



Gender Portrayal in Mastering English Book Five: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

Sex is a set of biological attributes while gender is a social construct influencing the perception of males and females in society. Gender roles affect interaction and power distribution in society and are fanned in many ways, including individuals, family groups and institutions. This study examines how gender disparities are propagated through learning English at the secondary school level. The study is descriptive, analysing language use in Mastering English, a textbook for Form 5 students. Mastering English is a course book used in Cameroon's English System of Education. The study analyses the textbook's comprehension passages, dialogues and letters, exercises and examples, and pictures. These aspects are treated for gender exclusion and inclusion, gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, order of appearance, representation in activities, and pictorial representations. The theories used as the basis of this analysis are Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Van Dijk's Sociocognitive approach, which is a triangular interrelation between discourse, cognition and society, analysing the macrostructure, superstructure and microstructure. The findings portray a gender bias presentation in both the linguistic and pictorial representation in favour of the male gender.

Keywords: Discourse, CDA, inequality, textbook, gender, discrimination, stereotyping

INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis is interested in the natural occurrence of language, larger units than isolated words and sentences. Therefore, it is the analysis of texts, discourses, conversations and communicative events, beyond sentence grammar, including interaction occurring in verbal and non-verbal communication such as gestures, images, and films. It also takes cognisance of social, cultural, situative and cognitive contexts of language use and also analyses a vast number of phenomena of text grammar and language use (Van Dijk, 2007a; Wodak, 2008a in Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) reveals unequal power relations, hidden ideology and their effects on the human race, and proposes ways of redressing the inequality in society. Although there are many directions and critique of social inequality, the way to approach it is by focusing on the role of discourse in the (re)production and challenge of dominance (Van Dijk, 1993). Amoussou and Allagbe (2018) discuss the basic assumptions of Critical

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Discourse Analysis by quoting Van Dijk (2003) who lists a number of requirements in order to effectively realise its aims. These are as follows:

- It is problem-or-issue-oriented:
- It is typically inter-or multidisciplinary, and focuses on the relations between discourse and society;
- It focuses on (group) relations of power, dominance and inequality and the ways these are reproduction or resisted by social group members through text and talk;
- Much work in Critical Discourse Analysis is about the underlying ideologies, that play a role in the reproduction of or resistance against dominance or inequality;
- The studies are geared to uncovering, revealing or disclosing what is implicit, hidden or otherwise not immediately obvious in relation to discursively enacted dominance or their underlying ideologies;
- This attempt to uncover the discursive means of mental control and social influence implies a critical and opposing stance against the powerful and the elites, especially those who abuse their power;
- Critical Discourse Analysis tries to formulate or sustain an overall perspective of solidarity with dominated groups.

Rais et al. (2020) argue that social cognition is how writers or creators see a social reality and how it influences the appearance of certain texts. It is related to the mental awareness of the writer who creates the text. They go on to explain that a writer is seen not as a neutral individual, but as an individual who has a variety of values, experiences, and ideological influence gained from his life. According to Hermawan et al. (2022), there are two means of understanding social cognition which are explaining a text production process and showing how values embedded in society affect the cognition of a text producer who then uses it to create texts. Van Dijk focuses on social cognition as one of the elements to use in making meaning of a text. This is directly connected to social reality amongst which is inequality. There are many tenets of social inequality and the one addressed in this study is gender inequality.

Gender inequality is one of the tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis. According to the Council of Europe, gender equality is often used to refer to equality between women and men. It goes on to describe gender as a state of affairs in which women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities, where the behaviour, aspirations, wishes and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured. The Council of Europe goes on to state that gender equality is equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. It aims to promote the full participation of both women and men in society and discusses how possible it is to go further, to change the structures of society, which contribute to maintaining the unequal power relationships between women and men, and to reach a better balance in the various female and male values and priorities.

Cerrato and Cifre (2018) quote Martinez and Paterna (2009), who argue that gender ideology seems to determine the percentage of tasks considered traditionally feminine

by members or the couple, such as washing, ironing, shopping, cooking, or cleaning. These are the roles assigned to the Cameroonian women. Kalaivani (2019) says that the various roles that women assume in the family are those of housewife, leader, administrator, manager of family income, and mother. Applebury (2021) views gender roles in the family as having an impact on the family both consciously and unconsciously. Applebury (2021) posits that gender-related material is internalised unconsciously through television shows, movies, commercials, book advertisements, and podcasts. It is internalised through conscious and unconscious levels through one's upbringing, observation of relationships and interactions with the world in general (school, jobs, friendships, etc.). In their upbringing, children are exposed to the traditional gender roles attributed to men and women by society and culture. In these traditional gender-assigned roles, girls are supposed to be well mannered, passive, non-confrontational and submissive while boys are supposed to be dominant, assertive, and competitive. Women are expected to raise children and men are breadwinners and decision-makers in the family. The women make more decisions in relation to the everyday organisation of the home, such as grocery shopping, purchasing new household appliances and helping with children's school or extra-curricular activities. (studysmarter).

