bias is that it denies the reality of individual differences and prevents readers from understanding the complexity and diversity that occurs within groups. Probably the most common occurrence of this form of bias is in the area of vocational and career choices, especially for men, women, non-dominant groups and people with disabilities. In textbooks in the U.S.A., a common example of stereotyping is vividly illustrated by pictures of community helpers which depict professionals such as physicians, lawyers and engineers as Euro-Americans, while custodians and sanitation employees are depicted as minorities. The message sent out here is a subtle but influential one, especially for children who are just beginning to form ideas about the world.

3.3.3 Imbalance and selectivity

The third form of bias, according to Gollnick and Chinn (1998:322), is imbalance and selectivity. This form of bias occurs when issues and situations are interpreted from one perspective, which is usually the perspective of the dominant group. Ideally, good textbooks should adopt a two-dimensional approach (Valdes, 1986:153). This means textbook writers should look at or interpret issues from more than one perspective. It is therefore necessary for authors of textbooks to be sensitive when they make decisions

regarding what should be included in and what should be omitted from the content of their textbooks.

Often, as authors select content to be included in textbooks, information about one group of people may be highlighted while information about another group of people may be partially or totally omitted. This usually results in the existing distortions prevalent in American history textbooks such as the one-sided way in which the relationships between the U.S. government and Native Americans are often examined (usually the government's perspective). In South African history textbooks, too, a similar form of bias is apparent, illustrated by statements such as 'Bartholomew Diaz discovered the Cape', when various indigenous peoples already lived there when Bartholomew Diaz arrived at the Cape. The statement should read 'Bartholomew Diaz was the first European to set foot in the Cape'.

3.3.4 Unreality

The fourth form of bias found in instructional materials is unreality (Gollnick and Chinn, 1998:323). Too often, textbooks treat issues of social significance in a superficial way, if at all. A report by Sleeter and Grant (1991:98) on textbooks they reviewed suggests that textbooks can convey incorrect images. For example, the textbooks they reviewed implied that there are no real issues involving sexism in the U.S.A.; that any battles for equality have been won; that the U.S.A. is not stratified on the basis of social class, that everyone is almost middle class; that there is no poverty and no great wealth. The report also highlighted the following: controversial topics are glossed over, and discussions of social movements, dissent, homosexuality, sex education, divorce and death are avoided.

Gollnick and Chinn (1998:323) are critical of this avoidance and unrealistic portrayal and coverage because it denies learners crucial information they need to recognise, understand and to conquer the problems that plague our society. The exclusion of controversial issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, sexual harassment, prejudice and discrimination in textbooks means that learners are not provided with the facts and information they need in order to handle these problems in their daily lives.

Contemporary problems concerning persons with disabilities and the aged are often disguised or omitted from textbooks. For example, in American textbooks, illustrations and discussions about Native Americans portray them in an historical context rather than a contemporary one. Furthermore, problems learners face in their lives, such as violence, lack of safety and poor living conditions are often not tackled in classroom discussions. It is ironic that the issues that are avoided in classroom textbooks are the very ones that some learners are faced with in their lives or will face in future. For the children affected, the practice of avoiding real issues creates discontinuities between home and school, thus making what these learners are taught in school irrelevant to their daily lives.

3.3.5 Fragmentation and isolation

Fragmentation is the fifth form of bias found in textbooks and instructional materials (Gollnick & Chin, 1998:323). There is a tendency for textbooks to address non-dominant groups and related issues in a fragmented and isolated manner. Often, issues, contributions and information about various groups are separated from the regular text and are discussed in sections or chapters of their own instead of integrating the information throughout the text. The inclusion of material in this fashion is very popular with writers and publishers whose sole wish is to redress the imbalances of the past. This method is preferred mainly because it is cheaper to insert pages in a text than to rewrite the materials altogether. Furthermore, by using this method, publishers appear to have accomplished their objective, because they have evidence that they have included groups formerly discriminated against.

However, isolating information often has negative connotations or messages for learners. It trivialises the importance of the material in question. As Sadker (1991:192) puts it, fragmentation and isolation imply that the history, experiences and situations of non-dominant cultural groups are somehow unrelated to those of the dominant culture and this ignores the dynamic relationship of these groups to the development of society today. Banks (1994:96) is also critical of the inclusion of ethnic content in textbooks merely as add-ons or appendages. According to Banks (1994:96), this form of inclusion of ethnic content has no value, because it does not make students rethink issues such as 'the American experience, to challenge their current assumptions, or to develop new

perspectives and insights on U.S.A. history and culture'. The argument made above applies to the South African situation as well. Banks further argues that if ethnic content is added, but viewed from an Anglo-centric perspective and point of view, a common occurrence, according to him, then ethnic stereotypes and misconceptions held by students are likely to be reinforced rather than reduced.

Fragmentation also occurs when members of a specific micro-cultural group are illustrated interacting only among themselves and never with members of the dominant culture and have little or no influence on society as a whole. Since society is multicultural and diverse in many ways, both Gollnick and Chinn (1998:324) and Banks (1994:97) argue, what is important is *how* ethnic content is integrated into textbooks and other instructional materials rather than *whether* or not it is included.

3.3.6 Linguistic bias

Finally, the last form of bias commonly found in textbooks and other materials used in the classroom is linguistic bias (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998:324). Linguistic bias can commonly be observed in older editions of textbooks. Examples of this form of bias include the lack of names from non-dominant cultural groups. Textbooks often make use of Anglo-Saxon or European names instead of Filipino names, African names or Polish names etc. In South African textbooks, English names or other European names still appear more than African names. Linguistic bias is also evident in the use of masculine pronouns (cf. 4.8.2).

3.4 SOME MEASURES TO ENSURE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN TEXTBOOKS

3.4.1 Avoid tokenistic inclusion

In response to the criticism of cultural bias, people from minority groups may be included in materials merely as a gesture, or in an attempt to give authenticity. This practice is called tokenistic inclusion or token diversity. Token diversity, according to Robles de Mendelez and Ostertag (1997:283), happens, for instance, when there is just one doll or an artefact of a given ethnic group in materials used in a classroom. Robles de

Mendelez and Ostertag (1997:283) view token diversity as way of minimising the existence of certain cultures and groups like women and the elderly. The criticism against tokenistic inclusion is based on the idea that tokenism reduces the importance and significance of the contributions and roles of a group (King, Chipman & Cruz-Janzen, 1994). Furthermore, minimal inclusion of the elements of diversity has no effect, for it does not bring about any positive change towards the recognition of the aspects of diversity, or other cultures, for that matter. In some textbooks, tokenist inclusion is evident when information about cultural minorities is relegated to an isolated section, whilst the rest of the material or textbook reflects a one-dimensional perspective. For example, materials dealing with Australian society may dismiss ethnic diversity or Aboriginality in a short statement at the beginning and nowhere else does the information appear in the textbook.

3.4.2 Lifestyle

Many textbooks tend to portray the western lifestyle as the norm. To determine whether the lifestyles of other cultural groups are included in textbooks, McIntosh (1984) urges users of textbooks to evaluate them using the following questions as guidelines:

- (a) Are all cultures represented as contributing to society and as being valid and worthwhile?
- (b) Are genuine insights given into other cultures?
- (c) Are both similarities and differences examined?
- (d) Does the material contain examples of everyday activities?
- (e) Are real events and concerns of the culture expressed and put in context?

Regarding (a), McIntosh (1984:21) argues that textbooks have a tendency to show one group as superior, more civilised and more worthy of imitation and aspiration by all members of a society. McIntosh (1984) further argues that members of non-dominant groups are often presented as imitations of the dominant groups and not as representatives of their countries of origin. Without doubt, this communicates negative messages to learners who belong to these cultural groups. Regarding (b), McIntosh (1984) argues that textbooks often contain inaccuracies and inappropriate information about other cultures. Regarding (c), McIntosh (1984) points out that textbooks often focus on differences between cultures and ignore any similarities that exist. Focusing on differences only, McIntosh (1984) argues, denies the reality that cultures are both

different and similar in many ways. Regarding (d), McIntosh (1984) sees it as important that textbooks contain examples of everyday activities because such activities serve to remove interpretations that romanticise these cultures and emphasise the exotic extreme. Regarding (e), McIntosh (1984) argues that putting real events and concerns of the culture concerned in context is justified by the fact that failure to do this may result in materials focusing on what people outside that culture deem important and thus the significance in totality of that culture is neglected.

3.4.3 Use of language

In many instances the manner in which language is used to describe members of different cultural groups can be an indicator of the feelings of the writer about the group concerned. McIntosh (1984:25) argues that language used by one group to describe another is often inappropriate and sometimes derogatory. This may result in reinforcing stereotypes. Although it may not always be possible to change existing materials, McIntosh cautions both readers and writers to be aware of inappropriate words and phrases that are derogatory or degrading to other cultures. Banks (1994:120) refers to these words or adjectives as 'loaded' words. Three examples are used to illustrate this point.

Firstly, adjectives used to describe a group or its members are often inappropriate. That includes adjectives such as 'savage', 'primitive', 'conniving', 'strange', 'lazy', 'superstitious', 'docile' or 'emotional'. These adjectives are used mostly by members of the dominant group in society to describe non-dominant groups. For example, Blacks in South Africa are often described by Whites as being 'lazy', 'primitive', 'superstitious', 'emotional' or 'savage'.

Secondly, incorrect/inappropriate terms for racial or ethnic groups can be used to refer to certain groups. Examples of racial terms used in that manner are 'Eskimo' for 'Inuit'; 'Red Indian' for 'Native American'; 'Australian' to refer only to people of Anglo-Celtic descent, thus excluding all other members of Australian society, including the 'Aborigines'; 'Niggers' for black Americans; 'Kaffirs' for black South Africans and 'Boers' for Afrikaners.

Thirdly, misleading terms or terms that are emotionally loaded are used, thereby creating a distorted image. Examples of these include terms such as 'tribe' for 'people' or 'nation' or 'group', 'massacred' instead of 'killed'.

3.4.4 Attitudes to a languages other than English

According to McIntosh (1984:28), dialogues in texts can reveal the underlying attitudes of the author, especially where references are made to a language other than English or to speakers of English as a second language. In order to reveal the attitudes of the writer, McIntosh (1984:28) challenges users of textbooks to do three things.

Firstly, readers should determine whether characters who are not fluent in English are presented as people who can communicate effectively in their home languages, and sometimes in several other languages. McIntosh (1984:28) sees this as important, because, according to him, textbooks tend to demean or mock characters who speak 'broken English' and often dismiss the fact that these people can communicate effectively in their home languages.

Secondly, readers should determine whether dialects and other forms of English are viewed as negative or inferior. This point is similar to the one mentioned above. McIntosh (1984:28) argues that there is a tendency for textbooks not to accept these forms of communication as valid living variants of the language. It is a known fact that second language speakers of English use the language differently from those who speak English as a first language (Ellis, 1994:59). This is because learners transfer structures from their first language (L1) into the target language. Even though their use of English does not equal what is regarded as 'standard' English, the English that they speak facilitates communication, hence it should be valued.

Thirdly, readers should determine whether dialogue is contrived or stilted. The ideal, according to McIntosh (1984:28), is for conversation to be authentic, valid and appropriate. The same applies to dialogues or texts in languages other than English. In addition to the point made above, Matsumoto-Grah (1992) recommends that materials in the native languages of the learners who do not speak English as a native language should be exhibited and included in the class (for example, if the class has children who

speak Xhosa or Sotho, materials in these languages should be readily available in the classroom). The presence of these languages serves to confirm that these languages, like English, are also important.

3.4.5 Sources of information

Du Preez (1983:13) argues that it is impossible to have communication which is devoid of values. So, textbooks as mass communication media are imbued with a particular set of values, for one symbolic system is chosen in preference to another. Authors themselves, Du Preez (1984) argues, are products of a certain period and social climate, thus the values to which they subscribe and which have influenced them find expression in their textbooks. This means textbooks can be subjective. However, an author or illustrator may make honest attempts to be 'objective'. In view of this, both McIntosh (1984:30) and Banks (1994:120) ask users of materials to determine what qualifies authors to deal with a specific subject.

If they are not members of the group they are describing, it should be established whether they have consulted with members of that group. Ideally, members of a particular group are the most appropriate sources of information about their own history and culture. Since they usually have first-hand experiences of the culture concerned, they are more likely to be sensitive to issues concerning that group. However, there is often a great deal of diversity in the viewpoints and opinions within any one group. Thus using information from only one source within that group may not reflect this diversity. In spite of the arguments presented above, the use of relevant sources of information which include members of the cultural group concerned is no guarantee for bias-free material, as cultural bias is not the exclusive domain of any one group or individual. Since consultation and research is easier said than done, users of textbooks should read textbooks critically.

3.4.6 Publication details

In evaluating textbooks for cultural diversity and inclusivity, McIntosh (1984:29) and Banks (1994:121) recommend that users of materials should take into consideration the date of publication of the source of information concerned. McIntosh (1984:29) states

that dated publications tend to contain all sorts of bias. So, in order to understand the point of view of the writers, the materials in textbooks should be put into their historical perspective and the attitudes and values that prevailed at the time should be taken into consideration. Derman-Sparks (1989) cautions against removing stereotyped or biased materials from use entirely. According to her, even such materials can serve as a teaching resource, although it might be advisable that they be used by the teacher alone. To ban or burn all dated (biased) materials denies the teacher as well as the learners the opportunity of using these materials constructively to assist learners in detecting and understanding cultural bias.

