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Gender Representation and Educational Equity: A Critical Analysis of Indonesian Senior High School English Textbooks

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Abstract

Despite increasing global awareness of gender equity, research on how English textbooks shape students' perceptions of gender remains limited in Indonesia. This study examines the linguistic and visual gender portrayals in two government-issued English textbooks for Grade X and XI senior high school students (revised 2017 editions), which are widely used nationwide. Using a qualitative content analysis integrated with critical discourse analysis, the study systematically analyzed all textual and visual elements, including dialogues, narratives, exercises, and illustrations, guided by established frameworks for evaluating gender representation. Quantitative coding documented frequency and types of gender representation, while discursive interpretation examined how language and images construct social meanings. Findings reveal 404 textual and 201 visual gender representations: although textual mentions in Grade X show near parity (35% male; 35% female), Grade XI reflects male predominance (43.5% vs. 33.5%), and visuals overall favor male visibility (43.7%). Female figures are disproportionately associated with domesticity, emotional expression, and limited occupations, whereas males appear in more diverse, agentive, and authoritative roles. Gendered language reinforces these patterns through masculine generics and adjectives emphasizing appearance for females and intellect for males. These findings suggest that while attempts at balance exist, textbooks continue to reproduce traditional gender ideologies. The study contributes a nuanced understanding of how school materials reflect and shape sociocultural norms and offers implications for textbook design and educational policy to foster inclusive and equitable gender representation aligned with SDG 5.

Keywords: Gender representation, English textbooks, educational equity, critical discourse analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Gender representation in education remains a critical issue that reflects broader social and cultural dynamics rather than being confined to language instruction alone. Gender is widely understood as a social construct learned and reinforced through institutional

practices, including schooling (Emilia et al., 2017; Posselt & Nuñez, 2021). Schools function as early arenas where children are introduced to structured ideas about identity and social roles, and the materials used in classrooms play a central role in shaping these perceptions. Textbooks, in particular, are not neutral pedagogical tools; they embed cultural values, norms, and ideologies alongside academic content (Blumberg, 2008; Aoumeur & Ziani, 2022; Ruiz-Cecilia et al., 2020). Through narratives, dialogues, and images, textbooks influence students' views of what behaviors and roles are expected for males and females, shaping their self-concepts and social expectations, as highlighted by De La Torre-Sierra and Guichot-Reina (2022). When textbooks disproportionately depict men as leaders, professionals, or active agents while portraying women primarily in domestic or supportive roles, they reinforce stereotypes and limit students' imagination of future possibilities (Namatende-Sakwa, 2018; Campbell, 2020; Tabatadze, 2023; Benattabou, 2020). Therefore, the way gender is represented in textbooks has far-reaching implications for how young people understand gender roles and relationships.

Furthermore, Indonesia has committed to gender equality through constitutional guarantees, national development plans, and alignment with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 (Sudaryat et al., 2024; Cameron, 2023). At the same time, evidence shows that disparities persist in areas such as labor participation, leadership, and access to decision-making roles, indicating that progress toward gender equity is ongoing and shaped by complex social, cultural, and economic factors (McLaren et al., 2023; Firdaus & Wulandari, 2023; Anggorowati et al., 2023). These broader dynamics are also visible in education, where classroom practices and curricular materials are closely linked to cultural expectations. Nationally distributed textbooks, as standardized resources approved by the Ministry of Education, reach millions of students across diverse regions and therefore exert significant influence on how adolescents conceptualize gender during formative stages of personal and social identity development (Mihira et al., 2021; Andini et al., 2023; Suwarno et al., 2021). Beyond providing linguistic input, these materials also implicitly transmit cultural norms and values, which can either reinforce or challenge existing stereotypes, as emphasized by Setyono and Widodo (2019) and Islam and Asadullah (2018). Given the central role of textbooks in Indonesia's education system and the country's stated equity goals, it is essential to examine how these resources construct gender ideologies and how such representations relate to broader national and global discussions on educational inclusion. To analyze how these gendered meanings are produced and sustained in educational materials, a critical theoretical lens is needed to connect textual and visual choices to broader social structures.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a theoretical and methodological approach that examines how language and other semiotic resources are used to reflect, reproduce, and contest societal power relations. It views discourse as a form of social practice, meaning that texts and communicative events are shaped by and simultaneously help shape broader social, cultural, and political structures (Fairclough, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2009; Mullet, 2018). CDA goes beyond describing linguistic features; it investigates how particular word choices, grammatical structures, and visual representations encode ideologies, privilege specific perspectives, and marginalize others (van Dijk, 2007; Machin & Mayr, 2012). A central assumption is that discourse plays a crucial role in maintaining or challenging social hierarchies related to gender, class, and ethnicity (Bloor & Bloor, 2007). Scholars such as