Gender stereotyping as explained by ohchr.org refers to the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of men and women. The United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner gives obligations vis-à-vis stereotypes and stereotyping. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), explains that state parties are required to modify or transform 'harmful gender stereotypes' and 'eliminate wrongful gender stereotyping' (UNCHR). Article 5 of CEDAW requires state parties to take all appropriate measures to 'modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women' in an effort to eliminate practices that 'are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotype roles for men and women. The nature of States' obligations in this regard has been detailed in the jurisprudence and the recommendations of the treaty bodies. These obligations include amongst others revising textbooks; ensuring that teachers receive gender training; emphasizing through awareness-raising activities; the importance of women's participation in decision-making roles; and adopting measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate occupational segregation based on gender stereotypes (ohchr.org). Cameroon is a signatory of most of the international laws, conventions and treaties concerning the protection and promotion of women's rights.

Rahmi (2015) asserts that stereotypically, women are represented as language users in television situations, comedy, newspapers, cartoons and even horror novels. According to Rahmi, to create humorous things, women are often represented as nagging and having excessive and never-ending speech; they are called woman shops which emphasize women's main focus was shopping. Men were represented as creatures who could speak very well and intelligently in public. These exposures through media and publishers certainly expanded the stereotypes to be widely spread. As a result, these

kinds of stereotypes about how men and women are perceived may be believed as the truth by many people in a certain society (Rahmi, 2015).

Ahmad and Shah (2019) in a study on Critical Discourse Analysis of 5th Grade English Language textbook used in Pakistan found that males and females were not equally represented in the textbook. They argue that passive activities are being ascribed to females while active as well as highly esteemed activities are being ascribed to males. Ahmad and Shah (2019) quote Musad (2017) and Smith (1991) who both state that education has the power to structure attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour of human beings by using it as an instrument to promote national identity and boost the privilege of some social groups over others including males over females. Accordingly, the privileges particularly inequalities are defined, reproduced, shaped, reinforced and promoted through education in implicit as well as explicit ways (p. 14). Ahmed and Shah go on to quote Jones et al. (1997) who propose a relationship between hidden curriculum and its implications for pedagogic and cognitive development through gender inequality in dialogues. According to them, if the examples of a dialogue between the members of one sex are less depicted, the learners of the silenced sex will participate less in dialogues. Similarly, if the member of one gender starts the dialogues most frequently the members of the other gender will grow as passive participants in conversations or dialogues. As Ahmad and Shah put it, there will be a negative influence on learners' cognition because they will refrain from playing such roles that are professionally or linguistically restricted in the educational system. In line with Ahmad and Shah, Andini et al. (2023) research on the Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Representation of the textbook used by Senior High School in Indonesia. The study revealed that there is a significant imbalance of gender representation in textbooks and most female positions are associated with the traditional view in society like only performing more in household duties (p. 69).

This study uses Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and Teun Van Dijk's (2003) Sociocognitive Approach as theories to realise the representation of gender in Mastering English Students' Book Form 5. The study uses the discourse structure as propounded by Van Dijk. Eryanto (2011) in Hermawan et al. (2022, p.80) opines that Van Dijk views a text as consisting of several structures which he groups into three levels. The macrostructure is the general meaning of the text that can be understood by reading the topic of the text; the superstructure is the concept of the text, how the structure and components of discourse are arranged in the text as a whole; and the microstructure is the meaning of discourse that can be seen by analysing the different levels of linguistics. The focus of this study is on the macrostructure, which highlights the themes realised whether consciously or unconsciously attributing gender roles in sentences.

Another theory used is the Systemic Functional Linguistics of Michael Halliday. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) give an elaborate description of Systemic Functional Linguistics. They give an explanation of the three metafunctions which are the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. This study focuses on the ideational which is divided into the experiential and the logical. The ideational metafunction is about the language users' perception of the world concerned with clauses as representations. The experiential is about transitivity, which has three tenets: processes, participants and circumstantial.

This study uses the participants to categorise the themes. The participant according to Michael Halliday takes the central position of the nominal group realised by the subject or object of the clause. This study focuses on the participants that form the subject of the clause especially when dealing with the linguistic position of the male or female in the sentence. Using Discourse Structure and Systemic functional Linguistics, this study aims to find out how gender is projected in Mastering English Student's Book, Form 5.