3.5 CONCLUSION

To sum up, there is substantial evidence that bias in textbooks used in schools existed in the past and still exists nowadays. Amongst other things, the above discussion has attempted to show that the content of some textbooks is neither culturally diverse nor culturally inclusive. As the discussion suggests, the stereotypes and prejudices that are contained in textbooks can have a detrimental effect on learners. For example, textbooks in which role models belong to the middle class only and not to low-income groups as well communicate problematic messages to the learners from these groups. To middle class learners, the textbooks communicate a positive message that what is proper and acceptable in society belongs to the middle class. By contrast, the textbook teaches learners from low-income groups that members of their groups are less important and less significant in the society than members of the dominant group. This message affects the development of these groups' self-esteem negatively and this usually results in a lack of confidence among these learners.

3.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURALLY DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE TEXTBOOKS

To conclude the chapter, the discussion above is summarised as characteristics desirable in culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks.

- Culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks should reflect the experiences of characters of different cultural backgrounds in positive roles and should have examples which

draw on different cultures, as well as illustrations of different cultural groups and their activities. In short, textbooks should have members of different cultural groups featuring visibly (cf. 3.3.1).

- Culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks should avoid stereotyping, because stereotyping denies the reality of individual differences and prevents readers from understanding the complexity and diversity that occur within a group (cf. 3.3.2).
- Writers of textbooks should exercise caution when selecting what to include or to exclude in their textbooks (cf. 3.3.3).
- Textbooks should cover adequately contemporary issues and controversial topics that affect learners rather than avoid such issues or topics or present them in a superficial way (cf. 3.3.4).
- Textbooks should integrate content about non-dominant groups within regular text instead of including it in a fragmented and isolated manner (cf. 3.3.5).
- Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias (cf. 3.3.6).
- Textbooks should avoid tokenist diversity/inclusion (cf. 3.4.1).
- Textbooks should not portray western lifestyle as the norm. The lifestyles of non-dominant groups within society should also be portrayed as valuable and worthwhile (cf. 3.4.2).
- Textbooks should avoid using loaded words or adjectives to describe members of specific cultural groups (cf. 3.4.3).
- Since there is a strong relationship between language and culture, an attempt should be made to exhibit and include the home languages of the learners present in the class (cf. 3.4.4) and
- Textbooks should not demean people who speak 'broken English' (cf. 3.4.5).
- Culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks should attempt to look at issues from more than one perspective rather than only from the perspective of the dominant group. The validity of sources of information should also be established (cf. 3.4.6).

CHAPTER 4

GENDER ISSUES IN TEXTBOOKS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter conducted a review of literature on cultural diversity and inclusiveness. Motivation for the use of culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks was also given. This chapter reviews literature regarding gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral English in the English textbooks used in schools. At the end, the characteristics of gender-representative textbooks and the characteristics of textbooks that use a gender-neutral form of English are set out.

4.2 DIFFERING VIEWS REGARDING THE CONTENT OF TEXTBOOKS ON GENDER ISSUES

In the U.S.A. different groups have become passionate about what textbooks should teach children (Sadker 1991:190). This is the case because for a long time there has been general disagreement concerning what textbooks should contain. For example, in the 1970s, fundamentalists and scientists battled over whether to include Darwinism or creationism, feminists protested against the portrayals of apron-clad women relegated to the kitchen, minorities have objected to the lack of multi-racial and multi-ethnic texts. This resulted in the issuing of guidelines for non-sexist textbooks by textbook companies and professional associations such as *The American Psychological Association*. This in turn resulted in textbooks that were more fair than their predecessors in their representation of women and minority group members.

In spite of these improvements, Sadker (1991:190) is of the opinion that women are still under-represented in textbooks.

4.3 THE CURRENT STATE OF TEXTBOOKS REGARDING GENDER REPRESENTATIVENESS

Textbooks and other instructional materials used in school tend to be conservative in the way they represent males and females at home and at work, as well as their intellectual and physical abilities. According to Corson (1993:140), there is a tendency for modern literate adults to perceive books of almost any kind for children as an intrinsic educational good, and to believe that as long as children are reading, it does not matter what they are reading. Yet, children can and do come into widespread and early contact with all sorts of bias and types of discrimination in the textbooks studied at school, which are often read by many generations of children.

Since textbooks used at school are authoritative texts of the school, they function as socialisation agents in the school. Through socialisation, which happens both at home and at school, boys and girls learn to perceive certain content areas as either 'masculine' or 'feminine'. This practice of identifying subjects in the curriculum as the turf of one gender or another (Streitmatter, 1994:91) leads to a situation where students hold high/low expectations about themselves. For example, some children, given a choice, would avoid certain content areas because they perceive them to embody characteristics that are in conflict with role expectations for their gender. Others, although they study certain subjects, still feel they are in alien territory. Many schools tend to structure the curriculum in such a fashion that it appears to be gender-neutral, since all content is taught to all learners. However, Streitmatter's (1994:90) research, which measures aspects of students' participation in schooling, demonstrates that gender differentiation persists in the choice of school subjects.

Sadker (1991:190) identifies six forms of bias which can be used to evaluate and monitor gender-bias in textbooks and other instructional materials. They are gender stereotyping, female invisibility, imbalance and selectivity, unreality, fragmentation and isolation and linguistic bias. These points are discussed below in relation to the representation of gender in textbooks.

4.4 FORMS OF GENDER BIAS IN TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

4.4.1 Female invisibility

Reading schemes, instructional materials in general and textbooks in particular tend to portray fewer females than males (Sadker, 1991; Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; Streitmatter, 1994). This exclusion of women from representation or consideration occurs in text narrative and/or illustrations. For example, although women constitute more than 51 per cent of the population of U.S.A., they represent only approximately 30 per cent of the persons and characters referred to throughout textbooks in most subject areas. English literature anthologies primarily used in high school, according to Streitmatter (1994:76), were also found to contain works by male authors and with main characters who were usually male. This pattern was also found to apply in subjects such as history, science and mathematics.

Another difference noted was that females are seldom portrayed as successful, while their male counterparts are frequently shown to be brave, adventurous and successful. The female world is centred around domestic activity and childcare. Thus, the message conveyed is that a woman's place is in the home and that little girls should spend time learning 'feminine' skills such as cooking, childcare and mending things. The invisibility of career women in instructional materials according to Streitmatter suggests that women are not as important as males, and cannot contribute as much as males can to the development of society.

Not only reading schemes, but also reading books follow a similar pattern. In books, boys do interesting things, have adventures and lead girls, particularly in play. Enid Blyton has been especially criticised for this bias. In traditional fairy stories, the problem is more acute. For example, Maccia, Coleman and Estep (1975) give an account of how princesses wait passively, even asleep, to be rescued by handsome princes on obligatory horses. Girls do not work for a living or study for a degree, but rely on their beauty for survival.

Recently though, gender representative stories in which princesses and girls are active and play meaningful roles have been written. Examples of these stories are found in titles like *Princess Polly to the Rescue* and *Lucy and the Big Bad Wolf*. In the former, it is Prince Tom who is captured by Haggis the witch, and Princess Polly recognises Tom's inability to save himself and hatches a plan to save him. In the latter, Lucy, on her way to her grandmother's house, meets the wolf on the bus, confronts and turns him to a performing dog to rescue family fortunes (Measor & Sikes, 1992).

4.4.2 Gender stereotyping

A number of studies have revealed that most materials which contain illustrations or text show males and females in situations divided according to traditional gender roles (Sadker, 1991; Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; Streitmatter, 1994). A chemistry text, for example, might show a male chemist working on an experiment in the lab while a female assistant takes care of 'housekeeping' chores. Important scientists pictured throughout the texts are almost always male, with the occasional exception of Marie Curie. However, even this isolated example of a woman scientist conforms to gender stereotyping of females. For example, Streitmatter (1994:76) notes that the most frequently used photograph of Marie Curie shows her standing to the side and lightly behind her husband, leaning for support. Thus, Streitmatter (1994:76) suggests when one is looking at the picture, the eye is drawn toward Monsieur Curie and not to Marie Curie, whom the text is about.

Streitmatter (1994:76) presents other examples of common stereotypes frequently seen in textbooks such as the portrayal of girls in situations where they are afraid, concerned with dirt and their appearance, passive and unimaginative. Boys, on the other hand, are often depicted in situations where they take active leadership roles and are heroic and strong, unafraid and creative. Adult women are assigned roles as mother and wife almost exclusively, while men feature in a variety of jobs and activities, but rarely in parenting roles. Sadker (1991) also cites common examples as including the portrayal of women as passive dependent persons defined solely in terms of their home and family roles, with men portrayed in a wide variety of occupational roles (occasionally as husbands and fathers) and as strong, assertive persons defined in terms of work outside the home.

4.4.3 Imbalance and selectivity

Sadker (1991:191) argues that one of the ways in which textbooks perpetuate bias is by presenting a single interpretation of an issue, situation or group of people. Imbalance and selectivity also occurs when the roles of women in history, for example, or their contributions to science and other fields are omitted, as when issues such as family planning or abortion are presented from a male perspective only (Grossman & Grossman, 1994:172). Sadker (1991) argues that imbalanced and selective accounts restrict student knowledge of complex issues by denying the varied perspectives that may apply to a particular situation. Through selective presentation of information, instructional materials may distort reality and ignore differing points of view. An example of distortion contained in U.S.A. history textbooks, for example, is a reference to the fact that women 'were given the vote', omitting to say that physical abuse was suffered and sacrifices were made by the leaders of 'the women's suffrage movement'.

4.4.4 Unreality

Streitmatter (1994:77) points out that textbooks tend to treat issues of social significance briefly and superficially, if at all. This unreality is indicated, amongst other things, in the portrayal of males and females only in stereotyped positions, a situation which distorts the reality that many people do all kinds of work, irrespective of gender. Streitmatter (1994) maintains that children reading about the 'typical' American family consisting of the father as a breadwinner, mother as a homemaker, and two children, usually a brother and a younger sister as the prototype, are made to question the value of their situation if it differs from that of the families depicted in these books.

4.4.5 Fragmentation and isolation

As was discussed in Section 3.3.5 (under cultural inclusivity and diversity), it is obvious that adding information in textbooks about non-dominant or less powerful groups in a society, for example, women, in a fragmented way or in separate areas in the original materials conveys negative messages to the reader about the group concerned and their activities in society. Sadker (1991:91) outlines two primary forms in which information about women in textbooks is presented. The content on non-dominant groups and

women may be physically or visually fragmented and delivered only in separate chapters e.g. 'the Bootleggers', 'the Suffragettes' or even in boxes at the side of the page with topics such as 'Ten Women Achievers in Science'.

Racial/ethnic minority members and women may be depicted as interacting only with persons like themselves, never in contact with the dominant culture. A good example to illustrate this isolated inclusion of materials is one case of a book which included Harriet Tubman, a black American activist, whose daring rescues helped hundreds of slaves escape to freedom (Streitmatter, 1994:77). Although the inclusion of Harriet served to increase the representation of women and African Americans in particular, the manner of inclusion served to trivialise the importance of the material. Thus the message sent to the reader is that the information is superfluous to the major points and the historic situations. Experiences of minorities and women are somehow unrelated to those of the dominant group (Sadker, 1991:192). This type of inclusion also ignores the dynamic relationships of these groups in the development of modern society.

4.4.6 Linguistic bias

Language is a powerful medium to convey bias in instructional materials both in blatant and subtle forms. A detailed discussion regarding this form of bias is presented in section 4.8.2.

4.5 WAYS TO ANALYSE TEXTBOOKS FOR SEXISM AND GENDER REPRESENTATIVENESS

In a brief prototype guide prepared on sexism in textbooks by some teachers of history in London, Cole (1989:67) recommends that users ask the questions below.

4.5.1 How often are women mentioned in the text?

This question is answered by counting the frequency with which women are included in texts and participate in activities. This enables users to determine whether women are visible in a text or not.

4.5.2 How often are women included in chapter headings and chapters?

By counting the frequency with which women appear in chapter headings and within chapters, and compare the numbers with those for men, one can determine whether one gender is overrepresented while the other is underrepresented. Truscott (1994:47) states that textbooks tend to overrepresent male characters while female characters tend to be underrepresented.

4.5.3 How often are women shown in illustrations?

Research by Truscott (1994:47) has revealed that textbooks in general tend to contain illustrations of males doing all sorts of things, but few women, if any, are shown in illustrations. In order to determine the frequency with which women are shown in illustrations, one would need to pay particular attention to references in which women are portrayed in relation to home/domestic life.

4.5.4 Does the textbook promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls and women by presenting more females in a positive light?

Banks (1994:119) argues that messages conveyed and norms established in textbooks can limit some children's aspirations and self-concepts. For example, Banks (1994) challenges readers to consider what might happen to a girl's self-esteem when all she reads in textbooks is that only boys perform brave and important deeds, or what might happen to a girl's self-esteem if she is not 'fair' of skin and 'slim of body'?