Fairclough highlight the dialectical relationship between micro-level language use and macro-level social structures, demonstrating that meaning is produced not only by explicitly stated but also by what is omitted or presupposed (Fairclough, 2013). CDA typically analyzes multiple dimensions of a text, including vocabulary, syntax, discourse structures, and multimodal elements such as images, to reveal how these linguistic and visual choices contribute to the normalization of dominant ideologies (Sari et al., 2018). Drawing on interdisciplinary insights from linguistics, sociology, and cultural studies, CDA is particularly suited for exploring how educational materials such as textbooks construct social meanings and identities.

A growing body of research consistently shows that Indonesian English language textbooks often reinforce gender stereotypes through both textual and visual content, shaping how learners perceive gender roles. Studies at various educational levels reveal that males are typically depicted as more active, dominant, and diverse in their social and occupational roles, while females are more frequently portrayed in domestic or supportive contexts. For example, analyses of junior and senior high school EFL textbooks have found asymmetrical representation, with males as adventurous and independent and females as passive or nurturing (Emilia et al., 2017; Habib et al., 2020). Visual and verbal analyses also highlight the underrepresentation of women in public spheres and leadership roles, and the persistence of stereotypical divisions of labor, particularly in occupations and social responsibilities (Rohmawati & Putra, 2022; Ariyanto, 2018). Comparative and critical discourse studies similarly report unequal gender portrayals across Indonesian and international ELTs, especially within family and occupational domains, suggesting that such biases are not isolated to one context (Fithriani, 2022; Tyarakanita et al., 2021). While some constructive images of women are beginning to emerge, as noted in Setyono's (2018) feminist CDA, the dominant trend across studies remains imbalance, gender blindness, and limited awareness among textbook authors and curriculum designers.

Despite a substantial body of research documenting gender stereotypes in Indonesian English textbooks, most existing studies concentrate on elementary or junior high school materials, focus primarily on descriptive counts of male and female appearances, and rarely integrate a critical analysis of how linguistic and visual elements together construct gender ideologies. Very few adopt interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives that explain what patterns exist and how and why they matter within broader socio-cultural and policy contexts. This leaves a gap in understanding how senior high school textbooks, used during a formative stage of identity development, reflect or challenge normative gender roles and how these portrayals align with Indonesia's formal commitments to gender equality. Addressing this gap is particularly relevant given global and national equity agendas such as SDG 5, which call for substantive rather than symbolic progress toward equality. To respond to this need, the present study offers novelty by combining Critical Discourse Analysis with the concept of gender performativity to examine both textual and visual representations of gender, allowing for a deeper exploration of how gender identities are discursively produced and potentially reshaped in educational materials. The study aims to identify patterns of inequality and propose insights for creating more inclusive and equitable English textbooks that better support national and international gender equity goals.

METHOD

This study used qualitative content analysis to examine gender representation in Indonesian senior high school English textbooks. Qualitative content analysis is a systematic and rule-governed method for interpreting various forms of communication, including textual and visual materials, within a rigorous yet flexible framework (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2023; Schreier, 2012). While primarily qualitative, this approach quantifies relevant elements, such as frequencies of gender-related references, to support deeper thematic interpretation (Mayring, 2014; Krippendorff, 2019). The analysis encompassed all relevant components of the textbooks, including dialogues, narrative passages, exercises, speech bubbles, instructional comments, and illustrations. Gendered characters were identified and coded using iterative categorization, with attention to how male and female figures were portrayed linguistically and visually and the broader social meanings implied by these portrayals.

The data consist of textual and visual materials drawn from two government-published English textbooks for tenth-grade (Grade X) and eleventh-grade (Grade XI) senior high school students in Indonesia. These books were selected because they are widely used by English teachers nationwide and represent the officially endorsed curriculum. Both are revised editions published in 2017 by the Curriculum and Book Publishing Center under the Research and Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture. Each book comprises 15 chapters with various activities, including warm-up exercises, vocabulary builders, pronunciation guides, reading passages, comprehension questions, grammar tasks, speaking practices, and reflective components.