METHODOLOGY

This work analyses the multimodal representation of gender in Mastering English Student's Book 5. The method used for data collection and analysis was the survey design. The study analysed the linguistic aspects and the images (pictures). The linguistic aspect examines how gender is portrayed through language as in the use of male and female persons, inclusion and exclusion and stereotyping. Sentences of exercises were grouped under themes to find out if there was any gender stereotyping following traditional gender roles. Themes that did not have up to 10 sentences were placed under miscellaneous, like school and positive attributes under the male. The pictures mostly focused on inclusion and exclusion and added visibility to gender portrayal. The female and male were identified through the presentation of their hair and dresses and the sentences were considered female or male using Halliday's participant (subject). This means the gender considered is the role of the participant, which might be the Actor, Goal, Sensor, Phenomenon, Carrier, Attribute, Identified, Identifier, Behaver Sayer and Existent. The study did not take into consideration questions asked from comprehension passages and dialogues. It rather considered these elements as a whole. This is because if the passage is about a neutral aspect then the questions will follow suit. The focus is on the female and male gender and not on the neutral. The neutral also included subjects that could not be identified and mixed subjects.

DISCUSSIONS

The discussions analyse the presentation of gender from the themes in the exercises, passages, letters, dialogues and pictures.

Exercises and Examples in Mastering English Student's Book Form 5

The exercises and examples were classified in accordance with Halliday's participants at the level of the subject of the clause to form themes. Van Dijk's macrostructure was used to determine the theme of the discourse. The analysis shows a variety of themes used in the textbook in relation to females and males. The authors used one hundred and nineteen (119) sentences pertaining to male subjects; one hundred and thirty-one (131) whose subjects are female and twenty-five (25) with neutral subjects, situations that are both female and male, and cases that could not be identified as either female or male.

Male subjects and themes

Table 1. Themes in exercises and examples representing male subjects

Hobbies 11

<p>He always feeds the dogs before going to work.</p> <p>He plays basket ball'</p> <p>'Can you play volleyball' , his friend asked.</p> <p>Mr. Ngwa plays the xylophone whenever he visits his friend.</p> <p>He travelled to Germany last month.</p>	<p>He went to the US after finishing his studies.</p> <p>His entire life centres on music.</p> <p>Basketball is his favourite sport.</p> <p>Is your father a democrat or a Republican?</p> <p>Henry loves Geography.</p> <p>Mr, Anderson leaves for Yaounde on Sunday.</p>
Negetivity 20	
<p>The disgruntled child burst out, 'I'm not to blame for his future.'</p> <p>Although Alex usually looked unkempt, he had a very neat appearance at his job interview.</p> <p>Tiku has ---apologized for the numerous mistakes he makes daily.</p> <p>He---asked for forgiveness until the old woman forgave him.</p> <p>My father hardly keeps late night.</p> <p>His conduct to say the least was disgusting.</p> <p>'The thief was arrested on his way to church.' the pretty girl announced.</p> <p>The young man who has suddenly grown healthy and handsome---taking drugs last month.</p> <p>Now he regrets his acts.</p>	<p>The men were being arrested by the police.</p> <p>He has not been warned---</p> <p>Since he has apologized, we will not take any further actions against him.</p> <p>---is to blame for his misfortunes.</p> <p>Emeka must have broken the glass.</p> <p>Some boys' behaviour leaves much to be desired.</p> <p>Jeff stole the money.</p> <p>The boy broke the window.</p> <p>Do you know the boy----uncle embezzled state funds?</p> <p>What an ugly boy!</p> <p>Michael, the corrupt minister's son has been arrested.</p>
Education 10	
<p>Paul's sisters---my classmate at school.</p> <p>Shemi did not go to school yesterday, did he?</p> <p>He taught me in class three.</p> <p>He drove to school.</p> <p>Etame shared the formulae with-----he resolves the equation.</p>	<p>John wrote a project about bee farming.</p> <p>He lent his books-----a student he hardly knew.</p> <p>----he worked hard, he failed.</p> <p>Mr. Asongkeng teaches Leslie.</p> <p>John -----to school every day.</p>
Superiority 24	
<p>Good evening His Royal Highness; would you mind settling a family dispute for us?</p>	<p>The President of Cameroon appointed him Minister.</p> <p>If the president appoints him, they will rejoice.</p>