4.5.5 Does the textbook describe women in their own right and not as male appendages?

Stones (1983:16) is critical of descriptions such as 'the clever wife' or 'the wise daughter' as they acknowledge the identity of the female only in relation to that of another person.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The discussion presented above suggests that some textbooks are gender biased in favour of males. In addition, textbooks continue to present women in stereotypical, unreal and fragmented ways.

Although the involvement of women in society has increased dramatically, there is a suggestion that the frequency with which women are mentioned in chapter headings and appear in illustrations is lower than that of males. Some textbooks also continue to communicate the traditional view that males are the active members of society while women are the passive members of society. Stones (1983) argues that this problem is compounded by the fact that while strong evidence supports the view that non-sexist children's books have a positive influence on eliminating harmful stereotypes, schools as buyers in the textbook marketplace continue to support materials containing gender stereotypes and sexist language. Finally, some measures aimed at combating lack of representativeness in textbooks are suggested. These include promoting the development of positive self-esteem in girls and women by portraying them in positive roles and describing women in their own right rather than as male appendages.

4.7 CHARACTERISTICS OF GENDER-REPRESENTATIVE TEXTBOOKS

In this subsection, the discussion above is summarised in a point form list of the characteristics of gender-representative textbooks.

- Textbooks and other instructional materials should present women from all cultural groups and socio-economic classes in a visible manner (cf. 4.4.1).
- Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping (cf. 4.4.2)
- Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity (cf. 4.4.3).
- Textbooks should avoid unreality (cf. 4.4.4).
- Textbooks should integrate information about women throughout the text rather than add it in fragmented and isolated manner (cf. 4.4.5).
- Textbooks should mention women in their texts as many times as men (cf. 4.5.1).
- Textbooks should include as many women as men in chapter headings and chapters (cf. 4.5.2).
- Textbooks should show as many women as men in illustrations (cf. 4.5.3).

- Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls and women by presenting more females in a positive light (cf. 4.5.4).
- Textbooks should describe women in their own right and not as male appendages (cf. 4.5.5).

4.8 USE OF A GENDER-NEUTRAL FORM OF ENGLISH

4.8.1 Introduction

Use of language is an essential part of life in a classroom. Language is the medium through which learners and teachers communicate. All languages, according to Streitmatter (1994:94), represent most fully the experiences of the dominant forces of a culture and tend to limit the representation of the minority groups' experiences within that culture. The English language, like other languages in the world today, reflects male dominance and, generally speaking, subsumes female existence (Streitmatter, 1994:94).

The use of male-centred English can be traced back as far as the 18th century poet Alexander Pope and his famous quotation: 'The proper study of mankind is man'. Although this example of male chauvinism might have been unintentional, today the use of the generic masculine terms such as 'mankind' and 'man' and the generic pronouns 'he', 'him' and 'his' are associated with sexism. One of the main arguments against male-centred English is that discrimination against women is promoted through sexist language. Miller and Swift (1992:220) define sexist language as any language that expresses 'stereotyped attitudes and expectations, or assumes the inherent superiority of one sex over the other'.

Streitmatter (1994:94) provides a synthesis of a large body of research that has analysed gender dominance in the English language. According to this research, gender-differentiated attitudes and beliefs about males and females are created and reinforced due to the lack of gender balance in the structure of the language. Richardson (1989) identifies six ways in which the English language is male-centred. They are:

- the use of the generic 'he' and 'man' (linguistic bias);
- the existence of unmarked male words vs. marked female words as well as stereotyped gender and occupational roles;

- the trivialisation in the language of that which is female;
- the tendency to describe females as sexual objects or using words with a sexual connotation;
- the tendency to define women in relationships to men coupled with a lack of parallel terms that describe men and women;
- the process of pejoration of that which is female.

These six items are discussed in more detail below.

4.8.2 The generic 'he' and '-man' or the 'he/man approach'

The 'he/man' approach refers to the use of male terms to refer to both males in particular and human beings in general. Within the context of the language, females are not included as independent figures but are subordinated under that which is male. A good example to illustrate this is the use of the generic 'he' or 'man' to refer to both males and females. Romaine (1994:106) and feminist linguists view this usage of the generic 'he' and 'man' to refer to both males and females as an indirect way of excluding females. However, when the issue of using masculine words to describe males and females is presented to adults for consideration as an example of gender bias, many dismiss it as frivolous and claim that the generic usage is generally understood by all to include both genders (Streitmatter, 1994:94). Yet, according to research conducted on both adults and children, this generic interpretation does not hold. In fact, when presented with a seemingly generic usage of 'he' and 'man', people tend to visualise males rather than females, or males and females. One of the better known examples that illustrate this point is the 'Draw Early Caveman' activity. When asked to perform this activity, children do not include 'cave women' and 'cave children' in their pictures (Sadker & Sadker, 1982). In the light of such evidence, it is not surprising that the generic 'he' is so seldom interpreted by readers and hearers to be inclusive of both males and females.

Besides the generic 'he', another area in which the generic masculine term is used to refer to humans in general is the names of professions ending in '-man' as in 'postman', 'fireman', 'policeman', as well as in words or phrases such as 'man-to-man', 'prehistoric man' and address terms such as 'chairman' or 'freshman'. This biased use of language has documented negative effects. For example, Bem and Bem (1973) found that gender-biased job advertisements for positions in traditionally masculine jobs attracted

fewer female applicants than unbiased advertisements. In a series of psychological experiments, Martyna (1978b) also found that men had an easier time than women in imagining themselves as members of the category referenced by the generic 'he'. Not surprisingly, Martyna (1983:31) also found that females used the generic 'he' less often than males and more frequently turned to alternatives like 'he/she' or 'they'. In the U.S.A., the use of the generic 'he' and 'man' to refer to human beings in general, and males in particular, has led to a number of legal disputes regarding what is intended by, for example, 'a reasonable man', and whether a scholarship fund established for 'worthy young men' can also be used for women.

Some concrete measures to combat this bias in English have been taken. Regarding the 'he/man' approach, a lot of progress has been made to date to redress male-centredness in English. For example, many academic writers, newspapers, magazines and other conscientious writers in general require that submissions be written in more inclusive language. More specialised books such as the *Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers* (MLA), the *Linguistic Society of America* (LSA), the *Journal of Reading 'Some Elegant ways to make your writing gender neutral'* and the *National Council of Teachers of English* (NCTE) publications provide clear guidelines of what constitutes sexually discriminatory language and reasonable alternatives. Such changes in language, as Cameron (1990) points out, demonstrate that conventions of representation can be deconstructed and reconstructed if they are found to disadvantage groups. Of the words which serve as 'generic' referents, the ones that have received the most attention in English are the masculine pronouns 'he', 'him' and 'his' as used in the following five sentences:

- The average student is worried about his grades.
- Each student can select his own topic.
- Everyone should do his best.
- Each student will do better if he has a voice in the decision.
- When everyone contributes his own ideas the discussion will be a success.

Freeman and McElhinny (1996:225) and Leard (1998:38) propose that the following strategies be used to avoid the use of the generic masculine pronoun and the suffix 'man'.

- Drop the masculine pronoun so that the sentence, 'The average student is worried about his grades' reads 'The average student is worried about grades'.
- Rewrite the sentence in the plural so that the sentence 'Every student can select his own topic' reads 'Students can select their own topics'.
- Substitute the pronouns 'he' and 'his' with 'one' and 'one's' so that the sentence 'Everyone should do his best' reads 'One should do one's best'.
- Use 'he/she', 'his/her', in speech or writing or 's/he' in writing so that the sentence 'Each student will do better if he has a voice in the decision' reads 'Each student will do better if he/she or s/he has a voice in the decision'.
- Use 'their' when the subject is an indefinite pronoun so that the sentence 'When everyone contributes his own ideas, the discussion will be a success' reads 'When everyone contributes their ideas the discussion will be a success'.

However, there is no general consensus regarding the use of the fifth strategy. On the one hand, prescriptive grammarians and editors mark it as incorrect, saying that there is a lack of agreement in number between the pronoun 'their' and the referent 'everyone' (one is singular and the other plural). On the other hand, feminist linguists argue that there is gender disagreement if one retains the generic masculine pronoun.

Regarding the suffix 'man', more inclusive terms in use at present include:

postman	-	postal agent
policeman	-	police officer
fireman	-	fire-fighter
man-made	-	synthetic
prehistoric man	-	prehistoric humans
chairman	-	chairperson

4.8.3 Words explicitly marking the referent's profession as male or female and their association with gender roles

Professions are often preceded with a word explicitly marking the referent as female or male. This serves to identify the gender of the professional in question. For example, the unmarked term 'nurse' is often marked when the nurse is a man ('male nurse'), reflecting

the cultural assumption that nurses are women. Similarly, the terms 'lady doctor' (but not 'male doctor'), 'family man' (but not 'family woman') and 'career woman' (but not 'career man') are marked when the doctor is female 'lady doctor', 'family man' not 'family woman' and 'career woman' not 'career man' are marked to convey the same effect (Lee, 1992:111).

4.8.4 The trivialisation in the language of that which is female

A third way in which the male-centredness of the English language is demonstrated is through the trivialisation in the language of that which is female. English has a tendency to use words that hold greater weight and command respect when describing masculine people or things. Examples that illustrate this include the use of 'boy' and 'girl' to refer to adults. The word 'boy' is rarely used to refer to males who are no longer children. By contrast, adult female workers are commonly referred to as 'the girls in the office'. Other examples of words and phrases used in this manner include referring to women's conversation as 'girl talk' which implies that conversation among women is gossipy, silly or self-indulgent.

4.8.5 Use of words that describe women as sexual objects or using words with a sexual connotation

The issue of women portrayed as sexual objects is demonstrated firstly in the existence of more words for a sexually promiscuous woman than for a sexually promiscuous male. Research by Stanley (1977) has identified 220 words for a sexually promiscuous female but only 20 for a sexually promiscuous man.

Secondly, there are also a number of words, according to Streitmatter (1994:96), that at first glance appear to be gender-neutral, but when associated with a male or female person, take on very different connotations. For example, when one says, 'He's easy', the listener needs to be provided with a context in order to understand. By contrast, 'She's easy' has an unmistakable sexual meaning.

Thirdly, although many words define women in relationship to men, the parallel words that describe men do not relate men to women. For example, 'Sir' and 'Madam' have

very different meanings. The former is only a title and a mark of respect, but the latter is also used to refer to a woman who runs a brothel. Similarly, 'master' and 'mistress' have very different meanings. 'Master' has not lost its meaning of 'the head of the house', but 'mistress' has also come to have sexual connotations ('a woman involved in an illicit affair') and no longer only refers to a woman who controls a household.

Fourthly, in speaking of women as sexual objects, the words used are often associated with animals. For example, women are often referred to as 'bitch', 'fox', 'chick' and 'puss' (Richardson, 1989:7).

4.9 SEXIST PRACTICES IN NAMING AND REPRESENTATION

There are other ways in which the male-centredness of the English language can be illustrated. These include titles for men and women, surnaming practices, using gender-biased vocabulary, the addition of suffixes to denote women in professions and the use of demeaning or unpleasant words to describe women. A detailed discussion of these points is presented in this order.

4.9.1 Titles

Naming conventions and forms of address are areas in which gender-differentiated language is used. Studies conducted suggest that women are named, titled and addressed differently from men (Wardhaugh, 1994:317; Freeman & McElhinny, 1996:222; Romaine, 1994:108). For example, there is one form of address for men, 'Mr', regardless of marital status, while, for some time, the marital status of women was distinguished by 'Miss' (for a spinster) and 'Mrs' (for a married woman). The distinction, according to Freeman and McElhinny (1996:222), reflects the notion of whether or not a woman is in a supposedly exclusive heterosexual relationship. This is a strictly private issue. To address this imbalance in language use, feminists have since coined a new category ('Ms') for women who believe their marital status should be as irrelevant as that of males.

4.9.2 Surnaming practices for women

Surnaming practices for married women are another area in which gender-bias is evident. For a long time, the traditional or conservative way in which a married woman was addressed as 'Mrs', plus the husband's surname, has been the norm. Currently, there is considerable variability as to which surname a woman chooses after marriage. In this regard, there are many options. Some women retain their own surname, while others adopt the husband's surname. Some adopt a last name which is a hyphenated hybrid of their own and their husbands' surnames. Yet others use their surname in professional settings and their husband's surname in the community, church and leisure settings. I will illustrate surnaming practices using myself as an example. I am Kulukazi Soldati and I am married to Akiiki Kahimbaara. At work I am referred to as Ms Soldati-Kahimbaara, in the community and in church I am referred to as Mrs Kahimbaara.

4.10 GENDER BIAS IN VOCABULARY

Gender bias has also been identified in the vocabulary used by men and women. For example, there is a suggestion that women use colour words like 'mauve', 'magenta', 'lavender, or 'aquamarine' while men do not. Words like 'fantastic', 'charming', 'divine', 'lovely' and 'sweet' are used more often by women and very rarely by men. Women are also said to have their own vocabulary for emphasising certain effects. These include words like 'such fun', 'precious', 'exquisite', etc. (Wardhaugh, 1994).