The data were collected through systematic documentation of gender representation across the textbooks' textual and visual elements. This process involved recording the frequency of male and female appearances, the activities associated with each gender, and their roles in occupational and social contexts. Non-human or animal figures (e.g., "Papa Bear") were excluded to ensure analytical relevance unless they carried explicit gender-coded meanings pertinent to the study. The coding and categorization process followed established content analysis procedures, emphasizing data collection transparency and reliability (Krippendorff, 2019; Schreier, 2012).

The analysis was guided by a combination of Porreca's (1984) and Giaschi's (2000) frameworks for evaluating gender representation in educational materials. Porreca's widely cited model identifies four primary indicators of gender bias: (i) omission, referring to the underrepresentation or absence of a particular gender; (ii) occupational visibility, which examines the distribution of professional and social roles by gender; (iii) generic masculine constructions, where male-oriented terms are used as universal references; and (iv) gendered use of adjectives, which highlights descriptive language reinforcing gender stereotypes. Using these frameworks allowed the study to systematically capture the quantitative dimensions of gender representation and the qualitative implications of how such portrayals may shape learners' perceptions.

Giaschi's (2000) framework was applied to further operationalize the analysis to provide detailed criteria for examining both linguistic and visual content. These criteria included counting images featuring only male or female characters, identifying instances where characters appeared in professional or public contexts, analyzing the types of activities assigned to each gender, and determining whether characters were presented in

active or passive roles. The analysis also considered interpersonal relationships, visual positioning, depiction, and the use of gendered language descriptors. This comprehensive set of indicators allowed for a nuanced examination of how gender was constructed and conveyed in the selected textbooks.

The content analysis served as an initial diagnostic phase to identify patterns, disparities, and potential sites of ideological reproduction. Quantitative and categorical findings from this phase informed a deeper discursive analysis using Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model. Rather than treating content analysis and CDA as separate approaches, this study integrates them to examine what patterns exist, how they are linguistically and visually produced, and why they matter within a broader sociocultural context (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Fairclough's model was applied across three interrelated dimensions: description (textual analysis of lexical choices, grammatical structures, pronoun usage, and visual salience), interpretation (how texts construct preferred readings and naturalize gender roles), and explanation (situating findings within socio-political and ideological contexts of gender in Indonesia, including SDG 5 and national development plans). This integrated approach, combining the systematic mapping of content analysis with the critical depth of CDA, enabled the study to move beyond descriptive representation and reveal how linguistic and visual choices in textbooks contribute to the construction of gender ideologies that reflect and potentially reinforce social inequalities (Fairclough, 2013; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section reports the results of the analysis of gender representation in the two Indonesian senior high school English textbooks examined in this study. The findings are presented based on textual and visual elements, covering aspects such as frequency and distribution of male and female representations, roles and activities associated with each gender, and the linguistic and visual features identified through the analysis.

Table 1. Gender representation in the textbooks

English Textbook	Gender Representation					
	Text			Images		
	M	F	N/U	M	F	N/U
Grade X	88 (35%)	88 (35%)	88 (35%)	53 (45%)	53 (45%)	53 (45%)
Grade XI	68 (45%)	68 (45%)	68 (45%)	35 (42%)	37 (44%)	11 (13%)

Table 1 shows the distribution of gender representation in the English textbooks for Grade X and Grade XI across textual and visual elements. In the text content of Grade X, male and female characters each appear 88 times, making up 35% respectively, while neutral or unspecified references account for 72 occurrences (30%). In Grade XI, the text shows a higher proportion of male characters (68 occurrences; 45%) compared to female characters (52 occurrences; 34%), with neutral references appearing 31 times (21%). For visual representations, Grade X images depict males in 53 instances (45%), females in 35 instances (30%), and neutral/unspecified figures in 30 instances (25%). In Grade XI, males appear in 35 images (42%), females slightly more frequently at 37 images (44%), while neutral figures occur only 11 times (13%).