<p>Mr Robert Adam is the Director of the preparatory classes.</p> <p>The Mayor said that he commended the patriotic spirit of everyone present.</p> <p>Emperor Asoka---many reforms in the country.</p> <p>Being the CEO of a big company, Michael is in an ---position.</p> <p>Many admire Donald Trump.</p> <p>James is the President.</p> <p>The city mayor, Abega Samuel, is quite old.</p> <p>President Biya----Monseigneur Kleda as the National Mediator of crises in Cameroon.</p> <p>President Paul Biya, Queen Elizabeth, Doctor,</p>	<p>They made him king (not a king).</p> <p>The minister----wife is in your group, was killed by the angry mob.</p> <p>This is the boy whose father is a captain in the army.</p> <p>If Joshua Osih wins the presidential election,---.</p> <p>If President Trump expels all Africans----.</p> <p>Manu Dibango plays the saxophone and the trumpet.</p> <p>Prophet T.B. Joshua looked at the man and said, let love lead.</p> <p>‘Why are Africans so lazy’, said President Trump.</p> <p>The manager asks his employees to arrive on time.</p> <p>Abrahams, Professor George...</p> <p>Samuel Eto’o is a household name in Africa.</p>
Miscellaneous 54	
<p>He lives there.</p> <p>Each of the boys has a laptop.</p> <p>Either the boy or his parents.</p> <p>Fon has a special place where he sits.</p> <p>Why is the father talking to his children?</p> <p>The man whose daughter died is in shock.</p> <p>John always eats with his left hand.</p> <p>Mr Nkongho has gone to have lunch.</p> <p>Andrew along with his sisters---at the newspaper stand once a week.</p> <p>Mr, Musa bought a hundred cattle yesterday.</p> <p>Mr Daniel came to visit you....</p> <p>Moussa is a Muslim, not a Christian.</p> <p>He is charming and so is his wife, but his daughter is the most charming.</p> <p>Discipline Master (Sir).</p> <p>The father of my chap is very rich.</p>	<p>He placed it in the box.</p> <p>He’s working at his desk.</p> <p>My father is still young at heart.</p> <p>He escaped the flood by the skin of his teeth.</p> <p>He is very comfortable; he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth.</p> <p>My uncle’s death has left his children at each other’s throat over inheritance.</p> <p>Young men may become vagabonds while young girls take the streets.</p> <p>My father is a nice man.</p> <p>That little boy smells food before eating.</p> <p>To a man of my age online shopping is a dream.</p> <p>Bryan is respectful; his brother is not.</p> <p>Ngole was a good man.</p> <p>If he wounds himself, he bleeds.</p> <p>If he attends the meeting, he will speak for us.</p> <p>If father gets the job, I’ll congratulate him.</p>

<p>Dad so what's your reaction to this family dispute?</p> <p>The old man dived---the lake to rescue the drowning bay.</p> <p>The boys were unable to shelter---the rain.</p> <p>The man to---you spoke is my husband.</p> <p>Jean puts the house in order.</p> <p>Jordan arranged the chairs.</p> <p>As he was not there, I couldn't meet him his mother.</p> <p>The little boy was clinging to his mother's leg screaming that he wanted her to buy him a candy bar.</p> <p>Though he is rich, he is not arrogant.</p> <p>If I get a job, I will marry her.</p>	<p>-----he will come to Africa.</p> <p>My father would bless me if I honoured him.</p> <p>My uncle knows the soldier.</p> <p>The boy---is my cousin.</p> <p>He told us about armed robbers.</p> <p>Papa's second wife's uncle is no more.</p> <p>Some men's drinking habits are a call for concern.</p> <p>That is the man----dog bit the madman.</p> <p>The boy ---I borrowed this dress from lives here.</p> <p>Ekema drives to work every day.</p> <p>Paul will give Mary a birthday gift.</p> <p>His work was appreciated by the committee.</p> <p>James is handsome.</p> <p>Daniel gave me an apple.</p>
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From the above table showing male subjects, the total sentences are one hundred and nineteen (119). The analysis reveals four (4) major themes, which are; Hobbies, music and sports; negativity; education and superiority. Where there are not up to ten (10) sentences in a theme, they are place under miscellaneous.

Female subjects and themes

Table 2. Themes in exercises and examples representing female subjects

Shopping, Looks and Dressing 13	
<p>What a pretty girl!</p> <p>The young lady sitting-----my left is the prettiest lady I ever saw.</p> <p>She looks cute in that dress.</p> <p>When the beautiful bride---from her car, everyone admired her breath.</p> <p>Essomba;s list was so long that she forgot to buy oil, fish, onion and vegetables.</p> <p>While at the market , she bought books, pens, pencils, rulers and an umbrella.</p>	<p>She shops online all the time.</p> <p>That is the shop in which she works.</p> <p>Her new shoes—look like yours have. already gone bad.</p> <p>Amina's best friend's dresses have been carried away by the madman.</p> <p>Miss Enyih Evodia's shop sells children's dresses at relatively low prices.</p> <p>A mother said to the daughter, 'Go and change your dress.'</p>
Food 22	