4.11 THE '-ESS', '-ETTE' AND '-INE' SUFFIXES

It is common practice in English that when a word referring to a person is distinguished by gender, the feminine form is marked with a suffix, which at times carries the sense of a diminutive. According to Shapiro, Kramer and Hunerberg (1981:41) and Holmes (1992:337), diminutives are frequently used in our language to indicate when something is either an imitation ('leather' – 'leatherette') or small, less important ('book' – 'booklet') or female ('usherette'). So, words such as actress, usherette or poetess, are frequently interpreted as suggesting that females in these professions are not equal to their male counterparts.

However, using suffixes to mark gender seems to be declining (Graddol & Swann, 1989; Poynton, 1989). So, for example, some women refer to themselves as 'actors' rather than 'actresses' and gender-marked terms like 'stewardess' are being replaced by 'flight attendant'.

4.12 USE OF DEMEANING OR UNPLEASANT WORDS TO DESCRIBE WOMEN

It is common practice to address women using words that are demeaning or unpleasant. For example, adult women are often addressed using terms like 'babe/baby', 'chick', 'hag', 'crone', 'cow' or 'witch'. Power relations are reflected in words describing women as something men can devour, as in 'tart', 'cookie', 'pumpkin', 'cherry' or using adjectives such as 'delicious', 'delectable', 'appetising', 'fresh', 'sweet', 'peachy', etc. Mavis Cheek's novel, *Janice Gentle gets sexy* (1993), exposes this trend and Margaret Atwood's *The Edible Woman* (1980), satirises this situation. It is interesting to note that it is frowned upon to address male counterparts in this manner. Shapiro, Kramer and Hunerberg (1981:39) argue that this practice indicates how English, like many languages, mirrors the low esteem in which women are often held.

4.13 CONCLUSION

In the literature discussed above, there is overwhelming evidence that English is often male-centred. This is demonstrated in various ways, such as the use of the generic 'he' and '-man', the use of words that explicitly mark the referent as either male or female, the trivialisation of words that refer to or describe things done by females and the tendency to describe females as sexual objects using words with a sexual connotation. Male-centredness in the English language is also demonstrated in titles used by men and women, forms of address, the use of gender-biased vocabulary, the use of suffixes to mark females and the use of demeaning/unpleasant words to describe women.

Although efforts are being made to address these forms of gender bias in language, some publishers and writers continue to support materials that use gender-biased English. Since the use of gender-biased English implies and/or projects constructions of women as unequal to men, it is crucial that users of English employ, whenever possible, gender-neutral English. Leard (1998:37) and feminist linguists hope to correct the

distorted assumptions and projections that exist in society by making apparent the full participation of both sexes in all spheres of life.

4.14 CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXTBOOKS THAT EMPLOY A GENDER-NEUTRAL FORM OF ENGLISH

In this section, a summary of the discussion is provided in the form of a list of the characteristics of textbooks that employ a gender-neutral form of English.

- Avoid the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to both males and females; more inclusive terms of reference should be used (cf. 4.8.2);
- Avoid using words that explicitly mark the referent as female or male and their association with gender roles (cf. 4.8.2);
- Avoid trivialising in the language that which is female (cf. 4.8.4);
- Avoid using words that describe women as sexual objects or using words with a sexual connotation (cf. 4.8.5);
- Where no preferences are indicated, use the title 'Ms' instead of 'Miss' and 'Mrs' (cf. 4.9.1);
- Where both surnames are known, use the hyphenated surname (cf. 4.9.2) ;
- Avoid using gender-biased vocabulary (cf. 4.11);
- Avoid using suffixes to mark the feminine gender (cf. 4.12); and
- Avoid using demeaning or unpleasant words to describe women (cf. 4.13).

CHAPTER 5

CRITERIA FOR CULTURAL INCLUSION, GENDER REPRESENTATIVENESS AND THE USE OF A GENDER-NEUTRAL FORM OF ENGLISH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the characteristics of culturally diverse and inclusive textbooks as well as gender representative textbooks and textbooks that use a gender-neutral form of English are formulated into criteria and each criterion is briefly discussed.

5.2 PROVISIONAL CRITERIA FOR CULTURALLY DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE TEXTBOOKS

5.2.1 Textbooks and other instructional materials should present people from all cultural groups in a visible manner

It is difficult, if not impossible, to include all members of all different cultural groups in textbooks used at schools. However, some effort should be made to include as many as possible of the cultural groups which constitute the majority of the people who live and use the textbooks concerned. Omission of such groups can have negative implications, particularly for children who belong to the underrepresented cultures (cf. 3.3.1).

5.2.2 Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping

No two people are identical. Even with identical twins, individual differences have been noted. Since stereotyping assigns rigid and traditional attributes to a group, it denies the existence of differences, thus preventing readers from understanding the complexity and diversity that occurs within groups (cf. 3.3.2). A more honest depiction of the home, women or men as the chief wage earners in the household, women and men in non-traditional jobs, women as well as men in positions of authority, with well-paid jobs or in

prestigious occupations and men as well as women in domestic roles or sharing domestic responsibility.

5.2.3 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity

Authors of textbooks usually have some leeway regarding what to write about in their textbooks. Nowadays, though, as societies become increasingly multicultural, writers are under more pressure to make their books representative of all cultures and to refrain from highlighting one group's situation (usually that of the dominant group) at the expense of the non-dominant group (Prodromou, 1992:39) (cf. 3.3.3).

5.2.4 Textbooks should avoid superficiality/unreality

One of the goals of education as provided by the school is to equip learners with knowledge and skills that will enable them to cope with and solve problems in their lives. Textbooks should therefore avoid the tendency to evade dealing with unpleasant topics as well as contemporary problems that learners face in their lives (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). These include topics like rape, aids, poverty, racism or prejudice. Avoidance of these issues (which apply to the learners' lives) in the classroom serves to create discontinuities between home and school, thus making what learners learn at school seem irrelevant in their lives (cf. 3.3.4).

5.2.5 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation

Recently, publishers have been put under pressure to include the experiences of members of non-dominant groups in textbooks. Since rewriting textbooks is costly, many authors have tried to meet this need by adding information on these groups as add-ons or appendages, either in separate sections or in boxes (Sadker, 1991). Adding information in a fragmented and isolated manner communicates negative messages to users in that it trivialises the information in question. It also ignores the dynamic contribution made by cultural groups concerned to the development of society as it is now (cf. 3.3.5).

5.2.6 Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias

Many English textbooks have had a tendency to give English names or European names to characters from cultural groups other than those from an English background (cf. 3.3.6).

5.2.7 Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion/diversity

In order to give authenticity to texts, a number of authors have included members from non-dominant groups, but not in a genuinely inclusive spirit. Robles de Mendelez and Ostertag (1997) observe that tokenist inclusion does not promote diversity; instead it reduces the importance and significance of the contributions and roles of the groups in question (cf. 3.4.1).

5.2.8 Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle as a norm

Due to the fact the majority of writers are westerners, there has been a tendency for textbooks, on the one hand, to portray the western lifestyle as a norm and, on the other hand, to portray other lifestyles in a less positive light (cf. 3.4.2).

5.2.9 Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate words/language to describe members of different cultural groups

As pointed out in Section 3.4.3, some words or adjectives used by members of one cultural group to describe another are inappropriate, in the sense that they are derogatory and degrading. Examples of inappropriate and degrading adjectives and nouns include: 'savage', 'primitive', 'lazy', 'superstitious', 'Kaffir', 'Aborigines', 'Nigger' etc. Although writers nowadays show more sensitivity regarding use of such words, there are still textbooks that use inappropriate words. Where the original text of an extract uses such words, these should be explicitly discussed or indicated as inappropriate, dated and unacceptable.

5.2.10 Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English

Often, dialogues in texts reveal the underlying attitudes of the author, especially where references are made to a language other than English or to speakers of English as a second language (McIntosh, 1984) (cf. 3.4.4).

5.2.11 Textbooks should avoid conveying a negative attitude to 'broken' English

It is important to acknowledge that although second language speakers of English may be unable to communicate effectively in English, they are capable of communicating fluently and effectively in their home languages. Ellis (1994) explains errors second language speakers make in English as caused by the interference of their home languages in the learning of English (cf. 3.4.4)

5.3 PROVISIONAL CRITERIA FOR GENDER-REPRESENTATIVE TEXTBOOKS

5.3.1 Textbooks should ensure that women from all cultural groups are visibly and adequately represented

It is not easy to say in terms of number what constitutes adequate representation of women in textbooks. However, some kind of balance can be achieved by making sure that the numbers of women and men who appear in textbooks are equal (cf. 4.4.1).

5.3.2 Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping

Gender roles for men and women have undergone a dramatic change, compared to gender roles in the past (cf. 4.4.2). Textbooks should depict these changes. For example, mothers who are breadwinners and unemployed/house husbands should also feature in textbooks instead of only the traditional roles where all mothers stay at home while all husbands work outside the home.

5.3.3 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity

Imbalance and selectivity occur when, for example, the roles of women in history, science, etc. are omitted, as well as when issues that affect women, such as abortion, family planning or low wages for women do not feature in textbooks (cf. 4.4.3).

5.3.4 Textbooks should avoid unreality

One of the criticisms against textbooks is that they often treat issues of social significance superficially, if at all. There is also a tendency to omit or avoid dealing with contemporary problems as well as unpleasant issues. This usually distorts reality and is therefore harmful, particularly to young learners (cf. 4.4.4).

5.3.5 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation by integrating the contributions of women to society throughout the text rather than putting them in separate sections

To ensure that textbooks are inclusive of groups formerly discriminated against, such as women, the disabled, the poor, gays and lesbians, writers often add information on these groups in a fragmented and isolated manner, in most cases as add-ons or in separate boxes. As discussed in Section 4.4.5, adding information in that way is detrimental, as it trivialises the information in question.

5.3.6 Textbooks should have as many women as men in chapter headings and chapters

Research by Truscott (1994:47) has established that textbooks tend to overrepresent men in chapter headings and chapters, while women are underrepresented. To do away with the underrepresentation of women in chapter headings, textbook writers and users should compare the frequency with which the two genders appear in textbooks (cf. 4.5.2) and redress the balance.

5.3.7 Textbooks should have women adequately represented in illustrations

Like the underrepresentation of women in chapter headings, the underrepresentation of women in illustrations of textbooks can be addressed by ensuring that equal numbers of women and men appear in illustrations (cf. 4.5.3). How women are depicted is as vital as how often. Frequency and manner of depiction should not be separated

5.3.8 Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying females in a positive light

The messages conveyed and norms established in textbooks can limit some children's aspirations and self-concepts (cf. 4.5.4). Because textbooks tend to portray boys as 'brave' and 'heroic', and girls who are 'fair of skin' and 'slim of body' as having desirable characteristics, children who do not fit this category might perceive themselves as odd. This could result in the development of low self-esteem.

5.3.9 Textbooks should describe women in their own right and not as male appendages

The tendency for women to be described in relation to the men in their lives rather than in their own right has been criticised by Stones (1983). Examples that illustrate this include descriptions such as 'the clever wife', a 'wise daughter' etc. (cf. 4.5.5).

5.4 PROVISIONAL CRITERIA FOR A GENDER-NEUTRAL FORM OF ENGLISH

5.4.1 Textbooks should not use the generic 'he' and 'man' to refer to people in general, gender-sensitive alternatives should be used

The main objection to the use of the generic masculine 'he' and '-man' is based on the fact that they are often interpreted as referring to males only. More gender-sensitive alternatives, such as 's/he', 'him'/'her', one instead of 'he' and 'their' instead of 'his', can be used (cf. 4.8.2).

5.4.2 Textbooks should not use words that explicitly mark the referent's profession as either male or female

Often, when people in professions like medicine and law are referred to, a word that explicitly marks the referent as either male or female is used. Examples include 'female judge', 'female doctor', 'male nurse' or 'family man'. Freeman and McElhinny (1996:225) point out that the manner in which gender marking occurs reveals the cultural assumption that the first two are expected to be professions for males while the last two are female occupations (cf. 4.8.3).

5.4.3 Textbooks should avoid using trivialising words and language that refers to females

Descriptions such as 'the girls in the office', to refer to female adult workers in an office, and terms such as 'girl talk' to refer to women's conversation imply that women do not carry much weight and also do not command respect. The use of such terms serves to trivialise females (cf. 4.8.4).

5.4.4 Textbooks should not use words that describe women as sexual objects or use words with a sexual connotation to describe women

Words such as 'bitch' or 'slut' have an unmistakable sexual connotation. Words such as 'madam', 'mistress' or 'queen' have also lost their specific original meanings and should therefore be avoided because they suggest that women are sexual objects (cf. 4.8.5).

5.4.5 Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to describe females, both married and unmarried, rather than 'Miss' or 'Mrs'

Feminist linguists are critical of the fact that males, both married and unmarried, use the title 'Mr', while the titles for females distinguish between married ('Mrs') and unmarried ('Miss') women (cf. 4.9.1). Feminist linguists are of the opinion that just as males use 'Mr', irrespective of marital status, females too should use 'Ms'.

5.4.6 Textbooks should use surnaming that retains women's identity

Traditional surnaming practices have been criticised by feminists on the basis that they rob women of their identity after marriage. Nowadays, many options exist regarding which surname to adopt after marriage (cf. 4.9.2).