Table 2. Gender representation in the English textbook grade X

Chapter	Title/Topic	Text			Image		
		M	F	N/U	M	F	N/U
1	Talking about Self	5	11	8	3	6	1
2	Congratulating and Complimenting Others	23	21	5	15	10	6
3	Expressing Intention	2	3	1	1	0	4
4	Which One is Your Best Getaway?	1	1	6	2	0	3
5	Let's Visit Niagara Falls	2	2	3	6	1	6
6	Giving Announcement	4	1	10	2	0	1
7	The Wright Brothers	3	1	4	4	0	2
8	My Idol	1	3	0	4	1	0
9	The Battle of Surabaya	4	4	1	1	0	0
10	B.J. Habibie	5	5	6	2	0	1
11	Cut Nyak Dien	13	8	6	0	2	0
12	Issumboshi	11	9	7	0	1	2
13	Malin Kundang	5	3	10	4	3	3
14	Strong Wind	9	13	2	5	7	1
15	You've Got a Friend	0	3	3	4	4	0
Total		**88**	**88**	**72**	**53**	**35**	**30**

Table 2 details the distribution of male, female, and neutral/unspecified characters across each chapter of the Grade X English Textbook, separated into text and image categories. Across the textual content, male and female characters each appear 88 times in total, while neutral references occur 72 times. Some chapters show relatively balanced representation between genders (e.g., Chapter 2, *Congratulating and Complimenting Others,* with 23 male and 21 female mentions), while others show noticeable gender variation. For instance, Chapter 1, *Talking about Self, contains more female characters (11) than male (5), whereas Chapter 11, Cut Nyak Dien,* shows more male references (13) than female (8). Certain chapters have few or no references for one gender; for example, Chapter 15 *You've Got a Friend* has no male references in text, and Chapter 3 *Expressing Intention* has no female images. For visual elements, males appear 53 times, females 35 times, and neutral figures 30 times. Male figures dominate the images in several chapters (e.g., Chapter 2 with 15 male vs. 10 female), while in some chapters female images outnumber males (e.g., Chapter 1 with six female vs. three male). Several chapters lack visual representation for one gender entirely; for instance, Chapters 6 and 7 contain no female images.

Table 3. Gender representation in the English textbook for grade XI

Chapter	Title/Topic	Text			Image		
		M	F	N/U	M	F	N/U
1	Offers and Suggestions	7	6	2	5	10	1
2	Opinion and Thoughts	0	3	1	10	10	1
3	Party Time	17	15	2	2	2	0
4	National Disaster-An Exposition	0	0	5	3	2	0
5	Letter Writing	0	6	5	0	4	0
6	Cause and Effect	5	8	5	1	1	1
7	Meaning through Music	0	0	6	0	0	1
8	Explain This!	3	2	2	0	0	1
En. 1	Can Greed Ever be Satisfied?	2	1	1	2	2	1
En. 2	Bullying: A Cancer that Must be Eradicated	8	3	0	0	0	1

En. 3	Hopes and Dreams	4	0	0	9	0	0
En. 4	Vanity, What is Thy Price	9	3	1	2	6	0
En. 5	Benefit of Doubt	6	3	0	0	0	1
En. 6	The Last Leaf	4	2	1	0	0	2
En.7	Father of Indonesian Education	3	0	0	1	0	1
Total		**68**	**52**	**31**	**35**	**37**	**11**

Table 3 presents the distribution of male, female, and neutral/unspecified characters across each chapter of the Grade XI English textbook, divided into text and image categories. In the textual content, there are 68 male mentions, 52 female mentions, and 31 neutral references in total. Some chapters show balanced gender representation, such as Chapter 3 *Party Time,* with 17 male and 15 female references. However, other chapters lack mentions of one gender; for example, Chapter 2 *Opinion and Thoughts* and Chapter 5 *Letter Writing* have no male references. Chapters 4, National Disaster-An Exposition, and 7, Meaning through Music, have no gendered characters except for neutral references. There are 35 male, 37 female, and 11 neutral images for visual elements. Several chapters depict male and female figures' equal or nearly equal presence, such as Chapter 1 *Offers and Suggestions* (5 male, 10 female) and Chapter 2 *Opinion and Thoughts* (10 male, 10 female). Some enrichment units, such as En . 3 *Hopes and Dreams*, show only male figures (9) with no female or neutral counterparts, while others depict only female figures or lack gendered visuals entirely.