<p>She likes the biscuits.</p> <p>Mary -----eating mangoes(likes).</p> <p>She placed the food on the table.</p> <p>Fatima has just eaten beans, corn, rice and groundnuts.</p> <p>My late grandmother--- vegetables and fruits to the best meat and chicken.</p> <p>My aunt sells good fufu and eru in the market.</p> <p>Monica cooks very well.</p> <p>Immediately I entered the house, Mom announced 'Dinner is almost ready.'</p> <p>She cooks well.</p> <p>My sisters scarcely eat boiled eggs; they don't want to get fat.</p>	<p>She does well in all first sequence exams.</p> <p>She grinds all the ingredients and keeps before she starts cooking.</p> <p>She wants food.</p> <p>Rice cakes are produced by Effa.</p> <p>Alice, like Rose likes rice.</p> <p>One of the ladies wants eru.</p> <p>Eta said that she had eaten mangoes the day before.</p> <p>'Why do you always cook late?' The husband shouted.</p> <p>Ashley wanted butter Effimba wanted chocolate.</p> <p>If she eats poison, she dies.</p>
Education 16	
<p>Sarah is the most intelligent girl in class.</p> <p>Miss Eleanor wants to be an engineer.</p> <p>The girl wears a jacket to school.</p> <p>My sisters are good----Mathematics.</p> <p>She was so ----that she couldn't speak in front of the class.</p> <p>Mbock is sure to get a good grade in the test because it was-----.</p> <p>If she studied harder, she would excel.</p> <p>'Essomba has never failed a Mathematics test,' her classmate said.</p>	<p>The discipline mistress----he exeat before she went out of school.</p> <p>If she passes the entrance, she would leave for training.</p> <p>Jane writes well.</p> <p>Jane writes lovely letters.</p> <p>The girl wrote a lovely letter.</p> <p>Amvela skipped classes because she repeatedly scored 100 in all her subjects.</p> <p>Her school bus breaks down-----.</p>
Family Life 24	
<p>She is getting married----December.</p> <p>She caught the goat with great difficulty.</p> <p>She often goes to the movies, with her husband.</p> <p>Do your suitors come to see you?</p>	<p>She is the breadwinner in the family.</p> <p>Jane washes dresses daily.</p> <p>Mom instructed us to---the drum with water.</p> <p>She gathered all the trash in the can and---it on fire.</p>

<p>The young lady contemplated over the marriage proposal.</p> <p>The young lady who works in court is getting married now.</p> <p>If she loves you, then she will marry you.</p> <p>Emilia does not know the man---impregnated her.</p> <p>She is---than her husband.</p> <p>Sandra, you will have to make a choice. It's --him or me.</p> <p>She loves her husband.</p> <p>Charlotte---Joe over Randy because Randy wasn't sincere with her.</p>	<p>Miriam felt the hatred of the entire family.</p> <p>While in Europe, Aminata always---about the welfare of her family back home.</p> <p>If she drinks and smokes, she aborts the child.</p> <p>If she offers you flowers, she loves---.</p> <p>If she accepts to marry me---.</p> <p>If she divorces her husband, she would travel out of the country.</p> <p>Jane remembers everything now.</p> <p>She took my bags into the house.</p>
Miscellaneous 56	
<p>She sleeps early these days.</p> <p>At puberty, her behavior---.</p> <p>Her rich grandmother bought a very----.</p> <p>Mrs Neba, please sit by me.</p> <p>Exactly, she admitted the crime.</p> <p>My sister who is 12, will soon be there.</p> <p>She died in the ESEKA train accident.</p> <p>Atangana danced well She gave me a smile.</p> <p>If she is generous, then she is rich.</p> <p>If she invites me, I will go.</p> <p>If Cynthia runs fast, she will win the race.</p> <p>Her progress is visible.</p> <p>Her business will progress from one level to the other.</p> <p>She projects to complete her house by December.</p> <p>If she scores a goal, she will receive a prize.</p> <p>If Aboudi Onguene kicked the ball, she would score.</p>	<p>Don't mind her, she keeps blowing her own trumpet.</p> <p>Cameroon---the female AFCONS in November 2016.</p> <p>The girl we chose is Musa's friend.</p> <p>Cindy's mother's uncle is expected home tonight.</p> <p>Her sons are washing the car.</p> <p>Jane seems happy.</p> <p>Julie will have finished the project before next week.</p> <p>Jane lives in Yaounde.</p> <p>She arrives at 7.30am.</p> <p>She has gone to Douala.</p> <p>She will not come---we compel her.</p> <p>She began to cry---she had lost her golden chain.</p> <p>---happened, that's why she could not be here on time.</p> <p>She tunes the radio.</p> <p>Mary takes after her mother.</p>

She would lose her job if she disrespected hierarchy.	Yoland---Fred's laptop yesterday and made him worry all night.
That is the woman whose house was burnt down.	The woman who stole the child was imprisoned.
She is to blame for the massive failures.	Osoh regretted her actions
The child said that she couldn't sleep without her puppy.	Neither Grace nor Helen knows anything about it.
She---sit for hours listening to the radio.	Both Jane and Jenny were invited.
The Aweri sisters takes over Bank Antique in December.	Bernice Abongwa is just a little girl from Mount Carmel.
My sister-----early every morning.(rise).	Mrs Agbor is selling her house and moving to the village.
She -----the idea of becoming a member of our prestigious club.	Eposi is coming to Cameroon next Sunday.
Her brother who was suffering----appendictis had surgery yesterday.	Women and land ownership in the family.
She was treated for malaria by the nurse.	A wife's adultery is unpardonable and more easily leads to divorce than that of a husband
Women and inheritance: Should women be heiresses?	Brenda is not a lazy girl.
She----to be lazy; she----all her time sleeping.	Dynamic Women'association gives loans to its members for business.
Mrs Biya the first lady is a generous woman.	