5.4.7 Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals

As already discussed in Section 4.11, using suffixes to mark female professionals has negative connotations in that suffixes may carry the sense of a diminutive which conveys a lack of seriousness (Holmes, 1992:337; Shapiro, Kramer & Hunerberg 1981:39). Therefore, the use of suffixes should be avoided.

5.4.8 Textbooks should not use demeaning or unpleasant words to describe women

It is common practice to address women using words that are demeaning or unpleasant. For example, adult women are often addressed by strangers and acquaintances alike, by using demeaning or unpleasant words such as 'baby' or 'babe', 'chick', 'hag', 'crone', 'cow', 'witch', 'tart' etc. Since it is frowned upon to address male counterparts in this manner, Shapiro, Kramer and Hunerberg (1981:39) suggest that this practice indicates how English, like many other languages, mirrors the low self-esteem in which women are often held (cf. 4.12).

5.5 CONCLUSION

To sum up, there is substantial evidence that textbooks used in schools are neither gender-representative nor use a gender-neutral form of language. There is an indication from the discussion presented above that women in textbooks are invisible, presented in stereotypic roles, the representation of women is inadequate, unreal/superficial. The little representation there is not integrated fully in textbooks. In addition to the lack of gender representativeness in textbooks, the study has also indicated that the representation of females in texts in chapter headings and in illustrations does not tally with that of males in the same textbooks.

Regarding the use of a gender-neutral form of English, this study has shown that many textbooks used in schools use a male-centred English and are sexist. This is done through the use of the generic 'he' and '-man', by using words that mark the referent's profession as either male or female, by trivialising words and language that refer to females, by using words that describe women as sexual objects, by using titles that distinguish between married and unmarried women, by using surnaming that renders married women's identity invisible, by using belittling suffixes to mark female professionals and by using demeaning or unpleasant words to describe women.

CHAPTER 6

VALIDATION OF THE CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF ESL TEXTBOOKS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to report on the validation of the proposed list of criteria. Validation was deemed necessary in order to avoid formulating criteria that reflect the researcher's bias and personal opinions.

6.2 PROCEDURE

Criteria for the evaluation of textbooks in terms of cultural diversity, gender-representativeness and use of a gender-neutral form of English were developed by the researcher. To validate the proposed criteria, questionnaires were sent to a 'panel' consisting of five experienced lecturers in Applied Linguistics. All five questionnaires were returned.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A required personal details and its completion was optional. Section B consisted of opinion questions based on the preliminary criteria. An easy-to-understand statement was made on each of the criteria. A final set of criteria based on the input of the panel was drawn up. Depending on the ratings given to each preliminary criterion by the panel, the order of importance of the criteria was also established.

6.3 FINDINGS

The average rating score of each statement was determined. The average rating of all the criteria was added up and divided by the sum total of all the criteria and multiplied by a hundred. This gave an average rating score of 92%. Thus the validators agreed to a great extent with the preliminary criteria.

The criterion with the lowest rating was 28, 'Textbooks should not convey a negative attitude towards "broken" English'. All validators expressed dissatisfaction with what they perceived as the promotion of substandard English. The criteria for which there was no common consensus were 20, 23, and 27. 20 states that 'Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals'; 23 states that 'Textbooks should use "Ms" to refer to both married and unmarried women'; and 27 states that 'Textbooks should use surnaming practices that retain women's identity after marriage'. Regarding 20, some validators indicated that the use of suffixes to mark female professions was useful, as it revealed the gender of the person in question, therefore making it easy for speakers or listeners to know whom they are addressing. Others felt that such a distinction was unfair, as suffixes like '-ess' and '-ette' trivialise and diminish women, and when they refer to occupations such as authoress or poetess, carry connotations of a lack of seriousness. This attitude, according to Holmes (1992) and Shapiro *et al.* (1981), derives from the meaning of the associated diminutive suffixes in terms such as 'laundrette' (a little laundry), and 'maisonette' (a small house). Regarding 23 and 27, some validators felt women who agreed with the two criteria indicated that they were not happy with their partners. Others supported the two criteria, stating that they promoted self-identity.

6.4 THE FINAL LIST OF CRITERIA. (THE CRITERIA ARE SET OUT IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE, BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE) (see APPENDIX E).

- 1 Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias.
- 2 Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English.
- 3 Textbooks should ensure that women are visibly and adequately represented.
- 4 Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping.
- 5 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding inclusion of different cultural groups.
- 6 Textbooks should include people from all cultural groups in a visible manner.

- 7 Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping.
- 8 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of women and men in texts.
- 9 Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion.
- 10 Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle as a norm.
- 11 Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate words or language to describe members of different cultural groups.
- 12 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups' experiences.
- 13 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of women's contributions to society.
- 14 Textbooks should not use demeaning or unpleasant terms to describe women.
- 15 Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying females in a positive light.
- 16 Textbooks should avoid using the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to people in general. Gender-neutral alternatives should be used.
- 17 Textbooks should not use words that explicitly mark the referent's profession as either male or female.
- 18 Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals.
- 19 Textbooks should describe women in their own right, not as male appendages.

- 20 Textbooks should not use words that describe women as sexual objects or use words with a sexual connotation to describe women.
- 21 Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to describe both married and unmarried females.
- 22 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face women in general.
- 23 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face the South African society in general.
- 24 Textbooks should strive for equal representation of women and men in chapter headings and chapters.
- 25 Textbooks should represent women and men equally in illustrations.
- 26 Textbooks should avoid using trivialising words or language to refer to females.
- 27 Textbooks should use surnaming that retains women's identity after marriage.
- 28 Textbooks should avoid conveying a negative attitude towards 'broken' English.

CHAPTER 7

THE EVALUATION OF THREE ESL TEXTBOOKS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Language teachers around the world use a variety of textbooks. There are numerous reasons why teachers and learners use textbooks. Whatever the reason, textbooks are a very important resource for teachers.

However, it is important for teachers to use these textbooks with caution. As discussed in 3.1, the attitudes and values of writers often influence what they write (Du Preez, 1983:13; Valdes, 1986:153). If this happens, textbooks may be biased in terms of culture, gender or the language.

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate three of the most frequently used textbooks for teaching English as a second language according to the list of criteria.

7.2 THE SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS

The selection of these textbooks was based on information received from publishers, teachers and education departments. Three ESL textbooks widely used in the country were selected. They are:

BAM, C. L., THERON, C. M. & WEBB, C. M. 1987. *Focus on English 8*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman

GRANT, A., MAWASHA, A., RALENALA, M., MLOTSHWA, J. & BRENNAN, P. 1995. *Advance with English Std 7/ Grade 9*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.

KUHN, M.J., MEIRING, S. M., SCHEFLER, B., MARAIS, E. & OOSTHUIZEN, I. I. 1987 *English in Action: Second Language Std 9*. Pretoria: De Jager-HAUM.

7.3 PROCEDURE FOR THE EVALUATION OF TEXTBOOKS

The textbooks were evaluated in accordance with the criteria established in 6.4. There were 28 criteria in total. Each of the three textbooks was evaluated and rated on the degree to which it met each of these criteria. For the rating purposes, a 5 - point scale was used.

1	2	3	4	5
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does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

If a criterion did not apply to a particular textbook, no mark was allocated and the criterion was not taken into account in the final evaluation score. (The complete evaluation instrument appears in Appendix D). This chapter gives a summary and a brief discussion of the results of these evaluations.

7.4 AN EVALUATION OF THE THREE ESL TEXTBOOKS

7.4.1 *Focus on English 8*

Focus on English consists of sixteen units and 156 pages. The content of the textbook is educationally sound and covers a range of topics. However, the textbook is not very successful with regard to cultural inclusiveness. It does not reflect the diversity of race and culture within South African society. Although Africans in South Africa constitute the majority of English second language users of textbooks, they do not appear at all in the textbook. In fact, the entire textbook is about White people, their activities and experiences. For example, activities and issues discussed in the textbook include surfing, shaping up in gyms; names (only Western names, not African names) and so forth. Very few Africans can afford these activities.

Secondly, this textbook is also not successful with regard to gender representativeness. Women rarely feature in texts used in the textbook. For example, only two women of importance (the Queen of Sheba, of biblical fame, and Dr Helen Caldicott, President of Physicians for Social Responsibility) are included in the entire textbook. By contrast,

many important men, such as Edward Jenner, Louis Pasteur, Karl Landsteiner, Roger Bannister and others feature in the textbook.

Finally, the textbook does not use a gender-neutral form of English. Throughout the textbook, the generic 'he' and '-man' are used repeatedly (cf. Unit 2, p.14 and Unit 4 pp.37 & 43, Unit 6, p.55).

More or less a quarter of the content of the textbook meets the criteria proposed.

The total score is 46%. A detailed evaluation of this textbook appears in Appendix A.

7.4.2 *Advance with English Std 7*

Advance with English consists of sixteen units and 202 pages. It covers topics ranging from culture and gender to problems facing humanity in general.

The textbook is very successful with regard to cultural inclusivity and diversity. People from different cultural groups feature in the textbook. For example, South African sporting heroes such as 'Kalamazoo' Mokone, Evelyn Tshabalala and Paula Newby-Fraser feature together with other sporting heroes from other countries, such as Diego Maradona of Argentina and Martina Navratilova of the Czech Republic.

The textbook is also very successful in respect of its coverage of contemporary problems. For example, it deals with unpleasant topics such as bullying, the use of drugs in sport and poaching. The success of *Advance with English* regarding cultural diversity/inclusivity also stems from its inclusion of the section entitled 'multilingual matters'. This section instils a sense of pride in pupils whose home languages are not English by acknowledging the fact that these languages, like English, are important.

In addition to its satisfactory coverage of cultural diversity, the textbook is also gender-representative. Women and their contributions to the fields of sports, governance, world affairs and business are adequately represented. For example, sporting heroes who are women do feature (Evelyn Tshabalala and Paula Newby-Fraser). The textbook is also

successful in terms of its coverage of problems that affect women in society, such as domestic violence and child abuse.

Lastly, the textbook is also successful with regard to the use of gender-neutral English. Unlike the other two textbooks evaluated in this study, *Advance with English* does not use the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to humans in general. The textbook is also conversant with modern trends regarding titles and surnaming practices. For example, the textbook maintains the identity of married women by using double-barrelled surnames for married women (cf. Paula Newby-Fraser p. 82).

The total score is 90%. A detailed evaluation of the textbook appears in Appendix B.

7.4.3 *English in Action Std 9*

English in Action consists of ten units and 313 pages. The content of the textbook is educationally sound, but it does not reflect the multicultural diversity of South African society. The textbook focuses mainly on experiences, activities and the way of life of White people. In short, the textbook is Eurocentric. No people from disadvantaged backgrounds appear in the textbook. Regarding languages other than English, this textbook shows an obvious bias in favour of foreign languages such as French, Latin, etc. There is no mention of African languages.

This textbook is also not gender-representative. Very few women appear in the texts used. The textbook is also superficial in that it does not deal with contemporary problems that face women in their lives. *English in Action* practices gender stereotyping. Girls and boys do different things. For example, girls are instructed to write their favourite recipes and boys are given instructions on how to prepare breakfast or milkshake. The implication here is that girls cook and boys do not.

Finally, this textbook is not successful regarding the use of a gender-neutral form of English. The textbook repeatedly uses the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to people in general. For example, words and phrases such as 'At first *he* is a *madman*' (cf. 141) are used frequently. The textbook also distinguishes between male and female professionals by using the '-ess' suffix to mark females, e.g. patron (male) and patroness (female).

Overall, only less than quarter of the textbook meets the criteria set. Thus, the textbook is unsuccessful with regard to cultural inclusivity/diversity, gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral English.

The total score is 30%. A detailed evaluation of the textbook appears in Appendix C.

7.5 SUMMARY

It is important to reiterate the statement by Sheldon (1987) that no textbook is perfect. In view of this comment, it is crucial for users of textbooks to evaluate them for cultural bias, gender bias, their use of male-centred forms of English and sexist language.

To summarise, the evaluation of three ESL textbooks revealed that two of the textbooks, namely *Focus on English* and *English in Action*, do not meet the criteria of cultural inclusiveness, gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral form of English.

Firstly, these two textbooks do not practise cultural inclusiveness. Both textbooks exclude members of formerly disadvantaged groups, such as Coloureds and Africans, while members of the formerly advantaged group, such as Whites, are overrepresented. Thus the textbooks do not reflect the diversity of South African society.

Secondly, both textbooks are also not successful regarding the representation of women. In both textbooks, very few women feature in extracts used. In *Focus on English*, for example, only one woman with a powerful job is featured (Dr Helen Caldicott, President of Physicians for Social Responsibility). As in *Focus on English*, in *English in Action* only one woman with a powerful position is featured in the entire textbook. The rest of the women are featured in stereotypic roles (cf. 'My Family' p. 208 and 'Writing a composition' p.142).

Lastly, the two textbooks also do not use a gender-neutral form of English. For example, both textbooks use the generic masculine 'he', 'him', 'his' and '-man' to refer to both men and women. *English in Action* also uses the suffix '-ess' to refer to female professionals

(cf. *'patroness'* p. 62) and inappropriate words or language to describe members of different cultures (cf. *'tribal societies'* and *'witch doctor'* p. 23)

Advance with English, by contrast, meets the criteria for cultural inclusiveness, gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral form of English to a great extent.