Table 4. Analysis of gender bias across thematic dimensions in English textbooks

Dimension	Findings	Examples / Patterns
Omission	Gendered themes like feelings and heroism are distributed along ideological lines; female voices dominate emotional expression, while heroic/leadership roles are overwhelmingly male. Male absence in expressive writing; female absence in heroic narratives.	– Chapter X.1 Talking about Self and XI.5 Letter Writing show female-to-female correspondence; males peripheral.– Heroism terms ("he led," "he risked his life") mostly tied to male characters.
Occupational Visibility	Males portrayed across more varied and prestigious occupations; female representation decreases in higher grades and is concentrated in domestic/aesthetic roles.	– Across both books: 36 professions coded; 134 total depictions.– Grade X: female students (13) > male students (9); males are also leaders/heroes.– Grade XI: males as writers/playwrights/presidents; females as ballerinas/housewives.
Masculine Generics	Language often defaults to male-centered terms even when generic is intended; female participation is linguistically erased.	– "Postman…he took the letter to the Postmaster…kind gentleman" (Grade XI, p.48).– Consistent masculine pronouns/titles; no gender-neutral alternatives (postal worker, they).

Gendered Adjectives	Adjectives differ by gender; females are described for looks/emotion, males for intellect/agency; traits are treated as fixed identities.	– 60 adjective uses coded: physical appearance (20), emotional state (14), intelligence (13).
		Female: "beautiful, kind, shy."
		Male: "smart, confident, brave."

Table 4 outlines four major dimensions in which gender inequality was identified across the Grade X and Grade XI English textbooks, drawing on content analysis and CDA findings. Under omission, the analysis shows that specific themes, such as emotional expression and heroism, are unevenly distributed along gender lines. Emotional writing tasks (e.g., emails and letters) are predominantly associated with female-to-female communication, whereas male perspectives are largely absent. In contrast, heroic or leadership roles are almost exclusively assigned to male characters through linguistic patterns highlighting bravery and public agency. The second dimension, occupational visibility, reveals that male characters are depicted in a broader and more prestigious range of professions than female characters. While Grade X shows some balance with female students appearing slightly more frequently than males, Grade XI increasingly limits female figures to domestic or aesthetic roles such as ballerinas or housewives. At the same time, men are associated with leadership or creative professions like presidents or playwrights.

The masculine generic construction dimension highlights that some narratives use male-centered terms and pronouns as defaults, even when intended to be generic. For example, the repeated use of terms such as "postman," "gentleman," and male pronouns reinforces male agency and symbolically excludes women from public roles. Lastly, gendered use of adjectives shows systematic differences in evaluative language. Female characters are most often described using adjectives tied to appearance and emotionality (e.g., "beautiful," "kind"), while male characters are described with traits emphasizing intellect and agency (e.g., "smart," "brave"). These linguistic and representational choices across the textbooks contribute to constructing and normalizing traditional gender roles and social hierarchies.

DISCUSSION

Gender representation in Indonesian senior high school English textbooks reveals persistent discursive inequalities despite the appearance of numerical balance. In Grade X, male and female characters accounted for roughly 35% of textual references, suggesting surface-level parity; however, a closer qualitative analysis uncovered entrenched gender stereotypes. By Grade XI, male representation rose to 43.5% compared to 33.5% for females, reflecting uneven visibility consistent with patterns identified in other Indonesian EFL studies (Andini et al., 2023; Fatmawati et al., 2022; Mihira et al., 2021). Both visual and textual portrayals reinforce hierarchical gender roles: men are frequently depicted as presidents, playwrights, scientists, or public speakers and are typically associated with active material processes that highlight agency and leadership (e.g., "He led the nation," "He discovered…"). Women, by contrast, are more often framed within relational or mental processes (e.g., "She was beautiful," "She felt sad"), which emphasize emotionality and passivity. These patterns are ideologically charged rather than neutral; they position male characters as active agents while relegating female characters to observers or emotional

subjects. Such representational choices confirm Blumberg's (2008) notion of textbooks as a "hidden curriculum" that shapes learners' understanding of socially acceptable roles and echo Susanti et al.'s (2021) findings that Indonesian EFL materials risk perpetuating gender inequality through discourse.

Exclusionary patterns further intensify these disparities. Drawing on Porreca's (1984) framework, the analysis revealed that women are largely absent from political, scientific, and historical contexts, whereas men are seldom depicted in caregiving or domestic roles. As van Dijk (2007) notes, omission is a discursive strategy that normalizes dominance by rendering underrepresented groups invisible. This is reinforced through the use of masculine generics, as seen in a Grade XI passage describing "the postman…he decided to take the letter to the Postmaster…a kind gentleman," which exemplifies what Sunderland (2004) terms androcentric discourse—male-specific nouns and pronouns functioning as normative references. The lack of gender-neutral alternatives such as "postal worker" symbolically excludes women from public authority and echoes Vu and Pham's (2022) observation of women's ongoing "discursive invisibility."