The total number of sentences with female subjects is 131. The analysis above portrays the females as used to discuss themes of shopping, looks and dressing; food; education; and family life and relationships;

Neutral subjects

Table 3. Themes in exercises and examples representing neutral subjects

The sentences that are neutral have subjects that are neither females nor males. These are also sentences whose gender could not be identified and subjects that are both male and female

Neutral 25	
Some families give preference to boys education than to girls.	Jarson ,please tune in the television.
Who could have imagined my sister would be heiress?	Kamdem had seen the movie before.
	Do you have an elder brother in your family?

<p>Lale went to their house----nine o'clock.</p> <p>The----lover----himself.</p> <p>No I told you she was not coming.</p> <p>The green book that is lying on the floor is Anne's.</p> <p>Maimouna studied hard.</p> <p>If we caught the boy, we would beat him up.</p> <p>I would bless him if I were God.</p> <p>The child you saw happens to be my nephew.</p> <p>Those are the children ---house is opposite Peter's.</p> <p>I am looking for the man---car is badly parked outside.</p>	<p>We thought he loved her, but we were wrong!</p> <p>I love and appreciate Brenda's character</p> <p>Is Akwen in town?</p> <p>Eli and Peter were present at the first class.</p> <p>John and Mary study Mathematics regularly</p> <p>I was amazed---her brilliance.</p> <p>Mr. and Mrs Talla have been living in this house for twenty years.</p> <p>Mr and Mrs Agbor have been living in this house since 1996.</p> <p>I have a brother and three sisters.</p>
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The analysis of male, female and neutral subjects in the sentences portrays a disparity in the themes used for the different genders. The themes for the male subjects are hobbies, negativity, education, and superiority. Males have the time to go out and relax and are the ones to be managers, presidents, ministers, and mayors and have household names. Females spend their time shopping, getting involved in relationships, taking care of the family, and cooking or eating. As explained in ohchr.org, gender stereotype is harmful when it limits women's or men's ability to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives and life plans. It is for example based on the stereotype that women are more nurturing and that child-rearing responsibilities often fall on the woman. The portrayal or development of many sentences in the exercises of a textbook can continue with this stereotyping in society. In the case of this study, the student does not learn only the English Language, but may consciously or unconsciously learn that the female is to take care of the family while the male goes out to relax. Additionally, the student learns that males rule, they are at the top while females spend their time cooking, dressing, looking good, and expecting compliments. The males are the ones who steal, fight, destroy and do negative things, Even though this helps to dissuade females from negativity, it makes males to be comfortable with wrongdoing.

Representation of comprehension passages, letters and dialogues according to gender

This section analyses the percentage of females to males used as subjects in passages, letters, and dialogues in the textbook. Role plays, simulations, and stories are crucial in teaching language. The general presentation of females and males makes the students adopt an inclusion and exclusion attitude of males and females in activities. In

quebe.ca/en-family-and-support-for-individuals/ it is stated that children, adopt gender-based behaviours because stereotypes have been unwittingly transmitted to them by their parents, or by their human or material environment. This includes other adults, their living environment, books, toys, and the media. Activities in textbooks which the students read and act on, have this influence on the competencies they acquire. Rahmi (2015) argues that it is interesting to know about gender representation in many materials that are used by teachers in teaching a foreign language such as handouts, teacher's guides and textbooks. According to Rahmi, the questions arise about whether men and women are in equal and realistic representation numerically. The examination of comprehension passages, letters and dialogues, portrays that the use of females is 17.1% while males is 28.6%. This gives the impression to the students that the males are superior and shall dominate in such situations. As Lakoff puts it, men could have control over many aspects, like politics, culture and social life (Rahmi,2015).

Table 4. Representation of gender in passages, dialogues and letters

	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Total	%
Female	2	1	-	3	-	6	17.1
Male	4	1	1	4	-	10	28.6
Mixed	1	-	1	1	-	3	8.6
Neutral	4	3	3	1	5	16	45.7
TOTAL	11	5	5	9	5	35	100

The above table represents the percentage use of females and males in passages, dialogues and letters. The general view shows a high percentage of neutral subjects used. However, this study focuses only on females and males which is 17.1% and 28.6% respectively.