CHAPTER 8

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUPPLEMENTATION OF TEXTBOOKS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter indicates how each of the textbooks evaluated can be supplemented by the teacher. Obviously, these books are in use and will not be rewritten immediately, but teachers can counter the problems presented by the book. The numbers in brackets refer to the criteria as listed in 6.4.

8.1.1 Recommendations for the supplementation of *Focus on English 8*

Focus in English can be made effective in terms of the criteria by doing three things. Firstly, there is a need to increase the representation of people from formerly disadvantaged cultural groups such as Africans and Coloureds. The experiences of these groups, their activities and their lifestyles should be portrayed. Their voices should be heard, their languages should feature and their contribution to society in general should be included.

Unit 5, 'Surfing', dealing with the theme of recreation, is used to illustrate how a unit can be made to satisfy the criteria proposed. As surfing is an activity that is enjoyed mostly by White people, adding pastimes that are enjoyed by people from formerly disadvantaged groups would make this textbook appeal to diverse groups. This can be done by featuring recreational activities such as watching soccer or netball in a stadium or on television. Other activities such as attending parties, weddings, visiting relatives and spending Christmas holidays at the beach can also be included, as they are popular particularly with people from formerly disadvantaged groups (10). Learners could be asked to tell the class how they spend their spare time or holidays. Different learners from different backgrounds are likely to come up with different forms of recreation.

Furthermore, learners could be asked to list places they would like to visit in South Africa. Learners could then be asked to research which languages other than English are spoken in these provinces and how they would be required to greet people in these languages (2). For example, the majority of people in KwaZulu Natal speak Zulu, while the majority of people in the North-West Province speak Tswana.

Secondly, the representation of women in the textbook is poor and should be rectified (3). Unit 1, 'Food' can be used as an example. Learners from different cultural backgrounds can be asked to bring to class pictures of different foods. They can be asked to tell the class what their staple foods are. If there are learners who have parents from different cultural groups they can be asked to talk about the different staple foods from each parent's culture (6) as well as the children's. Learners can then be asked to teach their classmates how to pronounce the names of the different meals in the different languages (2).

In order to reflect the changes in roles that have taken place in society, learners can do role play of the changing roles that are in existence today, for example, a more honest depiction of society as it is, including house husbands or unemployed husbands and women who are the chief wage-earners in the household or women who have prestigious occupations and are in positions of authority (6, 7). The representation of formerly disadvantaged groups such as women can be achieved by asking learners to make a collage of ten or twenty pictures of women in South Africa and abroad from all cultural groups who excel in their occupations (3, 5, 6, 8). For example, in Unit 2, 'Medicine and Disease', the inclusion of the scientist, Marie Curie, could have enhanced the effectiveness of this book (3) and this could possibly have had a positive impact, encouraging the development of positive self-esteem in girls (15).

Newspaper articles and magazines showing South African people of all races interacting and united by a common cause such as President Mandela's inauguration (6) should also be brought to class for a discussion on how people of all groups converged at the Union buildings to welcome their first democratically elected president (5).

Although the textbook deals with some problems that face societies in general, as depicted in Unit 12, 'Children's rights', and Unit 13, 'Saving our environment', the effectiveness of *Focus in English* can be enhanced by including problems pertinent to

the South African situation in class discussions. Learners can be asked to talk about problems experienced by their communities (23). These could include peer pressure, drugs, crime, racism in the workplace, schools and churches or Aids and the youth, taxi violence and faction fighting. Learners can also be asked to list problems that affect mainly women (and other formerly discriminated groups such as the disabled or young people) in their communities (22). These could include problems such as rape, abortions or domestic violence. Then in pairs or in groups, the teacher could ask the learners to find solutions to these problems, for example, groups can be assigned to devise ways in which young girls and boys can be helped to be alert against crimes against them, such as rape.

Lastly, the effectiveness of *Focus on English* would have been enhanced if sexist and male-centred language, which is evidenced in the repeated use of the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to humans in general (cf. Unit 2 p. 14; Unit 3 p. 33; Unit 6 p. 55), had been eradicated. To address this issue the teacher can teach the learners strategies used by conscientious writers for avoiding the use of the generic masculine pronoun (16). For example, the paragraph below can be changed from being male-centred to being gender-neutral as indicated in brackets:

Vaccination works on these principles. If you give someone a very weak form of the disease, his (the) body makes antibodies to fight that particular disease. Then later, if he (s/he or the person) catches the disease, his ('the person' or 'her/his') body already has antibodies to fight it and get rid of it before he (s/he or the person) becomes really ill (16).

The use of the generic masculine '-man' can be substituted as indicated in brackets in the sentence below.

'Men (Humans/people) cannot fight against tanks and machine guns, Mister President...' (16).

The use of suffixes to mark the feminine gender (18) as in 'patroness' (p. 62), and the distinction between married and unmarried women (21) can be addressed by providing teachers with various strategies which sensitive writers use in their writing (cf. 4.8.2, 4.9.1 and 4.11)

8.1.2 Recommendations for the supplementation of *Advance with English Std 7/Grade 9*

There are very few shortcomings in this textbook. Although all groups are represented, Africans are perhaps overrepresented at the expense of other formerly disadvantaged groups in South Africa, such as Coloureds and Indians. Instead of having everything being done by Africans only, Coloureds and Indians should have featured more. Secondly, in Unit 3 (*Heroes and heroines*), the textbook makes use of suffixes to mark the feminine gender. As discussed in 5.4.7, using suffixes to mark females conveys a lack of seriousness on the part of females. Teachers could discuss such issues openly.

8.1.3 Recommendations for the supplementation of *English in Action Std 9*

The main shortcomings of this textbook centre around three things: a lack of cultural inclusiveness/diversity, a lack of gender representativeness and a repeated use of male-centred English.

Unit 3, 'Out and about' can be used to illustrate how this theme can be made to be inclusive of all cultural groups and genders. Different learners in the classroom can be asked to talk about their favourite meal/s when eating out or when eating at home. Since eating out is costly, learners could be asked to plan their favourite meal. The names of the ingredients to be used can be written in both the learner's home language and in English (2). Favourite dishes in different cultures should be listed and recipes written down (6). Names of different dishes in different languages should be learnt (2). Utensils for eating in different cultures should be discussed (6). For example, chopsticks, forks, knives and using hands are examples of utensils used by Chinese, Westerners and Africans for specific dishes. Pictures of different restaurants such as Pizza Den, a Chinese Restaurant or a Spur franchise can also be brought to class and typical foods served in these restaurants discussed.

The effectiveness of Unit 8 would have been greatly enhanced by the inclusion of people from formerly disadvantaged groups such as Africans, Coloureds or Indian people in the textbook (7). If the classroom consists of children from other cultural groups, they should be used to generate a list of names for girls and boys in their home languages and the

origins of the names can be traced (6). Learners can be asked to do research at home on this topic. Learners can also be asked to tell each other what their names mean and why they were given these names (1, 2). The teacher can also point out to the learners inappropriate or unpleasant terms that were used in the past to refer to people from different cultures (11). These could include terms such as 'Kaffirs' for blacks, 'Boers' for Afrikaners, 'Coolies' for Indians, 'Red Necks' for Englishmen or 'Yellow people' for the Chinese. Furthermore, learners' attention can be drawn to the fact that referring to adult women using terms such as 'baby', 'pumpkin' and 'cookie' is demeaning (14). In addition to the names provided in Unit 8, African names and nicknames, for example, could be added and their origins and meaning traced and established (1).

The effectiveness of Unit 9, 'Body Language', can be enhanced by asking learners to discuss what various non-verbal signals mean in their cultures (6). For example, the meaning of a shrug can be discussed.

Secondly, the effectiveness of this textbook with regard to gender-representativeness would have been enhanced by ensuring that women were adequately represented in the textbook (3). Highlighting achievements of highly successful women, such as Frene Ginwala (speaker of Parliament) or Dr Dlamini-Zuma (Minister of Foreign Affairs), could be beneficial, as this might boost the self-esteem of young girls in general (15, 3). It also needed to refrain from gender stereotyping (4) as illustrated when boys and girls are assigned different tasks (cf. p. 70). Girls are asked to write their favourite recipes and boys are given instructions on how to prepare breakfast. The distinction in tasks given to boys and girls implies that boys are not expected to be knowledgeable on the subject of cooking. The teacher could discuss this type of stereotyping openly to break down the underlying sexist attitudes.

Finally, male-centred English as denoted by the use of the generic 'he' and '-man' occurs frequently in the textbook (cf. Unit 6 p.140). The use of the generic 'he' or 'his' and the generic '-man' to refer to humans in general in the extract from the textbook can be interpreted by some people as referring to males only. This can be corrected by using s/he or his/her (16). Similarly, the use of the generic '-man' can be rectified by using the term 'humankind' or 'a person' (16). For example, the composition lesson in 8(a) (p.140) can be changed as indicated in brackets:

A good writer is four different people when writing a composition:

At first **he** (s/he) is a **madman** (mad person).

The **madman** (mad person) jots down all ideas **he** (s/he) can think of about the topic.

It helps to ask questions like: Who? When? Where? Why?

Then **he** (s/he) is an architect.

The architect selects the best ideas, orders them and prepares the outline or plan.

The **he** (s/he) becomes a carpenter.

The carpenter joins the sentences and links the paragraphs. **He** (s/he) adds an introduction and a striking conclusion, as well as some artistic touches – a better word for a hackneyed one, for instance, an interesting metaphor or simile, a little irony or humour.

After being a carpenter, he (s/he) becomes a judge.

The judge evaluates the composition and considers what about the composition is to be improved. He (s/he) eliminates as many errors as **he** (s/he) can find (16).

8.2 CONCLUSION

As the discussion above suggests, no textbook is without shortcomings. Of the three textbooks evaluated, *Advance with English* was the most successful in terms of the criteria. The main shortcoming of this textbook has to do with the overrepresentation of Africans at the expense of other formerly disadvantaged groups such as Coloureds, for example.

Both *Focus on English* and *English in Action* needed to increase the representation of people from cultural groups other than the West, the representation of women and needed to refrain from using sexist and male-centred forms of English. Where these books are found to be problematic, teachers should note their shortcomings and actively counteract damaging aspects of the textbooks by exposing the faults and inviting learners to participate in strategies which overcome cultural and gender bias as well as a biased use of language.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to determine the extent to which textbooks frequently used in schools are culturally inclusive as well as gender-representative, and whether they use gender-neutral English. This chapter provides a summary of the major findings of the study. Suggestions for further research are also made.

9.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

South African society has undergone a lot of changes since the advent of democracy in May 1994. A lot of changes have also taken place in educational institutions. For example, formerly White-only schools have opened their doors to pupils of all races. The education policy promotes multiculturalism, multilingualism and gender equality in schools.

These changes in society and in schools require that changes occur in the style and content of textbooks used in school. In particular, there is a need to include people from formerly disadvantaged cultural groups in textbooks as well as increased representation of women in general. In line with modern trends in language use, efforts should also be made to ensure that male-centred English is eradicated from textbooks in favour of a gender-neutral form of English.

Criteria for the evaluation of textbooks for cultural inclusiveness, gender-representativeness and for the use of a gender-neutral form of English were established in this study and three textbooks in use country-wide have subsequently been evaluated.

- 46% of the content of the textbook *Focus on English* met the criteria proposed.
- 90% of the content of the textbook *Advance with English* met the criteria proposed.
- 30% of the content of the textbook *English in Action* met the criteria proposed.

Thus the two textbooks with scores lower than 50% need supplementation with materials that cater for cultural inclusiveness, increased representation of women and materials that use a gender-neutral form of English (cf. Recommendations for supplementation 8.1.1, 8.1.2 and 8.1.3).

From the literature study and the order in which the criteria were placed it is evident that the following criteria are deemed to be very important:

- Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias.
- Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English.
- Textbooks should ensure that women are visibly and adequately represented.
- Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping.
- Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups.
- Textbooks should present people from all cultural groups in a visible manner.
- Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping.
- Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of women in texts.
- Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion.
- Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle as a norm.
- Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate adjectives, terms or language to describe members of different cultures.

In view of the fact that some of the changes suggested in this study are radical to some extent and some aspects of English such as masculine and feminine forms are still in common use today, it is worth noting that this is a process which will take time and that changes cannot occur overnight.

9.3 FURTHER RESEARCH

The following topics are suggested for further research:

- an evaluation of setworks used in the primary school for cultural inclusiveness or diversity as well as gender-representativeness and use of a gender-neutral form of English; and

- an investigation of cross-cultural barriers to effective pupil-teacher talk between speakers of English as a second language who originate from different cultural groups.

9.4 CONCLUSION

Two of the textbooks evaluated have proved to have serious shortcomings and these have highlighted the role of values and attitudes of writers and publishers in their writing and publications. In the light of these findings, teachers should be provided with criteria which they can use to evaluate textbooks and other materials. Thus the criteria can serve as a guideline for the writing of textbooks and designing of supplementary materials.

APPENDIX A

EVALUATION OF *FOCUS ON ENGLISH*

BAM, C. L., THERON, J. P. & WEBB, C. M. 1987. *Focus On English Std 8*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller. 156pp.