Occupational visibility further illustrates gendered asymmetry. Across both textbooks, men were associated with a broader and more prestigious set of professions, whereas women's roles narrowed in higher grades. By Grade XI, men frequently appeared as presidents, playwrights, or public speakers. At the same time, women were depicted primarily as housewives or dancers, reflecting findings from Rohmawati and Putra (2022) and Rizkiyah et al. (2022) that female characters are often relegated to traditional roles. Nurwahyuningsih et al. (2023) similarly argue that such portrayals reproduce stereotypes that limit students' imagination of socially valued futures. These patterns suggest that female representation becomes increasingly restricted as academic themes become more complex, sending implicit messages about gendered capabilities.

The evaluative language used to describe characters underscores these biases. Female characters were most often described with adjectives tied to physical appearance or emotional states (e.g., "beautiful," "kind"). At the same time, males were associated with intellectual and agentive traits (e.g., "smart," "confident," "brave"). This aligns with Emilia et al.'s (2017) transitivity analysis, which found Indonesian EFL textbooks frequently depict males as adventurous and capable, while females are portrayed as nurturing or passive. Such differential language reflects what Sunderland (2000) describes as the role of classroom discourse in shaping learners' self-concept and worldview; repeated associations of men with intellect and leadership and women with emotionality risk reinforcing internalized hierarchies.

These representational patterns mirror broader societal gender inequalities in Indonesia. Despite formal commitments to gender equality through constitutional guarantees and SDG 5, women remain underrepresented in leadership and decision-making roles (Cameron, 2023; Firdaus & Wulandari, 2023; McLaren et al., 2023). As Wodak and Meyer (2009) emphasize, discourse is socially constitutive and conditioned; it reflects and reproduces dominant ideologies. The persistence of male-centered narratives, gendered omissions, and stereotyped adjectives in nationally distributed textbooks undermines stated equity goals. Brahimi (2017) suggests these biases often arise unintentionally through topic selection and author perspective, while Syafitri et al. (2022) highlight the powerful role of visuals in reproducing symbolic cues aligned with outdated roles.

CONCLUSION

Gender representation in Indonesian senior high school English textbooks reflects numerical and discursive imbalances that mirror broader societal norms. Although some degree of balance appears in Grade X texts, a deeper analysis revealed persistent biases in textual and visual elements. Male characters are more frequently linked with leadership, authority, and diverse occupational roles. In contrast, female characters are often limited to domestic or aesthetic spheres and described through emotional or appearance-based traits. These patterns highlight how textbooks can subtly reinforce traditional gender ideologies despite formal educational commitments to equality. Discursive mechanisms such as omission of female figures from scientific and historical contexts, the use of masculine generics, and gendered linguistic structures normalize male dominance while marginalizing female agency. The evaluative language used in adjectives further underscores these disparities, with traits of intellect and bravery attributed primarily to males and passivity or beauty emphasized for females. Since textbooks play a significant role in shaping adolescents' self-concept and understanding of social roles, these imbalances have important implications for educational equity.

Several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting these findings. First, the analysis was confined to two government-issued English textbooks for Grades X and XI, published in 2017. While these books are widely used nationwide, they may not fully represent all senior high school materials or reflect variations in privately published or more recent editions. Second, the study focused on the content of textbooks rather than how teachers and students engage with them in actual classroom settings. Learners may interpret or negotiate the meanings of texts differently from what is assumed through content analysis alone. Third, the analysis relied primarily on qualitative content analysis and CDA. At the same time, this provided rich insights into linguistic and visual patterns, but it did not capture the broader institutional or policy processes behind textbook production that may also shape gender representations.

Future research could address these limitations in several ways. Expanding the scope to include textbooks from other grade levels, publishers, or recent curriculum revisions would provide a more comprehensive picture of gender representation in Indonesian EFL education. Longitudinal studies could track whether and how gender portrayals evolve. Classroom-based research, such as observations or interviews with teachers and students, would enrich understanding of how textbook content is interpreted and used in practice. Comparative studies across regions or countries could further contextualize Indonesian findings within broader global trends. Finally, collaborative research involving curriculum designers and textbook authors could explore practical strategies for integrating more inclusive and equitable gender representations into educational materials.

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