Representation of Pictures According to Gender

There is an interaction between the producers of a text or an image and receivers. The producers of images take cognisance of the viewers since they produce not from a vacuum but as Kress and Leeuwen (2003) state, from a context of social institutions, which to different degrees and in different ways, regulate what may be said about images, and how it should be said, and how images should be interpreted. Discussing representation and interaction in designing the position of the viewer, Kress and Leeuwen (p. 119) agree that there are two kinds of participants involved in the interaction between the producer and the viewer of the image: the represented participants and the interactive participants. In discussing the participants they give an example of where the producer and the viewer do not have a face-to-face interaction. Here the producers have to create a mental image of the viewers and the way viewers make sense of their pictures. In the case of Mastering English Student's Book Form 5, the authors(producers) and the students(viewers) do not have a face-to-face interaction. The students are left with the pictures to make meaning of them. This study argues that the students do not only make meaning out of the language items but also make meanings of gender representation. The students do not just learn the language but learn through the language. This section of the study analyses the gender presentation of the pictures in the

textbook, with a focus on inclusion and exclusion, stereotyping and the subject of discussion.

Cover page

The cover page carries a picture of both male and female graduates jubilating.

Module 1: Family and Social Life

Module one is on Family and Social life. It begins with three pictures. The first and second pictures have both males and females. The last picture has mostly males: five males and one female, with the males domineering. The picture for the warm-up exercise portrays mostly females. The first is mixed with the girls sweeping while the boys are walking away and the second is about women working on the farm. In the writing exercise done as group work, three pictures are presented, portraying A as mixed, B as only males and C as mixed but having mostly males.



Figure 1. Representative picture of gender portrayal in Module 1

Source: Mastering English Student's Book, Form 5, p.71

To teach speaking, as can be seen in the picture above, six pictures are presented. Picture A is neutral and the rest, B, C, D, E and F are mixed. However, picture B is mixed and has just one female. The female in this picture is projected in a domineering position. This encourages girls to do technical education and woodwork specifically. Picture F is a mixed class with a male teacher.

Module 2: The World of Business

This module begins with pictures A to L. The page portrays that in the world of business, and the people and things that make up the business world are males. Picture A, B, C, I, K and L are neutral. The rest, of the pictures, D, E, F, G, H are pictures of males, which may be interpreted that females do not do or succeed in business.



Figure 2. Representative picture of gender portrayal in Module 2

Source: Mastering English Student's Book, Form 5, p.87

Further into the module there is a picture on combating unemployment, which portrays only the males standing with placards in protest. Under Categories of Action Speaking and Reading, there are six pictures, five of which are neutral and one is about a male at the river bank.

Module 3: Environment, Health and Wellbeing

Module three talks about health. Three pictures are presented to teach speaking and listening: one is neutral and two are carrying pictures of males, a doctor included.

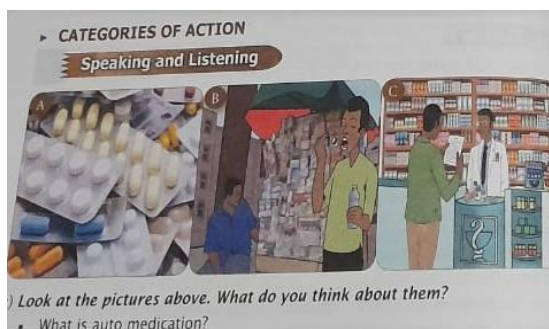


Figure 3. Representative picture of gender portrayal in Module 3

Source: Mastering English Student's Book, Form 5, p. 169

Under the second speaking and listening activity, there are four pictures: three are males and one is a female. Still in this module, to teach vocabulary and confusables, a picture of two males who look alike is presented. In speaking and listening, on Tourism, six pictures are presented, five are neutral and one is a male.

Module 4: Citizenship

Teaching Speaking, before a dialogue, a male teacher is presented with mixed students. In lesson four where they are exploring cultural values, three pictures are presented. Picture A portrays males in their traditional regalia, and the females are at rare. Picture B is about two males and a female and picture C is about a female and a male child. Under speaking in Major Historical events and Personalities four pictures are presented:

President Paul Biya, President Donald Trump, Hilary Clinton and President Macron. Only Clinton is a woman, not even a president. The pictures can be seen below.

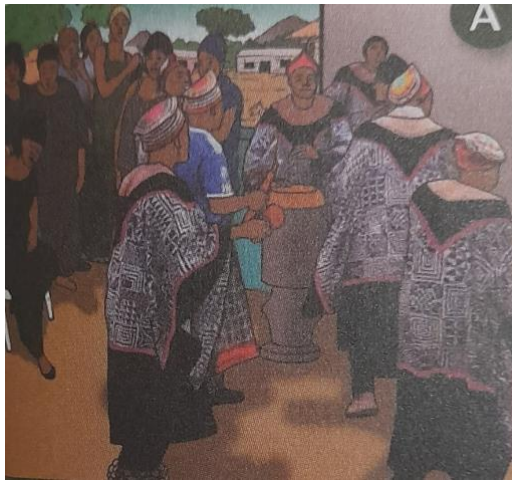


Figure 4. Representative picture of gender portrayal in Module 4

Source: Mastering English Student's Book, Form 5, p. 249 & p. 253 respectively

The module continues with picture composition, where a wedding invite is presented with both a female and a male and the second picture is a business arena where both are presented. However, the females overshadow the males.