A.1 Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias

The textbook is successful regarding this criterion. For example, Chinese people have Chinese names (cf. Unit 2 p.22), Americans have American names (cf. Dr Helen Caldicott). In Unit 8 also, people's names are traceable to their backgrounds. For example, the German *von*, the Dutch *van* and the French *de la* reveal the language backgrounds of the people concerned.

Rating 4

A.2 Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English

In Unit 8, a few words from other languages such as German, Dutch, Greek and Scottish are used. However, none of these words originate from languages spoken by indigenous cultural groups in South Africa such as Zulu, Sotho or Xhosa.

Rating 3

A.3 Textbooks should ensure that women are visibly and adequately represented

The textbook is unsuccessful regarding this criterion. Very few women appear in the texts used.

Rating 2

A.4 Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping

There is evidence of gender stereotyping in Unit 9 (p. 88). For example, fluttering eyelashes or batting the eyelids is considered a female behaviour for attracting males. There is also evidence of gender stereotyping regarding toys, behaviour and games played by boys and girls. For example, girls play with ribbons and boys play with catapults, girls hate rough games while boys love rough games (see pages 68 - 69).

Rating 1

A.5 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups

This textbook is largely imbalanced and selective in that it overrepresents Whites, while Africans do not feature at all in the textbook. However, in Unit 6 (p.56), the plight of quadruplegics , a group usually marginalised, is highlighted.

Rating 2

A.6 Textbooks should include people from all cultural groups in a visible manner

Besides White people, who are in the majority in the textbook, *Focus on English* does include members from formerly disadvantaged groups such as Chinese. However, no people of African origin appear in the textbook.

Rating 3

A.7 Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping

The textbook portrays White people as a people with a model culture. Among other things, it shows them as well-travelled and engaging in daring sports such as surfing, skiing and expensive outings such as dining in restaurants. There is little mention of the experiences, activities and ways of behaviour of people from formerly disadvantaged groups.

Rating 1

A.8 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of women in texts

The textbook is not successful regarding this criterion. Very few women appear in this textbook. More importantly, women from disadvantaged groups do not feature at all in the texts used in this textbook. Thus, pupils who originate from these groups do not have people with whom they can identify.

Rating 1

A.9 Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion

The textbook is successful with regard to this criterion. Where people from disadvantaged groups are included, this has been done in a genuinely inclusive spirit. For example, the text on acupuncture as a form of medicine practised largely by Orientals is included realistically, together with other texts on medicine and disease.

Rating 5

A.10 Textbooks should avoid portraying the western lifestyle as a norm

Many passages in the textbook suggest that a western lifestyle is desirable. For example, the leisure activities of people from a western background include surfing, jogging, reading books or watching western movies. None of these activities depict the way of life of people from disadvantaged groups.

Rating 1

A.11 Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate words or language to describe members of different cultural groups

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

A.12 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding inclusion of different cultural groups' experiences

Although very few texts deal with formerly disadvantaged groups, the few that are included in the textbook are well-integrated in the texts, for example, the text on acupuncture, an Eastern medical procedure, is well-integrated within topics that deal with medicine and disease.

Rating 2

A.13 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of women's contributions to society

This does not happen in the textbook, possibly because there are very few women in the texts used.

Rating 1

A.14 Textbooks should not use demeaning or unpleasant words to describe women

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

A.15 Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying women in a positive light

The inclusion of Dr Helen Caldicott, President of Physicians for Social Responsibility, is likely to promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls. However, this is the only example of a woman with a prestigious job contained in the textbook.

Rating 2

A.16 Textbooks should avoid using the generic 'he' or '-man' to refer to people in general. Gender-neutral alternatives should be used

The textbook does not meet this criterion at all. In Unit 2 (p. 14) the generic 'he' and 'his' are used to refer to people in general, and on pages 21, 31, and 45, the generic '-man' is used to refer to humans in general. Gender-neutral alternatives such as 's/he' or the plural 'their' or 'they' can be used. The generic 'man' in 'poor man' can be replaced by 'poor person' and 'Englishman' can be replaced by English national.

Rating 1

A.17 Textbooks should not use words that explicitly mark the referent's profession as either male or female

The textbook meets this criterion fully. For example, in Unit 2 the text does not distinguish between males and female nurses. We are told 'men who had survived the plague didn't get the disease a second time. So they were exempted from military service and drafted as nurses' (not 'male' nurses).

Rating 5

A.18 Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

A.19 Textbooks should describe women in their own right, not as male appendages

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

A.20 Textbooks should not use words that describe women as sexual objects or use words with a sexual connotation to describe women

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

A.21 Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to refer to both married and unmarried females

The textbook does not meet this criterion. It distinguishes between married and unmarried people. In Unit 10, a boy addresses his teacher by the term 'Miss'. Since the marital status of the teacher is not in question, the title 'Ms' is more appropriate.

Rating 1

A.22 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face women in general.

The textbook does not deal with problems experienced by only women in society, but it deals with contemporary issues such as pollution and nature conservation, children's rights and diseases that affect humans. Since these affect both males and females, the textbook partially meets the criterion.

Rating 4

A.23 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face South African society in general

The textbook deals with contemporary issues that affect societies world-wide such as children's rights (Unit 11), nature conservation and pollution (Unit 13).

Rating 4

A.24 Textbooks should strive for equal representation of men and women in chapter headings and chapters

This does not occur in the textbook because women are underrepresented.

Rating 1

A.25 Textbooks should represent women and men equally in illustrations

This does not occur because women are underrepresented in the textbook. For example out of 11 illustrations, only two have women appearing alone (not with men).

Rating 1

A.26 Textbooks should avoid using trivialising words and language to refer to females

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

A.27 Textbooks should use surnaming that retains women's identity

It is not clear whether this happens or not. For example, the surname Caldicott could either be a married or maiden surname.

Rating 3

A.28 Textbooks should avoid conveying a negative attitude towards 'broken English'

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

The total score for the book is 46%.

APPENDIX B

EVALUATION OF *ADVANCE WITH ENGLISH*

GRANT, A., MAWASHA, A., RALENALA, M., MLOTSHWA, J. & BRENNAN, P. 1995. *Advance with English Std 7*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller. 202pp.

B.1 Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias

The textbook meets this criterion fully regarding names. For example, Kenyans have Kenyan names (cf. Kimathi, p. 13), and Africans have African names (cf. Vukani, p. 38).

Rating 5

B.2 Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English

The textbook meets this criterion fully. For example, Units 2, 5, 11 and 12 have a section entitled 'Multilingual Matters' in which learners are reminded of two things, namely, that their home languages are as important as English and that they are encouraged to converse in their own languages with their classmates.

Rating 5

B.3 Textbooks should ensure that women are visibly and adequately represented

The textbook is quite successful in this criterion. Women from diverse backgrounds appear in the textbook, for example, Martina Navratilova from Czechoslovakia, Paula Newby-Fraser, Evelyn Tshabalala, and Mirriam Makeba from South Africa as well as Mother Teresa from Albania. There are also township businesswomen such as Ma-Mosamaria and rural businesswomen such as Tsufutukani Maswati and many others.

Rating 5

B.4 Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping

Women in this textbook are not shown in situations divided according to traditional roles. Instead, women are game rangers, business women (Ma-Mosamaria), or outstanding sportspeople (Evelyn Tshabalala, Martina Navratilova and Paula Newby-Fraser).

Rating 5

B.5 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups

The textbook is quite successful regarding this criterion. Many people from diverse cultural groups appear in the textbook. These include South Africans such as former president Nelson Mandela and Evelyn Tshabalala, Jamaican Bob Marley, Argentinian Diego Maradona and many others.

Rating 5

B.6 Textbooks should include people from all cultural groups in a visible manner

This textbook fully meets this criterion. A number of chapters focus on people from various cultural groups. For example, Unit 11 traces the history of money among Lybians, Chinese, Indians and Canadians. Prominent sport personalities dealt with in the book originate from different countries, such as South Africa (Steve Mokone, a soccer player), Argentina (Diego Maradona, a soccer legend), the Czech Republic (Martina Navratilova, a tennis legend).

Rating 5

B.7 Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping

This textbook fully meets this criterion. The cultural assumption that men are dominant members of society is not promoted in this textbook. For example, heroes from both sexes are celebrated and women are shown to feature in business (Ma-Mosamaria, Tfutukani Maswati). In short, the textbook does not assign rigid traditional roles to a particular group.

Rating 5

B. 8 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of women in texts

This textbook fully meets this criterion. Women from diverse cultural backgrounds such as Evelyn Tshabalala, Mother Teresa, Elana Meyer, Martina Navratilova, Ma-Mosamaria and others are included in the textbook.

Rating 5

B. 9 Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion

People from formerly disadvantaged groups in South African society are included in a genuine spirit of multiculturalism and not as mere tokens. For example, people from disadvantaged groups are shown taking control of their lives in realistic ways, either by starting businesses or by criticising a lack of order, as illustrated by Mathatha Tsedu's article, Black Eyes, which mentions that Jo'burg Station has developed into one great mess.

Rating 5

B.10 Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle as a norm

The textbook does not portray a western lifestyle as a norm. Various lifestyles are depicted. For example, both a township lifestyle (cf. The Good Samaritan, p.182) and a rural lifestyle (cf. Tsutfukani Maswati, p.168) are portrayed favourably.

Rating 5

B.11 Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate words or language to describe members of different cultural groups

This textbook meets this criterion fully. In Unit 13, the use of terms such as 'witchcraft' and 'witch killings' is condemned. Furthermore, the benefits of traditional herbal medicine are acknowledged (cf. also Unit 10, p.117).

Rating 5

B.12 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups' experiences

Texts on formerly disadvantaged groups in society are well-integrated into the textbook. They do not appear in separate sections or in boxes.

Rating 4

B.13 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding women's contributions to society

The textbook meets this criterion fully. Texts about women are well-integrated into the textbook.

Rating 5

B.14 Textbooks should not use demeaning or unpleasant terms to describe women

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

B.15 Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying females in a positive light

This textbook fully meets this criterion. Many successful women are represented in the book. These include the well-known musician, Miriam Makeba; the runner, Elana Meyer; the caring Mother Teresa; Evelyn Tshabalala, an athlete; Paula Newby-Fraser, a triathlon sport personality; and Martina Navratilova, a tennis player.

Rating 5

B.16 Textbooks should avoid using the generic 'he' or '-man' to refer to people in general. Gender-neutral alternatives should be used

The term 'men' to refer to people in general is used only once in the book. In Unit 2, a poem by Carl Sandburg, 'Happiness', suggests that executives are males. 'And I went to famous executives who boss the work of *men*'. By contrast, the letter on car theft (p.22),

raises awareness of the biased use of the term 'policeman' by putting it in inverted commas.

Rating 3

B.17 Textbooks should not use words that explicitly mark the referent's profession as either male or female

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

B.18 Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals

The textbook is not successful with regard to this criterion. In Unit 3, it refers to female heroes as 'heroines'. Shapiro *et al.* (1981:41) and Holmes (1992:338) are critical of the use of suffixes while referring to occupations on the grounds that they are understood to indicate that females are less important than males in the same positions.

Rating 1

B.19 Textbooks should describe women in their own right, not as male appendages

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

B.20 Textbooks should not use words that describe women as sexual objects or use words with a sexual connotation to describe women

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

B.21 Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to describe both married and unmarried females

In the dialogue between a librarian and a student (cf. p. 136), there is a distinction between married and unmarried women. Such a distinction is unnecessary as the marital status of the librarian is not an issue. Furthermore, in Unit 10 (Green Medicine), a female researcher is referred to as Mrs Diane Roberts. The title 'Ms' is more appropriate in both instances.

Rating 1

B.22 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face women in general

The textbook meets this criterion fully. Typical problems which women face in their lives are dealt with. These include domestic violence and child abuse.

Rating 5

B.23 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face the South African society in general

This textbook meets this criterion fully. Amongst other things, it deals with contemporary problems young people face. For example, Unit 4 deals with conflict resolution and samples of typical letters from teenagers are included. It also deals with family problems, an issue that affects all cultural groups. Other problems featured include poaching and witchcraft.

Rating 5

B.24 Textbooks should strive for equal representation of women and men in chapter headings and chapters

There are as many women as there are men in chapter headings and chapters.

Rating 5

B.25 Textbooks should represent women and men equally in illustrations

There are as many women as there are men in illustrations.

Rating 5

B.26 Textbooks should avoid trivialising words or language to refer to females

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

B.27 Textbooks should use surnaming that retains women's identity after marriage

The textbook meets this criterion fully. In Unit 7, Paula, a sporting personality, is addressed using a double-barrelled surname, Newby-Fraser.

Rating 5

B.28 Textbooks should avoid conveying a negative attitude towards 'broken' English

The textbook is very successful regarding this criterion. By means of a tall story based on the novel *Kes* by Barry Hines, the authors debunk the myth that the British speak good English. An English national in the story speaks English that is full of errors.

Rating 5

The total score for the book is 90%.

APPENDIX C

EVALUATION OF *ENGLISH IN ACTION*

KUHN, M.J., MEIRING, S. M., SCHEFFLER, B.; MARAIS, E. & OOSTHUIZEN, I. I. 1987. *English in Action: Second Language Std 9*. Pretoria: De Jager-Haum. 313pp.

C.1 Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias

This textbook meets this criterion fully. For example, English people have English names (Margaret Farrow on p. 18), Polish people have Polish names (Anna Cwynarska on p. 20) and Afrikaners have Afrikaans names (Dr Christiaan Barnard on p. 46).

Rating 5

C.2 Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English

Languages such as French and Afrikaans are included in the textbook. This is commendable because inclusion of these languages acknowledges that French and Afrikaans are as important as English. However, African languages are not included at all. Yet, most Africans study English as a Second Language and are therefore more likely to use the textbook.

Rating 3

C.3 Textbooks should ensure that women are visibly and adequately represented

Females are portrayed in this textbook far less frequently than males. So, for example, out of nine units, only one unit (Unit 10) includes references to a woman.

Rating 1

C.4 Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping

Gender stereotyping occurs in the textbook. Texts used show males and females in situations according to traditional gender roles. In Unit 3 (p.70), for example, there is a clear differentiation between jobs done by girls and jobs done by boys. Girls are asked to write down their favourite recipes, while boys are given instructions of how to prepare breakfast. The assumption here is that girls cook and boys do not.

Rating 1

C.5 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups

The textbook is imbalanced and selective. Texts used feature only one cultural group (White people). People from formerly disadvantaged groups, such as Africans, are not included in texts used.

Rating 1

C.6 Textbooks should include people from all cultural groups in a visible manner

This textbook does not meet this criterion at all. There is clearly an omission of people from formerly disadvantaged groups such as Africans, Indians, Chinese and Coloureds in the textbook. By contrast, Whites are overrepresented in the textbook. Since children need strong positive role models for the development of their self-esteem, the omission of their own groups may have a negative impact on the development of their self-esteem. The omission might also be interpreted by members of the groups concerned to indicate that they are less important and less significant in society than members of the dominant groups.

Rating 1

C.7 Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping

This textbook practises cultural stereotyping. It assigns traditional and rigid roles or attributes to a group. Cultural stereotyping in the textbook is vividly shown in the area of vocational and career choices for men and women. Moms and Dads are different and do

different jobs. So for example, in the passage entitled 'My Family' (p. 208), 'with the Dad everything was precision and accuracy'. 'He spoke only two languages: English and Computer'. The mother, on the other hand, is a concert pianist with more energy than a hundred mothers her age. The differences between the couple are striking. The mother is also likened to a little girl. The implication is that she is immature, unlike the father, who is serious and commands respect.

Rating 1

C.8 Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of women and men in texts

This textbook is not successful regarding this criterion. Authors of this textbook have put emphasis on men and omitted women. Only three women are mentioned in the entire textbook.

Rating 1

C.9 Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion

This criterion does not apply to this textbook .

No rating is given.

C.10 Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle as a norm

The textbook is not successful regarding this criterion. It portrays a western lifestyle as a norm, epitomised by topics such as 'globe-trotting' and 'dining out' at 'super' restaurants. Engaging in leisure activities such as the ones mentioned above may not be possible to people from formerly disadvantaged groups, due to financial constraints.

Rating 1

C.11 Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate words or language to describe members of different cultural groups

The textbook is not successful as regards this criterion. In Unit 2 (p.23), words such as 'witch-doctor' instead of 'traditional healer' and 'tribal' society instead of 'traditional community' are used.

Rating 1

C.12 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups' experiences

Fragmentation and isolation occurs when textbooks represent people from formerly disadvantaged groups in separate sections or in add-ons. This is not applicable in the textbook because people from formerly disadvantaged groups do not feature in the textbook at all. No evidence of fragmentation or isolation of information in this textbook can be found, but only because members of formerly disadvantaged groups are not included at all. Since society is multicultural, it is important that textbooks reflect this diversity as part of the total text.

Rating 1

C.13 Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of women's contributions to society

Women hardly feature in the textbook.

Rating 1

C.14 Textbooks should not use demeaning or unpleasant words to describe women

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

C.15 Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying females in a positive light

There is hardly any evidence that this criterion is even considered by the authors in the textbook, and this is due to the fact that women are minimally included in the textbook. Only one passage, 'Terrors and treasures of the deep', shows a woman (Director of the Shark Board, Mrs Beulah Davis) occupying a powerful position.

Rating 3

C.16 Textbooks should not use the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to people in general. Gender-neutral alternatives should be used

This textbook makes use of both the generic 'he' and '-man'. In Unit 3 (p.55) the writers use terms such as '*man-size*' instead of (big/huge). On p. 28, the generic masculine '-man' is used again in the sentence 'Modern *man* (instead of 'a modern person') is full of pill power'. On p. 23, we are told 'However healthy a human being happens to be, he (instead of 's/he') can hardly expect to go through life without having to endure some aches and pains'. In the text entitled 'Handling a complaint' (p. 55), the generic 'he' is also used to refer to a person in general: 'even though *he* (instead of 's/he') is paying for *his* (instead of 'his/her') meal'.

Rating 1

C.17 Textbooks should not use words that explicitly mark the referent's profession as either male or female

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

C.18 Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals

This textbook is not successful with regard to this criterion. For example, it talks of a *patroness* on p. 62 and there are other feminine forms marked by suffixes that are also used here (see p. 260 2.1).

Rating 1

C.19 Textbooks should describe women in their own right, not as male appendages

In Unit 5 the textbook mentions 'the wife of millionaire Isidor Strauss'. The woman in question has no identity of her own. She is identified only in terms of the husband.

Rating 1

C.20 Textbooks should not use words that describe women as sexual objects or use words with a sexual connotation to describe women

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

C.21 Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to describe both married and unmarried females

The textbook is not successful regarding this criterion. It distinguishes between married and unmarried women. For example, there is reference to a 'Mrs' Beulah Davis (p. 211). This distinction is not necessary, as Ms Beulah Davis's marital status is not an issue here. The title 'Ms' is the most appropriate in this instance.

Rating 1

C.22 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face women in general

The textbook does not meet this criterion at all. It does not deal with contemporary problems such as rape, domestic violence and unemployment among women. Inclusion of some of these topics would be useful, in the sense that they would generate discussion in class which could in turn provide solutions to the problems.

Rating 1

C.23 Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face the South African society in general

This textbook does not meet this criterion at all. It does not deal with contemporary problems that face South African society in general. Instead of covering common disasters experienced by South Africans, such as floods, road accidents or shipwrecks that often occur on the South African coast, it deals with the Titanic.

Rating 1

C.24 Textbooks should strive for equal representation of women and men in chapter headings and chapters

The textbook is not successful at all regarding this criterion.

Rating 1

C.25 Textbooks should represent women and men equally in illustrations

Although some women appear in illustrations, there are more men in illustrations than women. For example, all aspects of English which the authors need learners to pay attention to, are preceded by an illustration of a man.

Rating 2

C.26 Textbooks should avoid using trivialising words or language that refers to females

The textbook is not successful regarding this criterion. For example, in the passage entitled 'My Family', the mother is described as being 'just like a little "girl" who never grew up'. Referring to a grown-up woman as a 'girl' implies incompetence or immaturity on the part of the woman concerned.

Rating 1

C.27 Textbooks should use surnaming that retains women's identity after marriage

It is difficult to tell whether the surname Davis is a maiden or a married surname. Had a double-barrelled surname been used it would have been clear and the true identity of the person concerned would be easy to determine.

Rating 3

C.28 Textbooks should avoid conveying a negative attitude towards 'broken' English

This criterion does not apply to this textbook.

No rating is given.

The final score for the book is 30%.

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

1. Textbooks should avoid linguistic bias.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

2. Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

3. Textbooks should ensure that women are visibly and adequately represented.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

4. Textbooks should avoid gender stereotyping.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

5. Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

6. Textbooks should include people from all cultural groups in a visible manner.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

7. Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

8. Textbooks should avoid imbalance and selectivity regarding the inclusion of women in texts.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

9. Textbooks should avoid tokenist inclusion.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

10. Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle as a norm.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

11. Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate words or language to describe members of different cultural groups.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

12. Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of different cultural groups' experiences.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

13. Textbooks should avoid fragmentation and isolation regarding the inclusion of women's contributions to society.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

14. Textbooks should not use demeaning or unpleasant terms to describe women.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

15. Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying females in a positive light.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

16. Textbooks should avoid using the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to people in general. Gender-neutral alternatives should be used.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

17. Textbooks should not use words that explicitly mark the referent's profession as either male or female.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

18. Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

19. Textbooks should describe women in their own right, not as male appendages.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

20. Textbooks should not use words that describe women as sexual objects or use words with a sexual connotation to describe women.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

21. Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to describe both married and unmarried females.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

22. Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face women in general.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

23. Textbooks should avoid unreality/superficiality by featuring problems that face South African society in general.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

24. Textbooks should strive for equal representation of women and men in chapter headings and chapters.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion meets criterion fully

25. Textbooks should represent women and men equally in illustrations.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

26. Textbooks should avoid using trivialising words or language to refer to females.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

27. Textbooks should use surnaming that retains women's identity after marriage.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

28. Textbooks should avoid conveying a negative attitude towards 'broken' English.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

does not meet criterion

meets criterion fully

APPENDIX E

VALIDATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to establish criteria for the evaluation of English Second Language textbooks from a sociolinguistic perspective. The following aspects are referred to: cultural diversity/inclusivity, gender representativeness as well as the use of a gender-neutral English.

You are requested to express your opinion on a number of statements that refer to these aspects.

Thank you very much for your time. Your input is much appreciated.

SECTION A:

Supplying information in this section is completely voluntary.

Teaching experience:.....

SECTION B:

Please indicate your responses to the following statements regarding inclusivity/diversity, gender-representativeness and the use of a gender-neutral form of English in ESL textbooks used in schools. Simply circle the relevant value to indicate your choice:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | = | strongly disagree |
| 2 | = | disagree |
| 3 | = | not sure |
| 4 | = | agree |
| 5 | = | strongly agree |

**PROVISIONAL CRITERIA FOR CULTURAL INCLUSIVITY
OR CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

- 1 Textbooks should include experiences of people from all cultural groups and not only experiences of people from the dominant group.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

2. Textbooks should avoid cultural stereotyping as suggested when men are portrayed as the dominant group and sole decision-makers at home, while women are portrayed as subordinates who have little or no say in decision-making.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

3. Textbooks should avoid suggesting that members of different cultural and racial groups do different jobs in society, by representing, for example, white lawyers, doctors, etc. and black helpers, gardeners, etc.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

4. Textbooks should deal with contemporary issues that are relevant in the learners' lives, such as the use of drugs, teenage pregnancy, etc.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

5. In trying to make existing textbooks inclusive of people from disadvantaged groups, texts about people from these groups should be integrated throughout the book, rather than in separate sections.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

6. Textbooks should use names from the cultural groups concerned (e.g. African/Chinese rather than English names for characters from these groups).

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

7. Textbooks should not include people from formerly disadvantaged groups in a tokenist way, but should do so in a genuinely inclusive spirit.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

8. Textbooks should avoid portraying a western lifestyle and behaviour as a norm.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

9. Textbooks should avoid using inappropriate adjectives or terms, such as describing Africans as 'lazy', or referring to members of different cultural groups by inappropriate names.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree

5 = strongly agree

10. Textbooks should portray a positive attitude to languages other than English.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

11. Textbooks should not convey a negative attitude towards 'broken' English.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

PROVISIONAL CRITERIA FOR GENDER-REPRESENTATIVENESS

12. Textbooks should represent women in a visible manner in texts.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

13. Textbooks should avoid showing women in care-giving careers only and never in leadership roles.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

14. Textbooks should not over-represent men while women are under-represented, or interpret issues from one perspective only (usually that of the dominant group)

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

15. Textbooks should deal with problems that affect women in real life (such as rape, domestic violence against women, etc.).

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

16. In trying to include formerly disadvantaged groups in textbooks, texts about these groups should be integrated throughout the text rather than put in separate sections or added in separate boxes.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

17. Textbooks should promote the development of positive self-esteem in girls by portraying females doing jobs or activities that are challenging, admirable and held in high esteem by society.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

18. Textbooks should describe women in their own right and not in terms of their relationships with males, as indicated by descriptions such as the 'clever wife' or the 'wise daughter'.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

**PROVISIONAL CRITERIA FOR THE USE OF
A GENDER-NEUTRAL FORM OF ENGLISH**

19. Textbooks should not use the generic 'he' and '-man' to refer to people in general; instead, gender-sensitive alternatives such 'he/she' or the plural form 'their' should be used.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

20. Textbooks should not use explicit markers to describe professionals in fields such as medicine or law, as indicated by 'male nurse', 'female judge' or 'female doctor'.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

21. Textbooks should not refer to adult women by using terms such as 'baby', 'chick' or 'doll'.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

22. Textbooks should not use words with a sexual connotation such as 'mistress' to describe women.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

23. Textbooks should use the title 'Ms' to describe both married and unmarried females.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

24. Textbooks should retain the identity of married women by using either their maiden or a double-barrelled surname.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

25. Textbooks should not use suffixes to mark female professionals, as found in words such as 'poetess' and 'heroine'.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

26. Textbooks should not use adjectives that describe women as something men can devour, e.g. 'sweet', 'juicy', etc.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

27. Textbooks should represent as many women as men in chapter headings.

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

28. Textbooks should represent women adequately in illustrations

1	=	strongly disagree	2	=	disagree
3	=	not sure	4	=	agree
5	=	strongly agree			

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