Module 5: Media, Communication, Science and Technology

Module five is on Media, Communication, Science and Technology. It opens with five pictures; three are neutral, one is a male and the other one is a human, not identified as male or female. Even the drawing at the beginning of lesson one is a male working on the computer. Under Project, there are three pictures. Picture A is a male working on the computer and the picture on the computer is a male and neutral. Picture B is that of young males discussing, A closer look shows that the whole class is made up of males and the teacher is also a male. The third picture is a human being that cannot be identified as either male or female.

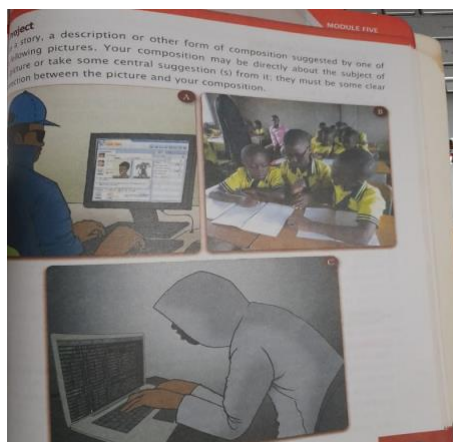


Figure 5. Representative picture of gender portrayal in Module 5

Source: Mastering English Student's Book, Form 5, p.293

Table 5: Representation of pictures according to gender

	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Total	%
Female	1	-	1	1	1	4	3.7
Male	3	10	7	3	4	27	25
Mixed	16	-	2	7	1	26	24.1
Neutral	9	14	15	1	12	51	47.2
TOTAL						108	100

Studysmarter.co.uk posits that gender socialisation is strengthened and reinforced by institutions such as education and industries. Those hiring managers may be hesitant to hire women for leadership roles if they believe that a man would inherently be better at them. Instead, they may hire women for more feminine roles, such as secretarial roles where women will cater for others' needs and follow orders. This is what can be seen in the study of Mastering English Student's Book Form 5. In themes, men hold leadership positions while the females are caterers, where they do not give but follow orders. From the pictures, females are just 3.7% while males are 25%

Practical Implication

Many researchers have carried out research on Mastering English and found out that it is an excellent course book, especially in the teaching of the English Language. The study is purely an academic work that looks at society and is analysed based on theories of Critical Discourse Analysis. As seen above, Critical Discourse Analysis reveals hidden ideologies, hegemony, social power abuse and dominance (Fairclough, 2001) in the society. Students in school do not only learn the language but learn through language. The teaching of the language, therefore, should take care of the other aspects students learn out of language (age, class, gender) because they all have a tremendous impact on society. So many have written on gender equality and equity. Atanga (2021) brings to view the representation of women in the parliament of Cameroon. Fomukong (2017) discusses the situation of rural women fighting to own land titles. Fombe et al. (2013) argue that the woman is at a disadvantaged point socio-economically because she is denied land rights. All these are the worries about how women are being treated in society. If the students in their English Language classroom are presented with pictures of mostly males in the business world, males in science, communication and technology, and males as major historical personalities and in control of culture, then the problem of female/male imbalance will continue to be a cry in our society. Even with the number of girls in our secondary and tertiary levels studying business administration, computer sciences, arts and culture, the males will still try to dominate. Ahmad and Shah (2019) in their study concluded that males are in privileged positions and females are in non-privileged or marginalized positions. They state that this marginalisation in textbooks indirectly prepares female learners to accept privileged roles for males and less privileged roles for themselves. They ascertain that such positioning of females and males may have negative effects on the female learners by creating feelings of alienation, exclusion, and inferiority in them leading to limited behavioural, linguistic and social roles. It can also limit females' career choices as well as worldviews, distort their self-image, raise learner-gendered subjects

and limit learners' future scope (Ahmad and Shah, 2019). The authors of English Language textbooks should consider equality and equity when writing their textbooks.

Conclusion

This study concludes that there is a dominance of female representation in exercises in Mastering English Student's Book Form 5. There is gender stereotyping in the use of themes in the text. The use of the female gender flourishes in cooking, dressing and looks while the male excels where there is power, superiority and authority. The pictures portray gross disparity between the representation of females and males. The males take 25% of the pictures as against 3.7% of females. The males command the business world, the computer world and the traditional world. Even when the cultural values are projected only the males are the actors, while the females are watching from the rare. There is male dominance also in the representation of passages, letters and dialogues. The total presentation of gender in the Mastering English Student's Book Form 5 projects the male as superior and domineering as against the less significant role of the female. The students do not just learn the language that these exercises, passages, dialogues, letters and pictures are used to teach, they also learn, both consciously and unconsciously, about the gender roles projected in the text. This is obviously taken back into the society in which they live.

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